POWER THROUGH INSTITUTIONAL WORK: ACQUIRING ACADEMIC AUTHORITY IN THE 1968 THIRD WORLD STRIKE

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Introducing a process model of power and institutional change, I argue that actors may seek power by creating, supporting, or modifying institutions. Lacking unilateral authority to enact new institutions, actors can leverage symbolic resources into coercive resources, which may require making concessions to multiple logics and stakeholders. The emergent organizations and institutions are then subject to adjustment to stakeholder and regulator expectations. The argument is illustrated in a case study of the 1968 Third World Strike at San Francisco State College, where the college president strove to increase his authority so he could prevail in a dispute with student activists.

Organizational change draws attention to a central debate within social science and management research. Should organizational change be viewed as an expression of managerial authority? Or is organizational change constrained by historical path dependencies and environmental pressures? The first view depicts organizational change as the outcome of power (e.g., Barnard, 1983; Chandler, 1962; Dowding, 1996; Pfeffer, 1981; Weber, 1946). Once powerful actors articulate their interests, they employ their resources to reshape organizations. Power, in these accounts, is exogenous. In contrast, other scholars view organizations as saddled with constraints (e.g., Barnett & Carroll, 1995; DiMaggio & Powell, 1983; Hannan & Freeman, 1989; Lounsbury & Ventresca, 2003; Scott, 2000; Stinchcombe, 1965). Actors are not at liberty to restructure organizations as they please because firms and other bureaucracies are subject to social pressures. Managers are expected to make their organization conform to templates and scripts that indicate they are rational and legitimate (Davis & Marquis, 2005; DiMaggio & Powell, 1983; Lounsbury & Ventresca, 2003). State regulations and industry norms further limit what managers may do in organizations. For these reasons, the argument in the earliest neoinstitutional writings was that stasis is typical and change infrequent (e.g., Powell & DiMaggio, 1983; Stinchcombe, 1965). In these accounts, organizational actors don’t have the agency—the liberty to assert their interests—because they are enacting institutional imperatives.

Contemporary scholarship suggests that this comparison does not capture the range of possibilities. Power and institutions can affect each other. Actors can find it advantageous to change their organization to acquire more power, just as institutions limit what actors can do. Managers can create the organizational resources that expand their authority. Numerous empirical studies show how this can happen. Freeland (1996), in an analysis of General Motors, for example, argued that the “M-form” was instituted to help firm leaders assert control over divisional heads. Pfeffer (1981) argued that organizational structure is not always an attempt to rationally accomplish an organization’s task. An organization’s rules, structures, and practices reflect the political settlements associated with
power building (March, Schulz, & Xueguang, 2000; Rao & Kenney, 2008).

These analyses draw attention to the complex relationships among organizational change, power, and institutions. The key process is the effort expended in creating, modifying, or challenging the rules that govern organizations, which Lawrence and Suddaby (2006) called “institutional work.” From this perspective, power is often acquired and expressed through episodes of institutional work. The manager who wishes to prevail in a dispute with workers, or other managers, may advocate new rules and expectations. It has been suggested that power is, to a good extent, about marshalling the resources and effort needed to modify institutional arrangements (Lawrence, 2008: 172). From this perspective, organizations are the site of “institutional politics,” the push and pull over the rules and who can define them.

Descriptions of politics and work bring agency into institutional research. But, as Batillana, Leca, and Boxenbaum (2009: 66-67) argued, this impulse contradicts institutional theory’s fundamental emphasis on constraints. Therefore, it is important to articulate the conditions that enable actors to construct and modify institutions. I address this issue with two arguments: First, evolving environments make some types of institutional work advantageous, while nullifying others. Thus, the process that leads to organizational change may be linked with a shift in how power is acquired through institutional work. In the present article, I focus on how actors can shift from normative to coercive strategies. Eroding consensus reduces the symbolic authority inherent in certain offices, which may encourage some actors to seek the authority to coerce others. Second, change may yield institutions that combine prior institutions because power is distributed among the organizations that collectively define a domain of action (an organizational field [Greenwood and Hinings, 1996; Hinings and Greenwood, 1988]). That is, instituting change may require consent from multiple groups and organizations (Fox-Wolffgramm, Boal, & Hunt, 1998). Institutional work may result in a regime that makes vital concessions to rival logics and interests. Actors may incorporate competing belief systems that shape behaviors and practices (i.e., institutional logics) into new policies, and external actors, such as stakeholders or state authorities, may intervene in response to an expansion of power within an organization. Recombinant institutions result as actors combine rival logics and outsiders roll back practices deemed inappropriate within a new political and social environment.

This process of acquiring power, combining logics, and adjusting new normative orders can be captured in a process model of power and institutional change.

I illustrate this argument with a case study of a college president who expanded his power during a conflict with student activists. In November 1968, S. I. Hayakawa assumed the presidency of San Francisco State College. At the time, the college was engulfed in a dispute between administrators and student activists called the Third World Strike. By the end of the strike, the new college president acquired extensive powers by restructuring the organization and challenging the norms that governed student conduct. I use this episode to examine how acquiring power in organizations is enabled, shaped, and then constrained by shifting institutional regimes. The conflict itself was enabled by eroding constraints on campus behavior, which allowed student activists to escalate their activism and expose the university administration to criticism. Hayakawa found that existing normative resources were not enough for him to pursue his goals and thus shifted to acquiring coercive powers. Once the conflict concluded, and Hayakawa’s actions were litigated, multiple actors intervened to curtail the new regime that he had instituted within the college.

**POWER IN ORGANIZATIONS: EXOGENOUS OR CONSTRAINED?**

Organizational research often rests on an assumption that some actors possess authority. The starting point is often Weber’s (1946: 180) definition of power: individuals, or groups, possess power when others obey their edicts. Subsequent discussions have expanded, critiqued, or replaced this definition. For example, researchers have often described how individual power depends on possessing specific symbolic resources, such as political office or professional status (e.g., Barnard, 1983; Parsons, 1956a, 1956b). Power may include the ability to directly influence others, set agendas, and become part of the unquestioned institutional order legitimating an organization (Lukes, 2005). Perhaps the most general discussion is Bourdieu’s (1977) theory of symbolic capital. Every social domain, Bourdieu noted, has specific symbolic resources that allow an individual to claim attention, prestige, and honor, which can then be used to pursue specific objectives. Other scholars have built on this point in describing how individuals in emerging organizational fields expend effort to create the symbolic resources that they can use to wield power (e.g., Braithwaite & Drahos, 2000; Dezalay &
Garth, 1996). Individuals rely on their networks to gather the financial and symbolic resources needed to create the rules and organizations that will govern a new field.

Instead of describing deployed resources, a second approach focuses on the constraints that actors face. This second approach describes how economic resources and cultural forces limit what actors can do in organizations. Perhaps the strictest view is to be found in ecological writings. Hannan and Freeman (1989), for example, argued that structural inertia characterizes organizations. Actors in organizations are severely constrained in their ability to enact significant organizational change because they are subject to selective pressures within their industry. Citing Stinchcombe’s (1965) argument and resource dependency theory (Pfeffer & Salancik, 1987), scholars have argued that deviations from “cultural templates” can endanger the resource flows needed to maintain organizations (DiMaggio & Powell, 1983; Meyer & Rowan, 1977). Later writings have conceded that important changes occur in organizations, but there is still a strong emphasis on constraints. For example, studies of how social movements initiate change in organizations have emphasized how activists must promote policies that somehow conform to cultural standards (Binder, 2000, 2002; Rojas, 2007). Studies of entrepreneurship provide another example. New organizational forms become standardized once they have survived selective pressures and become part of the taken-for-granted aspect of an industry (Aldrich, 1999; Aldrich & Fiol, 1994).

Recent scholarship suggests that there is a more complex relationship between power and organizational environments. Rather than describe the use and creation of specific resources, such as charisma or formal offices, these scholars have paid attention to the ways that individuals manipulate and interact with their organization and its environment. Organizations can be created or restructured by forming alliances with outsiders and bridging networks (e.g., Laumann, Galaskiewicz, & Marsden, 1978; Laumann & Knoke, 1987; Padgett & Ansell, 1993). Fligstein’s (1997, 2001) theory of social skill describes how this might happen. Individuals may have an acute sense of the framings found in an organization. Influence may be developed if a person has superior rhetorical skill that allows his or her goals to be seen as highly compatible with the organization’s goal, or a heightened ability to sense changes in the organization’s internal culture and identity. Similarly, Fligstein drew on social network studies to identify other paths to power. An individual may increase his or her power or influence by acting as a broker within a network or by forming alliances with those with superior resources and information (Burt, 1992; Gould, 1989; Gould & Fernandez, 1989).

Other scholarship on power in organizations has made similar points. Managers often try to increase their authority by forming close personal ties with a firm’s “overseers” (e.g., Krause & Kierney, 2006; Schreischeim & Neider, 2006). These connections help individuals acquire the legitimate authority to influence events in the organization. These arguments point to resource dependency issues. Those who can obtain symbolic or financial resources through interorganizational networks are in a position to promote their agenda. Power is often translated into specific positions or status, which confers the ability to determine budgets, set agendas, and determine work arrangements. Managers may seek to increase their power by creating or abolishing divisions in a firm or otherwise restructuring it to increase their own power and that of their allies (e.g., Pfeffer, 1981; Pfeffer & Salancik, 1978).

INSTITUTIONAL WORK AND THE EXPANSION OF AUTHORITY

The underlying issue is that actors can implement policies and structures by shifting the equilibrium present in an organization field. A common observation is that organizational environments are not monolithic or uniform and are subject to disruption and upheaval (e.g., Alexander, 1996, 1998; Battilana, Leca, and Boxenbaum, 2009: 74–78; Clemens & Cook, 1999). An organization may operate in an environment characterized by competing constituencies, conflicting norms, and eroding practices. Relaxing constraints can provide opportunities for actors to appropriate the resources needed to create coalitions and framings that establish new rules and political orders (e.g., Padgett & Ansell, 1993; Thelen, 2004). By appropriating preexisting resources, actors transform authority in ways that retain an element of continuity with a previous order and yet introduce practices that embody new values. Thus, organizational change may indicate a merging or blending of new and old institutional logics, even if concessions to competing logics are grudging or involuntary.

Current theory provides language for describing how individuals change institutional regimes. Institutional work denotes how actors affect the practices that govern their organizations. Like earlier institutional theorists (e.g., Clemens & Cook, 1999; DiMaggio & Powell, 1983; Mizruchi & Fein, 1999; Zucker, 1987), the cited scholars have pointed out that stable behavioral patterns govern organizations and that certain power-granting resources (e.g., rep-
utation, social networks, policies, formal offices) are manifestations of these patterns. Contemporary scholarship advances this argument by drawing attention to the ways that actors may appropriate or manipulate institutions and symbolic resources to gain influence (Beckert, 1999; DiMaggio, 1988; Fligstein, 2001; Lawrence, 2008; Lawrence, Sudday, & Leca, 2009; Sudday & Greenwood, 2005).

Institutional work, as Lawrence and Sudday (2006: 215) defined it, is the effort expended in creating, maintaining, or disrupting rules, norms, and expectations that govern organizations. Thus, if persons or groups wish to increase their legitimate power in an organization, then they have to engage in this type of behavior. That is, they must expend some effort to redefine the institutions that define the organization so that the new social order ascribes them more authority.

Institutional work is likely to be important when weak constraints characterize an organizational field. For example, a field may be new, and organizational actors may not have reached a settlement about what is legitimate (e.g., Braithwaite & Drahos, 2000; Dezalay & Garth, 1996; Powell, 1999). Those who construct organizations may not know what kinds of powers managers or workers should have, or may not have foreseen the situations requiring a clear definition of who has authority. This ambiguity may allow actors to deploy discursive strategies and cultivate a coalition supporting new organizational forms and practices. Similarly, social change also may lead to organizations with limited or constrained leadership. Members of a social movement, for example, may challenge an organization and argue that authority, as currently constituted, is illegitimate (Binder, 2000, 2002; Rojas, 2007; Schneiberg & Soule, 2005). Such a challenge can lead to conflict between different constituencies who struggle to define what is appropriate in the organization. There also may be changes in public opinion and the professional environment. Attitudes toward the organization and its work may severely change, or the state may decide to regulate organizations in ways that diminish the power of certain classes of individuals. All of these circumstances may encourage actors to redefine their organization and environment so that they may have more influence and power.

Kraatz (2009) provided a useful formulation of the issue. An organization’s actors, such as its leaders, may not find their interests well served by relying on existing practices, and they may adopt a more entrepreneurial stance toward the organization and its institutional environment. Drawing on Selznick’s (1957) Leadership in Administration, Kraatz emphasized the distinction between managers who are executives and those who are “institutional leaders.” In the former category are those who accomplish the daily tasks of the organization according to well-defined rules, which is not effective in many environments. In contrast, the latter are “statesmen” whose actions are best described as political and entrepreneurial. Kraatz quoted Selznick, who wrote that an “executive becomes a statesman as he makes the transition from administrative management to institutional leadership” (1957: 4). This formulation is normative, but it is important to note that the idea can apply to any effort to expand power. Leaders, or other actors, can opt to work within existing frameworks in managing their organization, or they can assume a more political role that involves building coalitions, reshaping discourse, and innovating policies. This more assertive stance toward institutions is especially important, as Kraatz and Block (2008) noted, when organizations are situated in environments with multiple, conflicting demands. When facing such institutional pluralism, successful leaders must play a subtle game of managing expectations, cultivating coalitions, and deviating from their prescribed roles.

SHIFTING ACTION AND INSTITUTIONAL COMBINATION

Both Battilana et al. (2009) and Lawrence et al. (2009) raised important, but unanswered, questions about power acquired through institutional work. They argued that research has so far drawn attention to the activities of leaders and institutional entrepreneurs, but more needs to be said about how institutions and strategic action affect each other. An important issue is how organizational fields affect the way that actors transform authority. A common observation among institutional scholars is that organizational fields contain normative, coercive, and cultural elements (DiMaggio & Powell, 1983; Scott, 2000). Which of these will entrepreneurial actors deploy? In situations in which managers and workers view a field as susceptible to change, why are some strategies chosen over others?

When low consensus characterizes organizational environments, actors may seek to convert normative resources to coercive resources. The distributed nature of power in many fields obviates some strategies, while encouraging others. Thus, transforming one authority structure into another may require that actors seek the ability to force their opponents. Case studies of organizations often describe an attempt by some actors to seek the legitimate power to coerce others, especially when con-
sensus over the proper role of management is absent (e.g., Chandler, 1962; Freeland, 1996; Goldstone & Useem, 1999; Gouldner, 1954; Lammers, 1977). That is, faced with an inability to effectively frame their issues, or deploy status, or other symbolic resources, actors may seek the authority to coerce behavior from others or, in more extreme cases, eject opponents from the organization.

A related question focuses on the outcomes of institutional work. How does the transformation of authority yield an organizational order that combines competing institutional logics? When actors seek more power, they may encounter rival constituencies. Institutional reformers may merge competing institutional logics as they seek a coalition that will back their efforts (Lounsbury, 2007; Lounsbury & Ventresca, 2003; Schneiberg & Lounsbury, 2008: 666–68; Thornton & Ocasio, 1999, 2008: 111–12). The path to more authority is to create a consistency within an organization that legitimizes itself through a hybridized institutional regime (Washington, Boal, & Davis, 2008: 725).

The merging, or juxtaposition, of practices occurs through multiple mechanisms. Two are of particular interest. First, an actor may concede to multiple institutional logics because of immediate conflict and the emergence of new institutions. A social movement’s members, for example, may simply refuse their assent if certain ideas aren’t implemented, or the movement may be so successful that some of its ideas become routine features of organizations or the institutional order that governs them (e.g., Bartley, 2007; Schneiberg & Soule, 2005). Second, organizations are subject to multiple authorities that may intervene as institutions are formulated and implemented. In industrialized societies, state regulators, courts, and shareholders govern firms. These actors may be drawn into the conflict stemming from the introduction of new institutions (e.g., Greenwood & Hinings, 1996; Tolbert & Zucker, 1996). These constituencies may be called upon to adjudicate conflict or may simply intervene if they perceive threats to their interests. For these reasons, new organizational forms can represent multiple possibilities that can emerge from institutional work and politics: actors can impose new institutions; they may juxtapose institutions, allowing some to go unenforced; or they may blend rival logics.

DATA AND RESEARCH METHODS

Case Studies

These arguments about institutional work and its outcomes are illustrated with a case study of a dispute between student activists and college administrators, the 1968 Third World Strike at San Francisco State College. At the beginning of the conflict, the organization possessed few rules for legitimate regulation of administrator-student interactions. By the end of the Strike, the college president successfully acquired more authority by deploying his reputation, social connections, and other resources so that he could rewrite the rules and acquire the authority to threaten student activists.

Case studies have numerous strengths. One is the wealth of material and the thickness of description, which can ground research while providing multiple opportunities to articulate and challenge hypotheses (Eisenhardt, 1989; Rabin & Becker, 1992). Well-executed cases can be exemplars that serve as foci for further investigation (Flyvbjerg, 2006; Yin, 2008). The case study is also an appropriate method for studying difficult-to-observe processes that would require interviews, field site visits, and internal organizational documents to construct a credible account.

Case Selection

The Third World Strike is an important case because it reveals institutional processes that are normally difficult to observe. Barley (1986) observed that institutions can be “totalizing.” Actors in organizations take rules for granted and may not be aware of how those rules were created, developed, and challenged. Some scholars have even argued that policies and practices advocated by some actors can have institutional change as an unintentional result (Battilana et al., 2009: 70; Lounsbury & Crumley, 2007). Therefore, power and institutional work may be poorly documented and difficult to observe. However, there are institutional disruptions, moments when practices are interrupted and become publicly questioned. These moments allow researchers to examine the otherwise opaque workings of organizations.

The Third World Strike is an excellent example of an institutional disruption. San Francisco State College was an organization rife with disputes over how to regulate student conduct. Arguments, as will be detailed below, were often framed in terms of the norms governing higher education. Because of the unusual intensity of the conflict, the Third World Strike attracted the attention of the federal government, the national media, and various political activists, all of whom documented the conflict in detail. Investigations often focused on internal decision making within the college, which permits contemporary researchers to reconstruct actions
that changed how the college was governed. For these reasons, the Third World Strike provides a valuable opportunity for studying how institutions, individual action, and shifting environments affect organizational change.

Archival Data in Organizational Research

Organizational archives present unique opportunities and challenges (Bryman, 1989; Ventresca & Mohr, 2002). One obvious benefit is that many organizations routinely save their documents and make them available to researchers. American state bureaucracies, major nonprofit organizations, historically important firms, and educational institutions regularly archive their papers. These holdings have become the basis for major studies in management research (e.g., Chandler, 1962; Freeland, 1996). Another advantage is that many organizations possess internal cultures that emphasize written communication. In the 1950s and 1960s, administrators routinely produced memos documenting phone calls, meetings, and policy discussions, in addition to documents produced for external audiences. This organizational practice can produce an unusually rich set of materials on which to base an organizational analysis.

The disadvantages of archives are that organizations vary in what is saved and when it is saved. Government organizations, for example, are required by law to save many documents. In contrast, colleges save only materials donated by specific persons or offices. A second challenge is that archives tend to be very rich in documents from leaders, but they have fewer materials about other actors. A third challenge is that actors can selectively record what transpires in an organization. Meeting minutes, for example, may address only major points and omit important contextualizing discussions. For these reasons, archival sources should be supplemented, when possible, with newspaper accounts, interviews, memoirs, and other materials that provide additional information about the events happening in organizations.

Data on the Third World Strike

I have consulted every known archival collection on the Third World Strike. These collections address the strike from different perspectives. The National Commission on the Causes and Prevention of Violence was established by President Lyndon Johnson to study campus protests and other civil disturbances. In the winter of 1969, the Commission collected interviews, documents, and ephemera related to the Third World Strike. These materials were used to write the book *Shut It Down!* (Orrick, 1970) and present an outsider’s view of the strike. These materials also are valuable because they include interviews with activists, professors, and administrators. In many cases, these are the only available first-person accounts of key events.

The Third World Strike Collection at San Francisco State University contains materials such as flyers, student newspapers, campus publications, and media coverage of the strike. It also contains written statements and speeches by various campus organizations. This collection includes many materials that reflect the strike from the perspectives of student and faculty groups.

To understand the administrative response to the strike, I consulted two additional archives. First, I consulted the papers of Glenn Dumke, the chancellor of the California State College system from 1962 to 1982. This collection contains Dumke’s own unpublished account of the strike and papers written by deans and faculty members. Second, I consulted Ronald Reagan’s governor’s papers. These include minutes from meetings in which student protest was discussed. Examples include the meetings of the California State College Board of Trustees and memos written by Reagan’s education policy specialist, Alex Sherrifs. The Reagan papers also include oral histories with Reagan’s staff, which touch on campus unrest. There does not appear to be a publicly available collection of S. I. Hayakawa’s papers from his time as the San Francisco State College president, though there are papers relating to his tenure as California’s United States senator. The only strike-related material generated by Hayakawa himself is a 1991 oral history at the Bancroft Library at the University of California, Berkeley (Hayakawa & Peters Hayakawa, 1993). Unfortunately, the time spent discussing the strike itself is minimal. This may be ascribed to his advanced age at the time of the interview or a desire to avoid the topic.

In addition to primary documents, I examined published secondary accounts. First, I consulted every published account of the strike, such as *Shut It Down!* (Orrick, 1970), *Blow It Up!* (Karaguezian, 1971), *Long Walk at San Francisco State* (Boyle, 1970), *Unfinished Rebellions* (Pentony, Smith, & Axen, 1971), *By Any Means Necessary* (Smith, Axen, & Pentony, 1970), *President Seven* (Summerskill, 1971), and Biondi’s (2007) study of California politics during the strike. I also drew on my history of the black studies movement (Rojas, 2007), which describes the student mobilization at the campus. Various dissertations and theses written about the strike were also consulted (e.g., Hekymara, 1972; Perisco, 1973). Second, I read newspaper accounts.
of the strike, including national media sources, such as the *New York Times*, the *Los Angeles Times*, and the *Chicago Tribune*. To understand the daily chronology of the strike, I went to San Francisco daily papers, such as the *Examiner* and the *Chronicle*. I also visited the San Francisco State University archives and obtained copies of campus newspaper articles relating to the strike. To corroborate these accounts, I interviewed two strike leaders. Unfortunately, lead administrators, such as S. I. Hayakawa, were deceased or unavailable because of advanced age. Lexis-Nexus was also used to search for court cases regarding the strike. These were valuable because they provided additional information about the college’s policies and how they were applied to student activists.

THE THIRD WORLD STRIKE: ISSUES AND EVENTS

Background

This section provides a brief summary of the Third World Strike. Extended accounts can be found in Orrick (1970), Rojas (2007), and Smith et al., (1970). Like many college campuses, San Francisco State College had been the site of numerous protests. In the early 1950s, students demonstrated against the House Un-American Activities Committee, which held hearings in San Francisco. Later, the campus became the site of protests against the Vietnam War and racial segregation. Furthermore, countercultural groups in San Francisco often staged events on the campus. In addition to participating in national political efforts, students began asserting their rights on campus and fought with administrators over the right to approve a new student union building and invite campus speakers. These continuous disputes strained relations between students and the college administration (Chandler, 1986). One president, John Summerskill, resigned in the aftermath of a Vietnam War rally that ended with mass arrests of students. Outside observers noted that the administration experienced high turnover as deans, and other academic leaders, constantly moved to other less stressful jobs.

A key development at San Francisco State College was the 1963 creation of the Black Student Association. Initially started as a student social club, the group soon became a focal point for black students’ activism. The organization renamed itself the Black Student Union (BSU) in 1966 and quickly became a bridge between campus politics and Bay Area radical black politics. One of the early BSU leaders was a civil rights and black power activist who enrolled in the college to mobilize students. The BSU set up a tutorial center to help disadvantaged children in San Francisco; it was also placed close to an existing Black Panther office (Orrick, 1970; Rojas, 2007: 58–64).

The growth of the BSU soon led to disagreements with other students and the administration. One issue was whether funds from the student government could be used to support the BSU’s tutorial program. Another issue was how the BSU was portrayed by the editors of the campus newspaper (Rojas, 2007: 64–65). At the same time, student activists were leading courses about black topics and asked that the administration bundle all black-themed courses into a Department of Black Studies (Orrick, 1970: 28). Though the college administration indicated that it would eventually approve the request, there were disputes over when and how such a new academic unit would be created.

Leading Up to the Strike

The sequence of events that resulted in the Third World Strike began in November 1967, when BSU members confronted the editors of the student newspaper because they thought they were being depicted unfairly (Rojas, 2007: 64–65). A fight broke out between the BSU members and the newspaper staff. The administration initially delayed any action, then suspended the black students; then the college’s president reversed the suspensions. The result was that the BSU members were allowed to remain on campus throughout the 1967–68 school year. During that time, one student, George Murray, became nationally known for his strident rhetoric, and there was subsequent public pressure to expel him (Orrick, 1970: 34).

In November 1968, the current college president, Robert Smith, suspended Murray in response to pressures from Governor Reagan and other state leaders (Orrick, 1970: 36). A few days later, Murray’s student allies—the BSU and the student coalition known as the Third World Liberation Front—issued demands to the administration. In addition to revoking Murray’s suspension, students wanted to create a College of Ethnic Studies and a Department of Black Studies, and they wanted more affirmative action and financial aid. When the administration did not immediately yield to these demands, students staged protests, walkouts, and office and classroom occupations.

The Strike and Its Conclusion

The Third World Strike lasted from November 5, 1968, to March 21, 1969. During November 1968,
students succeeded in creating picket lines and occupying offices and classrooms. Later, the intensity of the strike escalated when a rally turned into a fight with police, which brought the campus administration much criticism from both student activists and antistudent opponents. President Smith unsuccessfully tried to reach a compromise by calling a convocation in which students, faculty, and the administration could gather and rationally discuss the issues (Orrick, 1970: 51–54). This did not lead to a settlement because it was viewed as a weak administrative response, and criticism of Smith’s handling of the strike mounted.

In the first week of December 1968, Smith resigned during a meeting with the California State College Board of Trustees. He was promptly replaced by S. I. Hayakawa, a linguistics professor who was a well-known critic of student activists. Hayakawa’s primary goal was to break the strike by expelling its student leaders and faculty allies (Smith et al., 1970: 213). But Hayakawa found it difficult to do that because he lacked the authority to quickly punish students. He then spent the next three months lobbying for new powers and engaging in a public relations campaign to improve his reputation with the public. In the middle of March 1969, Hayakawa told leaders of the BSU and the Third World Liberation Front that he would expel them unless they accepted his offer of a Department of Black Studies and other concessions in exchange for ending the strike. The offer was accepted, amnesty from disciplinary action was granted for strike leaders, and the dispute was formally terminated (Garlington, 1969).

**STUDENT-ADMINISTRATOR RELATIONS LEADING TO THE THIRD WORLD STRIKE**

The Third World Strike occurred at a time when San Francisco State College’s institutional environment was drastically changing. Up until the 1950s, the institution of “in loco parentis” (e.g., Grossi & Edwards, 1997; Melear, 2003) governed colleges. College administrators and the courts used the family as the cultural template for adjudicating disputes between students and administrators. According to this view, college administrators were analogous to parents. Administrators were thus given wide latitude and students retained few, if any, rights. The 18th-century legal theorist William Blackstone summarized this view of teachers and students by writing that a parent “may also delegate part of his parental authority, during his life to the tutor or schoolmaster of the child; who is then *in loco parentis*, and has such a portion of the power of the parents committed to his charge” (Blackstone, 1765/2002: 453). This doctrine was enforced in nearly every case in which students litigated against colleges. Perhaps the most famous example is the *Pratt v. Wheaton College* 1866 case, in which students litigated because they were denied the right to form a campus student organization (Dizon, 1971). The judges wrote that they “have no more authority to interfere than [they] have to control the domestic discipline of a father in his family.” Later, in *Gott v. Berea College* (1913), the Kentucky State Supreme Court wrote that, on similar grounds, a college could tell students where to eat and otherwise regulate their daily routine.

The in loco parentis regime eroded in the 1960s for judicial and cultural reasons. First, judicially, litigation succeeded in challenging college administrators’ nearly unlimited authority (Grossi & Edwards, 1997; Melear, 2003). In *Dixon, et al. v. Alabama State Board of Education, et al.* (1961), students sued the University of Alabama after they were expelled for participating in a lunch counter sit-in. The plaintiffs argued that they should be granted a hearing or other procedure during which charges could be presented and answered. The federal appeals court agreed with the plaintiffs and used a new cultural template for analyzing student-administrator relations. Rather than view the college as a familial organization, the court used unions as a template because litigation in the 1930s established that unions could not unilaterally expel members without due cause. The college, the court argued, was a voluntary association that carried with it certain privileges and unlike a family, which was more autocratic. That case and others established that students retained procedural rights in higher education.

The second force eroding the institution of in loco parentis was the general cultural change in the United States during the 1960s. One element of that change was a transformation of attitudes toward young people. People were more likely to believe that college-aged people should be treated as adults rather than as children. College administrators were not exempt from this trend. Numerous writings at the time indicate that administrators stopped believing that they should police the personal or political behavior of students (Pentony et al., 1971). Instead, students should be responsible for their own actions. If they did something illegal, that was the domain of law enforcement, not higher education administration.

San Francisco State College was affected by both developments in its institutional environment. College administrators felt that there was little need for a discipline code, and when one was developed, it incorporated a few procedural rights of the type
that emerged after the Dixon decision (Pentony et al., 1971: 152–153). Administrators, starting in the 1950s, viewed students as adults and peers who needed very little direct supervision. This was a conscious attempt to encourage a friendly, liberal atmosphere at the college (Chandler, 1986). Discipline was seen not as a regulation of campus behavior, but as an attempt to assist with a student’s personal development (Pentony et al., 1971: 152–153). Later, in response to student activists, the college administration added a handful of disciplinary rules that required that a student court decide punishments for behavioral violations (San Francisco State College, 1962). However, as another administrator wrote in a memoir about the strike, the rules were scarce and rarely used. Some administrators had even forgotten about the details of the code (Pentony et al., 1971: 159). When the black-white student conflict emerged in November 1967 and the strike escalated a year later in November 1968, administrators were in possession of a disciplinary system unsuited to the challenge of a sustained student uprising.

Poorly defined expectations regarding student-administrator relations affected San Francisco State College and its environment in two ways. First, the unwillingness and inability of administrators to articulate a legitimate response to student activism suggested to outsiders that the administration was weak. The unwillingness to expend effort to influence the college’s institutions undermined the administration’s position in the conflict. This was a severe liability in a political environment in which “law and order” became a prominent theme. This perception of weakness was followed by political pressures from the media, citizens, and political elites in the state of California (Biondi, 2007; Orrick, 1970; Rojas, 2007). For example, the Board of Trustees met on multiple occasions to excoriate the leadership of San Francisco State College concerning their response to Vietnam War protesters (Orrick, 1970: 21–27). Later, at the beginning of the Third World Strike, Governor Reagan personally called college president Robert Smith to insist that George Murray be suspended. These constant interventions deprived the college administration of the time and energy needed to manage the campus.

The second effect of the underdeveloped disciplinary code was that it intensified disagreements between students and administrators. Administrators believed that some students exploited the liberal discipline code. For example, in an interview with federal investigators, a San Francisco State College dean complained about student activists and the discipline policy and was dismayed that campus behavior was almost completely unregulated. When the interviewer asked if it was true that no student had ever been expelled from San Francisco State College, this dean responded:

Jimmy Garrett [a leading student activist] knows [that no student has ever been expelled]; everybody knows this. . . . If you want to take a code of student conduct, it is the only code in the history of man that doesn’t have any rules in it. It is incredible that there isn’t anything which is identified as appropriate or illegal. (Garrity, 1969)

Not only did the vagueness of the policy upset administrators, but also, students felt that administrative actions were unjust because there were no rules about what constituted an appropriate limit on student behavior. When the administration initially sanctioned some BSU members in November 1967, a student group formed the “Movement Against Political Suspensions,” and they claimed that sanctions against BSU members and other activists had no procedural basis (Windmiller, 1968).

THE LIMITS OF NORMATIVE RESOURCES

Administrators were unwilling or unable to create or enforce practices that students and faculty might collectively view as appropriate regulations of student conduct, behavior that Selznick (1957) might have called a lack of institutional leadership. For example, in the initial conflict between BSU members and the student-newspaper staff, the administration reversed its decision to suspend the BSU students (Rojas, 2007: 64-68). The next fall, college president Robert Smith overrode his stated preference, which was to allow the student court to settle the George Murray discipline case (Rojas, 2007: 68). This indecision exacerbated the fact that San Francisco State College did not give the president many resources for managing conflicts with students. For example, when students organized a massive anti–Vietnam War demonstration in spring 1968, the administration’s calls to end the rally were ignored (Orrick, 1970: 28). The administration’s only recourse was to call the police, which further delegitimized the administration and brought additional scrutiny.

Hayakawa faced the same issues at the end of 1968, when he became the college president. He, too, found that it was nearly impossible to influence student activists with his existing authority. Without additional effort, the presidency was an office with limited influence, and there were limits to his reputational resources. For example, Hayakawa tried to dispel student demonstrators by appealing to his authority as college president (Rojas, 2007: 81). Unsurprisingly, he failed. Later, Hay-
akawa began secret negotiations with student activists, their lawyers, and allies in San Francisco politics (Brown, 1970; Orrick, 1970: 68–69). At the meetings, he appealed to the fact that Japanese Americans like himself had suffered discrimination as well, and he hoped that black student activists would sympathize. The negotiations were difficult because Hayakawa could be condescending, and the meetings ended when they were leaked to the press. Drawing criticism for secretly dealing with students, Hayakawa discontinued these negotiations.

Even when Hayakawa chose to punish his opponents, he often found that the rules and practices in the college were severe obstacles. After Hayakawa assumed the presidency, he tried to suspend faculty members who assisted the students or sided against the administration on other issues (Pentony et al., 1970). However, the existing rules for sanctioning faculty members required written reports from department chairs. Many sympathized with the students and did not do what Hayakawa asked. The college’s Academic Senate itself also sided with the students. Contrary to what Hayakawa and other critics asked, the Academic Senate refused to unconditionally condemn student demonstrations and walkouts. Student allies in the Academic Senate preferred mediation of the conflict between Third World Liberation Front/BSU coalition and the administration, rather than conceding everything to the Hayakawa administration.

**LEVERAGING NORMATIVE RESOURCES INTO COERCIVE AUTHORITY**

Faced with severe limits on what he could accomplish with his powers as college president in December 1968, Hayakawa tried to acquire powers that would allow him to force a settlement of the strike. He lobbied for new rules that would give him or his allies the power to directly punish students. Hayakawa used multiple tactics to achieve this goal. Collectively, they can be described as leveraging normative resources into coercive resources. That is, he employed resources that were based on shared moral understandings of the organization to obtain additional authority to eject students and sanction them.

The strategy operated at two levels. First, Hayakawa used his personal reputation and ties to sympathetic political elites to acquire discretion. A shared moral framework regarding student activism meant that California political elites were less likely to interfere with decisions that could attract criticism from students, the media, or the public. This relative safety allowed him to pursue new strategies for dealing with student activists. Second, prior to the strike, Hayakawa had developed a personal network of allies who were highly critical of student activists. This coalition is of the sort depicted by Hargrave and Van de Ven (2006) in their description of how actors obtain change by using shared views of the world to develop networks (Gerlach & Palmer, 1981; McAdam & Scott, 2002; Tilly, 1978). These allies were appointed to key positions in the university during the strike. They developed new policies that redefined how the administration responded to students and ultimately gave Hayakawa the authority to threaten and punish students.

This reliance on personal reputation and ties to elites began with Hayakawa’s appointment. These political relationships and Hayakawa’s persona rested on the belief that students do not have the right to protest and that faculty members and administrators should have more authority over students. According to journalistic accounts and first-person recollections, Hayakawa was appointed because of his unusually strong reputation as a strike critic (Cannon, 1969: 252; Pentony et al., 1970: 205–212). Before the strike, Hayakawa was known as a member of the Faculty Renaissance, an informal club of Bay Area academics who publicly opposed the 1964 Berkeley Free Speech movement (Pentony et al., 1970: 206). When the strike began, in November 1968, Hayakawa appeared at faculty meetings and insisted that the faculty members were the only ones with a legitimate right to influence college policy (Orrick, 1970: 47). At the time of his appointment, both the California State College system’s chancellor and Governor Reagan sympathized with Hayakawa and cited his membership in Faculty Renaissance (Dumke, 1980: 174–76). The federal commission’s investigation of the strike concluded that his stated antistudent stance was rewarded. The Board of Trustees immediately granted additional financial aid and personnel to Hayakawa that earlier presidents had not received (Orrick, 1970: 57).

During the strike, Hayakawa’s reputation and social capital granted him some protection from political intervention. For example, in late December 1968, Hayakawa closed the campus in an attempt to deprive students of a place to meet, a move that both Governor Reagan and Chancellor Glenn Dumke had forbidden (Orrick, 1970: 61). Though some in the media criticized the move, there is no evidence that state leaders pressured Hayakawa to reopen the college. In January 1969, a massive conflict between students and police resulted in hundreds of arrests. Despite his clear inability to pre-
vent further disruption on campus, once again, there were few calls for Hayakawa to resign.

The second element of Hayakawa’s strategy was to build a coalition within the organization around shared perceptions of the strike. The purpose was to have a dependable group of administrators who would develop, implement, and enforce antistrike policies. He did this by relying on his network of personal friends, the Faculty Renaissance group, and converting them into the college’s new leadership (Smith et al., 1970: 208). Hayakawa and his faculty allies elected industrial arts professor Howard Waldron to the Academic Senate. Waldron sponsored new proposals for quicker and tougher student discipline, which were finalized in winter 1969. English professor Frank Dollard was appointed executive vice president at the college. He was responsible for, among other things, working with the faculty and the state of California. With Dollard’s appointment, Hayakawa was guaranteed a loyal follower in every meeting between the college faculty and the state. Later, Dollard replaced Howard Waldron as executive vice president.

It is worth noting the circumstances of these appointments. In discussing this coalition with strike participants and examining the documentary records, I saw little evidence that this coalition was effectively resisted as it emerged. In one 2009 interview, I asked a strike participant about these appointments, and he suggested that the resignations of other administrators made them possible. He continued that resigning administrators were simply tired of conflict or disagreed with the new administration. Others, he speculated, may have used the strike as an opportunity to seek different employment. It is also notable that most of these appointments happened before the beginning of the spring 1969 semester, when the school was out of session. It may have been difficult to oppose appointments during a recess period. This isn’t to say that these appointments were without contention. Members of the faculty union, for example, complained about Hayakawa’s liaison with the state government. But, given the turmoil at the campus and the timing of the appointments, it was unlikely that the appointments could serve as a focal point for mobilization.

By February 1969, student discipline and student affairs were under the control of Faculty Renaissance members. Hayakawa appointed two trusted colleagues to disciplinary positions. Ed Duerr, a business professor, took charge of student discipline. Upon his appointment, the student newspaper noted that he was completely behind Hayakawa and against student demonstrators (Daily Gater, 1969d). Physical education professor and Hayakawa associate William Harkness was appointed Dean of Student Activities and was later Dean of Student Affairs. In this capacity, Harkness cut off funding to groups that were central in the strike, such as the Daily Gater and another liberal campus publication, Open Process.

With allies in the Academic Senate and the Student Affairs Office, it was not too difficult for Hayakawa to create new policies that would increase his power within the college. By January 1969, the Academic Senate passed new discipline policies that abolished the student-led court and replaced it with a system in which faculty and deans would quickly resolve disciplinary charges. The court even started trying students in absentia (Nyman, 1969). By February 1969, Hayakawa began investigating faculty members who had assisted the Third World Strike, with the intent to dismiss them from the college (Toutjian, 1969). He also insisted on loyalty oaths from the faculty (Daily Gater, 1969h). The administration was helped by antistrike groups. As late as March 10, 1969, students associated with the Young Americans for Freedom patrolled classrooms to report missing faculty members to the administration, which helped Hayakawa target sympathizers within the faculty (Daily Gater, 1969a).

Furthermore, administration allies began to target campus institutions and the strike coalition’s off-campus supporters. Citing fiscal mismanagement, the college administration asked the San Francisco Superior Court to put the student government body into a receivership, which deprived activists of funds. Later, the state attorney general’s representatives visited the printer responsible for the production of the Daily Gater and implied that the newspaper’s publication should be terminated (Daily Gater, 1969b). The political environment facilitated external investigation of campus activities. Not only were conservative leaders (e.g., Governor Reagan) against the strike, but also some prominent liberals, such as Assembly Speaker Jesse Unruh, were also antistrike, and they supported state investigations. These actions were part of a strategy aimed at shutting down the student government, which at that point was allied with the Third World Liberation Front, and making its paper useless as a tool for coordinating protests.

**THE STRIKE SETTLEMENT: NOT A RESTORATION, BUT A COMBINATION**

Even though Hayakawa used a shared moral understanding of student-administrator relations to build a coalition so that he could increase his power, he was unable to return to a system resem-
bling in loco parentis, in which he might act with few restraints. What Hayakawa created was a new order that incorporated the new logic of procedural rights with a reinvestment of power in the administration. Using the terminology of institutional work theory, he combined vestment (i.e., attaching individuals to practices and rights) with an implementation of new controls (Lawrence & Suddaby, 2006). For example, the new discipline code enacted in January 1969 shifted authority from the student court to a faculty-run disciplinary committee, which was known to be staffed by professors who were sympathetic with Hayakawa (Nyan, 1969). At the same time, the new rules included multiple procedural protections for students. Following what had been decided in courts and in other colleges, Hayakawa’s new discipline code required that a student be properly notified, that charges be clearly articulated, and that the student have an opportunity to respond (San Francisco State College, 1969).

Though Hayakawa instituted procedural rights, the new discipline code was not designed to give students the benefit of the doubt, and the Hayakawa administration rushed numerous cases in an attempt to quickly undermine the strike (e.g., Daily Gater, 1969f; Jackson et al. v. Hayakawa et al., 1982; Wong et al. v. Hayakawa et al., 1972). Hayakawa’s actions are a case of signaling compliance with new regulatory regimes, but then ignoring them (Westphal & Zajac, 1994). However, students litigated after the strike, and they were able to reverse many of Hayakawa’s actions. In a series of cases, California and U.S. appeals courts ruled that the new procedures for discipline were legal but that they were not properly employed. The courts affirmed the administration’s right to determine discipline policy and expel students, but they also required that the college respect the students’ procedural and due process rights. Specifically, the code instituted by Hayakawa allowed the discipline committee to expel students if they were cited by police for disorderly conduct. The courts affirmed the general principle but found that the college acted improperly in this because the committee relied on citations from a dragnet-style mass arrest. The principle promoted by the courts and the plaintiffs was that the college needed to respect procedural rights and needed credible evidence of student misconduct.

The settlement itself was a major concession to the new logic of ethnically conscious education, a major development in higher education at the time (Rojas, 2007). As demanded, all courses advertised as “black studies” were bundled into a new Department of Black Studies. Furthermore, the new department adopted, almost without modification, the black studies curriculum proposed in 1966 by students (Rojas, 2007: 63). Perhaps more important, even political elites affirmed the new academic norms promoted by student activists. For example, during the strike, Hayakawa publicly said that he supported black studies. Later, during a private interview, Governor Reagan reluctantly noted that he supported black studies—as long as the department was open to both black and white students and the courses maintained academic standards (Reagan, 1969)—while emphasizing his opposition to student activism and protest. Likely an attempt to appear open minded yet tough, this statement is a notable combination of civil rights rhetoric (in the insistence that the program be unsegregated) and a highly critical attitude toward student activists.

Structurally, the strike settlement had multiple effects that speak to its hybrid character. At the institutional level, it succeeded in integrating new curricular ideas into the college’s yearly course offerings. Although there were lingering disputes in the 1969–70 academic year (e.g., Daily Gater, 1969, 1970), none of these conflicts deinstitutionalized or significantly disrupted the new programs. Furthermore, in defending his actions, Hayakawa adopted a pro–black studies rhetoric. He claimed that he was pushing his agenda only because he cared about making black studies a high-quality program. At the individual level, the strike settlement succeeded in strengthening Hayakawa’s hand by encouraging leading activists to end the strike, while leaving the administration free to decide how it would treat other students and faculty sympathizers. As noted earlier, Hayakawa ejected students from the campus after the strike ended. Given the new rules regarding discipline, this was not difficult to do. For example, at a single mass demonstration in January 1969, the San Francisco city police arrested more than 400 students (Dumke, 1969). These citations were enough to discipline dozens of students whom the administration, often erroneously, targeted as strike leaders. As a result, many rank-and-file activists were expelled. The college administration also punished students by revoking their financial aid (Jackson et al. v. Hayakawa et al., 1982) after new federal law was passed in 1969 that gave college presidents the right to cut financial aid to those who participated in campus disruptions and a California state law allowed college presidents to expel students who had been cited for disruptive behavior by police (Daily Gater, 1969c). These actions were immediate and debilitating and, as noted above, were reversed only in the 1970s and 1980s through a series of complex legal actions.
The administration’s sanctions against individual student activists and their faculty allies had an important effect on the student movement. The sanctions managed to effectively prevent the continuation, and possible institutionalization, of student activism at the college. The toll of the strike made it nearly impossible for students to sustain their intensity. Strike leaders received jail sentences from criminal courts for participating in the strike (e.g., Daily Gater, 1969g, 1969i). Confrontations with police, opposition to the new disciplinary system, and the costs of disrupted financial aid simply made it impossible for many student activists to be a consistent presence on campus. Hayakawa’s allies in the Student Affairs Office also cut funding for student groups that participated in the strike, a tactic that continued into the 1969–70 academic year (Kessler, 1970). Sympathetic faculty members and graduate students found that their contracts were not renewed, and, as later revealed in litigation, Hayakawa instructed department chairs to not hire people on a blacklist that he had compiled (Jackson et al. v. Hayakawa et al., 1982).

This is not to imply that Hayakawa completely succeeded in dismantling the student mobilization at San Francisco State College. In fact, there is much evidence indicating that Hayakawa’s actions did not completely alleviate the tensions between students and the administration. In the 1969–70 academic year, arguments over the administration’s support for the Educational Opportunity Program helped minority students gain admission to the college (Kessler, 1970). There were also protests on the first anniversary of the Third World Strike (Daily Gater, 1969g). However, the movement had deescalated so much that Hayakawa no longer faced the problems that had crippled his successors and driven them from office.

DISCUSSION: A PROCESS MODEL OF INSTITUTIONAL LOGICS AND POWER

This study focused on the interaction between an organization’s environment and administrative behavior. The political equilibrium supporting particular institutions may have weakened, allowing actors to expand their power by acquiring the authority to coerce others and combining institutions. However, more can be said about the different ways that institutions are combined and how the empirical analysis speaks to these different outcomes. First, one might expect a dominant logic to emerge, a logic that ignores other existing rules. Second, one might expect an accommodation or reconciliation as logics are hybridized. Third, one logic might “paper over” another. Logics can be “sedimented,” or superimposed, as new rules are imposed over others, without actors making any attempt at integrating them. The issue worth addressing is the process of combining institutions. Does the Third World Strike show dominance, true hybridization, or sedimentation?

The evidence suggests that all of these outcomes occurred. Early on, Hayakawa tried to create a situation in which he might be regarded as a strong, almost parental, figure. Not only did he try to manage the Strike using only his position as college president, but also, in interviews he actually referred to student activists as “good boys and girls” who should respect the authority of teachers (Brown, 1970). There was a vigorous attempt to reinstate the college president as a strong, almost authoritarian, leader. Later, when Hayakawa and his allies rewrote the discipline code, they created a sedimented system, in which Hayakawa ritualistically recognized procedural rights but did not apply the policies in good faith. The courts intervened and realigned the system so that it would truly mix increased administrative authority with student procedural rights.

This sequence of events suggests a process theory of institutional change. Early on, as the political environment of an organization changes, actors may engage in substitution. When promoted by activists, new institutions may be seen as avant garde, even as unintelligible. When promoted by actors associated with an older order, imposition of logics may be seen as restorative and possibly reactionary. These actions generate contention from insiders and also from outsiders who have a stake in the organization. Then, leaders have choices to make.

When promoting new rules associated with activists, they may opt for “impression management” and use their authority to introduce a new framing that will legitimize the movement’s proposals (Elsbach & Sutton, 1992). Leaders may also choose to impose their rules over others and acknowledge rival logics only formally. Rules are simply layered upon older ones and selectively enforced. Of course, leaders may also try reconciliation, whereby logics are blended and the rights of rival groups are acknowledged. Should these outcomes prove unsatisfactory, contention and opportunities for institutional reformulation may arise.

In the present study, Hayakawa’s reforms were litigated well into the 1970s, almost ten years after the Third World Strike. The nature of successive challenges and adjustments may depend greatly on the resources available and shifting political conditions. American society was still undergoing liberalization in the 1970s, so the courts were still
open to litigation over the rights of school administrators. It can also be argued that the process of acquiring authority in San Francisco State College was about the transition from familial forms of authority to rationalized authority based on legal codes, precedents, and universal rights. This later type of authority, more professionalized and codified, is different in that it is decentralized and dependent on reciprocal affirmation by other organizations such as the courts and state educational institutions. It is an open question as to whether similar processes played out in other contexts, such as firms or states.

The process model of power and institutions brings additional insight to studies of organizational change by providing crucial microfoundations for the rise of new institutional orders. The empirical analysis draws attention to the ways that various resources, such as the authority to coerce, is tied to the creation of specific rules, which then are subject to further adjustment. An emergent theme in the study of power and organizations is that establishing influence and authority may require the activation or cultivation of networks. In their study of the Florentine city state, Padgett and Ansell (1993) described how demographic and economic processes created networks of linked families that the de Medicis could form into a coalition within the city government. Laumann and Knoke (1987) discussed how lobbying within the federal government is regulated by a decentralized network of interest groups. Thelen (2004), presaging the themes of the present article, discussed how excluded actors, such as low-status occupational groups, formed coalitions to modify worker-management relations in various western nation-states.

The process model also speaks to research on movements and organizational change. For example, Morill, Zald, and Rao (2003) and Zald, Morrill, and Rao (2005) have argued that an organization’s capacity for change mediates the impact of social movements. This study revises that argument. Instead of assuming that the capacity for change is exogenous, I argue that actors may have ample opportunities to combine norms and practices and thus make movement response an endogenous process. Similarly, Schneiberg and Soule (2005) presented a multistage model of movements and organizational change. In that model, movements mobilize outside firms to affect public opinion and the state, which then triggers regulation. This study adds another possibility. Instead of being the target of state regulation, the organization itself becomes a resource for countermovement actions. The new order can then be challenged by aggrieved actors and readjusted to account for changing values.

Conclusion

This article began with an observation: research often frames organizational change as the assertion of exogenously defined power or as determined by an organization’s environment. This study indicates that these positions are the extremes of a continuum. Possessing substantial discretion means that the coalition governing an organization has already granted actors great leeway. Similarly, if administrators have no discretion, it likely indicates that the stakeholders have not granted them the authority to act according to their interests. However, it may be the case that an organization’s political underpinnings are shifting, which permits entrepreneurial action that creates or erodes authority. The transformation of authority requires a mixing of institutions that is adjusted as contention plays out in the organization and its environment.

This model of power and institutional change can guide future empirical research. For example, San Francisco State College was but one of hundreds of colleges that experienced sustained campus disruption. Aside from case studies, there is little systematic evidence about the links between student mobilization and the transformation of authority in higher education after the 1960s. The question for higher education researchers, and other organization scholars, is whether the processes described here occurred elsewhere, and if institutional reform was propagated throughout the entire sector. Such research will establish needed links between microsociological accounts of institutional politics and macro-oriented theories of field evolution.

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