3/22/2017

Dear PPW Comrades,

There's nothing like a deadline to get the juices flowing. What you have before you is a very first draft--draftier than Grandma's attic--of a set of thoughts that I've wanted variously to turn into an article or a book for a long time. It may form the basis of collaborations as well, and is also partly--as will become clear--*already* the product of a collaboration (with Colin Barker who bears no blame for what follows). It's messy. Too many separate ideas and sources that may or may not be saying exactly the same thing. I've even left some out! I also rather awkwardly cite a bunch of my earlier empirical work. Not sure how this works, or how/whether it makes sense to do.

In any case, I welcome your ideas for clarification, development, cuts (it needs to lose a quarter of its volume or so), reorganization...and your general sense of whether I may be onto something significant or not.

I should also note that there's nothing--oddly--in here about speed and social media. I'd be interested to know whether you think its inclusion--other than making me look a little less fogey-ish--would change what I have to say significantly.

Many thanks.

John

Apologies for the lack of a list of references. In the interests of time, I've left it undone.

Time for Movements – EARLY DRAFT

John Krinsky

Spring 2017

The title of a book, put out by *Yes!* magazine in 2012, announced the magazine's editor, Sarah Van Gelder's general outlook toward Occupy Wall Street: *This Changes Everything*.

Seeing the book now, in the midst of a significantly contested reaction, puts me in mind, somehow, of a cartoon by the French cartoonist, Jean-Jacques Sempé, from a book on political demonstrations titled *Quelques Manifestants* ("Some Demonstrators"). The cartoon (Figure 1), in twelve panels, focuses on what looks like a middle-aged, bourgeois man leaving his house, carrying what looks like an inverted bag on a stick. He doffs his hat politely at passersby; he waits for the light to change and looks both ways before crossing the street; he pays his fare on the bus. He gets off the bus and joins a demonstration, taking off the bag on the stick: it is a sign that reads, *"Tout est à refaire"* (Everything must change!). The implication, of course, is that in spite of his aspirations, this man, who follows all the rules, will never see much of anything remade or redone if he keeps it up.

Both Van Gelder and Sempé are making, in their ways, historical-sociological claims about the pace of social change and its relation to protest and movements. If Van Gelder optimistically portrays Occupy as an "event"—as a break or a turning point—and does so "performatively"—i.e., in such a way as to accomplish the truth of the claim—Sempé emphasizes the continuity of political life perhaps in spite of political aspirations, and the routineness of protest.

In what follows, I want to build on both ideas to argue three interrelated points: First, that what we might call the *shape* of time—its sudden turns, long build-ups, cycles—in social movements is more varied than the alternatives of eventfulness, stability, and waves or cycles, and are, in fact, layered and perspectival. Second, it is layered and perspectival—that is, shaped by the standpoint from which one views it—precisely because it is *relational.* By this, I mean that the experience of time depends a great deal on the situatedness of this experience in social relations that are themselves complex temporally and geographically. Any set of relations offers vantage points on these relations that can be located through multiple, intersecting experiences of time--cycles, trajectories, turning points[1]. This makes agency complex. Accordingly, and third, the layeredness of temporalities is a key element in the formation of movement strategies. Insofar as movement strategizing is a kind of learning or development of group capacities, the vantage points furnished in the "timescapes" of political activity by movement activists can shape collective objectives, collective subject-formation, and the means by which the subjects attempt to reach or apprehend their objects.

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[1] This typology largely mirrors McAdam and Sewell's (2001), which contains a further one not discussed here: cultural epochs.
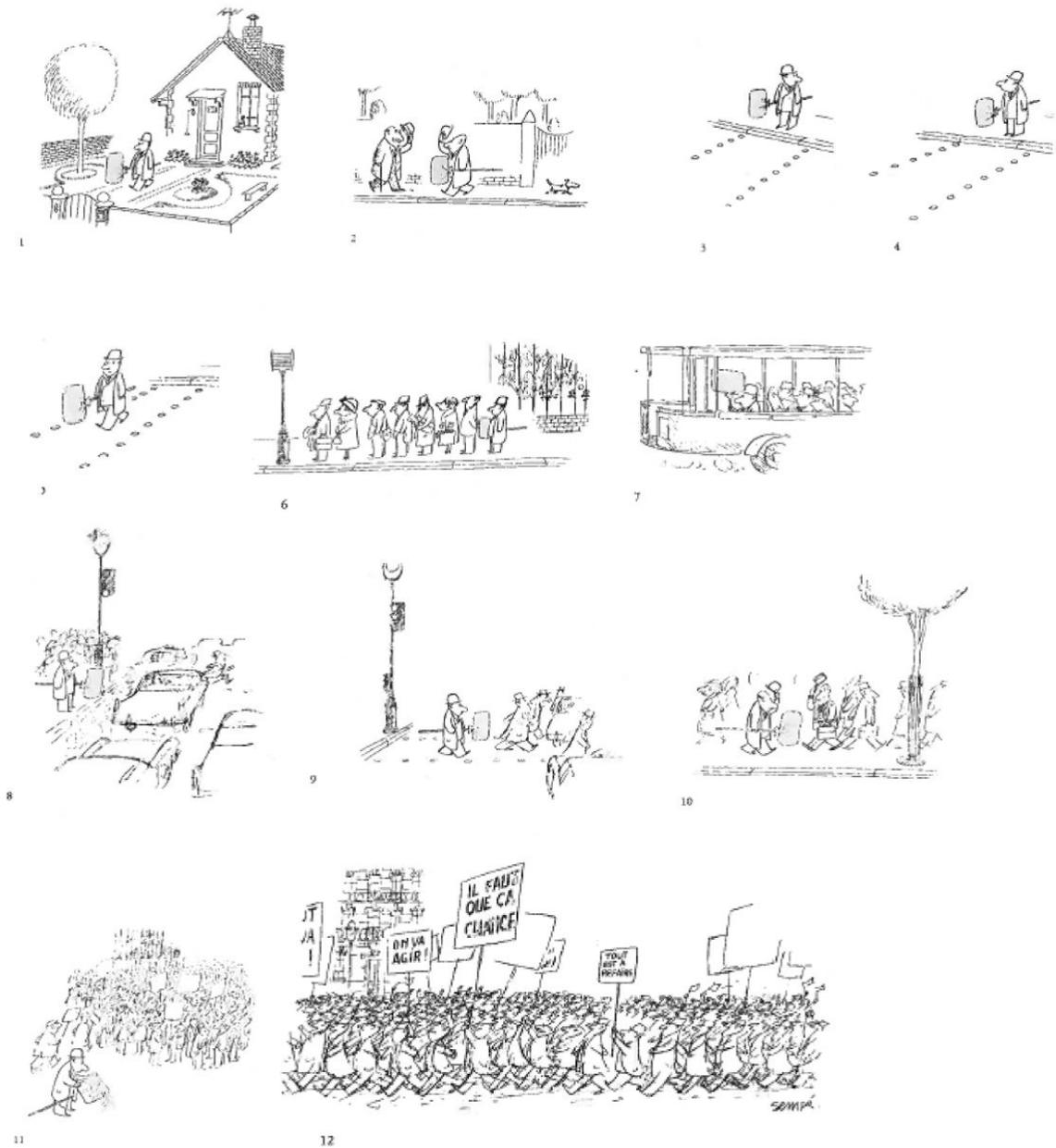
Figure 1. Jean-Jacques Sempé, from *Quelques Manifestants*

Why is it important to consider these questions about time in the context of social movements? As McAdam and Sewell (2001) argued more than fifteen years ago, the understanding of temporality in contentious politics must extend beyond waves and cycles. From a sociological point of view, if social movements are still understood as important manifestations of collective agency (not the only ones, to be sure), it should be important to understand what Emirbayer and

Mische (1998) understand to be the "triadic" relationships among past-, present-, and future-oriented action—habitual action, problem-solving, and projectivity. These, in turn, lie on the trajectories, and in the cycles and turning points--and their complex layers in situated action.

From a more political point of view—more important in practical terms—these temporal questions cut directly to questions about why certain situations call for more urgent action, why institution-building might be important in some periods and harmful in others, and how the composition of leadership in movements can lend strategy a particular temporal stamp.

What follows is a largely theoretical investigation of these questions, that uses a smattering of historical examples to illustrate the main points. I first discuss the "shapes" of temporal concepts in social movement studies, address some of their problems, and then elaborate an approach that argues for a complex layering of temporal concepts for analysis. I then follow this with a discussion of the relational, spatial, and historical situatedness of temporality and the role that activists' vantage points on the temporalities of their relations play in their strategic choices. I conclude with some ideas about how the ideas in the paper might be fruitfully studied both from within and from outside social movement activism itself.

Shapes of Time

Historical sociologists and social historians have paid closer attention to what I call the "shape" of temporality for more than much of the past three decades. This has been particularly true in the study of contentious politics, from social movements to revolutions. What Tarrow identified as "cycles of contention" (1989) and what others (CITES) have called "waves" of contention, whether self-consciously or not, imputed a kind of temporality to protest that suggests periods in its intensity and extent. Episodes of protest do not necessarily concatenate and form waves, but when they do, it is normal to assume that a wave will crest and then decline, often leaving in its wake a "residue of reform" (Piven and Cloward 1979). Sociologists have disagreed about the precise mechanisms that make the shape of a protest wave as regular as it is, with some cleaving more closely to a Michelsian analysis that locates the decline of protest in the formation of mass organizations and their goal-displacement and their drift toward oligarchy (e.g., Piven and Cloward 1979). Others emphasize the combination of fatigue, repression, and satisfaction of reformist goals as ways to explain what seems to be an inevitable decline in mobilization.

Cycles and waves are just one possibility among the shapes of protest and politics. As Stone (1997) notes for talk about public policy, "stories of decline" or, conversely, of constant improvement are important rhetorical devices in arguing for or against one or another policy choice. They are especially useful when transformed into stories of "stymied progress," in which a proposed policy would interrupt an otherwise Whiggish trajectory of constant progress and improvement. But for social movement activists and analysts, alike, more gradual trajectories are also important ways of seeing time unfold. In many respects, Tilly's overall story of the development of the modern "repertoire of contention" is one of gradual, but directional change from localized, direct protest forms to nationalized, more indirect ones (e.g., 1984, 1995; but see Tilly and Wood 2003 for evidence of its geographical unevenness).

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Trajectories suggest gradualism or incrementalism, but not necessarily in a desired direction. For example, the idea that things are getting consistently worse for a particular group, or continually more repressive can suggest the foreclosure of opportunities for success, either in the goals of a movement or campaign or even in mobilization itself. At the same time, as Sewell (2008) indicates, long-term trajectories of change denote a kind of stability within adaptable systems. In some cases, however, more sudden change can be the result of intersecting trajectories, where the normal operations of institutions, for example, may, in some places or times "abrade" against each other, and cause a crisis.

Perhaps the clearest contrast to trajectories is what sociologists and social historians have come to call "turning points" or "events" (see Abbott 2001; Sewell 1996a). These are moments of radical discontinuity, when previous apparent trajectories are thrown into crisis, historical patterns disrupted and remade, and social relations redirected. What is especially interesting about events is that they cannot be known until after they occur: whatever sudden changes activists—or authorities—may hope to achieve may also, and regularly are, stymied. For Sewell, therefore, events have to be interpreted *as if* they were just that. In Sewell's example, the storming of the Bastille in July 1789, that event—that episode—became the index of a new meaning of the term "revolution," promulgated by members of the National Assembly, and at once validating the act, certifying the Parisian actors who did it, and creating new categorical boundaries in the process. In Sewell's version, an event is therefore the contingent entailments of a focal action that define events, rather than the actions themselves, though actions that defy expectations—like the storming of the Bastille prison and the killing of its governor by the Parisian *foule*—are centrally important, as well.

There are other kinds of turning points, ones in which the balance of forces in a struggle suddenly shift, as when soldiers defect from the state and join revolutionary forces. Even there, a question of critical mass comes up, so that the turning point can only be understood as a turning point when the critical mass has been reached, or the commanding officer killed, but not when the first soldiers start to express doubts. In other words, even these turning points have to be located in a larger story by their participants.

One satisfying element of eventful history is that it is far more conducive to non-academic storytelling than are temporal accounts of cycles and trajectories. Unlike cycles and trajectories, the centrality of unconventional action trains our analytic focus on agency, almost traditionally understood, rather than on more structured, anonymous patterns of action or on agglomerations of institutions like "the state." This focus on agency, in turn, trains our attention on actors and on their decisions and interpretations, and thus, too, on moral and political choices. The narrative form, with protagonists and antagonists, story arcs, and denouements is itself an important communicative convention for building relationships (e.g., White 1992), and eventful histories can invite activists to insert themselves into eventful situations to consider what they might have done, or to engage in comparisons with their own situations. In this sense, the agentic focus of eventful histories, when brought into comparison with other situations, can even help to clarify structural barriers to action that obtain in one place or time as opposed to another. They help to discern the features of different equilibria and the actions that might be able to punctuate them.

Problems with Shapes

Each of the typical shapes of temporality discussed above comes with its own peculiar set of limitations both for analysis and action.

Problems with Cycles and Waves

If Sidney Tarrow was fairly careful about what he defined as a "cycle of contention"—"heightened conflict," "expanding repertoires of contention," new organizations, "geographical and sectoral diffusion," and new interpretive frames, which crest and decline—others have been less circumspect, given the difficulty of measuring all of these features well. As a result, in studies of waves of contention, frequencies of individual participation, number of protest events, and diffusion of protest from one locality to another or from one "sector" to another all "count" as evidence of a wave. But the problem is that sometimes these do not move in tandem: what do we make, for example, of British industrial action in the 1970s, in which many smaller strikes gave way to fewer, larger ones and strikes with little political content co-existed with several politically radicalized ones (Barker and Krinsky 2016)?

Further, it is difficult to know what or who *makes* a wave. This is the problem with naturalistic metaphors, as well as mechanistic ones (see Stone 1997). It leaves agency indeterminate. The problem is exacerbated when it comes to movement decline. Why a wave breaks and dissipates, and why it does *when* it does, is rarely clear. And clarity on this issue should be of utmost political importance. Was there something that could have prevented decline? What could someone have done to prolong the movement? Or is it just a matter of structure and saturation? There are only so many available new places for a movement to diffuse its claims and tactics, and after that, there's only one direction in which to go. Or, perhaps, all the agency is on the side of the repressors. In any case, the principal problem is with its agentless inevitabilism.

Moreover, as Gillan (2016) and Barker and Krinsky (2016) indicate, there is no real clarity in the literature that distinguishes movements from movement *waves*. Without a clear understanding of the difference, it becomes difficult to know how central Tarrow's interest in sectoral and spatial diffusion are. These may proceed, moreover, in quite different ways than the increase and decrease in protest in a given place or over a given issue.

Finally, there's a matter of thresholds. When, exactly, do we judge a wave to have started? When does it end? Because waves are generally uneven in practice—cut through with ripples and larger and smaller wavelets—the question of rises and declines are, almost surprisingly, matters of hunches from the inside, and able to be judged from the outside only *post hoc*—unless some kind of threshold makes sense or does so consensually (think about the disjuncture between the experience of recessions and official definitions).

Problems with Trajectories

Trajectories suggest different sets of problems than those of cycles and waves. There are few demands for substantive specificity, so no particular conundrums about what one is measuring

to determine the trajectory. Almost anything can be on a trajectory, and they can be upwards, downwards, or stable, and more or less gradual or steep. The particular problem trajectories entail is their very stability and constancy. It is difficult to discern a role for agency for movements. Yet, we often talk about politics in this way, and in the process discount movement outcomes, attributing anything short of a revolutionary change to continuity in a gradually changing system.

In some cases, the kind of gradualism or stability implied by trajectory thinking is justified. In quite different examples, Meyer (2011) and Sewell (2008) suggest the importance of thinking about institutional or systematic stability. Meyer argues that the US constitutional system, with its Madisonian design of checks and balances, federalism, and fragmented power, both encourages social movements to arise since it is difficult to satisfy political claims inside the system, and yet also absorbs social movements through its very slowness and many entry and veto points. Accordingly, the US system is built for incrementalism, and only rarely gets jolted from it. On a different level of analysis, Sewell argues that as a global system, capitalism has been—even with all its periodic instability—fairly constant in its ability to organize social relations, and to secularly expand its reach.

The problem with many accounts of trajectories is that the trajectories are kept on course, so to speak, by an underlying structural logic. For the study of social movements, these logics may be important, and important for activists to understand, too. But taken by themselves, trajectories generally leave little opening for intervention.

Problems with Events

Eventful accounts, as I said earlier, are narratively satisfying, and give a greater sense of agency than do trajectories or waves. At the same time, as Bearman, Faris and Moody (1999) indicate, they should be *rare* and may depend, at least for outside analysts, on "butterfly effects"—the idea that *but for the triggering of a single link in a causal chain,* the event might not have occurred. In other words, they are concerned that eventful accounts, being simply accounts, are also *simplified* accounts, in which the analyst funnels a rich network of causes through a single (or small set) of occurrences and then broadens the implications back out to a larger network of effects. Thus, they argue, more structurally inclined analysts, interested in the complex layering of social and political life, smuggle agency and discontinuity in to their accounts via the trick of a good narrative. While they do not discount the possibility such events, they are concerned that they should, indeed, be far rarer occurrences than they appear to be in historical-sociological accounts of change. Instead, they argue for historical sociologies that are more richly determined, where significant changes occur through multiple, mutually reinforcing pathways.

Further, in eventful accounts, it is not always clear what leads up to the event being triggered: Armstrong and Bernstein (2008) suggest that changes in the complex, "multi-institutional fields" of politics come amid "contradictions" among institutional orders, an idea akin to that of trajectories "abrading" against each other (Orren and Skowronek 1994), or the production of "critical junctures" in "punctuated equilibria" (Baumgartner and Jones 1994; **CITES**). As Paul Pierson (2004: 58) argues, however, we still need theories that say more about such collisions

and what makes them more or less likely.

Alternatively, "events" can be triggered by psychological and microsociological stimuli acting on relations already shaped by "molecular processes" (Trotsky) and "densification of networks" (Della Porta 2016) that can prepare them for contingency rather than determined action on one or another side of a social divide. For both, there are times at which there is "temporal intensification" (Della Porta) in which, on a micro-scale, people are looking for, and picking up cues from each other. With denser networks—which can even be the forced relationship between protesters and the forces of order on the streets—these signals become paramount. As Trotsky writes:

> The psychological moment when the soldiers go over to the revolution is prepared by a long molecular process, which, like other processes of nature, has its point of climax. But how determine this point? A military unit may be wholly prepared to join the people, but may not receive the needed stimulus. The revolutionary leadership does not yet believe in the possibility of having the army on its side, and lets slip the victory. After this ripened but unrealized mutiny, a reaction may seize the army. The soldiers lose the hope which flared in their breasts; they bend their necks again to the yoke of discipline, and in a new encounter with the workers, especially at a distance, will stand opposed to the insurrection. In this process, there are many elements imponderable or difficult to weigh, many crosscurrents, collective suggestions and autosuggestions. But out of this complicated web of material and psychic forces one conclusion emerges with irrefutable clarity: the more the soldiers in their mass are convinced that the rebels are really rebelling – that this is not a demonstration after which they will have to go back to the barracks and report, that this is a struggle to the death, that the people may win if they join them, and that this winning will not only guarantee impunity, but alleviate the lot of all – the more they realize this, the more willing they are to turn aside their bayonets, or go over with them to the people (Trotsky 1930: Ch. 7).

For Trotsky and Della Porta, of course, the moment of change is prepared only by organized protest that may not depart from the general routines of protest that are already established. That is why in both the case of the February Revolution in 1917 and the Eastern European and Middle-Eastern cases Della Porta considers, the militants and organizers themselves were taken by surprise at the turn of events. Della Porta argues that this "meso-level" of protest, in changing people's routines, and creates more "spaces for encounter" in which networks can grow and with it, perceptions of accelerated time and an attendant sense of urgency. Quoting one Czech activist, Della Porta then elaborates:

> "[W]hen *the little crack that shows possible change appears, then everybody's feeling united*: people united and that is why the huge gathering on Wenceslas square was possible….It's becoming unbearable when it seemed that change is possible" (CZ 5, emphasis added).

> That "little crack" makes relations between different social and political groups more dense. The mobilization process itself creates spaces for the encounter of various oppositional individuals and groups increases moral satisfaction by showing broadening support for the oppositional ideas. The number of participants is not the only important

signal: the diversity of the groups involved is also considered as an important indicator of the spreading of dissatisfaction and, especially, the potential to express it through protest.

Particularly important in both Trotsky's and Della Porta's account—and a position to which Sewell came (2008)—is the inadequacy of the "event" for explaining change. Rather, even if we allow that there are these rare moments of radical contingency, the contingency appears as something more than randomness precisely because there are more micro-social and psychological, as well as macro-social dynamics involved that prepare the event.

Layers and Perspectives

In 2008, Sewell argued that it was important to link the eventful nature of local change to the cycles and secular trajectories of capitalism. In so doing, he began to point the way to a more nuanced understanding of time in movements, one that can be understood to consist of multiple, interpenetrating "layers" of time, often across different spatial scales.

In his historical accounting of the long switch from a Fordist repertoire of municipal governance and public labor regulation in New York City to a more neoliberal repertoire, Krinsky (2011) highlights the ways in which a focal "event" for the transition to neoliberalism—the New York City fiscal crisis of 1975-1977—left in place corporatist governing arrangements that had marked the previous decade's belated inclusion of public workers in New Deal-like bargaining regimes. In the process, however, it set the stage for the gradual erosion of these arrangements and their transformation into a new repertoire in the 1990s. The analysis highlights the interweaving temporal dynamics of longer union-recognition struggles dating from the 1930s, the eventful dynamics of bankers' decision to block the city's sale of new bonds in 1975, and the cyclical dynamics of labor mobilization and more and less progressive electoral coalitions.

Gillan (2016) takes a similar route into his discussion of temporality. He proposes the concepts of "velocity," "vector," "timescales," and "timescapes." Velocity refers to the speed of relational change—much as Della Porta suggests the "acceleration of time" as networks densify. Vector refers to the direction of action, as when path-dependency and positive-feedback mechanisms nourish continuity. Vector therefore speaks to what I called "trajectories," above.

Timescales refer to the length of time that a given vector lasts; this, of course, is a matter of analytic difficulty, since, "abeyance structures" (Taylor 1989) beg the question of whether a movement has essentially ended, with a remaining core that tries to keep the flame alive enough to ignite the imaginations and actions of subsequent generations, or whether this is, in fact, the continuation of the vector. As Gillian indicates, this cuts to the very definition of movements, and is an ontological question. For Della Porta, the transformation of identities that can occur in movements raises the question in another way: are the same actors traveling on a given trajectory? Finally, timescapes are the "temporal context" of movements, those agglomerations in space of relevant velocities, vectors and timescales of relational action.

The important point of such layers is that participants in protest—and in politics more generally—are located at different points in them, and therefore have different experiences of

time. Further, their own temporal passages—not always associated with a movement or authorities, but sometimes involved with them for significant periods—may suggest different orientations toward action, willingness to "densify" their own networks, and interpretation of risks, velocity, and relevant others from whom to pick up signals.

In his comments on the importance of "vantage point" in Marx's dialectical method and processes of abstraction, Bertell Ollman makes a point that is relevant here (2003). A vantage point is a:

> place from which to view the elements of any particular Relation and, given its then extension, from which to reconstruct the larger system to which this Relation belongs. A vantage point sets up a perspective that colors everything which falls into it, establishing order, hierarchy, and priorities, distributing values, meanings, and degrees of relevance, and asserting a distinctive coherence between the parts. Within a given perspective, some processes and connections will appear large, some obvious, some important; others will appear small, insignificant, and irrelevant; and some will even be invisible.

We have come up against the epistemological question facing studies of time in social movements, namely, whether it is possible to know anything *but* trajectories at any given moment. In Della Porta's and Trotsky's work, it is the very search for cues in possibly-eventful moments that may help make possibly-events into events by pushing some people to act decisively and others to withdraw. In other words, the sometimes-frantic search for cues may betoken a breakdown of trajectories and routines, but their resolution—revolution or restitution—is never knowable in advance, and neither, therefore, is their ultimate eventfulness. Similarly, it is difficult to know where in a cycle one is, especially since the empirical evidence of cycles—almost no matter what one counts—is marked by smaller fluctuations within more pronounced rises and declines.

Accordingly, vantage point in a struggle is crucial both for understanding how one acts, and also for understanding how one may understand the context within which action is possible. Vantage point is itself relational, and the agency involved with *seeing* through a vantage point combines past experience and accreted habits with problem-solving and projectivity in a variously accented "chordal triad" (Emirbayer and Mische 1998). If this is the case, however, the particular layering of relations and their vectors should be of considerable importance in shaping one's vantage point and the relative emphasis each element of agency takes in any situation.

For many union activists in Krinsky's account, for example, the long-term importance of gaining something like parity with private-sector workers, most of whom had, by 1965, enjoyed thirty years of regularized collective bargaining, was a key trajectory within which they located themselves since the "event" of the National Labor Relations Act of 1935. For several union activists, however, this trajectory intersected with other events and cycles: the purge of Communists in the early 1950s and the defeat of the largest municipal workers' union, for older Communist activists, and the rise of the Civil Rights and student movements in the early 1960s, for the younger ones. In 1965, former members of the older union, who had been exiled to remote welfare offices, joined with younger, idealistic social workers with 1960s movement experience, to form a smaller social workers' union and strike for better pay, lower caseloads,

and better benefits for their clients. They managed to get the workers in the larger, more moderate union to strike with them, and even to get support from Martin Luther King, Jr. But two years later, after more formalized collective bargaining procedures began to be put in place following their historic one-month strike, they could not get the larger union to join them on the picket lines. Two years later, they were absorbed into the larger union.

It is not just that the two sets of union leaders had different goals. They shared the goal of regularized collective bargaining and parity with private-sector workers. Rather, the trajectory of fighting for this goal was the singular focus on the less-radical labor leaders, and, having moved toward the achievement of this goal in 1967, they were less likely to upset the apple cart than were the old- and new-left unionists in the smaller local. Indeed, the Communist-dominated union had, going back to the 1930s, mixed workers' demands with demands beyond the workplace and in solidarity with welfare clients. The crushing of the Communist-dominated union in the 1950s and the distribution of hangers-on to remote welfare offices created little pockets of "abeyance structures" that kept the earlier wave of union activity from dying out completely and which allowed them to "collide and abrade" with the trajectory of the more moderate union's ongoing efforts in the 1965 strike. These abeyance structures—spatially removed from centers of control—became distinctive "timescapes" in Gillan's terms, with distinctive temporal layers, and colored these activists' vantage points on the opening of the City government, under Mayor Robert F. Wagner, Jr. to collective bargaining. In the process, it also led them to put their projects, recovered from an earlier wave of unionism, ahead of formalized collective bargaining two years later, even as the larger union did not.

Situations of Time

If Trotsky and Della Porta's work focus on epochal transformations—the Russian Revolution, the fall of the Communist Bloc, and the Arab Spring—there are nevertheless less-epochal transformations and certainly less "eventful" movements for which understanding temporality might be important, especially, but not necessarily in the service of making them more eventful.

For this, it is crucial to focus not on the event itself, but on the molecular processes that may precede events, and that push trajectories forward, lead them to collide with other trajectories, and begin processes of network-densification and acceleration of political interaction. What this means, in turn—and perhaps especially in the Madisonian churn of US politics—is that we have to understand the temporal patterns of multiple movements and multiple institutional contexts in which activism unfolds. This is particularly critical because in the US context, the extensive network of civil society and its overlap with state institutions tends also to create significant moderating influences, disorganization of radical projects, and cooptation of activists into governing projects, in short, to draw movement and "normal" politics closer together (Meyer 2011; Meyer and Tarrow 1998).

Institutions and Vantage Points

Institutions, sociologically speaking, are relatively stable sets of interactions that are subject to

significant path-dependency and positive feedback loops. This means that institutions are sets of relationships that set the conditions for further interaction in self-reinforcing ways. These can include institutions of the state—what can be thought of as a particularly important meta-institution—as well as those outside of the state, and even informal ones. Because institutions persist at multiple scales, the "multi-institutional fields" (Armstrong and Bernstein 2008; see also Krinsky 2008; Fligstein and McAdam 2012) in which movements grow and operate, tend to be shot through with multiple, intersecting trajectories, "vectors" and "timescales" of interaction. Each of these, in turn, entails more or less loyalty and regularity of participation. Each is also potentially a context of contention with greater or lesser levels of consensus about the content and form of the interactions that compose the institution.

The multiple intersections of institutions that inscribe our lives afford to us specific standpoints. To say this does not mean simply that everything we do is overdetermined; it does mean that the patterns of action these institutions make available are the stuff with which we see and know the social world, the essential cognitive building-blocks of our vantage points from which we act. If there is no meso- without the micro-, the same also applies in reverse.

Activists' vantage points, like anyone else's, are shaped by their institutional positions, relations, and the typical temporal patterns they take on. Thus, a tenant organizer in New York City will approach her work with an eye toward organizing tenant associations in buildings with abusive landlords or rapacious mortgage-holders, but will have clear ideas on how long such a project would and should take. There are also steps available, like rent-strikes and getting a judge to appoint a receiver for rents until repairs are made that involve courts. These can stretch on for years. There are regular municipal hearings on rent levels, periodic attempts to pass tenant-friendly legislation or block landlord-friendly laws that involve the Rent Guidelines Board, City Council, and occasionally, the state legislature. Even if she has a political commitment to socialism and decommodified housing, it is likely that in the normal course of her life as an organizer, she will conceive of what is possible *as activism* in ways that are largely constrained to these institutionalized possibilities.

It may be for this reason that, as Della Porta notes, "[t]he acceleration of time makes events difficult to predict: indeed, "surprise" is a frequently used word at the beginning of revolutions or other exceptional events" (2016: 5). If acceleration of time has to do with making *new* connections in "densifying networks," two things are likely. First, that new people are drawn into protest, which means that they may come *without* the cognitive limits imposed by institutional involvements. Those with the most institutionalized commitments may be least optimistic about, or even conscious of, the capabilities of a mass of people in motion.

Second, as new connections in networks are made, the locally "salient knowledge" born of institutional commitments can be "recontextualized" in new networks, so that what was once familiar now looks surprising and strange, opening up new possibilities for action (Ganz 2000).

This does not happen only—or even primarily—in the course of protest. Densification can occur in a number of ways, whether through urbanization, in Marx's classical understanding of the conditions under which a proletarian movement might emerge, or through the actors whose actions compose institutions and their overlap.

In a study of the politics of workfare in New York City—where many housing, welfare-rights, and anti-hunger groups, as well as labor unions contested the City's policy of making welfare recipients work as a condition of receiving aid—Krinsky (2008, 2010) found that turning points can occur "behind the backs," of participants, if on a smaller scale than the outright abolition of the program would have been. Studying eleven years of claims-making in a variety of institutions, he found that when local churches, synagogues, and nonprofit charities denounced workfare, the Mayor stopped making as many moralizing claims for the program's benefits. Because stopping workfare's expansion, rather than stopping the Mayor from publicly moralizing, was the goal of the campaign, its success went at least partially unnoticed (though plans to expand the program as a requirement for nonprofit contracts was stopped).

Similarly, the local media turned against the program, publishing damning articles about workfare only after the newspapers had to sue the City government for basic information on it. In the context of the program as a whole, these made little evident dent, and so escaped the notice of most activists. One union leader, discussing the progress of the campaign after eight years, simply indicated with his hand a steady decline. And yet, crucial to workfare's eventual demise was the decreasing ability for mayors to publicly justify it, as it lost cachet in successive institutional settings. This seems to be a good extension of Della Porta's (and Tarrow's [1993]) suggestion that the fact of protest, in densifying networks, also creates new resources for protest.

Coalitional Vantage Points

In the workfare case, the mayor's commitment to institutionally overhauling the welfare system meant constantly activating new networks of activists and advocates, from welfare rights and labor to childcare, housing, hunger, and homeless advocates. With each activation, the press followed; the courts often did, as well. Where, on one hand, activists, advocates, and service-providers could be attached to their institutional routines, their being forced together by common state action against their constituents and clients enabled them to work together and learn from each other, in no small part due to the efforts of several advocates who created forums for this to occur. This changed at least some of the vantage point for action, in part by creating a neutral context—a *present*—that could take precedence in the "chordal triad" of gathering movement action, in which participants were not as closely tied as before to their institutional vectors of activity.

Significantly, too, grassroots organizations that were organizing workfare workers—they were not sure whether into union-like structures of workers or into welfare-rights organizations—engaged many people who had not had experience in organizing and protest. These groups' willingness to be a platform for new voices resulted in two things: First, newcomers had few limiting expectations linked to their political involvement, beyond the usual cynicism and feelings of powerlessness they were trying to overcome by being involved. Second, a new sector of organizing formed that was more focused on popular education and member power. In the twenty years that have followed these anti-workfare campaigns, a more intensively joined network formed among similar activists.

Embedded Dynamics

Focusing on revolutionary events, as Della Porta and Sewell do, leads to several risks: we can miss deep continuities between "befores" and "afters," and, related to this, overstate the "fluidization" of macro-structures caused at the meso-level of the movements themselves. While it does highlight the often-missing agency of large groups of people acting together, the focus on revolutionary events misses the kinds of dynamics suggested above, for example, the ways in which significant shifts in "discursive opportunities" (Koopmans and Statham 1999) may only become more fluid or more rigid only *partly* because of collective action, but also due to the dialogical consequences of this action down the line, the ways in which it affects the relations among multiple third parties and pushes them toward, or pulls them away from alliances they have made.

A focus on such large events can also conflate questions about actual disorganization of ruling coalitions on one hand, and the basic limits of control strategies on the other. These may be the same at certain points, and may be different in others. Take, for example, the case--also highlighted by Sewell (1996b) of Howard Kimeldorf's (1988) discussion of the "strategic pivot" in West Coast dockworkers organizing in the 1930s. Communist activists on the docks were following the Comintern's "Third-Period" strategy of trying to organize specifically Communist unions outside of the American Federation of Labor (AFL). They were not having a great deal of success, even though workers frequently complained about the AFL union. Instead, a group of Communist Party activists, under the leadership of Harry Bridges, decided to focus less on revolutionary rhetoric in their newspaper, and more on the problems dockworkers faced. There were revolutionary solutions offered in inner-pages, but the paper highlighted the daily struggles of workers. And it caught on quickly. The group of activists further decided to try to take over the AFL union--anticipating the Party's "boring from within" strategy by a few years--and succeeded. But because this went against Party directives, the Party sent a representative from headquarters in New York City to set the San Francisco activists straight.

They threw the representative out of the window of their meeting hall, and proceeded to lead a shutdown of ports up and down the West Coast within a year through a radicalized AFL union.

On one hand, we could interpret this "pivot" or "turning point" as an event that shows that the San Francisco activists' ability to "fluidize" Communist Party authority structures, but there does not seem to be enormous evidence that this was the case. Instead, Communist Party leaders were simply unable to extend their authority and enforce from New York City to the West Coast. And, like the Bolshevik leaders during the February Revolution and the Eastern European activists in Della Porta's account, they were caught by surprise by the ferocity and extent of the dockers' strike of 1934.

Further, even if, during revolutionary events, local actions can reconstitute identities and challenge larger patterns of power, it is also the case that frequently, some of these patterns--these repertoires--are reproduced in the actions of revolutionaries themselves. As revolutionaries have often discovered, it is one thing to bring down a regime, and another to constitute a regime on a fully different basis, and with different practices. Revolutionary experiments are often short-lived: the Commune and soviets are cases in point, and the deeper the uncertainty among the new rulers of their power, perhaps the more likely they are to revert

to broader governance repertoires.

This reassertion of older patterns is due to repression, longer-standing habits and repertoires of rule that limit the imagination of alternatives, and the tasks involved in winning. This applies to the Paris Commune--repression, certainly; but also a failure to impound accounts at the *Banque de France*; and the basic tasks of running a city--as much as it does to smaller-scale, non-revolutionary movements.

Two further observations: First, the habits and repertoires (the difference does not strongly matter for our purposes here) that limit alternatives are at once repertoires of action and organization and discourse and thought. And they are not politically innocent. As Cox and Nilsen (2014) argue--following Gramsci, Stuart Hall, and others--social relations that are settled are best understood as "truce lines" in ongoing social struggles. Seen in this way, the problem for understanding time in and for social movements is as much one about the mechanisms for *stopping* development and limiting agency as it is about "fluidizing" structure.

Second, a good deal of what social movements do is create alternative institutions, rather than protest those that exist. This work, most of which is offstage in studies of cycles and events, often involves trying to "rework" (Katz 2004) existing relations and their routines, and rather than producing turning points, do a great deal to "densify" local networks and to *keep them dense* through organizational maintenance. The struggles to build these institutions over time can sometimes become struggles over time. These movement tasks involve as much *slowing* of time as events do speeding it up. As a result, there are often struggles within movements over what might be called *urgency* and *patience,* with urgency, because of its association with the acceleration of eventful temporality, often understood to be a more radical stance than patience.

The question of vantage-point here is important, in part because urgency and patience also touch on questions of the interpretation of the needs (Fraser 1989) to which movements are often pitched, and can therefore sometimes be reversed. Meeting immediate needs urgently can as easily pose the challenge of quiescence as spur radical challenge--charitable intervention on the one hand, bread riots on the other. But unalloyed urgency does not help to build up alternatives, and it is these alternatives, such as the cooperatives that were part of the socialist movement, historically, that provide different bases for self-governance after revolutionary events. The vantage point of those facing significant needs is not necessarily a ready guide out out of this two-facedness of urgency and patience. As with workers who refuse overtime because it takes away employment opportunities for others and homeless people who work on housing campaigns from which they know they may not benefit directly, the vantage point of privation often enough leads people to make choices that defer gratification of those needs in favor of more systematic solutions.

Strategies and Politics of Time

So far, I have argued that prevailing conceptions of temporality in the analysis of social movements are limited if taken in isolation from each other. In this, I follow Sewell, Gillan, and Emirbayer and Mische, though they articulate the importance of layering in different ways. Further, I have argued that the salience of these layers rests in the relational vantage points

occupied and taken in the course of a movement, and further, that these vantage points can both obscure and uncover layers of time, so that similar occurrences may look "eventful" from one perspective, and like continuations of trajectories or the breaking of waves from another. But even these vantage points--these situations of temporality--are not fully dispositive of agency.

This final section builds an outline around the question of layered and embedded temporal agency that--almost oddly, given the tone of this essay as a whole--is meant to guide thinking *in and about* actual movement activity. It builds on Della Porta's strategy of looking for temporal cues in her interviews with activists to understand how *they* understand--and then act on--the temporality of their own struggles. Della Porta's methodological hunch here seems to be that these cues will allow access into activists' own historicizing activity, and particularly their own understandings of what Abbott calls "time horizons" and what Gillan calls "vectors." Abbott is more technical: he's interested in the length of time it takes for a variable to become apparent, to "separate signal and noise or real and random change" (2001: 173). If one can understand the folk version of this among activists, one can understand how they interpret--and therefore help to *make* events "events."

Vantage Point and Temporal Cueing

When activists and organizers from New York's low-income communities of color first encountered Occupy Wall Street, it was often with a mix of curiosity, dismissal, and hostility. Some had encountered the members of the New York General Assembly--the group that called the occupation--earlier in the year, and found their consensus-based process tedious and their language disconnected to the long struggles that their communities were facing. Some noted with bitterness that the sudden growth of attention lavished on Occupy's message of opposition to inequality seemed to be in proportion to the occupiers' whiteness and middle-class origins. To them, the sped-up, eventful appearance of Occupy Wall Street was dangerously close to a simple reproduction of an old pattern in which the political voices of the poor and people of color were marginalized. This changed nothing. Some still approached the occupation with some curiosity--and with the idea that it could be built upon in potentially interesting ways. Some combined all of these.

For those who were initially hostile, there was no doubt that there was a kind of "temporal intensification" and increased "velocity" with respect to attention to the inequality that they had been highlighting and fighting for years in very tangible ways: it's just that they were concerned--to use Gillan's vocabulary--that the velocity was not really on a *vector,* that the densification of networks at Zuccotti Park and through the traditional press and social media would actually lead nowhere, as it was still largely disconnected from the networks they had patiently built up over the previous ten to thirty years. This was fundamentally a problem of *vantage point* and the temporal horizons that were visible from it. It also raises the problem of "temporal cueing" (Mische 2004; see also Krinsky 2007), in which a mismatch in actors' time-horizons and understandings of time impedes the formation of coalitional ties and common political program.

As with the Bolsheviks who encouraged workers to follow the women textile workers out on an unplanned strike on International Women's Day in Trotsky's account of the February Revolution, many of these community organizations quickly made the assessment that they had

to at least engage with Occupy. This was also the case because for all of its anti-organizational rhetoric, Occupy was organizationally, operationally, and financially sustained behind the scenes in some large measure by organized labor and by community organizations with longstanding--if sometimes tense--ties to the city's labor movement. In other words, there was a way "in" to Occupy for these community organizations without having to commit fully to what promised to be a short-lived physical occupation in favor of the longer-term work they were doing. The overall setting--or timescape--of the movement allowed some element of temporal cueing where initially it seemed to be more difficult.

It should also be said that because of Occupy, the densification of networks and the temporal intensification infused new energy into both community organizing and the labor movement locally, while the spread of the Occupy slogan--the 99 percent--has had widespread repercussions in opening "cultural opportunities" for claim-making about inequality that had not existed prior, both locally and nationally.

Temporal Strategies and Learning

Strategy is as much a matter of *learning* as it is about *planning*, but both are intertwined in social movement activity. Social movement activity is an engagement with the world in order to change it, and so the kind of "inquiry" involved (Dewey 1938) is active and generally dominated by the "projective" note in Emirbayer and Mische's chordal triad of agency. For Ganz (2000), "strategic capacity" is an emergent property of leadership groups that combine multiple experiences, kinds of knowledge, and vantage points. This makes them able to combine the motivation for change with "salient local knowledge" and the experience of leaders with histories in other movements that can "recontextualize" local knowledges. This, in turn, gives rise to new, synthetic and syncretic claims and actions that innovate and give strategically capacious groups an advantage in their organizing.

Ganz's ideas are nourished by his experience in the United Farm Workers from the mid-1960s through 1980. The "resourcefulness" of the strategically capacious Farm Workers was in contrast to the resource-rich, but strategically constrained campaigns of the AFL-CIO and Teamsters. Importantly, though understated in Ganz's analysis, part of the obstacle for other organizing campaigns was that their organizers could not or would not leave their vantage points *as labor organizers*, and so tried to run unionization campaigns in the berry and lettuce fields as if they were running campaigns in Fordist factories. Their vision of the arc of campaigns, their velocity, and their vectors were either not enhanced by the recontextualizing "heuristic processes" triggered by participants with non-labor movement experience or not attentive enough to the vantage points of the farmworkers themselves.

Similarly, in a five-year-old organizing campaign for decommodified low-income housing through community land trusts in New York City, members of a homeless activist organization have been stalwart participants even though it is clear to them that they may not personally benefit from their activism, even if it is successful. Apart from upsetting what might be normal expectations of demands for urgency from their vantage point, it is particularly interesting from the point of view of the intersecting temporal considerations at play, and the strategic learning it has produced.

Much as Ganz has done, Krinsky and Barker (2009; see also Krinsky 2007, 2008) have argued that strategy in social movements can be seen as a process of collective learning. Following the "cultural-historical activity theory" perspective in developmental psychology (see, e.g., Leontiev 1979; Engeström 1987; see also Sawchuk 2011; De Smet 2014 for applications to social movements), they show the ways in which strategizing is inseparable from the objects or goals that help define the subject (a movement is a group moving toward a given object and not others), the means to achieve the object, and the substrate of rules and repertoires, divisions of labor, and others oriented to the same object. When temporalities are overlaid on this already-complex picture, however, we can think more systematically about constructing what Auyero and Swistún (2009) call "tempographies" or maps of what Gillan calls "timescapes" of strategic situations. Auyero and Swistún, in their study of the creation of "toxic uncertainty" in an Argentine shantytown, highlight the ways in which time--and especially making others wait--as a technology of power. In movements, strategizing is partly a matter of learning and mapping the ways in which this works.

In the case of homeless people in the community land trust coalition in New York City, several elements are important to understand. First, the founding director of the organization had once been a resident--and learned organizing during the fight for--the oldest and most successful community land trust in New York City. Accordingly, she brought attention to an otherwise-obscure model to discussions of housing in her organization. Second, homeless activists themselves know that with each passing year that poor people do not have any semblance of control over the housing and real-estate in their neighborhoods, they are increasingly susceptible to displacement and homelessness; currently homeless people have diminishing options for stable, permanent housing in this scenario, too. Third, housing of all kinds is itself expensive and must be paid for over a period of time. Public subsidies for privately developed housing often attach to mortgages or are otherwise expire, so go through a cycle of affordability, after which they are "lost" to the affordable housing stock. Fourth, the history of homeless activism, such as it is, suggests powerfully that homeless people have been relegated to a residual category, and are often left out of housing plans both by housing officials who come to believe that rehousing people on a large scale is unrealistic, and by neighborhood residents who, whether through "Not-in-my-backyard" sentiments or simply through putting enough distance between themselves as poor tenants and "the homeless." Keeping homeless people at the table, as part of the coalition, keeps the issue of extremely-low-income housing front and center, in spite of its practical and fiscal difficulties.

Homeless people's *patience* in being involved is therefore an indication of the obvious fact that in many ways, time has been employed against them: the endless wait for housing, the failure of the City to develop adequate housing for extremely poor people that drives it, the constant deferral of homeless people's demands in housing politics, even within "the movement." Further, the structuring of housing subsidy programs such that they tend to expire, leaving the owners of the housing to "go market rate," may free up capital for construction in the near term, but builds in significant instability in a cyclical way, that also exacerbates homelessness and displacement.

On the other hand, homeless participants' patience indicates and even constitutes power in the movement because it is widely recognized that they have *every right to be impatient*. Their

presence calls for urgency, and as long as they are present the urgency of the fight--including to end the cyclical nature of affordable housing loss through permanent and accountable affordability schemes such as community land trusts--remains on the table. By keeping the issue of housing for those normally excluded from housing programs in focus, the tense temporal mismatch between patience and urgency serves not only as a potential rebuke to those coalition members who might otherwise take an easier route, but also helps to define the overall goals, and therefore, too, the overall strategy of the movement.

Conclusion

Donatella Della Porta approaches her study of temporality by trying to understand how activists narrate the movements in which they took part. Her focus on revolutionary events leads her to conclusions about network-densification and the perception of time-intensification, or what others have discussed as increases in the velocity of social interaction in such moments. Students of waves and cycles tend to *count* and find that the variable of interest--protests, protest participants, organizations, new interorganizational ties, etc.--rises and then falls, and sometimes in tandem with other possible variables of interest. From these findings, they look for mechanisms that explain the pattern. For example, Piven and Cloward (1979) draw on Michels' ideas about oligarchization of protest organizations to explain how poor people's movements succeed by creating disorder and fail because they create formal, mass organizations that inevitably fall prey to Michels' Iron Law. And students of trajectories--and of critical junctures--look for continuities or gradual change in organizational behavior that slowly cumulate or sometimes collide with other trajectories to create more significant crises in which other temporalities of change can take place.

I have suggested here a kind of catholic approach, one that argues, following the leads of McAdam and Sewell (2001) and Gillan (2016), who suggest, in different ways, that temporalilty is layered, where "timsecapes" of action are shot through with multiple temporal patterns. Moreover, these intersections at any given place and time provide vantage-points from which some parts of the intersecting processes--and their cumulation--can be more or less easily perceived and interpreted.

Finally, I have argued that understanding these vantage points helps us to understand strategy and strategic learning in movements, not only because it helps us to understand the actors' goals and objectives and very constitution, but also because it suggests that all of these processes are characterized by the possible collision "abrading" of trajectories, cycles, and event-triggers, which create the hopes, urgency, demands for patience, reversals, and roadblocks that are the stuff of movement action. Further, these are not politically innocent: all of the "vectors" of change have direction, opening up new possibilities for agency and foreclosing others, opening up new avenues of collaboration through cueing or blockages through mismatches. Understanding the "tempography" not just of social movements but of the political situations they produce and compose them, will help both social scientists and activists understand critical issues about how activists collectively learn and experiment in the face of power, and how

political power itself is constituted with and against movements.

There is a lot yet to be done. More explicit understandings of how a "chordal triad" of agency operates through timescapes would be important, and would raise critical and interesting methodological and epistemological questions regarding the evidence one could use. More explicit treatment of collective memory and its intersection with what Emirbayer and Mische understand as the past-oriented habitual action side of agency would likely enrich our understanding of the feedback loops that help more gradual trajectories of change take shape. And some greater consideration of the rescaling of temporality with social media--where densification of networks and time-intensification may not characterize revolutionary events so much as speed-ups of commodifiable sociability--seems critical for an understanding of how these same temporal dynamics can be as double-sided as the patience of homeless people in a housing coalition, or as Occupy appeared to activists from low-income communities of color.

References

To be inserted...