

**COMMUNICATION CADRES: LEADERS, THE CONTROL OF
COMMUNICATION, AND CO-OPTATION**

by

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DEDICATION

This dissertation is dedicated to my parents, Miguel and Josephine Dueñas, who always believed in me.

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CHAPTER 1

The Introduction

The Micro Informs the Macro

If a democratic government and a democratic society are mutually reinforcing and reflective,¹ then what conclusions can be drawn from how society practices democracy with how that society practices government? The preceding macro level question refers to societies, governments, and the people who live in them. Social scientists commonly agree that a democratic government and its society reflect one another and reinforce one another. Theda Skocpol's research on American Federalism, political development, and the growth and development of national organizations demonstrate how social organizations mirror the United States system of government.² Theories of social capital are founded on the idea that participation in social organizations is necessary for citizens to develop the skills and ideology necessary to support a strong democratic government.³ Robert Dahl's work on pluralism, polyarchy, and democracy are strongly based on how different types of social institutions and government strongly reflect one another.⁴ In a more critical vein of democracy in the United States, the application of an elitist model

¹ Dahl 1971, Lindblom 1977, Tocqueville and Bradley 1980, Putnam 2000

² Skocpol 1992, Skocpol, et al. 2002

³ Putnam 2000, Garcia 2001

⁴ Dahl 1971, 1989

points out how elitism plays out at different levels of government and society.⁵

Comparative research using network theory argues that in the United States, Germany, and Japan a “blurring” occurs between state and society relations in broad policy-making domains.⁶

In *Communication Cadres, Leaders, and Co-optation*, the title of this dissertation, I address three macro points. First, how individuals organize and govern themselves in small organizations. Second, how these organizations reflect society and government; and, finally, how society relates to government. In essence, this dissertation explores the implications of how social organizations in the United States practice democracy with how the federal system of U.S. government practices democracy.

The macro concerns of *Communication Cadres, Leaders, and Co-optation* emerged from initial micro observations of how individual leaders within organizations communicated information to their followers in both large bureaucratic organizations and very small organizations practicing participatory democracy. I noticed a recurring pattern at the organizational level, organizational leaders selectively presented organizational members information that included and excluded information and available alternatives. In studying the history of social movements and individual unions, I began to see references by both leaders of organizations and the rank-and-file that pointed to their experiences with similar occurrences.⁷ Consequently, I moved from observing individual organizations and institutions to hypothesize that *organizational leaders rise to power*

⁵ Gaventa 1980, Dye 1995

⁶ Knoke 1996

⁷ Piven and Cloward 1977, Acuña 1988, Walton 1988, Hero 1992, Smith 1996, Collier and Collier 2002

and stay in power by controlling communication and information flows, which creates an environment conducive for co-optation to occur. The resulting dissertation turned from micro level observations and analysis to their macro level implications.

Critical case studies of three small organizations with politically experienced members dedicated to participatory democracy and open communication and information flows test the argument. The critical case studies do more than test the theory; they allow us to see the ideals of democracy and political participation put to work and to move from microanalysis to macroanalysis.

The Theory

Communication Cadres, Leaders, and Co-Optation, theorizes that leaders rise to power and stay in power by controlling communication and information flows, which creates an environment conducive for co-optation to occur. I refer to the leader(s) who control organizational communication and information flows as a **communication cadre (CC)**.

The **Communication Cadre Theory (CCT)** deserves to be studied for several reasons. First, the CCT identifies how and why communication and information networks are important for political power. Second, the CCT defines co-optation and explains the danger co-optation poses at the organizational and individual level. Third, the theory offers an explanation for how and why oligarchy occurs.⁸ Fourth, it explains why the Iron Law of Oligarchy occurs. Fifth, the Communication Cadre Theory identifies how and why a communication cadre develops and forms an organizational elite. Sixth,

⁸ Michels 1962

the CCT identifies obstacles to an individual's freedom of choice in organizations. Seventh, the theory identifies how and why the control of communication and information networks creates an obstacle to democracy and democratization. The Communication Cadre Theory identifies organizational obstacles to communication and information sharing. This dissertation, also, demonstrates how the current conceptual stretching of key political science terms related to democracy, representation, accountability, and cooperation muddies and biases political analysis and interpretations.⁹

The following chapters develop the Communication Cadre Theory, critically test the theory, and discuss the theory's significance for organizations and institutions, as well as the implications the Communication Cadre Theory holds for society and government.

Defining The Problem

The control of communication and information is a problem for several reasons. The case studies in this dissertation demonstrate entrenched leadership, which will later be related to the communication cadre concept, relies heavily on its control of communication and information. Furthermore, this control yields an organization increasingly dependent on the communication cadre for information the organization's members need to make informed decisions. The control of communication and information forms the basis for political power within an organization and provides a resource and mechanism for organizational leaders to become entrenched. The result of these several points is a decrease in a leader's accountability and representation, and the creation of an environment that is less conducive for democracy.

⁹ Sartori 1970, 1984

Leaders of organizations rise to power and stay in power by controlling communication and information flows, which result in an environment conducive for co-optation. The Communication Cadre Theory highlights several consequences resulting from the control of communication and information flows. The **Theory Chapter and Case Study Chapters** explore these consequences in greater detail. Briefly stated here, the consequences resulting from the control of communication and information flows are:

1. The options available for an organization's members to choose from may be reduced,
2. The reduced options available for members to decide between limits their free choice (results in limited free choice),
3. The limits on free choice reduces the power of an organization's members, because an individual's free will to decide cannot make up for a lack of free choice,
4. Limited free choice limits democracy and democratic action,
5. An organizational elite that takes over the organizational function of controlling communication and information flows,
6. Creates an environment conducive for the entrenchment of organizational leaders (oligarchy),
7. Creates an environment conducive for co-optation to occur, and
8. Undermines the political power of the organization's members.

The options available for an organization's members to choose from may be reduced. Olson wrote in *The Logic of Collective Action* that the great are often exploited by the weak in referencing the Free Rider Problem faced by all organizations.¹⁰ While this occurrence is well documented, leaders who control communication and information flows are strategically placed to be less than forthcoming to their organization's members **without** those members knowing. For example, a person who controls communication and information flows may know that the organization has options 1, 2, 3, and 4, but only tell the broader organization that options 1, 2, and 3 exist. The censorship in the preceding example limits the free choice of organizational members. The reduction of free choice then reduces the power of an organization's members, because an individual's free will to decide cannot make-up for the lack of free choice. Limited free choice limits democracy and democratic action.

Organizational needs pressure an organization to appoint or elect someone(s) to oversee or manage communication and information flows within the organization and with external organizations. An organizational elite forms that takes over this organizational function of controlling communication and information flows. As it will be explained in the **Chapter 2**, *control* over communication and information flows (or those who manage communication and information) are the necessary condition to both hold and use power. Controllers of communication and information flows are strategically positioned to become entrenched leaders within their organizations, because they exercise considerable control over the information organizational members possess when they decide who they want to lead their organization. Furthermore, when

¹⁰ Olson 1971

communication and information flows are controlled, an environment conducive for the organization or organizational leader(s) to be co-opted exists. In the previous example of organizational members believing they have 3 choices, when in fact they have four choices, an Organization B opposed to the withheld fourth option only needs to convince the person(s) who controls their organization's communication and information to withhold option #4 for his/her personal interests over the organization's interest. If this is the case, organizational members are structurally hampered from discovering this and their political power is undermined.

The Communication Cadre Theory is important for the study of organizations and institutions. The theory highlights several key factors and their impact.

1. Identifies the importance of communication and information for political power,
2. Explains the danger of co-optation at an organizational and individual level,
3. Explains how and why oligarchy occurs,
4. Identifies a reason for the creation of an organizational and communication elite,
5. Identifies obstacles to an individual's freedom of choice,
6. Identifies an obstacle to democracy and democratization, and
7. Identifies organizational obstacles to communication and information sharing.

The Communication Cadre Theory provides insight into other theories on organizations, bureaucracies, social movements, interest groups, political participation,

political development, democracy, representation, and legitimacy. The Communication Cadre Theory provides answers to how and why leaders become entrenched in organizations, bureaucracies, and social movements. The arguments advanced in this dissertation aid to increase the clarity of such central concepts in Political Science as democracy, representation, and legitimacy. The role the control of communication and information flows played in determining the political development of organizations, communities, institutions, and government in the United States provides an alternative to understanding political struggle.

The Communication Cadre Theory is important to study for normative reasons, primarily free will and free choice. The corner stone of democratic theory and participation are rooted in the concepts of free will and free choice. The later two concepts subsequently rely on access to communication and information to be realized. Consequently, people cannot make informed choices or form opinions about individual issues, strategies, or leaders without receiving the information that they need to make an informed decision.

The control of communication and information is not restricted to elected and known leaders, but also appointed and unknown leaders. Similarly, The communication cadre may encompass known and unknown leaders or elected and unelected leaders. For example, unknown or non-elected leaders may encompass secretaries, technocrats, bureaucrats, or a political entrepreneur within the group or organization. The ability of bureaucrats to achieve administrative autonomy in the Department of Agriculture during the Progressive Era stands, stand as a case in point.¹¹ In another example, Registered

¹¹ Carpenter 2001

Nurses working in hospitals are seldom considered to have much political power by outsiders, but it is common knowledge among medical professionals working in hospitals that Registered Nurses “run” hospitals, because they are at the nexus of communication and information networks for patient care. The result is an environment that increases the probability that a communication cadre will use the control of communication and information for personal gain.

The Communication Cadre Theory described in this dissertation highlights the important distinction between official and unofficial leaders. The difference between elected and appointed leaders is one of elected leaders possessing greater legitimacy and a greater likelihood of representing their constituencies, because of their need to be re-elected. Conversely, appointed officials, such as bureaucrats or technocrats, possess less legitimacy and a decreased likelihood of representing a constituency, because they are insulated from the mechanism of public elections.¹² The distinction between these different types of leaders clarifies the influence, power, and legitimacy of official and unofficial leaders. Consequently, researchers can more accurately distinguish different types of political participation and representation, as well as the difference between co-optation, cooperation, and compromise.

Communication Cadres, Elected and Non-Elected Leaders

A communication cadre always forms an organization’s leadership. The communication cadre may or may not be the official leaders of an organization because

¹² Skowronek 1982, Wilson 1989

their power is strongly derived from their control of communication and information and not just holding an elected or appointed position.

One way of determining the official and unofficial leadership of an organization is to look at formal, official, and public relationships both inside that organization and between that organization and other organizations to determine who forms the public leadership of an organization. One then must map the official relationship between the public leaders to an organization. The official relationship is then used as a starting point for determining if an informal relationship exists between or within organizations. If both formal and informal relationships exist then the two types of relationships must be compared to determine which relationship holds dominance and under what conditions that relationship holds dominance.

The Communication Cadre Theory helps to explain what organizations do, how organizations do it, and the results of organizational actions. Social, economic, and political variables shape the Communication Cadre Theory. How social, economic, and political variables shape the Communication Cadre Theory is important to explore. In this dissertation, I study the Communication Cadre Theory by focusing on how it is created by communication and information flows, organizational needs, politics, and society, as well as how it is influenced by these variables. I also focus on how and why the Communication Cadre Theory impacts what organizations do and how organizations do it.

Economies of scale increase the probability of the Communication Cadre Theory being present and that a communication cadre exists. The political and social implications

of the Communication Cadre Theory increase as we move from smaller to larger organizations and institutions.

The Secretary Question

If the control of communication and information networks is so important and produces the communication cadre, then why are secretaries, bureaucrats, technocrats, and other controllers of communication and information not routinely part of the communication cadre? While the analysis in *Communication Cadres, Leaders, and Co-Optation* is not designed to address this specific question, the results yield potential reasons for this occurrence. The primary reason that controllers of communication and information (like secretaries, bureaucrats, and technocrats) do not exercise greater political power is that they do not choose to use this control for power. Another reason that appears in this preliminary analysis of the secretary question is that the role of a person's position in a hierarchy dramatically determines whether or not they choose to become part of the communication cadre. Also influencing whether or not a person chooses to seize power is the role that gender, race, ethnicity, and class play for the individual and within the organization. More information on the "Secretary Question" may be found in **Chapter 2** and **Chapter 6: Summary and Conclusions**.

The dissertation looks at how and why the control of communication and information flows is a political resource for organizational leaders to gain and stay in power. The case studies provide insight into why leaders and some professions (e.g. administrative assistants and registered nurses) who possess considerable access to information and play key roles as communicators in organizations are generally viewed

as politically powerful or not politically powerful players. I refer to this issue of people with considerable access to information and key roles as communicators who are generally not viewed as powerful (even by themselves) as the “Secretary Question?” In addressing this problem, the key question asked is, “Why and under what conditions do individuals employ or not employ their political power?”

How do organizational leaders become entrenched and unreflective of their constituency’s beliefs? If the control of information and communication is so central to political power than why are certain professionals like administrative assistants not acknowledged as powerful political players more often? What is co-optation and how does it occur? Why should scholars and laypersons be concerned with these issues? My research offers answers to these questions by focusing on who controls communication and information networks within an organization and with outside organizations.

Communication Cadres, Leaders, and Co-Optation, elaborates and tests the preceding and following questions. How is the social and political environment within and between organizations affected? What impact does an environment of inclusive and exclusive communication and information flows have on the participation of an organization’s members and leaders, or those who are included or excluded in the communication and information flows?

Communication and Information Networks

Communication and information networks are crucial in determining who has power.¹³ Whoever controls the flow and content of information and communication

¹³ Knoke 1990

within an organization shapes opinions within that organization and with the external groups they interact with. Research on the mass media and public opinion provide strong evidence to support this.¹⁴

A communication cadre always develops unless it's vigorously guarded against. Communication, relationships, and pact-making with other groups increases the probability that a communication cadre will form. Basically, any event that requires an individual or individuals to communicate between two or more sub-groups or groups works as a potential catalyst for a communication cadre to form. Also increasing the probability that a communication cadre will form is limiting the amount of members or leaders who participate in communication or negotiations with other groups. The communication cadre's importance increases as organizational members interact less often with one another or other groups because more individuals rely on fewer and fewer individuals for their information and to communicate their needs or objectives. As **Chapter 2** and the case studies demonstrate, an organization's need to manage its communication and information requirements provides an environment conducive for a communication cadre to exist. Whether an organization appoints or elects an individual or individuals to control the organization's communication and information networks does not decrease or eliminate a favorable environment for a communication cadre to exist. What impedes an environment conducive for a communication cadre are organizational oversight, open access, and turnover. Organizational oversight enables organizational members access to the actions of key individuals who control communication and information flows. Open access to communication and information

¹⁴ Parenti 1993

flows for organizational members and turnover of personnel who control communication and information networks. As it will be shown in this dissertation, the election of leaders or individuals to communication and information positions, per se, does not effect an environment conducive for communication cadre. What matters are oversight, open access, and turnover.

The Communication Cadre Theory proposes that communication and information networks are mechanisms for the development of entrenched leadership (i.e. oligarchy) and create an environment conducive for co-optation to occur. Throughout this dissertation one question that continually lingers in the background is to what extend can democracy and representation exist in the presence of communication cadres?

Robert Michel's Iron Law Of Oligarchy describes entrenched leadership in organizations, but he does not provide explanations for its occurrence. The main pieces missing from the Iron Law of Oligarchy are the variables that influence the creation, maintenance, and effects of oligarchy, (the mechanisms leaders use to become entrenched). The Communication Cadre Theory provides for these mechanisms, as well as ways to test for their presence.

Methods

The critical question that will be asked of my research design and analysis is whether or not my biases influenced the research design and analysis enough to find evidence of the communication cadre and the importance of communication and information for political power. Other possible explanations that may be offered to

explain the events that occurred and the case studies reflect dominant theories within the field of political science.

The Communication Cadre Theory tests other theories of organizations, interest groups, democracy, political participation, pluralism, and elitism. The Communication Cadre Theory tests these theories from a different perspective and offers supporting and conflicting arguments for prevailing beliefs about organizations, interest groups, democracy, political participation, pluralism, and elitism.

The goal of comparing and contrasting the Communication Cadre Theory with other political theories is to test what happens when commonplace assumptions are not taken as assumptions, but as questionable tenants to be tested.¹⁵ Some of the key assumptions to be tested are first, the assumption that democratic elections of leaders yield leaders who represent the interest of their constituency.¹⁶ Second, the American democratic character is reflected in social and political organizations, interest groups, and the American federal system of government.¹⁷ Third, that co-optation occurs rarely in the United States and that co-operation and compromise best define political negotiations between political actors.¹⁸ Fourth, the limited political participation of individuals in the United States is not a threat to the democratic character of this country or to political representation.

¹⁵ Dye 1976

¹⁶ In two classic studies, Warren E. Miller and Donald E. Stokes concluded that constituencies elected representatives who best represented them, while Christopher H. Achen used Miller and Stokes data set to demonstrate that constituencies did not elect the candidates who best reflected their interests. See, Miller and Stokes 1966, Achen 1978

¹⁷ Tocqueville and Bradley 1980, Putnam 2000

¹⁸ Perrow 1986, Scott 1998, Putnam 2000

Putnam's work on the differences between bridging and bonding social capital activities points to the differences they create.¹⁹ While bridging social capital actions serve to form connections across class, ethnicity, race, and religious identities, bonding activities reinforce those exclusive identities. Consequently, both types of social capital activities may increase the accumulation of social capital, but their inclusive and exclusive natures may result in very different effects on individuals, organizations, organization members, leaders, and the communication cadre. At the organizational level the difference between bridging and bonding activities and who engages in them highlight the driving question of the Communication Cadre Theory. Namely, what affects do communication and information flows that are inclusive or exclusive of group members have on organizations, organizational members, and organizational leaders, and their actions?

The organizational need to limit the amount of leaders has been supported by research.²⁰ The tendency of leaders to stay in power or become entrenched goes back to the early work of Mosca, Pareto, and Michels.²¹

The three faces of power (power, mobilization of bias, and the culture of powerlessness) manifest themselves differently among the rank-and-file, leaders, and the communication cadre.²² While the third face of power argues that a culture of powerlessness yields individuals and organizations that do not realize they have power or

¹⁹ Putnam 2000

²⁰ Michels 1962, Olson 1971

²¹ Pareto, et al. 1935, Mosca, et al. 1939, Michels 1962

²² Schattschneider 1960, Dahl 1961, Walker 1966, Gaventa 1980

how to use their power.²³ The mobilization of bias results in individuals not knowing that they have choices.²⁴

The question, “Do elected or appointed officials represent the views of their constituency and act in their best interest?” has long driven the field of Political Science. Elitism initially emphasized the paternalistic and/or necessary role of an elite class.²⁵ Pluralism countered elitism’s claim by arguing that the creation of multiple elites with multiple spheres of influence, in order to argue that democracy existed through pluralism and the varied interests of the populace were represented.²⁶ Pluralism’s critics argued that pluralism was still elitist in its approach, did not account for class issues, the mobilization of bias, or how people develop a culture of powerlessness.²⁷ Critics of pluralism in the fields of American political development, race and politics, and social movements documented groups whose interests were not represented by pluralism or federalism.²⁸

Organizational Obstacles to Rank-and-File Participation

How does the rank-and-file identify with their leaders, organizational factions, and parties within the organization? Entrenched leaders who do not embody the goals and ideologies of their organization’s membership and the co-optation of leaders pose two

²³ Gaventa 1980

²⁴ Schattschneider 1960

²⁵ Pareto, et al. 1935, Mosca, et al. 1939, Hunter 1953, Michels 1962

²⁶ Truman 1951

²⁷ Schattschneider 1975, Gaventa 1980, Manley 1983, Mendel-Reyes 1995

²⁸ Woodward 1974, Bridges 1984, Montejano 1987, Foner 1988, Guinier 1994

obstacles that prevent members from advancing their issues and concerns in organizations. Furthermore, the preceding obstacles limit organizational members democratic participation, political influence, and power.²⁹ In such cases, critics easily point out that a group's membership is free to leave and join or form another organization that meets their needs. The freedom to leave an organization in order to join or form another group, however, is not a viable choice for most people, because the costs of overcoming those obstacles discourage individuals from doing so.³⁰

The relationship between entrenched leaders, their control of communication and information, and their co-optation is repeatedly alluded to during my conversations with leaders and members of advocacy, community, and labor organizations.³¹ A cursory examination of the literature on advocacy, community, and labor organizations mentions this relationship between entrenched leaders, their control of communication and information networks, and an environment conducive for co-optation.³² Unfortunately, the political science literature seldom develops the relationship between the control of communication and information networks with entrenched and/or unresponsive leadership. The concept of co-optation is seldom defined and even less likely to be operationalized for useful analysis, (Phillip Selznick and Robert C. Smith are two

²⁹ Michels 1962, Bridges 1984

³⁰ Olson 1971

³¹ Former SNCC Chairman Charles McDew and Communications Director Julian Bond; various local, regional, and national union leaders of the AFL-CIO, Teamsters, SEIU; African American, Asian American, Latino, and Native American community and advocacy organizations;

³² Piven and Cloward 1977, Acuña 1988, Walton 1988, Hero 1992, Smith 1996, Collier and Collier 2002

exceptions).³³ Consequently, the relationship between co-optation and the control of communication and information is seldom explored in the literature.

Defining co-optation and separating it from cooperation and compromise is crucial in determining which has occurred. This dissertation separates co-optation from cooperation and compromise based on power to make decisions and the responsibility for decisions made.

Co-optation occurs when an individual or organization moves away from their founding ideology or membership's ideology and towards another individual's or organization's ideology for personal gain. Co-optation continues to occur when leaders remain in power and shift their organization's focus. For example, a group's leader acts in their personal interest and not in their organization's interest to accept a specific political compromise with another organization. In the previous example, the leader's actions are not a political compromise reached with another organization, but co-optation.

Co-optation does not always occur under the Communication Cadre Theory. Variables that increase or decrease the probability of co-optation occurring in a Group A are:

1. Pact-making, relationships, or communication with other groups.
2. Limiting the amount of membership and leader participation and communication or negotiations with other groups.
 - a. The appointment or election of individuals to these positions does not matter.

³³ Selznick 1966, Smith 1996

3. When GROUP A opposes GROUP B's policy or position.
4. GROUP A is deficient in resources vis-à-vis GROUP B that a leader or communication cadre craves or fears.
5. Patronage exists.
6. The organization is dependent on other groups or individuals for crucial resources.
7. A leader or communication cadre member is also in control or oversight of an influential subgroup or sub-function of GROUP A.
8. Static or entrenched leaders, communication cadre, or controllers of communication and information.
9. A dedicated, charismatic leader.
10. Term limits.
11. The oversight of communication and information controllers.
12. The presence of an environment open to ideological or practical change and evolution.
13. Organizational size.

Even though this dissertation focuses on organizations with members who care tremendously in building a democratic organization, a participatory democracy, and working diligently to limit the communication cadre and its effects with various levels of success, I believe that Americans care strongly about democracy and participating democratically in the organizations they care about. The problem for Americans is how

to move past the hurdles created by organizations, and social and government institutions to create and nurture more democratic organizations and institutions.

The Communication Cadre Theory originally developed in an attempt to explain the history of the labor movement in the United States and Mexico, as well as the history of communities of color organizing for economic, social, and political change. Mexico witnessed different periods of expansion in the labor movement's membership, power, and influence during the 19th and 20th centuries, while the U.S. labor movement saw similar periods of growth during the same time period. Both nations experienced efforts by the business community and the State to halt the creation and expansion of the labor movement.³⁴

The Communication Cadre Theory provides a substantial explanation for the lack of greater political power by labor, community and advocacy groups. The theory explains how leaders come to power in labor, community and advocacy groups. Why oligarchy develops in organizations and how a favorable environment develops for co-optation. The Communication Cadre Theory accounts for why elite groups seek to co-opt labor, community and advocacy groups; why leaders are in a position to be co-opted; and, several methods elite groups use to accomplish co-optation. The findings in this dissertation also hold relevance to the interaction of one group with another, no matter the group's size, membership, goals, or ideology. The relationship between the control of communication, leaders, communication cadres, oligarchy, and co-optation must be understood for an organization to avoid oligarchy and co-optation.

³⁴ Collier and Collier 1991, 2002

Chapter Summaries

Chapter 2 develops the Communication Cadre Theory, defines key terms, addresses conceptual stretching, and presents the research methodology. The chapter explains why the control of communication and information is crucial for leaders to rise to power and stay in power. The problem of conceptually stretching the terms “democracy, representation, accountability, legitimacy, co-optation, cooperation, and compromise” is addressed. Finally, the chapter presents a framework for reducing the conceptual overlap of co-optation, cooperation, and compromise. **Chapter 3** provides a literature review and begins to develop the Communication Cadre Theory.

Chapter 4 provides a case study of a Mexican American Employee Organization over twenty years. The organization critically tests the Communication Cadre Theory and demonstrates how co-optation differs from cooperation and compromise.

Chapter 5 presents two more critical case studies and analyzes how organizations that are sixteen and twenty-three years old deal with their communication cadres, while struggling to maintain open and free communication and information flows. The two organizations demonstrate how vigilant and active members dedicated to participatory democracy and free and open communication and information flows can neutralize an environment conducive for co-optation.

Chapter 6 summarizes the findings and discusses the implications the Communication Cadre Theory and case studies present for the study of politics, organizations, and democracy.

Closing Thoughts

This dissertation started out by looking at the control of communication and information in organizations that advocated for disadvantaged groups. Why such control occurred and the impact it caused on organizations, an organizations' policies, and organizational members. During the course of my dissertation research, I met with leaders and members of grassroots, community, and labor organizations. They took the time to share their organizing experiences, as well as the political and social environment that they operated in. Several themes developed over the course of these discussions. The themes covered organizational, political, and social topics within and external to their respective organizations. The topics ranged from the need for strong central leadership and the bureaucratic needs of their organizations to the need for greater member participation (i.e. increased democratization of their organization) and rank-and-file leadership.

Communication Cadres. Leaders, and Co-optation offers an alternative explanation of American political life based on the Communication Cadre Theory. Briefly stated here and elaborated in greater detail in **Chapter 2**, the theory argues that leaders rise to power and stay in power by controlling communication and information flows, which creates an environment conducive for co-optation to occur. Information gained from three critical case studies provide insight into:

1. How social organizations in the United States are organized and practice democracy, and

2. How social organizations and government in the United States reflect one another.

At a minimum, a communication cadre threatens participatory democracy, democracy, representation, and accountability. At a maximum, a communication cadre works against participatory democracy, democracy, representation, and accountability. The structural conditions that encourage a communication cadre to develop continue to exist and increase as the organization grows or ages. It must be noted, however, that a communication cadre does not decrease organizational power and may, in fact, actually enhance organizational power.

I hope that this dissertation challenges the reader to look at their ideas about government, democracy, and representation as they are practiced in the United States of America. The reader should not interpret this challenge as condemning or endorsing American government or political and social life. Rather, the reader should use the ideas and argument in the following pages to help them define what representation, democracy, and government means for them.

CHAPTER 2

The Communication Cadre, Leadership, and Co-Optation

“It is organization which gives birth to the domination of the elected over the electors, of the mandataries over the mandators, of the delegates over the delegators. Who says organizations says oligarchy.” Robert Michels in *Political Parties* (p72)

How do organizational leaders become entrenched and unreflective of their constituency’s beliefs? If the control of communication and information is so central to political power, then why are certain professions, like administrative assistants or registered nurses, not acknowledged as powerful political players more often? What is co-optation and how does it occur? Why should scholars and laypersons be concerned with these issues? My research offers answers to these questions by focusing on who controls communication and information networks within an organization and with outside organizations. Furthermore, I will demonstrate that key concepts in the field are conceptually stretched.³⁵ The terms “co-optation, cooperation, and representation,” are stretched because they include aspects of one another.

The relationship between entrenched leaders, their control of communication, and their co-optation is repeatedly alluded to in personal discussions I’ve had with organizers and group members. A cursory examination of the literature on advocacy groups for the disadvantaged supports this relationship between entrenched leaders, their co-optation,

³⁵ Sartori 1970, 1984

and their control of communication.³⁶ This chapter identifies the critical role that the control of communication plays in the development of oligarchy and the manifestation of co-optation. Specifically, I am proposing a mid-range theory that will link the iron law of oligarchy, network theory, and the concept of co-optation. I call my conceptualization the Communication Cadre Theory.

Through the use of critical case studies, the dissertation focuses on my theory that leaders rise to power and stay in power by controlling communication and information networks and that this creates an atmosphere conducive for co-optation.³⁷ I call my theory the *communication cadre theory*.

The Communication Cadre Theory

Let's assume that as a Group A develops and communicates or engages in pact-making with other groups, a small circle of individuals develops within Group A that gains control over Group A by controlling internal and external communication and information networks. I call this small circle of individuals the *communication cadre* and they comprise the most influential leaders in Group A. The communication cadre entrenches itself by maintaining control of communication and information networks. The communication cadre may or may not be the official leadership of elected or appointed leaders, because their power is derived from the control of communication and information *and not* an election or appointment. Consequently, the communication

³⁶ Rudolfo Acuna, *Occupied America: A History of Chicanos*, New York: Harpers and Row Publishers, 1988. Ruth Berins Collier and David Collier, *Shaping the Political Arena*, Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1991. Francis Fox Piven and Richard Cloward, *Poor Peoples' Movements: Why They Succeed and How They Fail*, New York: Vintage, 1977.

³⁷ Co-optation is defined in the following section titled **Conceptualizing Co-Optation**.

cadre's identity may or may not be known or realized by Group A's members or official leadership.

The development of a communication cadre results in a favorable environment for Group A to be co-opted by a given Group B, if Group B desires to co-opt Group A and possesses the resources to use patronage or force to co-opt Group A's communication cadre. Group B seeks to co-opt Group A's communication cadre when Group A can potentially, or in reality, opposes Group B's policies. A favorable environment for co-optation exists, because Group A's communication cadre are the only people who need to be co-opted, because they control Group A through their control of communication and information.

The communication cadre exerts their greatest influence on Group A by controlling what information members receive and what is communicated to and from outside groups. Group A's communication cadre may be co-opted by Group B, if Group B can offer more resources than Group A to Group A's leaders. For example, the resources Group B might offer include jobs, higher wages, insurance benefits, capital, security, or social standing. A favorable environment for co-optation exists, because Group A's communication cadre is positioned to accept patronage without Group A's members finding out. Consequently, the communication cadre decreases their accountability to Group A's members, because they may prevent or limit the information that Group A's members receive.

In the following section, I outline the close relationship between the communication cadre's control of communication and information with an environment that is conducive for co-optation. I then operationalize co-optation and begin to

conceptually separate the concepts of co-optation and cooperation, as well co-optation and representation.

Conceptualizing Co-Optation

Co-optation is a normative property that occurs when a group's leaders move away from their founding ideology or the membership's ideology and towards an opponent's ideology or goals *for personal gain*. Co-optation occurs when these leaders remain in power and shift their organization's focus. In this scenario, a policy shift for the organization may not be a political compromise reached by leaders, it may be co-optation. The group's leaders act in their personal interests and not in the organization's interests. An environment conducive to co-optation exists in organizations, because an entrenched communication cadre controls communication and information, which reduces their political accountability to Group A's members.

As previously stated, co-optation is used to decrease the threat a Group A poses to a given Group B's policies by bringing Group A under Group B's influence. Group B seeks to co-opt Group A's leaders when Group A can potentially, or in reality, opposes Group B's policies. Group A's leaders are the only people who need to be co-opted, because they control the organization. In this scenario, Group A's leaders may be co-opted, if Group B can offer more than Group A to Group A's communication cadre.

A successful co-optation relies on Group B's ability to use force or to selectively distribute resources to Group A's communication cadre and on Group A's communication cadre's ability to selectively distribute force or resources to their organization's members.

As Van de Walle and North have noted,

"The person or group in a position to hand out rewards for service or punishment for disobedience will control the political landscape. When [elites] suppress labor demonstrations with force and provide... subsidies for unions that follow the party's platform [patronage is involved]."³⁸

And,

"[Organizations] are perfectly analogous to the rules of the game in a competitive team sport... They consist of formal written rules as well as typically unwritten codes of conduct that underlie and supplement formal rules... the rules and informal codes are sometimes violated and punishments are enacted. Therefore, *an essential part of the functioning of institutions is the costliness of ascertaining violations and the severity of punishment.*"³⁹

Selectively distributing patronage is an attractive political option, because it is relatively cheap. For example, in an employee union which advocates for employees who exist in a less powerful position *vis a vis* their employer, the union requires compulsory membership and selectively distributes benefits to their members, in order to overcome the dominant position an employer holds over an employee.⁴⁰ Olson's work acknowledges that the selective distribution of benefits (i.e. patronage) affects an individual's actions. The Communication Cadre Theory's focus on co-optation extends Olson's argument of selective benefits by operationalizing co-optation as an efficient method for affecting an oppositional organization, through the selective distribution of benefits. The argument for operationalizing co-optation as a useful analytical tool acknowledges that a more powerful organization might use co-optation of a competing organization's leaders as an efficient method for affecting the actions of the competing

³⁸ Van de Walle 2001

³⁹ North 1990

⁴⁰ See Chapter 3 of Olson 1971

organization. In exchange for buying-off a handful of leaders, the communication cadre, the actions of an opposition group can be affected. I contend that the presence or absence of patronage and co-optation *must be* accounted for when:

1. A power differential exists between two or more players and one player changes their opinions or actions, or
2. An organizational leader or communication cadre member changes their opinion or actions, which shifts an organization's action

I also contend that the presence or absence of patronage and co-optation *should be* accounted for when a relatively little power differential exists between two or more players and one player changes their opinions or actions. Patronage and co-optation are political tools and every person possesses resources that are of potential interest to another person.

Patronage and co-optation involve a stronger Group B selectively distributing benefits to a weaker Group A's representatives, so long as they support Group B's policies. The representatives then control the distribution of resources to the members of their group who support them. In a society experiencing shortages and where Group B controls the distribution of benefits unavailable to the general public, access to resources becomes tantamount and increases the likelihood of patronage and co-optation increases. When an individual, organization, or society is not experiencing shortages, the likelihood of patronage and co-optation decreases.

Once a leader is co-opted by a stronger Group B, the weaker Group A is controlled through the selective distribution of resources or force. Through patronage, a stronger Group B can selectively distribute limited resources to members of the communication cadre who do not create dissension with Group B's policies. The communication cadre can then distribute the limited resources to their supporters. Group B can also punish opponents in Group A by not distributing limited resources to them, or, Group B can use force to neutralize opponents. A relatively efficient method for buying-off the masses can then be institutionalized, because the cadre is positioned to enter the chain of patronage. An examination of literature on the underclass indicates how elite groups selectively distribute benefits to supporters of their policies or use force to eliminate opposition.⁴¹ For these reasons, the presence of patronage indicates a favorable environment for co-optation.

Operationalizing Co-Optation

Why should we be concerned with co-optation as a political concept and tool? Ideologically, co-optation is a powerful word, which is commonly used to describe organizations or individuals placing another party's interests over their constituency's interests. In contrast, the 10th edition of *Merriam Webster's Collegiate Dictionary*, the definition of co-opt is: 1a) to choose as a member, 1b) to appoint as a colleague or assistant, 2a) to take into a group, 2b) take over, appropriate. The basic definition of co-opt and how the term is commonly used have resulted in co-optation being confused with

⁴¹ Key 1949b, Selznick 1966, Piven and Cloward 1977, Gaventa 1980, Carson 1981, Bridges 1984, Montejano 1987, Acuña 1988, Collier and Collier 1991

cooperation and representation. I make co-optation a useful tool for analyzing how two groups or individuals relate by eliminating the confusion and overlap of co-optation with other concepts, such as cooperation and representation.

The following conceptualization of co-optation expands Philip Selznick's model of co-optation in *TVA and The Grass Roots*.⁴² His work represented the conceptual development of co-optation and, to date, no one has improved upon his model to make it a more useful analytical tool for looking at how individuals and organizations relate to one another. The most recent work on the topic, by Robert C. Smith, uses Selznick's same definition and model of co-optation.⁴³

Selznick's model of co-optation was limited to two types: formal and informal co-optation.⁴⁴ His categorization of co-optation was based on the power to make decisions and responsibility for the decisions made.⁴⁵ According to Selznick's model, co-optation occurred when one organization absorbed new elements [i.e. new organizations] into its leadership or policy-making structure to avert threats against its stability or existence. His conceptualization of co-optation defined two types of co-optation: formal and informal. Formal co-optation indicated that an absorbed organization lacked power (i.e. it was not part of the central decision-making process), but it was still held responsible for the decisions made by the absorbing organization. Informal co-optation indicated that an organization possessed power (i.e. it was part of the central decision-making process), but was not held responsible for decisions made. By conceptualizing

⁴² Selznick 1966

⁴³ Smith 1996

⁴⁴ Selznick 1966

⁸ Selznick originally operationalized power as the "capability" to make decisions.

co-optation in this manner, his model resulted in a duality where only a single actor can possess power and no responsibility, while the other actor must possess no power and bear all of the responsibility (see Table A).

TABLE A. SELZNICK’S MODEL OF CO-OPTATION

FORMAL CO-OPTATION	INFORMAL CO- OPTATION
No Power & Responsibility For Actions	Power & No Responsibility For Actions

Selznick argued that cooperation between organizations influenced all of the parties involved and that power differences between organizations affected how those groups cooperated and interacted. By engaging in co-optation with external groups, organizations trade power in the decision-making process for the external group’s support. The relationship and influence went both ways between the groups. Selznick used the term co-optation to account for how organizations absorbed or were absorbed by other organizations and the dynamics this created. Namely, whether an organization gained power in the relationship or was saddled with responsibility for decisions they did not make. Unfortunately, he did not account for the different combinations of power and responsibility, or how relationships between organizations could be affected by public and official relationships or by private and unofficial relationships.

If researchers use Selznick’s definition of co-optation, they face severe limitations. Selznick’s definition of co-optation does not account for five important factors:

- 1) The many ways that power and responsibility can combine,

- 2) The role that publicized, official, and institutionalized rules for inter-organizational relations play,
- 3) The role that non-publicized and unofficial rules for inter-organizational relations play,
- 4) How co-optation differs from cooperation and representation, and
- 5) Individuals and organizations changing their ideology.

By neglecting these five crucial features, Selznick's definition of co-optation provides little more than a blunt tool to categorize if one group holds all of the decision making power and no responsibility for the decisions made, while the other group must possess no power and bear all the responsibility.

To overcome the flaws in Selznick's model, I define co-optation and develop methods for distinguishing between co-optation and cooperation or representation. Co-optation is a normative property that occurs when a group's leader(s) moves away from the group's founding ideology (or the position of the membership) and towards another individual's or organization's ideology or position for personal gain. For example, Group A's leader acts in his/her personal interests to accept a political compromise with another Group B. In this scenario, the leader of Groups A's actions are not a political compromise reached between two organizations, it is co-optation, because Group A's leader acts on behalf of his/her personal interests and not in the interests of the organization or its membership. In my model of co-optation, I distinguish between co-optation and cooperation based on power in the decision making process, responsibility for decisions made, the presence of public, official, and /or institutionalized relations

between organizations, and individuals placing their interests above the group for personal gain.

The presence or absence of power in the decision making process and responsibility for decisions made is important for establishing what occurs when two actors interact with one another and the consequences of that interaction. Identifying the basis of power, who holds it, how they use it, and the consequences of how power is used or not used is central to the study of politics. Responsibility establishes what the stakes are in political interactions by identifying who gains or loses from the exercise of power. How power and responsibility are defined and used establish what the concepts of co-optation, cooperation and representation mean. By defining power as the ability to make and enforce decisions and defining responsibility as the actor who bears responsibility for the decisions made and enforced, the foundation is established for distinguishing between co-optation, cooperation, and representation (see Table B).

In my model, **formal co-optation** represents co-optation in the context of publicized, official, and/or institutionalized relations between organizations. **Informal co-optation**, however, represents co-optation in the context of the lack of public, official, and institutionalized relations between organizations. The need for two types of co-optation is to contrast events and relationships that are both public and private, to help distinguish between an illusion and reality. By conceptualizing co-optation in this manner, it is possible to have a relationship between actors categorized under both a formal and informal relationship that may or may not be the same. For example, a formal relationship where power is shared between actors and an informal relationship where power is not shared. My model of co-optation in **Diagram A** accounts for this

possibility. Please note all of my models of co-optation model the relationship between a **Group A** and a **Group B**.

Method for Identifying Formal and Informal Co-Optation

1. There may be a formal relationship that is illusionary and an informal relationship that captures the real relationship between organizations.
2. Start by looking for a formal relationship between organizations.
3. Map the formal relationship.
4. Use the formal relationship as a place to begin looking for an informal relationship between organizations.
5. If a formal and an informal relationship between organizations are found, then the two types of relationships need to be compared to determine which relationship has the greatest effect.

DIAGRAM A. MY CO-OPTATION DIAGRAM MODEL

X = Responsibility for Decisions Made,

Y = Power in the Decision-Making Process,

Z = Formal and Informal Relationship (height)

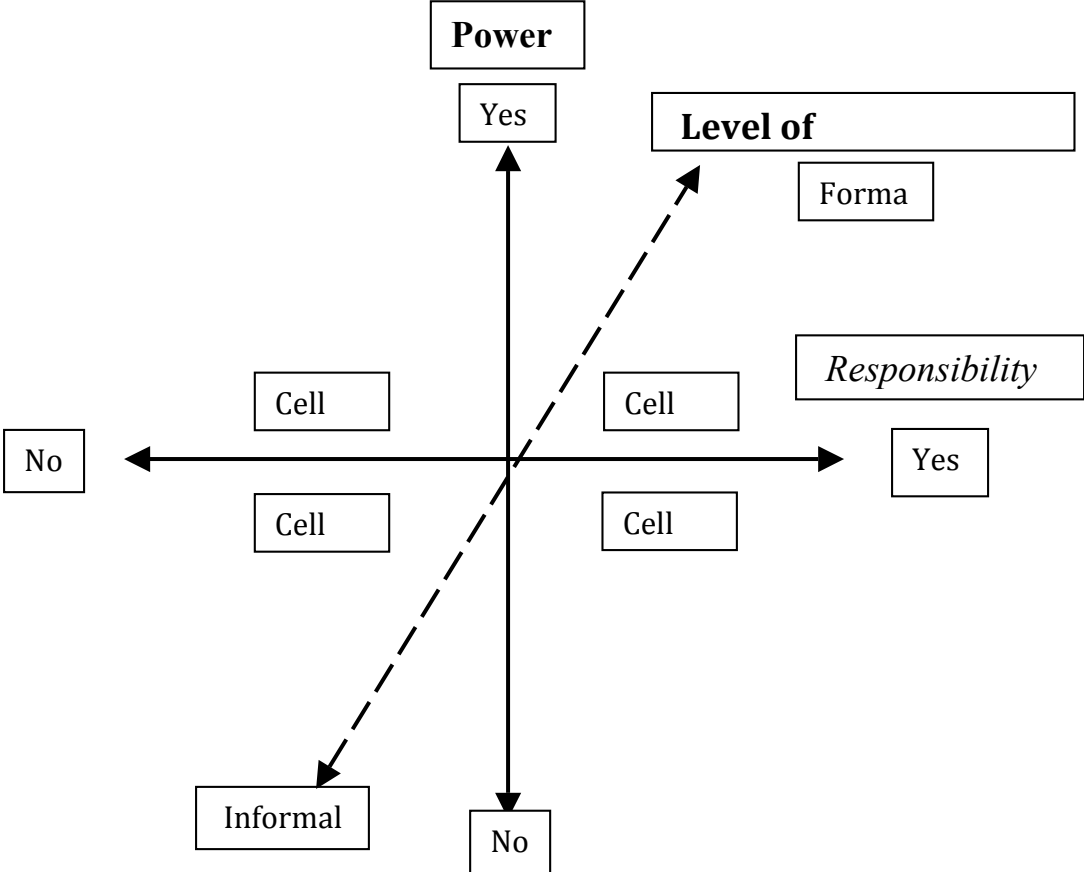


TABLE B. MY TABLE MODEL OF COOPTATION⁴⁶

FORMAL CO-OPTATION

No Power & Responsibility For Actions	Power & Responsibility For Actions
No Power & No Responsibility For Actions	Power & No Responsibility For Actions

INFORMAL CO-OPTATION

No Power & Responsibility For Actions	Power & Responsibility For Actions
No Power & No Responsibility For Actions	Power & No Responsibility For Actions

⁴⁶ Please note all of my models of co-optation model the relationship between a **Group A** and a **Group B**.

TABLE C. DIFFERENTIATING BETWEEN CO-OPTATION and COOPERATION IN GROUP A’s RELATIONSHIP TO GROUP B⁴⁷

<p align="center">Cell #1 No Power-Responsibility “Group A The Co-opted”</p> <p>Co-optation because Group A does not have power in the decision-making process and bears responsibility for decisions Group A did not make.</p> <p>Not Cooperation because power is not shared in the decision-making process between Group A and Group B.</p>	<p align="center">Cell #2 Power-Responsibility “Group A The Co-opter?”</p> <p>Co-optation because Group A has taken all of Group B’s decision making power and accepted all of the responsibility for decisions made.</p> <p>Cooperation because Group A and Group B share decision-making power and responsibility for the decisions made.</p> <p>No Relationship between Group A and Group B, each group is autonomous.</p>
<p align="center">Cell #3 No Power-No Responsibility “Group A The Co-opted?”</p> <p>Co-optation Group A has been co-opted out of existence or barely exists.</p> <p>Not Cooperation because power and responsibility are not shared.</p> <p>No Relationship between Group A and B.</p>	<p align="center">Cell #4 Power-No Responsibility “Group A The Co-opter?”</p> <p>Co-optation because Group A has decision-making power and Group B is forced to accept responsibility.</p> <p>Not Cooperation because responsibility is not shared for decisions made, Group B is forced to accept responsibility for the decisions made.</p>

⁴⁷ Please note all of my models of co-optation model the relationship between **Group A** to **Group B**.

One of the main critiques leveled against the use of co-optation is that it does not adequately address how it differs from cooperation. Selznick's definition of co-optation, also, suffers from the same critique. By not distinguishing between cooperation and co-optation, researchers rely too heavily on their own biases to determine which term they use.

Differentiating between co-optation and cooperation is difficult, but the following method aids the scholar to untangle the two concepts. First, we must acknowledge that the two terms will encompass aspects of one another. Second, we must acknowledge that co-optation and cooperation possess normative properties. Third, we need to define how co-optation differs from cooperation. What aspects are unique to co-optation and cooperation? Co-optation is more likely when there is a power differential between groups or individuals interacting with one another and the likelihood of co-optation increases as the power difference between the groups increase. We can further hypothesize that when an individual, organization, or society experiences shortages a more favorable environment for co-optation occurs.

Co-optation differs significantly from compromise. **Table C** models how to distinguish between co-optation and cooperation by using the presence of power and responsibility. In **TABLE C**, **Power** represents power in the decision-making process, while **Responsibility** represents responsibility for the decisions made. When two groups interact:

1. Cooperation *can only* occur in **Cell #2** (power and responsibility) in **TABLE C**, where both groups share in making decisions and responsibility for those decisions.
2. Co-optation can occur in any of the **Cells** in **TABLE C**.
 - A. Co-optation is more likely to occur in **Cell #1** (no power-responsibility) and **Cell #3** (no power-no responsibility), both of which represent where **Group A** is cop-opted by **Group B**.
 - B. Co-optation can, also, occur in **Cell #2** (power and responsibility) and **Cell #4** (power and no responsibility), both of which represent where **Group A** co-opts **Group B**.

While more conceptual work needs to be done to distinguish “co-optation” from “cooperation.” In this section, I have outlined one method that begins to do this and which can serve as a basis for eliminating the conceptual stretching of these two terms. The method I use to distinguish co-optation from cooperation will serve as the basic framework to distinguish co-optation from the democracy and representation.

Theoretical Foundations

The communication cadre theory is based on the iron law of oligarchy and social network theory. In this section I briefly review these two theoretical bases before explaining the communication and information components of the communication cadre theory and how they create an environment conducive for co-optation to occur. **Chapter**

3 contains more in-depth analysis of the theoretical bases and theoretical implications of the Communication Cadre Theory.

The Iron Law of Oligarchy

I draw upon two theories to develop the communication cadre theory, the iron law of oligarchy and social network theory. In his book, *Political Parties*, Michels states that the roots of oligarchy exist in the necessity of organizations to delegate responsibility to a cadre of leaders. The cadre then becomes the entrenched leadership of the organization,⁴⁸ because the oligarchic tendencies of organizations result from, 1) the nature of human individuals, 2) the nature of the political struggle, and 3) the nature of organization.⁴⁹ According to Michels, organizations give their leaders a near monopoly of power due to the leaders: 1) superior knowledge, 2) control over the formal means of communication within the organization, and 3) skill in the political arts.⁵⁰ Over time, leaders use this power to become entrenched through a sense of tradition, cartel forming, and political influence. Leaders are then in a position to manipulate or ignore the opinions of the group's members.⁵¹ Michels, also, identifies several key tendencies of organizations, among these are: the autocratic and conservative tendencies of leaders, organizational co-

⁴⁸ Michels 1962

⁴⁹ Ibid.

⁵⁰ Ibid.

⁵¹ Ibid.

optation by elites, the struggles between the leaders and the masses and among the leaders themselves, and the reasons for bureaucracies to centralize and decentralize.⁵²

While Michels' book, *Political Parties*, is descriptive it does not provide a theory for how oligarchy occurs. Furthermore, the polemical nature of the iron law of oligarchy limits its application and use. By coupling social network theory's emphasis on social networks with the role of communication and information networks, a mechanism for oligarchy to occur that is theoretical, instead of polemical, provides a more useful and less dogmatic analytical tool.

Social Network Theory

Network theory is the second basis for the development of the communication cadre theory. Network theory argues that social, political, and economic relationships manifest themselves through networks.⁵³ According to this theory, social networks determine key political paths and points of power between actors and groups.⁵⁴ Social networks are important, because they structure the political landscape. In the communication cadre theory, communication and information networks operate like social networks.

A group becomes dependent on a communication cadre (which controls communication between and within groups), because the cadre knows and has access to

⁵² Michels 1962

⁵³ Bridges 1984, Knoke 1990, Padgett and Ansell 1993

⁵⁴ Marsden 1982

the social and political structure.⁵⁵ Therefore, the cadre is positioned to strongly influence a group's political direction by controlling the flow and content of communication and information. Consequently, as the members of different groups interact less often, they rely more on communication cadres to manage their communication and information needs.

Why Communication and Information?

The rise and entrenchment of group leaders depends on the control of communication and information for one important reason: whoever controls the flow and content of communication and information shapes opinions within the group they represent and the groups they interact with. The communication cadre may provide full, incomplete, or false information to their organization and influence the decisions individuals and the group make. The communication cadre is also in a position to portray themselves as indispensable communicators with other groups or within their organization. Due to their control of communication, the cadre can blame other groups for personal failures or errors in deals between groups. Furthermore, the communication cadre's importance increases as group members interact less often with other groups.

In organizations, the communication cadre always forms the group's leadership. The communication cadre and the group's leaders are the same, because organizational leaders provide the greatest influence on the actions of their membership. The communication cadre, however, may or may not be the official organizational leadership of elected or appointed leaders, because the cadre's power is derived from the control of

⁵⁵ Bridges 1984, Padgett and Ansell 1993

communication and information *and not* an election or appointment.⁵⁶ The researcher must determine if the communication cadre represents the official or unofficial leadership. Consequently, the communication cadre's identity may or may not be known or realized by Group A's members or official leadership. It is highly likely, though, that the communication cadre comprises their organization's official leadership, because the organization usually entrusts their organization's leaders, through organizational rules, to engage in pact making and coalitions with other groups. By controlling communication between their group and other groups, the communication cadre establishes relationships with other groups. Over time, the cadre will see themselves as part of another group they communicate with, if that group is more privileged than their own, and begin to associate more with that group.⁵⁷ Roberto Michels argues that this results from people's psychological need to feel important and to belong to a higher socio-economic standing (e.g. a cadre from a union identifies more with their employers).⁵⁸ When two groups are equal, though, the cadre's members choose to associate and work for the group that can provide them with the most benefits or privileges.

The communication cadre theory integrates the iron law of oligarchy and social network theory. Network theory's reliance on social networks, to explain political structures and who group leaders are, provides the mechanism for explaining why oligarchy develops. The paper now moves on to discuss the creation and evolution of the communication cadre.

⁵⁶ Knoke 1996

⁵⁷ Ibid.

⁵⁸ Ibid.

Stabilizing the Communication Cadre

The communication cadre emerges over time and changes in response to four factors: 1) the organization's size and age, 2) increased relations between groups, 3) successive rounds of negotiations between groups, and 4) internal group conflict. As it will be shown in the next paragraph, the four factors affect the communication cadre's size and change its composition. Furthermore, the four factors influence each other.

For example, as an organization grows in size, the communication cadre may increase, remain the same, or decrease in size. As the organization ages, however, the size of the communication cadre should decrease. As it will be shown, the decrease results from the influence of increased relations between groups, successive rounds of negotiations, and internal group conflict. While internal group conflict may yield an increase in the amount of communication cadre members, the increase will be temporary as one communication cadre replaces another or an individual displaces and replaces a communication cadre member. Increased relations and negotiations between groups influence the communication cadre's size and composition. The cadre decreases because official meetings and relations between two groups are simplified when fewer people are involved (i.e., transaction costs are decreased). Two reasons account for this phenomenon. First, a group might develop bureaucratically to where increased specialization decreases the communication cadre, or other groups may insist on a decrease in the communication cadre to facilitate inter-group meetings.

Internal group conflict, also, accounts for the communication cadre's change in size and composition. Internal group conflict occurs between group leaders with their

group members and other group leaders.⁵⁹ The conflict between group members and leaders occurs because the group can use their collective strength to dismiss leaders who do not represent their interests. The conflict of interests usually centers on the leaders being more conservative than the group. Very rarely, though, the conflict of interests may rest on the leaders being more radical than the group. While intra-group conflict may temporarily increase the communication cadre's size, due to conflict negotiation and resolution, the long-term result is a decrease in the cadre's size as both factions struggle to control the organization.

The conflict among leaders begins during the foundation of an organization, when leaders struggle to gain and retain control of the organization. As an organization becomes established, the communication cadre is developed and oligarchy is established. The struggle at this stage occurs between entrenched leaders and new, aspiring leaders. It is through intra-group conflict that the group's members exert their greatest influence. The struggle between entrenched and aspiring leaders forces them to meet the needs of the masses, in order to gain political power and support. True representation will not be realized, however, because the structure and conditions that gave rise to the prior cadre's misrepresentation continues to exist. An environment conducive for co-optation and manipulation, as outlined in the next subsection, continues to exist and threatens representation.

⁵⁹ Michels 1962

Methodology

Critical Case Studies

The critical case study method was chosen to rigorously test the communication cadre theory. By choosing case studies that logically contradict the theory's assumptions and critical components, if the data supports the theory, then a strong argument exists that the theory applies in other cases. Once the theory passes or fails the critical tests, further theoretical testing using other methods may be used to test the theory's validity.

Three critical case studies that challenged the communication cadre theory's basic assumptions and components were chosen. The testing method required determining the theory's assumptions and critical components, in order to decide which case studies posed critical tests. The theory argued that a cadre controls communication and information flows. Consequently, organizations that claimed no cadres controlled communication and information flows posed an initial critical test. Organizations without hierarchical structures posed another critical challenge. Without elected or appointed positions responsible for running the organizations or managing communication and information, no corresponding cadres can exist. Organizations with small, highly active members, should limit the free rider problem and the "exploitation of the strong by the weak."⁶⁰ The case studies came from the Midwest, a region commonly considered to be less corrupt than other regions of the country.⁶¹

Consequently, the case studies selected fit the following criteria:

⁶⁰ Olson 1971

⁶¹ Chicago was eliminated from the areas of study. Consequently, Illinois was eliminated.

1. Organizations where no individual(s) controlled communication and information within the organization,
2. Organizations with no hierarchical structures,
3. Organizations dedicated to participatory democracy,
4. Small organizations with less than 20 members,
5. Highly active member participation, and
6. Located in a midwestern state where politics are commonly perceived to be less corrupt than other regions of the country.

Identifying Critical Studies

Identifying organizations, which met the critical case study criteria, framed the data collection. The search for critical case studies occurred in a major midwestern metropolitan area where established and new community contacts identified potential case studies. I contacted professors who specialized in local politics, unions, and community organizing, as well as grassroots leaders and members of community non-profits and neighborhood organizations from the area. The people contacted were familiar with a large and diverse group of organizations spanning different races, ethnicities, and genders.⁶²

Community contacts received a brief presentation about the dissertation's topic, as well as the case study selection criteria. The community contacts and I then discussed the research topic in greater detail, before they recommended organizations and provided

⁶² To protect the confidentiality of the people I interviewed, specific information that might identify them or their organization was deleted.

me with the organizations' contact information. I received permission to use the community contacts as references.

I contacted the recommended organizations, told them who referred me, and briefly described my research. I answered any questions the organizational contact had and verified that the organization met the selection criteria. Organizations that self-identified themselves as not having a hierarchical structure or not having a person, persons, or office controlling or handling communication and information were questioned further to verify this information. Several potential organizations were eliminated after further questioning, because a Board of Directors governed them. Finally, three organizations were identified that met the selection criteria.

The three organizations chosen as critical case studies were the Mexican American Employee Organization (MAO); United Labor Activists (ULA), a group composed of labor activists; and Northstar (Nstar), a small business collective. The selected organizations were chosen for four reasons. The organizations met the critical case study selection criteria. The organizations shared similarities in their interest of promoting labor issues, worker equality, fair wages, improved working conditions, and eliminating on the job discrimination. The organizations granted me access to interview their members. Finally, my connections to leaders and members of organized labor, diverse racial and ethnic communities, the non-profit sector, and local communities provided a basis for the people interviewed to trust me and aided to increase the response rate.

For each case study, confidential interviews were conducted with as many of the organizations' members as possible. The case studies then discussed their participation

in my research among their membership and consented to participate in the research study.⁶³ I then confidentially interviewed the organizations' members.

The interview questions were highly structured to ask different thematic questions about a person's background, work environment, organization, organizing tactics, personal and group views, leadership, conflict, as well as communication and information flows.⁶⁴ Due to differences in the work shifts and personal activities of group members, I scheduled all interviews at the most convenient time and location possible for each interviewee. For two case studies, I conducted telephone interviews of two members per organization to increase the response rate. Northstar had a participation rate of 100% (6 of 6 members). United Labor Activists had a response rate of 80% (12 of 15 members), while the Mexican American Employee Organization had a participation rate of 75% (12 of 16 members).

Identifying Communication Networks

Communication Cadres, Leaders, and Co-Optation uses a method common in network theory for determining communication and information flows between individuals in organizations, as well as determining who occupies peripheral and central positions within communication networks. To determine the structure of the communication and information networks in the case studies, I interviewed organizational members using semi-structured interviews. A central interview theme was asking who group members interacted and communicated with, i.e. whom they talked

⁶³ One organization invited me to give a brief presentation about my research, before agreeing to participate. Another organization checked my references before agreeing to participate in the study.

⁶⁴ Please see Appendix A titled Interview Questions.

with and who talked with them. The communication network was then constructed using confirmed communication relationships, i.e. both the person receiving and the person giving the information agreed on the type of relationship.⁶⁵ Furthermore, when possible, information was collected on exchange offers that organizational members did not accept for their cooperation or service.⁶⁶

The most important determinant of network power is not the official or public position of the person involved, rather a person's ability to exert greater control over the behavior of another determines a person's power.⁶⁷ Consequently, this dissertation uses the concepts of formal and informal to acknowledge that other political actors play a role in the political arena, than those with official titles. The terms formal and official, as well as informal and unofficial are used interchangeably.

Conclusions

My dissertation breaks new ground on issues of representation and accountability that have been ignored in the American sub-field. First, my research advances the current work on social capital to highlight how issues of representation and accountability need to be addressed between the government of society's organizations and the government of the United States. Second, I test the critical importance that communication and information play as a political resource for organizational leaders to gain and stay in power. Third, I clarify why some professions (e.g. administrative assistants and

⁶⁵ Knoke 1996

⁶⁶ Ibid.

⁶⁷ Knoke 1990

registered nurses) have considerable access to information and possess crucial roles in organizational communication, but are seldom acknowledged in the political science literature as powerful political players. I refer to this problem as the “Secretary Question?” The key questions to answer here is why and under what conditions do individuals (e.g. administrative assistants) employ or not employ their political power, which is based on their access to and control of information and communication. Fourth, my research has huge implications for the study of democracy, representation, participatory democracy, and social capital. The communication cadre raises the issue that most people participate in less than democratic institutions. If democracy is based on how citizens participate in society and democratic institutions, then democracy faces stiff challenges. Fifth, the concept of co-optation has been overlooked and neglected in scholarly research for too long. The result has been key terms in the study of politics have been conceptually stretched (e.g. co-optation, cooperation, representation, and democracy). The conceptual stretching of the previous terms obscures their meanings and analysis that rely on them.

Implications for Labor, Community, and Advocacy Groups

The Communication Cadre Theory proposes that communication networks are mechanisms for the development of oligarchy in organizations and create an environment conducive for co-optation. Throughout the process of supporting the communication cadre theory, a question continually lingers in the background, “To what extent can democracy and representation exist in the presence of communication cadres?”

The Communication Cadre Theory provides a substantial explanation for the lack of greater political power by labor, community, and advocacy groups. The theory explained how leaders come to power in labor, community, and advocacy groups and why oligarchy and a favorable environment for co-optation develop. The communication cadre theory accounts for why elite groups seek to co-opt labor, community, and advocacy groups, why leaders are in a position to be co-opted, and the various methods elite groups use to accomplish co-optation. The relationship between the control of communication, leaders, oligarchy, and co-optation must be understood for an organization to avoid oligarchy and co-optation. If labor, community, and advocacy groups want to prevent leaders from "selling them and their goals down the river," opening the communication and information process within the organization and with outside organizations is essential.

The huge normative concern with this research is the need for labor, community, and advocacy groups to implement organizational rules that insure a communication cadre does not develop. The alternative is to follow a strong, charismatic leader and risk the danger that a successful organization will terminate or become unsuccessful with the leader's co-optation or departure. The implementation of rules that prevent a communication cadre from developing will aid an organization or movement in maintaining their goals. For example, rotating leaders and communicators cultivates new leaders who will (hopefully) stay true to the organization's or movement's ideals and goals.

CHAPTER 3

Assessing the Literature and the Field

“In reality men of ability, and substance, and of sharp wit assume leadership and manage the affairs of the state with the consent, with the tolerance, or simply by the acquiescence of those who have to earn a living and cannot afford to devote their time to politics.” V.O. Key’s, *Southern Politics* (p489)

Certain studies of political parties offer insights into organizational behavior. V.O. Key offer us insight into the why organizations behave the way they do. V.O. Key’s classic study of Southern politics provides great insights into the behavior of southern political parties. Do organizations that are organized against a particular interest, organization, or institution face a similar problem that V.O. Key noticed in *Southern Politics*?⁶⁸ Namely, that the organization prioritizes unity towards a particular goal over all others. A priority that results in the leadership viewing any dissension from the party line as a threat to the organization’s leadership and organization, a point supported in research on organizations and social movements across time, regions, and countries.⁶⁹ V.O. Key concluded that the two faces of the Old South’s politics were its relation to the United States and state intra-party competition. In a manner-of-speaking,

⁶⁸ Key 1949b

⁶⁹ Michels 1962, Selznick 1966, Parenti 1970, Allen and Allen 1983, Scott 1985, Collier and Collier 1991

when organizations are aligned against a particular interest, do they react like the traditional political party system of the Old South and view unity as the priority?

The communication cadre theory helps us in identifying processes that occur within organizations.⁷⁰

1. The identification of organizational problems through members and leaders demands for action,
2. The formulation of solutions through policy initiation and development,
3. The legitimation of those policies,
4. The implementation of the chosen policies by the organization, and
5. The evaluation of the implemented policies by organizational leaders and members.

We will now focus on identifying processes within organizations and the role organizational members, leaders, and the communication cadre have. Organizational processes and members are looked at from the perspective of the Communication Cadre Theory, organizational studies, elitism, pluralism, hegemony, social network theory, social capital, and rational choice. Thomas R. Dye's work points to the overwhelming constraints that economic environmental conditions exert at the macro level, which affect the options available at the micro level of organizations and individuals.⁷¹ While the field is filled with scholars who argue that macro level conditions at the international and

⁷⁰ Dye 1987

⁷¹ Dye 1976, Skocpol 1985

national level influence the opportunities, actions, and outcomes available to a nation's inhabitants,⁷² the work often ignores the role and influence of the individual.⁷³

Organizational Studies

The Communication Cadre Theory builds upon organizational studies and informs organizational studies. The Communication Cadre Theory focuses on organizations for the macro and micro reasons listed in **Chapter 1: Introduction**. Briefly stated, micro observations by this researcher and conversations with members of activists organizations directed attention to how the control of communication and information flows effected the actions of organizations and their members. I then took the next step and looked at what the control of communication and information at the individual and organizational level revealed about behavior at the societal and social institutional level. As I moved from a micro to a macro perspective, the following question emerged. If a democratic government and a democratic society are mutually reinforcing and reflective,⁷⁴ then what conclusions can be drawn from how society practices democracy with how that society practices government?

Historically, the importance of studying organizations result from their prevalence in society; the dominance of organizations over important societal functions from the family to the economy; the criticisms that increasing organization leads to negative consequences and unanticipated consequences; and, finally, to the organization as a

⁷² Skocpol 1979, Moore 1993

⁷³ Olson 1971

⁷⁴ Dahl 1971, Putnam 2000

political actor.⁷⁵ While organizations come in a wide range of sizes, shapes, and characteristics, overall, organizations share common characteristics.⁷⁶ For purposes of this dissertation, I define organizations as social structures created by people to support the pursuit of common goals. The definition of organizations results in a common set of problems for groups to overcome. First, members of an organization must define their goal or goals. Second, the organization must persuade their members to participate. Third, the organization must control and coordinate the contribution of their members. Fourth, the organization must get resources from the environment it operates in and dispense a product for its members. Fifth, people who participate in the organization must be selected, trained, and replaced. Sixth, the organization needs to determine its relationship to other organizations and individuals outside of the group.⁷⁷ The case studies chosen for *Communication Cadres, Leaders, and Co-Optation* (the title of this dissertation), met these common characteristics to qualify as case studies.

Different levels of analysis are employed in this dissertation. I primarily use structural and ecological approaches for the analysis of the data. I am interested in the structural features that describe how communication and information networks operate in organizations. The subsequent impacts these communication and information networks exert on how organizations relate to other organizations comprise the ecological approach. To a lesser extent, the consequences that communication and information networks cause for members of organizations encompass individual behavior.

⁷⁵ Scott 1998

⁷⁶ Ibid.

⁷⁷ Scott 1987

Many methods exist for identifying the elements of organizations. For purposes of this dissertation, I am using the elements that W. Richard Scott uses in *Organizations: Rational, Natural, and Open Systems*.⁷⁸ Social structures, participants, goals, technology, and environment are the five different elements of organizations. Social structures are broken down into *formal* and *informal* structures. Scott identifies *formal* structures as the relationship between explicitly specified positions independent of the personal characteristics of the person holding that position. He, also, identifies *informal* structures as the inability to distinguish the individual characteristics of the position holder and the characteristics of the positions. My definition of *formal* and *informal* is slightly different. I argue throughout this dissertation that formal structures are clearly defined, like Scott does, *and* that these structures are publicly known. *Informal* structures, however, are not publicly known.

Participants, i.e. organizational members, contribute to an organization in return for inducements. The impact different organizational members' exert on their organization vary from person to person and from organization to organization. An awareness shared by organizational members that their organization exists to achieve a desired purposes comprises the organizational goals. An organization's technology encompasses the skills and knowledge of its members, as well as the physical and mechanical inputs, that are used to support the organization and help the organization achieve its goals. The organizational environment acknowledges the larger system the organization and its members exist in.

⁷⁸ Scott 1987

Rational Systems View

Simon's theory of organizational decision-making argues that a formal structure exists to support rational decision-making organizational members make.⁷⁹ The formal structure separates member responsibilities and provides members with the resources, information, and tools necessary to make decisions. This model of organizational decision-making emphasizes the unobtrusive control of participants by teaching and controlling information and attention that play a larger role in producing dependable behavior than orders, rewards, or punishments.⁸⁰ By controlling the information organizational members receive and directing their attention, the options an organization's members may choose between become restricted. The process resembles the mobilization of bias (to be discussed shortly), wherein power relations and structures limit the choices an organization and its members may address.⁸¹ As it will be shown in proceeding sections of this chapter, the mobilization of bias provides one mechanism for a communication cadre to direct and limit the power of organizational members.

Simon's work represents the rational systems view of organizations, which views organizations as highly formalized groups in the pursuit of specific goals.⁸² Under this view, goal specificity provides unambiguous criteria for members to select alternatives for action and formalization provides standards regulating the behavior of organizational members. Other scholars representative of this view include Max Weber and the early

⁷⁹ Simon 1957

⁸⁰ Perrow 1986

⁸¹ Schattschneider 1960, Bachrach and Baratz 1962, 1963, 1979

⁸² Simon 1957

work of James G. March (with Simon),⁸³ which incorporated the idea of *bounded rationality*.⁸⁴

Several criticisms challenge the rational systems view of organizations.⁸⁵ The definition of rationality is limited, as it is in rational choice theory. Rationality exists so long as clear criteria exist for making decisions and exterior environmental forces, which effect individual decision-making by structuring the value systems they base their decisions on, are ignored.⁸⁶ The rational system's approach focuses on the normative belief that organizations must focus on goal specificity and formal rules governing behavior, while ignoring the role of individual behavior. The possibility that individuals or groups might develop and reinforce hierarchies for personal gain does not enter into their analysis of organizations.

The rational systems view of organizations corresponds with the functionalist period of social inquiry. Both of the preceding views, hold that the roles of individuals and exterior variables do not effect an organization or its parts, as much as the structure and function of the organization being studied or the organization's substructures. The consequence of such a view led to the belief that people follow rules blindly, an idea that has become unacceptable today. Even the Structuralist School, which intellectually grew from the early Functionalist School, does not take such a narrow view of what independent variables affect the dependent variable.

⁸³ Weber, et al. 1946, March and Simon 1958

⁸⁴ March and Simon 1958

⁸⁵ Scott 1987

⁸⁶ Green and Shapiro 1994

The Communication Cadre Theory does not hold such a limited view of what variables influence the actions of individuals, organizations, and institutions. In the preceding chapter, **Chapter 2**, the Communication Cadre Theory lays out how an exterior environment influences how organizations and organizational members act. The Communication Cadre Theory, also, does not focus on the normative at the expense of the behavioral, it does both.

Natural Systems View

Moving from the rational systems view, the natural systems view offers a different perspective on organizations. The natural systems view emphasizes goal complexity, the behavioral or individual role, the belief that organizations seek to survive, acknowledges the existence and role of informal networks, and the internal organizational need to induce individuals to participate.⁸⁷

Stated goals are not the only goals an organization may have, nor are they the only goals that organizational members believe in or work towards. The natural systems view recognizes that a difference exists between the public or official goals and the actual goals the organization or members of the organization pursue. Even when the organization and its members pursue the public goals, other goals still influence members' actions. In the open systems view, members of organizations may form personal hierarchies for power or pursue an individual goal that differs from the organization's goal. Consequently, their behavior reflects these different possibilities. For example, a political entrepreneur may desire to shift his/her college from being a co-

⁸⁷ Scott 1998

educational facility to an exclusively women's college and act to gain the power and influence to change his/her college's mission. Conversely, an employee of a small company may seek to work as little as possible and do the minimal amount of work possible.

The Communication Cadre Theory incorporates the variables identified by the natural systems view as influencing the actions of individuals, organizations, and institutions. In the preceding chapter, **Chapter 2**, the Communication Cadre Theory lays out how these variables influence how organizations and organizational members act. The Communication Cadre Theory, also, does not focus on the normative at the expense of the behavioral, it does both.

Of related interest, is the organizational need to survive. Many scholars explained this by accounting for how and why so much organizational behavior and resources are directed at the organization's administrative functions.⁸⁸ Perrow explains this with a functional analysis that organizations have needs that must be filled in order to survive.⁸⁹ Reaching further back in the literature, Robert Michels argues that some organizational members have a vested interest in the organization's survival, because it is their source of economic, political, or social power. Consequently, these members will place the survival of the organization as their primary, personal goal and act accordingly.⁹⁰

⁸⁸ Michels 1962, Skowronek 1982, Skocpol 1985, March and Olsen 1989, Skocpol 1992, Edwards, et al. 1993

⁸⁹ Perrow 1970

⁹⁰ Michels 1962

Identifying Organizational Problems

What are the opinions and ideology of an organization's membership? Does an organization's membership elect members who represent them and their views? How does one determine what the opinions and ideology of the rank-and-file are? Are non-majoritarian views protected or enacted? The answer to these questions brings us once again to the competing schools of elitism and pluralism. Several influential and controversial studies have attempted to answer the previous questions from the level of the individual to the level of nations. While it is not the goal of this dissertation to explore the entire literature that addresses the previous questions, a sampling of relevant literature will be done.

In *Communication Cadres, Leaders, and Co-optation*, I address three macro points. First, how individuals organize and govern themselves in small organizations. Second, how these organizations reflect society and government; and, finally, how society relates to government. In essence, this dissertation explores the implications of how social organizations in the United States practice democracy with how the federal system of U.S. government practices democracy.

The macro concerns of *Communication Cadres, Leaders, and Co-optation* emerged from initial micro observations of how organizational leaders communicate information to their followers in both large bureaucratic organizations and very small organizations practicing participatory democracy. I noticed a recurring pattern, in which, organizational leaders selectively presented organizational members that included and excluded information and available alternatives. In studying the history of social movements and unions, I began to see references by both leaders of organizations and the

rank-and-file that pointed to their experiences with similar occurrences.⁹¹ Consequently, I argue that organizational leaders rise to power and stay in power by controlling communication and information flows, which creates an environment conducive for co-optation to occur.

Critical case studies of three small organizations with politically experienced members dedicated to participatory democracy and open communication and information flows test the argument. The critical case studies do more than test the theory; they allow us to see the ideals of democracy and political participation put to work and to move from microanalysis to macroanalysis.

We can view the process of identifying problems in and by organizations as similar to the identification of public policy problems. Elitism and pluralism offer competing views on whether public opinion drives public policy. Elitists believe a small group of elites in various sectors drive public policy⁹² or believe a smaller group of elites shape public opinion through their control of the mass media.⁹³ Pluralists argue that the many varied interests of the public help shape public policy through the multiple channels available to the public. Furthering complicating this issue is the ongoing debate between the methodological individualists and the structuralists about how much control individuals exert over their behavior and their environment.⁹⁴

Determining the relationship between public opinion and public policy becomes further complicated when competing studies provide contradictory conclusions or no

⁹¹ Piven and Cloward 1977, Acuña 1988, Walton 1988, Hero 1992, Smith 1996, Collier and Collier 2002

⁹² Truman 1951, Mills 1956, Walker 1966, Dye 1976, 1995

⁹³ Parenti 1986, Bagdikian 1997

⁹⁴ Olson 1971, March and Olsen 1989, North 1990, Chong 1991, Green and Shapiro 1994

conclusion. V.O. Key, Jr. argued about the difficulty of determining if public opinion drives public policy, because we cannot determine if public opinion shaped public policy or public policy shaped public opinion.⁹⁵ To quote Key, “perfect congruence between public policy and public opinion could be government *of* public opinion rather than government *by* public opinion.”⁹⁶ Key’s statement points to the difficulty of determining the causal relationship between public policy and public opinion. Since Key published his findings in 1967, before substantial consolidation in the mass media,⁹⁷ arguments for the media’s independence and ability to remain unbiased find less and less support.

The identification of problems and their possible solutions are the most important part of the policy-making process. In an ideal democratic society, the population would know all of the problems and the range of solutions that they are facing. Considering the many possible problems that face a society and the combined range of solutions, the sheer number of possibilities precludes a person from being fully informed. In such a reality, the determination of what problems and solutions will be considered and publicized to the greater society becomes of critical importance.

In a diverse society, such as the United States of America, the multiplicity of organized interests is daunting, even without considering the even greater number of unorganized interests. The multiplicity of problems and solutions makes the greatest challenge facing organized interests one of getting their problem on the agenda of policy makers of problems to be solved. If a problem never reaches the agenda setting stage, the

⁹⁵ Key 1961

⁹⁶ Ibid.

⁹⁷ Pfeffer and Salancik 1978, Parenti 1995

likelihood of that problem gaining enough public attention to be forced onto the agenda is unlikely. People of color labored for centuries to have their lack of political, economic, and civil rights addressed by a political and economic system that ignored their concerns. Only after major social movements by these groups and their supporters reached critical levels of support and action, which threatened the dominant social order, were their concerns addressed.⁹⁸ As Jack Walker and Michael Lipskey argued, it took major social movements to break the society's logjams and start the process of change,⁹⁹ a process that resulted in the concerns of racial and ethnic minorities being put on the agenda of problems to be addressed.

According to the pluralist view, any problem may be discussed and placed on the policy-making agenda at any of the various levels of our federal system. Individuals and groups are free to organize themselves and define their issues. After they define their issues they are free to mobilize support for their issue and press government from the local to the national level to have their issues addressed. Several scholars even define the lack (of success?) of such political activity as an indicator of satisfaction, ignoring such historical evidence as the Populist Movement, the Civil Rights Movement, the American Indian Movement, or the internment of Japanese Americans during World War II. Researchers often conveniently forgot historical examples of racial and ethnic minority groups or groups of the working-class and the poor petitioning for their unmet policy needs in the streets through so-called Bread Riots or the withholding of their labor.¹⁰⁰

⁹⁸ Allen and Allen 1983, Rosenstone, et al. 1984, Montejano 1987, Acuña 1988, Skocpol 1992, Moore 1993, Gómez-Quiñones 1994

⁹⁹ Walker 1966, Lipskey 1968

¹⁰⁰ Polanyi 1944, Piven and Cloward 1977, Scott 1985, Galeano 1988, Gómez-Quiñones 1994, Kelley

The power to decide what problem will be put on the agenda to be addressed is crucial to the policy-making process. As Schattsneider argued in *The Semi-sovereign People*, the ability to define the alternative is the supreme instrument of power, because the definition of the alternatives is the choice of conflicts that allocates power.¹⁰¹ The ability to determine the agenda, referred to as the mobilization of bias, is of tremendous significance and political power. The main power of the mobilization of bias lies in the ability to keep particular issues from being discussed as policy problems at the political decision-making levels of local to national government.¹⁰²

Bachrach and Baratz refer to results of the mobilization of bias as non-decision making. “A non-decision... is a decision that results in the suppression or thwarting of latent or manifest challenge to the values and interests of the decision-maker.”¹⁰³ They refer to the method of non-decisions as the suppression of demands to alter the current system of benefits and privileges. The method relies on preventing discontent from being publicized to the general population or governing body. If the issue is voiced, the goal is one of keeping it suppressed or weakening it in the decision-making stages or implementation stage.¹⁰⁴ The famous parliamentary maneuvers of tabling an issue, filibustering, or assigning the issue to committee provide classic examples of suppressing an issue, while using the power of the purse-strings to undercut policy implementation or

1994

¹⁰¹ Schattschneider 1960

¹⁰² Bachrach and Baratz 1962, 1963

¹⁰³ Bachrach and Baratz 1979

¹⁰⁴ Macpherson 1977, Bachrach and Baratz 1979

eliminating the policy's enforcement provide two classic parliamentary maneuvers to sabotage policy implementation.¹⁰⁵

Non-decision making, also, occurs when dominant elites or subordinates act openly or privately to stem an issue. The motivation for this behavior by dominant elites is that if attention is focused on the issue, than something might be done that will not be in their best interests.¹⁰⁶ In the case of subordinates, the results are seen in self-censorship, because the subordinates fear that if they bring up an issue, than an elite who holds power over them will react in a punishing way towards the subordinates. An example of this, are employees who are afraid to unionize or voice their support of unionizing, because they fear retaliation by their employer.¹⁰⁷ In the case of journalist, Michael Parenti writes about how and why journalists censor themselves.¹⁰⁸

Pluralists argue that the interest group system provides the means for how issues are identified, which solutions are offered, and what policies are adopted. The predominant literature in the field argues, however, that the political system responds better to organized, large-scale groups with good access to financial resources and government officials.¹⁰⁹ Schattsneider noted, the interest group system works, but it has a definite upper-class accent.¹¹⁰

¹⁰⁵ Walton 1988

¹⁰⁶ Bachrach and Baratz 1962, 1963, Gaventa 1980

¹⁰⁷ Olson 1971, Gaventa 1980, Ruiz 1987

¹⁰⁸ Parenti 1993

¹⁰⁹ McConnell 1966, Chappell 1982, Freindreis 1985, Denzau 1986, Hansen 1991, Grenzke 1999 For a review of this literature see, Smith 1995, Austen-Smith 1996

¹¹⁰ Schattschneider 1975

The recent work of Richard Hall on lobbying as legislative subsidy,¹¹¹ however, notes that relatively small groups with limited resources have been much more successful in having their issues addressed than the literature on the mobilization of bias and hegemony predicts or can account for.¹¹² Lobbying as legislative subsidy refers to lobbyists subsidizing the work of legislators by providing resources and aid to a legislator in exchange for a legislators support. Furthermore, while the process might be corrupt, the individual is not corrupt.

The work of Adams and Balfour contradicts and clearly lays out how the argument that bureaucracy protects a bureaucratic member from culpability of the wrongs perpetrated by the bureaucracy are false.¹¹³ Adams and Balfour 1998 The Communication Cadre Theory argues that organizational tendencies for a communication cadre to control communication and information flows exist, but communication cadre members are not individually absolved of their responsibility and accountability to their organization. Within organizations, I take the position that the political process merely enhances an individual's nature toward placing their own interests above the group they represent.

Richard Hall's argument lays out several logical possibilities and, depending on your experience or background, several counterintuitive arguments to explain several persistent problems in the field of American politics. Namely, that money does and does not matter when it comes to influencing the behavior of the Legislature. His theory goes

¹¹¹ The following section builds on, Hall 2000

¹¹² Hall 2000

¹¹³ Adams and Balfour 1998

a long way towards explaining the relationship between lobbyists and legislatures, but the dilemma remains that lobbyists make contributions to members of the Legislature who are neutral (at best) or who are antagonistic (at worst) towards the lobbyist's position. A solution for this dilemma is found in the theoretical work of this dissertation that supports some of Rick Hall's arguments, while contradicting several others.

Lobbying as legislative subsidy seeks to account for why lobbyists apply their resources to their strongest supporters and not swing votes or opponents. Yes, lobbyists give more money and support to their strongest supporters, but it might not be just for the marshalling of a lobbyist's supporters. According to the Communication Cadre Theory, lobbyists give money to those who are neutral or even antagonistic to their position, because they are searching to see who may be interested in moving towards the lobbyist's position. Anyone who accepts money could be flagged as a new legislator who is testing the possibility for a positive relationship with the lobbyist. In my work, the process of providing limited money to those who are neutral or opposed to one's position occurs to determine who can be co-opted under the guise of support.

What about trust and compromise? Yes, there is a need for trust and compromise, but the co-optation and compromise intersect, as laid out in **Chapter 2**. The overlap of compromise and co-optation provides opportunities for both sides to co-opt the other through the leverage.

Hall does not incorporate how money or other political resources have historically been used to influence or attempt to influence people's actions. If we look at the basic perspectives in political science on what power is and how power is defined, categorized, and observed we can gain additional insight into how political resources such as money,

time, labor, communication, and information influence the behavior of individuals and organizations.

Elitism and Pluralism

Pareto, Mosca, and Michels all classical political theorists who argued that, in any society, a small circle of elites exercise great power and control over that society and its people.¹¹⁴ While the three authors disagreed on why and how a ruling elite comes to power, stays in power, or falls from power, they agreed on the basic concept that a ruling elite wields power over society and the masses. They broadly defined elites as the few who held power in society and the masses as the many who did not. Pareto referred to the elite as the chosen few who governed the population.¹¹⁵ In Mosca's concept of the ruling class, he developed Pareto's idea of elites. Mosca argued that all societies could be divided into two classes, a class that rules and a class that is ruled. A smaller ruling class that performed all of the political functions, monopolized power, and enjoyed the benefits of power, while the much more numerous ruled class was directed and controlled by the ruling class.¹¹⁶

Robert Michels, a disillusioned socialist, came to see elitism as a universal phenomenon that was not isolated to specific economic or social systems. He argued that all large organizations from political parties to governments were oligarchies, which

¹¹⁴ Pareto, et al. 1935, Mosca, et al. 1939, Michels 1962

¹¹⁵ Pareto, et al. 1935

¹¹⁶ Mosca, et al. 1939

resulted in a small ruling elite that stayed in power.¹¹⁷ Other scholars mirror Michels famous quote, “He who says organization, says oligarchy.” Harold Lasswell and Daniel Lerner wrote, “Government is always government by the few, whether in the name of the few, the one, or the many.”¹¹⁸ The philosopher Colin Blakemore wrote, “The dream of every leader, whether a tyrannical despot or a benign prophet, is to regulate the behavior of his people.”¹¹⁹

Mancur Olson provides a different view on the need and reason for elitism, as well as the ramifications of elitism in organizations. He argued that the necessity of leadership in organizations resulted in the domination of the great by the weak. He further argued that organizational elites and special member benefits were necessary for organizations representing the economically, politically, and socially disadvantaged to compete against more powerful interests.¹²⁰

Democracy and the Constitution

The work of Madison, Dahl, and Carey¹²¹ provide the basic foundation for our understanding of tyranny. The Communication Cadre may be thought of as a faction within an organization and when it abuses its control of information and communication

¹¹⁷ Michels 1962 For a fuller discussion on the relationship between Robert Michels work and the communication cadre theory see **Chapter 2**.

¹¹⁸ Lasswell 1952

¹¹⁹ Colin Blakemore, “The Dream of Every Leader,” p. 170, in *Mechanics of the Mind*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1977. Quoted in Bagdikian, *Media Monopoly*, 1990, p. xvii. Colin Blakemore is also a psychologist and neurobiologist.

¹²⁰ Olson 1971

¹²¹ Dahl 1956, Carey 1978

it may be thought of as a tyrant. In the worst-case scenario under the communication cadre theory (when the communication cadre abuses its power by deceiving their organization's members, limiting democratic participation and undermining the members' goals for personal gain), the communication cadre (CC) becomes a tyrant (as Madison defined) at the organizational level. As Madison, Dahl, and Carey argued, tyranny can and does occur among both majorities and minorities. These scholars saw the tyranny of a majority as the greatest danger to democracy and designed and interpreted the Constitution to protect minority rights. The perspective of the Communication Cadre Theory (CCT) is that organizational tyranny is conducted by a communication cadre that, by definition,¹²² is a minority. Exceptions to the previous view obviously occur, where majorities tyrannize a minority. During the 1900's White domination over people of Mexican heritage in the Southwest and Blacks in the South exhibited similar characteristics in state laws and social mores that required racial separation excluded non-whites from voting and holding government office.¹²³ The internment of Japanese Americans during World War II provides further evidence of majorities tyrannizing a minority. The impact of local policies rippled into national policies, as the national government refused to step in to enforce equal rights and equal access for all of its citizens.¹²⁴

¹²² See **Chapter 2**.

¹²³ Acuña 1972, Woodward 1974, Montejano 1987

¹²⁴ The national implications of regional and local tyranny are argued persuasively in, Key 1949a

The communication cadre theory benefits from previous work in the field of American politics, addresses many disciplinary shortfalls, and represent an important step forward in the field.

To start with, in the field of democracy and the U.S. Constitution the communication cadre equates to Madison's concept of faction in the Federalist Papers #10.¹²⁵ The communication cadre faction becomes a tyrant¹²⁶ when the communication cadre attempts to manipulate its organization for personal gain. The manipulation occurs when the communication cadre censors the information it gives to the rank-and-file, public leadership, or the outside organizations it interacts with. While Madison preoccupied himself with majority tyranny, the manifestation of tyranny in organizations is more likely to be minority tyranny due to the communication cadre's nature. While many people may point to cases of majority tyranny in organizations or institutions (e.g. radical labor, community, or political organizations, the strong enforcement of norms in workplaces, communities or schools), what at first appears to be majority tyranny can usually be traced to the information communication cadres selectively communicate to their respective organizations or institutions.

In Judith Shklar's presidential address to the American Political Science Association in 1990, she discussed how American political theory has long "been charged with an obsessive and unconscious commitment to a liberal faith that prevents it from asking profound and critical questions."¹²⁷ She persuasively argued that the United

¹²⁵ James C. Madison, et al., *The Federalist Papers*,

¹²⁶ *ibid*,

¹²⁷ Shklar 1991

States embarked a democratic and tyrannical experiment, as evidenced by four phenomena.¹²⁸ First, the early realization of white male suffrage; second, federalism; third, judicial review; and, finally, constitutional slavery. The existence of these four phenomena laid the groundwork for our current democratic institutions and practices, while supporting tyranny.

A White majority tyrannized a Black minority in the U.S.A., since the slaves first arrived to the colonies. The tyranny continued virtually unchecked for almost 300 years, with the possible exceptions of the American Civil War, Reconstruction, and the Civil Rights Movement. Southern Whites eliminating Black voting rights constituted majority tyranny from 1877 to 1964, the years between the end of Reconstruction under President Grant and the Civil Rights Act of 1964.¹²⁹

Majority tyranny and government tyranny existed in a symbiotic relationship that allowed Black voting rights to be usurped. The White majority needed government powers to undermine Black voting rights, and the legislative and executive branches needed majority support to win office and implement policies against Blacks. Majority tyranny occurred because a majority faction acted to harms a minority faction. The second section considers the related issue of government tyranny, the concentration of government power. The Third section critically analyzes two competing interpretations of Madison by Robert Dahl and George Carey.¹³⁰

¹²⁸ Shklar 1991

¹²⁹ Eric Foner identified the end of Reconstruction as 1877 and the decline of Federal protection for Blacks and a rising White backlash against Blacks. Foner 1988

¹³⁰ Dahl 1956, Carey 1978

In the Federalists #10 and #47 Madison addressed the tyrannies of a majority and government. In the Federalist #10, Madison defined majority tyranny as a faction that could decide an issue through superior force, even if that decision disregarded minority rights. Evidence of majority tyranny exists in the seizing of Black voting rights by a White majority in the post-Reconstruction South. V.O. Key's *Southern Politics* and Doug McAdam's *Political Process and the Development of Black Insurgency, 1930-1970*, provided evidence for how a White majority prevented Southern Blacks from voting by establishing restrictive voter registration laws designed to undermine Black political power.¹³¹ Consequently, Southern Whites violated Black rights guaranteed by the 14th and 19th Amendments.

Critics might argue that a rural, landed elite usurped Black rights and not a Southern White majority. While the political origins of a Black backlash centered on the landed elite, the Southern, White majority *supported* the landed elite.¹³²

Southern Whites designed restrictive voting laws preventing Blacks from voting. Literature tests, White primaries, and Grandfather Clauses explicitly prevented Blacks from voting. Restrictive laws, while not explicitly preventing Black voting (poll taxes, limited registration sites and hours, periodic re-registration requirements, and White social norms condemning Black voting), served to prevent Black voting. The restrictive laws raised the costs of voting to discourage Black voters, a concept explained by Anthony Downs.

Downs' theorized that citizens vote if voting costs do not exceed voting benefits. Blacks faced severe financial, legal, and personal voting costs. Financial costs included poll taxes and loss of income or credit by retaliating Whites. Legal costs included possible arrest

¹³¹ Key 1949b, McAdam 1982

¹³² Key 1949b

for violating state or local laws. Finally, White social traditions sanctioned beating or lynching Blacks who tried to vote. Even if Blacks voted, the White primary, outright election fraud, or the one party, southern political system rendered their vote useless.¹³³ For southern Blacks, voting costs far exceeded voting benefits.

Formal studies further support the negative effect of high voting costs on voting. G. Bingham Powell, and Raymond Wolfinger and Steven Rosenstone found the depressing effects of voter registration laws to be roughly 14% and 9% respectively.¹³⁴ Although the data for the two studies were collected after the Civil Rights Movement, we can easily infer from them, Downs' theory, and Black history that Blacks were seriously impeded from voting prior to the Civil Rights Movement.

It could be argued, however, that a Southern, White majority took the voting franchise from Blacks, in a phenomenon isolated to the South. Consequently, this would represent a regional, not a national, incident of majority tyranny. The criticism is wrong.

Vann Woodward and Key addressed a crucial point often ignored by history and government textbooks.¹³⁵ The Southern, White majority could not have usurped Black voting rights without national support as seen by the origin and widespread use of Jim Crow Laws in the North and Southwest. Jim Crow Laws developed in the North as social measures to control interactions between Whites and Blacks.¹³⁶ In the Southwest, registration laws and violence electorally disenfranchised Americans of African and

¹³³ Key 1949b

¹³⁴ Wolfinger and Rosenstone 1980, Powell 1986

¹³⁵ Key 1949b, Woodward 1974

¹³⁶ Rosenberg 1962, Woodward 1974

Mexican descent, which predated its use in the South.¹³⁷ Unfortunately, this field of inquiry requires more research to analyze the relationship between Jim Crow and voting laws in the Southwest and North to the South. One possible explanation for the seeming relationship could be through close family ties between Southern emigrants to the Southwest and the relatives they left in the South.¹³⁸

In sum, an overbearing, *national* majority eliminated the rights of a minority. To further defend this proposition, the following section addresses the tyranny of concentrating all formal political power under a single majority.

In the Federalist #47, Madison equated tyranny with the concentration of the Legislative, Executive, and Judicial branches in the same hands. The Black voting rights loss after Reconstruction was highly correlated with a Southern White majority regaining control of the government. Without the ability to elect representatives, Blacks could not rely on the legislative or executive branches to curb government tyranny against Blacks. Completing the triad of government tyranny, the Courts provided no protection for Black voting rights.

Robert Dahl argued that the Supreme Court formed part of the national ruling coalition and reinforced majority policy.¹³⁹ From 1876 to 1930, Supreme Court decisions involving Blacks eroded earlier constitutional provisions protecting civil rights,¹⁴⁰ consistent with Dahl's theory. Jonathan Casper contested Dahl because he selected out cases that

¹³⁷ Montejano 1987, Del Castillo 1990

¹³⁸ Montejano 1987

¹³⁹ Dahl 1957b

¹⁴⁰ McAdam 1982

presented problems to his theory (e.g. majorities existed only for four years) and the data was based during the politically less turbulent 1950s.¹⁴¹

Casper's research was biased, too. He based his data on cases selected between 1958 and 1974, when the Court engaged in more policy making behavior related to civil rights and the politically active 1960s and early 1970s. Casper's research does point out, though, that the Court is capable of policy making. While the Judiciary eventually engaged in policy making to restore the Black vote, the Court waited almost 70 years to take action.¹⁴² Placing faith in the Court to protect minority rights appears to be a long term commitment that is dependent on the Justices' ideologies.

In the South, government tyranny is easily seen in government actions. White legislatures passed laws to restrict Black rights, White governors refused to veto those laws, and the White courts supported the restrictions under the rubric of state rights.¹⁴³ Without the ability to vote, Southern politicians were not accountable to Blacks and the government eliminated Black rights.

Government tyranny is also seen at the national level. The President had no incentive to aid Blacks, because the Southern block could prevent candidates from winning the presidency and Blacks couldn't vote.¹⁴⁴ Southern Senators filibustered to death any bill that threatened White dominance in the South. Finally, the federal government failed to enforce section 2 of the 14th Amendment, which called for the number of representatives

¹⁴¹ Casper 1976

¹⁴² The time frame between the end of Reconstruction in 1877 and the 1944 Supreme Court ruling against White primaries.

¹⁴³ Key 1949b

¹⁴⁴ Ibid.

to be reduced in proportion to the population denied the vote. By not enforcing the 14th Amendment, the federal government contributed to Southern Whites eliminating Black voting rights.¹⁴⁵

Contrary to pluralism, federalism provided no defense for Black rights against government and majority tyranny. Dahl argued in *Who Governs?* that Federalism provided many access points for people to influence policies from the local to national level.¹⁴⁶ The South's treatment of Blacks graphically contradicts his argument about the influence of multiple access points.

George Carey and Robert Dahl provide two competing interpretations of Madison that are unsupported by the loss of Black voting rights. In *Preface to Democratic Theory*, Dahl argued that the Madison model sought to curb people and the effects of tyranny.¹⁴⁷ Considering how Southern Whites seized Black voting rights, Dahl's model is inadequate. First, Dahl's belief that frequent popular elections check tyranny found no support in the history of Black voting rights. Blacks weren't even allowed to vote. Second, he concurred with Madison that the country's large size checked the effects of faction, a position that lacks credibility considering that it took 90 years for a new faction to restore Black voting rights. Third, Dahl argued that Madison ignored how socialization could check tyranny in a pluralistic society. In counterpoint, the socialization of Southern Whites did not prevent them from taking away Black voting rights, nor did the socialization of non-Southern Whites lead them to defend Black rights.

¹⁴⁵ McAdam 1982

¹⁴⁶ Dahl 1961

¹⁴⁷ Dahl 1956

In the "Separation of Powers and the Madisonian Model," Carey argued that Madison sought to prevent government tyranny and, consequently, did not adequately address majority tyranny.¹⁴⁸ Carey's stance that Madison's model sought to curb government tyranny received little support from the Southern example. The South epitomized government tyranny and checks against government tyranny didn't prevent the government from eliminating Black voting rights. Furthermore, the South usurped national jurisdiction and power by preventing Black citizens from voting and met no federal resistance. Non-southern states contributed to the problem by not defending Black voting rights. Consequently, the lack of outside intervention to defend Black voting rights constituted government tyranny against Blacks.

Carey's argument about a majority being able to form social policy against minorities is supported by Jim Crow Laws in the South. The elimination of Black voting rights, however, was a *political* policy, *not*, a social policy. In light of Blacks losing their voting rights, Carey's policy-making argument should not be limited to only social policies.

Government tyranny occurred concurrently with majority tyranny, both existed in a symbiotic relationship. The White majority needed government powers to undermine Black rights, and the legislative and executive branches needed majority support to win office and implement policies against Blacks. The policy implications extended beyond the right of African Americans to vote and hold office in the South

Pluralist arguments find little support. Truman's concept of potential groups and overlapping group membership protecting group interests finds no support.¹⁴⁹ The

¹⁴⁸ Carey 1978

¹⁴⁹ Truman 1951

phenomenon refutes Truman's concept of potential groups and overlapping group memberships protecting the unorganized interests of people.

Tyranny of the majority against the minority cannot be limited to the elimination of black voting rights. The internment of Japanese Americans during World War II, easily fits the mold of majority and government tyranny. The loss of land rights in the Southwest for the newly Americanized Mexicans living in the region is another case in point. Mycarthism also serves as an example of majority tyranny.

In all of these cases race played a key role, for example, why were German Americans not interned during World Wars I and II? Why did land holders of non-Mexican descent in the newly acquired Southwest not lose their land rights? Based on empirical evidence, even McCarthyism negatively and disproportionately affected minority organizations that advocated for equal rights and treatment. Ironically, except for the case of McCarthyism, corporate America was seldom affected, (McCarthy targeted Howard Houghs for investigation).

A critic might point out that Federalism provided relief to Blacks, because the Supreme Court and national government forced the South to grant Blacks the right to vote. The criticism is false, however, because it took nearly 90 years for Blacks to regain their voting rights after Reconstruction's end and the passage of the Civil Rights Act of 1964.

One would think that more than 200 years is enough for society to reflect the national, democratic system of government and for the national system of government to reflect the democratic character of society. For example, the practice of female genital mutilation by women on girls in several African nations with large Muslim populations continues despite the *Koran's* strong and explicit language that condemns *any* such

contact. The local populations believe this is an acceptable Islamic practice and common among all women, because it is sanctioned by local clerics and strongly advocated by mothers and grandmothers. In reality, female genital mutilation predates Islam by several hundred years and has been condemned by *all* of the major universities that train Islamic clerics.¹⁵⁰ The fact that female genital mutilation continues, speaks to several points. First, tradition is strong. Second, tradition is hard to change (or end), even when a very religious community's religion dictates a cultural change. Finally, the society and a major institution, religion, began to reflect and reinforce one another. In this example, clerics who are not trained at the official religious schools sanction female genital mutilation to retain political and religious power within the community.

Putnam's *Bowling Alone* addresses the close relationship between social capital, society, and government.¹⁵¹ One of his arguments is that society needs to have a high level of social capital to support political participation and democracy. The normative concern behind the book rests on his fear that society's social capital is decreasing and threatens democratic society. Meanwhile, Theda Skocpol's, *Protecting Soldiers and Mothers* and her recent work, *Diminished Democracy*, on the rise, growth, and spread of national organizations, supports how national organizations in society and the Federal system of government govern themselves in a similar manner.¹⁵²

¹⁵⁰ Interview with Sheik Imam Muhammoud, a Muslim cleric, on April 20, 1998, Minneapolis, Minnesota. Sheik Muhammoud discussed how all of the official and central universities that train Islamic clerics officially condemn the practice of female genital mutilation. According to Sheik Muhammoud, the official position for the last 1500 years at the official, central universities holds that the *Koran* does not support the practice of female genital mutilation and argues that the *Koran* explicitly condemns any alterations of human genitalia. The interview, also, covered the cultures, religions, ethnic groups, governments, society, and educational system of Somalia and East Africa.

¹⁵¹ Putnam 2000

¹⁵² Skocpol 1992, Skocpol and Fiorina 1999, Skocpol, et al. 2002, Skocpol 2003

Elitists argue that the elitist nature of institutions and organizations is due to the elitist nature of all societies. The elitist character of American society is not uniquely due to capitalism, conspiracy, or any specific malfunction of democracy.¹⁵³ The demands of large institutions necessitate the concentration of power by a small group at the institutions' upper levels.¹⁵⁴

In modern, complex societies, power concentrates in large institutions¹⁵⁵ and the people who control those institutions. The truly powerful are not individually powerful unless they possess access to and control over large organizations or institutions.¹⁵⁶ Individual wealth does not equate with economic power. A government bureaucrat who earns a salary of \$80,000 a year can control government expenditures of \$50 billion a year.¹⁵⁷

The powerful occupy positions of authority and control, whether they act to influence decisions or not.¹⁵⁸ Control over large organizations and institutions. In a study on why the Medici were so powerful in Renaissance Italy, Padgett and Ansell found that the Medici's power stemmed from their control of the communication flow between the other ruling families.¹⁵⁹ Thus, the Medici extended their institutional base from their family, to control the communication between other families. In Renaissance

¹⁵³ Dye 1995

¹⁵⁴ Olson 1971, Dye 1995

¹⁵⁵ Dye 1995

¹⁵⁶ Mills 1956

¹⁵⁷ Dye 1995

¹⁵⁸ Ibid.

¹⁵⁹ Padgett and Ansell 1993

Italy, the control of communication between ruling families became a crucial power basis, because the political environment and culture family politics discouraged them from communicating with one another.

The previous discussion focused on elitism as institutionalized power, power derived from positions of control or influence in institutions or large organizations. Under institutional power, individuals may exercise power whether they act to influence particular decisions or not.¹⁶⁰ In effect, A exercises power over B when A succeeds in preventing B from raising issues that are detrimental to A or that A does not want raised.

Pluralism contests the elitist interpretation of politics and believes that power embodies decision-making. Pluralists object to elitist's beliefs that a small group of elites control power and that elites exert power through non-decision making. Pluralists, instead, argue that we can only observe actual power (direct and observable actions) and not potential power (indirect and unobservable phenomenon, e.g. non-decision making).

Pluralists argue that potential power and actual power are not equivalent. Potential power based on a person's position of institutional control over economic, political, or social institutions is not power until a person actually uses their power. Nelson Polsby lays out pluralism's critique of the elitist concept of non-decisions. His argument has two points. First, we cannot determine if a political actor is powerful without witnessing some sequence of observable events, which attest to the actor's actual power. If these events do not occur then we do not have the grounds to determine the

¹⁶⁰ Bachrach and Baratz 1963

actor's power.¹⁶¹ In other words, "A has power over B to the extent that [s/he] can get B to do something that B would not otherwise do."¹⁶²

Pluralism originated in the need to describe the American political system as democratic.¹⁶³ The rising criticisms about the lack of America's democratic character created the need for a theory to reconcile the differences between the classic definition of democracy and the reality of America's political system. A political system in which relatively few people exert direct impact on national decision-making.¹⁶⁴ Pluralist argue that the democratic nature of the American political system is maintained through:

1. Individuals can join groups to influence political decisions,
2. Interest groups compete to influence politics, which protects the individual
3. Individuals can choose between competing groups in elections,
4. New interest groups are free to form,
5. Interest groups do not possess a monopoly of power and influence in all areas,
and
6. Federalism allows individuals and interest groups multiple access points to
influence American politics, and
7. Public policy may not be majority preference, but minority interests are protected,
which ensures the protection of individual rights and freedoms.

¹⁶¹ Polsby 1963

¹⁶² Dahl 1957a

¹⁶³ Dye 1995

¹⁶⁴ Ibid.

Three Faces of Power

While I view the political world as largely a world of elite interactions, I do not subscribe to the belief that the masses do not have power, influence, or impact. Nor, do I accept that there is a single dominant elite that exerts hegemonic control of power and over ideology. The numerous historical examples from American history contradict the existence of hegemony and lack of political power by the masses. Even in the face of overwhelming economic, political, and social force disadvantaged groups exhibit a long history of political participation. Bread riots in the 18th and 19th century, slave uprisings, coalminers unionizing in the 19th century, Native Americans embracing the Ghost Dance Movement in the late 1800s, women unionizing California's canning industry in the early 20th century, the Civil Rights Movement, and the unionization of farm workers provide just a few examples contradicting the lack of political participation by disadvantaged groups.¹⁶⁵

I do believe that a communication cadre exists in any organization, a cadre controlling internal and external communication and information flows, which creates an environment conducive for co-optation to occur. The extent that an organization's membership participates in their organization's communication and information network and how the communication cadre controls that network depends on *both* the members and the communication cadre. The rank-and-file decides how much they participate in the communication and information network and how much control and trust they allow the communication cadre to possess. The communication cadre decides how open the

¹⁶⁵ Bridges 1984, Morris 1984, Ruiz 1987, Mendel-Reyes 1995 Fenelon 1998 Katz 1974, Reis 1982 McLaurin 1978

communication and information network is to the rank-and-file and how much they honor the trust bestowed to them by the organization's members.

In organizations aspiring to democratic participation, ultimately determine their own level of involvement in both the communication and information networks, as well as the amount of control and trust they bestow to individuals over these networks.

Pluralism and elitism provide different interpretations for what politics is, who participates in politics, and how they participate in politics. All of the previous literatures exhibit points of contention about politics, power, and democracy.

The communication cadre theory provides insights about the concepts of power, false consciousness, and hegemony. Research by pluralists and elitists continues to address the on-going question of how to interpret the seemingly accepting and compliant behavior by the less economically, socially, or politically powerful when the use of force or coercion is not observed. The community power literature in the United States focuses on low levels of orthodox political participation (e.g. working in a campaign, voting, contacting a congressperson, etc.) despite marked inequalities and a relatively open political system.¹⁶⁶ The elitist literature explains the lack of greater political participation by the less powerful because a dominant or hegemonic ideology pervades society.

Hidden Transcript

James C. Scott developed a concept called the *hidden transcript* to describe how the powerless express independent opinions in areas where the powerful are not present.¹⁶⁷ The hidden transcript is not isolated to the powerless, as the powerful often

¹⁶⁶ Dahl 1961, Bachrach and Baratz 1962, Polsby 1963, Walker 1966, Gaventa 1980

¹⁶⁷ Scott 1990

develop their own hidden transcript when the powerless are not present. By comparing the hidden transcripts of both groups to their public transcripts, a new way to understand resistance to domination is created.¹⁶⁸ Social science focuses primarily on the public, official, and formal relations, which hardly exhausts what we might know about power and political relationships.¹⁶⁹

The public transcript alerts us to power relations that revolve around the fact that public transactions (what is said in public), is not the whole story. While, “the public transcript creates the appearance of unanimity among the ruling groups and the appearance of consent among subordinates.”¹⁷⁰ The public transcript is an indifferent guide to the opinion of subordinates or of elites, when one does not contrast the public transcript with the hidden transcript.

James C. Scott is not alone in his use of the hidden and public transcript. Robin Kelley uses a similar approach to identify political actions by African Americans in the South.¹⁷¹ Adams and Balfour moved beyond the euphemisms the German bureaucracy used to describe the Holocaust, while the fields of critical, comparative, literature and clinical psychology *assumed* the presence of a sub-text or subconscious.¹⁷²

In **Chapter 2** I introduce the concepts of official and unofficial, which is similar to Scott’s hidden and public transcripts concept. I then offer a method for determining if the public or hidden transcript better describes the relationship or issue being studied.

¹⁶⁸ Scott 1990

¹⁶⁹ Ibid.

¹⁷⁰ Ibid.

¹⁷¹ Kelley 1990, 1994

¹⁷² Adams and Balfour 1998

When the hidden transcript is used by organizational members and organizational leaders the impact on organizational politics and representation provide a disproportionate opportunity for leaders to benefit *vis-à-vis* the rank-and-file.

Third Face of Power, Hegemony, and False Consciousness

The Communication Cadre Theory is not an argument that hegemony or false consciousness exists. If we take James C. Scott's categorization of hegemony or false consciousness as "thick" or "thin" the reasons for this stance become clear.¹⁷³ The thick version claims that dominants persuade subordinates to believe in the values that justify and explain their subordination, (i.e. subordinates consent to their social position).¹⁷⁴ The thin version claims that subordinates believe that their subordination is natural and inevitable, (i.e. subordinates resign themselves to their subordination, but they do not believe in the values that justify their subordination).

Readers of this dissertation might believe that I advocate a thin hegemony,¹⁷⁵ as opposed to a thick hegemony. The dissertation does not advance an argument for thick hegemony, because nothing in the CCT argues that dominants persuade subordinates to believe in the values that justify and explain their subordination or their consent. The CCT argues that organizational pressures create an environment conducive for a communication cadre to not inform organizational members of all their options or give a full explanation of relevant issue(s). Consequently, the rank-and-file lacks the

¹⁷³ The following section on hegemony and false consciousness draws heavily on James C. Scott's work. See, Scott 1990

¹⁷⁴ The writings of Antonio Gramsci and Nicos Poulantzas provide representative samples of the thick hegemony argument. See, Gramsci, et al. 1971, Poulantzas 1978

¹⁷⁵ Gaventa 1980

information to make informed decisions. Furthermore, the hidden transcripts that organizational members, leaders, and the communication cadre voice in the case studies provide evidence that is not consistent with thick hegemony.

Arguing that this dissertation does not support the thin hegemony or thin false consciousness theory is more difficult. Gaventa argued the third face of power resulted in powerlessness producing a consciousness of powerlessness (and power producing a consciousness of power).¹⁷⁶ Gaventa argues that his thin false consciousness predates thick hegemony and provides a mechanism for thick hegemony possible. Similarly, the Communication Cadre Theory predates thin false consciousness and provides a mechanism for false consciousness to occur.

Pluralism professes the reasons groups do not articulate their grievances occurs because those groups do not have any grievances. Ironically, pluralism's strong argument against the concept of hegemony does not provide solid reasons that account for the lack of disadvantaged groups pressing or voicing their grievances.

Economic Power

Traditionally pluralism viewed economic interest groups as just another interest group in a system of interest groups. Elitism views interest groups as distinctly powerful in shaping the political and economic environments.¹⁷⁷ Robert Dahl, whose early work theoretically developed the field, revised his original opinion of the influence of

¹⁷⁶ Gaventa 1980

¹⁷⁷ Dye 1995

corporate power. In two separate works he argued that business groups play a distinctive and much more powerful role than other interest groups.¹⁷⁸

Corporate interests effect more than the political world, they directly influence the work world, which directly affects the lives of almost the entire population. In the United States, a democratic ideology for government competes with a capitalistic ideology that is non-democratic in organization and culture.¹⁷⁹ Further complicating this mixture is the non-democratic nature of virtually all organizations and non-governmental institutions, which are hierarchical. All of the major institutions in America are non-democratic in theory and practice. The family, education, religion, non-profit organizations, and labor, unions are hierarchical and not governed by democratic principles with how they are overseen by non-elected or non-democratic leaders.¹⁸⁰ Many cultural institutions in the media, arts, foundations, and education, do not exhibit democratic practices due to their board of directors and the hiring practices used to appoint institutional leaders.¹⁸¹ The prevalence and the power board of directors possess is increasingly evident within social work and community organizations. The government requirement for organizations to have board of directors in order to qualify for tax-exempt status and funding foundations requirement for funding provide increasing pressure for community organizations to switch to board of directors. In *Polyarchy*, Dahl provided convincing proof that the link

¹⁷⁸ Dahl and Lindblom 1976, Dahl 1989

¹⁷⁹ Lindblom 1977, Macpherson 1977, Mouffe 2000

¹⁸⁰ Vogel 1987

¹⁸¹ Parenti 1993

between democracy and capitalism is not a causal relationship, because many nations fall outside of this relationship.¹⁸²

Economic power is highly concentrated in the United States and that concentration is increasing. In 1995, 4,300 individuals possessed authority over more than half of the nation's industrial assets, two-thirds of all banking assets, half of all assets in communications and utilities, and more than two-thirds of all insurance assets.¹⁸³

As the concentration of corporate assets continues, the political problem of capital mobility increases because of a corporation's political power increase with its assets.¹⁸⁴ Capital mobility refers to the ease and ability of corporations to rapidly move their capital investments from one place to another, even across the world. As the capital assets of a corporation increase they can more easily use the threat of withdrawing their capital investments from a particular place. The threat of capital flight forces the political system to respond to the interests these groups place on the political system. Consequently, both nationally and internationally there has been an increase in the amount of tax-free business zones at the local to national level. The need and demand for nation-states to develop their economies force them to be responsive to interests possessing investment capital or risk losing investment in their economies.

The underlying value of pluralism rests on individual rights; however, modern pluralism recognizes that in a modern or industrialized or large society huge concentrations of power are inevitable. The pluralist believes that competing, organized

¹⁸² Dahl 1971

¹⁸³ Dye 1995

¹⁸⁴ Winters 1996

interests will prevent any one organized interest from dominating the political field, thereby, protecting individuals. The United States of America's federal system of government provides multiple access points for people to have their interests heard and individuals participating in organized interests present the best way for their interests to be heard. Individuals are free to join or form organized interest groups to represent them, which allows for any interest to be represented. Pluralism then argues that power is spread across many interest groups, which protects individuals and other organized interest groups from arbitrary use and abuse of power by a dominant interest group. Organized interests (e.g. political parties) hold the United States' government accountable. Consequently, the working foundation of the United States' government is transformed from the individual's participation in their government to the individual's participation in an organized interest group and competition between organized interest groups.

The pluralist ideology characterizes the vast majority of textbook on American government.¹⁸⁵ Thomas Dye's, *Irony of Democracy*, provides a notable exception by explaining American political life from an elitist view of democracy. Elitist theory argues that a small group of an organization's membership controls that organization. Furthermore, the background and values of these leaders tend to be the same across all groups. The characteristics of these leaders are viewed as being so similar that they form a sociopolitical elite, an elite that controls society's resources and forms society's values. The elites are bound more to their elite identity than they are to the groups they control. Consequently, elitists argue the pluralist view, that a system of balances exists in

¹⁸⁵ Dye and Zeigler 1975

American social and political life, cannot exist because a relatively small group of elites control these organizations and collectively govern the country. The elites value the need to maintain the social and political system. The results are elites who are not accountable to the organizations they represent or lead and elites who influence organizational members more than organizational members influence them. The end result is a social and political system that leaves organizational members with very little influence over the formation and implementation of policies that affect them.

Social Network Theory

Network theory provides the second basis for the Communication Cadre Theory's development. Scholars use network analysis for analyzing the exchange of key resources in organizational and institutional settings.¹⁸⁶ The disparity in how resources, physical or informational, move between individuals or groups within the network identifies power differences. Classically, the relationship between an actor's (defined as an individual or organization) position within this network transfers into power differences between the actors.¹⁸⁷ In, *Communication Cadres, Leaders, and Co-Optation*, networks are defined as communication and information flows within Organization A and between Organization A and Organization B.

The decisions democratic organizations make involve multiple exchanges. Organizational members and leaders gather information to make decisions and communicate with one another, as they work out their position on a policy or seek to

¹⁸⁶ Hecló 1978, Laumann and Knoke 1987, Padgett and Ansell 1993, Knoke 1996, Carpenter 2001

¹⁸⁷ Marsden 1982

influence one another's policy position. Financial, political, or social resources may be exchanged. The exchange of tangible and non-tangible resources allows the organization to be viewed as a network of exchange. Within an organization, resource rich members exchange their resources for the support or obstruction of their colleagues. Actors who occupy central positions within this exchange network possess political advantages over other actors who do not occupy central positions. Political advantages that aid them in achieving their preferred policy ends, through their access to resources.¹⁸⁸ In the case of the Communication Cadre Theory, the key resource is communication and information flows.

The Communication Cadre Theory approaches organizational politics from the perspective that formal and informal relations and networks exist within any organization. As the **Theory Chapter** elaborates, which network best describes the political landscape must be determined. The dominant criteria for determining whether the formal or informal network best describes the organization is if organizational members routinely cast their votes based on information or communication they receive from specific individuals within the organization.¹⁸⁹ One factor that emerged from the case studies is that members of the communication cadre possessed the greatest knowledge of the informal network that operated within their organization. Furthermore, the more active organizational members possessed greater knowledge of the informal network. While a person's perception of informal networks is not a determinant of power or influence within an organization, the communication cadre (power holders) all

¹⁸⁸ Laumann and Knoke 1987, Knoke 1996

¹⁸⁹ In the case of non-democratic organizations, members would routinely side with or cite particular individuals from whom they received their information.

possessed high perception of their organization's informal networks. While some scholars have tried to link knowledge of informal networks to organizational power,¹⁹⁰ as this dissertation argues in the **Theory Chapter** and the case studies evidence, knowledge is only power *if* it is used.¹⁹¹ Consequently, the Communication Cadre Theory hypothesizes that an organization's *real* leaders (the communication cadre) are the people who most strongly influence the actions and opinions of their fellow members and organization.¹⁹² As the **Theory Chapter** argues and the case studies support, the control and dissemination of communication and information provides the greatest resource for individuals to shape the opinions and actions of their fellow organizational members.

Of particular relevance for this dissertation is Knoke's research on the "blurring" of state and society relations in the United States, Germany, and Japan in broad policy domains, specifically labor issues.¹⁹³ In each labor domain studied, organizations that comprised the core of the communication networks enjoyed high reputations and actively engaged in policy events. Knoke's results recall Floyd Hunter's work on reputation and power in *Community Power* without suffering from Hunter's methodological weaknesses.¹⁹⁴

¹⁹⁰ Krackhardt 1990

¹⁹¹ For greater details on this issue see the conclusion section of the **Chapter 2**.

¹⁹² Mizruichi and Potts argue three points. First, centrality matters in understanding an actor's power, but not always in the same way. Second, organizational structure strongly influences the affect centrality has on an actor's power. Finally, the ability of central actors to break intra-organizational deadlocks affects their power. One of the findings in this dissertation points to the strong effect an actor's desire to gain or hold power and influence plays on the relationship between an actor's power and his/her centrality. Mizruichi and Potts 1998

¹⁹³ Hall 1984, Lehman 1988, Knoke 1996

¹⁹⁴ Hunter 1953

Communication Cadres, Leaders, and Co-Optation uses network theory's method for determining communication and information flows between individuals in organizations to determine who occupies peripheral and central positions within communication networks. To determine how the communication and information network worked in the case studies, I interviewed organizational members using semi-structured interviews. A central interview theme was asking who group members interacted and communicated with, who they talked with and who talked with them. The communication network was then constructed using confirmed communication relationships, i.e. both the person receiving and the person giving the information agreed on the relationship. Furthermore, when possible, information was collected on exchange offers that organizational members did not accept for their cooperation or service.¹⁹⁵

The most important determinant of network power is not the official or public position of the person involved, rather a person's ability to exert greater control over the behavior of another determines a person's power.¹⁹⁶ Consequently, this dissertation uses the concepts of formal and informal to acknowledge that additional political actors play a role in the political arena, than only those with official positions or titles.

Following the work of David Knoke, influence and domination networks play a similar role as communication networks and patronage in this dissertation.¹⁹⁷ Influence

¹⁹⁵ While Knoke does not gather this type of information, he discusses the need to gather such information when more powerful organizations do not accept exchange offers from less powerful actors. I feel that *all* exchange offers that are not accepted should be documented, because such offers provide more data to increase the accuracy of identifying the communication network and the positions individuals occupy within the network. In addition, Knoke's method assumes who the more powerful actor is and will result in the researcher missing the event of a less powerful political player attempting to gain greater political power or influence. Knoke 1996

¹⁹⁶ Knoke 1990

¹⁹⁷ Ibid.

networks involve persuasive communication to shape another persons opinions regarding possible choices and their outcomes. In this dissertation, I use communication networks to describe interactions similar to influence networks. Knoke's domination networks refer to actions people take to assist or obstruct another person's actions according to the desires of the initiator. In this dissertation I use the term patronage to describe a similar process of an actor who seeks to hand out rewards for service or punishments for disobedience. Communication networks and patronage are elaborated in greater detail in the **Theory Chapter**.

Network theory argues that social, political, and economic relationships manifest themselves through networks. According to this theory, networks determine key political paths and points of power between individuals and groups. Networks are important, because they structure the political landscape.¹⁹⁸ In the communication cadre theory, communication and information networks operate like networks.

A group becomes dependent on a communication cadre (which controls communication between and within groups), because the cadre knows and has access to the social and political structure. Therefore, the cadre is positioned to strongly influence a group's political direction by controlling the flow and content of communication and information. Consequently, as the members of different groups interact less often, they rely more on communication cadres to manage their communication and information needs.

The Student Nonviolent Coordinating Committee of the Civil Rights Era under the guidance of Ella Baker created an organization that opposed hierarchical control and

¹⁹⁸ Bridges 1984, Padgett and Ansell 1993

a limited lifetime for the organization in an effort to avoid the problems of co-optation and subversion by older civil rights leaders or outsiders.¹⁹⁹ Prior to the formation of SNCC, Baker worked for the Southern Christian Leadership Council, the NAACP, and as a community organizer in New York during the Depression. While SNCC avoided an official hierarchical structure and maintained that they did not control local groups.²⁰⁰ The initial belief was that decentralized control encouraged sustained action, while decentralized control and a limited organizational lifetime discouraged the development of a controlling elite within the organization and the threat of co-optation by outside forces.²⁰¹ The strength of SNCC's organizational approach was the avoidance of co-optation, but the lack of a strong centralized office resulted in a loss of focus and momentum when the sit-ins ended.

Asymmetric Information

Of particular relevance to the Communication Cadre Theory is the work of Krehbiel and Gilligan, because their research focuses on the effect of asymmetric information on distributional benefits and information efficiency using game theory. They focus on Legislatures when asymmetric information exists between heterogeneous committee members with superior information and legislators under open, modified, and closed rules.²⁰² Gilligan and Krehbiel argue that under closed rules distributional benefits

¹⁹⁹ Carson 1981

²⁰⁰ Ibid., pp24-30

²⁰¹ Interview with Doug McDew, St. Paul, Minnesota, September 30, 2000. The interview covered the organizational aspects and theory of SNCC. See, also, Carson 1981pp19-30

²⁰² Gilligan and Krehbiel 1989, 1990, Krehbiel 1991

are gained by the proposing committee member at the expense of legislators and information efficiency is greater than under open or modified rules.²⁰³

Gilligan's and Krehbiel's focus on the Congress necessarily requires a theoretical leap to apply their results to smaller organizations or institutions that lack more than one organized preference group or are less bureaucratized. Nevertheless, applying their findings to small organizations provides a method to analyze the data and interpret the results of this dissertation. Furthermore, the macro concern of this dissertation with how the state and society are mutually reinforcing and reflective, as well as the micro level concern on the role the control of communication and information plays, are relevant for applying and interpreting the results of Gilligan and Krehbiel to smaller settings.

The Communication Cadre Theory fulfills a need to delve into the tension between information efficiency and distributional effects in collective decision-making under conditions of uncertainty.²⁰⁴ The relationship of the communication cadre (CC) to organizational members reflects the relationship between committee members to legislators. Asymmetric information between the communication cadre and organizational members provide opportunities for the communication cadre to strategically use information. The strategic opportunities available to the communication cadre to strategically use information was exploited most often in the first case study of the Mexican American Employee Organization (MAO). While the other two case studies of United Labor Activists (ULA) and Northstar did not exhibit the use of this strategy, the strategic opportunity existed and was commented on by a few members within each

²⁰³ Gilligan and Krehbiel 1989

²⁰⁴ Ibid.

group. MAO differed from ULA and Northstar, because MAO was experiencing an active internal power struggle between two identifiable groups with different beliefs, a scenario that more accurately reflects Congress's dominant two party system.

The reason for asymmetric information occurs because of the strategic use of information by committee members, who "cannot be induced to divulge all of their... information even under the most informationally efficient rules."²⁰⁵ The case studies in this dissertation, face a similar problem as the Congress. While the case studies in this dissertation are small, democratic organizations dedicated to open communication and information flows, the communication cadre(s) that arise (even in these small organizations) face similar and different problems for divulging all of their information. First, the difficulty of realizing symmetric information among all organizational members faces the free rider problem.²⁰⁶ Why should organizational members continually feel compelled to acquire all of the information they need? Adding to the free rider problem is the issue of trust. When organizational members trust their leaders and the people who provide them with information (e.g. the communication cadre), members must first believe that the very people they trust to keep them informed are not keeping them fully informed, especially on critical issues. Next, organizational members must decide how to act and then act to get the information they need.²⁰⁷ Finally, if the communication cadre chooses to engage in a strategy of limited or false disclosure, organizational members

²⁰⁵ Gilligan and Krehbiel 1989

²⁰⁶ Olson 1971

²⁰⁷ Michels 1962, Gaventa 1980, Parenti 1993, Mendel-Reyes 1995, Carpenter 2001

must first determine that there is a problem, then find a way and act to get the information they need.

While the two party system in the U.S.A. provides the basic condition necessary for a legislature to have informational and distributive benefits,²⁰⁸ organizations often lack more than one, organized, preference group (especially, smaller organizations). Further complicating the picture, is the tendency for organizations to increase in complexity as they age and to fall under the control of a single, organized preference group.²⁰⁹

The necessity of Gilligan's and Krehbiel's model on having a heterogeneous committee, applying their model outside of the Congress, poses significant problems. The tension that exists in a heterogeneous committee is often absent at the organizational setting, except when an internal power or leadership struggle is occurring. When organizations lack competing groups, the dependency of organizational members on the communication cadre for their information is extremely high. In this scenario, the organizational members do not have perfect information and the signaling that would occur among committee members is absent from a unified communication cadre. The result is that organizational members must choose from the options the communication cadre provides them, which may or may not yield a *pareto optimal* solution for members.

Normatively, Gilligan and Krehbiel believe that "the informational role of committees in legislatures is to facilitate the choice of policies based on the maximum

²⁰⁸ The model proposed by Gilligan and Krehbiel needs two opposing sides to guarantee the necessary tension that fosters informational efficiency.

²⁰⁹ Michels 1962, Carson 1981

amount of available information and consistent with majority rule.”²¹⁰ While they are explicit in applying this belief to committees in legislatures,

While the Committee System works for Congress in Gilligan’s and Krehbiel’s model, that does not mean that it represents and works for people living in the United States. The Communication Cadre Theory raises questions of applicability outside of Congress and a normative concern that citizen representation [democracy] occurs. While a two-party system provides the basic condition necessary for Congress to have information and distributive benefits,²¹¹ the reality of social organizations or other institutions having *exactly* two organized opposition groups is not a reality. If organizations have only one organized preference group, which are especially common in smaller organizations, the information and distributive benefits in Gilligan’s and Krehbiel’s model change. In these organizations, the applicability of the Communication Cadre Theory outweighs Gilligan’s and Krehbiel’s model, because the incentives for informational and distributive benefits, are lost and the incentives for a communication cadre to form are greater.

If two organized preference groups exist, the Communication Cadre Theory agrees with the Gilligan’s and Krehbiel’s model, because the incentives for information flagging allows the rank-and-file to maximize their information and distributive benefits. However, two additional factors cause their model to falter. Namely, the communication cadre’s presence is not known, or patronage of an organization’s leaders and communication cadre members provide too large of an incentive for the information and

²¹⁰ Gilligan and Krehbiel 1989

²¹¹ The model proposed by Gilligan and Krehbiel needs two opposing sides to guarantee the necessary tension that fosters informational efficiency.

distributive benefits discussed by Gilligan and Kreihbel. The great benefit of Gilligan's and Kreihbel's model to the Communication Cadre Theory lies in the strong argument they provide for the organizational need to have two opposition preference groups to destabilize an environment conducive for co-optation and patronage to occur.

Unfortunately, there appears to be a strong organizational tendency for organizations to increase in complexity as they age and for a single preference group to dominate an organization.²¹²

If organizational members are not receiving the information that allows them to know what their options are or how to choose between their options an environment conducive for a mobilization of bias or the 3rd face of power occurs. Congress and committee members engage in the mobilization of bias or the 3rd face of power to limit what policies are discussed and made; or what options are believed possible. Kriehbel's and Gilligan's model then serves as a representation for how Congress operates, but not participatory democracy.

Social Capital

The concept of social capital describes the social connections between people, which joins them in a community and ties them to a larger society. Social capitalists propose that the accumulation of social capital benefits civic society, democracies, and individuals economically, socially, and politically.²¹³

²¹² Michels 1962, Carson 1981 Olson 1971

²¹³ Putnam 2000 and James Coleman, *Social Theory of a Changing Society*, 1991.

The study of social capital includes three broad perspectives focusing on the individual, social structures, and environment. The three broad perspectives include the basic variables of social norms, social networks, and organizations. The way that these basic variables interact in networks and organizations strongly influence people's access to power, decision-making, and policy implementation, as well as effecting how people organize.²¹⁴

At the individual level, Putnam (2000) defines social capital as horizontal linkages between people through social networks and the establishment of common norms, which affect the results of a community's activities. The main characteristic of Putnam's concept of social capital is that the accumulation of social capital assists in the cooperation, planning, coordination, and implementation of policies or actions that benefit the community and community members. From the social structure perspective, James Coleman used a broadened concept of social capital to include social structures that assist the actions of community members and communities.²¹⁵ Consequently, social institutions that govern interpersonal behavior and establish community and social norms could be more closely studied for their effect on social capital. Finally, Bourdieu and Coleman sought to create a more inclusive and expansive view of social capital by including the study of social and political environments.²¹⁶ Social and political environments shape social structures and permit the development of societal norms, through formalized institutions.

²¹⁴ Garcia 2001

²¹⁵ Coleman

²¹⁶ Bourdieu and Coleman, 1991.

Conclusions

To paraphrase V.O. Key, I believe in people's great capacity for self-government.²¹⁷ V.O. Key argued that the best government was one with free and vigorous electoral competition, including defined, genuine issues, candidates that take a stand, and two political parties to represent citizens. As the section on asymmetric information points out, there are normative reasons for organization to have two opposition groups. What earlier sections on the media and government point out is that even two opposition parties do not eliminate massive barriers for representative democracy and citizen participation, nor the incentives the Communication Cadre Theory identifies in the preceding chapter for an environment conducive for patronage or co-optation to exist.

The reader is probably aware that the biases I approach this dissertation with are based on a fundamental belief in the democratic process where individuals are free to make informed decisions in the social organizations that they participate in.

Historical events that lead to the creation of organizations and provide individuals with the experiences that shape their decisions cannot be ignored when studying organizations. A diverse array of political science scholars acknowledges this point in their writings.²¹⁸

²¹⁷ Key 1949b

²¹⁸ Selznick 1966, Woodward 1974, Rosenstone, et al. 1984, Walton 1985, Dahl 1989, Skocpol 1992, Winters 1996, Carpenter 2001, Skocpol 2003

CHAPTER 4

Protest and Organize: The Case of a Mexican American Employee Organization

The following chapter focuses on a small, Mexican American, employee organization located in a large metropolitan region of a Midwest state. While this chapter focuses on a Mexican American employee organization, the experiences shared by members of this organization are not limited to Mexican Americans or employees. The chapter focuses on how the control of communication and information flows influence organizations, their members and leaders. The Communication Cadre Theory identifies this influence as leaders rising to power and staying in power by controlling communication and information flows, which creates an organizational environment conducive for co-optation to occur.

By focusing on the control of communication and information within organizations, a broad basis for comparison between different populations and organization types is created. After all, all organizations and their members must deal with communication and information needs, which transcend race, ethnicity, gender, or class. Readers may also find common experiences based on ethnicity, class, or gender. In sum, individuals, specific communities, and organizations may share similar

experiences, but possess different backgrounds based on race, ethnicity, class, or gender.²¹⁹

The Mexican American Employee Organization (MAO) provided an excellent critical test of the Communication Cadre Theory. Located in a large metropolitan region of a midwestern state, the organization was small with only 16 members. MAO had no elected or appointed leaders and practiced participatory democracy. Members claimed that no individual or groups controlled internal or external communication and information flows. The members actively participated in organizational affairs. The preceding factors critically tested the theoretical foundation of the relationship between the control of communication, information, leaders, and co-optation, as outlined in **Chapter 2's Methodology section.**

Additional factors increased the rigor of the test. MAO's members were politically aware and experienced individuals who consciously strived to create an organization that prevented leader(s) from controlling the organization. The majority of group members were active in the Chicano Movement and/or in community politics. Second, members structured MAO to foster open and easy information and communication access for all members. Third, the group was politically informed and committed to increasing Mexican American opportunities and decreasing discrimination at their company, called Urban Inc. Urban Inc. was a state-owned, urban, utility service provider. Fourth, members readily remarked on newspaper and television reports about the status of Mexican Americans and Latinos in the United States and Midwest. Fifth, the organization existed off-and-on for 20 years and the members believed they avoided

²¹⁹ Pachon and DeSipio 1994, Garcia 1997b

the problem of an entrenched leadership. I expected the members of MAO, who were politically experienced, committed to a cause, and dedicated to creating a non-hierarchical organization to be less likely to allow the development of entrenched leaders and an environment conducive for co-optation. Finally, the following events took place in the Midwest, a region whose politics are generally viewed as being less corrupt than other regions of the United States. Consequently, oligarchy and co-optation should be less prevalent in the Midwest than in other regions, because oligarchy and co-optation are corrupt forms of politics.

I initially gained access to the Mexican American Employee Organization (MAO) through a friend who knew members of the group. He arranged for me to meet with an active member of the organization. Access to other group members was gained through each successive interviewee providing me with new contacts. I interviewed eleven of the sixteen group members (69% of the members). The five members who were not interviewed either declined to be interviewed or did not respond to interview requests. Finally, I interviewed a lawyer who was working on behalf of the organization.

Information gained through the interviews, established that the people interviewed formed the group's more active members. The eleven interviewed members and lawyer confirmed that I had interviewed the more active members, and that only two of the five non-interviewed members were active in the group. According to the interviewees, the five people not interviewed did not differ significantly from those interviewed in their socio-economic standing or ideologies. The validity of this belief by the interviewees was increased by the information obtained through the interviews. All of the interviews confirmed that two competing factions existed within MAO and all of their supporters

held similar views as the non-interviewed members. Therefore, the exclusion of the five non-interviewed members of MAO should not significantly alter the study's findings.

I conducted informal interviews and structured them to ask different sets of questions. To encourage full and truthful answers, all of the people interviewed were guaranteed anonymity and confidentiality.²²⁰ The interview questions were designed to solicit information on their work environment, MAO, their organizing tactics, personal and group views, leadership, communication and information flows, and problems they had with their job and MAO.

In summary, this critical case study analyzed the communication and information flows in a small, non-hierarchical, Mexican American Employee Organization (MAO). The case study relied on interviewing MAO's members and a lawyer counseling the group in a civil rights lawsuit. In the following case study, **MAO** corresponded to **Group A** and **Urban Inc.** to the stronger **Group B** of the Communication Cadre Theory discussed in **Chapter 2**.

The following case study of the Mexican American Employee Organization provides a critical test of the Communication Cadre Theory advanced in this dissertation. The critical conceptual elements of Political Science center on the concepts of power, political processes, and decision-making.²²¹ Due to this specific case study's focus on a male ethnic minority (predominantly, Mexican Americans) organizing in the workplace,

²²⁰ Due to the sensitive nature of the issues discussed and the possibility of retaliation against the people interviewed, the people interviewed for this case study were the only interviewees granted anonymity in this dissertation's case studies.

²²¹ Garcia 1997b

the analysis requires the need for the political analysis to be complemented by studies on Latinos, ethnicity, race, class, and gender.

Studies that combine the concepts of race, ethnicity, class, and gender are becoming more common.²²² Racial and ethnic conceptualizations in the social sciences are generally limited to race or ancestry. Political Science appears more limited than other social sciences in using two-dimensional definitions of race and ethnicity, namely, Black or White.²²³ Latino American, Asian American, and Native American Studies expanded race and ethnicity conceptually and operationally to include culture(s) as attitudes, values, and practices, in addition to bi-culturalism, social networks, and identity. While the conceptualization and operationalization of race and ethnicity has increased, the inclusion of multiple racial and ethnic groups as units of analysis or areas of study is still rare. Fortunately, exceptions do exist that expand the common two-dimensional use of race (i.e. Black and White) to be more inclusive of other racial and ethnic groups (i.e. Asian, Latino, and Native American).²²⁴ While this case study focuses specifically on a male, Mexican American, employee organization, the second case study focuses on a mainly Caucasian organization, while the third case study focuses on an organization that is diverse across racial, ethnic, and gender groups.

The role of gender is less explored in this and the following case studies. The limited use of gender analysis should not, however, be misconstrued to mean that gender did not exert an influence on the events that occurred. Indeed, the lack of women's

²²² Córdova, et al. 1986, Falcon 1988, Jackson 1991, McClain 1993, Sonenshein 1993, Torre and Pesquera 1993, Smith 1996, Walton 1997, Jaynes 2000

²²³ Dahl 1961, Parenti 1967, Verba and Nie 1976, Wolfinger and Rosenstone 1980, Sonenshein 1993

²²⁴ Falcon 1988, McClain 1993, Sonenshein 1993

membership in the Mexican American Employee Organization reflected the lack of women employed in the traditionally male dominated labor fields at Urban Inc.. As Montoya's work has pointed out, social roles and structural relations affect gender.²²⁵ The members of MAO, all male, identified strongly with their ethnicity (i.e. Mexican), pan-ethnicity (i.e. Latino), and historical working class background, however, they still reflected the predominant and dominant male environment at Urban Inc..

Considering that Midwest State owned and operated Urban Inc., the state definitely played a role in defining power relations within a gendered context. As African Americans, Asian Americans, and women made inroads into Urban Inc.'s workforce, Latinas were not included among the increasing population of female workers. Through hiring, the role of culture, race, and ethnicity effects how the state defines what is gender appropriate labor.²²⁶

The members of MAO were not free from this bias either, interviews with members of the Mexican American Employee Organization (MAO) indicated that very few of the people they recommended for jobs at Urban Inc. were women. The result of these forces combined and created multiple obstacles of gender, ethnicity, and class, a "triple oppression", for Latinas at Urban Inc..²²⁷

John A. Garcia has noted that Latino "political mobilization and/or social involvement can be initiated or enhanced by the salience of race/ethnicity, class, and/or

²²⁵ Montoya 1996

²²⁶ Zinn and Dill 1994

²²⁷ Moraga and Anzaldúa 1983, Córdova, et al. 1986, Ruiz 1987, Torre and Pesquera 1993, Zinn and Dill 1994

gender among Latinos.”²²⁸ In the case study of MAO, ethnicity played a crucial role in politically mobilizing the Mexican American population at Urban Inc.. MAO’s members felt that they were being ethnically discriminated against by Urban Inc. and their representing unions. The perceived discrimination in treatment and wages resulted in a core group of five people who organized and formed the foundation of MAO. The founding five members were then able to recruit almost all of the Mexican employees at Urban Inc. by stressing the need and possibility of overcoming on-the-job discrimination. Initially, MAO organized and formed a loose coalition with African American and Asian American groups to address their collective concerns of racial and ethnic discrimination. As it will be explained in this chapter, MAO’s members changed their organizing tactics from a loose coalition across racial and ethnic groups, to one of organizing along ethnic lines in order to have their interests and grievances represented and heard. Consequently, MAO’s ability to overcome the first order problem of organizing a new group, as well as overcoming the free-rider problem was enhanced by the role of ethnicity.

Historically, Latino studies focused on ethnic and racial identity as a prime area of research.²²⁹ In their interviews, the members of the Mexican American Employee Organization demonstrate the evolution of their ethnic identity. They describe the process of developing an individual Chicano/Mexican American ethnic identity and an ethnic group consciousness, then using ethnicity to assess their social and political position and relations.²³⁰ The evolution of their ethnic identity then progressed to a

²²⁸ Garcia 1997b p.2.

²²⁹ Garcia 1982

²³⁰ Hurtado 1987, Garcia, et al. 1991

Latino pan-ethnic identity and group consciousness.²³¹ MAO's members describe the benefits of being Latino as belonging to a larger population group that shares similar concerns for personal and/or strategic economic, political, and social reasons. A result that is consistent with Felix Padilla's observations that membership in Latino organizations aids individuals from different Latin American national origins to consider themselves Latino.²³²

Ethnicity, however, does not form the only basis for one's identity and this is evident among MAO's members. The intersection of race, ethnicity, class, and gender plays a key role in determining a person's identity and identities.²³³ One's identity or identities may reinforce or weaken the likelihood of political participation for any person. In the case study of MAO, ethnicity and class provide additional factors aiding in the formation and continuation of MAO.

Considering that Midwestern State owned and operated Urban Inc., the state definitely played a role in defining power relations within a racial and ethnic context. As African Americans, Asian Americans, and women made inroads into Urban Inc.'s workforce, Latinos or Latinas were not included among the increasing population of workers. Through hiring, the role of culture, race, and ethnicity effects how the state defines what is racial or ethnic appropriate labor.²³⁴ The members of MAO were not free from this bias either, very few of the people they recommended for jobs at Urban Inc.

²³¹ Padilla 1985, Hurtado 1987, Garcia, et al. 1991

²³² Padilla 1985

²³³ Zinn and Dill 1994

²³⁴ Montejano 1987, Gómez-Quiñones 1994, Zinn and Dill 1994

were women or of a different Latin background. The result of these forces combined and created multiple obstacles of gender, ethnicity, and class.²³⁵

The role class played in the following events is more difficult to discern, because several members of MAO were in supervisory or managerial roles.²³⁶ In the forthcoming case study, traditional views of class are complicated, because one of the unofficial leaders of MAO voluntarily steps down from a higher managerial position for reasons both related and unrelated to class.

Social Structures

Social structures (i.e. political, economic, and social institutions) shape and influence MAO and Urban Inc. This dissertation and the following chapter seek to connect the interactions of the Communication Cadre Theory with decision-making, motivations, and initiatives, in order to better understand how democracy operates within social organizations, society, and the federal system of government.²³⁷

Political Science's analysis of electoral participation provides rich data for studying the United States' electoral systems. An electoral system based on a plurality, winner-take-all system with at-large elections, off-year, and non-partisan elections and multi-member districts, and the difficulty for third political parties to be competitive are structural factors that have affected the number of Latino candidates (successful or not) in elections, racially polarized voting and campaigning, representation, and governmental

²³⁵ Moraga and Anzaldúa 1983, Córdova, et al. 1986, Ruiz 1987, Torre and Pesquera 1993

²³⁶ Dye and Zeigler 1975, Gaventa 1980, Córdova, et al. 1986, Hero 1992, Gómez-Quíñones 1994, Zinn and Dill 1994, Smith 1996, Mouffe 2000, Collier and Collier 2002

²³⁷ Hero 1992

responsiveness.²³⁸ De la Garza, DeSipio, Gunier, Rosenstone, and Wolfinger all argue for methods to address the problems posed by a plurality, winner-take-all electoral system. The methods they argue for include single member districts, cumulative or proportional voting schemes, and community of interest consideration in re-distribution of district plans. Additionally, historically obstacles prevented Americans of Mexican, African, Asian, or indigenous backgrounds from voting or running in the electoral process.²³⁹

MAO's members are aware of these structural factors and historical obstacles in the United States' electoral system. In the following case study, it will be shown that MAO engaged in a democratic decision-making process that mirrors the country's electoral system.

Individual factors that contribute to Latino political participation and power focus primarily on the individual resources Latinos possess, as evidenced by their SES or linkage between individuals, organizations, and leaders. The SES, or socioeconomic status, variables focus on level of education, income level, and occupation and served as the main approach to understanding why individuals participate in politics.²⁴⁰ The strong correlation between SES and on the types and level of political participation by individuals are well documented. The relationship between SES and Latino political participation is not as strong. The work of John A. Garcia highlights how the inclusion of group consciousness, ethnic identification (e.g. Chicano in place of Mexican American),

²³⁸ Dye and Zeigler 1975, Montejano 1987, Garcia 1988, de la Garza 1993, Rosenstone and Hansen 1993, de la Garza, et al. 1994, Parenti 1995, Rosenstone, et al. 1996

²³⁹ Key 1949b, Dye and Zeigler 1975, Bridges 1984, Walton 1985, Montejano 1987, Acuña 1988, Gómez-Quiñones 1990, Griswold del Castillo 1990, Rosenstone and Hansen 1993, Tocqueville 1994

²⁴⁰ Verba and Nie 1972, Verba, et al. 1995

provides further variables towards explaining Latino political participation.²⁴¹ In the case of MAO, the additional factors Garcia highlights point towards a greater understanding of why MAO's members became politically active at Urban Inc., also, MAO's members overwhelmingly possessed experience in politically organizing.

MAO's political empowerment includes structural factors, which influence the how, why, and to what extent MAO's members participated. Political Science traditionally focused on voting systems and representation.²⁴² The case of MAO is no different; MAO's members believed that the system they practiced, while flawed, enabled them to have an important voice in what MAO did as an organization. Additional structural variables that encouraged MAO's members to participate are the ability to meet on company time and property, as well as access to high-ranking officials at Urban Inc.

Coalition Building

Recent work on how and to what level Latinos at the mass and elite levels interact across Latino and non-Latino groups are now available.²⁴³ The works point out that Latinos cooperating across Latino sub-groups and with non-Latino groups is more apparent at the elite level, than at the mass level. The coalition building appears to be more practical, than the creation of a new pan-Latino or pan-community of color identity. As the Latino population grows and becomes more concentrated in urban areas,

²⁴¹ Garcia 1997c

²⁴² Hero 1992

²⁴³ Jackson 1991, Sonenshein 1993

opportunities for coalition building with non-Latino groups increases.²⁴⁴ Other communities of color such as, African Americans, Asian Americans, and Native Americans, are struggling for increased economic, political, and social power and they share similar policy concerns.²⁴⁵ Electoral coalition building and competition at the local and municipal level forms the main area of coalition building research, as coalitions form across groups and work for greater political power or competition between groups drives them apart.²⁴⁶

As it will be shown, MAO engaged in coalition building with African Americans and Asian Americans in MAO's initial organizing efforts. In this case, the high level of previous political experience among MAO's members might serve as a proxy for considering them elite. While coalition efforts among the different communities of color at Urban, Inc. existed at the initial stage, two overwhelming opinions existed among MAO's members. First, MAO's members believed that there was not enough support from other groups to merit continued coalition efforts. Last, MAO's members believed that Urban Inc. actively engaged in pitting the different groups of color in competition for jobs and company resources.

The following sections were structured to reflect the successive negotiation rounds between Urban Inc. and MAO. Organizing the chapter in this manner, best demonstrated how the organization and communication cadres developed and the relationship between the communication cadre to oligarchy and co-optation.

²⁴⁴ Garcia 1997a, b, c

²⁴⁵ Ibid.

²⁴⁶ Jackson 1991, Sonenshein 1993

Protest and Organize

The Mexican American Organization

The Mexican American Organization (MAO) advocated for Mexican Americans at Urban Inc.²⁴⁷ The organization's goals were for Mexican Americans to have the same rights and opportunities as their Caucasian co-workers and to end racial discrimination against Mexican Americans at Urban Inc. MAO's members strongly displayed unity in their purpose, goals, and egalitarian beliefs. All of MAO's members, except one, claimed that no leader or group of leaders controlled the group.²⁴⁸ Indeed, MAO members purposefully sought to avoid having a single leader or leadership cadre by not holding elections leadership positions and meeting at least twice per month. The stated purpose of the frequent meetings was to decrease the opportunity for leaders to develop or become entrenched and to increase the access and flow of communication and information. MAO meetings did not have a formal chairperson to regulate meetings. Group members engaged in open discussion and collectively solicited comments from silent members. A majority vote determined MAO's course of action after an issue was discussed. Thus, MAO's structure and membership critically tested the Communication Cadre Theory.

²⁴⁷ The terms Mexican, Mexican American, and Chicano are used interchangeably and reflect the self-nomenclature MAO members used. MAO members spanned a wide occupational spectrum from secretaries and laborers to foremen and supervisors. In addition, MAO members belonged to different unions and several members worked in management and were not eligible to belong to a union.

²⁴⁸ The lone exception came from Jim, who claimed that he was the leader. Information from all the other interviews, however, did not support his claim.

Fewer than twenty Mexican Americans worked at Urban Inc., of those, sixteen belonged to MAO.²⁴⁹ They originally organized from 1981 through 1982 and joined other workers of color to combat racial discrimination in wages, job opportunities, and work environment. The state government controlled Urban Inc. and the initial administrative response created an advisory board charged with investigating and handling the situation. A slow state investigation, accompanied by little administrative activity to address the complaints, gave the loosely organized Mexican Americans time to become more organized. Member participation was high and almost all of them volunteered and served in leadership activities (e.g. committee or individual tasks). In order to accommodate this organizational structure, the administration sat down and mediated with almost all of the Mexican American workers, (while only negotiating with representatives from other racial groups). MAO's organizing led to the promotion of a Mexican American employee, Joe, to be the company's first civil rights officer. Group members identified Joe as belonging to a core group of five MAO members who initiated the protest. The state then promised to implement and enforce new work practices that addressed MAO's concerns.

MAO members quickly stopped organizing after their initial success. Almost ten years later, in 1990, they believed that Urban Inc. failed to honor their previous agreement and reorganized. Once again the company sat down to mediate with MAO. This time, however, the administration told MAO to pick members to represent their group. MAO conceded and members estimated that at least twelve of sixteen members

²⁴⁹ The actual number of Mexican workers at Urban Inc. was not known. Company records and MAO members placed the amount as less than twenty.

actively participated in the second round of negotiations.²⁵⁰ MAO threatened Urban Inc. with a class action, civil rights lawsuit and the first settlement was reworked with new figures for promotions, hiring, and plans to improve the work environment by decreasing racial discrimination.

Several different unions represented different segments of MAO's membership. During the early 1990s, several MAO members received pay raises. The pay raises, however, resulted from different union contracts and only applied to those MAO members who belonged to those specific unions. The majority of MAO members, however, were represented by different unions, whose members were not due pay raises. Consequently, the majority of the Mexican American employees did not receive wage promotions. Furthermore, Urban Inc. failed to hire additional employees of Mexican descent and none of the members of MAO received job promotions, as Urban Inc. had promised to do in the previous negotiations.

Once again, the Mexican American employees stopped organizing. In 1996 and 1997 racial tensions increased between Caucasian and Mexican workers, in part, because Mexicans were not promoted nor hired in accordance with the previous settlement. The Mexican American civil rights officer, Joe, resigned and accepted a lower level position. When asked why he did this, he responded that the pressure was too great and that Urban Inc. had not honored its agreement with MAO. MAO wanted substantial and faster change, while Urban Inc. wanted to keep the workers of Mexican descent from advocating for change. As the civil rights officer, Joe constantly balanced the interests of

²⁵⁰ MAO members do not know the actual number and they do not possess records indicating who or how many people participated in the negotiations. When questioned, MAO members individually responded with a number from twelve to sixteen.

MAO and Urban Inc. He was forced to fend off accusations from both organizations that he favored the other group. Sam, a Puerto Rican American, was hired in his place and MAO changed its membership policy to include all Latinos.

During this time, Peter, a MAO member, began filing a civil rights violation against Urban Inc. The employees of Latino descent once again re-organized. As predicted by the Communication Cadre Theory, Urban Inc. insisted that MAO decrease the number of their representatives involved with negotiations. MAO responded by decreasing the original twelve to sixteen representatives to the first ten members to volunteer. The management of Urban Inc. disliked dealing with such a large group, but MAO insisted that they had honored Urban Inc.'s request and negotiations continued. Once again the mediation procedure resulted in the original settlement being re-worded with different statistical goals for new hires and promotions. Peter dropped his civil rights lawsuit. Unfortunately for MAO, the new settlement would only be partially honored by Urban Inc.

The third round of negotiations differed qualitatively from the preceding two rounds. Urban Inc. encouraged Latino employees to continue participating in MAO, by allowing them to meet on company time. At this time, MAO began exhibiting strong evidence of a communication cadre. Meetings between Urban Inc.'s administration and the at-large Latinos stopped. All communication between MAO and Urban Inc. took place via official and unofficial groups. A permanent, “official” Latino Advisory Board composed of MAO members Joe, Job, Al, and Sam (the Puerto Rican civil rights officer) met with Urban Inc.'s advisory council.²⁵¹ The Advisory Board met with Urban Inc.

²⁵¹ Urban Inc. placed Sam on the official Latino Advisory Board and forced MAO to accept Sam as a member. The implications of Urban Inc.'s actions will be discussed later in this section.

every two weeks. In addition to the official Advisory Board, MAO members Aldo, Carlos, and Ben formed a second unofficial Latino Advisory Board that communicated with Urban Inc.'s administration.

Almost all of members of the official and unofficial Advisory Boards formed the official and unofficial communication cadres. The two communication cadres were composed of Joe, Aldo, Carlos, and Ben. Joe, Aldo, Carlos, and Ben initiated MAO in the very early 1980s.²⁵² The four MAO founders were continually involved in communication and information flows and strongly influenced MAO's policies. Ten of the eleven MAO members interviewed identified these four founders as the people who communicated the most with Urban Inc. and the persons who provided them (the interviewee) with most of their information. Furthermore, the members considered these four people the ones who most influenced and lead MAO. The two communication cadres controlled communication and information between MAO and Urban, Inc. As Urban Inc. limited direct interaction with MAO's members, MAO's members increasingly relied on the official and unofficial communication cadres for their information and to communicate for the organization with Urban Inc.. Consequently, MAO's membership relied increasingly on the official and unofficial cadres to represent their needs, interests, and opinions.

MAO leadership became based on who was part of the two communication cadres. MAO accepted the first three volunteers as their members on the official Latino Advisory Board.²⁵³ Urban Inc. filled the fourth board position with Sam, the civil rights

²⁵² Ten of the 11 people interviewed identified four people as the founders of MAO: Joe, Aldo, Carlos, and Ben.

²⁵³ Some of MAO's members voiced displeasure with the volunteer method for choosing the Board

officer. When MAO protested this move, Urban Inc. forced them to accept Sam as one of their representatives by threatening to withdraw from all negotiations. All of MAO's members felt wary of Sam, due to his perceived unwavering support of Urban Inc.'s position and expectation by MAO members that he should be supportive of their position.

Once Urban Inc. appointed Sam to the Latino Advisory Board, MAO's entire membership considered him a company man and declared him *persona non grata*.²⁵⁴

They accepted his membership, however, for three stated reasons:

- 1) To continue negotiations,
- 2) He could be outvoted by MAO's members in MAO and on the Latino Advisory Board,
- 3) They could feed him false information, and
- 4) They would hold secret meetings without his presence to discuss sensitive material.

Neither faction of MAO considered Sam a supporter of their position. The stated reason from members of both factions indicated that he was not to be trusted. Almost all of the members interviewed, though, considered him more closely aligned with the official cadre's position. As Joe stated, the position of civil rights officer and MAO member was difficult to balance. Urban Inc. definitely made the tough balancing act

positions and pushed to elect the advisory board. The organization implemented the majority decision to use volunteers to fill MAO's positions on the Latino Advisory Board.

²⁵⁴ Sam's continued MAO membership and position on the Advisory board was extensively debated. Of critical importance, is the fact that the two opposing factions in MAO, to be discussed shortly, accepted Sam for the reasons listed.

more difficult when they forced MAO to accept him as one of their representatives on the Advisory Board.

Among MAO's three positions on the Latino Advisory Board volunteers, Joe, embodied the official cadre. He, also, was the only member of the official cadre. He was an established MAO leader and founder with connections to the administration from his previous role as Urban Inc.'s civil rights officer. He was politically ambitious and experienced, as evidenced by his influential role and aspirations in the local Republican Party and at Urban Inc. The other Latino Advisory Board members, Al and Job, testified they received the majority of their information from Joe who often served as their go-between with Urban Inc. In their interviews, they were very upfront about furthering their careers as they advanced MAO's goals.²⁵⁵

The unofficial cadre consisted of Aldo, Carlos, and Ben, all of whom founded MAO with Joe. The trio possessed an unobtrusive political style and preferred to act from behind the scenes. They often met individually with Urban Inc.'s administrators to insure that the Mexican American Organization's goals and interests were represented and met. The unofficial cadre took a strong stand against receiving personal perks, patronage, or any offer that could be construed as such. The unofficial cadre strongly advocated for an end to lower, discriminatory wages and lack of promotions compared to their Caucasian counterparts and an end to discriminatory hiring practices.²⁵⁶ Ben and Aldo were eligible for retirement and Carlos was within "two to three years" of retirement. They felt their retirement status enabled them to place the interests and goals

²⁵⁵ Al and Job often commented on how they were "looking out for [themselves]" and believed that all currently employed MAO members should receive benefits and promotions before addressing hiring discrimination and work conditions.

²⁵⁶ The issue of discriminatory hiring practices will be discussed later in the chapter.

of MAO and their local Latino community above their personal interests. The effect was a strong commitment to create change before they retired. Their strong commitment appeared to be based on a feeling of financial security due to their retirement status. They believed that Urban Inc. could not threaten them with unemployment.

Why did two distinct communication groups exist? MAO members provided few answers, because they assumed that no individual or group of individuals controlled communication, information, or MAO. Answers from non-cadre members identified the membership of the communication cadres and, most importantly, which leaders they aligned themselves with. MAO members on the official Latino Advisory Board advocated that Latino equality in on-the-job treatment and job opportunities (i.e., promotions) begin with current Urban Inc. employees. I termed this group the official cadre to recognize their “official” status as Latino Advisory Board members with Urban Inc. Furthermore, the official cadre did not push for rapid changes like their unofficial counterpart.

The unofficial cadre, however, drew majority support in MAO and was historically MAO's power brokers. The unofficial communication cadre benefited from long term, established relationships with some of Urban Inc.'s management and support staff. The relationships went back almost 20 years to MAO's founding and lasted through several rounds of negotiations between the two sides. In this scenario, the unofficial cadre was too influential for Urban Inc. to ignore.

The official and unofficial cadres represented the two factions within MAO. Each cadre advocated different policies to address the discriminatory environment against Latinos at Urban Inc. The official cadre totaled 6 supporters (1 cadre member, 4

supporters, and Sam). The unofficial cadre totaled 9 supporters (3 cadre members and 6 supporters). One person, who self-identified as belonging to neither group, ridiculed the official cadre. He then said in an angry voice that he planned on supporting the official cadre, which would increase the official cadre's supporters to 7.

The Communication Cadre Theory predicted that the cadre's size would decrease as relations increased between MAO and Urban Inc. and as MAO aged. As predicted, a communication cadre developed despite the egalitarian views and efforts of MAO members. During the first round of negotiations in 1981 and 1982 almost twenty Mexicans were directly involved in negotiations and communication flows with the state. By 1997, official and unofficial communication cadres consisted of four people who controlled communication and information between MAO and Urban Inc. The two cadres comprised MAO's unofficial political leadership, because they did not represent elected or appointed leadership positions of MAO.

Prior to the third round of negotiations, patronage was isolated to Joe's promotion as the newly created civil rights officer in the early 1980s. A couple of MAO members received overdue wage and salary promotions to the next higher government pay grade, also. During the third round of negotiations, a member of Urban Inc.'s administration informed MAO that Sam, the Puerto Rican civil rights officer, received a \$60,000 a year salary.²⁵⁷ A salary that was \$20,000 greater than the maximum his government employment level was entitled to. The large discrepancy in pay confirmed the members' feelings that Sam was acting on behalf of Urban Inc. and being subsidized for it.

²⁵⁷ This person has access to Urban Inc.'s payroll records and confirmed the civil rights officer employment level and salary. To protect this person's identity, no reference is made to race, gender, or position, this person is sympathetic to MAO's cause and regularly offers assistance to the group.

Once again, the Communication Cadre Theory's prediction came true, in regard to co-optation. Urban Inc., the stronger organization, forced MAO to accept Sam as one of their representatives on the Latino Advisory Board. Arguably, Sam was not co-opted by the state, since he was always identified as an advocate of the state's position, but he received patronage for his support. The state, however, had definitely begun to co-opt MAO by forcing them to accept a representative whom they did not want. Sam's continuous support for Urban Inc.'s position among his fellow MAO members may also be looked at as his and the state's effort to co-opt MAO.

The third round of negotiations was particularly bitter, as the Latinos demanded immediate and substantial efforts to honor the two previous pacts. The third round's settlement resulted in several pay raises and job promotions, which decreased the demands and legal threats of several MAO activists. The less vociferous MAO activists then represented MAO on the Latino Advisory Board during the fourth round of protests in 1998 and 1999. The unofficial cadre, however, continued to advocate for rapid changes that included both current and potential Latino employees.

The fourth round of protests revolved around increased discrimination against Latinos on the job and no new Latino employees hired since 1987. The lack of new Latino hires became important, because Urban Inc. had hired substantial numbers of African Americans and Asian Americans, since 1997. Latino employees were specifically upset that they had recommended qualified Latino applicants who were not hired despite Urban Inc.'s promises to hire a qualified Latino if one applied.²⁵⁸ Latino workers linked this policy to a discriminatory environment against Latinos, which

²⁵⁸ MAO members knew they sent qualified applicants, because they knew the job qualifications from experience and from reading job postings.

included "mysteriously" changing job qualifications when Latinos became eligible for promotions or as job applicants, and greater disciplinary action against Latino employees than Caucasians. MAO continued to negotiate for their inclusion (or an employee of Latino descent) to be on the applicant screening and interviewing committees. MAO also wanted Urban Inc. to enforce a non-discriminatory work environment and to account for how and why job classifications changed every time Latinos came up for promotions or employment. The last issue particularly angered the members of the Mexican American Organization, because when Latinos applied for promotion or employment they would fail to meet the new requirements. The only exception to this occurred when union contracts stipulated specific pay raises and the promotions of the members on the Latino Advisory Board.

The Communication Cadre, Leadership, and Co-Optation

The fourth round of protests and negotiations continued after research on MAO ended in 1999, but several facts were evident. First, MAO's leadership was in the hands of an official and an unofficial communication cadre of four people. The two cadres formed MAO's unofficial leadership. Second, the number of people in the communication cadres decreased with each successive negotiation round and MAO's members interacted less and less with Urban Inc. Consequently, the communication cadre's size decreased from MAO's sixteen organizational members in 1981 to four out of 16 MAO members in 1999.

The next fact was the presence of patronage. As defined earlier, patronage was a reward for service or punishment for disobedience and indicated a favorable environment

for co-optation to occur. Urban Inc. dispensed promotions and pay raises to members of the communication cadre and their supporters, as they decreased their level of activism or support of the unofficial cadre. In response, the official cadre member and his supporters negotiated their influence in MAO for personal gain.²⁵⁹ The most obvious example of patronage was Peter's \$60,000 annual salary that was \$20,000 greater than his government position was allowed to receive. Joe provided another example of patronage. He was hired as a civil rights officer and then negotiated a favorable demotion with excellent job security. Joe, meanwhile, used his position on the Advisory Board to garner a pay raise and then a job promotion with a corresponding pay raise. Finally, the newest supporter of the official cadre, Al, a union pipe fitter was promoted to foreman.

Unofficial communication cadre members also encountered patronage, as well as one of their supporters. Carlos reported that Urban Inc. offered him a pay raise and later a promotion for his cooperation, which he refused. He stated that his position in the union precluded favorable salary treatment and that he lacked seniority to be eligible for promotion. He believed that if he accepted either offer, he would eventually encounter problems with his union. He also stated that he ideologically refused to be "bought-off" or to accept favorable treatment. Ben stated that he was offered a promotion he refused. After his refusal, Urban Inc. supervisors implied his job might be eliminated by government cutbacks. Ruben, a MAO member not previously discussed, represented the only supporter of the unofficial cadre who faced patronage. He and a Caucasian co-worker fought at work and Urban Inc. fired both employees, although Urban Inc.'s regulations required that they be suspended. Within one week the Caucasian worker was

²⁵⁹ The administrative informant confirmed the following promotions and pay raises through his/her access to job classification and payroll records.

reclassified as suspended, but Ruben remained unemployed when research on MAO ended.²⁶⁰

The final point was that a power struggle occurred in MAO between the official cadre and the unofficial cadre. The official cadre advocated institutionalized ethnic group advancement over time with immediate promotions from within, while the unofficial cadre advocated for immediate institutionalized guarantees of ethnic group advancement and hiring of Latino employees. When this research ended, it was too early to know the outcome, but Urban Inc. was using patronage to encourage support for the official cadre's position. The unofficial cadre, meanwhile, was using legal counsel to file a civil rights lawsuits against Urban Inc.²⁶¹ The stakes of the struggle within MAO were high, control of MAO and the ability to determine what policies the organization as a whole would support and advocate for. Despite the outcome, the size of the communication cadre would more than likely decrease to one or three members depending on which cadre won the internal struggle.

The Cadre, Leadership, and Co-Optation of Mao

The Latino experience at Urban Inc. was consistent with the Communication Cadre Theory, even though MAO was a small organization composed of dedicated and politically experienced members who actively attempted to avoid entrenched leaders.

The size of MAO's communication cadres decreased and the cadres' importance increased

²⁶⁰ Ruben based his claim on information from his union business agent and a lawyer whom he hired to represent him.

²⁶¹ Aldo was the first MAO member to advocate a civil rights lawsuit in the fourth round of negotiations. Several other MAO members joined him. They were incorporating former, qualified Mexican applicants who were disqualified when job requirements changed after they applied for employment.

with the expansion of negotiations with Urban Inc. Concurrently, a favorable environment for Urban Inc. to co-opt MAO was created through patronage and communication cadres. The communication cadres and their supporters became appealing targets for Urban Inc. to co-opt, because the communication cadres controlled the Mexican American Employee Organization . The official communication cadre and its supporters benefited from patronage. Urban Inc., meanwhile, targeted the unofficial cadre for patronage in exchange for a decrease in their activity level or change in their policy position. Finally, supporters of the unofficial cadre were offered patronage to change their support and position.

Sam was identified by almost all MAO members as the proponent of the state's position. As indicated earlier, Peter is considered part of MAO. MAO allowed all Latino's to join and the state mandated that all "Hispanics" could be part of the group. Urban Inc. forced MAO to allow Sam to represent them on the advisory board. Consequently, Urban Inc. placed their advocate in the communication cadre and positioned him to be one of MAO's leaders. If Urban Inc. could place someone in another group's communication cadre, one group can influence the composition of another group's cadre. Once again, the Communication Cadre Theory's prediction came true. Urban Inc., the stronger group, used force to place one of their members, Sam, in MAO's cadre and rewarded him with an illicit pay raise for his loyalty. An act of patronage, and hence co-optation, was performed.

While the communication cadre and a co-optive environment were present in MAO, alternative strategies to avoid these problems found little support. For example, a large organization would have an even harder time avoiding a communication cadre and

a co-optive environment. Michels and Olson argued that the larger an organization was, the greater its need for a division of labor and bureaucracy, which would compound the problem.²⁶² A highly structured group with well defined rules encourages hierarchy, which separates the group and actively creates a communication cadre and the opportunity for co-optation.

Two possible solutions to the problem exist: a charismatic leader and strict rules that prevent a communication cadre from forming with an active membership. Michels concluded that oligarchy was unavoidable, that co-optation was the greatest threat, and that a strong charismatic leader committed to an organization's ideals was the solution to co-optation.²⁶³ The obvious problem with this approach is that it appears to prevent the problem of co-optation, but in reality, it does not eliminate the communication cadre or the favorable environment for co-optation. The temptation for a competing group to offer a charismatic leader patronage is very high, because he is the sole ruler of his organization. In turn, the temptation for a charismatic leader to accept patronage is great, because he controls communication and can prevent his group from finding out. Indeed, the danger of co-optation looms even greater, because once a charismatic leader is patronized or eliminated by force, an organization would probably lack the structure to remain true to its purpose and goals.

The other solution was first posed by Seymour Martin Lipset in *Union Democracy*.²⁶⁴ In his study he found that oligarchy and a co-optive environment could be

²⁶² Michels 1962, Olson 1971

²⁶³ Michels 1962, p.20.

²⁶⁴ Lipset 1956

avoided by an organization that had strict term limits in leadership and communication positions. The strict term limits had to be accompanied by an extremely participatory group membership to limit the likelihood that a communication cadre would form. The only problem with this scenario is that it rarely occurs, even when groups try to implement this structure. To date, the International Typographers Union, mentioned in Lipset's book, remains one of the few documented exception. Lipset even acknowledged this union as an exceptionally rare occurrence.²⁶⁵

Summary

This paper outlines and reviews a case study that supports the Communication Cadre Theory. The theory proposes that communication networks are mechanisms for the development of oligarchy in organizations and the creation of an environment conducive to co-optation. Throughout the process of testing the Communication Cadre Theory, a question continually lingers in the background. To what extent can democracy and representation exist in the presence of communication cadres? The Communication Cadre Theory provides a substantial explanation for the lack of greater political power by disadvantaged groups. The theory explains how leaders come to power in disadvantaged groups and why oligarchy and a favorable environment for co-optation develop. The Communication Cadre Theory accounts for why groups of the elite seek to co-opt disadvantaged groups, why leaders are in a position to be co-opted, and for the various methods elite groups use to accomplish co-optation. The relationship between the control of communication, leaders, oligarchy and co-optation must be understood for an organization to avoid oligarchy and co-optation. If disadvantaged groups want to prevent leaders from "selling them and their goals down the river," placing time constraints on the terms of communicators is essential.

²⁶⁵ For another example, see Ruiz 1987

The huge normative concern with this research is the need for groups of the disadvantaged to implement organizational rules that insure a communication cadre does not develop. The alternative is to follow a strong, charismatic leader and risk the danger that a successful organization will terminate or become unsuccessful with the leader's co-optation or demise. The implementation of rules that prevents a communication cadre from developing will aid an organization or movement in maintaining their goals. For example, rotating leaders and communicators cultivates new leaders who will stay true to the organization's or movement's ideals and goals.

CHAPTER 5

Rebuilding and Inspiring the Labor Movement: The Cases of United Labor Activists and Northstar Artists Collective

The following chapter focuses on two small organizations, Northstar Artists Collective and United Labor Activists, located in the same large metropolitan area and Midwestern state as the Mexican American Employee Organization case study in **Chapter 4: Protest and Organize**. This chapter continues the focus on how the control of communication and information flows influences organizations, their leaders, their members, and co-optation. I apply the Communication Cadre Theory to study these two organizations, which provide two additional critical case studies.

By continuing to focus on the control of communication and information within organizations, a broad basis for comparison between the three different populations and organizations used for the case studies is created. The two organizations and their members studied in this chapter's two case studies face communication and information needs, which transcend race, ethnicity, gender, and class.²⁶⁶ While people of different racial, ethnic, gender, and class backgrounds share different histories and experiences based on their differences, the case studies used in this dissertation focus analysis on the communication and information goals, needs, and practices these organizations share.

²⁶⁶ Pachon and DeSipio 1994, Garcia 1997b

This chapter focuses on the Northstar Artists Collective and United Labor Activists, because the research on these two organizations did not indicate or suggest any instances of co-optation currently occurring or having occurred. As it will be shown, however, Northstar Artists Collective (Northstar) and United Labor Activists (ULA) do exhibit environments conducive for co-optation to occur. Several factors contribute to the lack of co-optation in these two organizations: the beliefs of Northstar's and ULA's members and unofficial leaders, organizational practices, and organizational environments contribute.

Methodology

Northstar and ULA as Two Critical Case Studies

Unlike the previous chapter's concentration on a small, predominantly male Mexican American Employee Organization (MAO), this chapter focuses on two organizations identified as Northstar Artists Collective (Northstar) and United Labor Activists (ULA). As I will explain shortly, Northstar's and ULA's members possess different ethnic, gender, and, in some cases, socio-economic standing, than MAO's members. Additionally, Northstar and ULA operate in different organizational environments, than MAO does. Despite these differences, Northstar and ULA share with MAO a similar non-hierarchical structure, as well as a dedication to participatory democracy and labor issues. Furthermore, all three organizations met the criteria used for selecting critical case studies.

Northstar Artists Collective is a small, business collective seeking to instigate radical social change through art, while functioning as a participatory democratic workplace. Northstar strongly relates to and associates with the labor movement. United Labor Activists is an umbrella organization of labor activists rebuilding the labor movement in a progressive direction. The membership composition of these two small organizations differs from the case study of the preceding chapter. Northstar contains a 75% female membership and greater racial and ethnic diversity than MAO, while ULA is composed of 38% women and only one non-white member. Additionally, Northstar and ULA differ from MAO because neither organization operates in an environment where they currently or directly struggle for power and influence with an employer or co-workers. The obvious and immediate power struggles these two organizations possess pertain to Northstar struggling in a competitive market and ULA organizing across different unions to rebuild and energize the Labor Movement.

The Northstar Artists Collective and United Labor Activists critically test the Communication Cadre Theory, as described in the **Methodology** section of **Chapter 2: The Communication Cadre, Leadership, and Co-Optation**. Both organizations are located in a large metropolitan area of a midwestern state and the organizations are small. Four members comprise Northstar, while ULA contains fifteen members. The two organizations possess no elected or appointed leaders and both organizations practice participatory democracy. Members claim no individual or groups control internal or external communication and information flows. Furthermore, the members actively participate in organizational affairs. All of these preceding factors critically test the

Communication Cadre Theory's theoretical foundation that the control of communication, information, leaders, and co-optation are inter-related.

Many additional factors increase the rigor of these two case studies. First, Northstar's and ULA's members are politically aware and experienced individuals who consciously strive to make their organizations leaderless with open and transparent communication and information flows. All of Northstar's members are politically active in different organizations, communities, and movements with common interests in the local and national labor and peace movements. Similarly, ULA's members are all active in the labor movement at the local and national level. Second, both organizations strive to prevent any one person or small group from controlling their organization's communication and information flows. Third, members of both organizations stay informed about local and national economic, political, and social issues. Fourth, Northstar's and ULA's members exhibit strong commitments toward rebuilding the labor movement and adhere to a progressive labor platform. A platform that includes transparent lines of communication and information, as well as transparent decision-making processes. Fifth, ULA has operated for eleven years and the members believe they have avoided the problems of entrenched leadership and individuals controlling communication and information flows. Northstar, meanwhile, has existed for twenty-five years while seeking to maintain open lines of communication. Northstar differs from the other two case studies, in that they periodically recognize an organizational drift towards a non-hierarchical structure. As an organization and individuals they consciously and periodically grapple with establishing and maintaining a non-hierarchical organization.

I expect Northstar's and ULA's members, who possess political experience, commitment to a cause, a strong belief in participatory democracy, and dedication to creating a non-hierarchical organization with open lines of communication and information to be less likely to allow the development of entrenched leaders or an environment conducive for co-optation. As a final point, Northstar and ULA operate in the Midwest, a region where the Populist and Progressive Movements created strong and lasting political and social change. As a result, the Midwest is generally regarded as being less politically corrupt than other geographic regions of the United States. Consequently, one would expect entrenched leaders and co-optation to be less common in the Midwest than other regions, because oligarchy and co-optation represent corrupt forms of politics.

On the Lack of Co-Optation

This dissertation posits the theory that leaders rise to power and stay in power by controlling communication and information networks and that this creates an atmosphere conducive for co-optation to occur. The lack of co-optation in the following two case studies does not negate the central theory of this dissertation, because I theorize that the Communication Cadre Theory *creates* an atmosphere *conducive* for co-optation to occur, *not* that co-optation occurs or must be present. As the following case studies illustrate, the mechanisms for co-optation exist in these two organizations, but these two organizations and their members mitigate co-optation's occurrence through individual agency and organizational processes. Northstar and ULA do not exist in an environment where they currently and previously struggle for power and influence with an employer

or co-workers. Finally, the benefit of using cases where co-optation is not present maintains the objectivity of the study, which is necessary when discussing issues of co-optation, cooperation, and representation.

Identifying and Gaining Access to the Critical Case Studies

As the Methodology section of **Chapter 2: The Communication Cadre, Leadership, and Co-Optation** outlines, I conducted my search for critical case studies in a major Midwestern metropolitan area where my established and new contacts identified potential case studies. I contacted professors who specialized in local politics, unions, and community organizing, as well as community leaders and members of local non-profits and neighborhood organizations. The community contacts learned my dissertation's topic and the selection criteria used for identifying critical case studies. My contacts provided me with several organizations and contact information, as well as permission to use them as personal references. The ability to use my contacts as personal references proved invaluable in gaining access to the members of potential organizations for my case studies.

Only three organizations fit the critical case study selection criteria. The first case study, the Mexican American Employee Organization, was discussed in **Chapter 4: Protest and Organize**. The remaining two case studies, Northstar Artists Collective and United Labor Activists, are discussed in this chapter.

The Interviews

I initially gained access to the Northstar Artists Collective through a community contact who is active in the labor movement. I contacted Northstar and Victor, a Northstar founder, invited me to meet the organization during lunch. Due to the non-hierarchical nature of Northstar, Victor invited me to provide a very brief presentation about my research and to make my request to interview them in person. During our lunch meeting they asked me several questions regarding confidentiality, the types of interview questions I planned to ask, and if they had to answer all of the questions. I then explained what confidentiality meant, the types of interview questions I wanted to ask them, and I informed them they did not have to answer any questions that they did not want to answer, and that they could end the interview whenever they desired. After I answered their questions, they all agreed to let me interview them, and I scheduled interviews with all four members of Northstar.

I gained access to the United Labor Activists through Prof, a community contact who was a member of the organization. Prof invited me to give a brief presentation about my research and make a request to interview organizational members at their next meeting. At the meeting I was drafted to help stuff mailing envelopes, while they conducted their meeting and I made my presentation. The members of ULA asked several questions about the nature of my research and my background with the labor movement. A member of ULA then asked Prof if he would vouch for me. When Prof answered that he vouched for me and supported my request to interview members of ULA, everyone present at the meeting agreed to allow me to interview ULA's members.

Ten of ULA's fifteen members were interviewed. Due to the exceptionally high participation rates by ULA's members, the five members who were not interviewed were highly active in the organization. The interviews did not occur due to scheduling conflicts and the time constraints posed for completing this dissertation. Efforts taken to increase the validity of the analysis of ULA included the continued practice of confirming communication relationships²⁶⁷ and asking everyone interviewed to identify smaller communication and friendship networks within ULA. The results of this approach verified that the five non-interviewed members are very active ULA participants and closely linked to other members of ULA through regular interaction. What could not be determined without interviewing these five members is if they formed their own smaller sub-group within ULA. While this is a major concern, the high response rate by ULA's members helps offset this weakness.

The interview format was the same for all three case studies,²⁶⁸ MAO from the preceding chapter and Northstar and ULA from this chapter. The interviews were informal and structured to ask different sets of thematic questions. To encourage full and truthful answers, all of the people interviewed were guaranteed confidentiality. The interview questions were designed to seek information on their socio-economic standing, work environment, their organization, their organizing tactics, individual and group views, leadership, communication and information flows, and the organizational problems they faced.

²⁶⁷ Knoke 1996

²⁶⁸ See Appendix A for the interview protocol.

The case studies relied on interviewing Northstar's and ULA's members. In the following case studies, Northstar and ULA correspond to **Group A** of the Communication Cadre Theory. Unlike **Chapter 4: Protest and Organize**, there is no corresponding stronger **Group B** of the Communication Cadre Theory present or described. No immediate power struggle between Northstar or ULA with an immediate employer or co-workers previously occurred or was currently occurring for power or influence nor was co-optation present. In summary, this chapter's critical case studies analyze the communication and information flows in two small, highly participatory, non-hierarchical, organizations concerned with the labor movement.

Concepts and Actions

The following two case studies of the United Labor Activists (ULA) and Northstar critically test the communication cadre theory. Before analyzing the case studies using the CCT, critical political science elements centering on power, political processes, and decision-making will be looked at in light of the cases.²⁶⁹ Considering the diverse memberships of ULA and Northstar, we will then compliment the studies using ethnicity, race, class, and gender.

As research increasingly studies the intersections of race, ethnicity, class, and gender,²⁷⁰ racial and ethnic conceptualizations in the social sciences are generally limited to race or ancestry. Political Science appears more limited than other social sciences in

²⁶⁹ Garcia 1997b

²⁷⁰ Córdova, et al. 1986, Falcon 1988, Jackson 1991, McClain 1993, Sonenshein 1993, Torre and Pesquera 1993, Smith 1996, Walton 1997, Jaynes 2000

relying on two-dimensional definitions of race and ethnicity, Black or White.²⁷¹ Latino American, Asian American, and Native American Studies expanded race and ethnicity conceptually and operationally to include culture(s) as attitudes, values, and practices, in addition to bi-culturalism, social networks, and identity. While the conceptualization and operationalization of race and ethnicity has increased, the inclusion of multiple racial and ethnic groups as units of analysis or areas of study has been rare. Fortunately, exceptions do exist that expand the common two-dimensional use of race (i.e. Black and White) to be more inclusive of other racial and ethnic groups (i.e. Asian, Latino, and Native American).²⁷² The role Latinos played in President's Obama's 2012 election, has seen increasing interest and inclusion in recent political studies. While ULA's case study focuses specifically on a basically all White, majority male organization of labor activists, Northstar's case study focuses on an organization that is diverse across race, ethnicity, gender, and sexuality.

The role of gender and sexuality are less explored in this chapter and dissertation. The limited use of gender and sexuality analysis should not, however, be misconstrued to mean that gender and sexuality did not exert an influence on the events that occurred. Indeed, the lack of women in local, regional, and national union leadership reflects broader social realities in not only the labor movement, but U.S. society and politics, as well. As Vicki Ruiz points out in her groundbreaking, *Cannery Women, Cannery Lives*,²⁷³ gendered social roles in the home, society, and work, result in institutionalized

²⁷¹ Dahl 1961, Parenti 1967, Verba and Nie 1976, Wolfinger and Rosenstone 1980, Sonenshein 1993

²⁷² Falcon 1988, McClain 1993, Sonenshein 1993

²⁷³ Vicki Ruiz, *Cannery Women, Cannery Lives: Mexican Women, Unionization, and the California Food*

effects. The members of ULA identified strongly with their labor backgrounds, however, with the presence of women and their larger and more influential roles in ULA, their numbers still reflected the reality of the lower representation of women in union leadership. Northstar, on the other hand, with women comprising 3 of the 4 members (including a non-heterosexual), represents a much different organization and leadership, than the other 2 case studies and the broader U.S. society. While looking at and isolating the specific influences gender and sexuality played in the case studies and on the CCT are necessary, they go beyond the scope of this dissertation.

Social Structures

Social structures (i.e. political, economic, and social institutions) shape and influence ULA and Northstar. A focus of this dissertation is to connect the interactions of the Communication Cadre Theory with decision-making, motivations, and initiatives, in order to better understand how democracy operates within social organizations, society, and the federal system of government.²⁷⁴

Political Science's analysis of electoral participation provides rich data for studying the United States' electoral systems. An electoral system based on a plurality, winner-take-all system with at-large elections, off-year, and non-partisan elections and multi-member districts, and the difficulty for third political parties to be competitive are structural factors that have affected the number of female, working class, and non-White candidates (successful or not) in elections, racially polarized voting and campaigning, red

Processing Industry, 1930-1950. Albuquerque: University of New Mexico Press, 1987.

²⁷⁴ Hero 1992

baiting, representation, and governmental responsiveness.²⁷⁵ De la Garza, DeSipio, Gunier, Rosenstone, and Wolfinger all argue for methods to address the problems posed by a plurality, winner-take-all electoral system. The methods they argue for include single member districts, cumulative or proportional voting schemes, and community of interest consideration in re-distribution of district plans. Additionally, historical obstacles prevented Americans of Mexican, African, Asian, or indigenous backgrounds, as well as women, from voting or running in the electoral process.²⁷⁶

United Labor Activists' and Northstar Artist Collective's members were all experienced and active members in different social and peace movements, as well as formal and informal students of political, social, and labor history. As such, they were aware of structural factors and historical obstacles in the United States' electoral and political system. In the following case studies, it will be shown that ULA and Northstar engaged in democratic decision-making processes through town hall style meetings and voting.

Individual factors that contribute to political participation and power focus primarily on their individual resources, as evidenced by their SES or the linkage between individuals, organizations, and leaders. The SES, or socioeconomic status, variables focus on level of education, income level, and occupation and served as the main approach to understanding why individuals participate in politics.²⁷⁷ The strong

²⁷⁵ Dye and Zeigler 1975, Montejano 1987, Garcia 1988, de la Garza 1993, Rosenstone and Hansen 1993, de la Garza, et al. 1994, Parenti 1995, Rosenstone, et al. 1996

²⁷⁶ Key 1949b, Dye and Zeigler 1975, Bridges 1984, Walton 1985, Montejano 1987, Acuña 1988, Gómez-Quiñones 1990, Griswold del Castillo 1990, Rosenstone and Hansen 1993, Tocqueville 1994

²⁷⁷ Verba and Nie 1972, Verba, et al. 1995

correlation between SES and on the types and level of political participation by individuals are well documented. The relationship between SES and political participation for ULA's and Northstar's membership of Latinos, African American, Queer, and strong pro-Union members is not as strong. The work of John A. Garcia highlights how the inclusion of group consciousness and ethnic identification or the labor history research of Vicki Ruiz, provide additional variables for explaining the political participation of the members in these two groups.²⁷⁸ For ULA and Northstar, the additional factors Garcia and Ruiz highlight, such as group consciousness, a sense of belonging, and a desire to improve their group's condition, point towards a greater understanding of why their members became politically active. Additionally, the people in these two groups were overwhelmingly politically experienced in organizing in local, regional, or national social movements for labor or racial/ethnic causes.

ULA's and Northstar's political empowerment included structural factors, which influenced the how, why, and to what extent their membership participated. Political Science traditionally focuses on voting systems and representation²⁷⁹ and these two cases are no different. The members of these two organizations believed that the system they practiced, while flawed, enabled them to have an important voice in what each of their respective organizations. Additional structural variables that encouraged ULA's and Northstar's members to participate were the ability to meet on company time and property, as well as having access to high-ranking officials within their unions and with other unions both locally and nationally.

²⁷⁸ Ruiz 1987, Garcia 2001

²⁷⁹ Hero 1992

Lessons from Artists and Activists

Coalition Building

Work on how and to what level Latinos at the mass and elite levels interact across Latino and non-Latino groups are now available.²⁸⁰ The works point out that Latinos cooperating across Latino sub-groups and with non-Latino groups is more apparent at the elite level, than at the mass level, and reflects a more practical approach. With the advent of the Immigrant Rights Movement, however, coalition building by primarily young immigrant and Latino activists appears to be a mixture of practicality, idealism, and ideology.²⁸¹ As the Latino population grows and becomes more concentrated in urban areas, opportunities for coalition building with non-Latino groups increases.²⁸² Other communities of color such as, African Americans, Asian Americans, and Native Americans, are struggling for increased economic, political, and social power and they share similar policy concerns.²⁸³ Electoral coalition building and competition at the local and municipal level forms the main area of coalition building research, as coalitions form across groups and work for greater political power or competition between groups drives them apart.²⁸⁴

Northstar engaged in coalition building at the local and national level with activists in the labor, racial/ethnic, environmental, and anti-capitalist movements. In this

²⁸⁰ Jackson 1991, Sonenshein 1993

²⁸¹ Gonzales 2014

²⁸² Garcia 1997a, b, c

²⁸³ Ibid.

²⁸⁴ Jackson 1991, Sonenshein 1993

case, the high level of previous political experience in these diverse arenas among Northstar's members, the highly democratic nature of their organization, and the high demand for the graphic arts they produced for these causes continually forced them into mutually beneficial relationships with other groups and causes. Collectively, the preceding influences may serve as a marker for considering Northstar's members as elite political actors. While coalition efforts between the different workers at Northstar was seen as a workplace necessity to facilitate interpersonal relationships *and* future sales for their cooperative business, the collectivist and cooperative nature of this diverse group of workers coalesced into a set of consistent causes (i.e. movements) and set of beliefs into action. Northstar's member-workers exhibited two overwhelming opinions about coalition building. First, their members believed there was enough support from other groups to merit continued coalition efforts, which stand in stark contrast to MAO's experience in the previous chapter. Second, while Mao's members believed that Urban Inc. actively engaged in pitting the different groups of color in competition for jobs and company resources, Northstar's member-workers *were* the company because they ran their business as a democratic cooperative. Consequently, they set the agenda. Finally, they recognized that they were not immune to outside forces or internal biases that could lead them from their organizational model of a democratic cooperative.

While Northstar did not engage in active conflict with an employer, they recognized over time they always seemed to drift to less and less democratic and cooperative behaviors. Not unlike SNCC, they anticipated individual and organizational tendencies to create hierarchies.²⁸⁵ What sets Northstar apart from MAO in the previous

²⁸⁵ Carson 1981

chapter, is that the push for a communication cadre to be created came from within and was based on an extreme concern for their founder, Victor, who also had by far, the largest financial investment in the group. Meanwhile, external pressure for a communication cadre to develop, came from outside organizations Northstar worked with who identified Victor as the owner or “boss” and treated him as such, consequently relegating the other cooperative members to employee status.

Victor was highly aware of this and took pains to reassure the other members he saw them as all equal. He even told outside organizations calling to place an order or to seek their assistance in an organizing endeavor that they could do business with anyone who worked there because they were all equals at Northstar. Each member of Northstar understood the ideological and organizational reasons for how and why they operated as a highly democratic and cooperative venture. Northstar held regular bi-weekly “all staff” meetings to review where Northstar stood financially, what organizations or coalitions they were working with and why, as well as to creatively air ideas or questions they had about the business, potential new art projects, or about the latest political or organizing news. All their business and political decisions (e.g. which organizations to work with) were collectively discussed and made. In an effort to limit work hierarchies from developing, they regularly engaged in shadowing one another at work and sometimes, even, swapping work duties. Socially and politically, each member had at least one of their main political agendas as one of the coalitional areas Northstar was active in.

In interview after interview with each and every member of the organization, every member of Northstar continually brought up their concern that Victor had a young family with children (which no one else had) and he and his family would suffer

disproportionately, if their cooperative company went bankrupt. In the interviews, each member of the organization felt their voice was important, but the financial and personal reality of who would suffer the most, if they went bankrupt, resulted in them wanting Victor to have a greater voice in their collectivist decision making process, even if they did not agree with his ideas and decisions. Victor's role was more than the main financial backer (resulting in a 2nd mortgage on his home), he was also the main creative force for the graphic arts Northstar produced.

The evolving hierarchy was noticed by everyone at Northstar. As a former member of the Young Lords Puerto Rican social movement, Victor was painfully aware of it. Mojo, an anarchist and queer and people of color activist noticed it, Cleo the accountant and veteran of labor organizing noticed it, as well as the remaining members of Northstar. What is interesting and unique about Northstar is that each member was highly tuned to hierarchies, communication networks, and literally had training sessions at work on how to prevent hierarchies of power, privilege, information and communication sharing, and decision making from evolving.

According to the members, every 2-5 years, someone (usually Victor) would realize that once again, the members of Northstar were giving Victor greater and greater influence over decision making due to his financial stake and allowing most of their communication in-house and with external organizations to be filtered through Victor. All of the members realized that they each played a role in letting this communication cadre of 1 (Victor) evolve out of guilt and fear for the financial and familial risk he possessed. The external pressure for this communication cadre of 1 to evolve, according to the interviews, seemingly resulted from the other members wanting Victor as the main

nexus of communication and decision making to assume greater and greater responsibility. Mancur Olsen's, "the exploitation of the strong by the weak," comes to mind here.²⁸⁶ Concurrently, external pressure from external organizations to have an "identifiable" leader to talk to, seemingly embraced and maintained Victor in this role. While the story could end here, Northstar's members, including Victor, would collectively engage in dismantling this hierarchy and aggressively reinstating the non-hierarchical, democratic, cooperative model. New communication and information responsibilities would be created and Victor would remove himself temporarily from making decisions or refuse to share his ideas and vote last on everything for several months, all in an effort to destroy the hierarchy created from the control of communication and information and decision making.

ULA (United Labor Activists) faced similar problems as Northstar, even though they were not a cooperative business/organization. ULA was comprised of volunteers from several different unions who wanted to create an umbrella organization of progressive labor activists that was not hierarchical to lend support and aid for labor organizing and the labor movement. Given the extremely bureaucratic nature of labor unions in general,²⁸⁷ this was radically different from big labor hierarchical traditions, like the Teamsters and AFL-CIO. Once again, we see an organization with highly skilled and politically active members who create an organization to be as non-hierarchical and democratic as possible, to avoid entrenched leadership and the risk of co-optation. All of ULA's members were extremely active within their individual unions and in the labor

²⁸⁶ Olson 1971

²⁸⁷ Knoke 1996, Collier and Collier 2002

movement. Additionally, they were all seasoned union organizers with more than 20 years of experience each.

Ten of ULA's 15 active members were interviewed and several communication and information networks were present within this organization. Even with the presence of several communication networks and a very strong tendency by everyone interviewed to actively seek information from more than one network, all of the communication networks had one nexus in common, the man named Prof. In fact, the smaller communication networks were heavily dependent on Prof for their information and communication needs. What separates ULA from MAO is political agendas were remarkably consistent and outwardly focused on the "labor movement." Furthermore, with so many different unions represented in ULA and an ultra strong sense of solidarity and mutual support among the highly experienced members, it was difficult for outside organizations to pressure or strong arm the organization.

What separates ULA from Northstar, besides Northstar being a business, is that no member felt that another had a disproportionate investment in ULA and ULA members appeared more adroit at identifying when and why something might pose a threat to their non-hierarchical organization and collectively and more immediately discussing and resolving the threat. Despite both organizations existing for many, many years, ULA never waited several years to address a known organizational or interpersonal problem. The problem of a communication cadre developing in Prof, was mitigated by a firm commitment among all of the members to create several other communication and information networks, and to use them. While Prof still had an inordinate influence over communication and information flows, as identified by the members interviewed, ULA

members regularly verified the information he provided with their own knowledge or with people outside of the organization. What is important to see in the ULA case study, is that the communication and information cadre developed, but it was mitigated by an active and engaged membership that routinely verified said communication and information. Of the three case studies, ULA was the most successful at consistently maintaining their non-hierarchical structure and highly participatory membership, all the while staying focused on their core goal of advancing the Labor Movement.

Summary

As the preceding case studies of Northstar and ULA illustrate, individuals and organizational structures play crucial roles in providing two critical means for organizations to combat the creation of a communication cadre and the threat of co-optation. Northstar and ULA demonstrate the difficulty small organizations and individuals committed to full participatory democracy face in creating organizations that reflect their commitment. Both organizations grappled with creating and maintaining organizational policies and structures that fostered rank-and-file participation and guarded against the creation of a communication cadre or oligarchy. To this end, Northstar and ULA employed practices that actively sought rank-and-file input, avoided electing or appointing leaders, employed practices and multiple methods for distributing information, and diligently worked to ensure transparent lines of communication.

The diligence and difficult work of building an organization dedicated to full participation by all members, without entrenched leaders, highlights the importance of individuals. ULA sought to build and maintain such an organization, but the

organizational structure still resulted in the bulk of the communication responsibilities falling on one individual. While ULA's members knew Prof was at the nexus of communication and information flows and heavily relied on him for their communication and information needs, the multiple communication and information networks within ULA mitigated their complete reliance on Prof. Despite the members knowledge of Prof's role and their dependence on him within the organization, there was an acceptance of this organizational process. Why? Because ULA's members trusted Prof and individually they worked hard to participate in ULA's other communication and information networks.

Northstar's members, however, went beyond knowing they struggled as an organization to avoid entrenched leadership or individual(s) controlling communication and information flows. Northstar's members periodically grappled with creating and maintaining an organization structure that allowed everyone to participate and created transparent lines of communication. While all of Northstar's members acknowledged that Victor and Cleo were the *de facto* leaders of Northstar due to their financial and/or historical stake, all of the members engaged themselves in finding new ways to create an organization dedicated to full member participation without established leader(s) or controller(s) of communication and information flows.

ULA and Northstar demonstrate the crucial role individuals play in creating and maintaining organizations. While both organizations exhibit the mechanisms for a communication cadre and co-optation to exist, the individual members *and* unofficial leaders in both organizations remain dedicated to *and* active in achieving their

organization's mission, full member participation, open lines of communication, and no elected or appointed leaders.

CHAPTER 6

Summary and Conclusions on Communication Cadres, Leaders, and Co-Optation

This dissertation explored the existence and influence of communication cadres within the critical case studies and developed the Communication Cadre Theory (CCT). A theory that argued leaders rise to power and stay in power by controlling communication and information flows, which creates an environment conducive to co-optation. The Mexican American Employee Organization (MAO), United Labor Activists (ULA), and the Northstar Artists Collective (Northstar) provided three critical cases studies of the Communication Cadre Theory. The analysis of the case studies supported the arguments of the Communication Cadre Theory, even though these three organizations challenged the basic assumptions and components of the CCT. Briefly stated, these critical case studies espoused a dedication to non-hierarchical leadership, participatory politics, having no identified controllers of communication and information within the organizations, and small organizations with fewer than 20 very active members.

Summary of Case Studies

As the preceding case studies of Northstar, ULA, and MAO illustrated how individuals and organizational structures play crucial roles in the development and

influence of communication cadres on their organizations. As seen in the preceding chapter, Northstar Artists Collective and United Labor Activists provided two critical means for organizations to combat the creation of a communication cadre and the threat of co-optation. Northstar and ULA demonstrate the difficulty small organizations and individuals committed to full participatory democracy face in creating organizations that reflect their commitment. Both organizations grappled with creating and maintaining organizational policies and structures that fostered rank-and-file participation and guarded against the creation of a communication cadre or oligarchy. To this end, Northstar and ULA employed practices that actively sought rank-and-file input, avoided electing, or appointing leaders, employed practices and multiple methods for distributing information, and diligently worked to ensure transparent lines of communication.

The diligence and difficult work of building an organization dedicated to full participation by all members, without entrenched leaders, highlights the important influence individuals exert on their organizations. United Labor Activists sought to build and maintain such an organization, but the organizational structure still resulted in the bulk of the communication responsibilities falling on one individual. While ULA's members knew Prof was at the nexus of communication and information flows and relied heavily on him for their communication and information needs, the multiple communication and information networks within ULA mitigated their complete reliance on Prof. Despite the members knowledge of Prof's role and their dependence on him within the organization, there was an acceptance of this organizational process. Why? Because ULA's members trusted Prof and individually they worked hard to participate in ULA's other communication and information networks.

Northstar Artists Collective's members, however, went beyond knowing they struggled as an organization to avoid entrenched leadership or individual(s) controlling communication and information flows. Northstar's members periodically acknowledged and grappled with creating and maintaining an organizational structure that allowed everyone to participate and created transparent lines of communication. While all of Northstar's members acknowledged that Victor and Cleo were the *de facto* leaders of Northstar due to their financial and/or historical stake, all of the members engaged themselves in finding new ways to create an organization dedicated to full member participation without established leader(s) or controller(s) of communication and information flows.

ULA and Northstar demonstrated the crucial role individuals play in creating and maintaining organizations. Both organizations exhibited the structure of a communication cadre that controls communication and information flows, which creates an environment conducive for co-optation to exist. The individual members *and* unofficial leaders in both organizations, however, remained dedicated to *and* active in achieving their organization's mission of full member participation, open lines of communication, and no elected or appointed leaders.

The lack of co-optation in ULA and Nstar *does not negate* the central theory of this dissertation that leaders rise to power and stay in power by controlling communication and information flows, which creates an environment conducive for co-optation to occur. Both organizations exhibited communication cadres positioned at the nexus of communication and information networks, which created environments

conducive for co-optation to occur. I never argued co-optation always occurred, only that communication cadres create environments *conducive* for co-optation to occur.

The Mexican American Employee Organization (MAO) critical case study provided a classic case study consistent with the Communication Cadre Theory (CCT) and the manifestation of co-optation. MAO's communication cadres developed and evolved in importance as the organization aged and engaged in negotiations with Urban Inc. (The state agency that employed MAO's members). Despite (or because of) MAO's success, Urban Inc. sought to exert control over MAO's activities by demanding different rules and guidelines for negotiating Latino worker rights at Urban Inc. While Urban Inc. was not initially successful in forcing concessions from MAO, Urban Inc. succeeded in forcing MAO to limit who participated in negotiations from MAO's entire membership to a smaller and smaller group. Consequently, Urban Inc. helped create communication cadres in MAO and a favorable environment to co-opt MAO through patronage. The communication cadres and their supporters became appealing targets for Urban Inc. to co-opt, because the communication cadres controlled the Mexican American Employee Organization. The official communication cadre and its supporters benefited from patronage. Urban Inc., meanwhile, targeted the unofficial cadre for patronage in exchange for a decrease in their activity level or change in their policy position. Finally, supporters of the unofficial cadre were offered patronage to change their position.

While the communication cadre and a co-optive environment were present in MAO, alternative strategies to avoid these problems found little support. For example, a large organization would have an even harder time avoiding a communication cadre and a co-optive environment. Michels and Olson argued that the larger an organization was,

the greater its need for a division of labor and bureaucracy, which would compound the problem.²⁸⁸ A highly structured group with well-defined rules encourages hierarchy, which separates the group and actively creates a communication cadre and the opportunity for co-optation.

Conclusions

If a democratic government and a democratic society are mutually reinforcing and reflective, then what conclusions can be drawn from how society practices democracy with how that society practices government? This dissertation, *Communication Cadres, Leaders, and Co-Optation*, offered a new view of political development by coherently combining the study of political participation, representation, accountability, network theory, cooperation, and co-optation to analyze American political development. By comparing and contrasting how small, democratic, and highly participatory organizations governed themselves, this dissertation explored the implications for how these organizations practiced democracy with how democracy and participation are manifested in the United States.

The Communication Cadre Theory (CCT) developed in this dissertation argued that leaders rise to power and stay in power by controlling communication and information flows, which created an environment conducive for co-optation to occur. Furthermore, the dissertation reduced the conceptual stretching of “cooperation” and “co-optation” and applied the increased rigorous definitions to the case studies used, as well as competing political theories and studies. The results supported the Communication

²⁸⁸ Michels 1962, Olson 1971

Cadre Theory. The dissertation subsequently provided insight into competing political theories, studies, and biases affecting their research methods, arguments, and results.

While this dissertation had much to say about competing theories of politics, the CCT could not have been developed without other scholars' theoretical and historical work. As **Chapters 2 and 3** on the development of the Communication Cadre Theory and the literature review attest, research was and is built upon the earlier works of others. Much like the work of musicians and writers was influenced in known and unknown ways, this dissertation was influenced in known and unknown ways. The known influences on this dissertation may be found in the footnotes and bibliography. The unknown influences may be found in discussions with and writings by teachers, mentors, peers, activists, and the people who graciously agreed to be interviewed for this dissertation.

In this dissertation I argued that leaders rose to power and stayed in power by controlling communication and information flows (and networks), which created an atmosphere conducive for co-optation to occur. The dissertation theorized that this process occurred through both structural and individual means. Structurally, a tremendous organizational need pushed members of the organization to concentrate the organization's communication and information needs into a narrower and more specialized branch of the organization. The networks between organizational members became greater as the organization grew. Consequently, a smaller and smaller proportion of the organization's members were in contact with their organization's larger and broader communication and information needs and knowledge. In very large organizations and bureaucracies this organizational process was more easily observed,

while smaller organizations required a greater level of scrutiny to determine if this was the case. Despite the organizational tendency to decrease the amount of people in the communication cadre, individuals exerted a strong influence on who became a communication cadre member though choosing to pursue membership in the communication cadre *or* supporting individuals in their bid for membership in the communication cadre.

The role of the individual is often overlooked by structuralists and the role of structure is often overlooked by individualists, so much so, that a discussion here is not necessary.

In very small organizations the organizational tendency to limit membership in the communication cadre was not so obvious. Structurally it was easier for individuals to be aware of their organization's micro and macro communication and information needs and details. The need for organizational specialty was less apparent and the free-rider problem was more easily overcome. Individually, the network between organizational members was tighter and more complete, as well as the relationship between leaders and the rank-and-file. For very small, highly democratic, and participatory organizations the development of and need for a communication cadre that controlled communication and information networks appeared unwanted and unlikely.

The difference between large and small organizations is often one of degree and magnitude. While smaller organizations do not face the often overbearing need to centralize communication and information flows, smaller organizations do face a similar need. Several factors can contribute to the need to centralize communication and information flows, 3 factors observed in the case studies:

1. An individual or individuals sought to gain greater organizational power or control within their group, and
2. The organization was coerced to centralize communication and information flows by a stronger external organization that required a centralized person or office to communicate with, and
3. Organizational members decreased their involvement in the group's communication and information flows.

An additional factor, not seen in the case studies might be

4. The organization was engaged in multiple relationships with outside actors, increasing the organizational need to centralize its communication and information flows.

Communication Cadres, Leaders, and Co-Optation analyzed three critical case studies that supported the Communication Cadre Theory: leaders rose to power and stayed in power by controlling communication and information flows, which created an environment conducive for co-optation to occur. The Communication Cadre Theory proposed that controlling communication and information networks were mechanisms for the development of a communication cadre to control an organization by controlling that organization's communication and information flows. Once a communication cadre developed within an organization, an environment conducive for co-optation to occur was created, because it was easier and more efficient for an outside organization to co-opt a given organization by co-opting the communication cadre within that organization.

It must be stressed that co-optation was not an inevitable outcome of a communication cadre developing within an organization, merely that an environment conducive for co-optation to occur existed. The conceptual stretching and overlap of “cooperation” and “co-optation” was addressed in this dissertation to clarify their definitions and establish criteria for their use. I took a strong stand that biases among researchers and their less than rigorous use of these two terms necessitated a rigorous account for why a given situation was cooperation and not co-optation or co-optation and not cooperation. The model developed in **Chapter 2: Theory** provided an excellent start for eliminating the conceptual overlap and misuse of cooperation and co-optation. Future work by scholars on clarifying the conceptual overlap of cooperation and co-optation needs to be done.

The theory proposed that communication networks were mechanisms for the development of entrenched leadership (i.e. oligarchy) in organizations and created an environment conducive for co-optation to occur.

Specific points learned

The Communication Cadre Theory highlighted several consequences resulting from the control of communication and information flows. Briefly stated here, the consequences resulting from the control of communication and information flows were:

1. The options available for an organization’s members to choose from may be reduced,

2. The reduced options available for members to decide between limited their free choice (results in limited free choice),
3. The limits on free choice reduced the power of an organization's members, because an individual's free will to decide cannot make up for a lack of free choice,
4. Limited free choice limited democracy and democratic action,
5. An organizational elite took over the organizational function of controlling communication and information flows,
6. Created an environment conducive for the entrenchment of organizational leaders (oligarchy),
7. Created an environment conducive for co-optation to occur, and
8. Undermined the political power of the organization's members.

The Communication Cadre Theory highlighted several key factors and their impact.

1. Identified the importance of communication and information for political power,
2. Explained the danger of co-optation at an organizational and individual level,
3. Explained how and why oligarchy occurs,
4. Identified a reason for the creation of an organizational and communication elite,
5. Identified obstacles to an individual's freedom of choice,

6. Identified an obstacle to democracy and democratization, and
7. Identified organizational obstacles to communication and information sharing.

Co-optation does not always occur under the Communication Cadre Theory.

Variables that increased or decreased the probability of co-optation occurring were:

1. Pact-making, relationships, or communication with other groups.
2. Limiting the amount of membership and leader participation and communication or negotiations with other groups.
 - a. The appointment or election of individuals to these positions did not matter.
3. When GROUP A opposed GROUP B's policy or position.
4. GROUP A was deficient in resources vis-à-vis GROUP B that a leader or communication cadre craved or feared.
5. Patronage existed.
6. The organization was dependent on other groups or individuals for crucial resources.
7. A leader or communication cadre member was also in control or oversight of an influential subgroup or sub-function of GROUP A.
8. Static or entrenched leaders, communication cadre, or controllers of communication and information.
9. A dedicated, charismatic leader.
10. Term limits.

11. The oversight of communication and information controllers.
12. The presence of an environment open to ideological or practical change and evolution.
13. Organizational size.

Throughout the process of testing the communication cadre theory, a question continually lingered in the background. To what extent does democracy and representation exist in the presence of communication cadres?

Implications for Other Literature

The communication cadre theory helps us in identifying processes that occur within organizations.²⁸⁹

1. The identification of organizational problems through members and leaders demands for action,
2. The formulation of solutions through policy initiation and development,
3. The legitimation of those policies,
4. The implementation of the chosen policies by the organization, and
5. The evaluation of the implemented policies by organizational leaders and members.

²⁸⁹ Dye 1987

APPENDIX A

Interview Questions

Background Information

1. What is your job?
 - a. (If unemployed) What profession or type of job did you work in?
2. Where have you gone to school?
3. What is your age?
4. What organizations are you--or have you been--a member of?
5. Are you a member of Organization A?
6. How long have you been a member of Organization A?
7. What do you do in Organization A?
8. What is the purpose of Organization A?
9. How often does Organization A meet?
10. How is Organization A structured?
11. How many people are in Organization A?
12. How would you describe the members of Organization A?

The Leaders?

13. Who were the founders of Organization A?
14. Who does a lot of work for Organization A?
 - a. What do they do?
15. Who are the leaders of Organization A? [If no one is named, “Who do you consider a leader(s)? Who do you think people consider a leader(s)?”]
 - a. How were the leaders of Organization A chosen?
 - b. How long have they lead Organization A?
 - c. What are their qualities and skills?
 - d. What is their leadership style?
 - e. Are you comfortable with (the leaders named)?
 - f. Do you wish they did things differently?
 - i. Why? Or Why not?
 - g. What is their communication style like?
16. Who lead Organization A before the leaders you mentioned? [If no one is named, “Who do you consider a leader(s)? Who do you think people consider a leader(s)?”]
 - a. How were those leaders chosen?
 - b. Why are they no longer leading Organization A?
 - c. What were their qualities and skills?
 - d. What was their leadership style?

- e. Were you comfortable with them as leaders?
 - f. Do you wish that they did things differently?
 - i. Why? Or Why not?
 - g. What was their communication style like?
17. What other organizations or groups do you interact with?
- a. What types of organizations are they?
 - b. Who leads these groups? [If no one is named, “Who do you consider a leader(s)? Who do you think people consider a leader(s)?]
 - i. How long have they held that position?
 - ii. Do you know who lead the organization(s) you mentioned before their current leader?
 - c. Who do you talk to or communicate with from the organization(s) you mentioned?
 - d. Who talks or communicates with Organization A from the other organization(s) you mentioned?
 - i. How long have they been doing this?
 - e. Who talks or communicates to these other organizations you mentioned from Organization A?
 - f. What is there communication style like?
18. Are there other smaller groups or groups of friends in Organization A?
- a. Is there a leader(s) of these smaller groups? [If no one is named, “Who do you consider their leader(s)? Who do you think people consider their leader(s)?]
 - b. Who are they and how were they chosen?
 - c. How long have they lead this smaller group?
 - d. What are their qualities and skills?
 - e. What is their leadership style?
 - f. Do you wish they did things differently?
 - i. Why? Or Why not?
 - g. What is their communication style like?
19. Do you consider yourself a leader?
20. Do you consider yourself a leader in Organization A?
21. Do other people consider you a leader?
- a. Who are they?
 - b. Are they members of Organization A?
 - c. What organizations are they members of?
 - d. Why do they consider you a leader?
22. What are your qualities and skills?
23. What is (or would) your leadership style (be)?
24. Do you wish you could do things differently in Organization A?
- a. Why? Or Why not?
25. What is your communication style like?

The Communicators

26. How much communication is there between Organization A with other organizations or groups?

- a. Is there more or less communication with other organizations now or in the past?
 - b. Do you have any communication with outside groups?
 - i. How frequently?
 - ii. Who do you communicate with in outside groups?
27. Who communicates from Organization A with other groups?
- a. How were they chosen?
 - b. What are their qualities and skills?
 - c. Are you comfortable with them in this role?
 - i. Why or Why not?
 - d. Do you wish they did things differently?
 - i. Why or Why not?
 - e. What is their communication style like?
28. How do the leaders of Organization A get information from [the communicators] with outside groups?

Leaders, Communicators, and Group Views

29. What would you like to see Organization A do?
30. If you were in charge of Organization A, what would you do?
- a. How would you do it?
31. What do the leaders do for you?
- a. How?
 - b. Why?
32. What are the views of the leaders of Organization A you mentioned?
33. What are the views of [the communicators] of Organization A you mentioned?
34. What views or beliefs do the other members have about Organization A and what Organization A should do?
- a. How do you find out or learn what the members' views are?
 - b. Who do you get this information from?
35. Who do you talk to in Organization A?
36. How do you get information about Organization A or things that are happening that involve Organization A?
- a. Who do you get this information from?
 - b. Do other members in Organization A get their information from the same person or people?
 - c. Who are they?
37. What happens when there are different ideas or opinions about what should be done or how it should be done in Organization A?
- a. Why do people have these different opinions?
 - i. Who, usually, has different opinions?
 - ii. How would you describe these different opinions? Are these different opinions about certain areas, issues, or people?
 - iii. What would you like to see happen when people have different opinions?
 - iv. How are you treated when you have different opinions?
38. What are some of the perks or benefits of being a leader?

39. What are some of the perks or benefits of not being a leader?
40. What problems are there with Organization A?
41. Who are some members who left Organization A?
 - a. Why did they leave Organization A?
 - b. How would describe them?
 - c. Do you keep in contact with them?

Referrals To Other Members

42. What other members of Organization A can you refer me to?
 - a. How can I contact them?
43. What former members of Organization A can you refer me to?
 - a. How can I contact them?
44. Is there anything else that you think I should know or that you would like to tell me?

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