

This article was downloaded by: [La Trobe University Library]

On: 6 October 2008

Access details: Access Details: [subscription number 773404022]

Publisher Routledge

Informa Ltd Registered in England and Wales Registered Number: 1072954 Registered office: Mortimer House, 37-41 Mortimer Street, London W1T 3JH, UK



Sociological Spectrum

Publication details, including instructions for authors and subscription information:

<http://www.informaworld.com/smpp/title-content=t713666965>

ON THE CUSP OF A MOVEMENT: IDENTITY WORK AND SOCIAL MOVEMENT IDENTIFICATION PROCESSES WITHIN FATHERS' RIGHTS GROUPS

Jocelyn Elise Crowley ^a

^a Public Policy Program, Rutgers University, New Brunswick, New Jersey, USA

Online Publication Date: 01 November 2008

To cite this Article Crowley, Jocelyn Elise(2008)'ON THE CUSP OF A MOVEMENT: IDENTITY WORK AND SOCIAL MOVEMENT IDENTIFICATION PROCESSES WITHIN FATHERS' RIGHTS GROUPS',Sociological Spectrum,28:6,705 — 724

To link to this Article: DOI: 10.1080/02732170802342974

URL: <http://dx.doi.org/10.1080/02732170802342974>

PLEASE SCROLL DOWN FOR ARTICLE

Full terms and conditions of use: <http://www.informaworld.com/terms-and-conditions-of-access.pdf>

This article may be used for research, teaching and private study purposes. Any substantial or systematic reproduction, re-distribution, re-selling, loan or sub-licensing, systematic supply or distribution in any form to anyone is expressly forbidden.

The publisher does not give any warranty express or implied or make any representation that the contents will be complete or accurate or up to date. The accuracy of any instructions, formulae and drug doses should be independently verified with primary sources. The publisher shall not be liable for any loss, actions, claims, proceedings, demand or costs or damages whatsoever or howsoever caused arising directly or indirectly in connection with or arising out of the use of this material.

ON THE CUSP OF A MOVEMENT: IDENTITY WORK AND SOCIAL MOVEMENT IDENTIFICATION PROCESSES WITHIN FATHERS' RIGHTS GROUPS

Jocelyn Elise Crowley

Public Policy Program, Rutgers University, New Brunswick,
New Jersey, USA

Individuals who belong to social movement organizations (SMOs) do not necessarily identify themselves with the larger social movement overall. This sharp disconnect presents challenges to highly motivated activists, who rely on widespread movement identification to achieve their most valued goals in the political arena. This study aims to map out the conditions under which the movement identification process takes place. A mixed methods approach employs both content analysis and logit modeling techniques on original data collected from 149 members of fathers' rights groups located across the United States in 2003. In terms of results, first, the content analysis methods that are used on the interview data illustrate that SMO participants most commonly cite the social movement's formulation of a strong, social change goal when they consider the movement identification decision. Second, the logit models which are employed on the quantitative data show that engagement in externally-oriented identity work activities—or those activities that require members to interact with nonmembers of their immediate group in building their collective identity—as well as personal strain and notions of political efficacy are the most significant predictors of individual-level social movement identification. These results highlight the social movement features that are most significant to both movement identifiers and nonidentifiers, and demonstrate the importance of externally-oriented identity work on the conversion of simple SMO participation to social movement identification.

The author gratefully acknowledges the comments and suggestions of Jacqueline Olvera, Bob Edwards, and Rachel Einwohner in the preparation of this manuscript. All remaining errors are my own.

Address correspondence to Jocelyn Crowley, Public Policy Program, Rutgers University, 33 Livingston Ave, New Brunswick, NJ 08901–1987, USA. E-mail: jocelync@rci.rutgers.edu

Of particular interest to social movement scholars is the transition between the early appearance of a public problem—or the genesis stage of complaint recognition—and the existence of social unrest, or what these same researchers commonly call a bona fide social movement. Most notably, this moment is not clear-cut, whereby all participants suddenly realize that they are involved in a political project larger than themselves. Instead, the process of individuals identifying with a social movement is much more complex (Collom and Mitchell 2005; Polletta and Jasper 2001). Perhaps the most central intermediaries between the personalization of problems and social movement identification are the SMOs dedicated to pursuing change. Social movement scholars have identified these organizations as the critical locations whereby identity work—or tasks which build a sense of “we-ness,” a fundamental precursor to social movement identification—can flourish. Nevertheless, scholars have yet to document exactly how SMO members differentially engage in identity work in ways that can either promote or detract from overall movement identification.

This article squarely examines the role of identity work in advancing overall social movement identification by asking the simple question, what makes some SMO participants identify with the broader social movement, while others reject such an affiliation? It proceeds as follows. It first establishes the theoretical framework of the argument by distinguishing between SMO and movement identification, and the identity work processes by which an individual might move from one, more limited organizational affiliation to a broader, movement-related allegiance. Second, the analysis provides background on the research context utilized here to explore these identification processes: the fathers’ rights movement in the United States. Third, the article presents both qualitative results which suggest the components of a social movement that are most salient to SMO members when they consider the movement identification question, and quantitative results, which establish the predictive factors that lead individuals to believe that they are participating in a larger social movement rather than simply a more insular group operating by itself. Fourth, this article concludes with several important recommendations for social movement scholars as they attempt to map out the conditions under which SMO-level attachment can be converted into higher levels of overall movement identification.

SOCIAL MOVEMENT COLLECTIVE IDENTIFICATION PROCESSES

The fundamental task of any social movement is to encourage all participants to identify with a group of like-minded individuals and

a mission that is larger than themselves. Notably, at the microlevel, not all individuals march in lock-step in their construction of and incorporation into a social movement. In fact, we know that individuals vary to an extraordinary extent in terms of their likelihood to be recruited into different types of political activity, as well as in their levels of participation once recruited (Dixon and Roscigno 2003; Klandermans 1997; Passy and Giugni 2001). Interestingly, what has still gone unexplored to this point is the variability and fluidity at work in terms of the conditions under which individuals *identify* themselves as being part of a social movement. At stake is the construction of a common collective identity—a movement identity—that must resonate with the affected targeted population (Crane 1994; Gamson 1997; Taylor 1999). Collective identity pertains to “the (often implicitly) agreed upon definition of membership, boundaries, and activities” for the movement as a whole (Johnston et al. 1994). While a collective identity can be thought of as simply the emergent culture of a nascent movement (Stryker 2000), it also plays a critical functional role in mobilizing members, promoting loyalty to the cause, and aggregating grievances for presentation to those in power.

A key intervening vehicle between an individual's beliefs about his/her place in the social world and social movement identification overall is the SMO. In his research on the prospects for political action among potentially mobilizing populations, Gamson (1992) distinguishes between two layers of individual identification: organizational and movement attachments. While individuals may have allegiances to both, and, in fact, SMOs and movements often pursue similar goals, they can also work apart from one another and have unique adherents. That is, people can see themselves as affiliated with a movement, but not any particular organization, or alternatively, and most importantly for this analysis, perceive themselves as part of a specific organization, but not allied with a larger movement. This latter disjuncture among the rank-and-file membership is extremely problematic for the most committed activists because movement identification is essential to achieving highly valued political goals. The central question, then, becomes, how can this collective identity of movement allegiance be achieved?

One central mechanism might be identity work. Identity work involves all those tasks in which individuals engage in order to give meaning to themselves or to others (Einwohner 2006; Schwalbe and Mason-Schrock 1996; Snow and Anderson 1987; Snow and McAdam 2000). Critically, we can divide identity work into two types: one of which might build an individual's connection with

the SMO only, and the second which might function to build an allegiance with the larger movement. The key difference is whether the identity work is inward-looking or outward-looking in nature. Identity work which is *internal* in nature builds the *SMO's* collective identity by expressly linking members to the group. Examples would include already-established SMO members developing principles, codes of conduct, songs, rituals, and socialization rites that function to circumscribe the uniqueness of the organization. In all of these cases, the identity work's focus is inward in that the goal is strengthening the bonds among those who have already committed to the group. Identity work which is *external* in nature, on the other hand, builds the *movement's* collective identity by expressly linking members to the movement. Externally-oriented identity work requires that members take action beyond the scope of their organization's boundaries and current membership circles in support of the achievement of their larger political goals. What, then, might these externally-oriented forms of movement identity-building tasks involve?

A first type of externally-oriented identity work that can lead to movement identification is actively joining other SMOs—beyond one's original SMO—which are pursuing the same goal. Indeed, in the past, scholars have pointed to exposure to the narratives of others who are undergoing comparable problems as a central, identity-building experience (Kiecolt 2000; Lichterman 1999; Wuthnow 1994), one which can translate to movement identification if this exposure is widespread. Second, externally-oriented identity work resulting in movement identification can also take place when individuals attempt to recruit others into their SMO. By telling others outside the organization of their experiences with a particular social problem, individuals learn to streamline their accounts and provide linkages between their own particularized story and the larger issue at hand (Hunt and Benford 1994; Walsh 1981). In this way, too, they learn to shift their attention from the most immediate concerns of their SMOs to the movement at large. Third, externally-oriented identity work leading to movement identification can occur when individuals learn to clearly identify the cause's "enemies," thereby establishing a strong "us" versus "them" self-concept (Kiecolt 2000). While operating within an SMO, individuals have a choice; they can focus their time and energy on various aspects of an SMO's internal existence—such as by trying to build community there—or decide to acquire information about those who are contesting the issue against them in the public arena. This latter choice is much more likely to move members into operating with a more far-reaching,

movement-oriented perspective. In summary, this discussion leads to the following three central hypotheses regarding the impact of externally-oriented identity work:

Hypothesis 1: The more SMOs to which an individual belongs that are working for a similar cause, the more likely he/she is likely to conceive himself/herself as part of a social movement.

Hypothesis 2: If an individual engages in recruitment activities on behalf of an SMO, he/she is more likely to conceive himself/herself as part of a social movement.

Hypothesis 3: If an individual can identify enemies or opponents of an SMO, he/she is more likely to conceive himself/herself as part of a social movement.

While these externally-oriented identity work factors might be most important in predicting social movement identification, other forces might also be at play. More specifically, another motivating force is the severity of the social problem as experienced by the individual personally; examples might include significant monetary, family, and other relationship difficulties as perceived to be caused by this problem. If a person bears tremendous costs related to a particular social problem, then he/she might be more inclined to become mobilized to fight for change. This relative high level of strain could then lead to an increased probability of social movement identification as well. In addition, in order to be social movement identifiers, individuals must possess a solid notion of political efficacy. That is, individuals must have a strong belief that the political environment will ultimately change if they press their case hard enough; examples demonstrating this belief might include previous forms of political mobilization or protest. Taken together, these assertions lead to the following hypotheses:

Hypothesis 4. The more directly an individual experiences personal strain as a result of the social problem at issue, the more likely he/she is to conceive of himself/herself as part of a social movement.

Hypothesis 5. The more an individual demonstrates a belief in his/her political efficacy, the more likely he/she is to conceive of himself/herself as part of a social movement.

RESEARCH CONTEXT: FATHERS' RIGHTS ACTIVISM IN THE UNITED STATES

The fathers' rights movement in the United States provides a compelling setting in which to understand social movement identification processes more generally and test these five hypotheses more specifically. Over the past several decades, because of an escalating divorce rate and a nonmarital birth rate, the percentage of children living in single parent families has more than doubled, growing from 12% in 1970 to 28% in 2006 (Census 2006). As a result, policymakers have had to help parents make arrangements to both financially and physically care for these children. In terms of monetary support, the federal government, along with the states, has moved uniformly to strengthen the Child Support Enforcement Program, which was established by law in 1975. Currently the program engages in four tasks critical to the enforcement process: paternity identification, parental location, setting awards, and collecting awards (Crowley 2003). With respect to day-to-day care, the states remain actively involved in custody resolution cases, with the courts usually designating one parent as the primary, custodial caretaker and the other as the noncustodial parent in following the "best interest of the child" laws on the books (May 2001).

Fathers' rights groups in the United States, composed of mostly white, middle class men, emerged to counteract what they perceived to be the unfair effects of both sets of these laws. They argue that many fathers are prevented from participating in their children's lives once the parents part ways because current family policy has been captured by the women's movement. More specifically, with their groups claiming over 10,000 members located all throughout the country, fathers' rights activists maintain that men are victims of gender-based discrimination in the area of family law, with legislators, judges, lawyers, and social workers regularly favoring women over men in making postfamily breakdown decisions regarding their children (Fineman 1991; Goldberg 1997). They correctly note that in 2003, nine out of every ten parents who were due child support were mothers, and that approximately 83% of all custodial parents were mothers, while only 17% were fathers (Grall 2006). Participants in these organizations thus frame their goals as simply desiring "equal rights" with the mothers of their own children (Crowley 2006). More specifically, they seek to transform the child support system by reducing their obligations, advocating for tax laws that give them consideration for paying consistently over time, and calling for the institution of accountability systems such as debit cards to insure that their child

support dollars are only being used on their children's needs (rather than their ex-partners' needs/wants) (Crowley 2008). In terms of the physical care of their offspring, they also recommend a standard presumption of 50–50 joint custody—legal and physical—in all of the states.

METHODOLOGY

This analysis draws from a larger study of fathers' rights groups in the United States, where the central methodological goal was to conduct one-hour, in-depth telephone interviews with both organizational leaders and rank-and-file members. As no aggregate list of fathers' rights groups exists, I used the internet and non-profit directories for possible groups to include in the sample. After identifying 26 groups across the country that were willing to participate, I used snowball sampling techniques to secure a total of 158 interviews, of which 149 have complete data and thus are included in this analysis. All of these respondents answered questions on either five or six topics: (1) Demographics, (2) Group Patterns of Recruitment and Goals, (3) Relationships with Past Partners, (4) Relationships with their Children, (5) Political Behavior, and (6) Challenges Related to Leadership (asked of leaders only). All of the taped interviews, which were conducted in 2003, were then transcribed. Finally, it is important to note that all respondent names reported here have been changed to protect their identities.

Before turning to the testing of the hypotheses in the quantitative part of the study, the qualitative component of this study aimed to have respondents reflect upon and eventually articulate the most important features of a social movement in their minds when they considered the movement identification decision. All participants were thus directly asked the question, "Do you consider yourself to be part of a social movement?" In addition, the probes, "Why do you think so?" or "Why not?" were used to map and code their responses against the various components of McAdam and Snow's (1997) standard definition of a social movement.¹ More specifically, McAdam and Snow require that all social movements exhibit four

¹Within the social movement literature, there is some disagreement regarding how loose versus how rigid the definition of a social movement should be. McCarthy and Zald (1977) offer one of the most liberal definitions when they argue that social movements are "nothing more than preference structures directed towards social change." However, because of its specificity, this analysis utilized the McAdam and Snow definition in coding fathers' rights group members' responses.

notable characteristics: (1) a desire for change along some crucial, societal dimension, (2) an organizational construct, (3) temporal continuity, and (4) the presence of extra-institutional protest in making its appeal for reform.

Using this framework and content analysis methods, I divided the respondents into social movement identifiers and nonidentifiers. I then coded the social movement *identifiers'* responses in the following way. First, all responses that described the types of reforms desired or a commitment to the attainment of an alternative world in this area of policy as key to their belief that they were participating in a social movement were coded positively for valuing a *social change goal*. Second, all responses that incorporated the discussion of the group's structure and/or the presence of other groups working for the same goals as critical to their conceptualization of and allegiance to a social movement were coded as valuing the cause's strong *organizational framework*. Third, all responses that indicated that a long time horizon was essential to their commitment to a social movement were coded as exhibiting the component of *temporal continuity*. Finally, all responses that indicated that boycotts, protests, demonstrations, marches, hunger strikes, and the like were fundamental to their identification with the movement was coded as valuing the component of *extra-institutional means of protest*. Conversely, for the social movement *nonidentifiers*, their descriptions of the *absence* of these components when they explained their reasons for not believing that they were part of a movement larger than themselves were coded in a similar way. For example, if their responses suggested narrow, personal goals rather than social change goals as their reason for not identifying with the social movement, then the *lack* of a social change component in the social movement definition was coded as being part of their explanation.

For the quantitative part of the analysis which tested the five hypotheses outlined above, logit models were used to predict whether or not the respondent believed he/she was part of a social movement with 1 indicating identification with a social movement and 0 indicating a lack of social movement identification. Several variables operationalized each of the competing sets of hypotheses outlined above, the most important of which pertained to the impact of externally-oriented identity work in which they did or did not engage (Hypotheses 1–3).² To test the significance of this concept, the total number of fathers' rights groups to which the respondent currently belongs was incorporated into the models, with higher values

²A complete list of interview questions is available from the author.

corresponding to increased levels of externally-oriented identity work and thus an increased likelihood of social movement identification. Also included were measures of whether or not the individual conducted recruitment activities to bring others into the group, as well as whether the respondent could describe opponents of the group in the political arena. Both of these latter variables were coded with a 1 = yes and 0 = no, and were predicted to be positively related to social movement identification.

For the personal strain hypothesis (Hypothesis 4), a continuous variable was included to measure the amount of monthly child support paid per child and a dummy variable was incorporated to indicate whether or not the respondent was a noncustodial parent (1 = yes, 0 = no); both were predicted to be positively related to the dependent variable. In addition, each respondent was also asked to describe the relationship that he/she had with his/her expartner.³ These responses were coded with a 1 for a negative relationship and a 0 for a neutral or a positive relationship; respondents with negative relationships were predicted to be experiencing more personal strain and thus were more likely to identify with the social movement overall.⁴ In addition, two variables were utilized to operationalize the political efficacy hypothesis (Hypothesis 5). The first was a dichotomous variable simply measuring whether or not the respondent had ever made a campaign contribution to anyone running for office, with a monetary donation signaling a belief in being heard in the political process (1 = yes, 0 = no). The second variable used in this analysis was a measure of previous political activity in the form of joining a group or a social movement to promote social change (1 = yes, 0 = no). Both variables were predicted to have a positive impact on an individual's identification with the larger social movement.

Finally, two demographic variables were included. The race variable—Black—received a value of 1 if the respondent was Black and 0 otherwise, and was hypothesized to have a negative relationship with social movement identification. Black members are racial minorities within their own fathers' rights SMOs, and are thus less likely to feel a shared vision with other men—predominantly whites—in their

³The dual gender terminology (his/her) is used in this case because some women join fathers' rights groups as noncustodial parents, or as new wives, girlfriends, or mothers of men experiencing problems in the family dissolution process. In this sample, 19 out of the 149 respondents were women.

⁴If the member joined due to his/her relationship with a person undergoing the dissolution process, all personal strain variables were coded for this targeted person (according to the information provided by the member), rather than for the member himself/herself.

pursuit of reform. A respondent's educational level was also measured and predicted to have a positive relationship with social movement identification, as education signals advantage and the capacity to envision individual actions in broader terms. It was coded with a value of 1 if the individual had 12 years of education or less (GED or HS diploma), a value of 2 if the individual had less than 16 years of education and more than 12 years (some college, associate's degree), a value of 3 if the individual had exactly 16 years of education (bachelor's degree), and a value of 4 if the individual had more than 16 years of education, such as graduate work.

RESULTS

Table 1 presents a summary of the content analysis results related to social movement identification for these respondents. In total, 91 respondents maintained that they were part of a social movement, while 58 denied being part of a social movement. In either case, most referenced at least one of four components of McAdam and Snow's (1997) standard, social movement definition, although, as will be demonstrated, the first factor clearly dominated: a commitment to social change goals, a strong organizational framework, temporal continuity of their efforts, and the presence of extrainstitutional means of protest.

The most important reason offered by social movement identifiers in explaining why they believed that they were part of a social movement was the idea that they were pursuing social change goals. In fact, 92% of these identifiers mentioned this definitional component.

Table 1. Distinct components of social movements which lead to movement identification or nonidentification, by respondent count, and frequency

Social movement component	Social movement identifiers (component presence)	Nonsocial movement identifiers (component absence)
Social Change Goal	84 (92%)	32 (55%)
Organizational Framework	27 (30%)	10 (17%)
Temporal Continuity	37 (41%)	0 (0%)
Extra-institutional Means of Protest	12 (13%)	0 (0%)
Other	0 (0%)	22 (38%)
Total Respondents	91*	58*

*Some respondents described more than one social movement component as their reason for identifying with the movement (or not); hence, these columns of numbers do not add up to the total number of respondents.

Vic, a father of a teenaged son, described his thought process in the following way:

This is an unjust situation [that needs to] become just . . . I believe it's the last great civil rights issue we have in America. . . . I know it's profound, but it's the truth . . . I always say this, the truth always remains, the truth means it's better for a child to be with both parents and we will eventually evolve to that. We will eventually see the truth.

For nonsocial movement identifiers, their perception that their organization *lacked* a social change dimension was also mentioned most frequently, by 55% of these respondents. Jay, a father of a six-year-old daughter, laid out his reasoning by reflecting on his own personal circumstances.

[I think about my involvement in my group] much more narrowly because I want to resolve my issues. They are legal issues, more important family matters, emotional matters, and also financial matters. I am overwhelmed with those issues and really don't see [my group as part of] a national movement sweeping across the country.

Jay's attitudes towards his involvement with his local fathers' rights group were reflective of many other nonsocial movement identifiers in this study. For this set of individuals, their problems regarding child support and child custody were so burdensome that they only had enough energy and focus to concentrate on resolving their particular personal problems. Social movement activism, accordingly, was nowhere on their day-to-day agenda.

In terms of a strong organizational framework, 30% of social movement identifiers asserted that this was an important characteristic of their group and its affiliates in convincing them to believe that they were part of a social movement. Ray, father of a thirteen-year-old daughter and an eight-year-old daughter, indicated that his awareness of other groups throughout the country working on behalf of these issues was critical in describing his activities as being part of a social movement.

There are [fathers' rights groups or parents' rights groups] I'd say throughout the nation. It is not just in [my state]; you have groups in pretty much every state [that are] fighting for equality. They are not fighting for an advantage; they are fighting to say hey, these are

my children, too. I am not a criminal and I should have just as much say in what occurs in [my children's] lives as the other spouse, whether it be male or female.

For nonsocial movement identifiers, 17% argued that the *absence* of a strong organizational framework prevented them from seeing their mobilization on a larger scale. Michael, father of a twelve-year-old daughter, described his disillusionment with his SMO in the following way:

At least here in the group that I'm in, it's mostly men and men aren't as organized as women. . . . I guess you just compare [groups] like . . . NOW, the National Organization for Women and prowomen groups or movements with [the small number of] promen or fathers' groups. Just [think about] those statistics [by themselves]. No one has ever heard of [our fathers' rights group] but everyone has heard of NOW. I mean, in my experience in the group . . . we're so discouraged and disappointed in the system that we just feel like it's futile. We don't seem to organize as well as other groups that have more women in them.

Michael, like other nonsocial movement identifiers, argued that a primary barrier to his perceiving himself as part of a larger cause was the lack of organization in his current group. He maintained that because his group and others like his had yet to achieve any major legislative victories, even the most dedicated members were likely to experience frustration with their current plight. Interestingly, he also argued that innately, men are not as likely to be as well organized as women, a belief system that was echoed by other fathers in this study.

While no nonsocial movement identifiers discussed the concept of temporality or the duration of their efforts in their responses, 41% of social movement identifiers did reference this concept. Jonathan, father to an eleven-year-old son and a nine-year-old son, viewed the centrality of his long-term commitment to his activism as essential in his allegiance to the larger cause.

I often think of myself [in the following way]. There is that movie about Gandhi where the [Indians who are trying to defy the British ban on making salt] go up to the salt plant. They are battered and turned away one at a time, but the force of that is felt. I feel like one of those stalwart combatants who goes up and just insists on

staying . . . and stands in defiance by not going away. . . . I feel that I can pressure the society by insisting [on reform] and I've done that to a good degree. I am an example for other people. I have my kids essentially half of the time. I am not going away.

While Jonathan personalized the temporality issue by discussing how much time he was willing to spend on these issues, other fathers spoke about temporality in broader, historical terms. In all of these cases fathers reported a willingness to put in the time and effort to shape public opinion accordingly.

Interestingly, no nonsocial movement identifiers described the concept of extrainstitutional means protest as important in their responses, but 13% of social movement identifiers did. Irving, a father of a now-adult daughter, maintained that protests are fundamental to his perception of his activities as being part of a social movement. Here he elaborated on his involvement in one such protest in Washington, DC, the Million Dads March, an event held yearly since 2002 that is designed to draw national attention to the problems of noncustodial fathers.

I was nominated to be the state coordinator for the Million Dads March. My wife accompanied me to the Capitol Building in Washington on Father's Day to participate in the Million Dads March affairs down there. . . . I said previously that I network with people from all around the world. . . . So I am definitely very much aware of being part of a worldwide movement, not just a national movement, but a worldwide movement.

Irving and others like him, then, viewed extrainstitutional means of protest as fundamental to their perceptions of themselves being part of a social movement. These externally-oriented activities enabled them to mobilize with others who were similarly committed to action and, thus, to conceptualize themselves as part of a wider movement for change.

Finally, while all of the social movement identifiers' responses could be broken down into the four distinct components of McAdam and Snow's (1997) social movement definition, 38% of nonsocial movement identifiers offered other reasons for their lack of a sense of affiliation with the larger cause, such as their group's unreadiness to engage in social movement development. Considered together, all of the qualitative findings suggest that a ranking of McAdam and Snow's (1997) social movement definitional criteria might be in

order, with the presence of social change goals most paramount to individuals on the ground.

The qualitative findings tell us what features of a social movement are most important to both identifiers and nonidentifiers. The quantitative findings add to these results by enabling us to isolate the predictive factors involved in this identification process. Turning now to these quantitative results, descriptive statistics were run for all of the independent variables, and are reported in Table 2. Two logit analyses were then run to predict the dependent variable of social movement identification, as reported in Table 3. Model 1 was the baseline estimation without the central variables of interest—those which measure externally-oriented identity work. Model 2 then added these externally-oriented identity work measures. Both models were statistically significant as a whole, as indicated by their chi-square statistics, and the direction as well as the statistical significance of each variable was consistent across the estimations.

Because it included the primary variables of interest—the externally-oriented identity work variables—Model 2 will be discussed here. As Table 3 clearly demonstrates, the externally-oriented identity work concept clearly mattered in influencing a respondent's identification with a social movement, with two out of the three related hypotheses supported. While the total number of groups to which a respondent belonged was not statistically significant (Hypothesis 1), the two other variables capturing this concept were statistically significant in the expected, positive direction (Hypotheses 2 and 3). Those members who engaged in recruitment activities on behalf of

Table 2. Descriptive statistics for fathers' rights group members

Variable	Mean	Standard Deviation	Min.	Max.	N
<i>Externally-oriented Identity Work</i>					
Total Groups: Member	1.06	.266	1	3	149
Recruitment Activity (=1)	.872	.335	0	1	149
Opponent Recognition (=1)	.826	.826	0	1	149
<i>Personal Strain</i>					
Monthly Child Support Per Child -\$1000s	.378	.491	0	3.50	149
Noncustodial Parent (=1)	.550	.499	0	1	149
Relationship with Ex-Partner (=1)	.779	.417	0	1	149
<i>Political Efficacy</i>					
Previous Campaign Donation (=1)	.523	.501	0	1	149
Previous Political Mobilization (=1)	.477	.501	0	1	149
<i>Demographic Controls</i>					
Black (=1)	.087	.283	0	1	149
Education	2.87	1.02	1	4	149

Table 3. The impact of externally-oriented identity work on social movement identification: Logit model results

Variables	Model 1	Model 2
<i>Externally-oriented Identity Work</i>		
Total Groups: Member	–	–.861 (.677)
Recruitment Activity (1 = yes, 0 = no)	–	1.19** (.598)
Opponent Recognition (1 = yes, 0 = no)	–	.906* (.499)
<i>Personal Strain</i>		
Monthly Child Support Dollars Per Child (in \$1000)	1.40** (.704)	1.55** (.705)
Noncustodial Parent (1 = yes, 0 = no)	–.337 (.448)	–.442 (.457)
Relationship with Ex-Partner (1 = negative, 0 otherwise)	.165 (.436)	.224 (.447)
<i>Political Efficacy</i>		
Previous Campaign Donation (1 = yes, 0 = no)	1.08*** (.405)	.872** (.420)
Previous Political Mobilization (1 = yes, 0 = no)	.025 (.380)	.131 (.398)
<i>Demographic Variables</i>		
Black (1 = yes, 0 = no)	–1.64** (.684)	–1.67*** (.695)
Education (scale: 1–4)	–.308 (.198)	–.216 (.207)
Constant	.505 (.656)	–.610 (1.09)
Observations	149	149
–2 Log Likelihood	181.47	172.104
Model Chi-square	17.71**	27.08***

Note: ***p < .01; **p < .05; *p < .10. Standard errors in parentheses.

their groups were more likely to identify with the social movement, and those members who could describe their groups' enemies or opponents in the political arena were more likely to declare themselves as part of a social movement. Put another way, those members who are immersed in the process of building a community beyond their group—doing the externally-oriented identity work which is essential to creating a unified, movement collective—have an advantage with respect to seeing themselves as integral to the cause's larger fate.

Interestingly, with respect to Hypothesis 4, only one of the three personal strain variables was statistically significant. The number of monthly child support dollars spent per child had a positive influence on the likelihood of an individual identifying himself/herself with a social movement, as expected. This finding indicated that greater economic strain in the form of a heavy child support burden can play an important role in social movement identification. A strong sense of political efficacy was also predicted to be important in influencing the likelihood that one would identify with a social movement, as reflected by Hypothesis 5. Only one of these variables, a previous campaign donation, however, proved to be statistically significant in the expected direction. If a respondent had given to any candidate's

campaign coffers in the past, this increased the likelihood that he/she would identify with the social movement as a whole. Finally, in terms of the demographic variables, only one—being Black—was statistically significant in the expected negative direction. This means that being Black reduced the possibility that the respondent identified with the larger, mostly white social movement.

To infuse these results with more substantive meaning, Table 4 presents the predicted probabilities for social movement identification given three statistically significant variables included in this analysis, one involving personal strain—chosen because it is a focal point of fathers' rights activism—and two related to externally-oriented identity work: (1) the amount of monthly child support dollars paid per child, (2) recruitment activity, and (3) opponent recognition. All other independent variables were set at their means. Four scenarios are presented, including two extreme cases, Cases 1 and 4, and two intermediate cases, Cases 2 and 3. At one extreme, Case 1 depicts a scenario where a respondent does not engage in any recruitment activities and cannot identify his/her opponents in the political arena. In others words, Case 1 represents a respondent who engages in no externally-oriented identity work. If this respondent pays \$0 per month in child support, there is only a 14% chance that he/she will conceptualize himself/herself as part of a social movement. If \$800 is owed in monthly child support per child, then this probability rises to 44%.

Case 4 depicts the other extreme, where a respondent engages in both types of externally-oriented identity work: recruiting potential members into the group, and naming opponents to the cause. If a respondent were to pay \$0 per month in child support

Table 4. Predicted probability estimates for social movement identification, by monthly child support expenditures per child, recruiting status, and opponent recognition

Monthly Child Support Dollars Per Child	Case 1. No Recruiting and No Opponent Identification	Case 2. No Recruiting and Identifies Opponents	Case 3. Recruits and No Opponent Identification	Case 4. Recruits and Identifies Opponents
\$0	.14	.28	.34	.56
\$200	.19	.37	.44	.66
\$400	.26	.47	.54	.68
\$600	.35	.57	.63	.80
\$800	.44	.66	.72	.87

Note: All other independent variables are set at their means.

obligations, he/she would have a 56% probability of identifying with the social movement as a whole. If, on the other hand, this respondent owed \$800 per child in monthly child support, then there would be an 87% probability that he/she would identify with the larger social movement. Both active, externally-oriented identity work, along with higher levels of financial responsibility for dependent children, are clearly central in leading to higher levels of social movement allegiance.

CONCLUSIONS

As this article has demonstrated, social movements are not monolithic entities composed of homogeneously-motivated participants. In fact, even within the context of a vibrant set of SMOs pursuing the same set of political goals, individuals vary to an extraordinary extent in their willingness to identify with the larger social movement. This article explored this variability through two different lenses. First, the qualitative findings presented here for both social movement identifiers and nonsocial movement identifiers illustrate the critical importance of participants believing in the cause's strong social change goals over other factors in order for movement allegiance to take place. Snow and McAdam's other social movement definitional criteria—a resilient organizational framework, temporal continuity, and the presence of extrainstitutional protest—were much less significant, suggesting the need for a possible reformulation of their framework. Second, the quantitative results extend these findings by showing that while certain personal strain and political efficacy factors may matter with respect to an individual's propensity for movement affiliation, the importance of externally-oriented identity work variables in predicting overall social movement identification is also extremely significant. The more one does the "hard work" of building a collective consciousness through outward-looking identity work activities from the launching pad of the SMO, the more likely he/she is to identify with the social movement at large.

The flip side of these findings, of course, is that many SMO participants simply do not identify with the social movement of which the SMO is a part, a fact which undoubtedly causes consternation for the highly-motivated activists fighting for the cause at hand. This is even a worse outcome than found in some previous studies, which have documented, for example, a generational divide within the feminist community over what goals the contemporary women's movement should value (Reger 2005; Whittier 1995); at least in those cases, there

was a baseline affiliation among these women with some type of movement larger than themselves. Scholars studying the sharper disjuncture revealed in this article should, therefore, move in at least two distinct directions in trying to uncover the barriers preventing individuals from greater social movement identification.

One avenue to pursue is to examine the operational structures of the SMOs themselves to explore whether they are in some way inhibiting movement identification. For example, several scholars (Edwards and McCarthy 2004; Van Willigen and Taylor 1996) have noted that SMOs often risk providing “excessive” personal services to their members, such as victim aid assistance to families of drunk drivers and those experiencing health crises, which then lead these groups to turn their concerns inward to address individual harms rather than outward to demand political change. Fathers’ rights groups, which offer an array of personal services to their members such as legal information and emotional counseling without external obligations, might be falling into the same trap.

Another research trajectory should move in the direction of mapping out the levels of difficulty involved in externally-oriented identity work. Einwohner, Reger, and Myers (2008) have astutely argued that identity work, whatever its shape, is exactly that: work. By establishing metrics to rank these efforts and by also devising methods to measure the depth of an individual’s level of social movement identification, we could test the hypothesis that “harder” types of externally-oriented identity work lead to stronger forms of social movement identification. In sum, by more completely understanding the levels of effort involved in externally-oriented identity work, as well as which types of this work lead to more resilient forms of movement identification, scholars would then be able to provide the most complete roadmap detailing the route between simple SMO participation to overall movement allegiance.

REFERENCES

- Census. 2006. “Current Population Reports, Annual (and Earlier) Social and Economic Supplements.” Washington, DC: Bureau of Labor Statistics.
- Collom, Ed. and Douglas E. Mitchell. 2005. “Home Schooling as a Social Movement: Identifying the Determinants of Homeschoolers’ Perceptions.” *Sociological Spectrum* 25:273–305.
- Crane, George T. 1994. “Collective Identity, Symbolic Mobilization, and Student Protest in Nanjing, China, 1988–1989.” *Comparative Politics* 26:395–413.
- Crowley, Jocelyn Elise. 2003. *The Politics of Child Support in America*. New York: Cambridge University Press.

- . 2006. "Adopting 'Equality Tools' from the Toolboxes of their Predecessors: The Fathers' Rights Movement in the United States." Pp. 79–100 in *Fathers for Justice? Fathers' Rights Activism and Legal Reform in Comparative Perspective*, edited by Richard Collier and Sally Sheldon. Oxford: Hart Publications.
- . 2008. *Defiant Dads: Fathers' Rights Activists in America*. Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press.
- Dixon, Marc and Vincent J. Roscigno. 2003. "Status, Networks, and Social Movement Participation: The Case of Striking Workers." *American Journal of Sociology* 108:1292–1327.
- Edwards, Bob and John D. McCarthy. 2004. "Strategy Matters: The Contingent Value of Social Capital in the Survival of Local Social Movement Organizations." *Social Forces* 83:621–651.
- Einwohner, Rachel L. 2006. "Identity Work and Collective Action in a Repressive Context: Jewish Resistance on the 'Aryan Side' of the Warsaw Ghetto." *Social Problems* 53:38–56.
- Einwohner, Rachel L., Jo Reger, and Daniel Myers. 2008. "Introduction: Identity Work, Sameness, and Difference in Social Movements." Pp. 1–17 in *Identity Work: Negotiating Sameness and Difference in Activist Environments*, edited by Jo Reger, Daniel Myers, and Rachel L. Einwohner. Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press.
- Fineman, Martha. 1991. *The Illusion of Equality: The Rhetoric and Reality of Divorce Reform*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.
- Gamson, Joshua. 1997. "Messages of Exclusion: Gender, Movements, and Symbolic Boundaries." *Gender and Society* 11:178–199.
- Gamson, William. 1992. *Talking Politics*. New York: Cambridge University Press.
- Goldberg, Stephanie B. 1997. "Make Room for Daddy." *American Bar Association Journal* 82:48–51.
- Grall, Timothy. 2006. "Custodial Mothers and Fathers and Their Child Support: 2003." Current Population Reports, U.S. Census Bureau. P60–230.
- Hunt, Scott A. and Robert D. Benford. 1994. "Identity Talk in the Peace and Justice Movement." *Journal of Contemporary Ethnography* 22:488–517.
- Johnston, Hank, Enrique Larana, and Joseph R. Gusfield. 1994. "Identities, Grievances, and New Social Movements." Pp. 3–35 in *New Social Movements: From Ideology to Identity*, edited by Enrique Larana, Hank Johnston, and Joseph R. Gusfield. Philadelphia: Temple University Press.
- Kiecolt, K. Jill. 2000. "Self-Change in Social Movements." Pp. 110–131 in *Self, Identity, and Social Movements*, edited by Sheldon Stryker, Timothy J. Owens, and Robert White. Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press.
- Klandermans, Bert. 1997. *The Social Psychology of Protest*. Oxford: Blackwell.
- Lichterman, Paul. 1999. "Talking Identity in the Public Sphere: Broad Visions and Small Spaces in Sexual Identity Politics." *Theory and Society* 28: 101–141.
- May, Susannah. 2001. "Child Custody and Visitation." *Georgetown Journal of Gender and the Law* 2:382–401.
- McAdam, Doug and David A. Snow. 1997. "Social Movements: Conceptual and Theoretical Issues." Pp. xviii–xxvi in *Social Movements: Readings on Their*

- Emergence, Mobilization, and Dynamics*, edited by Doug McAdam and David A. Snow. Los Angeles: Roxbury Publishing Company.
- McCarthy, John D. and Mayer N. Zald. 1977. "Resource Mobilization and Social Movements: A Partial Theory." *American Journal of Sociology* 82:1212-1241.
- Passy, Florence and Marco Giugni. 2001. "Social Networks and Individual Perceptions: Explaining Differential Participation in Social Movements." *Sociological Forum* 16:123-153.
- Polletta, Francesca and James M. Jasper. 2001. "Collective Identity and Social Movements." *Annual Review of Sociology* 27:283-305.
- Reger, Jo (Ed.). 2005. *Different Wavelengths: Studies of the Contemporary Women's Movement*. New York: Routledge.
- Schwalbe, Michael L. and Douglas Mason-Schrock. 1996. "Identity Work as Group Process." *Advances in Group Processes* 13:113-147.
- Snow, David A. and Leon Anderson. 1987. "Identity Work Among the Homeless: The Verbal Construction and Avowal of Personal Identities." *American Journal of Sociology* 92:1336-1371.
- Snow, David A. and Doug McAdam. 2000. "Identity Work Processes in the Context of Social Movements: Clarifying the Identity/Movement Nexus." Pp. 41-67 in *Self, Identity, and Social Movements*, edited by Sheldon Stryker, Timothy J. Owens, and Robert White. Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press.
- Stryker, Sheldon. 2000. "Identity Competition: Key to Differential Social Movement Participation." Pp. 21-40 in *Self, Identity, and Social Movements*, edited by Sheldon Stryker, Timothy J. Owens, and Robert W. White. Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press.
- Taylor, Verta. 1999. "Gender and Social Movements: Gender Processes in Women's Self-Help Movements." *Gender and Society* 13:8-33.
- Van Willigen, Marieke and Verta Taylor. 1996. "Women's Self-Help and the Reconstruction of Gender: The Postpartum Support and Breast Cancer Movements." *Mobilization* 1:123-142.
- Walsh, Edward J. 1981. "Resource Mobilization and Citizen Protest in Communities Around Three Mile Island." *Social Problems* 29:1-21.
- Whittier, Nancy. 1995. *Feminist Generations: The Persistence of the Radical Women's Movement*. Philadelphia: Temple University Press.
- Wuthnow, Robert. 1994. *Sharing the Journey: Support Groups and America's New Quest for Community*. New York: Free Press.