

THE FRAMES AND TACTICS OF THE WOMEN'S
REPRESENTATION MOVEMENT

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THESIS

Submitted in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Master of Arts in Sociology
at The University of Texas at Arlington
MAY 2022

Arlington, Texas

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ABSTRACT

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Studies of social movements have yet to examine the modern women's political representation movement, a social movement industry made up of nonprofit organizations, foundations, activist groups, and political action committees aiming to create gender parity within U.S. political systems. Using in-depth interviews with fifteen leaders of organizations within the women's representation movement, this study reveals multi-faceted dynamics at play when tactics and frames are developed within organizations of this social movement industry. Findings reveal that frame and tactical development are influenced by several key factors, such as: cohort collaboration, funders, an established hierarchy of old versus new social movement organizations competing for resources, and the professional experiences held by movement leaders. This study also finds an unexpected connection between perceptions of the partisan nature of the movement's frames and tactics and women's experiences in the movement. By shedding light on how frames and tactics are developed, I am contributing to both our understanding of successful organizational practices within the movement, and the overall process of frame and tactic development within social movement scholarship.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

This work represents the final step in my journey to obtain a Master of Arts in Sociology, and I would like to take this time to thank everyone who made this possible. I'd like to extend my deepest gratitude to my thesis committee. Dr. Kelly Bergstrand, my committee chair, offered unwavering support throughout my time in the program, and most especially while I trudged through this project. Life has been relentlessly unpredictable throughout my time working with Dr. Bergstrand, and she has never once made me feel anything less than capable of doing it all with grace and persistence. I'd like to thank Dr. Beth Anne Shelton for taking on the task of serving on my thesis committee despite having little experience with my work; her feedback on the topic was instrumental in guiding my focus. I would like to thank Dr. Robert Kunovich for serving on my thesis committee and for his patient guidance throughout my time in the graduate program at UTA. I thank Dr. Heather Jacobson, Dr. David Arditi, and Dr. Jason Shelton for their parts in instilling in me a confidence in my abilities that I did not have when I arrived in the MA program. Each offered insight, guidance, and opportunities that nurtured my growth as a scholar. Thank you all for your kindness; I will miss our conversations in and in-between classes! To those within the movement who selflessly gave of their time, knowledge, and resources to help see this project through- you know who you are, and you have my deepest gratitude.

DEDICATION

To my Maya- you made every step of the way brighter with your sweetness and spiciness and reminded me every day of why this was worthwhile. To my love and husband, Bryan McNelis. I simply cannot thank you enough for the stability you have brought into my world that has made this possible for me to accomplish. Thank you for showing up through it all. I love this life we have made together, and I love you dearly. Finally, I would like to dedicate this work to my soulmate and compass- my Mom. Te quiero mucho, Marmie.

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INTRODUCTION

On August 26, 2020, the U.S. celebrated one hundred years of women's suffrage. Passed on August 25, 1920, 27 years after the first women's convention at Seneca Falls, the 19th Amendment served as a turning point for the women's movement, ushering it out of first wave feminism and into a period of abeyance (Paxon and Hughes 2014; Taylor 1989). The women's liberation movement of the 1960's and 1970's was the first activist stirrings of the modern women's representation movement, where the primary focus of activist activity is on women's participation in the governing of local, state, national and international political life. Women's political representation around the world, and in the U.S., is bleak. With only twenty-four countries around the world with women serving as the head of state, the United Nations estimates that it will take 130 years for the globe to reach gender equality in the highest positions in political power (UN Women 2020). When ranked according to the percentage of women serving in parliaments around the world, or in the case of the U.S., the House of Representatives and the Senate, the United States falls at number 82 with only 23.4% of House seats and 25% of Senate seats being held by women.

Paul Almeida (2019) classifies the women's movement as a national social movement that addresses many social issues and is made up of conglomerations of social movement organizations (SMOs). Female political representation fits as one of the many social issues addressed by the women's movement in the U.S. and is addressed by the grouping of SMOs within the women's movement that I will herein refer to as the women's representation movement. Groups and organizations in the women's representation movement are engaging in "tactical repertoires" (Taylor and Van Dyke 2004:265). Some of these tactics include gathering data from public databases, surveys, semi-structured interviews, or publicly accessible content

and then compiling and reporting them in novel ways with the intent to educate a wide audience. Others include providing motivational and educational opportunities to women, lobbying, public protests, advocating for policy changes and funding organizational and individual grants. Simultaneously, the problem of a lack of women's representation in the U.S. and its possible solutions are developed and disseminated by leadership within the organization through a creative framing process (Almeida 2019; Snow and Benford 2000).

This research seeks to understand the sources that are used to develop the frames that inform the tactics used by organizations within the women's representation movement today. Additionally, I seek to understand the creative process of developing frames. My research questions include the following: What does the process of developing frames and tactics look like for social movement organizations (SMOs) in the women's representation movement? Are leaders within SMOs developing frames and tactics collaboratively with other members of their organization; with other organizations within their or other movements, or both? What role, if any, do funder's goals influence what frames and tactics are disseminated by the organization?

LITERATURE REVIEW

Social Movement Organizations: Diffusion, Emergence and Coalition-Building

Social movements are defined as groupings of populations taking any number of collective actions to alter certain elements of society (Zald and McCarthy 1987). In Jenkins' (1983) conversation on the theoretical evolution of popular social movement theories in the U.S., he narrows the definition of social movements to collective behavior focused on structural change as opposed to collective behavior focused on personal improvement or growth. Zald and McCarthy define a social movement organization (SMO) as a "complex, or formal, organization that identifies its goals with the preferences of a social movement or countermovement that

attempts to implement these goals” (Zald and McCarthy 1987:20). Scholars in social movements and organizations take the definition of an SMO a step further to posit that SMO existence is precluded by the establishment of an organizational framework and is something that can only be accomplished with successful and sustained time in the field of work (Davis et al. 2005).

Social movement analysis turned toward organizational studies in the second half of the 20th century to develop theoretical and linguistic tools to study the impact and structure of the organizations that were increasingly representing social movement activity in the U.S. (Davis et al. 2005). Work born out of this marriage has shown that movement success and the opportunity for new movements to emerge is positively correlated with the expansion and societal entrenchment of SMOs (Minkoff 1997). Diffusion studies as applied to social movement industries (SMI) offers models for measuring if practices and procedures within one SMO spread to other SMOs within the industry, making it possible to examine social structures at work and the construction of meaning at play (Strang and Soule 1998). Meyer, Davis and Tarrow (1998) consider a social movement “institutionalized” when organizations take on the use of political action to further the cause as opposed to protest politics, and when presence within a society has been firmly established. Some scholars also refer to SMIs, or social movement industries, which are groupings of SMOs whose organizational aims align with the same social movement. There are also social movement coalitions, which refer to the collaborations and pooling of resources by multiple organizations within or outside of a movement (Van Dyke and Amos 2017).

Social movement scholars have examined SMOs from a macro perspective in their work on social movement coalition formation and efficacy (Feree and Roth 1998; Levi and Murphy 2006; Van Dyke and Amos 2017). In a study examining the 1999 protests in Seattle, Washington, Levi, and Murphy (2006) identify the varying ways that coalitions form. Event

coalitions, like the ones that Levi and Murphy studied in 2006, form in response to a particular event in time. In an audit of the literature on social movement coalitions conducted in 2016, Van Dyke and Amos identify the construction of the coalition and the institutions that those organizations target as strongly influencing whether a coalition is successful (2017:9).

Resources, Patronage, and Leadership in Social Movements

The resource mobilization perspective looks to strategic tasks and available resources that need to be examined to understand the how and why of social movement impact (Zald and McCarthy 1987). For example, important factors include recruiting and mobilizing of supporters and funds, creating, monitoring, and evaluating targets, and the political and competitive life among organizations within a social movement to explain SMO activities and their resultant outputs (McCarthy and Zald 1977). From this perspective, social movements, and the organizations within them, make up formal movements that strategically deploy actions that are geared toward specific and measurable goals with a centralized control of resources (Jenkins 1983). Emergent from this model has been an on-going focus on resources within social movement studies, with general flexibility as to what constitutes a resource and a scholarly understanding that resources will vary from SMO to SMO. For each SMO studied, it is up to the researcher to identify the resources salient to their organization of study (Cress and Snow 1996). For example, cultural factors can affect resources. Todd Nicholas Fuist (2013) laid out a typology of how culture influences collective behavior. The consideration of culture within sites, culture as resources, and culture within wider contexts, helps to simplify the process deciphering the different resources at play within a movement.

Resources play an integral part in defining the work of an SMO. Cress and Snow (1996) identify two important factors to consider when working to identify key resources for a particular

SMO or social movement. First, each SMO's resources are unique to that organization and that social movement, making it necessary to empirically identify the resources used by an SMO. Second, Cress and Snow (1996) call for a honed consideration of resources as they directly connect to the outcomes, or mobilization, produced by an SMO. In short, when identifying resources, pay close attention to how they affect what any organizations call their mission and vision.

Funders in the form of foundations, organizations, individuals, and public entities provide an essential resource, but it is also a role that opens the door for these entities to exert influence over programming produced within the organizations they are funding. Corrigan-Brown (2016) examines how the relationship between funders and SMOs affects not only the tactical repertoire, but the very structure of the organization itself, pointing to the need for consideration of the funding relationships an SMO engages in to better understand their tactical repertoire. Special consideration must be given to where the resources are coming from, which opens the inquiry to questioning who and what entities within and outside of the organization hold power over decision-making processes. To name a few, SMOs receive their operating income from foundations, other organizations, state, or federal infrastructure in the form of grants, or individuals. This patronage has been shown to affect the ways that SMOs operate and develop, but little has been shown that points to funding acting as a controlling force within SMOs (Jenkins and Eckert 1986).

While the value of leadership within SMOs and social movements as a whole has been little explored in social movement studies, some work is of note in our conversation about resources within SMOs. Marshall Ganz (2009) drew from resource mobility theory, social psychological theories, and cognitive sociological theories to develop a framework for

examining the resource value of “strategic leadership” (1009) and how this resource affects the formation, development, and success of a social movement. Under his framework, strategy is a way of framing information coming in in accordance with the personal skills that leaders have at their disposal. For leadership in social movements, “Strategy is how we turn what we have into what we need-by translating our resources into the power to achieve purpose” (Ganz 2000:1010). In matching what he identifies as factors that influence a leader’s strategic capacity, Ganz (2000) identifies salient knowledge, heuristic processes, and motivation as conditions by which a group or organization can have strategic capacity.

In Van Dyke and Dixon’s work on “activist human capital” (2013:197) the long-term strategic value of educating and bolstering professional networks of students and interns, can create pools of skillful and motivated organizers that indivertibly contribute to the strategic capacity of employees within SMOs. Similarly, Nepstad and Bob (2006) look to international social movements to observe “leadership capital” as being part cultural, part social and part symbolic in presentation.

Frames and Tactical Repertoires

The concept of tactical repertoires provides a framework for looking at the activist activities deployed by an SMO for the purpose of developing a deeper understanding of the links between those making decisions within the SMO, the movement at large, and opponents outside of the movement (Taylor and VanDyke 2004). Taylor and Van Dyke (2004) define a tactical repertoire as the tools of activism chosen by an activist organization at a particular moment in history. Research has shown that ideology and collective identity must be considered when examining the impact that the participants within an organization can have on the tactical repertoires deployed by the SMO (Jasper and Poletta 2001).

Much of the work done by SMOs within the women's representation movement places a strong emphasis on candidate training programs (CTP) (Maille 2015). Consequently, much of the research conducted by social scientists examining the impact of the work done by organizations within the women's representation movement looks to the effects of CTPs. Gordon (2021) uses collective action frames and social movement mobilization theories to explain a steep rise in women signing up to take a CTP, a commonly offered resource provided by organizations within the women's representation movement. Bernhard, Shames and Teele (2021) uses a pool of women that have participated in a CTP to further understanding of political ambition, while Scott (2018) examines CTPs ability to foster political ambition.

Framing concepts originally constructed by Erving Goffman were applied to SMO activities by Snow, Benford, and their colleagues. They developed a theoretical framework through which an issue or problem can be examined as an essential tool to understanding an SMO (Klandermans and Oegema 1987; Snow et al. 1986). Collective frames turn actors within SMOs into active participants who create and perpetuate meaning for those around them, including fellow activists with and against them, and the world at large. They are the tools by which SMOs recruit people and incite them to act for the sake of the cause and serve as an essential tool in shaping how a movement is presented to the wider public and how well a movement produces the desired outcome (Almeida 2019).

Benford and Snow (2000) define core framing tasks as the fundamental categories of the type of information, programming, or media presentation that SMOs generate in their work. Diagnostic framing refers to not only the identification of the problem, but who is to be held responsible for the perpetuation of the problem. These disagreements impact organization's ability to mobilize (Holman and Schneider 2016). Understanding the problem as a whole and

who is to blame for causing it are influenced by personal perspectives, historical understandings, and cultural norms, so it stands to reason that this framing task is a complex process that must be negotiated within and amongst SMOs.

Prognostic framing proposes a solution as it is defined by the collective culture within and around the SMO (Snow and Benford 2000). This also involves the calculated efforts to stay aware of and address the opposition's ideas. Scholarly work examining the work done by SMOs within the women's representation movement has been critical of candidate training programs (CTP), as they frame the problem too strongly as one that originates from a dysfunction of women themselves and too little on the "political structures that might generate exclusion" (Maille 2015:16).

Finally, motivational framing is the "call to arms" component of the SMO's collective frame (Benford and Snow 2000). This aspect includes the language that is used to instigate collective action and give activists reason to continue to act (Benford and Snow 2000). Talking about the severity of a problem, invoking a sense of urgency, espousing the efficacy of the actions taken in combating the transgression, and appealing to a sense of propriety, or the feeling of the rightness of one's action; all provide SMO participants with reasons to act and continue acting.

In this study of the leadership within organizations that make up the women's representation movement I aim to answer the following questions: What does the process of developing frames and tactics look like for social movement organizations within the women's representation movement? Are there collaborative efforts within and outside of the organizations shaping frames and tactics, and what role does patronage play in shaping them?

METHODS

Through qualitative interviews with executive leaders of SMOs within the women's representation movement I seek to understand what sources of information are informing their frames and tactical repertoires, and what that process looks like within their organization. I conducted qualitative interviews with fifteen executive leaders currently working in non-profit organizations within the women's representation movement.

In my time working as a researcher for a nonprofit organization within the movement during the summer and fall of 2021, I gained knowledge about the types of organizations participating in this movement and developed network connections that later facilitated participant recruitment. I knew that this is a small community that relies on each other for support when filling seats for events or panels, so for me to reach out through email was reasonable and proved to be a successful recruiting tool. Most of the contact information I used was public, as I found it on organization's websites, but several came through the connections I had made in the field. Three interviews came about through a snowball sampling method, where participants I interviewed connected me with peers in their network to recruit for my project. Other interviews were secured by connecting through LinkedIn.

I learned of the political life amongst organizations within the women's representation movement from my experience working with the organization, and that informed my decision to de-identify all information in this study. To gather useful information on what these women believe to be the influencing factors of their organizational decision-making practices, I needed to be able to assure them that theirs and their organization's anonymity would be protected. To do so, I used pseudonyms for each woman and the organization she works within.

The purpose of this case study is to understand what sources of information guide the frames and tactics used by organizations within the women's representation movement. Use of a grounded theoretical approach for this case study allows for the guided interviews to produce a more thorough understanding of the decision-making phenomenon that shapes the work and subsequently the impact of the organizations within the women's representation movement.

As previously discussed, much work has been done by social scientists on the contours of women in political leadership positions, but how and if this work is reaching the ears and minds of the executive leadership within SMOs of the women's representation movement has not been examined. As the interviewer, I guided the interview with questions that aimed to understand the ways that strategic plans and programs are designed and what key factors influence how decisions are made within the organization.

Data

All fifteen participants of my study identify as female, fall between the ages of 18 and 50 years old, hold at least a bachelor's degree, and report to spend 50% to 100% of their time working from home. Racially, the sample was 64% white, 21% Latinx, 14% Asian, and 7% Native American. Most of the women I spoke with make their living working within the women's representation movement, but 29% have full-time jobs outside of the work they do within the movement that they rely on as their main source of income. Please see Table 1 for more information.

The organizations that these women represent are nonprofit organizations that fall into one of three tax status categories. The differences amongst them primarily center around the kind of political work that they can do based on their status as a nonprofit. 501(c)(3) organizations have the most amount of oversight over what kind of political and legislative activity they can

engage in. 527 organizations are defined by their ability to function within politics, and 501(c)(4) organizations have some barriers to their ability to engage politically but with less stringent reporting requirements than 527 organizations (for more information please see Appendix). These organizations provide an array of programming to their members. The most common type of programming found in these organizations are candidate training programs (CTPs), wherein they arm women with knowledge on an array of topics from candidate filing to media training and every topic in between. Some of these organizations provide this training free to their members, while others charge a fee anywhere from \$50 to \$400 plus travel and hotel expenses. CTPs can be partisan or nonpartisan, address the candidacy stage of a political run or the legislative stage of a political run. Other types of programming include conducting research, producing publications, policy advocacy, writing grants for organizations and/or individuals or endorsing political candidates. This study gave me access to fourteen different organizations within the women's representation movement. My sample is made up of 57% 501(c)(3) organizations, 21% 501(c)(4) organizations, and 21% political actions committees or 527 organizations. Please see Table 2 for more information on these organizations including the political orientation they identify with, if any, and the types of programming they provide to their members.

TABLE 1: Descriptive Statistics of Statistics

Variable	Frequency	Percent
Income		
<i>Between \$45,000 and \$80,000</i>	4	27%
<i>Between \$80,001 and \$170,000</i>	3	20%
<i>Between \$170,001 and \$400,000</i>	3	20%
Participant's Main Source of Income		
<i>From work in women's representation movement</i>	9	60%
<i>From work outside of women's representation movement</i>	5	33%
Work Arrangement		
<i>Work in person</i>	0	0%
<i>Work virtually</i>	7	47%
<i>A combination of in-person and virtual</i>	6	40%
Highest Level of Education		
<i>B.A. or B.S.</i>	7	47%
<i>M.A. or M.S.</i>	3	20%
<i>J.D.</i>	1	7%
<i>PhD</i>	2	13%
Race		
<i>Asian</i>	1	7%
<i>Black</i>	0	0%
<i>Latino</i>	3	20%
<i>Native American</i>	1	7%
<i>White</i>	10	67%
<i>Other</i>	0	0%

TABLE 2: Descriptive Traits of Women’s Representation Organizations in Sample

Organization Pseudonym	Tax Status	Year Est.	Political Orientation	Programming Provided
D.C. Women Run	501-c4	2017-present	Republican	Research, Training
Emerging Leaders	501-c4	2017-present	Republican	Training
Equity Assessment	501-c3	2017-present	Nonpartisan	Publications, Research
Funding for Representation	501-c3	2017-present	Non-partisan	Grants, Endowments
Latinx Engage	501-c4	2017-present	Democrat	Training, Policy Advocacy
Latinx Unite	501-c3	2017-present	Democrat	Research, Training, Grants, Endowments
Leadership for Women	501-c3	2017-present	Republican	Research, Training, Grants, Endowments
Republican Women Run	PAC (527)	2000-2016	Republican	Training, Endorsements
Run Win Lead	501-c3	2000-2016	Democrat	Publications, Training, Research
The Equity Research Institute	501-c3	2017-present	Nonpartisan	Publications, Research, Policy Advocacy
Vote Run Serve	501-c3	Pre-2000	Nonpartisan	Training
Women Emerge	501-c3	2017-present	Republican	Training
Women Run and Lead	PAC (527)	2000-2016	Democrat	Training, Endorsements
Women's Political PAC	PAC (527)	pre-2000	Democrat	Training, Advocacy, Endorsements, Grants, Endowments

Analysis

Fifteen interviews were recorded, transcribed, and coded for themes using open codes and a grounded theoretical approach (Glaser and Strauss 2017). Following each interview, I wrote thematic memos to capture first impressions and thoughts I had on the conversation with the participant. I then applied open codes to each interview to identify broad themes across and finally conducted another round of focused coding. I used Zoom to host and record, Otter.ai to transcribe, and ATLAS.ti to write and organize my memos and create open codes. Additionally, I surveyed each participant, and gathered descriptive data on the state of the organizations within the women's representation movement.

RESULTS

Frame and tactic development focused strongly on collaborations within the movement. Interview participants stressed the tactical importance of funding relationships within the women's representation movement. The influence of interactions, or in some cases the lack thereof, between organizations that are new to the movement, and those that have been working in this space for decades, was a common theme that arose in discussion with participants. Participants emphasized the important need to consider personal and professional experiences of leadership to understand what is motivating and informing framing and tactical decisions. Finally, interviewees brought to light the existence of a partisan movement culture.

Cohort Collaboration Shaping Frames and Tactics

I observed a strong tendency for program developers and organization leadership to collaboratively develop frames and tactics with other organizations that exist within the movement. These collaborations range from strategically defined within an organization's core

functions, as is the case with *Funding for Representation*, an organization whose tax definition is as a “collaborative fund”, to covert and “shameful” as Amy Sanchez put it when she talked about how she and her partner of their small 501-c3, *Equity Assessment*, “will kind of catch on to what they [other organizations within the movement] are doing and see what we're missing, what they're trying to bring to the table that we don't have, and whether we have the capacity to bring it.” Several women I interviewed spoke openly about the need to collaborate within the movement to make progress, while others saw collaboration in framing and tactical development as opportunities for diverse sets of communities of women to support each other, which also moved the movement forward. Frankie Duncan, the president, and CEO of a large 501-c3 said:

For my community, it's good that they see that we have these relationships with other women of color, and other women of different political spectrums, because it helps them to better understand to, you know, when they're on the campaign, you know, how are they addressing these kinds of issues, and working with one another, and so that's also part of that intersectional piece, too.

Leadership for Women is another organization that uses collaboration amongst movement organizations as a tactical repertoire. Established in 2017, the nonprofit, *Leadership for Women*, is one of the three organizations whose executive leadership I spoke with that awards grant money to individuals and groups of individuals who want to establish a new organization to work towards gender equity in political representation. Interestingly, this organization identifies as center-right in their political affiliation, a term used by folks in the movement to identify someone who identifies themselves as moderate Republicans. *Leadership for Women* only funds other organizations that are center-right in political affiliation. I had the opportunity to speak to three women whose organization used their grant money from *Leadership for Women* as seed money for their organization. Tabitha Menzie, the Director of *Funding for Representation*

established in 2018, laid out the impetus for her organization's establishment, placing collaboration between organizations of the movement at the front and center.

We were launched after the 2018 election, which I'm sure you know, as the second year of the woman after 1992, recognizing that women had made great strides, but that women were still only about 25% of elected officials at the time, and that it had taken us 100 years to get to that point and not wanting to go another 100 years to reach gender parity...So we needed to increase the number of women running, which led us to look at these pipeline organizations. And we found two primary areas of concern. And the first was that they were not working together that they shared the same mission, right, that they all wanted to increase the number of women in elected office, but they weren't coordinating their efforts. And in fact, there was oftentimes a competitive nature that was arising among these groups. And in fact, that competitiveness is derived from the secondary finding that we had and that was that the groups were dramatically underfunded. And when there is a lack of funding in a space, organizations have to compete amongst themselves for that limited funding.

This tendency to collaboratively create frames and tactics with other organizations in the movement; whether that is explicit by creating collaborations, or implicit by taking an idea or set of ideas that one organization in the movement is using and either recreating it in their own vision or using the idea outright, is one that has the tendency to replicate programs and frames. This echo-chamber has its pros and cons. This dissemination of ideas means that policies and practices that work well are dispersed amongst the organizations and made more widely available across regional, socio-economic, and racial groups. Each of the organizations serve different populations with different demographics. Some organizations cater to women who have established careers within certain fields, while others develop their products for specific age groups. When borrowed tools or ideas are applied to an organization's specific population, more diverse groups of people are exposed to the information. Conversely, the tendency to rely heavily

on what is currently being done amongst the cohort of organizations can lead to a stagnation of ideas entering the movement, and subsequently hinder movement progress.

The Old Guard vs The New within the Women's Representation Movement

There is a lively dynamic between organizations that are established as the old guard versus organizations that are new within the women's representation movement. It is important to note that about 85% of the organizations that were represented in my sample were established between 2007 and 2020, and these organizations represent the new guard in my discussion here. The remaining 15% of my sample of organizations is what I consider in this analysis the old guard, as they represent organizations that have been established and functioning within the field of women's representation in the U.S. for over two decades. This distinction is important to note because along with the lifetime of their organization being different from most of my sample, when I probed topics such as leadership roles, funding relationships and collaborations outside of their organization, the women who represent these old guard organizations gave me much different responses than what I received from the women who represent the new guard organizations. While conversations around funding were not always transparent as I previously noted, I did find consistency within the responses of the women who represent the old guard organizations. Where the new guard of the cohort responded with acknowledgment of the complexity of funding relationships or with outright ambiguous language, the old guard responded with what was conveyed as a deep sense of confidence. When I probed Frankie Duncan on what kind of influence funders have over programming at her organization she referred directly to her professional experience and community contacts saying:

...the organizations that are funding us... you know, they might not have any relationships to my community. And so, you know, I think it's a lot harder for them to say, "Well, I think you should do this." And, well, no, I don't, because that's not going to work in my community. I think it's a lot more flexible, because they know that I am a person who's been in my community for a long time, and also in politics and civic engagement. So, for you to tell me how I'm supposed to do something isn't going to work, if I'm telling you, that's not gonna work. I think they are trusting me to know, you know, my community and how to best communicate with them, so that we can bring about results.

Jackie Jones is the Programs Director representing an organization established before the year 2000. When I questioned Jackie about how her organization measures success, she said:

I think one thing that we're able to refer to is the women that we've endorsed, and that are still kind of our candidates moving forward after their endorsement. We have women that we've endorsed for years...we don't even really have to say, we're successful. It's just like "Oh, look who's coming [to our events]."

Every organization that fell into the category of the new guard when questioned about how they measure success in their organization said that they collected data in house, with the assistance of an outside data firm, or planned to either do one or the other soon when they could establish that kind of structure to their new organization. While old guard organizations still must lobby for money for their organizations in the same way that new guard organizations do, the process by which they go about doing that is far less formal. This informal process of relying on previous successes that are easy to quantify

because they are visible to the public eye removes the need for organizational structure that the new guard organizations need to invest their time and money in.

Patronage Shaping Frames and Tactics

Interview data pointed to the need to consider funding relationships within the nonprofit model of social movements as an influential theme. Much like Tabitha pointed out, Polly Fox, the Director for *Institute*, claimed that more collaboration is needed in this space because “...having few funders invites an unhealthy amount of competition between a large pool of organizations.” It stands to reason that as these new organizations establish themselves in the landscape of the broader political scene they might combine efforts to increase bargaining power. But while these younger organizations seek to establish themselves, there is a sect of old-guard organizations within the movement that finds little reason to collaborate, as their political power has been firmly established by time and big-name political wins.

Lenora Dhalia spoke explicitly about the role that funding has in identifying an organization’s measures of success: “And some of the ways that we are measuring success have a lot to do with our funders, right? Because that's, that's how we exist and how we operate, you know, is on donations. And a lot of those are from foundations.” This relationship between whether an organization is considered successful and the measurements as they are determined by funders can be a fickle relationship. None of the women I spoke to expounded on any negative impacts of their relationships with funders, and some went as far as to completely reject the idea that their funders have any sway as to what they produce and how they operate. As the director of *Leadership for Women*, Sarah Fitzpatrick has direct access to the pipeline of funding that her organization uses as seed money for state-based organizations to start their work of

supporting Republican women in politics. She spoke directly of factors driving the funding relationships between large dollar foundation donors and organizations within the movement:

Yeah, I would say that our funders are supportive of us because they have a certain budget, as an organization, to get their message out to diverse, lawmaking audiences, and we are one avenue to hit that. It's a strategic approach for them to get their message in front of women that are more civically engaged, and more likely to be long term leaders.

Sarah goes on to talk about how *Leadership for Women* focuses their measures of success that they use to report to funders on the numbers of people reached, not the numbers of seats filled in public office. Interesting here is the focus on long-term movement and political change. Large dollar funding from foundations is much more focused on long-term accomplishments, a perspective that is served well within a political movement that requires years to create waves of cultural change.

The breeding of a competitive market because of limited resources is another aspect of funding within nonprofit work that arose in interviews and is exacerbated in this field of work because political power rests strongly on one's ability to harness funds on behalf of candidates. Joanna Ward, a 30-something woman who makes her living working as a pollster for Republican candidates, explained that the way that her organization, *DC Women Run*, prepares their trainees to run for office centers heavily on campaign funding. Trainees of DC Women Run's programs learn that "...money is the way that party committees and other candidates and other potential candidates can judge you, if you are serious or not, are you going to have the funds to kind of follow through and especially as campaigns get more expensive...." Campaign funding is naturally a core topic of CTPs, but what is interesting about the frame that Joanna takes around this topic rests in the networking connections she can provide to the women who participate in her training programs. Because of her background in polling, and therefore her connections to

foundations and individuals who would make large dollar payments to have access to her work, she can also provide these avenues of funding to her organization and subsequently to the participants in her program.

I observed another instance where this financial cross-over can occur in my interview with Zea Watson. Zea has a long career as a lobbyist under her belt, and her organization seeks to invite women into considering political leadership who have established careers in fields that are germane to boards, commissions, or appointments within local politics, such as civil engineers, or administrative staff at energy companies. Most of the women she recruits to participate in her training programs work in the field that Zea has been lobbying in for most of her career; she knows this landscape intimately. She can leverage her connections to bolster donations for her organization and for the women who participate in her programs.

I always say like, when you connect with me, then you end up in my sticky web. I don't necessarily call them contacts, I call them my sticky web, and I meet people from all over and throw them in my sticky web because at some point, they're all going to connect in some way down the road. In some way they're all going to connect.

Personal and Professional Experiences Shape Frames and Tactics

Interviews brought to light the impact that these leader's personal and professional experiences have on the work that their organizations conduct within the women's representation movement. Most of the women I interviewed had a diverse professional background. Only two women started work in the women's representation field right out of school, one bringing her studies in sociology to the field and the other international relations. Thirty percent of the women I spoke to have worked in the nonprofit realm before coming to their current organizations, and 60% have a background in politics in the form of running for office themselves, working as political consultants, working within grassroots organizing, lobbying, opposition research,

campaign management, or as political staffers. Only three of the women I spoke with have run for office themselves, with one win and two losses.

Examples of these women's professional backgrounds bringing diversity into the tactical contributions of organizations within the movement can be seen in these women's stories. One woman's response to her state election board not widely reporting the gender markers of candidates running in local and statewide elections instigated her to create her organization. Bringing her background in GIS systems into play, she can aggregate large amounts of data about exactly how many women run in every election in her state, and then make it accessible to the public and other organizations working within the movement. This woman's professional training and experience as a data analyst make her uniquely capable of addressing this need within the movement.

Another example of this can be seen in Marie White's experience in grassroots organizing, that led her directly into the work she does with *Leadership for Women* as their Director of Communications. Marie talked about spending her free time working to bring a gender lens into the forefront of the conversations at her local Young Republican Chapter. Marie felt strongly about women's representation, and when her grassroots organizing met her personal conviction to be a part of forward progress, it opened the door for her work to be seen and noticed by the founder of *Leadership for Women*. Marie's personal belief in the value of women's political participation and her professional background in grassroots organizing created her opportunity to step into work in the women's representation movement.

The Partisan Nature of the Movement

One surprising finding that emerged from the interviews was how the partisan nature of the movement has shaped tactics and frames. Most of the organizations in the women's representation movement are politically Democratic. They are often 501-c3 organizations, a tax status which limits their ability to affiliate with politics, but this does not stop these organizations from predominantly supporting Democrats. I got excellent results from my snowball sampling efforts with the few organizations that fall on the Republican side of the political spectrum. Forty percent of the organizations I was able to get access to were what they call center-right in political leaning. There is an in-group terminology used within the movement that identifies an organization as politically Democratic or Republican.

Organizations that covertly represent Democratic politics use the terms, progressive, left-leaning, or center-left. Conversely, organizations that covertly represent Republican politics identify as center-right or conservative. There is a small and growing group of organizations that identify as Republican participating in the work of aiming to increase gender parity in the political system.

Sarah Fitzpatrick, a Republican woman working as the Director of Development for the center-leaning 501-c3, *Leadership for Women*, discussed what this covert political leaning looks like in practice.

They'll use the term progressive. They, you know, are predominantly left leaning, the speakers that they're featuring, like Ilhan Omar...I don't want to go to an event and have her be the keynote speaker. And that is just a difference. That's then sort of gating all of that educational content away from me in terms of how I'm going to learn about the mechanics of campaigning.

Because of these Democratic leaning biases, Republican women do not have a natural fit within the representation movement. Organizations like *Republican Women Run* work to support center-right women with the unique perspectives they bring to the table. They do this by training women how to address what they believe is an audience of voters that are less accepting of acknowledging sexism and structural gender biases, and by providing support to women that according to them, have more groups working against them than their Democratic counterparts. Republican women shared with me that they lack support from the white, male Republican leadership, Republican women, and the organizations of the movement that identify as progressive and center left. For example, one woman said:

When Amy Cony Barrett was confirmed that confirmation was really volatile. And we were supportive of her as a woman. I mean, she is the fifth woman ever appointed to the Supreme Court...[on our social media] we were saying congratulations, we were highlighting what she had done, we were highlighting the criticism she got because of her family and family structures. She got a lot of, “Well, who's going to take care of your kids if you're a Supreme Court justice?” and that kind of stuff. And unfortunately, we didn't really see any of the other women's groups in the movement, talking about her at all, or addressing her struggles as a woman, because she's right leaning.

The women I spoke to were quick to acknowledge that “identity politics” can cause problems but insisted that when it came to women’s political representation, acknowledging the additional hurdles that women must jump through is necessary to move the needle long term. The dissonance between these ideas is easy to perceive. Joanna Ward pointed to a more extreme gender bias in the Republican base because of the types of policy initiatives republicans believe to be important, a finding based on polls her firm conducted on primary voters.

Republican primary voters tend to care a lot more about security issues, whether it's border security, national security, public safety, that tends to be a higher, a bigger focus for them. And or economic issues. And stereotypically, men are seen as stronger on security in the economy. It makes sense, it's makes a lot more sense when you talk about it in terms of security, right, we just kind of think of men is a little bit tougher. Economics, I always find interesting. But if you look at who's on CNBC, it makes a lot of sense. Right? When you're talking about who dominates Wall Street, and who dominates the military, it's going to be a lot of men.

Organizations seeking to engage Republican women are arming them with a different set of tools to address these uniquely Republican issues.

DISCUSSION

Interviews with the leadership of the women's representation movement revealed five key findings that influence the framing and tactical decisions made within these organizations, and the women's representation movement. Women I interviewed for this project demonstrated that collaborations within the movement are used to create frames that reflect strength within the movement and shapes the kinds of tactics that are deployed by these SMOs. Interviewees pointed to patronage as an influencing factor on the kinds of resources available to the organization and the participants of the organization's programs. The women reported that an established subset of organizations that have been actors within the women's representation movement for twenty to forty years engages in a different field of play compared to their two to ten-year-old counterparts. Conversations with these women highlighted that different leaders bring different professional resources to the table when running these organizations, and subsequently influence the frames and tactics deployed. Finally, participants reported on a bipartisan divide that contributes to differences in frames and tactics deployed, depending on what side of the aisle they fall on.

The role of an individual's professional background on the frames and tactics deployed within an organization stands out as a marker for the need to continue to diversify the movement to see progress. Most of the women working in this field have come to it through a background in politics, but it was particularly interesting to see how whether they were lobbyists or had run for office themselves made a drastic difference in the kind of tactics and frames they deployed in their work. For this movement to continue to gain ground in this country, it will continue to be important that leaders staff these organizations with people from a wide variety of political backgrounds. Previous staffers bring a knowledge of policy and bureaucratic barriers that impede women's entrance into political life, and these experiences can bring a much different perspective to the table than that of women who have worked as grassroots organizers.

Patrons have an indirect effect on the relationship between the old guard organizations and the newer organizations, and therefore contribute to the dynamic of an old guard versus a new in competition for financial and tactical resources. The reflections of the women I interviewed indicated that there is less collaboration between old guard and new guard organizations when compared to the concerted effort on the part of many new guard organizations to collaborate with one another. When large dollar funders and foundations are tying money up in donations to old guard organizations that are less likely to be collaborative with younger organizations, it creates a shallower pool of resources for these younger organizations and increases competition across the movement. Additionally, these old guard organizations lack access to frames and tactics that work well across multiple cohorts of women simply because they are not collaborating with the new guard organizations that serve more diverse populations.

In conversation with these women about the work they do within the movement, I saw instances wherein conversation was moving away from tactics and frames that identify individual causes and conditions surrounding political gender inequality and towards more structural causes of political gender inequality. One can hope that in moving away from the individual and toward the systemic in their perspective on the problem at hand, these organizations can turn this lens inward and examine how they are hindering their own forward progress by remaining too insular within the movement.

It was an interesting turn of events that I was given the opportunity to capture the perspective of Republican women within the movement, and one that enriched my research. There was very little to no conversation about women on the right side of the political spectrum when I spoke to women who represented progressive organizations, and had I not gotten access to their political counterparts, I would have had a very skewed perspective on how cohesive this movement is. There were several women who were part of progressive organizations that openly acknowledged the lack of support for Republican women, and even went as far as to point out that without them, gender parity will not be attainable. Overall, I saw evidence that the movement is working hard to include their Republican sisters, but there is much work yet to be done. Several women in my sample pointed to the partisan nature of current day U.S. politics as inflaming these problems within the movement, something that we have seen happen culturally across many different arenas.

Reflections and Limitations

Further study using a mixed methods model would be successful in further validating the findings of this study. While I was able to gather excellent data about patronage within the movement, the intrinsic relationship that exists between these organizations and funders makes it

difficult for those amid the work to acknowledge what kinds of influences are impacting the strategic decisions made. Some of the women I spoke to had organizations that were so young that they had not even begun securing funding outside of the seed money that started the venture in the first place, so they were just beginning their journey to understanding the role that funders play on tactics and frames. Additionally, much of the work done in the movement is more reflexive than strategic, something that I was able to surmise by how participants responded to some questions. Participant observation would be a good way to validate some of the findings of this study, given that the researcher would have an opportunity to be included in high-level decision-making conversations. Content analysis and comparison of strategic documents, websites, social media posts, annual reports and meeting minutes would be other extensions of further study that could be incorporated.

I found the women I spoke with to be mostly open and candid about the work they do within the women's representation movement, eager to shed light on what is and is not working and how they think their organizations should be doing things moving forward. A smaller sect of the group of women I spoke to came across as wary of being too candid, and the data I collected seemed mostly sound bites with less opinion or insight. I took this to be reflective of the nature of their work, which is on its outward face political as much as it is inwardly political for reasons that I have discussed. Regardless of level of comfort with sharing their own personal insights, it is clear to me that each of these women bring deeply held personal motivation to do the work they do. Most women I spoke to have a story of experiencing or witnessing sexism. Most of them have come into this field passionate about gender equity since they were young, and most of these women have no desire to play partisan political games but are earnestly working hard to move the country closer to gender parity in our political system.

CONCLUSION

The lack of political female representation in the U.S. has engendered a thriving social movement that began in the 20th century. While much scholarship done by political scientist and political sociologists has looked to understanding the why and how of low female representation in our U.S. political system little research has been done to examine the social movement organizations that make up the women's representation movement,. This work begins the task of creating a framework for identifying the various internal factors that shape frames and tactics, an important task to continue to develop within social movement scholarship. Furthermore, incorporating an organizational lens into the academic conversation about low female political representation will enhance our understanding of the playing field we find ourselves in and will arm these organizations with tools to strengthen the impact of their work. This study begins the work of developing a deeper understanding of the factors influencing the tactical repertoires and frames deployed by SMOs in the women's representation movement and serves as an exploratory first step in a deeper examination of this movement. My research on the frame and tactical development done within organizations of the women's representation movement reveals interpersonal, organizational, and cultural processes at play, all of which should be developed further to better understand where this movement has been, and where it is going, and where it should go.

This research reveals the need for continued study on the causes and conditions of the work being done among organizations within social movements. Each organization is made up of a conglomeration of individuals and customs with varying access to resources, and if we follow in the path of the movement itself and begin to take a collaborative and holistic view of the work being done across the country by all these SMOs, we place ourselves in a better position to

render accurate and useful information about the movement, and ultimately contribute to forward movement towards political parity. It is imperative for the sake of promoting continued movement toward gender parity within our political systems that we continue to examine these organizations, bringing to light the practices that work, and those that do not.

APPENDIX

Appendix 1: Tax Filing Status Descriptions

Tax Status	Description
501(c)(3)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Charitable organizations • Tax-exempt, tax-deductible contributions • Restricted political and lobbying activities- must constitute an “insubstantial amount” <u>or</u> 3%-5% of all activity
501(c)(4)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Social welfare organizations and local employee associations • Tax-exempt, tax-deductible contributions • Unrestricted political and lobbying activities- can constitute the sole or primary activity of the organization • May be required to report % of dues used for political and lobbying efforts to members
527 (PAC)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Political organizations- parties, committees, associations, funds, or other organizations whose primary purpose is to manage contributions or expenditures for an exempt function. • Exempt function: influencing or attempting to influence the selection, nomination, election or appointment of an individual to a federal, state, or local public office or office in a political organization. • Must file timely notices to IRS

Appendix 2: Data Collection Instrument

1. Tell me about your organization.
 - a. *What programs or resources does your organization produce?*
2. How did you get involved in this field of work, and with your organization?
 - a. *How does your personal and professional background inform how you see women's representation in the US? How does it inform how you approach your work?*
 - b. *How does your background affect how you identify and address the lack of women's representation in the US?*
 - c. *What unique perspective do you bring to your organization's work?*
3. Can you tell me about the most recent program that you took part in developing?
 - d. *Was this a collaborative effort? Who was on that team and who was the team leader?*
 - e. *How did this program come about?*
 - f. *How does this program fit into your organization's overall goals and aims?*
 - g. *How successful has this program been and why?*
4. What does your organization contribute to the women's representation movement?
 - h. *How did you come to this conclusion? By examining women in the field, or research done by other organizations or academics?*
5. How do you measure success in your organization?
 - i. *For example, a target number of women reached through programming or an offer for funding?*
6. How does your organization use academic research?
 - j. *Do you use academic research to identify specific problems as they relate to women's lack of representation in the US?*
 - k. *Do you use academic research to inform the kinds of solutions your organization uses to address the issues?*
 - l. *Does academic research inform the language you use?*
 - m. *Does academic research inform what kinds of programs and resources your organization produces?*
7. Are there other sources of information that inform how your organization identifies and addresses women's lack of representation in the US?
 - n. *In-house qualitative or quantitative research or panels of experts?*
8. Is there a document or guiding set of principles that dictates what work is done by the organization such as a mission and vision or more specifically a strategic plan?
 - o. *How did this come about?*
 - p. *Tell me about your organizations guiding document or set of guiding principles.*
9. When was the most recent update of the organization's guiding document or set of principles?
 - q. *What did the process of updating this document look like? Who was a part of that process? (Staff members, outside consulting firms etc., panels of experts)*

10. How well does the organization utilize the guiding document or set of principles as a basis for decision making?
11. How much of an effect do current events and news cycles have on the work your organization does?
 - r. *Tell me about a time that events dictated programming or an event in your organization.*
12. How do the expectations and goals of funders affect the content of the programs and resources provided by your organization?
 - s. *Do you use reports generated for funders for your wider audience?*
 - t. *Do the goals of funders every interfere or alter your wider goal as an organization?*
13. What role do you see your organization's work playing in the women's representation movement?
 - u. *Do you see other organizations doing similar work to what yours does?*
14. How does the work of other organizations within the movement affect the kind of work that your organization does?
 - v. *Is the movement a collaborative environment?*
15. Where do you see the women's representation movement going in the next 10 years?
 - w. *What role do you see your organization playing in that?*

Appendix 3: Demographic Questionnaire

Please keep in mind that none of the information provided below will not be connected to your name or interview, and feel free to leave any blank.

1. Which of the following categories best captures your race or ethnicity?
 - a. Asian
 - b. Black
 - c. Latino
 - d. Native American
 - e. White
 - f. Other racial or ethnic group (please specify) _____
2. Were you born in the United States?
 - a. Yes
 - b. No
3. Are you:
 - a. Female
 - b. Male
 - c. Transgender
 - d. Other gender (please specify): _____
4. Which of the following categories best captures your age?
 - a. 18-30
 - b. 31-50
 - c. 51-64
 - d. 65 and up
5. What is your working arrangement?
 - a. I work virtually
 - b. I work in-person
 - c. I do a combination of both virtual and in-person
6. What is the highest level of school you have completed? _____
7. When did you begin work with the organization that you currently work with?

8. How many employees are you responsible for overseeing?

9. What is your annual household income?

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