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Contention Across Social Fields: Manipulating the Boundaries of Labor Struggle in the Workplace, Community, and Market

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ABSTRACT

A growing literature examines the dynamics of social movement contention within and across "social fields." While fields tend toward stability, events and processes elsewhere in a broader system of fields can provide opportunities for movement mobilization. Most accounts see these cross-field dynamics as exogenous events, granting movements little control over when and how these opportunities might emerge. In contrast, this article argues that activists can and do purposely create cross-field effects. Examining changes in contentious practice in the American labor movement—which in recent decades, has reoriented contention over workplace issues away from workplaces themselves, and toward political arenas more traditionally dominated by community concerns—this article advances the concept of *cross-field manipulation*, purposive strategic action that accounts for the positioning of actors across social fields, triggering events in one field so as to reorder the dynamics of another. Using a historical study of evolving organizing practices in a Southern California hotel workers' union, including interviews and archival sources, the paper identifies three mechanisms—*power analysis, alliance building*, and *actor-triggered crises*—whereby labor activists purposely generate cross-field effects. Through repeated interactions with employers and polities, activists learned a unique campaign model that politicized workplace conflict in communities and markets, generating opportunities for workplace gains.

KEYWORDS: labor unions; living wage movements; community organizing; social fields.

At their 2013 convention in Los Angeles, AFL-CIO delegates passed a series of resolutions expanding the incorporation of non-union community groups into the labor federation. These resolutions called for greater collaboration with community-based organizations and the establishment of new funds to support joint training programs and campaigns. "For community-labor collaboration to reach such

range and strength," read one resolution, "our partnerships need to be rooted, dynamic and abiding; and, we must extend the frontiers of our relationships, building upon the values we share."[1]

The events at this convention marked the institutionalization of a decades-long trend toward increasing dependence on community-centered mobilization in the American labor movement. Many scholars have addressed this shift, referring to these transformations as "community unionism," "union revitalization," "social unionism," and "social movement unionism" (Clawson 2003; Fine 2005; Lopez 2004; Voss and Sherman 2000). While these labels are conceptually distinct, much of this research points to a common transformation: organized labor's reorientation of contention over workplace issues away from workplaces and toward arenas traditionally dominated by "community" concerns. Three important trends illustrate this shift: first, unions' retreat from workplace-centered contention and the rapid abandonment of the strike (Rhomberg 2012; Rosenfeld 2006); second, the increasing salience of community and political alliances in unions' contract and organizing struggles (Dixon and Martin 2012; Martin 2008; Milkman et al 2010); and third, the growing use of "comprehensive campaigns" that mobilize around firms' market connections (Garden 2011; Juravich 2007). These trends point to a key question facing labor activists and scholars today: How do unions build power to make change within workplaces, when labor contention shifts from the workplace to extra-workplace arenas?

To address this question, this article engages recent debates surrounding contention within and across "social fields," or relatively autonomous local social orders (Fligstein 2001). Scholars have argued that fields are not wholly autonomous, but interconnected and overlapping (Evans and Kay 2008; Fligstein and McAdam 2012; Mora 2014; Schneiberg and Clemens 2006). Contention in a system of interconnecting fields affords actors unique opportunities to exert power over others in a field (Evans and Kay 2008). Most accounts see cross-field dynamics as exogenous to the field in question, which is otherwise a stable social order. In contrast, this article argues that activists can purposely create these cross-field effects. When actors understand field interconnections, they can deliberately shift contention onto more favorable terrain, building positional power in a proximate field to obtain gains within a field in which they are weak. Using an in-depth study of evolving tactics in a Southern California hotel workers' union known for relying on workplace-centered mobilization, this paper finds that activists use *extra-workplace contention* to trigger cross-field effects, deliberately generating opportunities for workplace gains. Following two successive campaigns, this study finds that while cross-field effects were primarily exogenous in the first campaign, they were endogenously generated in the second. Through repeated interactions with allies and opponents, activists learned to exercise power by manipulating cross-field effects. I propose the concept of *cross-field manipulation* to account for these dynamics. The paper identifies three mechanisms—*power analysis, alliance building*, and *actor-triggered crises*—whereby union activists purposely generate cross-field effects.

CONTENTION WITHIN AND ACROSS FIELDS

That relatively weak actors might use the dynamics of social fields to obtain material gains may seem surprising. By most accounts, fields tend to reproduce stable and unequal social arrangements. Power and resources are unequally distributed, and those who wield power and resources attain dominant field positions and keep them. Formal and informal rules define acceptable modes of action that reproduce unequal field positions. In some theorizations, these rules become taken for granted (Bourdieu 1992; Meyer and Rowan 1977). In others, people act strategically to reproduce or challenge field structures, but usually only the powerful can marshal the resources to succeed in their efforts (Fligstein and McAdam 2012). Rules and positions tend to be reproduced, and underdogs do not often succeed.

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1 AFL-CIO Convention Resolution 16: Building Enduring Labor-Community Partnerships. http://www.aflcio.org/About/Exec-Council/Conventions/2013/Resolutions-and-Amendments/Resolution-16-Building-Enduring-Labor-Community-Partnerships. Accessed 03.09.14

To address the challenge of explaining social change in the context of fields that tend toward stability, scholars have developed two key ideas. First, they have focused on *strategic action within fields*, recognizing actors' capacity to purposely move to alter the dynamics of the field itself (Fligstein and McAdam 2012). James Jasper (2015), developing the conceptually similar idea of "arenas," argues that strategic actions can "change, ignore, or twist" the rules of play (p. 14). Pierre Bourdieu himself, while he generally argued that fields constrain individuals within them, nevertheless pointed to this possibility with the notion of the "classification struggle" (Bourdieu 1987). Second, scholars have mobilized the notion of *interconnected fields*. They have identified "relatively autonomous" fields, "cross-field effects," "overlapping" fields, "nested" and "proximate" fields (Bourdieu 1996; Evans and Kay 2008; Fligstein and McAdam 2012; Mora 2014; Schneiberg and Clemens 2006). What these concepts have in common is their attention to how changes in one field reverberate across a broader system. Exogenous events in proximate fields can provide resources and practices that actors use in their struggles over field position, and generate the periods of instability necessary for challenger groups to reorder a field.

The notion of interconnected fields, however, also creates space for a more purposive view of strategic action *across* fields. If within-field effects tend to reproduce stable social orders, cross-field effects may not. Seeing fields as interdependent and subject to change allows us to explain social change by identifying moments of agency that allow collective actors to defy enduring structures and create new ones. While this is a departure from conceptions of social fields that are premised on stability produced by consensus or social power, the notion of intersecting fields suggests that there are opportunities for actors, even weak ones, to deliberately manipulate these intersections by building coalitions in proximate fields. Rhonda Evans and Tamara Kay (2008) point to precisely this possibility with their concept of the "architecture of field overlap."

Building upon these ideas, I propose the concept of *cross-field manipulation*, defined as purposive strategic action that accounts for the positioning of actors across distinct but proximate social fields, triggering events in one field so as to reorder the dynamics of another. Whereas prior conceptualizations see cross-field dynamics as originating outside of the field in question, this concept accounts for the endogenous processes whereby activists deliberately trigger cross-field effects, allowing for greater agency on the part of weak actors. Conceptually, we can thus distinguish *cross-field effects*, which may be triggered by exogenous shocks or changes, from *cross-field manipulation*, where actors deliberately trigger these effects.

Empirically, cross-field manipulation can be distinguished from other cross-field effects when there is evidence that actors produce these effects with concrete practices that are *learned* and *deliberately applied*. Activists learn to overcome obstacles, developing new routines and strategies based on experience, collaboration and reflection, or trial and error (Hetland 2015; Wang and Soule 2012). Evidence of learning from experience indicates intentionality. While many scholars see collective organizational learning as primarily oriented toward the past rather than the future, learning is a product of situated interpretations of the past, "particularly on the evaluation of outcomes in terms of targets" (Levitt and March 1988:320). Activists can learn by doing, taking experience with past practice and generating new practices that can be deliberately applied to new situations.

Drawing on the practices and ideas of union organizers, this article points toward three mechanisms that link the deliberate action of activists to the reordering of workplace fields. The first is *power analysis*. Before someone can exploit a field intersection, she must understand what these intersections are. Power analysis requires research into the dynamics of proximate fields and into the positioning of actors within them, and planning to take advantage of field intersections. In particular, power analysis involves the identification of the interests of employers and potential allies across various fields. The notion that actors can identify the intersections of social fields contradicts many articulations of field theory. Bourdieu, for instance, suggests that an understanding of the dynamics of a field is rarely available to relatively weaker individuals within it (Bourdieu and Wacquant 1992; Burawoy and Von Holdt 2012). However, scholars have recognized power analysis as a practice often

used by labor and community organizers seeking to assess the power dynamics of a field, and which can be used as a participatory process that grants agency to otherwise powerless individuals (Gaventa 2006; McAlevey 2015; Noy 2008).

The second mechanism is *alliance building*, where actors build alliances with others who are appropriately positioned in proximate fields. As Evans and Kay (2008:374) write, "[a]ctors who lack influence within a field can draw upon relationships with influential field members to gain direct access to the field, increase their legitimacy within it, or indirectly influence decision making." Neil Fligstein (2001) similarly argues that one's ability to reorder a field depends on her ability to motivate the cooperation of others. I build upon Evans and Kay's (2008) concept of "alliance brokerage," though *alliance building* more readily captures the purposive nature alliances as an organizing project. Scholarship on labor movements has noted the importance of alliance building for campaign success (Brecher and Costello 1990; Ganz 2000; McAlevey 2012; Nissen 2004; Seidman 1994). Fred Rose (2000) points to the key role of "bridge-builders" adept at linking different kinds of organizations.

The third mechanism is the *actor-triggered crisis.* As Fligstein and McAdam (2012) argue, fields change when durable and unequal social orders are destabilized. This instability is usually produced by "exogenous shocks," or crises in proximate fields. While powerful actors are often positioned to withstand such turbulence, these periods of crisis are still some of the few opportunities for relatively weak actors to reorder a field. Social movements scholars have similarly argued that exogenous crises create opportunities for activists to achieve social change (Gamson 1975), and the notion of the exogenous shock is an important basis of the political opportunity approach (McAdam 1982). On the other hand, others have argued that activists can deliberately trigger crises through increasingly disruptive action (Bloom 2015; Morris 1986; Piven and Cloward 1978; Wilton and Cranford 2002). This is a process that union organizers often refer to as generating campaign "escalation" or "compression" (Chun 2009:126). Through careful power analysis and alliance building, weak actors can trigger such campaign compression, disrupting proximate fields and thereby challenging the prevailing dynamics of the field in which they are disadvantaged.

To illustrate these mechanisms, I turn to an analysis of tactical change in the American labor movement. Organized labor's victories are rare. Relative to employers and organized business, unions have been steadily weakening for decades, their numbers reduced and their influence in decline (Rosenfeld 2014; Western and Rosenfeld 2011). But these years of weakness and diminishing power within workplaces has sparked innovation in contentious practice (Martin 2008; Voss and Sherman 2000). Given this broad and intensifying relative weakness, a close examination of these innovations and rare victories is instructive for assessing how weak actors can exercise power within and across fields.

CHANGING PATTERNS OF LABOR CONTENTION

Ira Katznelson (1981) famously characterized the United States as distinguished by "the radical separation in peoples' consciousness, speech, and activity of the politics of work and the politics of community" (p. 6). In recent decades, however, many American labor unions have shifted away from workplaces as the key sites of labor contention, engaging in strategies that instead move conflict into proximate fields, such as local politics and markets. It is a shift—to borrow concepts first articulated by Erik O. Wright (2000)—from the exercise of "structural power," power rooted in the location of a worker in a workplace or market, to the exercise of "associational power," power rooted in extra-workplace social organization. It is a shift, in other words, from *workplace-centered contention* to *extra-workplace contention.* This transformation and the scholarship that has documented it offer important lessons for the theoretical questions examined above.

The strike is the quintessential tactic of workplace-centered contention. Yet strike rates in the US plummeted beginning in the late 1970s, declining faster than unionization rates (Martin and Dixon 2010; Rhomberg 2012). Strikes may have also decreased in effectiveness when they do occur (Rosenfeld 2006). But as unions engage in less workplace-centered contention, they engage in community-centered contention in new ways. One component of this shift is the increasing salience

of community-labor coalitions, and the growth of "community unionism" (Clawson 2003; Fine 2005; Milkman 2006; Milkman, Bloom and Narro 2010; Turner and Cornfield 2007). Community allies have been an important source of support for unions for many years (Fantasia 1989; Ganz 2000), but growing threats to unions in recent decades have pushed them toward greater community outreach (Dixon and Martin 2012; Luce 2014). These alliances allow unions to mobilize important symbolic resources that can translate into pressure on employers, and mobilize powerful political allies (Chun 2009).

Another innovation identified by scholars is the "comprehensive campaign" (Jarley and Maranto 1990; Perry 1996). Comprehensive campaigns begin with an understanding of firms as "social institutions" with market and social connections beyond the process of production. While traditional workplace-centered contention exerts power over production, comprehensive campaigns engage these external social relationships. Campaigns rely on strategic research, political mobilization, and public communications. Researchers seek to understand a firm's flows of capital and profits, and the economic, social, and political relationships of key decision-makers. Comprehensive campaigns are as diverse as the employers they engage, applying social, economic or political power according to the unique authority structures and capacities of each employer.

The notion that extra-workplace contention can help workers make gains within workplaces is now common among labor scholars and activists alike. But how do these tactics work? One approach sees community-centered campaigns as a tool for mobilizing workers whose primary identities may not be work-related, and for connecting workers to movements that are not traditionally work-related (Clawson 2003; Fine 2005; Milkman 2006; Piore and Safford 2006). The contention shift may be due to the characteristics of workers in emergent service sectors, their ethnic identities and community networks (Milkman 2006). But if labor's shift beyond the workplace is premised on using extra-workplace activity to motivate workplace action, we would expect to see unions' move toward greater community mobilization produce more workplace-centered contention. This is inconsistent with what I have categorized as the shift in contention from the workplace to other fields.

The possibility of making workplace gains sometimes independent of workplace-centered contention points to another argument: that extra-workplace contention yields unique forms of power during labor conflicts. How this power works, however, remains underspecified. The specific content of contentious practices, according to one perspective, is less important than the variety of tactics within a comprehensive campaign. Kate Bronfenbrenner and Robert Hickey (2004), for instance, find that while workplace-centered organizing strategies are critical, no single campaign tactic can predict success in itself; instead, "union win rates increase dramatically as the number of comprehensive organizing tactics increases" (p. 29).

Field theory clarifies how these tactics build relative power. Extra-workplace contention can be seen as *cross-field manipulation*—efforts to extend the bounds of labor contention beyond the workplace, where unions are increasingly weak, into proximate social fields, where they can build an advantage. Community alliances facilitate the politicization of workplace conflict in local political fields, while comprehensive campaigns build power in market fields. By skillfully building coalitions in proximate social fields and making workplace conflict subject to political contest in these arenas, unions can improve their position in the workplace.

ANALYTIC APPROACH

While scholars have recognized US unions' turn to community politics, we know little about how these strategies translate into workplace power (Dixon and Martin 2012). The goals of this article are two-fold: first, to explain the shift toward extra-workplace contention by elaborating the concept of *cross-field manipulation*; and second, to identify mechanisms whereby actors can engage in such purposeful manipulation.

Both goals involve identifying the social processes by which specific forms of labor contention produce outcomes. This involves the identification of *social mechanisms* linking the deliberate action of activists to the reordering of workplace fields. This article adopts Neil Gross' (2009) practice-centered

conceptualization of mechanisms. Gross (2009) conceives of social mechanisms as "chains or aggregations of problem situations and the effects that ensue as the result of the habits actors use to resolve them" (p. 375). With this conceptualization, identifying a mechanism involves identifying how people encounter situational problems that render untenable existing practices, how they devise solutions, and how these solutions aggregate to new modes of action. This approach puts actors' practical innovation and creativity at the center of investigation into links between cause and effect (Joas 1996). Here, my goal is to identify how relatively weak actors develop actions and social processes that allow them to exercise power.

I pursue this task using a case analysis of a union that has developed a unique approach to labor contention. While the range of questions that can be answered with case analyses is narrow, they are effective when focused on the identification of mechanisms (George and Bennett 2005; Ragin, et al. 2004). Revisiting a site studied by Forrest Stuart (2010), I select a paradigmatic case of "social movement unionism"—UNITE-HERE Local 11 in Southern California. UNITE-HERE is one of a few unions scholars have identified as having undergone an early transition to social movement unionism (Martin 2007; Voss and Sherman 2000). Los Angeles was an early incubator of community-centered union strategies (Milkman 2006; Milkman et al. 2010). While the campaigns considered here did not involve strikes, UNITE-HERE is known for its commitment to rigorous workplace committee-building and for its willingness to strike: in the early days of the union's revitalization in the 1980s, it built up its strongest locals through years-long strikes (Fantasia and Voss 2004; Getman 2010). I also examine the union's key ally in its community-centered endeavors: the LA Alliance for a New Economy (LAANE). Formerly called the "Tourism Industry Development Council," LAANE was originally incubated by UNITE-HERE in 1993. Today, LAANE is an important progressive economic policy organization in Southern California. I trace the historical processes whereby the two organizations produced a unique strategic repertoire, what activists call the "geographic campaign." The campaign involves simultaneous organizing drives in multiple properties within a geographic hotel market, combined with "living wage" policy initiatives. While a unique organizing model, the geographic campaign's strategy of shifting workplace contention into political and market fields reflects the broader shift in contention outlined above. The geographic campaign developed over two successive multi-hotel organizing drives in Southern California: in Santa Monica, from 1995-2001, and along Century Boulevard near Los Angeles Airport, 2005-2008.

While the narrative includes multiple campaigns, the historical trajectory constitutes a single case unfolding over time. To evaluate how the campaign model developed, and to illuminate the connections between activists' purposive action and cross-field effects, I rely on "process tracing," a method of *within-case* analysis where one identifies case-specific processes and event sequences that connect cause and effect (George and Bennett 2005; Mahoney 2003). This approach allows for the assessment of learning processes that unfold over time. Nevertheless, both campaigns organized in multiple hotel properties, and not all hotels were organized. This variation facilitates the use of within-case comparison, to assess the effectiveness of cross-field manipulation for organizing success in the Century Boulevard campaign.

This approach is appropriate for assessing causal processes within the case, illuminating the connections between activists' practice and cross-field effects in a specific industrial and political context. While the mechanisms identified can apply more broadly, they operate differently in different contexts (George and Bennett 2005). As such, my goal is not to identify universal causal relations that apply to any insurgent group, but to identify causal pathways at work in this case to revise theories of union revitalization and contention across interconnected fields.

I build the case using archival and oral data. I draw upon documents from the union's archives, public documents such as press reports and court filings, and grey literature such as white papers, reports, and leaflets. I supplement these with twelve interviews with key informants: organizers, researchers, political operatives, campaign directors and community allies. Interviews were conducted between August and December 2011, and ranged from 90-180 minutes. Interviews centered on participants' recollection of events, and probed their understandings of how the campaigns worked, from design to implementation. This allowed the borrowing of key concepts in regular use within the union-organizing field to provide insight into scholarly debates within field theory.

LEARNING FROM EXPERIENCE: DEVELOPING THE "GEOGRAPHIC CAMPAIGN" IN SANTA MONICA

This paper explores how union activists developed a strategic repertoire over the course of two consecutive organizing campaigns in Southern California, as activists learned how specific practices and strategies produced cross-field effects. In the first campaign, in Santa Monica, activists reported that they produced these effects inadvertently, out of interactions with local markets and polities—the campaign thus does not constitute an instance of cross-field manipulation. But while these practices emerged organically in Santa Monica, later sections show how they were deliberately reapplied in different contexts, making manipulation possible.

Activists created the "geographic campaign" model in the context of 1990s Santa Monica. The model combined workplace-centered contention, comprehensive campaigns, and policy initiatives. Organizers labeled the campaign model "geographic" because it organized multiple hotels within a local market and built alliances in the surrounding community; however, the spatial clustering of disruptive actions also made effective use of "spatial transgression" (Wilton and Cranford 2002). In this section, I first show how the changing hospitality industry created obstacles for the union. Second, I show how the local political context provided opportunities for new tactical approaches. These new approaches would later become a campaign model that activists could apply in different industrial and political contexts.

Industrial Obstacles and Community Partners in Santa Monica

When UNITE-HERE began to organize in Santa Monica in the early 1990s, organizers faced an exceptionally hostile terrain. While the 1980s had seen extensive hotel development in this small coastal city on the northwest border of Los Angeles, union membership had lost pace with this growth. As organizers considered how to defend the union's last unionized hotel in Santa Monica, they were also aware that the hospitality industry had changed underneath them, in ways that rendered traditional forms of labor contention less effective.

The most critical change was the shift of the key center of power—the hotel owner—away from workplaces and into proximate market fields. The union had originally organized the hospitality industry one hotel at a time, facing employers that owned and managed just one or a few properties. By the 1990s, a growing share of hotels were owned and operated by different entities, with many of the most recognizable hotel brand names becoming primarily operators, rather than owners. Over time, owners exercised greater control over hotel operations advancing their legal and financial interests through hotel management contracts (Eyster and DeRoos 2009; Wilson 2001). UNITE-HERE organizers noted this shift toward owner control. As a Local 11 Organizing Director put it, "For a while there management companies had a lot more say in what was going to happen on their property. We have learned over time [. . .], now I would say it is always the owner."[2] While the union's workplace-centered tools of contention were best suited for attacking previously smaller managers, focusing on increasingly powerful owners proved difficult.

The last remaining unionized hotel in Santa Monica was a tenuous toehold. Unionized for over 60 years, by 1995 the Miramar Sheraton had a weak contract, establishing it as an open shop. According to organizers, few workers were paying dues, and some were pushing for decertification. With a limited base of support within the hotel, and few other points of influence relative to the owner, organizers turned to a small number of allied organizations in Santa Monica to help them fight the decertification.

LAANE organizers developed an organization called Santa Monicans Allied for Responsible Tourism (SMART). SMART drew upon the existing activist organizations in Santa Monica, and its early activist recruitment reflected the existing political cleavages of Santa Monica during that period. From the late 1970s, a major political fault line in Santa Monica had been the conflict over tenants' rights. According to activists, many SMART activists had previously been active in Santa Monicans for Renters' Rights (SMRR). SMART and SMRR activists conducted delegations to Miramar

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management, and they organized multiple public events that attracted other local community organizations, as well as members of the City Council.

The union lost an initial decertification vote in 1997, leaving them temporarily without a membership base in Santa Monica (though they handily won a later re-vote). But the community-based support organizers had built shaped their strategy for reorganizing the local market, leading them to make two important decisions. The first was to launch new organizing campaigns at several nearby hotels. Rather than selecting the largest hotels, or the ones with the angriest workers, organizers chose to build organizing campaigns on the basis of employers' perceived potential responsiveness to community mobilization. For example, one hotel sat on land leased from the city and under the control of the city council, while a prominent fundraiser for the Democratic Party owned another. The second decision was to propose a "living wage" ordinance that would lift the wage floor above the minimum wage, an initiative proposed by SMART activists inspired by a living wage ordinance for city contractors and employers on city property that the City of Los Angeles had recently implemented.[3] To focus efforts on large hotels, the proposed ordinance applied to firms with annual gross receipts greater than $5 million, in a 1.5 square mile area. The ordinance would be the first in the nation to apply to private firms that were not engaged in direct transactions with the city.

The city council held multiple hearings on the proposed ordinance in late 2000 and early 2001. According to activists, prior to the introduction of the ordinance, hotel owners and operators on the beachfront rarely engaged in any collective projects. As one LAANE organizer put it, "We ended up organizing them together. Before that, they didn't talk to each other."[4] A UNITE-HERE organizing director agreed: "I think when they became organized when we hit the living wage. That is when they created their own committee, basically."[5] As the ordinance made its way through the city council, employers formed Santa Monicans Fighting Against Irresponsible Regulation (FAIR).[6] While the City Council approved the ordinance, FAIR collected signatures to push the ordinance onto the local ballot, forcing the union and its allies to defend the ordinance in two separate elections. After a hard-fought campaign, the living wage ordinance was defeated.

The "Geographic Campaign" as a Cross-field Organizing Model

Despite their loss, organizers recognized that the campaign for the living wage successfully politicized workplace conflict in the political field. They successfully organized four hotels. The Miramar was unionized after it sold in the midst of the living wage campaign; the owner of two other hotels, the Pacific Shores and the Delfina, was successfully moved by the City Council. The Loews Hotel unionized after several years of public protests and substantial political mobilization. Organizers I spoke to attributed these wins in part to the political crisis they had managed to generate in Santa Monica.[7] According to one community organizer,

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3   See Fairris et al. 2005; Kurt Petersen, November 2, 2011.

4   Interview conducted by the author with Vivian Rothstein, Deputy Director of the Los Angeles Alliance for a New Economy (LAANE), on November 1, 2011.

5   Kurt Petersen, November 2 2011.

6   Fixmer, Andrew. 2002. "Luxury Hotels Raise Nearly $250K to Fight Living Wage." *Santa Monica Daily Press*, October 10.

7   This sentiment was also reflected by several hotel owners. For instance, Lawrence Geller, CEO of Strategic Hotel Capital, the owner of the Loews Santa Monica, stated:

> "This was in the days when we were a private company and I'm beginning to forget those days but we had several properties that were under attack by the union. This one and our properties in New York. Essentially, to avoid massive disruption and in some form of trading, we worked out a union contract with the local union on this property, which had certain great productivity areas, etc., etc. [. . .] [This] was a time when we were at the minimum living wages. It was a very big issue in southern California and we were spending more money – truthfully, we were spending more money fighting the minimum living wage than we were on this $1 million hit on the union's side."

Source: SEC, conference call on March 1st, 2006. Transcript: http://www.secinfo.com/d122g8.vJ5.d.htm

The controversy that it engendered was extraordinarily helpful in terms of bringing the spotlight on exactly what the wages were in these hotels, which had some effect on worker organizing. [. . .] Some hotels made a decision that it was just simpler to make peace with us than to engage in a fight, whether it was a fight over strict unionization or a fight over policy [. . .] It was the fight itself that led to our victories.

If industrial changes created obstacles that compelled activists to push workers' struggles beyond the workplace, local allies and political cleavages gave them the tools to do so. Through extensive strategic research and coalition-building, the geographic campaign facilitated the union's development of power in two proximate fields: local politics and real estate markets.

When UNITE-HERE and LAANE began organizing at the Miramar, they did not intend to organize the Santa Monica market, or to innovate an organizing model that they would eventually repeat. As the Organizing Director put it, "I think we rather backed into this thing. [. . .] I do not think it was a master plan to organize the market at all."[8] The campaign had drawn more resources and generated more political polarization than they had anticipated, and they had lost the battle for the living wage ordinance. But in the process, they discovered, the extension of workplace conflict into nearby fields had contributed to the unionization of multiple hotels. The living wage initiative, while extending workplace conflict into the political field, also produced a significant challenge—the mobilization of dramatic employer opposition, and the formation of a coalition of employers and their allies. However, political polarization brought a broad set of interests, including disparate hotel owners and operators, into public debates concerning working conditions and unionization. Strong employer coalitions were undermined by hotel-specific comprehensive campaigns, which politicized labor conflict in proximate markets fields. This discovery helped activists develop a specific model of organizing that could be applied to new contexts.

MECHANISMS OF FIELD MANIPULATION: THE GEOGRAPHIC CAMPAIGN ON CENTURY BOULEVARD

When UNITE-HERE and LAANE activists began planning a new organizing drive in the early 2000s, this time concentrating on a cluster of hotels on Century Boulevard near the Los Angels International Airport (LAX), they sought to replicate the dynamics of the Santa Monica campaign. The Century Boulevard hotels had seen at least two failed organizing drives in the 1980s. But activists reasoned that the Santa Monica experience had equipped them with new tools. In adapting this model, activists took an "accident that we turned into a market campaign,"[9] and turned it into a replicable campaign model that operated by purposely manipulating field intersections. While they encountered a less favorable social terrain, activists worked toward deliberately recreating the cross-field effects they had produced in Santa Monica.

The Century Boulevard campaign narrative that follows illustrates the mechanisms of field manipulation, and highlights how these mechanisms correspond to purposive action by activists (Table 1). The first campaign stage involved *power analysis*, a careful mapping of the political and market terrains in which hotels were embedded. The second stage, *alliance building*, involved a long process of community organizing, which UNITE-HERE and LAANE leaders saw working in conjunction with a local policy initiative. As in Santa Monica, the policy initiative triggered alliance building among employers, and generated substantial political polarization. This polarization was an instance of the third mechanism, the *actor-triggered crisis*, which the union was able to resolve in its favor by breaking the employer coalition.

Power Analysis: Strategic Research and Planning

Before activists could engage in cross-field manipulation, they had to understand both the contours of proximate fields and the positions of employers and potential allies within them. Below, I show

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8 Kurt Petersen, November 2, 2011.
9 Kurt Petersen, November 2, 2011.

Table 1. Mechanisms of Field Manipulation

Mechanism	Purposive Action
Power analysis	Strategic research, mapping of employer positions in market fields, planning policy initiatives with an eye toward points of influence
Alliance building	Community organizing, political organizing, exposure of community allies to workplace conflict
Actor-triggered crisis	Strategic use of policy initiatives to accentuate political conflict, orchestrating public protest, comprehensive campaigns, alliance breaking

how activists understood the myriad field positions and interests of hotel firms, how they assessed their potential responsiveness to community power, and designed organizing campaigns within hotels they considered vulnerable in proximate fields.

Identifying Employers for Organizing

Organizers knew early on that they would have to design a campaign that focused on the interests of powerful decision-makers in the hospitality industry, even when workplace-centered organizing among the union's hotel worker base had difficulty reaching those decision-makers. Strategic research played an early role, beginning with the identification of organizing opportunities with a keen eye toward hotel owners and their potential responsiveness to community-centered mobilization. If the geographic campaign in Santa Monica had been an "accident that we turned into a market campaign,"[10] the organizing drive on Century would be a more deliberate implementation of the geographic model. This time, they would attempt a bigger, faster campaign escalation. This meant significant investment in building campaign infrastructure, within and beyond the workplace, well before it was set to "go public." Local researchers, working with researchers and strategists at the International Union, began profiling over a dozen Century Boulevard hotels two years in advance of the public campaign, to make informed organizing decisions and to begin conceiving hotel-specific comprehensive campaign strategies.[11]

Two organizing opportunities were determined by the priorities of the International Union. Nationally, UNITE-HERE was building its "Hotel Workers Rising" campaign[12], which focused on simultaneous organizing drives in multiple cities, to apply pressure on nationally-organized hotel chains. The union preferred to organize properties that were both owned and operated by the chain; the Westin Los Angeles Airport Hotel was owned and operated by Starwood. As part of the national campaign on Hilton, Local 11 would also focus on the Hilton LAX. Unlike the Westin, Hilton was the operator of the hotel, but not the owner. Nevertheless, it was the largest property on Century, and one of the largest Hiltons in the world. Given the importance of the hotel for Hilton, the union

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10 Kurt Petersen, November 2, 2011.

11 Interview conducted by the author with Paulina Gonzalez, former Researcher with UNITE-HERE Local 11, September 23, 2011; Interview conducted by the author with Derek Smith, Community Organizer with UNITE-HERE, October 31, 2011.

12 The 'Hotel Workers Rising' initiative, formalized at its 2001 convention, is an effort to align bargaining campaigns across the country in an effort to pursue new worker organizing with national hotel chains. Throughout the 2000s, UNITE-HERE's tactical innovation focused on adapting its campaign model to the increasing consolidation of owners and managers by bringing its campaigns to the scale of these corporations, coordinating across locals to develop national campaigns. Using bargain to organize strategies and large-scale, extensive comprehensive campaigns, the union has targeted national and global owners and managers, pushing to coordinate bargaining for workers in multiple locations at the same time, thereby amplifying the structural power of workers. The first stage of the Hotel Workers Rising strategy involved getting locals to line up contract expiration dates across the country. By 2006, contracts across the country were aligned, with 60,000 workers across the country represented by contracts expiring simultaneously. UNITE-HERE organizers often point out that while the campaign model is premised on large-scale comprehensive campaigning, its power is still rooted in the potential power of the strike and other workplace actions. See Sherwyn, Eigen, and Wagner (2006) for a discussion.

made the educated assumption that the company would have influence over the hotel's owner, Fortuna Enterprises, a relatively small company with few other assets in the area. Researchers also knew that Fortuna's mortgage agreement stipulated a continuous relationship with Hilton or another large operator, which also appeared to give the Hilton Hotels Corporation relative power in the relationship. According a LAANE researcher, "the Hilton, our perception was that it was the largest score. If we beat Hilton [nationally], we would beat them [at LAX]. That was our theory."[13]

Researchers also assessed the feasibility of other non-chain organizing opportunities. The union selected two large hotels that appeared to be low-hanging fruit. One was the Sheraton Gateway Los Angeles, which was owned by the Kor Hotel Group, the company that UNITE-HERE had developed a productive relationship with in Santa Monica in organizing the Viceroy and the Delfina. Similarly, the union decided to organize the Four Points Sheraton because they had previously engaged with the owner, which already owned several unionized hotels.[14] Finally, the Radisson Hotel LAX was a longstanding focus for the union. The hotel had been the sole union shop on Century. In 2000, the property was sold to a small aggressively anti-union company, which fired the employees and re-opened non-union. As the Organizing Director put it, "we wanted to get back the Radisson. It was a righteous fight, maybe it was the wrong [hotel], but we were going to do that one."

Policy Planning and Political Power

From their experience in Santa Monica, activists knew that policy initiatives could mobilize political and community allies in support of the organizing drive, and could potentially focus this mobilization against specific employers. With its policy campaign on Century Boulevard, UNITE-HERE and LAANE sought to replicate their success at extending workplace conflict into the local political field. However, they took a more careful and deliberate approach. As UNITE-HERE began its second attempt at a geographic campaign, they began the development of a similar comprehensive policy program. Politically, the union began outreach with the Mayor's office and specific city councilors well before the campaign was scheduled to go public.[15]

But the exact nature of the policy proposal was in flux. Organizers were fearful of igniting an employer backlash like the one they encountered in Santa Monica. According to a LAANE organizer, "we ended up having such opposition that we were very wary about getting back into that. We put so many resources into those ballot fights. We weren't sure that it was worth it." Fighting at the ballot box would be far more expensive here, since it would mean campaigning across the entire city of Los Angeles. Researchers explored multiple policy options for the campaign, weighing the probability of intense employer opposition against the potential to mobilize public support and apply extra-shop power over owners. They considered worker retention policies, tip protection, and the living wage, among various other potential policies.[16]

Initially, they pursued a strategy to build support for city investment in infrastructure development on Century Boulevard. Researchers tracking new development proposals identified discussions among hotels to seek a conference center on Century Boulevard, which they hoped would attract guests for longer stays at higher rates. If the living wage proposal in Santa Monica had prompted united opposition from employers, the conference center could be a carrot that could bring the hotels along.[17] As such, their first proposal was the creation of a "Gateway to LAX Development Zone," which would combine infrastructure investment with several worker-centered proposals. The hotels had not built the sort of collective coordination necessary to obtain the conference center

13 Interview conducted by the author with James Elmendorf, Policy Director with LAANE, September 22, 2011; Kurt Petersen, November 2, 2011; Derek Smith, October 31, 2011.

14 James Elmendorf, September 22, 2011; Kurt Petersen, November 2, 2011; Derek Smith, October 31, 2011.

15 James Elmendorf, September 22, 2011; Derek Smith, October 31, 2011.

16 James Elmendorf, September 22, 2011; Kurt Petersen, November 2, 2011; Vivian Rothstein, November 1, 2011; Derek Smith, October 31, 2011.

17 James Elmendorf, September 22, 2011.

investment; activists hoped to convince them that the union could muster the necessary political support. In the weeks before the worker organizing campaign went public, all of the hotel General Managers were invited to a meeting with the coalition and Mayor Villaraigosa to discuss improvements to Century Boulevard.[18] However, none of the hotels were won over at the meeting. While room revenue was a concern for all of them, organizers felt that few owners worked with a particularly long-term vision for their properties, making a partnership strategy untenable. According to a LAANE organizer,

> We went in saying "we want to work on lifting the standards for everyone. We want to work on a mini conference center; we want to work on beautifying Century." [. . .] But their side was completely disorganized. There was no one with any vision about how they could work with us and they weren't even that good at fighting us.[19]

Given the hotels' icy reception to the proposal, activists ultimately decided to reintroduce the living wage. On November 16th, 2006, the city council passed a package of ordinances including the living wage, tip protection, and worker retention policies, which applied to hotels as well as private employers operating on city property.

Alliance Building and Policy Campaigns

For unions to extend workplace contention into proximate fields, they must build alliances that span field boundaries. Alliances can be built through deliberate cultivation and through the work of organizers with experience in community organizing (Rose 2000; Voss and Sherman 2000). On Century, activists also built alliances by orchestrating political events and public dramas (Stuart 2010). Importantly, these efforts also triggered alliance building among powerful employers, who organized to protect existing orders. This incumbent counter-mobilization produced the subsequent political crisis.

Alliance Building and Community Terrains

When UNITE-HERE and LAANE organized SMART in Santa Monica, the alliances at its core emerged primarily from existing political cleavages in the city. But when laying the groundwork for the Century Boulevard campaign in 2005, community organizers faced a different community terrain. One advantage was that many workers lived nearby, in Lennox. LAANE began its outreach with a clear message: improving the working conditions in LAX hotels would improve the living conditions of nearby communities. LAANE found that one in five Lennox workers were employed in hotels and restaurants—more than 4 times the county rate.[20] However, organizers confronted steep challenges when attempting to connect community organizing to the political process. While Century Boulevard was in the City of Los Angeles, most of the surrounding communities were under separate political jurisdictions.[21]

While in Santa Monica, the union took advantage of existing cleavages in the political field, building alliances on Century Boulevard was a more purposive effort.[22] Organizers built a

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18 Vivian Rothstein, November 1, 2011.
19 Vivian Rothstein, November 1, 2011.
20 Century Corridor Commission on Jobs, Tourism and Communities 2006; Derek Smith, October 31, 2011
21 Kurt Petersen, November 2, 2011; Vivian Rothstein, November 1, 2011; Derek Smith, October 31, 2011.
22 This difference had an impact on the union's ability to engage community allies. LAANE Deputy Director Vivian Rothstein acknowledged that the more challenging community terrain surrounding Century Boulevard made the community organizing more difficult, and ultimately less successful:

> "So we made [Century Boulevard] into a citywide thing. But in terms of community people running the campaign, we never really succeeded in that. [. . .] Not the way we did in Santa Monica. We had a steering committee, and there were some people who were very involved. And they played a very important role, but it wasn't quite the same deep organizing."

community-based committee that they saw as more centered on religious institutions than the Santa Monica coalition had been.[23] Community organizers met with community groups and congregations in the nearby communities of Lennox, Inglewood, Hawthorne, and Westchester, and recruited members for the "Coalition for a New Century," modeled after SMART. In Lennox, they relied primarily on local churches, the central hubs of the Latino community there. LAANE had built alliances in Inglewood through previous organizing to stop the construction of a Wal-Mart store there, and was able to tap into those networks, hiring on some of the activists from the Wal-Mart fight as community organizers; they also found key allies in the Teachers Union and among local politicians. In Hawthorne, they made inroads through the Catholic Church. In Westchester, they found allies among local clergy and in the Democratic club. While bridging these community divides was an ongoing and difficult project, the Coalition for a New Century was beginning to form.

Political Polarization and the Living Wage

As in Santa Monica, the extension of workplace conflict into the political field ignited intense employer response, this time with even more formidable opponents. Recognizing they were being targeted collectively, hotel owners and operators began to coordinate. One of the group's key concerns was that UNITE-HERE would be able to pick off one or two hotels, and lead them to break ranks and undermine their unified effort. As the *LA Business Journal* had pointed out, owners perceived that as precisely what UNITE-HERE achieved during the 2005 contract bargaining in Downtown LA, driving a large hotel owner to break ranks with the employers' council and pursue a settlement.[24] That move led to the dissolution of the LA employers' council, and the initial settlement provided the framework for an agreement brokered by Mayor Villaraigosa. Months later, it would become evident that the employers had established a system of informal sanctions to keep each other together. When Michael Gallegos, the new owner of the Four Points LAX, publicly backed the living wage ordinance, he told the LA Times that other hotels had committed not to send any spillover traffic to the Four Points. "They did not appreciate us stepping out of line," Gallegos said.[25]

The Century hotels formed an organization called "Save LA Jobs," which prepared to collect signatures to place the ordinances on a citywide ballot, thereby shifting the decision over the ordinances away from the Council into a new venue where it could be defeated through large campaign expenditures. The LA Chamber of Commerce, the Valley Industry and Commerce Association, the California Restaurants Association, and the Hotel Association of Los Angeles, joined the coalition. Unlike in Santa Monica, a ballot question would be voted on by the entire city of Los Angeles— and organizers knew that a ballot fight at that scale would stretch the union's resources thin. By December 29th, Save LA Jobs had collected more than twice the signatures needed for a referendum.[26]

Breaking the Coalition with Activist-triggered Crises

Moments of instability create opportunities for less powerful actors to use cross-field alliances to reorder social fields. In the Century campaign, activists built upon the political polarization created by the living wage initiative to trigger a political crisis that facilitated the organization of hotel workplaces. Organizers used escalating conflicts in workplaces and in the local political field to lend force to a series of owner-specific campaigns that followed each firm along their myriad positions in proximate fields. This combination of general political crisis and owner-centered mobilization ultimately broke the coalition of employers, which otherwise would have likely maintained the preexisting order.

23   Interview conducted by the author with Vivian Rothstein, November 1, 2011; Derek Smith, October 31, 2011.

24   Fine 2006

25   Wartzman 2007

26   UPI. 2006. "Anti-'Living Wage' Group Gets Signatures." *UPI*, December 29.

A comparison of successful and unsuccessful organizing drives illuminates the connection between cross-field manipulation and campaign outcomes.

An Activist-triggered Crisis

With local politics polarized over the living wage ordinance, UNITE-HERE and LAANE organized a set of actions that served to accentuate the political conflict and trigger a political crisis. Organizers responded to the hotels' political assault with a variety of public displays that drew upon both workplace-centered actions and their community and political alliances. When a work stoppage at the Hilton LAX—a quintessential workplace-centered confrontation between workers and management—resulted in the indefinite suspension of 77 employees, the union was quick to connect this conflict with the increasingly contentious conflict in the political field. Activists organized a delegation of political allies to visit Hilton management a day after the events—the delegation resulted in then-City Councilwoman Janice Hahn and a hotel security guard trading accusations of assault.[27] Weeks later, the union organized a 7-day hunger strike in front of the Westin, featuring vigils attended by community groups and presided over by sympathetic clergy. They held a large rally framed around immigrant workers' rights a few months after the large immigration protest of May 2006; more than three hundred submitted to planned arrests, which the LAPD confirmed amounted to more arrests than at any labor action in Los Angeles in over sixty years.[28]

As these events unfolded, the hotel coalition's financial resources and the threat of the ballot measure proved overwhelming. In January 2007, Mayor Villaraigosa asked the City Council to consider rescinding the ordinance, to allow him to broker a deal that would be more favorable to the hotels. The Council acquiesced to this request, and passed a renegotiated ordinance in February, which retained the wage levels, but included a phase-in period, economic incentives for the hotels, and the requirement for extensive study before the council could approve a similar ordinance in the future.[29] Despite these additions, the hotels immediately sued to challenge the renegotiated ordinance, arguing that it was not sufficiently different from the one that they had collected signatures to place on the ballot. For the next few months, the living wage ordinance made its way through the courts.

Breaking the Employer Coalition

As in Santa Monica, the emergent crisis in the political field produced a formidable employer alliance. Despite the union's years-long efforts at alliance building, employers still held the upper hand in the political field. If their alliance held, employers would have likely endured the crisis with continued control over workplaces. But the intense political polarization also created opportunities for the union to break the employer coalition with comprehensive campaigns. These campaigns pushed the conflict further beyond the workplace, into market fields in which hotel owners and operators were embedded. In 2007, the employer alliance cracked. One hotel owner would self-impose the living wage that winter. Before the year was out, the owners of four hotels signed card check neutrality agreements. The Hilton, however, remained un-unionized. Comparing these successful and unsuccessful cases illuminates the importance of cross-field manipulation in the geographic campaign.

Some owners cooperated with the union. The case of the Radisson LAX is instructive. The union had been in a protracted fight with the Radisson's original owner, Pacifica Host Hotels, for almost a decade. But in the summer of 2007, organizers received some hopeful news from Radisson workers: Pacifica was selling. Researchers immediately issued a press release to the relevant business press,

27 See Stuart 2010; Fortuna Enterprises, LP, v. National Labor Relations Board, No. 10-1272, 2011. Available online at: http://www.cadc.uscourts.gov/internet/opinions.nsf/C36E858FF4BAEDA585257961005BCA7B/$file/10-1272-1346749.pdf. Accessed 01/21/2015.

28 See Matthews, Joe. 2006. "Labor Protest Targets Airport-Area Hotels." *Los Angeles Times*, September 29.

29 Kurt Petersen, November 2, 2011; see also Cummings and Boutcher 2009.

warning of potential labor disputes. They produced a report that would be sent to any interested buyers upon request. A union researcher recounted:

> Somebody contacted me by email and said, "You know, I'd like to get a copy of the document." [. . .] And it turned out that [Harp Group] had union hotels in Chicago, where they had also gotten those financed with union pension fund money.[30]

Harp Group's principal, Peter Dumon, had a longstanding relationship with UNITE-HERE, owning several unionized hotels in Chicago. This relationship extended to his potential purchase of the Radisson LAX—one of Harp Group's subsidiary companies obtained a $142 million loan from Amalgamated Bank, a bank owned by UNITE-HERE, to buy and improve the Radisson.[31] Given the publicity of the conflict on Century Boulevard, Dumon reportedly "put out feelers"[32] to see how he could avoid confrontation. He agreed to a card check agreement, and by June 2008, he penned a column in the *Los Angeles Times*, directed at his fellow hotel owners on Century, titled "Stop Fighting the Living Wage."[33] In April of 2009, Radisson workers ratified their first contracts.

Not all owners were as receptive, and these more protracted struggles are also instructive. The first neutrality agreement obtained was with Tishman, the mostly cooperative owner of the Four Points Sheraton. But before the ink was dry on the agreement, Tishman sold the hotel to American Property Management Company (APMC). APMC proceeded to fire twelve workers, many of who were members of the hotel's organizing committee. The union responded forcefully, taking advantage of the political polarization and organizing a community delegation to greet the new owner, Michael Gallegos. Gallegos, a prominent Latino philanthropist in New Mexico, also received contacts from Latino politicians. According to a LAANE organizer, Gallegos underestimated the politicization of the workplace conflict: "Here's this owner, walks in and thinks he can shit all over the workers and no one will notice it. Well, everybody noticed it."[34] Within two days, APMC hired back all twelve workers. Gallegos then went a step further, announcing that he would voluntarily pay the living wage and calling on other hotels to do the same.

Despite this public stance, Gallegos declined to abide by the card check agreement. After over a year of campaigning, including a number of public protests and comprehensive campaign approaches, APMC ultimately responded to a threatened boycott. The union approached the LA Unified School District, historically the largest customer of the Four Points. In March, the LAUSD passed a resolution threatening to move their business from the hotel if the boycott persisted; within days, APMC offered to resume negotiations. The parties agreed to a contract on April 7th, 2008; on April 16th, the Four Points workers voted to ratify it.[35]

The one owner that did not unionize, Hilton LAX, highlights how the lack of cross-field power had a negative impact on union success. Hilton LAX had been the most public focus of the Century campaign. The worker committee at Hilton LAX was among the most vigorous and audacious on Century Boulevard, engaging in repeated aggressive workplace actions throughout the campaign period.[36] The hotel, however, consistently resisted the union's efforts.

30   Interview conducted by the author with Andy Lee, Research Coordinator at UNITE-HERE Local 11, November 11, 2011

31   Details regarding these transactions emerged when the Supreme Court considered a case regarding a bankruptcy on the part of Harp Group. See respondent's brief, *RadLAX Gateway Hotel, LLC v. Amalgamated Bank*, 11-116, 2012. Available online at: http://www.americanbar.org/content/dam/aba/publications/supreme_court_preview/briefs/11-166_respondent.authcheck dam.pdf. Accessed 01/21/15.

32   Kurt Petersen, November 2, 2011.

33   See Dumon, Peter. 2008. "Stop Fighting the 'Living Wage.'" *Los Angeles Times*, June 11.

34   Vivian Rothstein, November 1, 2011.

35   Interview conducted by the author with Andy Lee, November 11, 2011.

36   Interview conducted by the author with Lorena Lopez, Organizing Director at UNITE-HERE Local 11, September 19, 2011.

Several organizers suggested that they made a strategic error selecting Hilton as a primary focus for the campaign, expecting that Hilton LAX could be organized through the national-level campaign on the Hilton chain. The national campaign would grow in scale in 2007, when the Blackstone Group, a private equity firm, acquired the Hilton Hotels Corporation. UNITE-HERE reached a broad agreement with the company, acquiring several card check agreements around the country. Hilton LAX, however, would not budge. The union applied multiple campaign strategies, including a large boycott, and developed one of the most organized workplace committees in the campaign, which successfully carried out a protected work stoppage.[37] But in making an erroneous assessment regarding the balance of power within the Hilton property, the union backed itself into a fight it had little power to win. Fortuna Enterprises was a limited partnership created to control Hilton LAX.[38] Researchers found that the family that controlled Fortuna obtained most of its income from Taiwan, maintaining few interests in the United States. Comprehensive strategies were ineffective in relation to a company with tenuous connections to the fields within activists' reach.

This contrast suggests that certain incumbents are more susceptible than others to cross-field manipulation. If extra-workplace tactics work when they build relative power in proximate fields, they are effective only when an employer is socially embedded in those fields a union can reach. They succeed when they affect the markets that firms watch most closely, or when they affect the political fields that some firms depend upon for resources.

DISCUSSION

Like many US unions, UNITE-HERE Local 11 turned to extra-workplace contention in order to win labor rights campaigns against resistant employers. They did so despite a longstanding commitment to building workplace committees and the capacity to strike. This shift in labor contention—from the workplace to community, political, and market fields—is a product of unions' efforts to manipulate the intersections of proximate social fields. Seen as instances of *cross-field manipulation*, extra-workplace contention achieves much more than an expanded audience, sympathetic ears or resources for workplace-centered action. Extra-workplace tactics offer unions positional power, allowing them to challenge an existing order by affecting the dynamics of proximate fields through alliances and triggered crises. And while the geographic campaign examined here is a specific form of comprehensive campaign, other campaign models can also be seen as engaging in extra-workplace contention in order to gain such positional power, with SEIU's "Justice for Janitors" model a prominent example (Waldinger et al. 1998). The lens of field theory and the concept of cross-field manipulation allow us to understand the mechanics of how such power is exercised.

For activists to be able to take advantage of cross-field effects, it is not necessary that these effects be intentionally generated. Indeed, the organizing successes during the Santa Monica campaign suggest that, in accordance with existing theory, activists can take advantage of exogenous crises and conditions. In Santa Monica, preexisting dynamics in the workplace, market, and political fields played an important role in the creation of the geographic campaign model. Activists reported that they came upon this combination of tactics accidentally, but they discovered its effectiveness at building extra-shop power. The historical tracing of these processes in the Century Boulevard campaign, however, suggests a different story: in this case, activists' application of the geographic campaign on less propitious terrains was an intentional undertaking. Through *power analysis*, activists surveyed the field and identified the positions of employers in proximate fields. This understanding was necessary for activists to *build appropriate alliances* in political and market fields, allowing them to build strong relationships in the right locations. Living wage policy initiatives helped to activate these alliances, but also triggered intense political polarization, as employers built their own alliances and counter-mobilized. Power analysis and alliance building across fields, therefore, were necessary conditions for

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37   Fortuna Enterprises v. NLRB, No. 14-1099 (D.C. Cir. 2015).
38   Ibid.

triggering crisis in the political arena. These alliances were also important factors in resolving the crises on terms that empowered workers in their workplaces, as comprehensive campaigns helped activists break opponent coalitions.

The evolution of the geographic campaign model across the campaigns points to the intentional and learned nature of cross-field manipulation. UNITE-HERE and LAANE activists developed the geographic campaign through experimentation and learning, linking initial successes produced by alliances across fields in Santa Monica, and creating a model of action that built upon these discoveries. Organizers developed a new organizing model whose campaigns had recognizable moving parts, but were adjusted to suit the field positions of allies and employers. Activists implemented this model on Century Boulevard, even as they encountered less favorable terrain. In 2012, the union launched a third successful campaign in the city of Long Beach, combining a multi-hotel organizing drive and a living wage campaign. This learning and reapplication adjusted to different contexts suggests that actors are not only able to identify and take advantage of field intersections, but purposely manipulate them.

Like other Bourdieusian concepts, the concept of the field is a "tool for research" (Swartz 2013: 20). Other forms of cross-field manipulation, in different fields and through different mechanisms, can be uncovered through further research. The events detailed in this paper demonstrate how the union extended labor contention to proximate arenas at the local level, a finding driven primarily by organizers' choices concerning policy interventions at local regulatory scales. However, we can also recognize cross-field manipulation at work in union campaigns in other fields. Unions can organize in regulatory arenas that do not immediately concern labor issues, as they did in the case examined here, but where employer interests may still be at stake. Organizers have built coalitions focused on environmental issues and public health regulation in ways that reinforce workplace power (Estahrook, Siqueira, and Machado 2000; Lille 2006). They have mobilized around urban planning processes, including extensive campaigns around real estate development that have aided worker organizing (Tufts 2007). Further, cross-field organizing can potentially affect asset prices, which may become increasingly salient in an era where firms generate a growing share of profit through financial speculation (Krippner 2005). Unions have built coalitions in the finance field, where they can attempt to wield power through their holdings in pension funds, and research has shown that anticorporate activism can have an effect on stock price returns (King and Soule 2007; Marens 2008; Santos 2011). We can recognize from all of these examples that the fields in which unions can mobilize are determined not by their similarity to the workplace, but by the embeddedness of employers and potential allies. This expands the possible arenas for cross-field manipulation. Recognizing the broad array of fields in which a given employer is embedded opens up opportunities for cross-field manipulation in a variety of arenas, and—depending on the scale of regulation— regional, national, and even global scales. The myriad potential intersections of fields give people space to build power.

These lessons of labor activists suggest that a rethinking of the link between strategic action and "cross-field effects" is warranted. Field theory is primarily a theory of constraint, by consensus or by domination. Recent theoretical innovations allow us to account for social change in fields that otherwise tend toward stability by attending to potential relationships between fields: changes in proximate fields can alter social dynamics in ways that lend challengers an advantage over incumbents (Evans and Kay 2008; Fligstein and McAdam 2012). But even these approaches see the dynamics of proximate fields as exogenous to the field in question, necessarily limiting the potential historical agency of actors in that field. Implicit in the notion of cross-field *manipulation*, however, is the idea that relatively weak actors can *purposely generate* cross-field effects. In particular, moments of crisis in proximate fields constitute opportunities to reorder unequal fields. These opportunities are not always exogenous: the campaign model created by these activists demonstrates that such opportunities can be intentionally created and managed. Geographic campaigns allowed the union to both generate unstable moments, and to take advantage of them.

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