

**WHY DAVID SOMETIMES WINS**  
**Strategic Capacity in Social Movements**

by

**Marshall Ganz**

Harvard University  
Cambridge, Massachusetts

November, 2002

Please direct correspondence to Marshall Ganz, Kennedy School of Government,  
Harvard University, 79 JFK Street, Cambridge, MA 02138; or [ganz@wjh.harvard.edu](mailto:ganz@wjh.harvard.edu)

"And there went out a champion out of the camp of the Philistines, named Goliath ... whose height was six cubits and a span. And he had a helmet of brass upon his head, and he was armed with a coat of mail ... and he had greaves of brass upon his legs ... and the staff of his spear was like a weaver's beam; and his spear's head weights six hundred shekels of iron.... And he stood and cried to the armies of Israel.... Choose you a man for you... If he be able to fight with me, and to kill me, then will we be your servants; but if I prevail against him, and kill him, then shall ye be our servants.... Give me a man that we may fight together." When Saul and all Israel heard those words of the Philistine, they were dismayed and greatly afraid.

And David said unto Saul, Let no man's heart fail because of him; thy servant will go and fight with this Philistine. And Saul said to David, Thou art not able to go against this Philistine to fight with him: for thou art but a youth, and he a man of war from his youth.... David said... The Lord that delivered me out of the lion, and out of the paw of the bear, he will deliver me out of the hand of this Philistine. And Saul said unto David, Go, and the Lord be with thee. And Saul armed David with his armour, and he put an helmet of brass upon his head; also he armed him with a coat of mail. And David girded his sword upon his armour, and he assayed to go; for he had not proved it. And David said unto Saul, I cannot go with these; for I have not proved them. And David put them off him. And he took his staff in his hand, and chose him five smooth stones out of the brook, and put them in a shepherd's bag which he had...; and his sling was in his hand: and he drew near unto the Philistine.... And the Philistine looked about, and saw David, he disdained him: for he was but a youth, and ruddy, and of a fair countenance.... And then said David to the Philistine, Thou comest to me with a sword, and with a spear, and with a shield; but I come to thee in the name of the Lord of hosts ... and David put his hand in his bag, and took thence a stone, and slang it, and smote the Philistine in his forehead ... and he fell upon his face to the earth.

--Holy Bible, Book of Samuel, Chapter 17, Verses 4-49

## INTRODUCTION

### HOW DAVID BEAT GOLIATH

---

The belief that strategic resourcefulness can overcome institutionalized resources is an ancient one. Tales of young, guileful, courageous underdogs who overwhelm old, powerful, and confident opponents occupy a mythic place in Western culture. When Goliath, veteran warrior, victor of many battles, arrayed in full battle gear, challenges the Israelites, their military leaders cower in fear. It is David, the young shepherd boy, to whom God gives the courage to face the giant. David's success begins with his courage, his commitment, and his motivation.

But it takes more than courage to bring David success. David thinks about the battle differently. Reminded by five stones he finds in a brook, he reflects on previous encounters in which he protected his flock from bears and lions. Based on these recollections he reframes this new battle in a way that gives him an advantage. Pointedly rejecting the king's offer of shield, sword, and armor as weapons he cannot use effectively against a master of these weapons, David conceives a plan of battle based on his five smooth stones, his skill with a sling, and the giant's underestimation of him.

The story of David and Goliath dramatizes questions about which many remain intensely curious: How have insurgents successfully challenged those with power over them? How can we challenge those with power over us? How can we change powerful institutions that shape our very lives?

Over the course of the last fifty years there have been many such challenges in the United States and around the world: the civil rights movement, the women's movement, the environmental movement, the democracy movements of Eastern Europe, the South African

liberation movement, and so forth. Social scientists tend to account for these events, however, by arguing one version or another of "the time for change was right" while many historians attribute success to the intervention of gifted, charismatic individuals. Few analysts explore relationships among the times, the people who act upon them, and the organizational settings in which they act, to learn why "Davids" succeed when they do.

Failure to focus on the contribution of strategic leadership to social movement outcomes is a particularly serious shortcoming of social movement theory (Jasper 1997a; Morris and Staggenborg 2002 ). Explanations of the emergence, development, and outcomes of social movements based on variation in access to resources and opportunities stress the influence of environmental changes on actors (McAdam, McCarthy and Zald 1996). In this view, social movements unfold when actors predictably respond to new political opportunities or newly available resources. But theorists who emphasize opportunity explain little of why one actor should make better use of the same opportunity than another. Yet it is often in the differences in how actors use their opportunities that social movement legacies are shaped (Sewell 1992). Other scholars who rely on variation in resources to explain why some movements are more successful than others, fail to explain how actors with fewer resources can defeat those with more resources (McCarthy and Zald 1977). But when insurgents overcome well established rivals or opponents this is most often the case. Students of strategy and tactics offer accounts of their sources, their logic and their effect on outcomes, but do not explain why one organization would be likely to devise more effective tactics than another (Tilly 1981; Freeman 1979; Lipsky 1968; Gamson 1975; McAdam 1983). And much of the discussion of the meaning social movement actors give to what they do, dealt with under the general rubric of "framing", focuses on one aspect of strategy, how social movements interpret themselves, but tells us little of how framing is actually

done, who does it, or why one organization would do a better job of it than another (Snow et al. 1986; Benford 1997; Benford and Snow 2000; Davis 2002). And finally, scholars who invoke "culture" to correct for the weaknesses in structural accounts of social movements often remain quite structuralist in their analysis, only shifting the focus from political or economic structures to culture ones (Johnston and Klandermans 1995). But they fail to explain variation in the agency actors exercise with respect to cultural, political or economic structures. Yet it is the exercise of agency that is at the heart of strategy.

Students of strategic leadership, on the other hand, even in management, military, and political studies, focus more on what leaders do and how strategy works than on explaining why leaders of some organizations devise more effective strategy than others. Popular accounts of insurgent success attribute effective strategy to uniquely gifted leaders rather than offering systematic accounts of conditions under which leaders are more or less likely to devise effective strategy (Westley and Mintzberg 1988; Howell 1990). In part, this is because good strategy is often anything but obvious. Based on the innovative, often guileful, exercise of agency, strategy can be hard to deduce from objective configurations of resources and opportunities because it is based on a novel assessment of them. Although effects attributed to charismatic leaders — attracting followers, enhancing their sense of self-esteem, and inspiring them to exert extra effort—can be invaluable organizational resources, they are distinct from good strategy (Hollander and Offermann 1990; House, Spangler, Woycke 1991). In social movement settings, especially at times of crisis, talented leaders may also be transformed into symbols of a new community of identity, a source of their charisma (Weber 1978[1914]; Durkheim 1964[1915]; Collins 1981; Pillai 1996).<sup>1</sup> But as sociologists of religion and others have documented, many groups have charismatic leaders but few devise strategy effective enough to achieve institutional

stability, much less to become successful social movement organizations (Stark and Bainbridge 1985; Carlton-Ford 1992).<sup>2</sup>

Explaining social movement outcomes, then, often requires accounting for the fact that different actors act in different ways, some of which influence the environment more than others. Some see political opportunities where others do not, mobilize resources in ways others do not, and frame their causes in ways others do not.

But strategy is not purely subjective. Strategic thinking is reflexive and imaginative, based on ways leaders learn to reflect on the past, attend to the present, and anticipate the future (Bruner 1990a). Leaders - like all of us - are influenced by their life experience, relationships, and practical learning that provide them with lenses through which they see the world (Bandura 1989; DiMaggio and Powell 1991; Banaszak 1996; Zerubavel 1997; DiMaggio 1997),<sup>3</sup> and by the organizational structures within which they interact with each other and with their environment (Weick 1979; Rogers 1995a; Van de Ven et al. 1999). In this paper, I discuss how the strategic capacity of a leadership team -- conditions that facilitate the development of effective strategy - can help explain why "David" sometimes wins (Ganz 2000a, 2000b).

## **UNDERSTANDING STRATEGY**

---

In our interdependent world of competition and cooperation, achieving one's goals often requires mobilizing and deploying one's resources to influence the interests of others who control resources one needs -- the use of power (Weber 1946[1920]a; Dahrendorf 1958; Oberschall 1973; Tilly 1978; Lukes 1974; Emerson 1962; Michels 1962[1911]; Salancik and Pfeffer 1977).<sup>4</sup> By resources I mean political, economic and cultural—or moral—assets actors can use to realize their goals (Weber 1946[1920]a; Emerson 1962; Oberschall 1973; Tilly 1978; Mann

1986; Bourdieu 1984; Hall 1997).<sup>5</sup> Although no one is entirely without resources, people do not have power if they are unable to mobilize or deploy their resources in ways that influence the interests of others. An individual's labor resource, for example, can become a source of power vis-à-vis an employer if mobilized collectively. Strategy is how actors translate their resources into power—to get "more bang for the buck."

Opportunities occur at moments when actors' resources acquire more value because of changes in the environmental context. Actors do not suddenly acquire more resources or devise a new strategy, but find that resources they already have give them more leverage in achieving their goals. A full granary, for example, acquires greater value in a famine, creating opportunity for its owner. Similarly, a close election creates opportunity for political leaders who can influence swing voters. A labor shortage creates opportunity for workers to get more for their labor. This is one reason timing is such an important element of strategy.

Actors have unequal access to resources in part because of the ways outcomes of prior competition and collaboration become institutionalized, influencing the distribution of resources and reshaping rules by which actors compete and arenas within which they do so (Gamson 1975; Lukes 1974; Skocpol 1990). A critical strategic goal of those contesting power is to find ways to turn short-term opportunities into long-term gains by institutionalizing them, for example, as formal organizations, collective bargaining agreements, or legislation. Assessing strategic effectiveness thus requires taking a "long view", a reason for studying the development of strategy over time (Andrews 1997).

Strategy is how we turn what we have into what we need to get what we want. It is how we transform our resources into the power to achieve our purposes. It is the conceptual link we make between the targeting, timing, and tactics with which we mobilize and deploy resources

and the outcomes we hope to achieve (Von Clausewitz 1832; Hamel and Prahalad 1989; Porter 1996; Brown and Eisenhardt 1998). Although we often do not act rationally and our actions can yield unintended outcomes, we do act purposefully (Cohen, March and Olson 1972; Salancik and Pfeffer 1977; Weick 1979; Crow 1989; Watson 1990; Bruner 1990a). Strategy is effective when we realize our goals through its use. Studying strategy is a way to discern the patterns in the relationship among intention, action and outcome.

Our strategy frames our choices about targeting, timing, and tactics. As schema theorists have shown, we attribute meaning to specific events by locating them within broader frameworks of understanding (Goffman 1974; Snow et al. 1986; Fiske and Taylor 1991; Gamson 1992; D'Andrade 1992; Gamson and Meyer 1996; DiMaggio 1997). The strategic significance of the choices we make about how to target resources, time initiatives, and employ tactics depends on how we frame them relative to other choices in a path toward our goals. One reason it is difficult to study strategy is that although choices about targeting, timing, and tactics can be directly observed, the strategy that frames these choices — and provides them with their coherence — must often be inferred, using data drawn from interviews with participants, oral histories, correspondence, memoirs, charters, constitutions, organizational journals, activity reports, minutes of meetings, and participant observation.

Since strategy orients current action toward future goals, it develops in interaction with an ever-changing environment, especially actions and reactions of other actors (Alinsky 1971a; Weick 1979; Mintzberg 1987; Burgelman 1991; Hamel 1996; Brown and Eisenhardt 1997).<sup>6</sup> In fixed contexts in which rules, resources, and interests are given, strategy can to some extent be understood in the analytic terms of game theory (Schelling 1960a). But in settings in which rules, resources, and interests are emergent—such as social movements—strategy has more in

common with creative thinking (Morris 1984; Hamel 1996; Brown and Eisenhardt 1997).

Strategic action can thus best be understood as an ongoing creative process of understanding and adapting new conditions to one's goals (Brown and Eisenhardt 1998).

The relationship of strategy to outcomes can be clarified by the distinction game theorists make among games of chance, skill, and strategy (Schelling 1960b). In games of chance, winning depends on the luck of the draw. In games of skill, it depends on behavioral facility, like hitting a tennis ball. In games of strategy, it depends on cognitive discernment—in interaction with other players—of the best course of action, as in the game of Go. In most games, all three elements come into play. Poker, for example, involves chance (deal of the cards), skill (estimating probabilities), and strategy (betting decisions). Although chance may be dispositive in any one hand, or even one game, in the long run skill and strategy distinguish excellent players—and their winnings—from others. Similarly, environmental developments can be seen as “chance” in so far as any one actor is concerned. But, in the long run, some actors are more likely to achieve their goals than others because they are better able to take advantage of these chances. Environmental change may generate the opportunities for social movements to emerge, but the outcomes and legacies of such movements have more to do with the strategies actors devise to turn these opportunities to their purposes, thus reshaping their environment.

## **A THEORY OF STRATEGIC CAPACITY**

---

Strategy is articulated in decisions organizational leaders make as they interact with their environment. The likelihood their strategy will be effective increases with their motivation, access to salient knowledge, and the quality of the heuristic processes they employ in their deliberations - their strategic capacity.

In explaining sources of effective strategy I focus on why one organization is more likely to develop a series of effective tactics than another, not why one tactic is more effective than another. Unlike studies of the effectiveness of particular tactics by social movement, military, political or management scholars, an attempt to identify the influences on effective strategizing requires studying the same organizations over time to discern the mechanisms that generate it (Lipsky 1968; Gamson 1975; McAdam 1983). Although strategic capacity, strategy, and outcomes are distinct links in a probabilistic causal chain, greater strategic capacity is likely to yield better strategy, and better strategy is likely to yield better outcomes.

Variation in strategic capacity may also explain differences in what actors make of unique moments of opportunity that demand rapid decisions - especially moments of extraordinary flux when sudden reconfigurations of leadership and organization may facilitate emergence of social movements. And because the strategic capacity of organizations can grow or atrophy, such variation may help explain changes in effectiveness over time - why some new organizations overcome the "liability of newness" to succeed while some old organizations suffering from a "liability of senescence" fail.

I do not claim to have found a key variable sufficient to account for all differences in observed outcomes. Rather, I argue that the outcomes I try to explain—one group devises more effective strategy than another—are more or less likely to the extent that conditions specified in this model are met. In poker, chance may determine the outcome of any one hand, or even a game, but in the long run, some players are more likely be winners than others. An organization can stumble on opportunity, but I argue that the likelihood that it will make strategic use of it depends on factors I specify here.

In viewing strategy as a kind of creative thinking, as shown in Chart One, I build on the work of social psychologists who hypothesize three key influences on creative output: task motivation, domain-relevant skills, and heuristic processes (Amabile 1996).<sup>7</sup> In this view, creativity is enhanced by motivation generated by rewards intrinsic to task performance, rather than extrinsic to it. Although domain-relevant skills facilitate implementation of known algorithms to solve familiar problems, heuristic processes are required to generate new algorithms to solve novel problems (Hackman and Morris 1975; Amabile 1996a).

While creativity is an individual phenomenon, strategy is more often than not the creative output of a leadership team. Conditions under which a leadership team interacts contribute social influences that may be more or less supportive of the creativity of its individual members (Hackman and Morris 1975; McGrath 1984; Amabile 1988, 1996b; Nemeth and Straw 1989; Van de Ven 1999). Furthermore, the task of devising strategy in complex, changing environments may require interaction among team members like the performance of a jazz ensemble. As a kind of distributed cognition, it may require synthesizing skills and information beyond the ken of any one individual, making terms of that interaction particularly important (Hutchins 1991; Rogers 1995b; Van de Ven et al. 1999).

### Motivation

David committed to fight Goliath before he knew how he would do it. He knew why he had to do it before he knew how he could do it.

Motivation influences creative output because it affects the focus one brings to one's work, the ability to concentrate for extended periods of time, persistence, willingness to take risks, and ability to sustain high energy (Ruscio, Whitney and Amabile 1995; Prentky 1980; Walberg 1971; Glover and Sautter 1977; Bergman 1979). Motivated individuals are more likely

to do the work to acquire needed knowledge and skills (Conti, Amabile and Pokkok 1995). And they are able to override programmed modes of thought to think more critically and reflectively if intensely interested in a problem, dissatisfied with the status quo, or experiencing a schema failure as a result of sharp breaches in expectations and outcomes (DiMaggio 1997; Abelson 1981; Garfinkel 1967; Moscovici 1984; Swidler 1986; Bourdieu 1990). To the extent that success enhances motivation, it not only generates more resources but may encourage greater creativity (Deci and Ryan 1980; Chong 1991a).

Psychologists locate the sources of creative motivation primarily in the intrinsic rewards derived from work one loves to do (Amabile 1996c). While some emphasize the rewards derived from stimulation of novelty, feelings of mastery, and feelings of control experienced in the competent performance of a task (Hebb 1953; Berlyne 1960; White 1959; Harter 1978; Deci and Ryan 1985), others emphasize the "meaningfulness" attributed to the task by the person doing it (Hackman and Oldham 1976). I argue that for social movement leaders, motivation deriving from identity forming values or the "moral sources" (Taylor 1989) that infuse one's life with meaning and one's work with meaningfulness are of particular importance (Weber 1946[1920]a; Turner and Killian 1987[1972]; Bruner 1990b; D'Andrade 1992; Peterson 1999).<sup>8</sup> Work expressive of identity can be viewed as a "vocation" and work at one's vocation promises more motivational reward than work at a "job" (Weber 1958[1905]).

In the group work setting of a leadership team devising strategy, individual motivation is enhanced when people enjoy autonomy, receive positive feedback from peers and superiors, and are part of a team competing with other teams. It is dampened when they enjoy little autonomy, get no feedback or only negative feedback from peers and superiors, and face intense competition within the team (Amabile 1988; Hackman 1990).

### Salient Knowledge

David did not know how to use King Saul's weapons, but he did know how to use stones as weapons.

A second element of creativity is possession of domain-relevant skills, mastery of which is requisite to developing novel applications. Creative jazz piano players have learned how to play the piano very well. Picasso mastered the styles of his predecessors before painting *Les Femmes d'Alger*. Picasso mastered the styles of his predecessors before painting *Les Femmes d'Alger*.

In terms of strategy, mastery of specific skills – or how to strategize – is relevant, but so is access to local knowledge of the constituencies, opponents, and third parties with which one is interacting. We expect effective military strategists to have command not only the art of strategy but also of an understanding of the troops, enemy, battlefield, and so forth. Salient knowledge includes both skills and information as to settings in which those skills are applied. The better our information about how to work within a particular domain — our local knowledge—the more likely we are to know how to deal with problems arising within that domain. When problems are routine, mastery of known algorithms, or, in the language of social movement theory, repertoires of collective action, facilitates effective problem solving. But since environments can change in response to our initiatives, especially volatile social movement environments, regular feedback is important in evaluating responses to these initiatives (Zaltman, Duncan, Holbeck 1973). When problems are novel, we must sort through our "repertoire" to find that which can be useful to us in learning how to innovate a response.

### Heuristic Processes

David found his skill with stones useful because he could imaginatively recontextualize the battlefield, transforming it into a place where, as a shepherd, he knew how to protect his

flock from wolves and bears. An outsider to the battle, he saw resources others did not see and opportunities they did not grasp. Goliath, on the other hand, the insider, failed to see a shepherd boy as a threat.

When we face new problems, we innovate solutions by using heuristic methods to imaginatively recontextualize data or synthesize it in new ways (Amabile 1996a; Langer 1978; Langer and Imber 1979; Bernstein 1975; March and Olsen 1976). To think creatively, we must recognize our problems as new ones, at least to us, that require new solutions. To find new solutions we use our gift for analogy to reframe data in ways that make novel interpretations and new pathways conceivable, combining familiar elements in new ways as bricoleurs (Lakoff and Johnston 1980; Gentner 1989; Langer 1989; Strang and Meyer 1994; Levi-Strauss 1966[1962]; Douglas 1986; Campbell 1997). Because it requires fresh perspectives and novel approaches, innovative thinking is facilitated by encounters with diverse points of view – within one's own life experience or combined experience of the members of a group (Bernstein 1975; Kasperson 1978; Langer 1989a; Rosaldo 1989; Piore 1995; Nemeth 1986; Weick 1979; Senge 1990; Rogers 1995a; DiMaggio 1997; Van de Ven 1999). Access to a diversity of approaches not only offers multiple routines from which to choose, but also contributes to the "mindfulness" that multiple solutions are possible (Langer 1989b) and that most known solutions are "equivocal" (Weick 1979). And at the most basic level, the more ideas that are generated, the greater the likelihood there will be good ones among them (Campbell 1960; Simonton 1988).

Creative problem-solving by teams is challenging because minorities tend to conform to majorities and persons with less authority tend to conform their views to those of persons with more authority (Asch 1952; Janis 1972; ; Milgram 1974; Hackman and Morris 1975; McGrath 1984). Expression of minority views, however, can encourage better problem solving because it

stimulates divergent thought about issues, causing decision-makers to attend to more aspects of the situation and reexamine their premises (Nemeth 1986). And solving certain problems, such as strategizing in a complex and changing environment, may require access to a range of knowledge, skill, and experience broader than that available to any one person.

Teams thus composed of persons with heterogeneous perspectives are more likely to make good decisions than homogeneous teams, especially in solving novel problems, because they can access greater resources, bring a broader range of skills to bear on decision making, and marshal a diversity of views (Nemeth and Staw 1989). Heterogeneity may grow out of the life experience of team members, their affiliation with diverse relational networks, or their knowledge of distinct action repertoires.

To take advantage of heterogeneity, however, a team must learn both to foster minority expression that encourages divergent thinking associated with creativity - learning by discovery - and to switch to convergent thinking required to make decisions - learning by testing. Managing these tensions is especially challenging when planning and action occur simultaneously, as in the process of innovation (Van de Ven 1999). They are managed more successfully by leaders tolerant of ambiguity who employ distinct organizational mechanisms for creative deliberation and decision making, rely on multiple sources of resources and authority, and resolve conflict by negotiation rather than by fiat or by consensus (Osborn 1963; Levinthal 1997; Nemeth and Staw 1989; Bartunek 1993).

### **Sources of Strategic Capacity: Leadership and Organization**

Having proposed a mechanism by which strategy is generated, I turn to the "input" to that mechanism that can be sources of strategic capacity - leadership and organization. As a unit of analysis, I focus on leadership teams - those persons who formally or informally participate in making authoritative strategic choices for an organization or units of an organization (Oberschall 1973; Porter 1996). I do not try to evaluate their qualities of leadership as such, but rather their contribution to the formulation of strategy. Although the "person in charge" plays a uniquely important leadership role, especially in forming, coaching and sustaining a team (Hackman and Walton 1986; Bartunek 1993), strategy, like innovation, is more often a result of the interaction among leaders than organizational myths usually acknowledge (Van de Ven 1999). Understanding strategic capacity may also help to explain why some groups are better able to take advantage of moments of opportunity than others and to specify the conditions under which the effectiveness of an organizational strategy will grow or atrophy.

As shown in Chart One, the strategic capacity of a leadership team is enhanced when it includes people who are insiders to some constituencies, but outsiders to others; who have strong ties to some constituencies, but weak ties to others; and who have learned diverse collective action repertoires. Leadership teams make the most of these attributes if they conduct regular, open, and authoritative deliberations and are held accountable by multiple, salient constituencies from whom they also draw their resources.

### *Leadership*

Leaders devise strategy in interaction with their environments. Scholars who recognize biographical experience as the primary source of cognitive socialization (Bernstein 1975; DiMaggio 1997; Zerubavel 1997), cultural perspective (Rosaldo 1989; Jasper 1997), and

motivation (D'Andrade 1992), link leaders' psychological, professional, organizational, and generational backgrounds to specific strategies. Few, however, have explored links between leaders' backgrounds and their potential to develop *effective* strategy (Kuhn 1962; Oberschall 1973; Chandler 1977, 1962a; Freeman 1979; Ross 1983; Wickham-Crowley 1992). But leaders' identities, sociocultural networks, and tactical repertoires -- or who they are, whom they know, and what they know - influence their strategic capacity.

Leadership teams that include "insiders" and "outsiders" have more strategic capacity than those that do not, as shown in the first row of Chart One, "Identity." Leaders' "identities" derive from their backgrounds as to race, class, gender, generation, ethnicity, religious beliefs, family background, education, and professional training. Teams of "insiders" and "outsiders" can thus combine access to a diversity of salient knowledge with the facility to recontextualize this knowledge creatively (Bernstein 1975; Weick 1979; Senge 1990; Rogers 1995c; Hamel 1996). Individuals with the "borderland" life experience of straddling cultural or institutional worlds are more likely to make innovative contributions than those without such experience (Kuhn 1962; Rickards and Freedman 1978; Weick 1979; Rosaldo 1989; Piore 1995). Insiders who identify personally with their constituencies or outsiders whose vocation entails serving those constituencies are likely to derive more intrinsic rewards from their work than those whose motivation is solely instrumental or occupational (Weick 1979; Howell 1990; Meyer and Allen 1997). Teams composed of persons with heterogeneous perspectives are likely to make better decisions than homogeneous teams, especially in solving novel problems, because they can access more resources, bring a broader range of skills to bear on decision making, and benefit from a diversity of views" (Nemeth and Staw 1989; Sutcliffe 2000).

Leadership teams that include people networked by "strong" ties to some constituencies and by "weak" ties to others will have more strategic capacity than those that do not, as shown in the second row of Chart One, "Networks." Sociocultural networks are sources of ideas about what to do and how to do it (Emirbayer and Goodwin 1994), mechanisms through which social movements recruit (Granovetter 1973, Stark and Bainbridge 1985, McAdam and Paulsen 1993), sources of social capital (Coleman 1990, Chong 1991a, Putnam 1993), and incubators of new collective identities (Gamson 1991, Taylor and Whittier 1992). Sociologists distinguish between the "strong" ties within homogeneous networks and "weak" ties within heterogeneous networks. Leaders with strong constituency ties are more likely to know where to find local resources, whom to recruit, what tactics to use, and how to encourage constituents to identify with the organization than those without such ties (Morris 1984). On the other hand, leaders with weak ties with multiple constituencies are more likely to know how to access a diversity of people, ideas, and routines that facilitate broad alliances. Combinations of strong ties and weak ties are associated with social movement recruitment because they link access with commitment, just as they are associated with innovation because they link information with influence (Gamson 1990; Rogers 1995a). Diverse ties, like diverse life experience, facilitate the creative recontextualization of strategic choices. But strong ties strengthen a leader's motivation due to his or her personal commitment to and identification with those whose lives are influenced by the choices he or she makes and among whom he or she earns his or her reputation (Chong 1991b).

Leadership teams that include persons with knowledge of diverse collective action repertoires have more strategic capacity than those without such knowledge, as shown in the third row of Chart One, "Repertoires." Knowledge of diverse collective action repertoires affords

a leadership team greater strategic flexibility than those without that knowledge (Moore 1995; Hamel 1996; Alexander 1998). Collective action repertoires are useful because of their practical (people know what to do), normative (people think they are right), and institutional (they attach to resources) utility in mobilizing people familiar with them (Tilly 1981; Clemens 1996). Tactics drawn from repertoires known to one's constituency but not to one's opposition are particularly useful (Alinsky 1971b). And knowledge of multiple repertoires not only widens leaders' range of possible choices, but affords them the opportunity to adapt to new situations through heuristic processes of bricolage or analogy. The motivation of leaders adept in such repertoires is enhanced by competence they experience in their use and by positive feedback from constituencies who find these repertoires familiar.

### *Organization*

Leaders interact with their environment from within organizational structures. A structure is created by commitments among founders who enact ways to interact with each other and with their environment (Weick 1993). It defines patterns of legitimacy (Weber 1978c [1922]; Powell and DiMaggio 1991), power (Emerson 1962; Salancik and Pfeffer 1977; Perrow 1986), and deliberation (March and Olson 1976). Although organizational form may be a founders' strategic choice (Child 1974; Oliver 1988; Eisenhardt and Schoonhoven 1990; Weick 1993; Clemens 1996), once established, it has a profound influence on subsequent innovation (Zaltman 1973, Damanpour 1991) and strategy (Chandler 1962b; Bower 1970). In the development of strategy venues of deliberation, mechanisms of accountability, and resource flows are particularly important.

Leadership teams that conduct regular, open and authoritative deliberation have more strategic capacity than those that do not, as depicted in the fourth row of Chart One, "Deliberation." Leadership teams conducting regular, open, and authoritative deliberation enhance their strategic capacity because they acquire access to salient information, participate in a creative process by means of which they explore new ways to use this information, and are motivated by commitment to choices they participated in making and upon which they have the autonomy to act (Duncan 1973; Hackman 1990; Ruscio et al. 1995). Regular deliberation facilitates initiative by encouraging the periodic assessment of activities, regardless of whether or not there is a crisis (Brown and Eisenhardt 1997, 1998). And deliberation open to heterogeneous points of view -- or "deviant" perspectives -- facilitates better decisions (Nemeth and Staw 1989), encourages innovation (McCleod 1992), and develops group capacity to perform cognitive tasks more creatively and effectively (Hutchins 1991). To realize these benefits, leaders must develop deliberative practices encouraging the divergent thinking that grows out of the expression of diverse views as well as the convergent thinking required to make decisions to act upon them. For this purpose, conflict resolution by negotiation, accompanied by voting, may be preferable to either fiat or consensus because it preserves difference yet makes collective action possible (Bartunek 1993). Deliberation resulting in actionable decisions motivates actors to take part in and to implement that which was decided upon (Hackman 1990; Mintzberg and McHugh 1985).

Leadership teams that mobilize resources, especially human resources, that are generated by an organizational program serving multiple constituencies, develop more strategic capacity than those that do not, as shown in the fifth row of Chart One, "Resource Flows." Leaders who mobilize resources from constituents must devise strategy to which constituents will respond

(Pfeffer and Salancik 1978; Mansbridge 1986; Knocke and Wood 1981). If membership dues are a major source of support, leaders learn to do what they have to do to get members to pay dues. Reliance on resources drawn primarily from outside one's core constituency—even when those resources are internal to the organization, such as an endowment—may dampen leaders' motivation to devise effective strategy. As long as they attend to the politics that keep the bills paid, they can keep doing the same thing "wrong." At the same time, leaders who draw resources from multiple constituencies acquire the strategic flexibility that goes with greater autonomy of greater room to maneuver (Powell 1988, Alexander 1988). Resources drawn from multiple sources may also encourage expression of diverse views important for creative thinking (Levinthal 1997). Leaders' choices about which constituencies from whom to mobilize resources can thus have an important influence on subsequent strategy (Oliver and Marwell 1992). Relying more on people than on money facilitates growth in strategic capacity to the extent it encourages development of more leaders who know how to strategize. The more the capable strategists, the greater the flexibility with which an organization can pursue its objectives and the scale on which it can do so (Weick 1979).

Leadership teams that are self-selected or elected by constituencies to whom they are accountable have more strategic capacity than those selected bureaucratically, as shown in the sixth row of Chart One, "Accountability." Accountability structures influence strategy by establishing routines for leadership selection and defining loci of responsiveness. Leaders who are accountable to those outside their core constituency may have been selected based on criteria that have little to do with knowledge of or motivational connection with it. As innovation scholars have shown, interaction with one's constituency (or customers) is a particularly important source of salient new ideas (von Hippel 1988; Utterback 1971). Leaders selected

bureaucratically are more likely to possess the skills and motivations compatible with bureaucratic success than with the creative work that innovation requires. Elected leaders are at least likely to have useful knowledge of the constituency that elected them and the political skills to have been elected. Entrepreneurial or self-selected leaders—at whose initiative the undertaking takes place—are more likely to possess skills and intrinsic motivations associated with creative work (Chambers 1973; MacKinnon 1965; Getzels and Csikszentmihalyi 1976). Although elective and entrepreneurial leadership selection processes may be in tension with one another, either is likely to yield more strategic capacity than bureaucratic leadership selection.

### *Timing*

Strategic choices are made not only in certain places but also at certain moments in time. Yet moments of opportunity come and go, and the choices actors make at some moments have far greater influence than those made at other moments. What influence, if any, does strategic capacity have on actors' ability to act not only in appropriate ways but in timely ones?

Sociologists, organizational behavior scholars, and cultural analysts note that some moments have greater causal significance for subsequent events than other moments. Some sociologists emphasize the significance of "critical junctures", moments when events unfolding along distinct causal pathways interact to yield unique opportunities (Skocpol 1984). Others identify as "focusing moments" events that create unique opportunities for mobilization by drawing attention to particular issues (Lofland 1996). Others cite the "eventful temporality" of unique events that alter the deep context in which subsequent events unfold (Sewell 1996). Organizational scholars identify portentous moments of organizational development as midway

points toward realization of particular goals and other moments of high contingency (Weick 1979, 1993; Gersick 1994). Cultural scholars point to moments of crisis or "role transition" in the lives of individuals or communities at which norms, identities, and values become fluid or liminal, compared with other times when they are relatively resilient (Turner 1966; Jasper 1997c; Smelser 1962; Turner and Killian 1987[1972]; Swidler 1986; Morris 1993). Moments of historical, cultural and organizational fluidity may occur singly or together -- what scholars call *entrainment*, alignment of internal and external rhythms of change (Ancona and Chong 1996).

Ironically, those moments when actors' strategic choices may matter most may also be moments of radical uncertainty, particularly in the case of social movements. Breakthrough events may alter the affected individuals, organizations, and environments so deeply that their consequences depend almost entirely on what actors make of them. Victories may be moments when strategic choices matter most, not times to "rest on one's laurels", but rather to make the most of one's successes. Victories may be moments of greatest risk.

Because of their radical uncertainty, these are conditions under which strategic capacity may matter most. When the value of reliance on known algorithms is most limited may be when creative capability is most important (Tushman and Murmann 1997). Leadership teams with more strategic capacity can make not only more informed choices, but quicker ones, allowing them to take greater advantage of unique moments of opportunity. And leadership teams with more strategic capacity can take advantage of moments of unique opportunity to reconfigure their own leadership and structure in ways that allow them to enhance their strategic capacity further.

### *Dynamics*

Since strategic capacity is the result of a relationship among leaders, organization, and environment, failure to adapt to environmental change can lead to atrophy. On the other hand, if organizations adapt their leadership to changes in their environment and continue interacting with it, their strategic capacity can grow. Because established organizations rely on their resources for institutional power, their loss of resourcefulness may only become apparent when they are required to face new challenges in unfamiliar environments. That strategic capacity can atrophy helps explain not only why David can sometimes win but also why Goliath can sometimes lose.

Scholars note that organizations institutionalize as environments change (Stinchcombe 1965; Hannan and Freeman 1984). Processes of organizational inertia inhibit adaptation by old organizations to new environments, thus creating niches within which new organizations can emerge — a liability of aging or senescence (Aldrich and Auster 1986). Leaders of the newer organizations were recently selected, have more organizational flexibility, and work in closer articulation with the environment. Leaders of older organizations were often selected in the past, are constrained by institutional routines, and may have resources that allow them to operate in counterproductive insulation from the environment. As leaders persist, they form bonds among themselves, develop common understandings of "how things work" and select others like themselves to lead. Access to internal organizational resources can insulate them, in the short run, from environmental change. For a time, these resources may even give them the power to shape that environment — but only for a time. Changes in organizational structure that reduce leaders' accountability to or need to mobilize resources from constituents — or changes in

deliberative processes that suppress dissent— can diminish strategic capacity, even as resources grow. The strategic capacity of an organization can thus grow over time if it adjusts its leadership team to reflect environmental change, multiplies deliberative venues, remains accountable to salient constituencies, and derives resources from them. Similarly, strategic capacity may atrophy if an organization fails to adjust its leadership, limits deliberative venues, loses accountability to salient constituencies, and relies on internal resources. Older organizations are likely to have less strategic capacity than newer ones.

### **Strategic Process Model**

As summarized in Chart Two, "Strategic Process Model", then, I argue that outcomes are influenced by strategy, the effectiveness of which is, in turn, the result of the strategic capacity of a leadership team. And the strategic capacity of a leadership team is the result of who its members are and how they structure their interaction with each other and with their environment as explained above.

## **EVALUATING STRATEGIC CAPACITY**

---

Although elsewhere I show that variation in strategic capacity can explain the success of the United Farm Workers as compared with its rival organizations, the AFL-CIO's Agricultural Workers Organizing Committee (AWOC) and the International Brotherhood of Teamsters, in this paper I've focused on articulating strategic capacity as a conceptual tool to help explain other

cases of David like success, or failure. How generalizable - and therefore, useful - can we expect this concept to be?

The core argument on which strategic capacity rests is the claim that under conditions of uncertainty, the capability to generate new algorithms, when rooted in deep understanding of the environment, is more strategically valuable than the capability to apply known algorithms, no matter how expertly. In other words, under conditions in which rules, resources, and interests are highly institutionalized and links between ends and means are certain, as in the world of game theory, the relationship between resources and success should be predictable, especially when expertise at how to play the game is factored in. Strategic capacity is thus more useful explaining outcomes in turbulent environments where rules, resources, and interests are emergent and links between ends and means are uncertain. This suggests that although it was developed in the context of social movement insurgency, strategic capacity as an analytic concept could be useful in explaining outcomes in any such environment—political, economic, or social.

One way the explanatory power of strategic capacity could be evaluated is with sets of cases in which strategic capacity and resources vary, as shown in Chart Three. Strategic capacity adds the most explanatory value in cases falling into the upper left quadrant (little resources, lots of strategic capacity) and lower right quadrant (lots of resources, little strategic capacity). But it could be tested with respect to any set of cases not limited to the lower left quadrant (little resources, little strategic capacity) or the upper right quadrant (lots of resources, lots of strategic capacity). Although strategic capacity would have the least explanatory value for cases confined to the lower left quadrant (little resources, little strategic capacity) or upper right quadrant (lots of resources, lots of strategic capacity), these are quadrants in which we expect to find the most

cases with the most predictable outcomes, i.e., challengers with little resources and strategic capacity, or incumbents with lots of resources and strategic capacity. The unique contribution of a theory of strategic capacity is to offer a way to explain the less frequent but—from a social movement point of view—more interesting outcomes of David winning and Goliath losing without resort to accounts grounded in opportunity and resources that rob actors of their agency. By selecting cases based on variation in resources and strategic capacity we avoid the problem of selection on the dependent variable, success. Strategic capacity could be tested by comparing a set of cases with observable variation in independent variables of resources and strategic capacity and the dependent variable of success. To the extent strategic capacity co-varies with success, the theory would be upheld. To the extent it does not, it would be falsified.

## CONCLUSION

This paper began by asking why "David" sometimes wins. Organizations can compensate for lack of economic, political, or cultural resources with creative strategy, a function of the motivation, access to a diversity of salient information, and heuristic facility with which their leadership teams interact with their environment. Changing environments generate opportunities and resources, but the significance of those opportunities or resources—and even what constitutes them—emerges from the hearts, heads, and hands of the actors who develop the means of putting them to work. People can generate the power to resolve grievances not only if those with power decide to use it on their behalf, but also if they can develop the capacity to outthink and outlast their opponents—a matter of leadership and organization. As an “actor-centered” approach, analysis of strategic capacity suggests ways to design leadership teams and

structure organizations that increase the chances of devising effective strategies to deal with the challenges of organizing, innovation, and social change today. As students of "street smarts" have long understood, resourcefulness can sometimes compensate for a lack of resources. While learning about how the environment influences actors is important, learning more about how actors influence the environment is the first step not only to understanding the world, but changing it.

## REFERENCES

- Abelson, Robert P. 1981. "Psychological status of the script concept." *American Psychologist* 36: 715-29.
- Aldrich, H. E. and E. R. Auster. 1986. *Even Dwarfs Started Small: Liabilities of Age and Size and Their Strategic Implications*. Vol. 8 of *Research in Organizational Behavior*, edited by B. M. Staw, and L. L. Cummings. Greenwich, CT: JAI.
- Alexander, Victoria D. 1998. "Environmental Constraints and Organizational Strategies: Complexity, Conflict and Coping in the Nonprofit Sector". In *Private Action and the Public Good*, edited by Walter W. Powell and Elisabeth Clemens. New Haven, CT: Yale University Press.
- Alinsky, Saul D. 1971a. *Rules for Radicals*. New York: Vintage, 136.
- 1971b. *Rules for Radicals*. New York: Vintage, 171.
- Amabile, Theresa M. 1988. "A Model of Organizational Innovation." Vol. 10 of *Research in Organizational Behavior*, edited by B. M. Staw and L. L. Cummings. Greenwich, CT: JAI Press Inc, 123-167.
- 1996a. "A Theoretical Framework." In *Creativity in Context*. Boulder, CO: Westview Press, 81-130.
- 1996b. *Creativity in Context*. Boulder, CO: Westview Press, 203-240.
- 1996c. *Creativity in Context*. Boulder, CO: Westview Press, 131-152.
- Ancona, Deborah and Chee-Leong Chong. 1996. "Entrainment: Cycles and Synergy in Organizational Behavior." Vol. 18 in *Research in Organizational Behavior*, edited by B. M. Staw and L. L. Cummings. Greenwich, CT: JAI Press Inc, 251-84.
- Andrews, Kenneth. 1997. "The impacts of social movements on the political process: The civil rights movement and black electoral politics in Mississippi." *American Sociological Review* 62:800-819.
- Asch, S. 1952. *Social Psychology*. Englewood Cliffs, NJ: Prentice Hall.
- Banaszak, Lee Ann. 1996. *Why Movements Succeed or Fail: Opportunity, Culture and the Struggle for Woman Suffrage*. Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1996, 21-43.

- Bandura, Albert. 1989. "Human Agency in Social Cognitive Theory." *American Psychologist* 44(9): 1175-1184.
- Bartunek, J. M. 1993. "Multiple cognition and conflicts associated with second order organizational change." In *Social Psychology in Organizations*, edited by J. K. Murnighan. Englewood Cliffs, NJ: Prentice Hall, 337-343.
- Benford, R. D. 1997. "An Insider's Critique of the Social Movement Framing Perspective." *Sociological Inquiry* 67:409-430.
- Benford, R. D. and David A. Snow. 2000. "Framing Processes and Social Movements: An Overview and Assessment." *Annual Review of Sociology* 26:611-639.
- Bergman, J. 1979. "Energy levels: an important factor in identifying and facilitating the development of giftedness in young children." *Creative Child and Adult Quarterly* 4:181-88.
- Berlyne, D. E. 1960. *Conflict, Arousal, and Curiosity*. New York: McGraw-Hill.
- Bernstein, Basil. 1975. "Social Class, Language and Socialization." In *Class Codes and Control: Theoretical Studies towards Sociology of Language*. Second edition. New York: Schocken Books, 170-89.
- Bourdieu, Pierre. 1986. *Distinction: A Social Critique of the Judgement of Taste* Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 11-96.
- . 1990. *The Logic of Practice*. Palo Alto, CA: Stanford University Press, 52-65.
- Bower, J. L. 1970. *Managing the Resource Allocation Process: A Study of Corporate Planning and Investment*. Homewood, IL: Richard D. Irwin, Inc.
- Brown, Shona L. and Kathleen M. Eisenhardt. 1997. "The art of continuous change: linking complexity theory and time-paced evolution in relentlessly shifting organizations." *Administrative Science Quarterly* 42(1): 34-56.
- . 1998. *Competing on the Edge: Strategy as Structured Chaos*. Boston: Harvard Business School Press, 1-24.
- Bruner, Jerome. 1990a. *Acts of Meaning*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 106-116.
- 1990b. *Acts of Meaning*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1-32..
- Burgelman, R. A. 1991. "Intraorganizational ecology of strategy making and organizational adaptation: theory and field research." *Organization Science* 2, no.3 (August): 239-262.
- Campbell, Donald T. 1960. "Blind variation and selective retention in creative thought as in other knowledge processes." *Psychological Review* 67:380-400.

- Campbell, John L. 1997. "Mechanisms of Evolutionary Change in Economic Governance: Interaction, Interpretation, and Bricolage." In *Evolutionary Economics and Path Dependence*, edited by Lars Magnusson and Jan Ottosson. Cheltenham, England: Edward Elgar, 10-32.
- Carlton-Ford, Steven L. 1992. "Charisma, ritual, collective effervescence and self-esteem." *Sociological Quarterly* 33(3): 365-388.
- Chambers, J. A. 1973. "Relating personality and biographical factors to scientific creativity." *Psychological Monographs* 78(7).
- Chandler, Alfred D. 1962a. *Strategy and Structure: Chapters in the History of the American Industrial Enterprise*. Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 314-323.
- Chandler, Alfred D. 1962b. *Strategy and Structure: Chapters in the History of the American Industrial Enterprise*. Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 1-18, 283-323.
- . 1977. *The Visible Hand: the Managerial Revolution in American Business*. Cambridge, MA: Belknap Press, 95.
- Child, John. 1972. "Organizational structure, environment and performance: the role of strategic choice." *Sociology* 6(1): 1-22.
- Chong, Dennis. 1991a. *Collective Action and the Civil Rights Movement*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 90-102.
- Chong, Dennis. 1991b. *Collective Action and the Civil Rights Movement*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 31-72.
- Clauswitz, Carl Von. 1832. *On War*, edited by Anatol Rapoport (London: Penguin Books), 241-298
- Clemens, Elisabeth. 1996. "Organizational Form as Frame: Collective Identity and Political Strategy in the Labor Movement, 1880-1920." In *Comparative Perspectives on Social Movements*, edited by Doug McAdam, John McCarthy and Meyer Zald. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 205-226.
- Cohen, Michael D., James G. March and Johan P. Olson. 1972. "Garbage can model of organizational choice." *Administrative Science Quarterly* 17:1-25.
- Coleman, James. 1990. *Foundations of Social Theory*. Cambridge: Belknap Press of Harvard University Press.
- Collins, Randall. March 1981. "On the microfoundations of macrosociology," *American Journal of Sociology* 86:984-1013.

- Conti, R., T. M. Amabile, and S. Pokkak. 1995. "Problem solving among computer science students: the effects of skill, evaluation expectation and personality on solution quality." Paper presented at the Annual Meeting of the Eastern Psychological Association. Boston, April.
- Crow, Graham. 1989. "The use of the concept of 'strategy' in recent sociological literature." *Sociology* 23(1) February 1989:1-24.
- Dahrendorf, Ralf. 1958. *Class and Conflict in Industrial Society*. Palo Alto, CA: Stanford University Press.
- Damanpour, Fariborz. 1991. "Organizational innovation: a meta-analysis of effects of determinants and moderators." *Academy of Management Journal* 34(3): 555-590.
- D'Andrade, Roy G. 1992. "Schemas and Motivation." In *Human Motives and Cultural Models*, edited by Roy D'Andrade and Claudia Strauss. New York: Cambridge University Press, 23-44.
- Davis, Joseph E. 2002. "Narrative and Social Movements: The Power of Stories." *Stories of Change: Narrative and Social Movements*, edited by J. E. Davis. New York, State University of New York Press.
- Deci, E. L. and R. M. Ryan. 1980. "The Empirical exploration of intrinsic motivational processes," in *Advances In Experimental Social Psychology*, edited by L. Berkowitz. New York: Academic Press.
- , 1985. *Intrinsic Motivation and Self-Determination in Human Behavior*. New York: Plenum Press.
- DiMaggio, Paul. 1997. "Culture and Cognition." *Annual Review of Sociology* 23:263-87.
- DiMaggio, Paul J. and Walter Powell. 1991. "Introduction," Pp. 1-38 in *The New Institutionalism in Organizational Analysis*, edited by Walter Powell and Paul J. DiMaggio. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.
- Douglas, Mary. 1986. *How Institutions Think*. Syracuse: Syracuse University Press, 66-67.
- Duncan, R. B. 1973. "Multiple decision making structures in adapting to environmental uncertainty: the impact on organizational effectiveness." *Human Relations* 26(3): 273-92.
- Durkheim, Emile. 1964[1915]. *Elementary Forms of Religious Life*. New York, NY: Macmillan, 319-322.

- Eisenhardt, Kathy M. and Claudia Bird Schoonhoven. 1990. "Organizational growth: linking founding team, strategy, environment, and growth among US semiconductor ventures, 1978-1988." *Administrative Science Quarterly* 35:504-29.
- Emerson, Richard. 1962. "Power-dependence relations." *American Sociological Review* 27:31-44.
- Emirbayer, M. and J. Goodwin. 1994. "Network analysis, culture, and the problem of agency." *American Journal of Sociology* 99:1411-54.
- Fiske, Susan and Shelly E. Taylor. 1991. *Social Cognition*. New York: McGraw-Hill, 139-42, 171-81;
- Freeman, Jo. 1979. "Resource Mobilization and Strategy: A Model for Analyzing Social Movement Organizations." Pp. 167-189 in *The Dynamics of Social Movements: Resources Mobilization, Social Control, and Tactics*, edited by M. N. Zald and J. D. McCarthy. Cambridge, MA: Winthrop.
- Gamson, William. 1975. *The Strategy of Social Protest*. Belmont, CA: Wadsworth Publishing, 145-180.
- . 1991. "Commitment and agency in social movements." *Sociological Forum* 6, no. 1:27-50.
- . 1992. *Talking Politics*. New York: Cambridge University Press, 6-8.
- Gamson, William and David Meyer. 1996. "Framing political opportunity." In *Comparative Perspectives on Social Movements*, edited by Doug McAdam, John McCarthy, and Meyer Zald. New York: Cambridge University Press, 275-290.
- Ganz, Marshall. 2000a. "Five Smooth Stones: Strategic Capacity in the Unionization of California Agriculture," unpublished doctoral dissertation, Sociology, Harvard University.
- Ganz, Marshall. 2000b. "Resources and resourcefulness: strategic capacity in the unionization of California agriculture (1959-77)." *American Journal of Sociology* 105(4): 1003-62.
- Garfinkel, Harold. 1967. *Studies in Ethnomethodology*. Cambridge, MA: Prentice-Hall.
- Gentner, Dedre. 1989. "Mechanisms of analogical learning." In *Similarity and Analogical Reasoning*, edited by S. Vosiadou and A. Ortony. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 199-239.
- Gersick, Connie J. 1994. "Pacing strategic change: the case of a new venture." *Administrative Science Quarterly* 29: 499-518.

- Getzels, J. and M. Csikszentmihalyi. 1976. *The Creative Vision: A longitudinal Study of Problem Finding in Art*. New York: Wiley-Interscience.
- Glover, J. A. and F. Sautter. 1977. "Relation of four components of creativity to risk-taking preferences." *Psychological Reports* 41: 227-230.
- Goffman, Erving. 1974. *Frame Analysis*. New York: Harper and Row, 1-39.
- Granovetter, Mark. 1973. "The strength of weak ties." *American Journal of Sociology* 78: 1360-80.
- Hackman, J. R. and C. G. Morris. 1975. "Group tasks, group interaction process, and group performance effectiveness: a review and proposed integration." In *Advances in Experimental Social Psychology*, edited by L. Berkowitz. New York: Academic Press, 45-99.
- Hackman, J. Richard and Greg R. Oldham. 1976. "Motivation through the design of work: test of the theory." *Organizational Behavior and Human Performance*, 16:250-279.
- Hackman, J. Richard and Richard Walton. 1986. "Leading Groups in Organizations." In *Designing Effective Work Groups*, edited by Paul Goodman. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass, 72-119.
- Hackman, Richard. 1990. *Groups That Work*, edited by J. R. Hackman. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass, 479-504.
- Hall, Rodney Bruce. 1997. "Moral authority as a power resource." *International Organizations* 51, no. 4 (Autumn): 591-622.
- Hamel, Gary. 1996. "Strategy as revolution." *Harvard Business Review* 74, no. 69: 69-78.
- Hamel, Gary and C. K. Prahalad. 1989. "Strategic intent." *Harvard Business Review* 67, no. 3: 63-77.
- Michael T. Hannan and John Freeman, "Structural inertia and organizational change", *American Sociological Review* 49, no. 2 (1984), 149-64.
- Harter, S. 1978. "Effectance motivation reconsidered: toward a developmental model." *Human Development* 21: 34-64
- Hebb, D. O. 1953. "Drives and the CNS." *Psychological Review* 62: 243-254.
- Hollander, Edwin P. and Lynn R. Offermann. 1991. "Power and leadership in organizations: relationships in transition." *The American Psychologist* 45(2): 179-90

- House, Robert J., William D. Spangler, and James Woycke. 1991. "Personality and charisma in the U.S. presidency: a psychological theory of leader effectiveness." *Administrative Science Quarterly* 36(3): 364-97.
- Howell, Jane M. 1990. "Champions of Technological Innovation." *Administrative Science Quarterly* 35(2): 317-39.
- Hutchins, Edwin. 1991. "The Social Organization of Distributed Cognition." In *Perspective on Socially Shared Cognition*, edited by L. B. Resnick, J. M. Levine, and S. D. Teasley. Washington, DC: American Psychological Association, 283-307.
- Janis, I. 1972. *Victims of Groupthink*. Boston: Houghton-Mifflin.
- Jasper, James M. 1997a. *The Art of Moral Protest: Culture, Biography and Creativity in Social Movements* Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 293-321.
- Jasper, James M. 1997b. *The Art of Moral Protest: Culture, Biography and Creativity in Social Movements* Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 101-180.
- Jasper, James M. 1997c. *The Art of Moral Protest: Culture, Biography and Creativity in Social Movements* Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 69-99.
- Johnston, Hank and Bert Klandermans, eds. 1995. *Social Movements and Culture*. Minneapolis, MN: University of Minnesota Press.
- Kasperson, C. J. 1978. "Scientific creativity: a relationship with information channels." *Psychological Reports* 42: 691-694.
- Knocke, David and James R. Wood. 1981. *Organized for Action: Commitment in Voluntary Associations*. New Brunswick, NJ: Rutgers University Press.
- Kuhn, Thomas S. 1962. *The Structure of Scientific Revolutions*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 90.
- Lakoff, George and Mark Johnson. 1980. "The metaphorical structure of the human conceptual system." *Cognitive Science* 4:195-208.
- Langer, Ellen. 1978. "Rethinking the role of thought in social interaction." In *New Directions in Attribution Research*, edited by W. Ickes, R. Kidd, and J. Harvey. Hillsdale, NJ: Erlbaum Associates.
- Langer, Ellen. 1989a. *Mindfulness*. Reading, MA: Addison-Wesley, 115-171.
- Langer, Ellen. 1989b. *Mindfulness*. Reading, MA: Addison-Wesley, 61-80.

- Langer, Ellen and L. Imber. 1979. "When practice makes imperfect: debilitating effects of overlearning." *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology* 37: 2014-2024.
- Levinthal, D. 1997 "Three Faces of Organizational Learning: Wisdom, Inertia, and Discovery." In *Technological Innovation: Oversights and Foresights* edited by R. Garud, P. Nayyar, and Z. Shapira. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 167-180.
- Levi-Strauss, Claude. 1962. *The Savage Mind*. Translated in 1966. London: Weidenfeld and Nicolson.
- Lipsky, Michael. 1968. "Protest as a political resource." *American Political Science Review* 62(48): 1144-58.
- Lofland, John. 1996. *Social Movement Organizations*. New York: Walter deGruyter.190-91,
- Lukes, Stephen. 1975. *Power: A Radical View*. New York: Macmillan.
- MacKinnon, D. W. 1965. "Personality and the realization of creative potential." *American Psychologist* 20, no. 2: 273-281.
- Mann, Michael. 1986. "A history of power from the beginning to A.D. 1760". Volume 1 in *The Sources of Social Power*. New York: Cambridge University Press, 1-33.
- Mansbridge, Jane. 1986. *Why We Lost the ERA*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.
- March, James and Johan Olsen. 1976. *Ambiguity and Choice in Organizations*. Bergen, Norway: Universeitetsforlaget.
- McAdam, Doug. 1983. "Tactical Innovations and the Pace of Insurgency." *American Sociological Review* 48:735-54.
- McAdam, Doug, John McCarthy and Meyer Zald. 1996. "Opportunities, mobilizing structures, and framing processes - toward a synthetic comparative perspective on social movements." Pp. 1-22 in *Comparative Perspectives on Social Movements*, edited by Doug McAdam, John McCarthy and Meyer Zald. New York: Cambridge University Press.
- McAdam, Doug and Ronnelle Paulsen. 1993. "Specifying the relationships between social ties and activism." *American Journal of Sociology* 98: 640-67.
- McCarthy, John D. and Meyer N. Zald. 1977. "Resource Mobilization and Social Movements: A Partial Theory." *American Journal of Sociology* 8(6): 1212-41.
- McCleod, P. L. 1992. "The Effects of Ethnic Diversity on Idea Generation in Small Groups." In *Best Paper Proceedings*, Academy of Management Convention, Las Vegas, Nevada.
- McGrath, J. 1984. *Groups: Interaction and Performance*. Englewood Cliffs, NJ: Prentice-Hall.

- Meyer, John P. and Natalie J. Allen. 1997. *Commitment in the Workplace: Theory, Research and Application*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications, 8-22.
- Michels, Robert. 1962 [1911]. *Political Parties: A Sociological Study of Oligarchical Tendencies of Modern Democracy*. New York: Collier.
- Milgram, Stanley, 1974. *Obedience to Authority*. New York: Harper & Row.
- Mintzberg, Henry. 1987. "Crafting strategy." *Harvard Business Review* 65, no. 4: 66-76.
- , 1994. "The rise and fall of strategic planning." *Harvard Business Review* 72, no. 1: 107-15.
- Mintzberg, Henry and Alexandra McHugh. 1985. "Strategy formation in an adhocracy." *Administrative Science Quarterly* 30, no. 2: 160-98.
- Moore, Mark H. 1995. *Creating Public Value: Strategic Management in Government*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press.
- Morris, Aldon. 1984. *Origins of the Civil Rights Movement: Black Communities Organizing for Change*. New York: Free Press, 275-290.
- Morris, Aldon. 1993. "Birmingham confrontation reconsidered: an analysis of the dynamics and tactics of mobilization." *American Sociological Review* 58: 621-36.
- Morris, Aldon and Suzanne Staggenborg. 2002. "Leadership in Social Movements" in the *Blackwell Companion to Social Movements*, edited by David Snow, Sarah Soule and Hanspeter Kresii. Boston: Blackwell Publishers
- Moscovici, S. 1984. "The Phenomenon of Social Representations," in *Social Representation*, edited by S. Moscovici and R. M. Moscovici-Farr. New York: Cambridge University Press.
- Nemeth, Charlan Jeanne. 1986. "Differential contributions of majority and minority influences." *Psychological Review* 93, no. 1: 22-32.
- Nemeth, C. J. and B. M. Staw. 1989. "The tradeoffs of social control and innovation in groups and organizations." Volume 22 in *Advances in Experimental Social Psychology*, edited by L. Berkowitz. New York: Academic Press, 722-30.
- North, Douglas C. 1990. *Institutions, Institutional Change and Economic Performance*. New York: Cambridge University Press.
- Oberschall, Anthony. 1973. *Social Conflict and Social Movements*. Englewood Cliffs, NJ: Prentice-Hall, 146-195.

- Oliver, Christine. 1988. "The collective strategy framework: an application to competing predictions of isomorphism." *Administrative Science Quarterly* 33, no. 4: 543-61.
- Oliver, Pamela E. and Gerald Marwell. 1992. "Mobilizing technologies for collective action." In *Frontiers of Social Movement Theory*, edited by Aldon D. Morris and Carol McClurg Mueller. New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 251-272.
- Osborn, A. 1963. *Applied Imagination: Principles and Procedures of Creative Thinking*. New York: Scribners.
- Perrow, Charles. 1986. *Complex Organizations: A Critical Essay*. New York: McGraw-Hill, Inc.
- Peterson, Jordan. 1999. *Maps of Meaning: The Architecture of Belief*. New York: Routledge, 19-89.
- Pfeffer, Jeffrey and Gerald Salancik. 1978. *The External Control of Organizations: A Resource Dependence Perspective*. New York: Harper and Row.
- Pillai, Rajandini. 1996. "Crisis and the emergence of charismatic leadership in groups: an experimental investigation." *Journal of Applied Social Psychology* 26(6): 543-563.
- Piore, Michael. 1995. *Beyond Individualism*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 140-167.
- Porter, Michael E. 1996. "Making strategy." *Harvard Business Review* 74, no. 6: 61-77.
- Powell, Walter W. 1988. "Institutional Effects on Organizational Structure and Performance." In *Institutional Patterns and Organizations*, edited by Lynne G. Zucker. Cambridge, MA: Ballinger Publishing Co., 115-136.
- Prentky, R. A. 1980. *Creativity and Psychopathology*. New York: Praeger.
- Putnam, Robert. 1993. *Making Democracy Work*. Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press.
- Rickards, T., and B. L. Freedman. 1978. "Procedures for managers in idea-deficient situations: examination of brainstorming approaches." *Journal of Management Studies* 15: 43-55.
- Rogers, Everett. 1995a. *Diffusion of Innovations*. New York: Free Press, 371-403.
- 1995b. *Diffusion of Innovations*. New York: Free Press, 131-159.
- 1995c. *Diffusion of Innovations*. New York: Free Press, 335-370.
- Rosaldo, Renato. 1989. *Culture and Truth: The Remaking of Social Analysis*. Boston: Beacon Press, 196-217.

- Ross, Robert J. 1983. "Generational Change and Primary Groups in a Social Movement." In *Social Movements of the Sixties and Seventies*, edited by Jo Freeman. New York: Longman, 177-187.
- Ruscio, J., D. Whitney, and T. M. Amabile. 1995. *How Do Motivation and Task Behaviors Affect Creativity? An Investigation in Three Domains*. Waltham, MA: Brandeis University.
- Salancik, G. R. and J. Pfeffer. 1977. "Who gets power - - and how they hold on to it: a strategic contingency model of power." *Organizational Dynamics* 2, no. 21: 2-21.
- Schelling, Thomas C. 1960a. *The Strategy of Conflict*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 81-172.
- Schelling, Thomas C. 1960b. *The Strategy of Conflict*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 3.
- Senge, Peter. 1990. *The Fifth Discipline: The Art and Practice of the Learning Organization*. New York: Doubleday.
- Sewell, William. 1992. "A Theory of Structure: Duality, Agency and Transformation." *American Journal of Sociology* 98:1-29.
- , 1996. "Three Temporalities: Toward and Eventful Sociology." In *The Historic Turn in the Human Sciences*, edited by Terrence J. McDonald. Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 245-280.
- Simonton, D. K. 1988. "Creativity, Leadership and Chance." In *The Nature of Creativity: Contemporary Psychological Perspectives*, edited by R. J. Sternberg. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 386-426.
- Skocpol, Theda. 1984. "Emerging Agendas and Recurrent Strategies in Historical Sociology." In *Vision and Method in Historical Sociology*. New York: Cambridge University Press, 356-391.
- , 1985. "Bringing the State Back In: Strategies and Analysis in Current Research." In *Bringing the State Back In*, edited by Peter Evans, Dietrich Rueschemeyer, and Theda Skocpol. New York: Cambridge University Press, 3-37.
- Smelser, Neil J. 1962. *Theory of Collective Action*. New York: Free Press, 109-120.
- Snow, David A., E. Burke Rochford, Jr., Steven Worden, and Robert D. Benford. 1986. "Frame Alignment Processes, Micromobilization, and Movement Participation." *American Sociological Review* 51:464-481.
- Stark, Rodney and William Bainbridge. 1985. *The Future of Religion: Secularization, Revival and Cult Formation*. Berkeley, CA: University of California Press.

- Stinchcombe, Arthur. 1965. "Social Structure and Organizations." In *Handbook of Organizations*, edited by James G. March. Chicago: Rand McNally, 143-153.
- Strang, David and John Meyer. 1994. "Institutional Conditions for Diffusion." In *Institutional Environments and Organizations*, edited by W. Richard Scott and John W. Meyer. Beverly Hills, CA: Sage, 100-112.
- Sutcliffe, K. M. 2000. "What executives notice: accurate perceptions in top management teams." *Academy of Management Journal* 37, 1360-1378.
- Swidler, Ann. 1986. "Culture in action: symbols and strategies." *American Sociological Review* 51, no. 2: 273-86.
- Taylor, Charles. 1989. *Sources of the Self*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press.
- Taylor, Verta and Nancy E. Whitter. 1992. "Collective Identity in Social Movement Communities: Lesbian Feminist Mobilization." In *Frontiers in Social Movement Theory*, edited by A. D. Morris and C. M. Mueller. New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 104-130.
- Thomas, Robert J. 1985. *Citizenship, Gender, and Work: Social Organization of Industrial Agriculture*. Berkeley: University of California Press.
- Tilly, Charles. 1978. *From Mobilization to Revolution*. Reading, MA: Addison-Wesley, 52-97.
- Tilly, Charles. 1981. *Class, Conflict, and Collective Action*, edited by L. A. Tilly and C. Tilly. Beverly Hills, CA: Sage, 13-25.
- Turner, Ralph and Lewis Killian. 1987 [1972]. "Culture in Action" in *Collective Behavior*. Third edition. Englewood Cliffs, NJ: Prentice-Hall, 273-86.
- Turner, Victor. 1966. *The Ritual Process: Structure and Anti-Structure*. Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press.
- Tushman, Michael and Peter Murmann. 1997. "Organization Responsiveness to Environmental Shock as an Indicator of Organizational Foresight and Oversight: The Role of Executive Team Characteristics and Organization Context." In *Technological Innovation: Foresights and Oversights*, edited by Raghu Garud, Praveen Nayyoi, and Zur Shapira. New York: Cambridge University Press.
- Utterback, J. M. 1971. "The process of technological innovation within the firm." *Academy of Management Journal* 14: 75-88.
- Van de Ven, Andrew H., Douglas E. Polley, Raghu Garud, and Sankaran Venkataraman. 1999. *The Innovation Journey*. New York: Oxford University Press, 3-20, 67-94, 125-148, 149-180.

- Von Hippel, Eric. 1988. *The Sources of Innovation*. New York: Oxford University Press.
- Walberg, H. J. 1971. "Varieties of adolescent creativity and the high school environment." *Exceptional Children* 38: 111-116.
- Watson, William. 1990. "Strategy, rationality, and inference: the possibility of symbolic performances." *Sociology* 24, no. 3: 480- 514.
- Weber, Max. 1958 [1905]. *The Protestant Ethic and the Spirit of Capitalism*. New York: Charles Scribners Sons, 75-94.
- . 1978[1914] a. "The Types of Legitimate Domination." *Economy and Society*, vol. I: 215-216 241-245, edited by Guenther Roth and Claus Wittich. Berkeley, CA: University of California Press.
- . 1978[1914] b. "Charisma and its Transformation." *Economy and Society*, vol. II: 1111-1157, edited by Guenther Roth and Claus Wittich. Berkeley, CA: University of California Press.
- . 1978[1914] c. *Economy and Society*, Volume 1:12-15, 48-52, 212-301, edited by Guenther Roth and Claus Wittich. Berkeley, CA: University of California Press.
- . 1946 [1920] a. *From Max Weber: Essays in Sociology* translated and edited by H. H. Gerth and C. Wright Mills. New York: Oxford University Press, 180-195.
- . 1946 [1920] b. *From Max Weber: Essays in Sociology* translated and edited by H. H. Gerth and C. Wright Mills. New York: Oxford University Press, 20.
- Economy and Society* edited by Guenther Roth and Claus Wittich (Berkeley, CA: University of California Press, 1978 [1922]).
- Weick, Karl E. 1979. *The Social Psychology of Organizing*. New York: McGraw-Hill, Inc., 1-23.
- . 1993. "Sensemaking in Organizations: Small Structures with Large Consequences." In *Social Psychology in Organizations*, edited J. K. Murnighan. Englewood Cliffs, NJ: Prentice-Hall, 10-37.
- Westley, F.R. and H. Mintzberg. 1988. " Profiles of Strategic Vision: Levesque and Iacocca." *Charismatic Leadership: The Elusive Factor in Organizational Effectiveness*, edited by J. A. Conger and R.N. Kahungo and associates. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass.
- White, R. 1959. "Motivation reconsidered: the concept of competence." *Psychological Review* 66: 297-323.

- Wickham-Crowley, Timothy. 1992. *Guerrillas and Revolution in Latin America: A Comparative Study of Insurgents and Regimes since 1956*. Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 19-48.
- Zaltman, Gerald, Robert Duncan, and Jonny Holbeck. 1973. *Innovations and Organizations*. New York. John Wiley and Sons.
- Zerubavel, Eviatar. 1997. *Social Mindscapes: An Invitation to Cognitive Sociology*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1-22, 35-52, 81-99.

---

<sup>1</sup> Although charisma is often viewed as a personality attribute, it is better understood as an interaction between leader and constituency. Weber (1978[1914]) attributes the "charismatic" authority of religious leaders to their followers' experience of the "divine" sources of their authority. Durkheim (1964[1915]) describes the role of mythic leaders or "civilizing heroes" as communal symbols. Collins (1981) argues that charismatic leaders are "individuals who have become the focal point of an emotion-producing ritual that links together a large coalition; their charisma waxes and wanes according to the degree to which the aggregate conditions for the dramatic predomination of that coalition are met." And Pillai (1996) offers empirical data that links the emergence of charismatic leaders to a group's experience of crisis.

<sup>2</sup> Stark and Bainbridge (1985), for example, report that in 1978 California was home to 167 of the nation's some 450 cults, most of which had charismatic leaders and Carlton-Ford (1992) reports 22 of 44 urban communes studied had charismatic leaders.

<sup>3</sup> A number of scholars offer psychological or sociological versions of what Bandura (1989) calls "the emergent interactive agency" that he contrasts with "pure autonomous agency" or "mechanistic agency", including DiMaggio and Powell (1989), Banaszak (1996), Zerubavel (1997), and DiMaggio (1997).

<sup>4</sup> This concept of power derives from Weber's (1946[1920]) view of stratification as power relations emergent from competition and collaboration among actors within economic, status and political markets, a view more recently articulated by Dahrendorf (1958). Oberschall (1973) and Tilly (1978) introduced this view of power to the study of social movements. Lukes (1974) shows how the power relations with which social movements contend become institutionalized. And at the micro level, Emerson (1962) develops a similar concept of power as growing out of exchange relations among individuals in terms of their interests and resources. To conceptualize power relations within organizations I draw on a tradition originating with Michels (1962[1911]), more recently articulated by Salancik and Pfeffer (1977).

<sup>5</sup> Although resources are often construed in narrow economic terms, Weber's multidimensional view is echoed in Mann's (1986) account of ideological, economic, military, and political sources of power, Bourdieu's analysis of "cultural capital", and Hall's (1997) "moral authority as a power resource".

<sup>6</sup> Community organizer Saul Alinsky (1971a) summarized this view of emergent strategy as "the action is in the reaction". Weick (1979) articulates a scholarly version of this perspective -- one that since the business environment has become more turbulent has supplanted "strategic planning" in the work of Mintzberg (1987, 1994), Burgelman (1991), Hamel (1996), and Brown and Eisenhardt (1997).

---

<sup>7</sup> I am particularly indebted to Amabile's (1996) fine work on creativity that provides links between micro-behaviors and macro-outcomes. In adapting her work to an understanding of strategy, I substitute the term 'salient knowledge' for "domain-relevant skills" to better capture the importance of environmental information to strategic thinking and I consider a broader range of motivational sources.

<sup>8</sup> I acknowledge that "interests" influence behavior, but follow Weber's (1946[1920] a;) "switchman" metaphor according to *which* values shape people's understanding of their interests – a view shared by Turner and Killian (1987[1972]), Bruner (1990b), D'Andrade (1992), and Peterson (1999).