Annu. Rev. Polit. Sci. 1998. 1:401–24
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CONTENDING THEORIES OF CONTENTIOUS POLITICS AND THE STRUCTURE-ACTION PROBLEM OF SOCIAL ORDER

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KEY WORDS: conflict, protest, revolution, collective action, social movements

ABSTRACT

To understand protest in America, one must understand protest and one must understand America. More generally, the study of resistance against authority may adopt two foci: authority (structure) and resistance (action). The leading practitioners of the structuralist approach to contentious politics—McAdam, Tarrow, and Tilly—have jointly systematized their ideas. This synthesis, which I call Synthetic Political Opportunity Theory (SPOT), exerts domination and hegemony over the field. Its upstart rational action challenger is the Collective Action Research Program (CARP). I outline the basic presuppositions of SPOT and CARP and describe their different approaches to the structure-action problem of constituting social order. I then explore the potential of a CARP-SPOT consortium. I conclude that synergisms of the perspectives are possible but that trade-offs are inevitable: strong on action, weak on structure and vice versa; strong on resistance, weak on authority and vice versa; and strong on protest, weak on America and vice versa. Hence, we need creative confrontations, which should include well-defined combinations rather than grand syntheses, of rationalist and structuralist approaches to contentious politics.

1094-2939/98/0616-0401$08.00

INTRODUCTION

To understand protest in America, one must understand protest and one must understand America. More generally, the study of resistance against authority may adopt two foci: resistance and authority. One may therefore investigate those who hold power and those who challenge power (the rulers and the ruled); take the point of view of people who oppress and people who are oppressed (the victimizers and the victims); care about normal citizens and deviant actors (the majority and the marginalized); analyze conventional politics and insurgent politics (centrism and extremism); and explore political institutions and social movements (regimes and oppositions). Thomas Hobbes thus wrote two important books: *Behemoth* and *Leviathan*. The first monster is the symbol of lawlessness, chaos, disorder, anarchy, heterodoxy, and deviance; the second is the symbol of law, order, power, the state, domination, and social control. [McAdam (1982, p.2) suggests that "all models of social movements imply adherence to a more general conception of institutionalized political power."]

The study of protest in America thus involves two interrelated sets of empirical and moral concerns. First, are the disadvantaged represented in the system of mobilized groups? The suspicion is that intense interests and preferences are not enough and that some groups are more socially active and politically relevant than others. This political cynicism leads to a set of empirical questions: First, which groups successfully mobilize and which do not? Who gets included and who becomes excluded? Does the universe of politically active and effective groups mirror all the preferences and values in civil society, or is the system of mobilized interests unjust, unfair, unequal, unbalanced, and hence undemocratic? Second, are America's institutions biased against the disadvantaged? This mistrust leads to another set of empirical questions: Which institutions are permeable to which preferences? Is the system accessible to some groups and closed to others? Are some institutions responsive only to certain interests?

These normative and empirical concerns can be put more concretely. The problem of protest in America is really an issue of the relative successes and failures of groups based on race, religion, ethnicity, gender, region, creed, and class when they attempt to mobilize and confront American capitalist democracy: its institutions (weak catch-all political parties, strong courts, a locally rooted congress, a nationally elected president, federalism, and nationally and internationally entrenched corporations) and its corresponding cultural ethos—"egalitarianism, individualism, populism, and laissez-faire" (Lipset 1996, p. 31). For example, to understand black protest one must understand racist institutions, and to understand feminist activism one must understand sexist institutions. The same homily holds for Jews, Indians, gays and lesbians,

environmentalists, consumers, Italians, and Catholics. In short, a study of protest in America is a study of a historically concrete group-institution nexus. Specific institutions affect the mobilization of specific groups who, in turn, influence the institutions.

This perspective may be made even more general. Those who study protest in America must deal with the structure-action problem and hence may adopt two foci: structure and action (M Lichbach & A Seligman, unpublished manuscript). The structure-agent problem in the social sciences is that human beings are the continually active subjects who make the eternally passive objects that limit their subjectivity. Individuals more or less purposefully make history, society, conditions, and rules, yet history, society, conditions, and rules make individuals. We are both autonomous creators and dependent creatures, innovators and prisoners. The world is both fact and counterfactual, constraint and construct. Some examples (Abrams 1982, pp. 2–3) drive home the point:

> Taking and selling prisoners becomes the institution of slavery. Offering one's services to a soldier in return for his protection becomes feudalism. Organising the control of an enlarged labour force on the basis of standardized rules becomes bureaucracy. And slavery, feudalism and bureaucracy become the fixed, eternal settings in which struggles for prosperity or survival or freedom are then pursued. By substituting cash payments for labour services the lord and peasant jointly embark on the dismantling of the feudal order their great grandparents had constructed.

The structure-action problem is concerned, more specifically, with interrelating three aspects of the micro (individual), meso (group), and macro (societal) levels of analysis. The first is the aggregation problem: how unintended, unwanted, unexpected, unpredictable, and yet seemingly inevitable collective outcomes result from a set of more or less purposeful individual actions. The second is the institutionalization problem: how these emergent properties solidify over time into structures. The third is the contextual problem: how this solidified social order comes to constrain and enable individual consciousness and action.

The study of resistance against authority is perhaps the central structure-action trade-off in all social inquiry. Conversely, the structure-agent problem is at the root of the question of political protest and social order. The reason is that state structures and social movements are reciprocally constituted: Authority begets the resistance that transforms it. Structure and change are therefore studied through the agency of protest. The structure-action/conflict-change dialectics can be traced from such previous masters of social thought as Marx and Weber to such contemporary masters as McAdam et al (1996, 1997) and Skocpol (1979). Order and relegitimation, state and crisis, stability and violence, regime and movement, and reform and revolution are thus central problems of the social sciences.

Scholars in fact study the action of protest because it reveals the structure of social authority and political power better than any other event, process, policy, or outcome.[1] The most theoretically interesting and normatively significant theories of conflict are consequently those that best illuminate the power relations under the Old Regime that begat resistance. One reason that the political economy literature became more successful than either the conflict literature or the voting and elections literature during the 1970s and 1980s was that it more successfully probed the nature of authority and power in society. Conflict studies lost a direct connection to politics that it is now only regaining (Tarrow 1996).

One can study the general problem of resistance to power from the point of view of rationalist (focusing on rational action), structuralist (focusing on social structure), or culturalist (promising to mediate rational action and social structure) metanarratives (Lichbach 1997a). With respect to challengers, rationalist approaches dissect the collective action (Lichbach 1995) and the strategic choice and interaction problems of dissidents (Lichbach 1987); culturalist approaches focus on anomic collective behavior (Smelser 1962) and relative deprivation (Gurr 1970); and structuralist approaches analyze the resource mobilization of dissidents (McCarthy & Zald 1977). With respect to authorities, rationalist approaches concerned with democracy focus on interest group competition and elections, while rationalist approaches concerned with autocracy focus on Leviathan and the collective action problem of authorities (i.e. the State's Dilemma; Lichbach 1995; also see Lichbach 1984); culturalist approaches study hegemony (Scott 1985) and the cultural-functionalist basis of social order (Huntington 1968); and structuralist approaches include the many variants of three staples of social inquiry—pluralism, Marxism, and statism—and a political process approach (Costain 1992) developed within the social movement tradition. These choices adopted in the more general literature on contentious politics are shown in Table 1.

The history of the study of contentious politics since the 1960s may be summarized as a movement from culture to structure, from collective behavior and relative deprivation to resource mobilization and political process, or from Gurr (1970) to Tilly (1978). This latter tradition has recently been consolidated by virtually all of its leading members (Tarrow 1994; McAdam et al 1996; McAdam et al 1996, 1997). I call this new structuralist approach Synthetic Political Opportunity Theory (SPOT). It offers a theory or framework for the study of social movements and social revolutions that uses the political process to bridge the authority-challenger (or structure-action) and rationalist-culturalist-structuralist divides.

[1]The political economy and political sociology of tax policy also X-ray authority structures (Levi 1988).

Table 1 Metanarratives of resistance to power

Metanarrative	Challengers	Authorities
Rationalist	Collective action Strategic interaction	Interest group (rent-seeking) elections Leviathan (bureaucracy) State's Dilemma
Culturalist	Collective behavior Relative deprivation	Hegemony Cultural functionalists
Structuralist	Resource mobilization	Pluralism Marxism Statism Political process

There are alternatives to this hegemonic tradition. The one that I advance here is the rationalist tradition of conflict studies that I have called the Collective Action Research Program (CARP) and analyzed in *The Rebel's Dilemma* (Lichbach 1995; also see Lichbach 1992, 1994a and Moore 1995). The comparison is reasonable because Tilly, Tarrow, McAdam, McCarthy, and Zald are among the most cited scholars in Lichbach (1995). The comparison is also important, because despite the urging of a prominent structuralist to bring the two traditions together (Tarrow 1996), there has been to date no extended debate between collective action (CA) and political process theorists (for a warm-up, see Lichbach 1997b vs Tilly 1997).

This article is therefore designed to stimulate a dialogue between the two competing approaches—rational action–oriented CARP and structure-oriented SPOT—to contentious politics.[2] I focus on these paradigmatic statements because there is intrinsic value to comparing paradigmatic statements and because CARP and SPOT synthesize enormous amounts of literature that cannot possibly be reviewed in the space alloted here. (For extended reviews of rational choice theories of contentious politics, see Lichbach 1995 and Moore 1995; for extended reviews of structural theories of contentious politics, see Tarrow 1994; McAdam et al 1996; McAdam et al 1996, 1997.) I outline the basic presuppositions of SPOT and CARP and show how they offer different approaches to the structure-action problem of constituting social order. I then explore the potentials of a CARP-SPOT consortium. I conclude that synergisms of the perspectives are possible but that trade-offs are inevitable: strong on action, weak on structure and vice versa; strong on resistance, weak

[2]Recent contributions in the culturalist tradition include Morris & Mueller (1992), Selbin (1993), Johnston & Klandermans (1995), and Klandermans (1997). For comparisons of the rationalist and culturalist approaches to contentious politics, see Lichbach (1994b) and Cohen & Arato (1995). For an attempt to compare all three approaches, see McAdam et al (1997).

on authority and vice versa; and strong on protest, weak on America and vice versa. Hence, we need creative confrontations, which should include well-defined combinations rather than grand syntheses, of rationalist and structuralist approaches to conflict and contention.

SPOT

The structuralist's explanandum is "contentious politics": the "collective action" and "collective mobilization" of "contenders" for power. Structuralists also have a strong secondary concern, in practice often confounded by the first, with a group's success at achieving reformist change in policies and revolutionary change in governing institutions. The form of contention that has most occupied the structuralists' attention is therefore the social movement. Because movements are not formally organized, with well-defined leadership, goal hierarchies, and decision-making entities, movements are not interest groups (Tarrow 1994, pp. 15–16). Nor are they mobs—unorganized and ephemeral collectivities. Rather, social movements are coordinated and sustained groups that engage in "contentious collective action" (Tarrow 1994, p. 2) with "elites, authorities and opponents" (Tarrow 1994, p. 1). Besides social movements, other highly structured phenomena that potentially fit under the broad explanandum of "contentious politics" include social revolutions, ethnic conflicts, and cycles of protest.

SPOT skillfully weaves several strands of resource mobilization and political process arguments into a "broad framework" (Tarrow 1994, p. 2) that explains contentious politics. This new synthesis argues that social movements are "triggered by the incentives created by political opportunities, combining conventional and challenging forms of action and building on social networks and cultural frames" (Tarrow 1994, p. 1). To Tarrow's key concern, "[h]ow movements become the focal points for collective action and sustain it against opponents and the state," three factors are crucial (Tarrow 1994, p. 189):

1. PO: Politics, defined in terms of *political opportunities*. The polity is structured in four ways: "the relative openness or closure of the institutionalized political system," "the stability of that broad set of alignments that typically undergird a polity," "the presence of elite allies," and "the state's capacity and propensity for repression" (McAdam et al 1996, p. 10). PO is therefore "consistent—but not necessarily formal or permanent—dimensions of the political environment that provide incentives for people to undertake collective action by affecting their expectations for success or failure" (Tarrow 1994, p. 85). Political processes, institutions, and alignments thus set the context for the strategic interaction of a movement with its allies and opponents in civil society and the state.

2. MS: Society, defined in terms of *mobilizing structures*. Civil society is structured along class, status, gender, ethnic, religious, and racial lines. These partially overlapping systems of stratification "link leaders with the organization of collective action—center with periphery—permitting movement coordination and allowing movements to persist over time" (Tarrow 1994, p. 136). Elite-mass linkages include "informal as well as formal [vehicles] through which people mobilize and engage in collective action" (McAdam et al 1996, p. 3). Dissident MS thus includes communities and associations rooted in civil society.
3. CF: Culture, defined in terms of *cultural frames*. Culture is structured by shared meanings, symbols, and discourses. Social movements are thus constituted by the culture in which they operate. Structuralists also think of culture in another way (Lichbach 1995, p. 450). Movements strategically frame meanings, symbols, and discourses so as to define grievances, pose solutions, and advance their "cognitive liberation" (McAdam 1982). CF therefore involves the "conscious strategic efforts by groups of people to fashion shared understandings of the world and of themselves that legitimate and motivate collective action" (McAdam et al 1996, p. 6). For example, the American ethos of "egalitarianism, individualism, populism, and laissez-faire" (Lipset 1996, p. 31) implies that protesters in America will be more successful if they hold a prayer vigil than if they burn the American flag. Culture, as much as politics and society, structures resistance to authority.

SPOT thus views contentious politics from a very attractive mix of Weberian structural and strategic perspectives: The historically rooted political, social, and cultural institutions of a social order define systems of stratification and set the contexts for historically concrete struggles over power, wealth, and status. The polity, society, and culture establish who is mobilized and who is demobilized and therefore who wins and who loses. Different structures institutionalize conflict, and hence bias politics, in different ways. PO, MS, and CF are therefore the windows through which groups understand and attack institutions. They are also the vehicles through which theorists understand and evaluate these conflicts: Structuralists expect that these three nominalist (i.e. artificial and transhistorical) concepts will help them dissect real (i.e. historically concrete) groups and institutions.

CARP

Work on the Rebel's Dilemma, or the problem of free-riding and nonparticipation in protest and rebellion (Lichbach 1992, Moore 1995), was sparked by economists (Tullock 1971) and sociologists [Gamson (1975) 1990] who drew

on Olson's (1965) idea that the norms of instrumental rationality, especially in the market-oriented structures of the modern world, promote self-interest and therefore could work against the collective good. Hence, the fundamental assumption of CARP is that collective endeavors often involve public good and Prisoner's Dilemma elements. The famous deduction and prediction of CA thinking is therefore the Five Percent Rule: Less than 5% of the supporters of a cause become actively involved in the cause, and activists outnumber nonactivists 19 to 1. CA, in other words, is the rare exception and not the general norm. Moreover, CA theorists expect that this rule will be correct 95% of the time—as good a theory as we presently have in the social sciences (Lichbach 1996). Elsewhere I have outlined the four basic steps in this research program (Lichbach 1995, pp. 292–93).

First, rationalists test the Five Percent Rule with a descriptive map of CA. They try to observe collective action and inaction, what did and did not happen, positive and negative cases, the dog that barked and the one that remained silent, in some particular context. Following Walker (1991, pp. 1–3), rationalists can consider the whole range of dissident groups that are and are not actively resisting some social order at one point in time, and then ask how so many groups came into being and why so many others did not arise. In short, they can compare the preference distribution of a population to a map of the constellation of dissident groups. Following McAdam (1982), rationalists can also begin historically and follow the waning and waxing of a single group's CA in some social order. Or, following Katznelson & Zolberg (1986), rationalists can follow one social group (e.g. class) across many different social contexts (e.g. nations). Finally, following Kriesi et al (1995), rationalists can follow many different social groups (e.g. several new social movements) across many different social contexts (e.g. nations). Whether they study one social order and look at many groups cross-sectionally or one group longitudinally, or study many different social orders and look at one group longitudinally or many groups cross-sectionally, CA theorists always begin with a group (or groups) rooted in a fairly well-defined historical tradition and linguistic community that establish its long-run goals, ideals, meaning, and project—i.e. the public good that it seeks. Although a group's teleology will be important to assessing the intended and unintended consequences of group action in step four below, CA theorists recognize that groups always contain within-tradition conflicts that have major impacts on CA.

Second, rationalists produce an explanatory map of CA processes to solve the basic empirical puzzle of CA theory: How can we explain the 5% who do participate in CA? Certain CA processes are operative and others not. Which of the many plausible rival solutions to the CA problem did the work of mobilizing or demobilizing dissidents? In other words, which CA solutions, under which conditions, activated or deactivated most protest and rebellion?

Solutions to the CA problem vary on two dimensions (Lichbach 1995, p. 21). The first dimension is deliberative. The actors involved in a CA problem may or may not discuss their situation and ultimately devise an answer. Solutions to the CA problem may thus result in either unplanned or planned order. The second dimension is ontological. One might believe that the entities involved in a CA problem are individuals only, or one might believe that institutions, structures, and/or relationships preexist individuals and that they help impose order. Solutions to the CA problem may thus result in either spontaneous or contingent order.

Combining dimensions produces the classic distinctions of social thought. Market approaches to social order and CA assume only individuals who engage in no social planning. Market approaches thus feature unplanned and spontaneous order. Contract approaches also assume individuals, but individuals who collectively plan their society. Contract approaches thus feature planned but spontaneous order. Community approaches assume that institutions exist and that these communal structures are so effective that social planning is unnecessary. Community approaches thus feature unplanned but contingent order. Finally, hierarchy approaches also assume that institutions exist and that in fact these institutions are created in order to plan society. Hierarchy approaches thus feature planned and contingent order. The result is that there are two approaches to unplanned order (market and community) and two approaches to planned order (contract and hierarchy). There are also two spontaneous approaches to social order (market and contract) and two contingent approaches to social order (community and hierarchy). The four possible solutions to the CA problem are displayed in Figure 1.

Of these four sets of solutions, market approaches to social order and CA may be thought of as the baseline. They operate by changing the parameters of

Ontology \ Deliberation	Unplanned Order	Planned Order
Spontaneous Order	Market	Contract
Contingent Order	Community	Hierarchy

Figure 1 Solutions to the collective action (CA) problem.

the canonical model of CA. The other three sets of solutions vary the context in which the baseline model is placed. Community solutions explore how common belief systems solve Olson's Problem, contractual solutions study the ways in which mutual agreements produce CA, and hierarchy solutions examine how hierarchies structure CA. Lichbach (1995) fits approximately two dozen sets of solutions to the CA problem into this typology of the organizational forms behind CA. The practical idea, of course, is to pick a very small number of central or master CA solutions that define the character of a particular movement. CA theorists thus wager on a few driving variables, causal mechanisms, or CA models and investigate how instrumental rationality and self-interest are embodied in these spheres of group action.

CARP therefore identifies a key issue ignored by SPOT: whether group mobilization occurs by market, community, contract, or hierarchy. Mobilization by market implies that individuals are driven by a variety of individual-level forces. The resulting forms of collective dissent are anomic and include, for example, rioting. Mobilization by hierarchy, in contrast, involves preexisting dissident organizations that explicitly mobilize their followers. Leadership and organizational forms become important. The resulting forms of collective dissent include, for example, social democratic and Leninist types of movements. Mobilization by contract or community involves more self-organization by dissidents. Pure contract implies a single-function, self-governing arrangement that is targeted only at protest. Pure community implies a multi-function, self-governing arrangement that has been mobilized into protest. These are, of course, ideal types that may be used to investigate how actual cases of protest are structured. For example, covenant implies that an entire community has agreed to a contract. The resulting forms of collective dissent include, for example, national liberation movements. Congregation, for another example, implies that a subset of a community has agreed on certain governing principles for protest. The resulting forms of collective dissent include, for example, sectarian forms of terrorism.

Rationalists' third step, after descriptive and explanatory mapping of CA, is to recognize that CA solutions are merely equilibrium possibilities. Unless the institutional and interpretive context for a particular strategic situation is established, the CA problem is indeterminate and "anything goes." CA models therefore need structure. CA theorists provide structure by tracing the causes of the key operative and inoperative CA processes. This inquiry (Lichbach 1995) leads directly to politics: How do competing interests—the regime, dissident entrepreneurs, dissident followers, and the dissidents' allies and opponents—try to shape contexts, structures, and institutions so as to initiate, sustain, and terminate CA processes? The results are generalizations about the origins of the basic properties of collective dissent—for example, an etiology of the risk propensities of dissidents, dissident altruism, dissident self-gov-

ernment, and external patronage of dissent. These explanations ultimately help us understand group mobilization.

Finally, rationalists trace the effects of the key operative and inoperative CA processes. This leads to the intended consequences of group mobilization: new institutions, policies, and programs desired by dissidents that help relegitimize the social order. More importantly, it leads to the unintended consequences of group mobilization: the pathologies of dissent (e.g. Michels's Dilemma, Lichbach 1995). In short, CA theorists are interested in determining how the goals and ideals of dissidents are both fulfilled and frustrated. They look at the gains, successes, and victories as well as the tragedies, comedies, and farces of collective dissent. In the case of social revolutions, for example, outcomes include bourgeois, fascist, or communist paths of development. Economic development, national development, state building, and nation building hold many intended and unintended consequences.

In sum, solutions to the CA problem are the basic building blocks of a rationalist theory of collective dissent and political quiescence. What is really useful about CA theories is that they lead to a study of the causes and consequences of the basic properties of collective dissent (i.e. CA processes) and to comparative and historical analyses of the strategic situations in which regimes and dissidents confront one another. CARP is therefore an important approach to social movements because it takes Olson's (1965) approach, runs with it, and sees where it goes. By elaborating his insights, CARP identifies many CA problems in conflict (e.g. among rebel organizations, within a rebel organization, among the state's supporters or the State's Dilemma) and thereby produces many new insights into contentious politics.

Green & Shapiro (1994) charge that rationalist models like CARP are not adequately testable and tested. The dozens of different CA solutions do raise the problem of empirical relevance. Market, community, contract, and hierarchy solutions are susceptible to three sets of test implications that can falsify parts of the CA program in some subject domain.

First, rationalists can ask, under what group and institutional conditions does a particular CA solution affect the extent of CA? The phrasing of this question implies that there are no pure CA solution–CA extent propositions (e.g. "selective incentives are necessary and sufficient for group mobilization"). CA solutions are contingent on groups and institutions, and hence the scope conditions for all CA solution–CA extent propositions include groups and institutions.[3] For example, material selective incentives mobilize more dissident peasants under patronage-oriented regimes than under regimes that lack patron-client ties (Lichbach 1994b). Tests thus involve correlating CA solu-

[3]Similarly, there are no pure institution-CA propositions (i.e. there is no single micro foundation of a structural explanation) because these vary by group and CA solution.

tions with the extent of CA for specific groups and institutions using a variety of data units: individuals (surveys), one group over time in a nation, nation-time aggregates (time series), regions within a nation, a cross-national time slice, a sample of groups within a country, or a sample of events within a country. Moreover, the many CA solutions are plausible rival explanations of CA that are subject to empirical work including crucial tests.

Second, rationalists can ask, how do group and institutional conditions affect the choice of a particular CA solution? Empirical work, in other words, is also required to discover typical patterns of CA solutions associated with particular groups and institutions. These empirical clusters involve different mixtures of ideal-type CA solutions. For example, under patronage-oriented regimes, more dissident peasants will be mobilized by selective incentives than by programmatic appeals (Lichbach 1994b). Levi (1998) varies the institutions under which antidraft protest occurs and determines their effect on whether antidraft protesters are mobilized by material selective incentives, altruism, or "Tit-For-Tat." It is also possible to hold the institution constant and ask how different groups solve their CA problem. Gays and environmentalists who wish to protest in contemporary America, for example, adopt different packages of CA solutions.

Third, CA solutions, properties, or processes have effects that can also be investigated with the aforementioned methodology (Lichbach 1995).

CARP AND SPOT AS ALTERNATIVE POLITICAL THEORIES OF SOCIAL ORDER

In sum, an explanatory sketch (Hempel 1965) based on SPOT consists of PO, MS, and CF, while an explanatory sketch based on CARP consists of the Five Percent Rule, CA processes, politics as causes of CA, and pathologies as consequences of CA. There is a basic three-step structuralist perspective and a basic four-step rationalist perspective.

CARP and SPOT are driven by different fundamental presuppositions about ontology, methodology, and the nature of theory in the social sciences. As theories of resistance against authority, however, they differ most importantly (Lichbach 1996) on the structure-action problem of constituting social order: What holds society together and prevents eternal resistance against authority? SPOT offers a political theory that is strong on structure and weak on action, while CARP offers one that is strong on action and weak on structure.

SPOT's theory of social order focuses on inequality, power, domination, and control and hence is inherently political. The social, economic, and cultural division of labor produces scarcity. Stratification systems come to define

conflicts of interest and hence provide the basis for social groups and group alliances or the constellation of political forces. Stratification systems also generate group resources and hence provide the basis for the power and domination of one group over another. Privileges, exploitation, and oppression result and ultimately generate political discontents and grievances. The struggle over scarce resources thus produces a struggle for power between competing groups. Whoever wins captures the state, which then operates as a system of political domination. Who wins is a function of group organization, which is in turn a function of group mobilization, which is in turn a function of group resources. Resource mobilization and counter–resource mobilization of dominant and dominated strata thus define group conflict.

The contention for power is consequently a fight over group resources. In the mobilization of resources, three factors are crucial: PO and constraints created by the state, particularly in its effort to exercise social control; the indigenous organizational strength of the dissidents, in the form of the MS of preexisting communal and associational ties; and CF, in which ideologies legitimize the regime and counterideologies justify dissidents. The concrete macrohistorical dynamics of reform and revolution are therefore a function of the strategic conflict between regime and opposition.

CARP's theory of social order focuses on the interrelationship of four dilemmas: Hobbes's Dilemma, the Prisoner's Dilemma, the Rebel's Dilemma, and the State's Dilemma. Hobbes argues that people will not voluntarily give up the use of force and fraud. Hobbes's Dilemma thus focuses on the question, "How is social order in a nation possible?" The modern restatement of Hobbes's Dilemma is that men and women in a state of nature desire the public good of social order, but the collectivity finds itself in a Prisoner's Dilemma. Everyone wants everyone else to voluntarily renounce the use of force and fraud, but everyone also wants to retain that right for himself.

If we take CA reasoning one step further and focus on the dissidents who wish to upset an existing social order, one solution to Hobbes's Dilemma immediately suggests itself: Dissident groups have their own Hobbesian problem of order. They face a Rebel's Dilemma. Dissidents seek a public good of either capturing the state or forcing the existing authorities to redress their grievances. Rational dissidents will not voluntarily contribute to this public good. The typology of solutions to the Rebel's Dilemma—market, community, contract, and hierarchy—is thus also a typology of approaches to social order (Lichbach 1996).

Now consider the counterrevolutionary coalition. Supporters of the regime also face a CA problem in assisting the regime: Contributions to the regime are also a public good. I refer to the regime's CA problem of maintaining the unity of dominant classes and molding its various factions into a coherent power bloc as the State's Dilemma.

The two dilemmas—the Rebel's Dilemma and the State's Dilemma—are of unequal significance because the two collectivities do not have equal abilities to coordinate their efforts. Numbers are the key and hence coordination by the government is much easier to achieve than coordination by the opposition. Hence, in Mosca's words, "each single individual in the majority... stands alone before the totality of the organized minority" (Hardin 1995, p. 28). This inequality is, in fact, the real basis of social order; force by the minority against the majority, after all, would never maintain order because there are too many in the majority and too few in the minority. Hardin (1995, p. 30) refers to this idea as the "dual-coordination theory" of social order: Stability occurs because coordination produces power, and relative numbers produce differential coordination. This theory allows us to grasp the potential power of competent social movements and the potential problems of incompetent government authorities. Lichbach (1995) operationalizes the theory by focusing on the CA problems and solutions of both dissidents and regimes.

In sum, the politics of reform and revolution involve the interaction of the Rebel's Dilemma and the State's Dilemma. Each side wishes to solve its own CA problem and intensify the CA problem of its opponents. Alignments and realignments, tensions between civil society and the state, and cross-class alliances and social coalitions result. Strategies and tactics must thus be seen in the interactive context of a two-level game that occurs between regime elites and dissident entrepreneurs, at one level, and within the regime and the dissident coalitions, at another (Putnam 1988).

CARP therefore studies three sets of political processes that stand behind social order. The first deals with PO: the State's Dilemma, the politics that leads to CA processes (Rebel's Dilemma vs State's Dilemma), state patronage of dissent, regime strategies of accommodation and repression, and the strategic interaction between the dissident group and its opponents in the regime and in the social-movement sector. The second deals with MS: the dissident group's efforts to overcome the Rebel's Dilemma, the strategic interaction between dissident entrepreneurs and their followers with respect to the principal-agent problem, and the strategic interaction between a dissident group and its allies in the same movement. The third deals with CF: the framing or shaping of the public good by dissident entrepreneurs. CARP assumes the existence of a dissident group pursuing a public good. Since this group can be politically and socially constructed, CARP offers a strategic theory of culture (Lichbach 1995, sections 5.2.3.4, 6.3.2, and 10.1).

In sum, CARP offers an action or neo-Hobbesian approach to social order that talks about collective action, democracy, and markets; SPOT offers a structural or neo-Marxian approach to social order that talks about social movements, the state, and capitalism. While the different terms revealingly

convey the different approaches to the constitution of resistance (action) and the nature of power (structure), both approaches offer political theories of social order.[4]

A CARP-SPOT CONSORTIUM?

If CARP provides the action and SPOT the structure for a theory of social order, a CARP-SPOT consortium appears to offer a solution to the structure-action problem of resistance against authority. As that seminal structuralist Barrington Moore notes, "the inevitable is seldom what anyone expected" (Lowi 1994). This section discusses the allure of seeking the CARP microfoundations of macrostructuralist SPOT.

The aforementioned differences between CARP and SPOT create a potential division of labor that can serve as the basis for fruitful collaboration. Structuralist arguments are strong on why people rebel and tend to miss how they do so. Structuralist theories of revolution and reform therefore need process arguments if they are to explain mobilization into protest and rebellion. All macro theories, in other words, need micro foundations: They must make assumptions about group action. Similarly, rational action arguments are strong on how people rebel and tend to miss why they do so. Rationalist theories of protest and rebellion therefore need structures if they are to explain the reformist and revolutionary change of institutions. All micro theories, in other words, need macro structures: They must make assumptions about the origin of preferences, beliefs, and endowments. Hence, structuralists must explore the dynamics of action (protest and rebellion) and rationalists must consider the dynamics of structure (reform and revolution). Both types of theories therefore contribute to the explanation of contentious politics. Structure without action has no mechanism; action without structure has no cause. CARP and SPOT are

[4]If the Five Percent Rule is interpreted from the authority's point of view, an interesting connection arises between the two theories of social order. The Rule demonstrates that system-preserving apathy, depoliticization, and nonparticipation—which result from the uninformed, the indifferent, and the uninvolved citizenry—are voluntary and rational. Hence, nonparticipation by subordinate groups is related to nondecisions by authorities and the conservative institutions of churches, schools, and political parties: All serve to reproduce the existing social order. Structural forces and rational calculations combine so that classes are kept in place, the poor remain invisible, the propertied are protected from the propertyless, and action on the basis of gender is delegitimized. McAdam (1982), for example, implies that SPOT accepts the CA theory of social order in that stability depends on obeying and legitimacy. Hence, he writes of "the latent, disruptive power all groups possess by virtue of their location within systems whose smooth functioning depends on their willing cooperation" (p. 233). He similarly suggests that "the insurgent potential of excluded groups comes from the 'structural power' that their location in various politico-economic structures affords them" (p. 37).

thus complements and not substitutes because both structural and behavioral hypotheses are needed (Eckstein 1965).

To see these interconnections more clearly, consider SPOT's basic argument:

Structure (Institutions → PO, MS, CF) → Mobilization → Outcome

In other words, SPOT examines how historically concrete institutions and institutional dynamics (McAdam 1982, p. 113) shape the historical development of PO, MS, and CF, which, in turn, produce group mobilization and finally movement outcomes.

CARP's basic argument, on the other hand, is as follows:

Causes → CA solutions → CA → Intended and unintended consequences.

In other words, CARP traces CA solutions to their origins and then explores how they affect CA and its ultimate outcomes.

SPOT's basic argument can therefore be integrated with CARP's basic argument, producing a four-step CARP-SPOT consortium:

Institutions → PO, MS, CF →
CA solutions →
CA →
Intended and unintended outcomes.

In other words, a CARP-SPOT consortium demonstrates how historically concrete institutions drive the historical development of PO, MS, and CF; how PO, MS, and CF drive the historical development of market, community, contract, and hierarchy solutions to the CA problem; how CA solutions drive CA; and finally how CA produces intended and unintended consequences, which include the deliberate and unconscious design of institutions. CARP thus provides, as shown in Figure 2, the micro (individual) and meso (aggregate) foundations of SPOT.

This synthesis implies that the limitations and boundaries of SPOT can be addressed by CARP.[5] To focus entirely on the political or structural level, and to ignore what is going on at the level of dissent, is to replace the study of dis-

[5]In some structuralist theories (Skocpol 1979), actors have no choice. Alternative processes and forms of thought, decision making, evaluation, calculation, deliberation, reflection, assessment, reasoning, and thinking have no place. Material conditions determine all. This leaves no room for the agency of CA processes. The value of a rationalist approach when the real issue is structure—and hence a functionalist, causal, or systemic perspective appears appropriate—seems small. Everything, after all, is historically and institutionally grounded. However, social structures are historically specific and temporally contingent. When we look at actual groups in specific nations, we see that their behavior is highly variable—i.e. they are economic classes as in Weber rather than as in Marx. Workers, peasants, middle classes, and intellectuals are not subject to monocausal and deterministic transhistorical and cross-cultural laws.

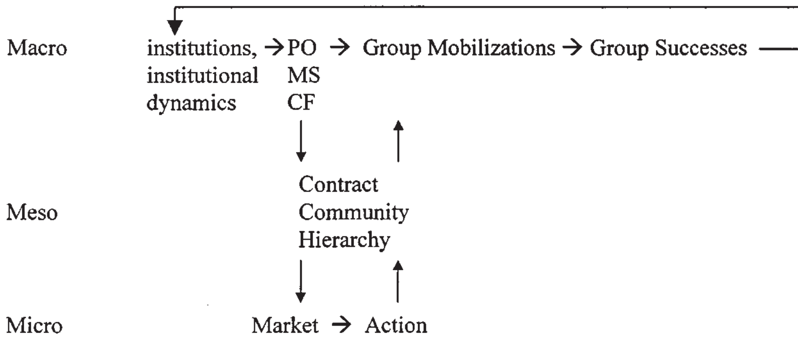

Figure 2 A CARP-SPOT consortium.

sent with the study of authority systems against which dissent is conducted. Hence, the real CA challenge to SPOT is: Get the mobilization processes right. CA models offer a much richer set of mobilizing processes—an organizer's manual of protest and rebellion—than one finds in the McAdam-Tarrow-Tilly tradition. They are exactly what bottom-up CA studies can contribute to top-down political process studies. Specifying intermediate CA processes also forces structuralists to distinguish macro, meso, and micro levels of analysis. Since these mobilizing processes help construct authority, CARP can remedy SPOT's tendency to view PO, MS, and CF as deus ex machina. Finally, a confrontation with CARP will force structuralists to provide more precise explananda; structuralists who think about CARP will be led, as if by an invisible hand, to explain what PO, MS, and CF affect—the level, form, locale, and framing of collective dissent.

For example, to argue that social movements flourish when POs are ripe does not indicate how mobilization is actually accomplished. SPOT offers only ad hoc speculations about how PO affects "incentives" and "expectations" (e.g. Tarrow 1994, p. 85). CARP can assist SPOT here because its compilation of micro (market) and meso (community, contract, and hierarchy) solutions to the CA problem is really a list of mobilizing processes. POs affect, for example, such market solutions as estimates of the probability of winning, risk, the supply of the public good, and competition among enemies, as well as such hierarchy solutions as patronage. In short, POs drive mobilization processes (i.e. they are part of their structural causes), and such processes, in turn, create POs (i.e. they are part of their structural effects).

The limitations and boundaries of CARP, on the other hand, can be addressed by SPOT.[6] Conflict and cooperation are social relations that can arise only in a social context. Analysts must therefore study that political (PO), social (MS), and cultural (CF) context. A theory of rational choice thus cannot be the sole basis of a theory of conflict and contention (Lichbach 1995). [This point is recognized by critics of the CA approach. Tarrow (1991, p. 13) argues that "unless individual motivation can be placed in its collective context, then the costs, risks and potential gains of collective action cannot even begin to be assessed. Post-Olsonian collective choice studies...show that these contextual factors are crucial for the triggering of collective action."] CA theories must be supplemented with macro theories of norms and institutions as found in SPOT. CARP can address the big macro questions of international relations, state, society, and state-society linkages only if it explores SPOT's structures.

One of the most important innovations of Lichbach (1995) is therefore the linkage of CA processes with several types of structures found in SPOT. First, the typology of solutions to the CA problem—market, community, contract, and hierarchy—is a typology of institutions or structures. Second, the search for the causes of CA solutions leads to a study of CA solutions as politics, or a study of the relationship between the Rebel's Dilemma and the State's Dilemma. Third, the search for CA solutions as consequences leads to a study of CA solutions as pathologies, or a study of the internal and external outcomes of dissent and of reformist and revolutionary politics. Fourth, CA theories can be supplemented by more institutionalist theories of rational choice, for example, theories of collective choice (Riker 1982), institutional choice (Bates 1989), microeconomics (Becker 1971), macroeconomics (Przeworski & Wallerstein 1982), and international trade (Rogowski 1989). Finally, CA models can be set within the context of the modernity problematique of individualism, democracy, and markets. Rational choice theories might in fact offer the best solutions to the pathologies of modernity (Lichbach 1997a).

All of this is very significant for CARP. The mere fact that collective dissent results from selective incentives, dissident entrepreneurs, and/or "Tit-For-Tat" does not mean that the great causes of conflict identified in SPOT, such as exploitation, oppression, and government crises, are any less important than structuralists believe. It is, however, only because of their effects on solutions to the Rebel's Dilemma that such factors are great causes of collective

[6]CARP implies that aggregate levels and particular outbreaks of CA are unpredictable (Lichbach 1995). This is because of the weakness of grievances; they are neither necessary nor sufficient for protest, preference falsification occurs, and there are too many CA solutions that can work individually and in combination. Moreover, the Coleman-Boudon program of establishing the micro foundations of structural propositions fails. CARP fails to answer key puzzles about structural (i.e. macro-macro) propositions such as repression-dissent. Finally, Lichbach (1995) demonstrates that all CA solutions are incomplete. By itself, none is sufficient to produce CA.

dissent. Their often contradictory effects on collective dissent, moreover, cannot be fully understood unless their often contradictory effects on solutions to the Rebel's Dilemma are understood. Government repression, for example, sometimes promotes and sometimes retards collective dissent; if repression provokes collective dissent, it sometimes takes the form of demonstrations, sometimes riots, and sometimes guerrilla war; and if collective dissent occurs, it is sometimes spatially widespread and sometimes temporally long-lasting. Which outcomes and which attendant forms and properties result from repression depend on the CA solutions rebels adopt and on the institutional context, which shapes values and beliefs about CA solutions, within which rebels act.

CA processes are therefore imbedded in the state, societal, and state-societal structures studied by SPOT. These structures, and the historical forces that produce them, are the macro contexts that drive CA and, in turn, are constructed by CA. Micro foundations (i.e. CA processes) need macro structures (e.g. state-society linkages), and vice versa. One must link micro CA processes to the larger structural forces in society. Patterns of capitalist development, industrialization, and socioeconomic and political change generate patterns of protest because they implement or impede solutions to the Rebel's Dilemma. Structures lead to CA because they activate some solutions to the CA problem and retard others.[7] Structures—PO, MS, and CF—in turn "evolve in response to individual incentives, strategies, and choices" (Bates 1989, p. xi).

This combination of structure and action is exactly what is needed to understand politics. CA theories focus on strategic interaction and hence are intrinsically "political." However, they often seem apolitical or politically naive because they are acontextual. It is probably more accurate to say that they are politically incomplete in that they need to be supplemented by a theory of the origins of preferences and a theory of the institutions that aggregate preferences and determine endowments. Structural models, on the other hand, are potentially political because they allow more scope for the strategic interaction of actors; they focus on how relations among actors structure interaction and outcomes. Only in an institutional context, that is, can we appreciate the strategic interaction among actors that is the stuff of politics. However, structural theories also seem apolitical, because they tightly constrain the strategic choices of the actors and hence ignore calculation. In sum, politics involves strategic in-

[7]Consider the following summary (Goldstone 1980, p. 436) of the many findings about how the structure of peasant communities determines CA: "The studies by Wolf, Moore, Migdal, Landsberger, Linz, Paige and Prosterman have shown that the nature of peasant revolutionary activity depends on the relations of peasants to landlords and to the state, on the types of crops and agricultural techniques used, on the mode of village organization, on the degree of landholding or landlessness, whether production is for local or market sale and whether taxes and other obligations are paid in cash, in labor, or in kind." This argument invites hypotheses about micro CA processes.

teractions within institutions; the institutions shape people's constraints and opportunities and, in turn, are shaped by politics. Politics involves, in short, CARP and SPOT. The two approaches are thus not opposites but stand in creative tension.

Others have argued that theories of resistance against authority should combine structure and action. With respect to theories of social movements, McAdam et al (1988, pp. 699, 711) call for an exploration of the "macro determinants of micro-mobilization contexts." They argue (p. 728) that macro-micro links are part of a dissident group's strategy: "Formal social movement organizations (SMOs) are expected to develop to fill the ongoing need for an organizational bridge between the larger political and social environment and the specific constituencies the movement must mobilize if it is to succeed. How well SMOs are able to reconcile the pressures of these macroenvironments with the ongoing demands of micro mobilization will largely determine the movement's chances of success." With respect to theories of social revolution, Kimmel (1990, p. viii) writes that "it became clear to me that an adequate explanation of revolution required setting the structural stage, making state, class, and international arena decisive, and yet allowing room for the complex play of human agency, of people's hopes and dangers, mediated by culture and ideology that are historically specific to the country in question." Hence, he calls for "the specification of a social psychology of revolution from within a structural analysis of revolution" (Kimmel 1990, p. 187).

There are many such combinations besides a CARP-SPOT consortium. Gurr (1973, p. 368) summarizes his methodology in ways strikingly similar to CARP: "Social psychological theories of violence begin with aggregate psychological states, and then work both 'backward' to their social determinants and 'forward' to their consequences." Scott (1975, p. 489) recognizes that exploitation is a structural relationship between two individuals, groups, or institutions that, according to some standard of distributional equality and justice, involves an unfair distribution of effort and reward. The motivation behind perceptions of exploitation may be relative deprivation. Skocpol (1982) adds idea systems and culture to her structuralist theory of revolutions. Durkheim (1951) studies the social context of deviance. Finally, some critical theorists combine Marx and Freud, while some rational choice Marxists combine Marx and Smith. Nevertheless, the CARP-SPOT confrontation advocated here seems particularly fruitful for studies of contentious politics: Rational action theorists need some structure and structuralists need some rational action. Theorists of conflict and contention thus must link structure and strategy, institutions and rationality, constraints and choices, collectivities and individuals, and the macro and the meso/micro. Social inquiry is challenging precisely because historical structures set hidden limits and opportunities, and historical subjects produce intended and unintended consequences.

However, there are many tensions and contradictions involved in a CARP-SPOT consortium (Lichbach 1997b). For example, the search for micro foundations is chimerical, and CARP and SPOT theorize about different subject matters or explanandums. Since the structure-action problem involves inherent trade-offs between structure and action, a grand synthesis of the paradigms is improbable and undesirable.

Students of contentious politics who consider themselves “problem-driven,” “puzzle-directed,” or “question-oriented” typically argue, however, that many of the reasons cited above imply that lower-level synergisms of CARP and SPOT are possible and valuable. Interested in developing middle-range theories in some substantive domain (e.g. protest cycles) or historically concrete explanations of empirical happenings (e.g. fascism in Weimar and Russia), rather than in advancing a new synthetic paradigm (e.g. a CARP-SPOT consortium), they want to draw freely on the structures in CARP and the actions of SPOT to develop a single comprehensive theory or explanation.

In attempting to be integrative and eclectic, such scholars miss the value of Popperian-type crucial tests among paradigms in advancing middle-range theories and concrete explanations (Lichbach 1995). In their widely cited studies, for example, Eckstein (1980) and McAdam (1982) developed “explanation sketches” of two or three alternative models of contentious politics and then explored several substantive domains to discover competing test implications. CARP and SPOT differ most clearly with respect to the Five Percent Rule and the importance of unintended rather than intended consequences. Does this insight yield competing predictions about the origins of insurgency, characteristics of movement participants, or the activities of outsiders? We can develop and test the predictions in a broad sample of social movements, a carefully chosen set of comparisons, or a case study of a single movement.

There is an approach that can make both the lumpers and the splitters happy: nested models. In this approach, splitters develop a set of competing predictions that complement the set of predictions produced by the lumpers. For example, what does CARP predict about the characteristics of movement participants? What does SPOT predict? What does a CARP-SPOT consortium predict? Nested models enable us to evaluate the limitations of the pure theories and the value of the combined theory.

At the level of paradigm, middle-range theory, or empirical explanation, such creative confrontations between CARP and SPOT are preferable to flabby and facile syntheses. CARP and SPOT are ideal-type theories that can generate the models and foils that make theoretical and empirical work interesting and worthwhile. The dialogue between CARP and SPOT should therefore stress struggle over synthesis and competition over consortium; even syntheses and consortiums, via the nested models suggested above, can enter the

competition. Contending structure and action theories of contentious politics should guide our research into the question of social order.

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

I wish to thank Margaret Levi and Sidney Tarrow for encouraging me to write this essay. An earlier version was presented to the 1996 Annual Meetings of the American Political Science Association, San Francisco, California. Anne Costain, Dan Cress, and Chris Davenport provided invaluable feedback at a meeting of the University of Colorado's Social Movement Workshop.

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