THE LEGACIES OF THE CIVIL RIGHTS MOVEMENT AND THE PARADOXICAL POLITICS OF INCLUSION: COLLECTIVE MEMORY IN CONTENTIOUS POLITICS

Hajar Yazdiha

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Approved by:

Kenneth Andrews
Christopher Bail
Neal Caren
Charles Kurzman
Andrew Perrin
ABSTRACT

Hajar Yazdiha: The Legacies of the Civil Rights Movement and the Paradoxical Politics of Inclusion: Collective Memory in Contentious Politics
(Under the direction of Charles Kurzman)

This dissertation examines the political uses of the collective memory of the Civil Rights Movement. In Chapter 1, I sketch the making of the collective memory of the Civil Rights Movement, as a cultural structure that is taken up and deployed by all sorts of political actors. In Chapter 2, I engage in an analysis of the political uses of the Civil Rights Movement among 110 social movement organizations representing 11 different social movements from 1980-2016. I find that as different groups make strategic linkages between their group’s identity and the collective memory of the Civil Rights Movement, the interaction between identity and memory produces new sets of meanings, transforming the meaning of the collective memory. Chapter 3 examines the processes of “strategy in interaction” more closely analyzing archival data from two paired-cases of rival movements over two presidential eras, the LGBT Movement and Family Values coalitions and the Immigrant Rights Movement and Nativist coalitions. I identify a pattern of processes that elucidate how the perceived relationship between a group’s identity and a collective memory shapes the construction and contestation of cultural resonance. Chapter 4 examines the growing Muslim Rights Movement as a group whose social location explicitly shifts after 9/11. Drawing on archival data and focus groups with Muslim community leaders and organizers, this chapter shows that Muslim activists’ perceptions of group identity recalibrate
with changing political-cultural contexts, reshaping strategies for seeking inclusion. These identity shifts reflect a process of racialization of collective identity in which post-9/11 policies and discourses stigmatize Muslims, shaping contexts in which Muslims generate perceptions of social location analogous to African Americans. What results is a new strategic focus on coalition-building with people of color through strategies aimed at establishing common oppression. Through this volume, by examining how a single cultural structure is taken up by a landscape of social movements, I develop a new approach to understanding cultural processes in contentious politics. As groups strategically deploy collective memory in different ways, the proliferation of meanings of memory, over time, changes the collective memory itself and the way we collectively recall our shared history.
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CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION

Introduction

On August 28 2010, the 47th anniversary of the March on Washington, Glenn Beck held a rally to “Restore Honor” at the steps of the Lincoln Memorial where King gave his famous “I Have a Dream” speech nearly five decades prior. In the months leading up to the rally, Beck explained the connection between the historic backdrop of the rally and the Tea Party’s mission to safeguard American values, threatened by minority claims to “special rights.” In this view, white Americans were the new victims under the Obama presidency, and Beck espoused this view a year prior when he said, “This president [Obama] I think has exposed himself as a guy, over and over and over again, who has a deep-seated hatred for white people and the white culture…this guy is, I believe, a racist,” (Calderone 2009). On his May 24th show, Beck said, “We are the people of the Civil Rights Movement. We are the ones that must stand for civil and equal rights. Equal rights. Justice. Equal justice. Not special justice, not social justice, but equal justice. We are the inheritors and the protectors of the Civil Rights Movement,” (Zernike 2010b).

Several days later, Beck explained that King’s vision had been “perverted,” and he planned to “pick up Martin Luther King's dream" and to "restore it and to finish it." He went on to say, “We are on the right side of history. We are on the side of individual freedoms and liberties and damn it, we will reclaim the Civil Rights Movement. We will take that movement because we were the people that did it in the first place,” (Beck 2010b). The strategic link between a historic African American movement for equal rights and a largely white movement
for free market principles was not immediately resonant to the general public, and Beck knew it. Through a series of impassioned monologues, Beck strategized to establish the credibility of a Civil Rights Memory Strategy that linked the largely white, conservative Tea Party activists to the memory of the Civil Rights Movement. In this Civil Rights Memory Strategy, the Civil Rights Movement was a symbol of American individualism, colorblind meritocracy.

Critics erupted in protest. Jon Stewart called the rally “I Have a Scheme,” satirizing its strategic connection to the “I Have a Dream” speech. Robert Greenwald, an activist and film maker protesting the rally, generated a website and video titled "Glenn Beck is Not Martin Luther King Jr." with a petition receiving over 30,000 signatures. In the video, Greenwald juxtaposed “shock jock”-style sound bites from Beck with King’s spiritual oratory in his “Dream” speech to discredit Beck’s Civil Rights Memory Strategy. At video’s end, a message read, “Don’t let Beck distort Martin Luther King Jr.’s legacy. Sign your name to virtually stand with Dr. King’s vision on August 28th” (Greenwald 2010). Al Sharpton called Beck’s event an "outright attempt to flip the imagery of Dr. King," (Sisk 2010). The day before the rally, Chris Matthews said on his show, Hardball With Chris Matthews:

Can we imagine if King were physically here tomorrow...were he to reappear tomorrow on the very steps of the Lincoln Memorial? I have a nightmare that one day a right wing talk show host will come to this spot, his people's lips dripping with the words interposition and nullification. Little right wing boys and little right wing girls joining hands and singing their praise for Glenn Beck and Sarah Palin. I have a nightmare.

On August 28th, Beck stood, like King, on the steps of the Lincoln Memorial, and gave an impassioned speech that had “everything to do with God...turning our faith back to the values and the principles that made us great.” Through a bricolage of religious imagery and historical invocation, from Moses to Lincoln to King, Jr., from the Civil War to World Wars I and II to
Vietnam, Beck rooted Tea Party principles in seemingly inseparable Christian faith and American collective memory. To his audience of followers, he did not focus on justifying the Civil Rights Memory Strategy as he had to a national audience in the months and weeks prior. Invocations of King were woven into a broader American history, a man who was but one among many of the foundational figures building a colorblind America of endless opportunity. Rather than focalizing the rally’s site as solely the site of King’s speech, he situated the site as one among Lincoln’s Memorial, a Vietnam Memorial, and a Korean Veterans Memorial. Beck said:

> We are standing, we are standing amongst giants and in between the Reflecting Pool. Why? Is it so we can say wow, look how dirty it is? No, it's not just to reflect the monument. It is intended for us to reflect, to reflect on what that man meant and those men meant and those, and those, and that man meant and the man who stood down on those stairs and gave his life for everyone’s right to have a dream, Martin Luther King. That's what the reflection is all about…[emphasis my own]

He went on to describe an America at a crossroads, not unlike the one Lincoln faced during the Civil War. Referring to the Tea Party’s struggle, he said, “It's the same story throughout history, all of mankind's history. Man finds himself in slavery and then someone appears to wake America up,” (Beck 2010a). Through religious and historical imagery, Beck emphasized American individualism in the face of oppression, a sort of “slavery,” again constructing Tea Party identity as a threatened, minority identity.

Further down the National Mall, Al Sharpton and Martin Luther King III led the Reclaim the Dream commemorative march at the planned site of the Martin Luther King, Jr. National Memorial. The rival movement which sought to discredit Beck’s strategy linking Tea Party identity to the Civil Rights Movement did not simply exist in an abstract discursive space in the public sphere. The rival movement was physically present, competing for a credible, culturally resonant link between identity and memory. Executive director of the National Council of Negro
Women, Avis Jones DeWeever pleaded with the audience, "Don't let anyone tell you that they have the right to take their country back. It's our country, too. We will reclaim the dream. It was ours from the beginning." (Harris and Thompson 2010). With King’s son in tow, a powerful symbol of King’s legacy firmly opposing the Tea Party’s mission, Beck’s rally required a parallel symbolic figure. Beck secured Alveda King, Martin Luther King Jr.’s niece and a conservative activist to speak at the Rally to Restore Honor. She called on the audience to:

…focus not on elections or on political causes but on honor, on character…not the color of our skin. Yes, I too have a dream....That America will pray and God will forgive us our sins and revive us our land…My daddy, Reverend A. D. King, my granddaddy, Martin Luther King, Senior – we are a family of faith, hope and love. And that's why I'm here today. Glenn says there is one human race; I agree with him. We are not here to divide. I'm about unity. That's why I'm here, and I want to honor my uncle today. (Dolak 2010)

Here was another living inheritor of Dr. King, of the Civil Rights Movement, lending symbolic credence to the Tea Party vision. From beyond the audience of the rally’s conservative followers, there were vocal critics who sought to discredit the Tea Party’s Civil Rights Memory Strategy through the perceived gap between Tea Party identity and the widely-held memory of the Civil Rights Movement. Engaging with and coming to anticipate these critiques in the months leading up to the rally, Beck and Tea Party organizers sought to bridge this perceived gap through Civil Rights discourse, the imagery of the historic setting, and, with Alveda King, the living progeny of a central historical figure. Hobsbawm says movements “[back] their innovations by reference to a ‘people’s past,’…to traditions of revolution…and to [their] own heroes and martyrs,” (Hobsbawn 1983, p.13). Yet King was not always a “hero and martyr” for conservatives. Just 30 years prior, there were spirited congressional battles around designating Martin Luther King, Jr’s birthday as a national holiday. Conservatives called King a communist traitor, highlighted his adultery to question his morality, and declared him an unworthy symbol for national commemoration. While Reagan signed the national King holiday into existence in
1983, state-wide battles over the holiday lasted into the 1990’s. South Carolina was the last state to approve a paid King holiday in 2000. Just ten years later, Glenn Beck, an unapologetically outspoken conservative, stood on the steps of the Lincoln Memorial and said, “As we pick up Martin Luther King's dream that has been distorted and lost…we say, it’s time to restore and to finish it.” What explains this rapid evolution?

Since the 1960’s, numerous groups including women, Latinos, Asians, the disabled, and LGBT coalitions have made civil rights claims around inclusion and equality. These mobilizations have been called “the minority rights revolution” (Skrentny 2004), the “movement of movements” (Fraser and Gerstle 1990; Gosse 2006), and the rise of the “civil rights society” (Bumiller 1992). For historically marginalized minority groups, strategic invocations of the African American Civil Rights Movement seem a natural strategy in claims-making around civil rights, a ready-made set of tools for their common circumstances. However, in the past two decades, conservative, majority-white social movements from the Tea Party to Gun Rights and Family Values coalitions have increasingly linked their group identities to the collective memory of the Civil Rights Movement. These strategies have become so widespread that even former opponents of the Civil Rights Movement from Strom Thurmond to George Wallace adopt its language and figures, associating themselves with the movement and its legacy. A social movement symbolic of minority struggle for equality in the face of oppression has become a readily available political strategy for all political actors, including those who initially opposed it. In turn, the collective memory itself has changed shape, flattened into a vacated, sanitized meaning structure (Hall 2005; Hill 2017; Romano and Raiford 2006). In 2014, a contingent of the Black Lives Matter Movement began a Reclaim MLK campaign specifically to reinject the “true meaning” of the Civil Rights Movement into popular collective memory.
While indelibly related, the political uses of collective memory and the social construction of collective memory live in separate theoretical realms: social movement studies and collective memory studies. After all, they investigate different puzzles: Why do groups use collective memory for particular political purposes versus why does collective memory get constructed in particular ways? One is a question about the enactment of the cultural structure toward political targets while another is about the cultural structure as the target itself. However, this study not only argues that the two are connected but shows through three chapters that their interconnection has significant implications for how we understand cultural processes in contentious politics. Without an adequate analysis of the relationship between mobilization strategies that invoke memory over time and debates over collective memory, we underestimate the impact of collective memory on present day politics.

As a widely known and commemorated collective memory, the collective memory of the Civil Rights Movement provides the ideal case for this study. Using mixed methods, across three chapters I analyze a unique dataset of 110 social movement organizations across 11 types of social movements from 1980-2016, archival data from two paired cases of movements: LGBT Movement vs. Family Values Movement and Immigrant Rights Movement vs. Nativist Movements from 2000-2016, and archival data and focus groups from one case: the Muslim Rights Movement from 1980-2016. In this introduction, I first sketch the history of the making of the institutionalized collective memory of the Civil Rights Movement. The congressional debates over the King holiday laid the groundwork for central meaning structures on which groups drew. I follow with a description of the arguments of Chapters 2-4. This study is the first of its kind to: 1) explore the wide diffusion of Civil Rights Movement Collective Memory as a political strategy, what I conceptualize as “Civil Rights Memory Strategy,” 2) compare how
minority and majority groups, groups with a range of collective identities (racial, sexuality, religious, moral, political) use Civil Rights Memory Strategy to make and contest rights claims; and 3) analyze how Civil Rights Memory Strategies evolve over time. Across three chapters, I draw from literatures in social movements, cultural sociology, collective memory studies, race and ethnicity, and social psychology to examine a significant phenomenon: how the legacies of collective memory shape the way groups seek inclusion in the collective in the present.

The Making of Collective Memory

Four days after Martin Luther King, Jr.’s assassination in 1968, Congressman John Conyers (D-Mich) introduced legislation to commemorate Dr. King with a national holiday. The bill stalled, and the Southern Christian Leadership Conference (SCLC) circulated petitions in 1971, garnering three million names in support of the holiday. With Representative Shirley Chisholm (D-NY), Congressman Conyers resubmitted the legislation for session after session to no avail, although support for the bill began to grow. During the 1976 presidential campaign, Jimmy Carter promised to support the King Holiday if elected, in exchange for the labor movement’s support. In a written supplement to his State of the Union Address in January 1979, Carter wrote that “[King] led this Nation’s effort to provide all its citizens with civil rights and equal opportunity,” pledging to “strongly support legislation” to commemorate King’s birthday “as a national holiday.” As his statement was written and not spoken, it mostly went unnoticed (Wolfensberger 2008).

Later that year, King’s widow Coretta Scott King worked with the Martin Luther King, Jr. Memorial Center in Atlanta to organize a new nationwide King Holiday petition campaign. New, seemingly unlikely sponsors for the bill emerged. Republican John Danforth of Missouri, a
conservative Christian who saw King as a fellow Christian, urged Republicans to join in support of the bill. As historian David Chappell noted, “For Danforth, King’s determination in the fight for equality symbolized the spirit of American freedom and self-determination,” and Danforth sought to extend King’s powerful morality to a growing sect of conservatives who sought to remake the GOP (Chappell 2014). Danforth’s stance represented a new political possibility for conservatives: a potentially natural alignment with King built upon his religiosity, which provided symbolic support for conservative opposition on issues ranging from abortion to homosexuality. From the Democrats, Robert Garcia (D-NY) championed the holiday “as an appropriate testimonial to an extraordinary individual who dedicated his life to the cause of human rights,” and “would underscore the Nation’s continuing commitment to alleviate the persistent and continuing effects of discrimination and poverty which Dr. King struggled to eliminate.” The holiday “will indicate the kind of moral direction of our country in the coming years.” Congress, he continued, “will have to make the most positive statement it can that the sectional and racial chapter of America’s history has been closed forever,” (Garcia 1979).

Still, the old conservative guard fought back with powerful attacks on King’s legacy. Senator Strom Thurmond reconvened the joint hearing, calling forth author Alan Stang whose account, “It’s Very Simple: The True Story of Civil Rights” claimed, with alleged evidence, that King had communist associations. Stang used King’s own words against him, highlighting King’s article on strategy in the April 3, 1964 Saturday Review as evidence that, “the violence he got was not a Surprise…he did not dislike it. He wanted it in order to pressure the Congress to enact still more totalitarian legislation,” (Chappell 2014). Thurmond also called on Julia Brown, a “loyal American Negro” and communist organizer who had joined the Civil Rights Movement. Brown testified that she thought she was “joining a legitimate civil rights organization…Finding
that I was a true member of the Communist Party which advocated the overthrow of the United States Government.” She described how members were “continually being asked to raise money for Martin Luther King’s activities and to support his civil rights movement by writing letters to the press and influencing local clergymen, and especially Negro clergymen that he was a good person, unselfishly working for the American Negro, and in no way connected with the Communist Party.” Concluding by drawing a powerful distinction between African American leaders worthy and unworthy of commemoration while linking their symbolic lineage, she proclaimed a “great many Negroes, such as George Washington Carver and Booker T. Washington [provide American youth with a positive example]…. [King provided an example of] agitation and manipulation for goals dictated by hatred and envy… [If a King holiday was approved] the memory of Carver and Washington would be dishonored…we may as well take down the Stars and Stripes that fly over this building and replace it with a Red flag,” (Chappell 2014).

Next, Larry McDonald highlighted what he saw as King’s hypocrisy, pointing to the Supreme Court’s 1978 Bakke decision upholding affirmative action. He asked whether “[King] really found racism repugnant in light of his support of discrimination in jobs and housing so long as the discrimination was in favor of blacks.” McDonald pointed to King’s affiliation with the “virulently racist Nation of Islam” to drive home his point,” pointing to a 1966 quote from King’s staff member James Bevel who said, “we need an army…to fight the white man this summer.” In a written statement, John Ashbrook described the debate at hand as a question of “[supporting] the fictional assessment of Dr. King” and argued that “King’s motives are misrepresented. He sought not to work through the law but around it, with contempt and violence. How soon we forget. When will politicians learn to accept history as it really happened
instead of history as told by the Washington Post?” He warned against commemorating a man who American children would “be misled into believing [was a great man…speaking of King] with the same reverence [as Washington and Lincoln].” Despite the vehemence of the opposition, a majority of house members voted to get the bill on the docket. However, as amendments were tacked on and the holiday began to lose shape, supporters led by Senator Conyers moved to withdraw the whole bill and try again with greater political support (CQWR 1979).

In 1980, popular musician Stevie Wonder released a song called “Happy Birthday,” a political call to commemorate King cloaked in cheery harmony and an unassuming song title. Wonder sang:

You know it doesn't make much sense
There ought to be a law against
Anyone who takes offense
At a day in your celebration
'Cause we all know in our minds
That there ought to be a time
That we can set aside
To show just how much we love you
And I'm sure you would agree
It couldn't fit more perfectly
Than to have a world party on the day you came to be
Happy birthday to you
...
Could not have a day that would
Be set aside for his recognition
Because it should never be
Just because some cannot see
The dream as clear as he
That they should make it become an illusion
And we all know everything
That he stood for time will bring…

With a well-liked cultural force behind the holiday, public attention toward the legislation grew. However, during the 1980 presidential campaign, Ronald Reagan’s growing popularity
caused concern among civil rights activists. Reagan was known among activists as a politician who had gained political support by opposing Black civil rights, from the Civil Rights Act of 1964 which he called “a bad piece of legislation” to the Voting Rights Act, which he called “humiliating to the South.” Even during his campaign for governor of California in 1966, he had spoken in support of a proposition to nullify the fair housing law, explaining, “If an individual wants to discriminate against Negroes or others in selling or renting his house, it is his right to do so,” (Gomer and Petrella 2017). Following King’s assassination in 1968, Reagan had suggested King’s murder was the result of his strategies, “a great tragedy that began when we began compromising with law and order and people started choosing which laws they’d break,” (Chappell 2014). The evening before the 1980 presidential election, King’s widow Coretta Scott King said, “I’m scared that if Ronald Reagan gets into office, we are going to see more of the Ku Klux Klan and a resurgence of the Nazi Party,” (Troy 2016).

In 1981 and 1982, support for the holiday was building, but Reagan argued that the holiday would come at too great a cost to the federal government, minimizing the import of the commemoration saying, “we could have an awful lot of holidays if we start down that road.” At the 1982 hearings, Coretta Scott King directed her testimony toward the opposition of years prior to whom she referred as a “traveling right-wing circus [specializing in] character assassination and infantile name-calling.” She argued that King had opposed communism more vehemently than his critics (King 1982). Still, returning to the forefront of congressional opposition, Larry McDonald accused King of communist ties pointing to the FBI’s sealed files on King. He went on to declare a holiday commemorating an African American “racist.” He said, “Why not a Chinese American? Why not an Hispanic?...we are supposed to be e pluribus unum.” In perhaps the most damning testimony against the holiday, Black conservative and author J.A. Parker said,
“[It’s] unrealistic to rank King with Jesus and Washington.” He cited more appropriate figures for commemoration: Jefferson, Lincoln, Patrick Henry, Crispus Attucks, Booker T. Washington, General Daniel “Chappie” James, and Franklin Roosevelt then said supporters were “unwilling to let history make its final judgment on the merits or demerits of Dr. King,” pointing to King’s comments on America’s involvement in Vietnam as “the greatest purveyor of violence in the world” during Vietnam. He warned that overlooking King’s “divisive” role was “to ignore the past and rewrite history,” and warned the holiday would “further exacerbate the effects of a color-conscious society at the expense of the color-blind society, which should be our goal,” (Chappell 2014).

Like Julia Brown in 1979, Parker’s African American identity imbued his opposition to the holiday with symbolic power and legitimacy, and Parker went on to cite five prominent African Americans who criticized King: NAACP director Roy Wilkins, Urban League director Whitney Young, Jackie Robinson, columnist Carl Rowan, and former Senator Edward Brooke.

Publicly, Stevie Wonder spoke out against the opposition saying:

Allow me to quote one American leader who seems to understand the value of remembering Dr. King. I quote: ‘There are moments in history when the voice of one inspired man can echo the aspirations of millions. Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr., was such a man. To America he symbolized courage, sacrifice, and the tireless pursuit of justice [too long denied]. To the world he will be remembered as a great leader and teacher, a man whose words awakened in us all the hope for a more just, more compassionate society. [He dreamed of an America in which ‘our children will not be judged by the color of their skin but by the content of their character’ and he reminded us that ‘injustice anywhere is a threat to justice everywhere.’] His time among us was cut tragically short, but his message of tolerance, non-violence, and brotherhood lives on...Let us all rededicate ourselves to making Martin Luther King’s inspiring dream come true for all Americans. (italics in brackets represent portions of Reagan’s statement not quoted by Stevie Wonder) (Chappell 2014; Jet Magazine 1982)
The irony of Wonder’s statement was that the great American leader he was quoting was President Reagan. Meanwhile, Reagan had not expressed public support for the bill. On King’s birthday in January 1983, Reagan made a public statement describing King as:

…the man who tumbled the wall of racism in our country. Though Dr. King and I may not have exactly had identical political philosophies, we did share a deep belief in freedom and justice under God. Freedom is not something to be secured in any one moment of time. We must struggle to preserve it every day. And freedom is never more than one generation away from extinction. History shows that Dr. King’s approach achieved great results in a comparatively short time, which was exactly what America needed…What he accomplished—not just for black Americans, but for all Americans—he lifted a heavy burden from this country. (Chappell 2014)

On August 2, 1983 the King holiday passed the House with 338 members in support of the bill. Once the bill reached the Senate floor, the opposition had organized with renewed vigor. Conservative legislators led by Senator Jesse Helms and Strom Thurmond filibustered against the holiday, saying that Dr. King was a communist sympathizer and the bill would be too costly. Floor manager for the legislation, Senator Robert J. Dole (KA-R), argued back, "Since when did a dollar sign take its place atop our moral code?...To those who would worry about cost, I would suggest they hurry back to their pocket calculators and estimate the cost of 300 years of slavery, followed by a century or more of economic, political and social exclusion and discrimination," (Dewar 1983).

Helms described King’s “calculated use of nonviolence as a provocative act to disturb the peace of the state and to trigger, in many cases, overreaction by authorities." Helms argued that a federal holiday should represent "shared values," but King's "very name itself remains a source of tension, a deeply troubling symbol of divided society.” Helms linked King and Civil Rights activists to communism, arguing:

I think most Americans would feel that the participation of Marxists in the planning and direction of any movement taints that movement at the outset…Others may argue that Dr. King's thought may have been merely Marxist in its orientation. But the trouble with that
is that Marxism-Leninism, the official philosophy of communism, is an action-oriented revolutionary doctrine. And Dr. King's action-oriented Marxism, about which he was cautioned by the leaders of this country, including the president at that time, is not compatible with the concepts of this country. (Dewar 1983)

The bill’s supporters, led by Senator Edward M. Kennedy (D-Mass.) denounced Helms’ claims. Kennedy retorted angrily, “I will not dignify Helms' comments with a reply. They do not reflect credit on this body.” Republican Senator Arlen Specter of Pennsylvania also rejected Helms’ argument, arguing that King was a “Herculean figure on the American scene” who had prevented rioting in Philadelphia in the 1960’s, a “stabilizing influence.” Republicans and Democrats were overwhelmingly in support of the bill, and as many political analysts have noted, much of this support stemmed from knowledge of strong Black voting contingents in their states. However, as Retta and Charles Gray of North Carolina wrote in a letter to the editor of *Time Magazine*, the political contention over the holiday over the years brought to the fore the continuing tensions through which the Civil Rights Movement emerged. They wrote, "As supporters of the King holiday bill, we thank Senator Jesse Helms for helping to secure the bill's passage. Helms reminded us by his behavior of the freedoms the Rev. Dr. King fought for,” (Rothman 2015).

In an unexpected turn, Reagan threw his support toward the bill by year’s end (Rothman 1983). Scholars have investigated Reagan’s motives, and political scientist Robert C. Smith worked tirelessly to obtain Reagan’s papers on the holiday decision, although a suspected twenty to twenty-six pages of the 4,811 pages known to exist are still confidential. Smith believes the secrecy reflects an effort “to whitewash [Reagan’s] record on race,” (Smith 2010). Analysts have noted that the shift was not an effort to appeal to Black voters in the 1984 election, to whom Reagan did not expect to appeal, but rather a gesture toward moderate white voters (Isaacson 1983). Yet the two ideas go hand-in-hand. Reagan’s shift allowed him to both signal support for
civil rights, silencing critics like the NAACP, as well as allowed him to “whitewash,” or sanitize King’s memory through a selective interpretation: a colorblind “dream” for America.

Fifteen years after the legislation was introduced, on November 2, 1983, Reagan sat amidst a choir singing “We Shall Overcome,” a powerful anthem of the Civil Rights Movement, and signed H.R. 3706 (98th): “A bill to amend title 5, United States Code, to make the birthday of Martin Luther King, Jr., a legal public holiday.” Outside of public view, Reagan maintained his oppositional stance toward civil rights, writing a letter of apology to Governor Meldrim Thomson, Jr. of New Hampshire who had vehemently opposed the holiday. Reagan reassured the Republican governor his support for the legislation was based “on an image [of King], not reality,” (Chappell 2014). This image was a sanitized commemoration free of King’s political beliefs, characterized by a rhetoric of colorblindness that Reagan would return to throughout his presidency to justify assaults on civil rights.

Two decades of debate over Dr. King’s legacy linking to and representing the wider memory of the Civil Rights Movement generated a central, institutionalized collective memory characterized by a particular set of meanings. These meanings were not only bound into a national holiday, but also narrativized through a particular telling of history in textbooks, celebrated through particular figures during Black History Month. Every year, Americans commemorated a collective memory of the Civil Rights Movement constituted by figures like Rosa Parks, expressed in Dr. King’s “I have a dream” speech, images of sit ins, freedom rides, African Americans and Whites joining, arms linked, in a quest for racial justice, and a particular conception of racism and violence as existing specifically in the south. These meanings are bound in commemorative structures and remain at the center of American collective representation. They have become distinctly American meanings. Yet at the fringe of the
collective memory are alternative meanings, drawn from historical debates, used to constitute a sort of binary to define the boundaries of the safe, acceptable memory of nonviolent protest from the radical, militant memory of protest. Malcolm X, Black Panthers, and Black Power are examples of fringe meanings operating as a sort of safeguard for the commemorative structure of the Civil Rights Movement. As Edward P. Morgan described in his analysis of media portrayals of the Civil Rights Movement, media relied on the Manichean battle between a “good” Civil Rights Movement and a “bad” Civil Rights Movement, a binary of a good, peaceful King and a bad, militant Malcolm X (Morgan 2006). As the memory of the Civil Rights Movement evolved into a political strategy, these fringe meanings would be invoked to legitimate or discredit movements time and again.

In 1988, fifty thousand people joined to commemorate the 25th anniversary of the March on Washington. President Reagan issued a statement characteristic of his selective adoption of Dr. King, lauding racial progress made “toward fully achieving Dr. King’s dream of a color-blind society.” Though a much smaller crowd than the original march, attendees were notably more diverse including Hispanics and Asians. In a statement, Coretta Scott King said her husbands’ “dream of justice, equality and national unity is not the exclusive property of any race, religion or political party.” Some journalists noted a somber mood as activists reflected on a decade that had turned back the clock on the civil rights gains of the 1960’s and 1970’s (Gomer and Petrella 2017). At the Lincoln Memorial, the historic site of King’s “I have a Dream” speech, civil rights activist Elena Rocha said, “If Martin Luther King could get up from the grave he would see that he’d have to start all over again raising hell,” (Mohr 1988).

This sketch of the making of the King Holiday illustrates the complex cultural and political processes that generated a central collective memory, a cultural structure. However, I
would like to draw particular attention to fractures of meaning in the collective memory. I argue these fractured meanings enabled groups to link their identities to different interpretations of collective memory, fragmenting the collective memory over time. Evaluating themes among the arguments deployed around the King Holiday, I identified three broad questions through which six sub-fields of meaning emerge. These sub-fields are the fractures of meaning through which trajectories of Civil Rights Memory Strategies have grown, as different groups have linked their identities to memory. The three broad debates relate, ultimately, to societal questions about equality: 1) Who is unequal? Meaning, who is identified or categorized as the oppressed group(s)? 2) Why should we oppose this inequality? Meaning, on what grounds do “we the people” contest inequality? 3) How do we overcome this inequality? Meaning, what are the appropriate modes of action through which change should be pursued? (Table 1.1). To be clear, these are not debates that originated in the making King holiday but were rather ongoing ideological debates throughout American history. These ideological tensions did produce particular meanings in debates over the King holiday that, I argue, produced vulnerable fractures in the collective memory of the Civil Rights Movement. As collective memory scholars argue, most collective memories are constructed through processes of contention (Ghoshal 2013; Pennebaker and Banasik 1997; Wagner-Pacifici and Schwartz 1991). Future studies might evaluate how these initial fractures shape other subsequent political uses of memory.
Table 1.1. Fractures of Meaning in Civil Rights Movement Memory

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<th>Theme of Memory Fracture</th>
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**Who is Unequal?**

*Oppressed vs. Equal*

Arguments around the King Holiday centered in part on delineating why an African American leader, as opposed to a leader of any other racial background, was worthy of commemoration. After the legal gains of the Civil Rights Act and Voting Rights Act of the 1960’s, how could inequality still be said to exist? Justifying the continued relevance and importance of King required drawing boundaries around who, if anyone was oppressed. I argue that the reiterated symbolism of African American struggle in the face of inequality concretized the linkage between Blackness and inequality in American consciousness. In the decades that followed, groups fighting for inclusion, from LGBT groups to animal rights activists to Muslims would characterize themselves as “the new Black” (Earle and Phillips 2013; Stone and Ward 2011). Even white supremacist groups defined their oppression in terms of racial identity, as a new minority *like* Blacks (Berbrier 1998, 2002).
A secondary aspect of this meaning structure entailed delineating not only who was oppressed, but also whether such treatment was justified. Was King worthy of such reverence, or was he a Communist traitor who espoused violence? These questions also reached back to the debates of the Civil Rights Movement. As African Americans argued for recognition of their American identity and the same citizenship rights as white Americans, their opposition painted Blacks as unassimilable threats to the populace through a lens of white nationalism. Historian Phoebe Godfrey has written that the tropes of dangerous African Americans, “were rooted in beliefs about the vulnerability of southern womanhood to blackness, which by its mere presence had the power to contaminate, symbolizing a sexual threat regardless of gender,” (Godfrey 2003). Similarly, the present-day Immigrant Rights Movement seeks recognition and national membership while countered by nativists who decry immigrants as unassimilable and illegal criminals.

For example, immigrant rights activist Leone Bichhieri highlighted the unjust outsider status of immigrants when he said, “People who are working, paying taxes, contributing into this economy, contributing to this society, should not worry that when they drive to another part of the country they live in, that they will be stopped, and harassed, and asked for papers,” (Roberts 2003). Emphasizing the centrality of immigrants in American history and their important contribution to society was pivotal for the 2003 Immigrant Workers Freedom Rides and 2006 Immigrant Rights protests. Meanwhile, anti-immigrant nativists echo the anti-Black protestors of the 1960’s as they work to delegitimize immigrant claims to national membership and emphasize their own victimization. In one example, Pat Buchanan echoed the sentiments of many nativist protestors in 2006 when he said, “[T]hey are not assimilated into America. Many Hispanics, as a matter of fact, you know what culture they are assimilating to? The rap culture, the crime culture,
anti-cops, all the rest of it,” (Legum 2006). In another example, a 2016 press release from the anti-immigrant group, Federation for American Immigration Reform (FAIR) read, “Some 13 million illegal aliens now reside in the U.S., competing head-to-head with America’s working poor and ever-shrinking middle class…Criminal aliens who have committed heinous crimes against our citizens are regularly released back onto our streets to commit addition crimes and shatter innocent lives,” (FAIR 2016). Just as anti-Black activists warned against desegregating the dangerous, criminal Negro to justify their inequality, Nativist groups delegitimize immigrant claims to equal rights by highlighting their criminality.

**Group History vs. National History**

In a related debate, a central theme in the King debates centered on the question of representation. Was King an appropriate representative of the Civil Rights Movement and of Americans more broadly? When lawmakers like Larry McDonald argued against a specifically African American holiday, supporters had to make the case that King did not only represent one group. He represented all Americans. To establish King’s propriety as a collective representation, supporters had to focalize the most selective, universal interpretations of his work and words. The cost of fighting to institutionalize a universal King for all Americans was that Coretta Scott King, with other African American civil rights leaders, unwittingly signed away group rights to his legacy. When Coretta Scott King said King’s “dream of justice, equality and national unity is not the exclusive property of any race, religion or political party” in 1988, she never could have imagined her words would enable the same debates two decades later (Bonilla-Silva 2001).
Still, as the tension between “oppressed vs. equal” illustrates, debates over the King holiday imbued African American racial identity with powerful symbolism. Like the Republicans who called on African Americans Julia Brown and J.A. Parker to oppose the King Holiday, those who sought to invoke alternative interpretations of Civil Rights Movement memory deployed African American spokespersons to represent these stories. These formative tensions over who owns and represents memory continue to shape the grounds on which movements seek to construct credible Civil Rights Memory Strategies. One example comes from the National Rifle Association (NRA). On January 20, 2014, the Martin Luther King Jr. holiday, the NRA released a video in which Noir connects the NRA’s vision to that of King’s. He said:

Let’s not forget the first forms of gun control were created to keep people like me from having guns…Dr. King was a nonviolent man but even he understood the realities of self defense and protecting his home and his family in the face of life-threatening violence. This is why he tried to apply for that gun permit… When Dr. King was denied [the firearm license], he did the next best thing and surrounded himself with people with guns…In my heart, based on Dr. King’s own actions, I don’t believe that Dr. King would ever advocate leaving a family, or anyone for that matter, defenseless in the face of violent life threatening danger. (Wilstein 2014)

Noir’s Black identity allowed him to occupy a symbolic position as a representative of the Civil Rights Movement, a credible spokesperson for King’s stance on gun rights. While the NRA’s Civil Rights Memory Strategy may have appeared to represent a new interpretation of Civil Rights memory, it drew from fractured meanings.

**Why should we oppose inequality?**

In another fracture of meaning, debates concerned the logics through which “we the people” ought to oppose inequality.
Morality vs. Immorality

One tension of meanings centers on questions of morality and values. Republican John Danforth had drawn on King’s religiosity and moral valence to appeal to the white conservative Moral Majority. These questions were at the heart of the Civil Rights Movement as well: what is the moral character of our nation? What are our values? As former civil rights leader Congressman John Lewis recalled, “The civil rights movement was based on faith. Many of us who were participants in this movement saw our involvement as an extension of our faith. We saw ourselves doing the work of the Almighty. Segregation and racial discrimination were not in keeping with our faith, so we had to do something,” (Emerson and Smith 2000). Similarly, activist Joan Mulholland said, “Segregation was unfair. It was wrong, morally, religiously. As a Southerner – a white Southerner – I felt that we should do what we could to make the South better and to rid ourselves of this evil,” (Mulholland 2007).

Yet, opposing forces too understood the maintenance of power relations, the justification for segregation, as a matter of morality. Bishop John Shelby Spong recounted, “When I grew up in the South, I was taught that segregation was the will of God, and the Bible was quoted to prove it,” (Spong 2007). For opposing forces, segregation was moral, it was the “will of God.” These historic tensions of meaning manifest in Civil Rights Memory Strategies in the present. For example, in rival campaigns, the LGBT Movement and Family Values Movements draw on rooted debates over morality. The LGBT Movement’s Civil Rights Memory Strategies make moral appeals to national values and morality while the Family Values Movement counters with claims of LGBT immorality while claiming their own religious oppression. Not unlike Lester Maddox’s claims of white oppression in the 1960’s, family values groups today argue that LGBT
gains infringe on their moral rights. For example, a Facebook post by Brian Klawiter, a Michigan engine repair shop owner, went viral in 2015 as he wrote:

> Our rights as conservative Americans are being squashed more and more everyday…I am a Christian. My company will be run in a way that reflects that. Dishonesty, thievery, immoral behavior, etc. will not be welcomed at MY place of business. (I would not hesitate to refuse service to an openly gay person or persons. Homosexuality is wrong, period. If you want to argue this fact with me then I will put your vehicle together with all bolts and no nuts and you can see how that works.) (Badash 2015)

Under Michigan’s religious freedom law, Klawiter has the right to refuse service to anyone. Similarly, a number of controversies have erupted over bakery owners who refuse to bake cakes for gay weddings and photographers who refuse to photograph gay weddings. Kentucky clerk Kim Davis received national attention for refusing to grant marriage licenses to same-sex couples citing her religious opposition, resulting in her imprisonment which Mike Huckabee called the "criminalization of Christianity," (Gass 2015).

Meanwhile the LGBT Movement’s pursuit of rights, particularly for gay marriage, draws from the fractured meanings of memory to minimize stigma by emphasizing morality and values of tolerance. As Linda Hirshman writes in her history of the gay revolution, “They could ask the society to ignore or tolerate their behavior, immoral or not, in the interests of higher values like freedom or privacy,” or they could assert their actions and identities were moral. “Gay is good.” (Hirshman 2013). LGBT Movement leader Evan Wolfson recognized marriage equality as a powerful weapon for establishing the moral equality of gays (Frank 2012). Some critics argue that in narrowing the movement’s focus to marriage equality, the movement has increasingly moved from a counter-cultural force celebrating difference to an assimilationist movement emphasizing their normativity and traditional values (Gabriel 2015). Lisa Duggan has called this a “homonormativity” that echoes dominant norms of a white, family-oriented, middle-class and reproduces exclusionary power dynamics through its politics of singular difference (Duggan
2002). However, these critiques are not unlike critiques of a Civil Rights Movement that emphasized respectability politics, assimilating African Americans – and Dr. King - into mainstream, white middle-class social values. Again, the political uses of memory follow a trajectory of fractured meaning.

**Structures vs. Individuals**

Another tension in meanings concerns explaining the grounds on which inequality exists as a result of structures versus individuals. Debates over the King holiday highlighted competing conceptualizations of a man representing unequal American structures in an ongoing pursuit of a dream compared to an individual representing the power of individual determination achieving the American Dream, ushering in a postracial era. These debates highlighted an ongoing tension between tackling inequality on the basis of individualism, where individuals were responsible for their life chances, or structuralism, where inequality was a result of institutions and systems (Bonilla-Silva 1997; Crenshaw 1995; Reskin 2012).

King’s words have been deployed toward both sides of this tension when he said, “When the architects of our republic wrote the magnificent words of the Constitution and the Declaration of Independence, they were signing a promissory note to which every American was to fall heir. This note was a promise that all men, yes, black men as well as white men, would be guaranteed the unalienable rights of life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness.” While King famously described his dream as a nation in which one, “will not be judged by the color of their skin but by the content of their character,” on one side his words have highlighted the systems of inequality that contextualized his speech. On the other side, these words have represented the power of individuals in the face of adversity. For example, the Tea Party drew on these rooted
meanings to claim King’s legacy as one of individual rights in which equality means a free and meritocratic market in which anyone is free to achieve economic success so long as the government does not intervene. Meanwhile, the Tea Party’s opponents including the NAACP and National Urban League worked to “reclaim” King’s legacy, arguing that his dream is unfulfilled as institutional inequalities and systemic oppression remain, and the work continues. While Civil Rights Memory Strategies, like the Tea Party’s, received much criticism as a disconnected interpretation of Civil Rights Movement memory, they maintained a trajectory of meaning traced to the fractures in the collective memory.

**How do we overcome Inequality?**

A final fracture of memory revolves around the modes by which inequality ought to be overcome.

**Race-Consciousness vs. Colorblindness**

During the debates over the King holiday, Republicans like Larry McDonald argued that institutionalizing an African American holiday would be racist against white Americans. Highlighting racial difference, in other words, was not the route to equality and inclusion. Similarly, during the Civil Rights era, whites saw desegregation as an oppressive practice infringing on their own rights (Formisano 2004; Sokol 2007). White Southerners felt desegregation was intended “not to end the system of racial oppression in the South, but to install a new system that oppressed them instead.” (Kruse 2007, p.9). However these debates were rooted even more deeply in historical legal debates over racial inclusion. The Constitution’s Equal Protection Clause of 1868, enacted largely to protect the Civil Rights Act of 1866, claims no state shall deny to any person within its jurisdiction "the equal protection of the laws." The
clause was the rationale for race-based remediation like Brown v. Board of Education in 1954. However, Justice Harlan’s 1896 dissent of the decision in Plessy v. Ferguson speaks to the deep-rooted debates over the extent to which the Constitution recognizes difference and what that recognition means. Harlan wrote, “In respect of civil rights, common to all citizens, the Constitution of the United States does not . . . permit any public authority to know the race of those entitled to be protected in the enjoyment of such rights. . . . There is no caste here. Our Constitution is colorblind, and neither knows nor tolerates classes among citizens,” (Kennedy 2013). While Harlan’s dissent intended to challenge the notion of “separate but equal,” his words were later deployed to challenge policies intended to reduce discrimination.

Interpretations of a colorblind Constitution, coupled with King’s own words, form the basis of present-day mobilization against race-based policies like affirmative action claiming that recognizing race leads to reverse racism (Gotanda 1991; Kennedy 2013). This notion of “reverse racism,” a discrimination against whites as direct result of laws, policies, and discourses protecting minority groups, took strong hold during Reagan’s presidency. These debates also spurred what many race scholars have identified as an era of colorblind racial ideology in which the very acknowledgment of racial difference is deemed a perpetuation of the “race problem” (Bonilla-Silva 2001, 2010; Feagin 1991b). These arguments were not limited to conservatives either. In 1992, campaigning presidential candidate Bill Clinton spoke out against African-American hip hop artist Sister Souljah for passionate lyrics in the song, “The Final Solution: Slavery’s Back in Effect.” Sister Souljah decried the continuing violence and oppression against African Americans with lyrics like:

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If your white great-great grandfather
KILLED my great-great grandfather
And your white great grandfather
SOLD my great grandfather
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And your white grandfather
RAPED my grandmother
And your father stole, cheated, lied and ROBBED my father
What kind of fool would I have to be to say,
“Come, my friend!” to the white daughter and son?

... The year is ’95, you’re a slave!
Some go in shock when they first hear the news
Press play and then rewind and review
But the message is clear and it cuts like a knife
You don’t surrender they’ll take your life
And I remember, the movies my momma used to show me
(*whip cracks*) “What’s ya name?!” “...Tobey”
Remember the times when they bought and they sold ya
WE ARE AT WAR!!!!! That’s what I told ya!
Slavery’s back in effect, slavery’s back in effect

At Jesse Jackson’s Rainbow Coalition event, Clinton denounced the lyrics, arguing, "If you took the words white and black and you reversed them, you might think David Duke [the white supremacist] was giving that speech,” (C-SPAN 1992). Later deemed the “Sister Souljah Moment” and a successful tide-changing event in Clinton’s campaign, Clinton’s denouncement of race-conscious rhetoric validated conservative arguments and appealed to moderates. When Sister Souljah defended her lyrics arguing they were taken out of context, the opposition fought back by arguing that rhetoric that emphasized racial difference ran counter to King’s ideals. For example, in an op-ed, Paul Greenberg wrote:

The temptation of a good old-fashioned hate isn’t confined to any one race or creed or ideology. All these separate but equal demagogues have more in common with one another than each might admit. And all are most dangerous not to others but to their own cause—because they deprive it of moral legitimacy. That is why Martin Luther King Jr. preached nonviolence and why he was so successful in his time. That is why he towers over various moral pygmies who have tried to claim his mantle, and why they seem unable to make any headway. Dr. King understood ‘the need for man to overcome oppression and violence without resorting to oppression and violence.’ He understood he had an ally in the heart of his enemy, and he never ceased addressing it. He would not relinquish the moral offensive—whatever the provocation... Have you noticed how the very word racist has lost almost all meaning by its promiscuous overuse? It comes to signify nothing more than someone we strongly disagree with—just as Fascist and
Communist once did. At one time or another, all these terms have been reduced to nothing more than generic cusswords… Final note: **Martin Luther King never had to claim that he was being quoted out of context** or back away from his words in any other fashion. Because he always took the rhetorical high ground, he never had to explain away his presence in the fever swamps. (Greenberg 1992)

These strategies mirrored Reagan’s initial strategy in signing the King holiday into existence: signaling colorblindness to both acknowledge racial inclusion while obscuring racial inequality. This strategic turn of meaning evolved into a strategy for other movements, both progressive and conservative, which sought to appeal to moderates. These meanings have also been applied beyond racial difference in strategies that contend that any rights granted on the basis of difference infringe upon an opposing group’s rights, as seen in the example of the Family Values and LGBT Movements. Family Values activists argue that LGBT rights infringe on Christian rights. While, again, these appear to be new strategies, they have long trajectories. These meanings exist in tension, deployed in new Civil Rights Memory Strategies that either recognize or obscure difference as a path toward equality.

**Radical vs. Moderate Action**

A final set of fractured meanings centers on the appropriate modes of action for challenging inequality. Lawmakers opposing King’s commemoration tied his actions to radicalism and violence, while those who supported him upheld his peaceful, nonviolent moderation. The understanding was that no figure worthy of collective, American commemoration could represent violence or political radicalism. For King’s supporters, this meant highlighting his most moderate acts— the marches, arms linked with whites – and words of peace – where only love would “drive out hate,” and minimizing his political critique and complex understanding of the mobilizing force of violence. Yet, during the Civil Rights
Movement, King was a polarizing figure. In 1966, the Harris Survey asked whether Martin Luther King was “helping or hurting the Negro cause of civil rights.” Fifty percent of white respondents believed he was hurting the cause. A little over a third said he was “helping.” The Civil Rights Movement itself was divisive. In a 1961 Gallup Poll, 61 percent of respondents disapproved of the Freedom Riders, 57 percent thought strategies like freedom rides, sit-ins, and other demonstrations would make it more difficult for African Americans to be integrated (Sekou 2017).

Even after the King national holiday had been signed and settled, memories of violence, militancy, and radicalism, often associated with Malcolm X and the Black Panthers, were juxtaposed with King’s nonviolence to highlight appropriate modes of protest. This dichotomous set of meanings has continued to shape a collective understanding of “good” and “bad” protest activity. Present-day movements deploy Civil Rights Memory Strategies that link their identities with the Civil Rights Movement through their nonviolent, civil disobedience like sit ins, pray ins, and die ins. Rival movements try to discredit movements by highlighting their radicalism and violence. For example, conservatives like Bill O’Reilly have discredited the Black Lives Matter movement’s strategies, arguing, “Dr. King would not participate in a Black Lives Matter protest,” (O’Reilly 2016). A frequently cited argument against Black Lives Matter was expressed by Dr. Richard Land in an op-ed in The Christian Post, where he argued that Black Lives Matter’s “radical” strategies ran counter to Dr. King’s philosophy of unity in “common humanity and our shared citizenship.” He wrote:

Black Lives Matter is just such a divisive movement. When they shout down politicians (Gov. Martin O’Malley) who tried to protest that all lives matter, rather than the more restrictive “Black Lives Matter,” they are engaging in counter-productive rhetoric which divides, rather than unites. The tragic result of such rhetoric is the kind of violence that erupted in Dallas last Thursday night producing five dead policemen and six more injured officers. One of the killers in Dallas said he wanted to murder as many white people as
possible and especially white policemen. (Land 2016)

The sets of meanings about acceptable and unacceptable protest are rooted in the collective memory of the Civil Rights Movement. Present day invocations of collective memory may take forms that appear brand new on the surface, assemblages of new and old cultural meanings deployed toward new political projects. Many civil rights scholars and activists argue as much when they describe the misappropriation, sanitization, and remaking of the Civil Rights Movement. However, I argue these Civil Rights Memory Strategies are not disconnected from their source. They are not evidence of cultural entropy, the “process through which the intended meanings and uses of cultural objects fracture into alternative meanings, new practices, failed interactions, and blatant disregard,” (McDonnell 2016). Rather, I argue these Civil Rights Memory Strategies that are so seemingly disconnected from collective memory are rooted in historical meaning structures. As movements link their dynamic group identities to different aspects of this meaning structure to generate new meanings, long trajectories of memory develop, as I will elucidate throughout this volume.

**Chapter Overview**

In Chapter 1, I engage in a large-n analysis to analyze Civil Rights Memory Strategies across a landscape of social movements. Within three decades, conservative detractors who opposed Dr. King’s national holiday now adopt and claim his legacy. Historians and activists have argued that conservative groups appropriate the meanings of the Civil Rights Movement for their own political purposes. Indeed, this chapter shows that political uses of the Civil Rights Movement have diffused across a landscape of social movements, progressive and conservative alike. Through the social movement framing approach, we would conceptualize this diffusion to
come as a result of a “Civil Rights” Master Frame. This approach argues that the Civil Rights Movement produced a widely-recognized set of tactics and cultural meanings that groups draw upon to shape their self-presentation to an audience. In this view, the Civil Rights frame is constituted by a relatively stable set of meanings. Yet in an analysis of the political uses of the Civil Rights Movement among 110 social movement organizations representing 11 different social movements from 1980-2016, I find the opposite result: the meanings of the “Civil Rights” frame fragment and diverge over time. As different groups make strategic linkages between their group’s identity and the collective memory of the Civil Rights Movement, the interaction between identity and memory produces new sets of meanings. Through a feedback loop, different identity-memory linkages subsequently transform the meaning of the collective memory. These findings draw attention to analytic shortcomings in the framing approach, which misses the influence of: 1) historicity; 2) the non-discursive dimensions of cultural meanings; and most critically, 3) the messengers who deploy meaning structures. To overcome these shortcomings, I develop a concept of “Civil Rights Memory Strategy,” which accounts for 1) the explicitly temporal character of collective memory as a cultural meaning structure; 2) the multiple dimensions of cultural constructs beyond discourse; and 3) movement strategies as constituted by linkages between group identities (messengers) and cultural meaning structures (messages). As the message in this analysis, collective memory is continually shaped through the interaction between group identities, memory meaning structures, and the changing contexts in which these “Civil Rights Memory Strategies” are deployed.

Having argued that Civil Rights Memory Strategies are constituted by links between group identities – messengers - and interpretations of memory - messages, Chapter 3 examines the processes of “Civil Rights Memory Strategy in interaction” more closely. Scholars have long
applied the concept of “cultural resonance” to explain how a message is received by an audience. In dominant theories of resonance, cultural messages resonate when they are connected to audiences’ worldviews. A more recent theory argues that resonance is more processual than previously theorized, emergent on contingent interactions between cultural messages and audiences. While this view importantly highlights the interactional process of cultural resonance, both approaches obscure the role of the messenger who deploys the cultural message toward the audience. I argue that the cultural message’s messenger – in case, the identity of the mobilizing group who deploys Civil Rights Memory Strategy – is a critical factor in this process. The targeted audience must accept not only the message they deploy – the interpretation of collective memory - but they must accept the linkage between the group’s identity and the collective memory. These linkages become the grounds on which movements and rival movements battle, as these case studies show. Analyzing archival data from two paired-cases of rival movements over two presidential eras, the LGBT Movement and Family Values coalitions and the Immigrant Rights Movement and Nativist coalitions, I identify a pattern of processes that elucidate how the perceived relationship between a group’s identity and a collective memory shapes the construction and contestation of cultural resonance. Rival groups seek to discredit a movement by disrupting the coupling of group identity and collective memory to sway political support in their own direction. These memory “strategies in interaction” are not only micro-processes contingent on micro-interactions. More critically, they are structured by macro-fields of cultural meaning that situate relational group identities. By taking a comparative approach to the study of cultural resonance in movement strategy, this study reveals the patterned cultural processes of meaning-making through which groups engage in contentious politics.
Finally, Chapter 4 looks even more closely at one movement to examine a case in which the messenger’s group identity is shifting as notably as the collective memory to which it links. As Chapters 2 and 3 showed, increasingly since the 1980s, mobilizations across the ideological spectrum strategically invoke the memory of the Civil Rights Movement. This “Civil Rights Memory Strategy” is deployed in competing political projects, both to establish and to discredit strategic links between a group’s collective identity and collective memory. Why do groups use Civil Rights Memory Strategies at some times but not others? Theories of movement strategy contend that groups vying for inclusion develop mobilization strategies based on evaluations of their social location. However, social locations are not static positions but are rather dynamic political processes shaped through the interaction between macro political-cultural contexts and micro relations between movement actors. Processes of racial group formation are particularly central in shaping the lenses through which groups understand their position in society and, critically for this study, develop strategies to negotiate their position. I argue that social movement theory presumes a sort of volitionality in these negotiations, underestimating the extent to which social location is historically-situated and constrained. Without integrating theories of racial group formation and movement strategy, we have a limited understanding of the relationship between shifting political-cultural contexts, movements’ relational social locations, and subsequent strategies for challenging these positions. As a group whose social location explicitly shifted after 9/11, the growing Muslim Rights Movement provides the ideal case for such a study. Although most rights movements evoke the memory of the Civil Rights Movement, the national Muslim Rights Movement only began using Civil Rights Memory Strategy in the last five years. What led mainstream Muslim activists to begin using this strategy, and what does this tell us about how groups vie for inclusion?
Drawing on archival data and focus groups with Muslim community leaders and organizers, this chapter shows how Muslim activists shift from pre-9/11 strategies centered on maintaining their distance from Black identity to post-2011 Civil Rights Memory Strategies that use Civil Rights memory to bridge Muslim identity with Black and Latino identity in multiracial coalitions. I find that Muslim activists’ perceptions of group identity recalibrate with changing political-cultural contexts, reshaping strategies for seeking inclusion. These identity shifts reflect a process of racialization of collective identity in which post-9/11 policies and discourses stigmatize Muslims, shaping contexts in which Muslims generate perceptions of social location analogous to African Americans. What results is a new strategic focus on coalition-building with people of color through Civil Rights Memory Strategies aimed at establishing common oppression. These findings explain how movements 1) Develop relational perceptions of group position as a process of racial identity formation, and 2) Use collective memory to strategize through these racial subjectivities to negotiate social location. Given the rise of xenophobic and racist discourse in the public sphere, this study has important implications for our understanding of the relationship between macro-contexts and micro-dynamics of movement identity and strategy construction.

Through this volume, by examining how a single cultural structure is taken up by a landscape of social movements, I develop a new approach to understanding why a cultural structure takes different forms in contentious politics. I not only historicize the cultural structure but I also argue that the ideological processes that created the object are the living roots of the object, shaping the ways in which it is deployed. As groups link the meaning-structures of their identities to the collective memory, they generate new meaning structures, which take on
trajectories of their own. The proliferation of meanings of memory, over time, changes the collective memory itself and the way we collectively recall our shared history.
CHAPTER 2: THE SHAPE-SHIFTING COLLECTIVE MEMORY OF THE CIVIL RIGHTS MOVEMENT: TRAJECTORIES OF MESSENGERS AND MESSAGES IN CONTENTIOUS POLITICS

“We must use time creatively.” – Martin Luther King, Jr. (Letter from Birmingham Jail, April 16, 1963)

Introduction

Within three decades, conservative detractors who opposed Dr. King’s national holiday now adopt and claim his legacy. Historians and activists have argued that conservative groups appropriate the meanings of the Civil Rights Movement for their own political purposes (Baldwin and Burrow 2013; Bruyneel 2014; Dyson 2000; Garrow 2004; Hall 2005; Vega 2015). Indeed, this chapter shows that political uses of the Civil Rights Movement have diffused across a landscape of social movements, progressive and conservative alike. While scholars of contentious politics generally agree that groups deploy cultural structures like collective memory in strategic ways, there is far less agreement about why these strategies take particular forms. Through the social movement framing approach, we would conceptualize this diffusion to come as a result of a “Civil Rights” Master Frame (Snow and Benford 1992; Tarrow 1994). This approach argues that the Civil Rights Movement produced a widely-recognized set of tactics and cultural meanings that groups draw upon to shape their self-presentation to an audience (Benford 1997; Benford and Snow 2000; Johnston and Noakes 2005; Snow and Benford 1992). In this view, the Civil Rights frame is constituted by a relatively stable set of meanings, although the contexts in which frames are deployed may change significantly.
Yet in an analysis of the political uses of the Civil Rights Movement among 110 social movement organizations representing 11 different social movements from 1980-2016, I find the opposite result: the meanings of the “Civil Rights” frame fragment and diverge over time. As different groups make strategic linkages between their group’s identity and the collective memory of the Civil Rights Movement, the interaction between identity and memory produces new sets of meanings. Through a feedback loop, different identity-memory linkages subsequently transform the meaning of the collective memory. These findings draw attention to analytic shortcomings in the framing approach, which misses the influence of: 1) historicity; 2) the non-discursive dimensions of cultural meanings; and most critically, 3) the messengers who deploy meaning structures and, ultimately, give them meaning.

To overcome these shortcomings, I develop a concept of “Civil Rights Memory Strategy,” which accounts for 1) the explicitly temporal character of collective memory as a cultural meaning structure; 2) the multiple dimensions of cultural constructs beyond discourse; and 3) movement strategies as constituted by linkages between group identities (messengers) and cultural meaning structures (messages). As the message in this analysis, collective memory is continually shaped through the interaction between group identities, memory meaning structures, and the changing contexts in which these “Civil Rights Memory Strategies” are deployed. To lay out this approach, I first describe a theoretical framework followed by a description of data and methods. Next I analyze a unique dataset of a sample of Civil Rights Memory Strategies deployed by 11 different social movements from 1980-2016. I first document their diffusion, showing how Civil Rights Memory Strategy usage grows over all eleven social movements over time. Next, I look more closely at their evolution of usage, showing that Civil Rights Memory Strategies are constituted by identity-memory linkages that transform the meaning of collective
memory over time. Finally, I conclude with thoughts on how these findings contribute to our understanding of cultural processes in contentious politics.

**Beyond the Framing Approach**

Since the 1980’s, much of the research at the intersection of cultural sociology and contentious politics has sought to explain why groups strategically deploy cultural meanings in particular ways and why these strategies are received by audiences in particular ways. The widely-adopted “framing approach” stems from Snow’s 1986 article on “frame alignment processes.” This approach draws from social psychological and linguistic theories – primarily Goffman’s work on the “schemata of interpretation” (Goffman 1974)– to connect processes of social reality construction with political processes (Snow et al. 1986). Scholars have thoroughly unpacked the different modes of framing – e.g. diagnostic, prognostic, motivational (Benford and Snow 2000; Schrock, Holden, and Reid 2004; Snow and Byrd 2007)– the variable features of frames – e.g. problem identification, inclusivity and exclusivity, variation in scope, resonance (Babb 1996; Benford 1993a; McCammon 2009)– the different types of frames – e.g. “injustice frames,” “oppositional frames,” “human rights frames,” (Benford 1993b; Čapek 1993; Carroll and Ratner 1996; Gamson et al. 1992) – as have they debated the utility of typologies. What is central for this study is that through this approach, movements are engaged in an active process of identifying and strategically deploying cultural meanings “out there” toward particular audiences. In the original conceptualization, frames are interactive, joint processes of meaning-making which may challenge existing meanings and generate new ones (Gamson et al. 1992), yet many analyses are more focused on schemata of meanings rather than processes of interaction (Benford and Snow 2000).
Through the framing approach, it is not particularly remarkable that all sorts of groups deploy the memory of the Civil Rights Movement in contentious politics. It is even predictable. Tarrow described how the Civil Rights Movement produced a modular mode of action and discourse, a diffuse “master frame” on which movements draw. He wrote:

It was in the process of struggle that the inherited rhetoric of rights was transformed into a new and broader collective action frame. The lesson of the civil rights movement is that the symbols of revolt are not drawn like musty costumes from a cultural closet and arrayed before the public. Nor are new meanings unrolled out of whole cloth. The costumes of revolt are woven from a blend of inherited and invented fibers into collective action frames in confrontation with opponents and elites. And once established, they are no longer the sole possession of the movements that produced them but – like the modular forms of collective action described in Chapter 6 – become available for others to wear. As Snow and Benford point out, once enunciated in the context of a period of general turbulence, a successful collective action frame becomes a ‘master frame’ (1992). In the case of civil rights, as a result of the pathbreaking framing work of civil rights, ‘we began to see the heightened politicization of other groups, notably feminists, environmentalists, the elderly, children, the handicapped, and homosexuals organizing and demanding their ‘rights’…(Tarrow 1994)

The framing approach seems to well explain this “minority rights revolution,” (Skrentny 2004) a “civil rights society” (Bumiller 1992) in which groups deploy a readily-available frame to present their oppression and mode of mobilization toward political targets. Tarrow describes these frames as costumes different groups try on and make their own. This description implies an important link between an actor and a frame, yet analyses do not unpack the mechanisms of this linkage. Further, in describing how the frames “are no longer the sole possession of the movements that produced them,” this conceptualization obscures the history that constitutes a frame’s core meaning structure. In other words, while the discourses and actions of the Civil Rights Movement may be widely adopted, the symbolism of African American struggle remains embedded both in the meaning structure of the collective memory and externally in social history. Groups must contend with these meanings. Here I want to draw an important distinction:
groups may draw on the discourses and tactics of the Civil Rights Movement with the utilitarian intention of enacting its effects without conjuring up its symbolism. Yet there is a meaningful difference in strategy between a movement that talks about civil rights and a movement that calls itself a “new civil rights movement” while quoting Dr. King. I argue that the framing approach has subsumed these strategies as one and the same, but they are markedly different in their goals, impacts, and unintended consequences.

Further, the framing approach obscures the dynamic recursive processes of change occurring between the groups deploying the frame – the messengers - and the frame – the message. And indeed, while social movement scholars have consistently employed the framing approach to evaluate the different ways in which groups deploy cultural meanings toward strategic goals, there are growing critiques of this approach. These critiques argue that focusing on frames can obscure the complexity of cultural processes in contentious politics. Benford’s “insider’s critique” of the framing approach well categorized these shortcomings as “neglect of systematic empirical studies, descriptive bias, static tendencies, reification, reductionism, elite bias, and monolithic tendencies,” (Benford 1997, 1). Many framing analyses are neither longitudinal nor comparative. They suffer from static tendencies, meaning they are conceptualized as “things” rather than ongoing processes, negotiations often wrought with contention. In many studies, frames have been reified, meaning analyses neglect the influence of human agents and their emotions (studies like the following renew the analysis of agents and emotions: Goodwin and Jasper 2006; Goodwin, Jasper, and Polletta 2000; Jasper 2012; Polletta, Jasper, and Goodwin 2001). Frames have also been reduced, in some analyses, to cognitive schema that overlooks their social constructionism. Jasper and Goodwin argue that this reification process overlooks the ways in which culture both shapes the political opportunities
toward which frames are deployed and the frames themselves (Goodwin, Jasper, and Khattra 1999). This sort of recursive relationship has been implied but not explicated in other movement studies, showing that frames are adapted to cultural contexts, in turn producing new frames, which can influence culture. Oliver and Johnston’s critique similarly argues that a framing approach problematically reduces and subsumes the broader work of ideology into frames (Oliver and Johnston 2000). They argue that scholars must analytically separate the work of ideology from the work of frames in movement processes. The framing approach is also subject to elite bias wherein much of the scholarship focuses on movement elites’ frames, neglecting other movement actors and bystanders. Finally, Benford argues the framing approach is monolithic, meaning it treats frames as singular entities representing a single social reality.

These thorough critiques highlight areas of remediation, which this analysis incorporates. However, this study also elucidates three additional shortcomings. First, a critique of the framing approach’s static tendencies aptly emphasizes its neglect of dynamic, contentious processes. However, another aspect of frames’ staticity is that they are often subject to ahistoric analysis. Just as frames evolve over time, studies should evaluate the extent to which they are enabled and constrained by past uses. How do the histories of the meaning structures, the ideologies that produced them, shape the boundaries of their usage (Foucault 1980; Said 2006)? For analyzing groups who deploy collective memory’s meaning structure, historicizing meaning structure becomes particularly important as history is an explicit feature. Evoking historical meaning is the goal of the strategy. A framing approach does not account for the temporal aspects of meaning. Second, most analyses of frames center on discourse. While discourse is central in the construction of social reality, focalizing discourse obscures other influential dimensions of cultural meaning construction such as meaning-laden actors, images, and actions. In the case of
collective memory as a meaning structure, analyzing a “civil rights frame” would obscure a range of other meaningful actions from the significance of invoking Dr. King over Malcolm X to deploying an image of segregated water fountains marked “Straight” and “Gay.” While Goffman’s early conception of a frame emphasized framing as a process of self-presentation, analyses of frames rarely consider the performative aspects of this work beyond discourse.

Finally, while the framing approach is based upon a theory of self-presentation, the relational subjectivities of the presenters themselves are too often left out of the analysis. Critiques of the framing approach point out that scholars neglect the human agents who interpret and emote frames. Critiques also highlight the reductionist, monolithic analytic tendencies that render a single social reality in which frames circulate and the individualist analyses that fail to scale up to broader cultural processes. However even these critiques do not spell out the thread that connects them: social locations and meaning structures are interwoven in a cultural fabric. Groups interpret their position in the social world in particular ways and they interpret frames in particular ways, but these particular interpretations or “modes of thought” (Perrin, Roos, and Gauchat 2014) draw upon the same universe of cultural meanings. They are interrelated, or relational, meanings. For example, Muslim activists argue that their group identity is denigrated, that they are socially constructed as terrorist threats. Activists then interpret their social location in relation to African Americans in the 1950’s and 60’s then deploy the memory of the Civil Rights Movement, a cultural representation of African American struggle, to present their movement as a civil rights movement. The “civil rights frame” Muslim activists deploy draws on the same network of meanings through which they understand their position in society.

This may seem an obvious claim. However, framing analyses and their critiques center on the shortcomings of analyzing messages without accounting for the meaning structures that
shape messengers’ relational social locations, the subjectivities from which groups interpret and deploy messages. Without linking the messengers to the messages, we miss the group-level cultural processes of meaning-making between individuals and structures that shape contentious politics. For example, in taking the modular framing approach, we would understand the Gun Rights’ Movement’s “civil rights frame” to operate on a different field than the LGBT Movement’s “civil rights frame”: two unrelated movements doing two unrelated things using one widely available cultural structure drawn from a sort of cultural toolkit, a repertoire of contention (Swidler 1986; Tarrow 1994; Tilly 1978). However, I argue that when groups deploy frames to negotiate their position in the social world they are connecting their perceived social location to an interpretation of shared cultural meanings. Groups occupy different social locations in terms of their relationship to other groups, to collective memory, and to the opportunities and constraints around action. A group’s social location is structured both by cultural meanings and material positions (Fraser 1997, Naples 2003), and groups strategize, mobilize, and compete both with and against one another in a dynamic and relational process (Blumer 1958). So, while groups may interpret separate social realities, they are jointly shaping – through separate, seemingly unrelated social movements – one social world, one society. In turn, the continual interaction between group identities and memory produces a conflagration of interpretations of memory, a sort of feedback process that transforms the meaning of the collective memory over time.

In sum, what is missing in framing analyses is the influential linkage between group identities and cultural meaning structures. Frames are made meaningful by messengers, so as critics argue, frames are not static, but not only because the frames themselves change over time. Frames change because they are constituted by the interaction between the meanings that
position messengers’ relational group identities, which are also changing over time, and the meanings embedded in the frame. These critiques are summarized in Table 1 with summaries of remediation.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Critique</th>
<th>Remediation</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Non-Systematic Empirical Studies</td>
<td>Longitudinal, Comparative Empirical Studies</td>
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<tr>
<td>Descriptive Bias</td>
<td>Sociology of the Mechanisms of Framing Frames as Dynamic, Contentious Processes incorporating Macro and Micro Levels of Analysis</td>
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<tr>
<td>Static Tendencies</td>
<td>Focalizing Agentic and Affective Factors that Construct Frames in Interpretive Ways</td>
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<tr>
<td>Reification</td>
<td>Scaling Up to Connect Framing Processes to Larger Political-Cultural Processes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reductionism</td>
<td>Separating the Work of Ideology Out from the Work of Frames</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ideology Subsumed as Frame</td>
<td>Incorporating All Movement Actors into Analysis</td>
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<tr>
<td>Elite Bias</td>
<td>Evaluating Multiple Layers of Social Reality-Construction</td>
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<td>Monolithic Tendencies</td>
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<th>Additional Critiques</th>
<th>Additional Remediations</th>
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<tr>
<td>Ahistoric</td>
<td>Evaluating Historical Lineage of Meaning Structure</td>
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<tr>
<td>Discursive Singularity</td>
<td>Incorporating Non-Discursive Dimensions of Cultural Meaning</td>
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<tr>
<td>Missing Messengers</td>
<td>Evaluating Deployed Frame as Constituted by Interactions Between Group Identity and Meaning Structures</td>
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Having argued that strategic invocations of collective memory should not be reduced to frames, I next develop a concept of “Civil Rights Memory Strategy” bridging memory studies with theories of movement strategy to chart a pathway out of the framing approach’s limitations.
Civil Rights Memory Strategy

Bridging memory studies and theories of movement strategy, I develop a concept of “Civil Rights Memory Strategy.” Memory studies tell us that collective memories are an ongoing, collective process of meaning-making constituted by multiple aspects (historical figures, images, discourses, actions) operating at multiple levels: social psychological in individual memories, cultural in meanings and discourses, and institutional in sanctioned vehicles of commemoration (Halbwachs 1992; Olick 1999; Olick and Robbins 1998; Pennebaker and Banasik 1997; Schwartz 1982). Movement studies of strategy tell us that social movement strategies are conceptual, interactive, relational choices both shaped by and shaping culture (Downey and Rohlinger 2008; Gamson 1990; J. Jasper 2004; Jasper 2012). Collective Memory is a cultural structure of particular interest as its relationship to time is explicit, unlike cultural structures (or frames) without an overt temporal referent, although all cultural meanings have a historical lineage. When a group invokes a collective memory for a political purpose – a “Civil Rights Memory Strategy” – a group foregrounds a point in collective history to make a claim about the present. By signifying a specific Civil Rights Memory Strategy, I foreground the historical features of the meaning structure.

Civil Rights Memory Strategy is a type of strategy constituted by a multivalent repertoire of historical figures, images, discursive frames, and actions intended to strategically invoke a collective memory (see Table 2). Because the intent of the strategy is to invoke the collective memory, I conceptualize these dimensions (historical figures, images, discursive frames, actions) not as separate strategies but rather as different dimensions of one strategy. However, these dimensions are not mutually exclusive nor need they be used individually. An actor may deploy
both a historical figure and a discursive frame, and in the case of invocations of Martin Luther
King, Jr, for example, the two are often interrelated as King’s speeches have been used as
representative discursive frames for the Civil Rights Movement. Used in conjunction, the
invocation of memory is amplified as the movement emphasizes that their discursive frames are
linked to King and intended to produce a cognitive association with the memory of the Civil
Rights Movement. The difference between dimensions is clear, however, when, for example, the
Family Values Movement invokes King to talk about how King would have opposed gay
marriage. In this instance, they are not invoking the discursive frames of the Civil Rights
Movement (freedom, equality, American Dream). They are invoking King as a historical figure
to interpret his stance on the issue at hand and to ultimately delegitimize the LGBT Movement’s
claims as the new civil rights movement. I retain these dimensions under one umbrella of Civil
Rights Memory Strategy because the broader strategy is the invocation of memory.

Table 2.2. Civil Rights Memory Strategy

<table>
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<tr>
<th>Civil Rights Memory Strategy Dimension</th>
<th>Description</th>
<th>Example from Civil Rights Movement</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Historical Figure</td>
<td>Invokes historical figure attached to collective memory. Invocation may interpret what historical figure said or did, or may use historical figure as a referent. Invokes image that calls to mind a particular collective memory. Invocation may reproduce image or simply describe it.</td>
<td>Martin Luther King, Jr.; Rosa Parks</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Image
Invokes image that calls to mind a particular collective memory. Invocation may reproduce image or simply describe it.

Segregated water fountains; Police brutalizing protestors with fire hoses and dogs; Lynching

Discourse
Invokes the resonant language of the collective memory, its widely recognizable sets of terms, phrases, and meanings.

Judged by the content of character; the American Dream; nonviolence

Action
Enacts activities, performances, tactics widely understood to be actions associated with the collective memory.

Sit ins; Freedom Rides

This conceptualization accounts for the limitations of the framing approach by shifting the analytic focus from a frame, which implies a single, reified thing, to a strategy, which implies a linkage between agent and process. This is an analysis that clarifies the recursive relationship between the moving parts on both sides of the linkage – dynamic processes of group identity formation on one side and dynamic processes of collective memory formation on the other side.

Actors present collective memory not only in discourse but also through historical figures, images, and actions. This study is longitudinal (1980-2016) and comparative (eleven social movements). As Goffman laid out in his original conceptualization, framing is fundamentally a process of self-presentation. It is not only the frames – or messages – that matter, it is the way they are strategically interpreted and enacted by actors – the messengers – in interaction with other actors that shapes social reality.

Data and Methods

In order to investigate the evolution of Civil Rights Movement memory over time, I take a random sample from Caren and Amenta’s dataset of 600 social movement organizations.
mentioned in the New York Times over a century (Amenta et al. 2009). This dataset was selected as a representation of the breadth of the types of social movements covered by a mainstream media source over time. This dataset follows a tradition of longitudinal social movement studies which examine protest events in the news (Jenkins and Eckert 1986; Kerbo and Shaffer 1992; McAdam and Su 2002; Soule and Earl 2005). With research assistants, Caren and Amenta first identified the population of social movement organizations (SMOs) in the twentieth century using a definition of SMOs generated by McCarthy and Zald and Gamson (Gamson 1990; McCarthy and Zald 1977), put simply as formal organizations with goals aligned with a social movement. As the researchers acknowledged, this method does exclude some organizations, for example think tanks and professional associations. However, Caren and Amenta justify their method as it examines “organizations [that] are the most directly influential in institutional politics and elite debates,” (Amenta et al. 2009). They began with extensive lists of SMOs generated by previous research (Fountain 2006; Tilly N.d.) including articles and monographs (Gamson 1990; Minkoff 1997; Skocpol 2003; Snow, Soule, and Kriesi 2004), as well as the Encyclopedia of Associations. As an additional check, they searched ProQuest for articles mentioning SMOs, including both official names and acronyms.

Next, they searched for mentions of these SMOs in the New York Times using ProQuest Historical Newspapers. They sorted organizations by their number of mentions, checking results against search results in The Washington Post. The four researchers coded with pairwise reliability scores above 90 percent. Finally, they categorized SMOs based on the type of movement. In sum, they identified 1,247 qualifying SMOs, although only 947 were covered in the New York Times. From this data, I further pared the dataset deleting organizations that appeared multiple times due to small differences in organizational spellings. I maintained a
column for duplicate spellings in order to search for organizational mentions with multiple iterations of organizational spelling. The result was 621 organizations. From this list, I developed a unique dataset of 10 randomly selected organizations per type of movement (Animals, Anti-Abortion, Christian Right, Conservative, Environment/Conservation, Gun Rights, Immigration, LGBT, Muslim Rights, Nativist/Supremacist, Police Reform) for 110 organizations. Because I was interested in invocations of the Civil Rights Movement after 1980, I did not include organizations that were defunct after 1980. If the organization was defunct, I randomly selected another organization. The resulting list of organizations for analysis is detailed in Appendix A.

Utilizing LexisNexis, with a research assistant, I searched for the co-occurrence of the organizational name with keywords from the Civil Rights Movement: “Civil Rights Movement,” “Martin Luther King,” “Rosa Parks,” “Malcolm X,” “Black Panthers.” LexisNexis is the most widely used news archive for social scientists (Weaver and Bimber 2008), including roughly 300 newspapers and 500 general print publications covering all big-city newspapers in the United States, as well as papers from mid-size markets and some local papers. It is a vast resource representing a complex field of media coverage. We sorted results by oldest-to-newest to locate the first publicized invocation of Civil Rights Movement memory, and we recorded the earliest three Civil Rights Memory Strategies. We only identified strategies where an organization had strategically invoked collective memory. For example, an organization may have been reported to be holding an event on “Martin Luther King Blvd.” or an article may have described how the NRA was protesting legislation introduced as a result of Martin Luther King’s assassination. In many cases, an article would cite a figure unrelated to the organization mentioning the Civil Rights Movement. These articles do not reflect an organizational invocation of collective memory and were not counted. If there were no newspaper articles citing a Civil Rights Memory
Strategy, we conducted a Google search and utilized the search function on the organizational website to identify any Civil Rights Memory Strategies that did not receive media coverage. If no such strategy existed, we indicated “N/A” in the dataset.

Social movement theory emphasizes how political and cultural contexts guide movements’ perceptions of opportunities and constraints, shaping strategy construction. Given the influence of political-cultural climate on social movement processes, I sought to evaluate the extent to which Civil Rights Memory Strategies differed not only between movements but also between presidential eras. From a dataset of newspaper articles covering Civil Rights Memory Strategies among 110 SMOs (n=1301), organizational websites, blog posts, and press releases, I looked for patterns in strategic memory usage over time. Using ATLAS.ti, I coded newspaper descriptions of Civil Rights Memory Strategies and quotes from organizational members, using a deep analysis of cases to move between generating and applying concepts. First, I used an inductive model of open coding to generate codes from transcripts in order to establish a coding scheme (Corbin and Strauss 2008). These early codes were nearly identical to the language employed by political actors to highlight the ways in which movements were drawing analogical meanings between their group identity and interpretations of collective memory like “the new Black” or “nonviolent like King.” It was from the breadth of these original codes that I began clarifying that while there were recurrent themes in interpretive concepts, there was much more fragmentation than coherence. The cohesion in interpretive concepts mirrored the themes uncovered in Chapter 1’s analysis of a fragmentation of meanings of collective memory: strategies that were directed alternatively between establishing group identity as new minorities or claiming no such inequality existed, strategies that deployed memory toward an argument about “who we are” as a country, whether on moral terms or economic terms, and strategies
deployed to make claims about the appropriate modes of protest. Yet these arguments took very
different shapes depending upon the group deploying the strategy. For example, an animal rights
group claiming animals were the newly oppressed minorities did not seem to compare to a
Family Values group decrying unborn fetuses the newly oppressed minorities, despite their
shared code within a coding scheme.

Because of these complexities, I turned the focus toward a content analysis of these
fragmented meaning structures (Berg 2001), focusing on examining the “scenes,” or series of
actions coalescing into meanings, through which the framing took place as described in the
newspaper articles (Goffman 1986). From this analysis of processes of meaning-construction, I
began to develop a theory of linkages between group identities and memory interpretations. To
contextualize Civil Rights Memory Strategies, I also analyzed secondary historical sources on
each type of social movement (see Appendix B). This data provided a sketch of each
movement’s roots and political-cultural trajectory in American history, and specifically, the
movement’s relationship to the Civil Rights Movement. I analyzed a total of 123 Civil Rights
Memory Strategies deployed among 73 social movement organizations constituting 11 different
types of social movements from 1980-2016. Sometimes the greatest newspaper coverage for the
strategy was only two or three articles, which highlights movements’ ongoing challenge of
Strategies that attracted the most attention bundled multiple dimensions of collective memory –
historical figures, images, discourses, actions – such as the Immigrant Rights Freedom Ride and
the Tea Party Rally to Restore Honor. Through the analysis of a unique dataset of Civil Rights
Memory Strategies among social movement organizations, I show how movement strategies that
invoke collective memory – “Civil Rights Memory Strategies” – are more than framing

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strategies deploying widely resonant messages. Civil Rights Memory Strategies are linkages between messengers and messages shaped in interaction with other actors and political-cultural contexts. These linkages generate new cultural meanings, which, over time, change the meaning of the collective memory itself.

**The Diffusion of Memory**

Though scholars and activists argue the memory of the Civil Rights Movement has been widely adopted, no study to date has systematically examined the extent of memory diffusion among movements. While this study does not examine every Civil Rights Memory Strategy ever deployed, I do examine a sample of Civil Rights Memory Strategies within a wide, representative landscape of eleven different social movements. These results show that by 2016, in a sample of 110 social movement organizations, 73 social movement organizations among all eleven types of social movements had deployed Civil Rights Memory Strategies. Figures 1 and 2 show how these Civil Rights Memory Strategies grew over time. In Figure 1, we see Civil Rights Memory Strategies are relatively rare in the 1980’s. Civil Rights Memory Strategies in Reagan’s era were selectively deployed mostly by minority movements like LGBT groups along the narrative of a “minority rights revolution” (Skrentny 2004). Civil Rights Memory Strategies grow in the 1990’s, expanding among conservative groups through Clinton’s presidency.

By George W. Bush’s presidency and the subsequent aftermath of September 11, 2001, nearly 40 percent of the organizations in this sample had adopted a Civil Rights Memory Strategy. By the end of Obama’s presidency, 66 percent of organizations had adopted a Civil Rights Memory Strategy. More importantly, all eleven types of social movements (Animals, Anti-Abortion, Christian Right, Conservative, Environment/Conservation, Gun Rights, Immigration, LGBT, Muslim Rights, Nativist/Supremacist, Police Reform) had deployed a Civil
Rights Memory Strategy. While each movement deployed the Civil Rights Movement Civil Rights Memory Strategy toward competing goals, the framing approach would lead us to expect the basic contours of the strategy would look similar. The meanings upon which groups drew would be expected to be about the same, even if they were deployed toward different targets. Yet a closer look at 123 Civil Rights Memory Strategies reveals markedly different results.

**Figure 2.1. Cumulative Percentage of Social Movement Organizations Using Civil Rights Memory Strategies, by Year**

The links between identity and memory generated vastly different meanings. These meanings are increasingly fragmented. I turn toward an analysis of trajectories among these strategies to argue that Civil Rights Memory Strategies were made through linkages between two sets of meanings: perceived group identity and interpretation of memory, both shaped against
political-cultural contexts. The interaction between these linked sets of meanings generated the Civil Rights Memory Strategy, which, over four presidential decades, reshaped the collective memory of the Civil Rights Movement.

**Linkages Between Messengers and Messages**

To recap, I argue that groups enact Civil Rights Memory Strategies by 1) developing a sense of group identity and this identity’s social location relative to other groups; 2) developing an interpretation of collective memory for group goals, both processes in interaction with political-cultural contexts; then 3) strategically linking perceived group identity to perceived memory interpretation, generating a Civil Rights Memory Strategy. These strategic linkages produce new meanings, which can and often are contested by other groups who may return with their own linkage between identity and memory. These processes transform the meaning of the collective memory over time. It is through this process that we can explain why conservatives who vehemently rejected Dr. King in 1981 claimed to be arbiters of his legacy two decades later. It is for this reason that in 2014, a #reclaimking movement began to “rescue” King and the Civil Rights Movement from its misappropriation.


In the decade following the institutionalization of a national King holiday, Civil Rights Memory Strategies were growing among minority groups fighting for civil rights. LGBT groups were particularly prominent as they began shifting from a group celebrating sexual liberation to a political movement mirroring ethnic (Seidman 1993) interest-group politics (Altman 1982; Paul 1982; Escoffier 1985; Epstein 1987; Seidman 1993; Gamson 1995; Vaid 1995; Bernstein 1997). Gay rights activists strategically linked the perceived oppression of LGBT individuals to that of
African Americans in the decades prior. For example, in 1986 an interview, a leader from the National Gay and Lesbian Task Force described organizational strategies for countering growing anti-gay violence as a result of the AIDS crisis. He described how the violence they faced was comparable “to the increase in violence against blacks in the 1960's at the peak of the civil rights movement,” (Greer 1986). A successful Civil Rights Memory Strategy requires presenting a legitimate link between identity and memory, so in this Civil Rights Memory Strategy, LGBT groups connected group to memory through shared meanings of violence and oppression.

During the 1980’s, Civil Rights Memory Strategies linking group identities to memories of nonviolence “like Dr. King” were also common, both among minority groups and conservative groups. Groups coupled the tactics and civil disobedience characteristic of the Civil Rights Movement with discourses, expressed in speeches or interviews with newspapers, to link their group to memory. For example, at a 1985 anti-abortion march on Washington and “pray-in,” a leader of the conservative group, March for Life, described their tactics as “what Martin Luther King, Jr. did.” Similarly, in 1986, a member of the American-Arab Anti-Discrimination Committee described organizational strategies that mirrored “the principles of nonviolence, like Martin Luther King.” Movements also encountered contestation between organizations over the meanings through which they sought to link identity and memory. The Animal Rights Movement has had a great deal of internal contestation over linkages, with one faction arguing for a moderate, nonviolent approach “like Dr. King,” while the other argues for a radical, disruptive approach, “like Dr. King.” In 1991, the Animal Liberation Action Group defended their threats of violence against animal abuse industries, associating themselves with the “radical” fringe meanings of Civil Rights memory. They wrote, “But did the Black Panthers seriously damage
the American civil rights movement? Rather, they amplified the still radical but sane and
nonviolent voice of Martin Luther King,” (Dawn 2004).

Yet as more groups both progressive and conservative developed links between group
identity and memory, the shape of the memory had started to shift. From its extension to LGBT
rights and anti-abortion rights, the collective memory of the Civil Rights Movement could be
used for non-Black causes. In 1989, known white supremacist and new Republican legislator
David Duke gave a speech at the Louisiana House of Representatives. Arguing against a bill to
grant minorities a portion of state highway contracts, he said, “I stand for equal rights, the rights
of white people not to be discriminated against.” In response, African American representative
Raymond Jetson said, "Welcome to the fight for equal rights. I'd just like to ask where you've
been all these years. Where were you when we were marching for equal rights for the past 20
years." Jetson’s dry delivery, noted by the journalist, reflects the contradiction in Duke’s
strategy. Linking white racial identity with civil rights requires establishing a connection
between sets of meanings that, as reported, many of Duke’s minority constituents did not buy.
Duke himself acknowledged the supposed shift in his stance toward civil rights and said, "Like
most people, I have changed. I don't think I'm a racist." Still, as the reporter noted, “…a few
minutes later he expresses satisfaction at his new role in life. Mr. Duke maintains that blacks no
longer suffer discrimination, but that whites are oppressed by the civil rights movement,”
was a Communist working not just for equal rights but for a new social order.” He called Civil
Rights, “a weapon the government uses to suppress people,” (Walker 1990). Duke’s
contradictory behavior represented a Civil Rights Memory Strategy increasingly taken up by
conservative groups into the 1990’s (Berbrier 1998; Hall 2005). Nativist groups linked white,
majority group identities to an interpretation of memory centered on colorblindness. To acknowledge racial difference, to institutionalize it in any policy, would be to discriminate against whites. As Duke himself argued, affirmative action was “racist against whites.” This linkage generated a new set of meanings of collective memory, which on their face adopted the widely-celebrated memory of the Civil Rights Movement, while, as Duke expressed, rejecting its historical meanings.

In 1991, in an effort to strategize support for the Civil Rights Act of 1991, the Leadership Conference on Civil Rights, a coalition of civil rights, labor, and women's organizations conducted a study to gauge support for the act among white voters. The study reported that "the civil rights organizations and proponents of civil rights were no longer seen as...addressing generalized discrimination, valuing work and being for opportunity. The proponents weren't seen as speaking from those values." While there was significant support for egalitarian principles of equal opportunity, merit-based promotions, and workplace fairness, white voters also reported perceptions that civil rights activists’ goals of equal opportunity were in fact cloaks for preferential treatment and that reverse discrimination in the workplace was prevalent. The study reflected the changing tide of public sentiment in a time after the wave of civil rights victories into the 1980’s. As one of the study’s authors, Celinda Lake, reported in an interview with The Washington Post, civil rights advocacy was “seen as pressing the ‘narrow’ concerns of ‘particularized’ groups, rather than promoting a broad, inclusive policy of opposing all forms of discrimination,” (Edsall 1991). Other public polls similarly showed that the majority of whites believed that African Americans and other racial minorities were no longer subject to discrimination and obstacles to equal opportunity (Lee 2011).
In the Reagan era through the Bush era, Civil Rights Memory Strategies reflected groups’ perceptions of their social location linked to their interpretations of collective memory. These strategies were not only discursive but rather combined actions like marches on Washington and sit ins with invocations of Dr. King and Rosa Parks, along with the discursive frames of civil rights. These interpretations of collective memory were not severed from history, like the frame concept would suggest, but rather relied on history’s explicit symbolism. From the historic features of their cultural symbol, groups drew meanings that would link group identity to memory, generating new meanings. These meanings reflected a diverging perception of social reality: one in which minority groups were oppressed in a continued struggle for civil rights and one in which minority rights had been long achieved and civil rights policies paradoxically oppressed white groups.


By the Clinton era, most progressive groups had deployed Civil Rights Memory Strategies. Environmental groups and Prison Reform groups had historic roots in the Civil Rights Movement, and their Civil Rights Memory Strategies often drew from what they would highlight as an inherited connection between their movements (Bullard 2008; Cummins 1994; Dunlap and Mertig 1992; Jacobs 1980; Katzenstein 2005; Mowrey and Redmond 1993; Sandler and Pezzullo 2007). For example, in a press release, the prison reform organization Citizens United for Rehabilitation of Errants quoted King to say, “Justice too long delayed is Justice denied. Martin Luther King, Jr.’s words have guided the efforts of the Petitioners since they first filed their lawsuit…” going on to link their group identity to those of the civil rights activists in the 1960’s.
Similarly the Prison Policy Initiative, another prison reform group, links the struggles of the Civil Rights Movement to their organizational mission in 1999:

While many claim that the long tradition of racism in the United States ended with the Civil Rights Movement of the 1960s, the legacies of slavery and segregation continue to affect U.S. society on all levels. Today, African-Americans are disproportionately imprisoned by racist drug laws, denied access to the economic and educational benefits enjoyed by Anglo-Americans, and robbed of their civil rights and human dignity by a pervasive white supremacy that lurks just beneath the surface of our so-called democracy. This country’s criminal justice system has not escaped the influence of, and is frequently the direct tool for, this racism.

For movements that directly stemmed from the Civil Rights Movement, like environmental justice and prison reform groups, Civil Rights Memory Strategies had much less meaning-work to do linking group identity to collective memory. Presenting group histories often sufficed. Yet in an increasingly crowded field of civil rights activists across all sorts of groups, these strategies were not notable. In this data, they rarely received media attention and I was most likely to find their documentation on an organizational website.

Meanwhile, LGBT groups continued to receive attention around their growing movement for civil rights. By the 1990’s, LGBT activists were calling themselves “the new civil rights movement.” They deemed the 1990’s their “civil rights decade – one future generations [would] liken to the 1960’s battle for black equality,” (Dart 1993). I describe this particular trajectory in greater detail in Chapter 3. At a 1992 march, Pat Hussain, co-chair of Atlanta's Gay and Lesbian Alliance Against Defamation linked LGBT identity to the memory of the Civil Rights Movement arguing, "the civil rights of African Americans and the civil rights of gay and lesbian Americans are the same inalienable rights.” At a 1993 protest in California, a lesbian businesswoman described the change the movement was seeing, saying, “There came a point even in little small southern towns when black people stopped stepping off the sidewalk when whites walked by. We too have undergone that kind of sea change. It doesn't mean there are no more problems. It
LGBT Civil Rights Memory Strategies saw growing success and public support, generating new meanings of LGBT identity as an oppressed minority identity deserving of civil rights. Groups also recognized the power of multiple dimensions of memory invocation, beyond discourse. They combined invocations of historical figures, images, discourses, and actions to identify links between their group identities and collective memory. As a protestor from the Gay and Lesbian Advocates and Defenders said in 1995, “It is very helpful…to use 'street rhetoric'...the lifeblood of the civil rights movement. The importance of parades and street demonstrations is that it is the only form of speech available to poor people." At the anti-abortion March for Life in Missouri in 1995, a leader encouraged marchers to borrow from Martin Luther King Jr.’s tactics, to sign a pledge of nonviolence and refrain from the violence of the "fist, tongue and heart" and observe the ordinary rules of courtesy with "both friend and foe."

In response to growing success among the LGBT “civil rights movement," a conservative backlash grew, focused on discrediting the strategic link between gay identity and collective memory. For example, in 1993, Reverend Lou Sheldon, leader of the Traditional Values Coalition said, "The freedom train to Selma never stopped at Sodom…homosexuals have never been denied the vote. They have never been banned from public toilets. In fact, in some places, you have to watch out for your kids.” In 1994, the Eagle Forum issued a press release warning, “Just as the black civil rights movement produced calls for special treatment as a remedy for past injustice, so homosexual campaigners seem unlikely to stop at such mundane things as age-of-consent laws. As soon as they have scored those victories, it is said, they will move on to new demands.” My findings showed that groups like the Christian Coalition, Eagle Forum, and Traditional Values Coalition increasingly deployed Civil Rights Memory Strategies in which
they linked their Christian group identities to the memory of minority struggle, arguing that gay rights were “special rights” that infringed on Christians’ rights. These groups coalesced as a Family Values Coalition led by evangelists like Pat Robertson, activating against a political context in which President Clinton expressed growing support for gay rights.

Anti-abortion groups like Americans United for Life claimed they were the new minorities being discriminated against, when, for example, Janet Reno refused to meet with them in 1993. Reverend Patrick Mahoney said, “We have to believe clearly that we are being discriminated against. She's refusing to meet with us. We are nonviolent. We have committed to that on a personal level.” Mahoney went on to compare the refusal to a refusal to meet with Dr. Martin Luther King and other civil rights activists “who were arrested in peaceful protests.” In 1998, anti-abortion group Feminists for Life argued “abortion is also a crime, a violation of human rights far more heinous than slavery,” calling themselves “contemporary freedom riders, a courageous counterculture [that] will ultimately prevail over injustice just as the civil rights movement helped put a stop to segregation.” By linking a religious identity, effectively a moral position, to an oppressed social location, Family Values groups connected their religious oppression to African American oppression in Civil Rights Memory Strategies. This linkage generated a memory of the Civil Rights Movement characterized by conservatism, Christianity, and moral opposition to abortion and homosexuality.

Similarly, on the far right, some white supremacist and nativist groups continued to link white identity to the discursive structures of Civil Rights memory while others continued to reject the memory outright. In 1992, civil rights leader John Jacob argued, "the rise of David Duke strips away the veil of American racism and exposes it to full view. Had Duke donned his Klan hood and waved Mein Kampf at election rallies, he would have been dismissed as a lunatic.
But in his newly adopted guise of a populist conservative, he mouthed sentiments and code words made familiar through long usage by national leaders, making his sewer ideology appear respectively mainstream.” One journalist compared the political strategy to other Republican leaders’ codes: “President Ronald Reagan attacked "welfare queens" in 1980. President George Bush used Willie Horton, a convicted black rapist, to scare the living daylights out of White America in 1990. And North Carolina Senator Jesse Helms, yet another Republican, kept it that way in 1990 with a hate-mongering TV spot that helped beat his black challenger…[a commercial shows] white, male hands (wearing a wedding ring, must support a family) ripped up a job rejection letter while a somber voice intoned: ‘You were the best qualified for that job, but you didn't get it. They had hiring quotas. ...’ Message received. You've got to be a minority in order to get ahead in America.” Public figures from the far right, clearly characterizing the very struggle of the Civil Rights Movement, continued to use the collective memory of the Civil Rights Movement to both argue it had enabled white oppression and to use its own meaning structures – equal rights, colorblindness – to justify overturning policies for remedying racial inequality. Much like the speculation around Reagan’s initial motives for signing the King holiday into existence, for nativist groups appealing to general publics, Civil Rights Memory Strategies were a powerful tool for signaling non-racist intentions and cloaking racially-coded strategies beneath a now widely adopted American collective memory.

At the same time, other organizations from the far right maintained interpretations of a communist Civil Rights Movement. For example, the White Aryan Resistance published a picture illustrating the scope of a sniper's rifle with Martin Luther King in the crosshairs reading, “I have a dream, and it just came true.” In a 1999 editorial about a meeting between Senate Majority Leader Trent Lott and the Council of Conservative Citizens, Tucker wrote:
Strange as it may seem, there are still dark corners of America where the Rev. Martin Luther King Jr. is considered a Communist, an insurrectionist, a traitor. One such peculiar quarter comprises the Web sites of the Council of Conservative Citizens -- a white separatist group -- and its ideological brethren.

Despite all the progress we've made toward racial equality, it isn't surprising to find the odd white-separatist or supremacist group here and there, spouting an ideology of saving the white race from "dark forces." Fringe lunacy can never be eliminated. What's surprising -- and disturbing -- is that the Council of Conservative Citizens can claim the ear of such political luminaries as Senate Majority Leader Trent Lott…

The council has deep roots in Lott's home state of Mississippi, where it traces its ancestry to the old segregationist White Citizens Council, which some historians consider to have been an upscale version of the Ku Klux Klan. Arnie Watson, Lott's uncle and a member of the council, says his nephew is "an honorary member" of the organization.

If that is so, the nation's highest-ranking senator keeps company with a group that believes the greatest threat to America is "race-mixing" and immigration, an organization that speaks fondly of the Confederacy and its goals, an organization that holds the civil rights movement and its leaders in contempt.

As a native of the great state of Mississippi, as a man old enough to remember the terrible days of segregation and as the leader of the U.S. Senate, Lott ought to know better than to truck with such a group. But sometimes, it seems, the political advantages of playing to racists and racist bigotry outweigh what we are taught by education and experience.

Lott, at 57, knows what a backwater the Old South had been before the civil rights movement brought the region into the nation's mainstream. Much of the South, white and black, was poor, ignorant and diseased. That goes double for Mississippi.

If anything, Lott and his peers in the proud leadership of a New South owe a great debt of gratitude to King and the civil rights movement that he led. The booming Sun Belt, the stronghold of the Republican Party, is a place of shining prosperity and newfound educational and technological attainment only because it was forced to abandon the legalized racism that had been the cornerstone of its culture.

Does Lott think for one minute that the big national casino companies would be attracted to his home state if it still practiced Jim Crow? Would Atlanta have attracted the 1996 Olympic Games if it could not have sold itself to the world as a city of cooperation across racial lines? Would the big German carmakers locate in South Carolina and Alabama if black children were still relegated to segregated schools and shut out of its major universities?

If the speeches and commentary to be found on the Web sites of the Council of Conservative Citizens and its member chapters are any indication, its members envision a nation made perfect by the complete domination of "Christian" whites -- a Valhalla. In reality, the twisted ideology it espouses can only lead to ethnic warfare and economic ruin. (Tucker 1999)

While public representatives of nativist groups adopted the Civil Rights Movement’s memory selectively, fringe organizations continued to reject it. This editorial suggests that even
so, through the end of the 1990’s, a group claiming King was a communist could still get the ear of a major political figure. The memory of the Civil Rights Movement was diffuse, in other words, but not necessarily accepted. Civil Rights Memory Strategies during the Clinton era reflected a sort of feedback between group identities and culture, where groups were 1) contending with their group’s perceived location in relation to other groups against the changing political climate, then 2) drawing on interpretations of memory – explicitly historic symbols - to strategize in order to renegotiate their position. They built upon the meanings generated by identity-memory linkages of the decade prior, evolving trajectories of meaning. The conservative forces that countered LGBT groups and pro-choice groups began to anticipate Civil Rights Memory Strategies and strengthen linkages between their own group identities and collective memory. Conservative groups not only had counter-Civil Rights Memory Strategies ready to deploy to discredit identity-memory linkages, but they also had their own original Civil Rights Memory Strategies, constructing their groups as the newly oppressed. Groups both progressive and conservative increasingly deployed strategies that linked their identities to non-racial interpretations of collective memory: colorblindness, individualism, the American dream. The proliferation of competing meaning structures continued to reshape the collective memory of the Civil Rights Movement itself. For example, Francesca Polletta analyzed invocations of Martin Luther King, Jr. in congressional speeches between 1993 and 1997 and found that Black legislators “…assimilated King into a pluralist framework by representing community service and institutional politics as the proper legacy of his activism,” rather than disruptive extra-institutional activism (Polletta 2009). In her analysis, African Americans themselves were constrained in their invocations of collective memory as the widely-held, “acceptable” memory of the Civil Rights Movement was flattening.
By President G.W. Bush’s inauguration, Civil Rights Memory Strategies were common among many progressive and conservative social movements. A conflagration of linkages between group identities and interpretations of memory had produced a landscape of conflicting memory meaning structures. These were not separate framings toward separate goals, but rather all linked through particular conceptions of group identity relative to other groups and particular conceptions of how those group positions should be negotiated via a shared cultural structure. The changing shape of the collective memory of the Civil Rights Movement was a result of these competing enactments toward what social reality existed and what it ought to be. As I have argued, groups generated Civil Rights Memory Strategies through the link between perceived group identities and their social locations relative to other groups and interpretations of collective memory, against political-cultural contexts. While political climates shifted between presidencies and over national events, the attacks of September 11, 2001 ushered in a significantly new and “unsettled” era (Swidler 1986). New national security institutions and policies created tightened boundaries around group identities, as “Muslims” became a subject of national concern (Bakalian and Bozorgmehr 2009; Haddad 2004; Jamal 2009; Kurzman 2011). Immigrants became subject to greater securitization and surveillance (Johnson 2001; Volpp 2002). New groups began creating linkages between group identity and collective memory, further diffusing a field of fragmented meanings of a collective memory. These linkages also increasingly produced unexpected allies. I describe these findings in great detail in Chapter 4.

At a 2002 speech at a Washington Rally for Civil Liberties, Al Sharpton compared the Bush administration’s racial profiling and surveillance of Arab Americans to the wiretapping and
surveillance Dr. King experienced. Sharpton said, "We cannot sit by and allow what J. Edgar Hoover did to Dr. King be done today to Dr. King's children. It's not enough to pack churches and sing hymns. Dr. King would have called us to take action." Sharpton linked Arab group identity to the collective memory of the Civil Rights Movement as its extension, arguing that profiling Arabs challenges the Civil Rights Movement. He called upon African Americans to take a stance against U.S. foreign policy. James J. Zogby, president of the Arab American Institute remarked on the vacated meaning of the collective memory of the Civil Rights Movement. "Dr. King has been diminished in some ways by the way the day is celebrated," he said, because many people have forgotten the country's long history of racism.” Lisalyn R. Jacobs, a civil rights lawyer from Arlington, said, "I really have been frightened, sickened and saddened as an African American woman to see my friends nodding and in any way giving credence to the idea that racial profiling in the post-September 11 context is correct," (Chan 2002). As Chapter 4 elaborates, under the umbrella group identity of Muslims, many Muslim-seeming groups like Arabs, South Asians, and Middle Eastern groups began linking group identity to collective memory to generate Civil Rights Memory Strategies to establish their oppression.

Similarly, a new immigrant rights movement was growing, and in 2003 immigrant rights groups linked immigrant group identity to the collective memory of the Civil Rights Movement in an “Immigrant Workers Freedom Ride.” The multi-week, performative Civil Rights Memory Strategy garnered immense media attention and developed a mobilization infrastructure on which the movement built in nationwide 2006 protests through the Obama presidency (Bloemraad, Silva, and Voss 2016; Hing and Johnson 2007; Voss and Bloemraad 2011). In interaction with these new minority movements, growing backlash from conservative, nativist
groups sought to discredit these Civil Rights Memory Strategies while establishing their own linkages between identity and memory. In 2003, conservative group Accuracy in Media (AIM) reported on a rally for the 40th anniversary of the Civil Rights Movement’s March on Washington. Staff writers wrote:

The major media deliberately concealed the facts about how the “civil rights movement” has degenerated into a collection of political extremists, homosexual militants, Muslim activists, and anti-American Marxists… ANSWER, which stands for Act Now to Stop War and End Racism, was itself a co-sponsor of this 40th anniversary “civil rights” event in honor of King. Despite the cries of racism that roared through the nation’s capital that day, dramatic evidence shows that the racism being practiced by the U.S. government consists of discriminating in favor of blacks and other designated minorities in federal hiring. The web site www.adversity.net has produced an analysis showing not only that federal agencies and departments are using quotas in the hiring of minorities, but that they are exceeding their quotas by enormous margins. This may constitute massive reverse racism against white males…

Instead, it’s the alleged “underrepresentation” of minorities that receives the press attention. Federal Times newspaper, for example, reports that, “Overall, percentages of blacks, Asians and American Indians in virtually all federal pay grades meet or exceed those of the national work force overall. But in the Senior Executive Service and equivalent senior pay grades, all minority groups are underrepresented as compared with their percentage in the national work force overall.” This is viewed by the press as evidence of racism against the minorities. So rather than focus on the harm caused by the overhiring of minorities that may constitute reverse racism against white males, the media now push for even more hiring of preferred minorities in the senior ranks.

Fay points out, however, that in order to push minorities into those positions, more experienced whites will have to be bypassed. “And the only way to do that is to reduce qualifications and/or to practice outright discrimination against the white guys and often against Asian-Americans as well,” he says. This is the reality of King’s “dream” today. (AIM 2003)

Like the Civil Rights Memory Strategies of nativist and conservative groups in the decades prior, Accuracy in Media linked white identity to a collective memory of oppression, maintaining a divergent trajectory of meaning in which King’s dream represented colorblindness. In this trajectory of meaning, racial preference would constitute a “reverse racism,” counter to King’s dream.
Similarly, other groups maintained and evolved their Civil Rights Memory Strategy trajectories. Conservative groups celebrated a conservative, Christian president who would protect their interests. In a 2003 gathering, the Pro-Life Action League celebrated the Supreme Court victory of NOW v. Scheidler, effectively enabling abortion-clinic protests. Speaker Joe Scheidler described how King’s dream was on its way to being recognized as abortion would be outlawed soon. He called on the movement to prepare for the victory to come when the “impossible dream” will come true and “abortion will be as unthinkable as slavery is today,” (PAL 2003).

The rising conservatism of the Bush era also saw growing efforts to quash LGBT civil rights gains through state and local referendums. Family Values coalitions had developed powerful rival Civil Rights Memory Strategies to counter LGBT claims to civil rights, drawing on interpretations of Dr. King’s religiosity to make seemingly natural connections been conservative Christian group identity and Civil Rights memory (see Chapter 3 for much more on the LGBT vs. Family Values Civil Rights Memory Strategy rivalry). In a 2005 marriage amendment challenge in Utah, Gayle Ruzicka said it's "absolutely appalling" that gays and lesbians would equate themselves to the Civil Rights Movement. She said, "I think it's an insult to try and compare what they're doing to the struggles minorities have gone through. What they're talking about is a sexual choice. They choose who they sleep with...It has nothing to do with civil rights." In 2006, conservative activist Carolyn Garris wrote an article titled, “Martin Luther King’s Conservative Legacy,” writing:

It is time for conservatives to lay claim to the legacy of the Reverend Martin Luther King, Jr. King was no stalwart conservative, yet his core beliefs, such as the power and necessity of faith-based association and self-government based on absolute truth and moral law, are profoundly conservative. Modern liberalism rejects these ideas, while conservatives place them at the center of their philosophy. Despite decades of appropriation by liberals, King’s message was fundamentally conservative. (Garris 2006)
Garris’ declaration was followed by Clarence B. Jones’ 2008 book, *What Would Martin Say?* in which he interprets King’s position on issues like diversity, the role of government, anti-Semitism, affirmative action, and illegal immigration through a conservative evangelical Christian lens (Jones and Engel 2008) and provides a foundation for conservatives to “create a King in their own image,” (Baldwin and Burrow 2013). The memory of the Civil Rights Movement was not just a frame, a discursive thing deployed toward a target. The memory of the Civil Rights Movement was an evolving set of cultural meaning structures, which were widely understood to encompass great power in their historical symbolism. Emphasizing historical linkage was a central means by which groups sought to legitimate their cause, connections which were up for debate. Civil Rights Memory Strategy construction was a continuous process evolving through interactions in a multi-institutional political field including rival movements, institutions, and the state (Armstrong and Bernstein 2008). When a group deployed an identity-memory linkage through Civil Rights Memory Strategy, the generated meanings were always up for debate, contested and countered, often with rival Civil Rights Memory Strategies generating competing sets of meanings. By the end of the Bush era, conservative movements from anti-abortion groups to nativist groups had produced identity-memory linkages through Civil Rights Memory Strategies that drew strong boundaries around the past and present. Through the proliferation of this conception of collective memory, African American struggle was a matter of the past, a symbol of how far we had come. King’s colorblind dream warned against recognizing racial difference, lest whites become the new Blacks.
The election of the first African American president marked a significant political cultural moment, cited by many as the beginning of a post-racial era (Bonilla-Silva 2010). Yet Obama’s election generated a significant political backlash from nativists and conservatives, including the Tea Party Movement (Bailey, Mummolo, and Noel 2012; Parker 2013; Perrin, Tepper, et al. 2014; Skocpol and Williamson 2012; Zernike 2010a). These growing movements from the far right would build on conservative identity-memory linkages that argued: 1) that minorities received special treatment, and 2) that white groups were the new minorities. For example, in 2008, Betty Jean Kling, secretary of the conservative organization the American Reform Party, issued a blog to supporters to draw attention to Obama’s threat to conservative women’s rights:

Hold your celebrations folks. We are not there yet- history was not made – we did not overcome- and Martin Luther King’s dream was not realized. Wasn’t it King who said ‘I have a dream that my four little children will one day be judged not by the color of their skin but by the content of their character?’ …So now all of a sudden skin color became the factor that everyone is judging how we make history? Was it because his face was black and for a short blip in our history blacks were kept as slaves? Or maybe some would say we are celebrating a black man reminds us of slavery and somehow this partially black man with no slavery background transcends that dark part of our history? Well that may be quite a stretch but we are still not there yet!...

This so-called historic Black candidate was not a product of the civil rights abuses of this country; he did not suffer mistreatment, during his candidacy…I ask again what was so euphoric that millions were crying – some for joy and some from the release resulting of shedding their white guilt. Guilt they willingly accepted as their responsibility and obligated the rest of us to carry with along with them while they turned a blind eye to those of us who have been enslaved since the beginning of time and who were left behind yet again. (Kling 2008)

In this previously established link between conservative group identity and a colorblind interpretation of memory, the “content of character” is the goal of the Civil Rights Movement, a yet-to-be-achieved goal as minority rights oppress whites, in this case white women, or “those of us who have been enslaved since the beginning of time.”
By the Obama era, every one of the eleven movements had deployed Civil Rights Memory Strategies, suggesting a wide adoption of the memory of the Civil Rights Movement, a major shift since the debates over the King holiday 25 years prior. Even Animal Rights activists linked animal identity to the collective memory of the Civil Rights Movement. In 2009, PETA members protested the Westminster Dog Show by dressing as members of the KKK, claiming that the establishment of purebred dog superiority was analogous to the establishment of whites as the “master race.” In 2012, PETA targeted students on college campuses with a photo of a hanging cow next to an image of lynched Black men. The same year, PETA filed a lawsuit on behalf of orcas under the 13th Amendment, the anti-slavery amendment. On February 4, 2013, Rosa Parks’ birthday, PETA posted a blog titled, “How Civil Rights and Animal Rights Are Inextricably Linked.” A PETA representative wrote, “In fact, many civil rights leaders, past and present, have maintained that as long as one form of prejudice exists, no form of prejudice can be completely eradicated, and thus, civil rights and animal rights are inextricably linked,” (Kretzer 2013). On their Features page, PETA links animal rights with the memory of Martin Luther King, Jr. writing, “Martin Luther King Jr. took a stand against inequality and rallied for civil liberties. Rise up against the injustices that are happening behind closed doors right now and make a change for the world and its inhabitants. Let freedom ring for everyone—human and otherwise.” In 2014, controversy erupted when PETA extended these invocations to Twitter, tweeting Martin Luther King, Jr. quotes linked with calls for animal rights activism including images of caged animals. In response to critiques about the implied link between African Americans and animals, PETA president Ingrid Newkirk said, "The message that's meant is, please imagine if Martin Luther King were alive today, he would be fighting for us and saying all living beings deserve protection from needless cruelty." In an official statement from PETA,
Newkirk defended the strategy, saying, "Racism extends to derogatory remarks about other races who are not human," (Lee 2014). By the time animal rights activists had adopted Civil Rights Movement’s Civil Rights Memory Strategy, there already existed so wide a landscape of identity-memory linkages that rendered the meaning of collective memory so universal it could apply to any form of perceived injustice.

Other unexpected groups also developed new identity-memory linkages. In 2007, the Citizens Committee for the Right to Keep and Bear Arms had made a public statement discrediting Jesse Jackson’s 25-city anti-gun protest. Jackson had timed the protest for the anniversary of King’s March on Washington, but the Citizen’s Committee called the effort “a great hypocrisy.” Chairman Alan Gottlieb said, “Dr. King’s historic march was to promote and defend civil rights. What Jesse Jackson is planning is designed to crush America’s most important civil right. A right that Dr. King exercised by owning a handgun.” Despite mentioning King’s interpreted stance on guns to discredit the anti-gun movement, the gun rights movement did not really begin establishing identity-memory linkages until the Obama era. In 2008, Gun Owners of America argued that gun control was part of the system of Jim Crow still operating today. They argued, “That gun rights have played such a pivotal role in racial equality makes the historical correlation between gun control and discriminatory policies unsurprising. From their beginnings, gun control measures have worked to create legal disparities, granting unequal rights to members of various socioeconomic groups.” In 2013, in an effort to attract more minority supporters after the Newtown, Connecticut shooting, the NRA announced a partnership with a new contributor to NRA News. Colion Noir, an African American gun advocate, was introduced through a strategic play to persuade African Americans to lobby against gun regulation by linking gun rights to civil rights. The NRA posted a video to YouTube, in which Noir says:
The same government who at one point hosed us down with water, attacked us with dogs, wouldn’t allow us to eat at their restaurants and told us we couldn’t own guns when bumbling fools with sheets on their heads were riding around burning crosses on our lawns and murdering us [...] The only person responsible for your safety is you. Cops can’t always be there. Obama definitely can’t be there. Guy telling me to get rid of my guns when I need them the most, isn’t my friend, isn’t looking out for my best interests and doesn’t speak for me or the community that I’m part of,” (Anon 2013).

Colion Noir became a frequent news commentator for the NRA, producing additional clips invoking the Civil Rights Movement to argue for gun rights. On January 20, 2014, the Martin Luther King Jr. holiday, the NRA released a video in which Noir connects the NRA’s vision to King’s dream. He says:

Let’s not forget the first forms of gun control were created to keep people like me from having guns…Dr. King was a nonviolent man but even he understood the realities of self defense and protecting his home and his family in the face of life-threatening violence. This is why he tried to apply for that gun permit… When Dr. King was denied [the firearm license], he did the next best thing and surrounded himself with people with guns…In my heart, based on Dr. King’s own actions, I don’t believe that Dr. King would ever advocate leaving a family, or anyone for that matter, defenseless in the face of violent life threatening danger.

In 2014, gun-rights advocate Ted Nugent said, “In 1955, my hero, Rosa Parks, refused to give up her seat on a city bus. Good for her. In 2014, gun owners must learn from Rosa Parks and definitely refuse to give up our guns. As Rosa Parks once said, ‘You must never be fearful about what you are doing when it is right.’” These repeated invocations linked identity and memory by tapping connections between gun rights’ identity and different aspects of meaning in the collective memory – historical figures like King and Parks, discourses of rights, actions of nonviolence and civil disobedience. Despite widespread diffusion, some white supremacist organizations continued to resist the widespread adoption of Civil Rights Movement memory. In 2005, Women for Aryan Unity continued to call Rosa Parks “Red Rosa,” implying her Communist ties. In the conservative publication, the National Vanguard, which celebrates "white
life.” Aryan activist April Gaede encouraged parents to find their children books published in the 1950s because children in multicultural society cannot "comprehend what it was like just a few decades ago, when our towns and schools were almost all White." Despite rejecting the political cloak of Civil Rights Memory Strategy, white supremacists and conservatives were strategizing toward the same understanding of social reality: a society biased toward minorities, in which whites were oppressed and under threat.

Meanwhile, the Muslim Rights and Immigrant Rights movements that had started mobilizing during Bush’s presidency were gathering force. Their Civil Rights Memory Strategies had established links between their group’s identity and the collective memory of the Civil Rights Movement, and they continued to evolve these strategies toward changing political climates. While a Democratic president appeared friendlier to their interests, immigrant rights activists continued to see immigration reform put on the political backburner as deportations reached record highs. Muslims continued to experience significant surveillance, and in 2009, controversy erupted over the proposed building of an Islamic Center near Ground Zero. Activists like Mahdi Bray of the Muslim American Society, likened Muslim supporters to Rosa Parks. He described how the center’s planners were being told, “We want you to move. You offend us being where you are. This is not the right place for you to be.” Muslim activists continued to build links between their group identity, which they increasingly came to see as a racialized identity comparable to African Americans, and the collective memory of the Civil Rights Movement (see Chapter 4 for much more on this linkage).

The Prison Reform Movement, encouraged by growing publicity around the prison industrial complex reinvigorated the linkage between its group identity and the memory of the Civil Rights Movement. With a growing movement for police reform at large, they highlighted
the racialized criminal justice system, a “New Jim Crow” (Alexander 2010). In 2010, The Sentencing Project, a prison reform organization, called to supporters to highlight the historical roots of the racial inequality embedded in the prison system: “Martin Luther King Jr., said we as a nation must undergo a radical revolution of values. A radical approach to the US criminal justice system means we must go to the root of the problem. Not reform. Not better beds in better prisons. We are not called to only trim the leaves or prune the branches, but rip up this unjust system by its roots.” Similarly, in 2014 Families Against Mandatory Minimums drew on King’s famous “Letter from a Birmingham Jail” to highlight the ongoing struggle for racial justice: “As the Rev. Martin Luther King, Jr., wrote in his famous letter from the Birmingham jail, ‘Injustice anywhere is a threat to justice everywhere.’ Society should not ignore known injustices just because they may be few in number. Rather, society should correct such errors, especially when their number is small, because we can no longer, and should not have to, rely on the clemency process to rectify them. Numerous Respected Individuals and Organizations Are Troubled by the Injustices of Overcriminalization…”

As old movements located new meaningful links between group identities and collective memory, movements who had been deploying Civil Rights Memory Strategies began innovating their Civil Rights Memory Strategies. These movements began incorporating different aspects of memory, lesser-known historical figures, forgotten speeches, and symbolic figures who could lend legitimacy to their identity-memory linkage. For example, in 2013, the animal rights group Mercy for Animals publicized how Dr. King’s widow, Coretta Scott King, and son, Dexter Scott King, observed vegan diets. They said, “Mrs. King believed that animal rights were a logical extension of Dr. King's philosophy of nonviolence. ‘Veganism has given me a higher level of awareness and spirituality,’ Dexter Scott King told Vegetarian Times magazine. ‘If you're
violent to yourself by putting things into your body that violate its spirit, it will be difficult not to perpetuate that onto someone else.’”

The abortion-rights movement began deploying historical evidence to support their claims that Dr. King would have opposed abortion. In 2011, conservative organization the American Freedom Coalition issued an extensive treatise overturning a Civil Rights Memory Strategy “myth” circulating among pro-choice advocates that, “Reproductive rights (i.e. “abortion” rights) for women is like civil-rights for blacks and other minorities. To try to deny women reproductive rights is the same as trying to deny African-Americans civil-rights. Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. was a great advocate of women’s reproductive rights, and for this he was awarded Planned Parenthood’s Margaret Sanger Award on May 5th, 1966.” In response, the American Freedom Coalition detailed evidence from historians in which “Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr., stridently denounced abortion as a form of genocide in many speeches.” They listed historical figures who would vouch to his pro-life stance, highlighted Margaret Sanger’s own racism which King would have denounced, and listed among their supporters, King’s own niece, conservative activist Alveda King (Evenson 2011). Similarly, in 2012, conservative group the Alliance Defense Fund issued a scathing critique of President Obama’s speech in honor of the 39th anniversary of Roe v. Wade, seven days after the King holiday. They wrote:

Just seven days after the nation commemorated the man who personified the American struggle to win respect for the lives and dignity of all men before the law, the man who has perhaps benefited more manifestly than any other from Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.’s efforts stood at a podium to refute his legacy. That wasn’t the president’s stated intention, of course. Nor was that how his words were reported in the media coverage of his remarks on the 39th anniversary of the catastrophic Roe v. Wade decision. What was reported, rather, is that our president has a dream. One substantially at odds with the dream that fired Dr. King’s imagination and eloquence so memorably on the steps of the Lincoln Memorial nearly 50 years ago. Dr. King’s dream – of peace and understanding, justice and freedom and mutual good will – was of a nation where his children would be judged, he said, ‘not … by the color of their skin but by the content of their character.’ What he could not have dreamed of was a nation where his children’s right to live would
be judged not by their viability and potential, but by whether their mother found it suitably convenient and self-serving to carry them to term… That is the dream our president professes to embrace, on behalf of the women of America. “And as we remember this historic anniversary,” [Obama] said, “we must also continue our efforts to ensure that our daughters have the same rights, freedoms, and opportunities as our sons to fulfill their dreams.” In other words, babies themselves are no longer the fulfillment of dreams – they just get in the way of them. (Sears 2012)

The organization adopted a meaning structure most often deployed by conservative groups to argue against racial preference policies, one repeatedly generated in identity-memory links since the 1980’s, and deployed it toward the rights of an unborn child generating a new set of meanings. Meanwhile, conservative groups continued to deploy Civil Rights Memory Strategies to argue for a reverse oppression and justify civil rights appeals, from the repealed provision of the Voting Rights Act (Shelby County v Holder) to the repeal of affirmative action in college admissions (Fisher v. University of Texas). During the 2013 Supreme Court ruling in Shelby County v Holder, Justice Scalia called the provision protecting minority voting rights a “racial entitlement” standing in the way of the political process. In her dissent, Justice Ruth Bader Ginsburg invoked Dr. King, arguing that his legacy was “disserved” by the decision. She wrote, “In King’s words, ‘the arc of the moral universe is long, but it bends toward justice.’ History has proved King right.”

In 2014, conservative politician Pat Buchanan was a guest on the Steve Malzberg show elaborating on his column arguing for the repeal of civil rights laws. He told Malzberg, “Everybody is claiming victim status. This isn’t the same situation we had at Selma bridge, and it is time to move on… Some of these civil rights laws in my judgment, once the job that they have been passed to do have been done, the reason they are continuing is because there is this gigantic bureaucratic empire that has been built up and erected to sit on top of all of us and oversee and police and monitor every decision we make in our corporate or personal lives,” (Blue 2014).
The irony of Buchanan’s comments was that conservative groups had become some of the most active messengers of the message of civil rights, linking their group identities to collective memory to claim they were the new minorities. For example, the Tea Party had been readily deploying Civil Rights Memory Strategies since Glenn Beck’s 2010 Rally to Restore Honor on the steps of the Lincoln Memorial. In 2013 at the Tea Party’s Audit the IRS Rally, Beck was quoted saying, “This is a civil rights movement, and it’s time for us to start moving as a civil rights movement. We have to be willing to have the dogs be unleashed on us, because believe me – after what I saw today on the way they’re handling things at the Capitol, you’re not very far from having the same kind of oppression coming our way...Harriet Beecher Stowe, Abraham Lincoln, Frederick Douglass, Booker T. Washington, Ghandi, Martin Luther King, Frederick Douglass’s time was in the 1800s. Martin Luther King’s time has passed. This is our time, and the long march towards civil rights is here,” (C-SPAN 2013). In 2015 at the South Carolina Tea Party Convention, “Wild Bill” Finley announced that the Tea Party would rescue King’s memory. He said:

Martin Luther King had a dream, and it was a good one — a day when skin color wouldn’t matter anymore. A time when character would be more important than skin color. But when we look at what’s going on in America today, it’s pretty easy to see that Dr. King’s dream got hijacked. I believe racism in this country would’ve died out a long time ago, except that some people figured out that racism can be very profitable — both financially and politically. And now, those who are most vocal about Martin Luther King being their hero seem to be the most race-driven people in America. The left have mastered the art of turning every issue into a skin-color issue, character be damned. Manufacturing racism for political purposes is a big business in the USA, and manufactured racism has been used to hurt the Tea Party from Day 1. There’s no doubt in my mind that if Martin Luther King Jr. was alive today the liberal left would spit in his face because he would be such a threat to their political agendas. We are the people who practice Dr. King’s dream. It is the Tea Party where people are not judged by the color of their skin, and it’s Tea Party Americans who believe that character still counts. So today, I am officially announcing that the Tea Party is taking Martin Luther King away from the liberal left. And to you race-baiting promoters of division and hatred, you’re not getting him back until you renounce your shameful skin-color politics and start practicing the politics of character. (Kaufman 2015)
For the far right, Civil Rights Memory Strategies linked white, conservative identity to an unrealized dream of colorblindness to generate a social reality in which whites were oppressed. As this trajectory of meaning grew, more and more conservative groups built upon these meaning structures. These interrelated Civil Rights Memory Strategies among markedly different social movements were not just frames, deploying divergent perceptions of social reality. Groups perceived their social location relative to other groups in a shared political-cultural context, then through this perceived location, strategized interpretations of collective memory to renegotiate their group position. These interpretations were not made anew each time but rather drew on evolving meaning structures generated through the identity-memory linkages that came before. As more groups developed identity-memory linkages, the meanings of the collective memory of the Civil Rights Movement continued to fracture in divergent trajectories. Through this new landscape of meaning, King’s own detractors can now claim the mantel of the Civil Rights Movement. Now the movement for Black Lives fights to dig up the roots of the memory in which the struggle for Black liberation never ended. As a former Civil Rights Movement activist and Black Lives Matter supporter wrote in an op-ed:

In 1964 and 1965, blacks won two massive legislative victories: passage of the Civil Rights Act and the Voting Rights Act, both historic victories for the cause of equality. But just a few years later — in 1968 — the symbol of the movement that won those rights, Martin Luther King Jr., was assassinated. And a half-century after our voting rights were secured, our jaws dropped when the Supreme Court turned voting regulations back to states that had long discriminated; we’ve had to battle new voter restrictions in more than a dozen states. Looking back, I know much has been accomplished. Looking forward, I know much more must be done. There is, at least, no hiding place anymore for racism. No longer would we tolerate an Alabama governor saying (as George Wallace did in 1963), “Segregation now, segregation tomorrow, segregation forever.” In Internet postings that shock us and sadden us, we see the latest inequities with our own eyes. Some say we live in a post-racial, post-civil rights era. I say the era of civil rights isn't over. Like 1968, 2016 will be a decisive year. What future will we choose…?
For this activist for whom there is “no hiding place anymore for racism,” Trump’s election may have been unexpected. Yet these findings show how the interactions of meaning between group identity, collective memory, and political culture can generate powerful tools for maintaining power relations. The political uses of the Civil Rights Movement produced enduring meaning structures through which conservative groups could simultaneously 1) silence minority groups for pulling a “race card,” countering King’s dream, as well as 2) activate a captive audience through an increasingly established memory of Black and Brown progress that threatened whites, the “true” America. Examining these trajectories of meaning since the 1980’s, Trump’s election in 2016 seems a predictable extension of long-growing cultural forces in contentious politics.

Conclusion

While social historians and activists have decried the misappropriation of the Civil Rights Movement, social movement scholars have explained the diffusion of civil rights discourse and tactics as a matter of a master “civil rights frame.” Through the framing approach, the Civil Rights Movement generated a modular set of symbols that groups can “try on” and deploy toward political targets. However, as critics have suggested, critiques on which I have built, the framing approach has its analytic limitations. I have drawn particular attention to frames’ lack of historicity, singular focus on discourse, and most importantly, obscured role of the actors – or messengers – who deploy frames – messages. Instead, I have developed a concept of “Civil Rights Memory Strategy” to account for the processual nature of strategy, centered on linkages between group identities and interpretations of memory. Both the formation of group identity and
the interpretation of memory are cultural processes, based upon a group’s perception of their social location vis-à-vis other groups within a particular political cultural context. Their perception of their relationship to collective memory is also a cultural process, from which they develop interpretations of memory and strategies for linking group identity to memory. Through a unique dataset of 110 social movement organizations representing 11 different social movements, this chapter analyzed Civil Rights Movement Civil Rights Memory Strategy diffusion from 1980-2016. I found that minority groups may have led the charge in Civil Rights Memory Strategies after the Civil Rights Movement, but by the 1980’s, conservative groups were quickly developing linkages between their causes and the memory of the Civil Rights Movement to pick up its mantel. These linkages competed with one another, interacting with other groups’ meaning constructions to counter, contest, and build on developing conceptualizations of memory. These processes were characterized by ongoing contention and negotiation over the credibility of linkages, which I examine more closely in Chapter 3. As conservative groups from gun rights activists to anti-abortion groups made repeated linkages between group identity and collective memory, over time these meaning structures became accepted interpretations of the Civil Rights Movement. A collective memory meaning structure of King’s dream of colorblindness, for example, was taken up by both Democratic and Republican politicians. In other words, Civil Rights Memory Strategies deployed toward all sorts of political purposes in turn changed the collective memory itself. These are some of the unintended consequences of social movements. The cultural processes of contentious politics can, in turn, change culture.
CHAPTER 3: “DR. KING WOULD BE OUTRAGED!” STRATEGY BETWEEN RIVAL MOVEMENTS AND THE POLITICS OF CULTURAL RESONANCE

Introduction

In Chapter 2, I argued that mobilizing groups deploy “Civil Rights Memory Strategies” to strategically link their collective identity to collective memory to generate political support among targets. Developing strategies to maximize support requires drawing on cultural meanings that resonate among targets. But what does it take for a message to resonate? Scholars have long applied the concept of “cultural resonance” to explain how a message is received by an audience. In prevailing theories of resonance, cultural messages resonate when they are connected to audiences’ worldviews (Benford and Snow 2000; Schudson 1989). A recent theory argues that resonance is more processual than previously theorized, emergent on contingent interactions between cultural messages and audiences (McDonnell, Bail, and Tavory, 2017). While this view importantly highlights the interactional process of cultural resonance, both approaches obscure the role of the messenger who deploys the cultural message toward the audience. I argue that the cultural message’s messenger – in case, the identity of the mobilizing group who deploys Civil Rights Memory Strategy – is a critical factor in this process. The targeted audience must accept not only the message they deploy – the interpretation of collective memory - but they must accept the linkage between the group’s identity and the collective memory. These linkages become the grounds on which movements and rival movements battle, as these case studies show.
Using comparative-historical methods, I examine two paired-cases of rival movements, the LGBT Movement and Family Values Movement and the Immigrant Rights Movement and Nativist Movement in four highly publicized events across two presidential eras. I identify a pattern of processes that elucidate how the perceived relationship between a group’s identity and a collective memory shapes the construction and contestation of cultural resonance. Rival groups seek to discredit a movement by disrupting the coupling of group identity and collective memory to sway political support in their own direction. These memory “strategies in interaction” are not only micro-processes contingent on micro-interactions. More critically, they are structured by macro-fields of cultural meaning that situate relational group identities. By taking a comparative approach to the study of cultural resonance in movement strategy, this study reveals the patterned cultural processes of meaning-making through which groups engage in contentious politics.

**The Politics of Cultural Resonance**

Movements adapt, deploy, and generate cultural meanings to project their grievances to audiences, establish particular collective identities, and attract allies. In these processes, movements are enabled and constrained by meaning systems, both in the availability of particular cultural meanings groups can deploy – meaning which meanings even exist for groups to draw upon - and the extent to which meanings resonate with broader publics – in other words, do audiences buy the messages movements are projecting? Are they credible? The latter question is part of a generative field of emergent research that crosscuts with communication studies and political science to examine how groups develop culturally resonant messages to “win hearts and minds” (Bail 2016a; Brader 2006; Castells 2012; King and Walker 2014). In these studies of
frame resonance, the core question is: how much does a movement’s particular construction of an issue match the audience’s assumptions about the social world? For example, recent research on the Immigrant Rights Movement tested the cultural resonance of three types of frames deployed by the movement: the human/citizenship rights frame, an economics frame, and a family frame. This study found that different frames resonated with different sub-publics, distinguished by political ideology (Bloemraad et al. 2016). These studies establish that given a particular political-cultural context and a particular audience, one ideational meaning structure will be more persuasive than another. But what does it mean for a message to resonate?

Social movement theories typically refer to resonance to explain why particular frames connect with audiences. Cultural resonance means the message a group deploys connects to the audience’s assumptions about the social world through sets of meanings they recognize (Benford and Snow 2000; Gamson et al. 1992; Schudson 1989). These messages must seem credible. However, as McDonnell, Bail, and Tavory point out in a forthcoming theory of cultural resonance, these studies have largely overlooked the processes through which cultural resonance manifests. In their generative theory of the process of cultural resonance, resonance is about contingent, processual interactions between cultural objects and audiences. They argue, “…to the extent that resonance is about congruence, we argue that it is about the act of making a cultural object congruent as a person works through a situation or problem they face rather than having an ‘already’ congruent or familiar solution ready at hand,” (McDonnell, Bail, and Tavory 2017). While this view importantly highlights the interactional process of cultural resonance, I argue that both approaches obscure the role of the group – or messenger- who deploys the cultural message toward the audience. I argue that the messenger- in case, the identity of the mobilizing group who deploys Civil Rights Memory Strategy – is critical in the interactive process of
cultural resonance. The targeted audience must accept not only the message they deploy as credible, the collective memory packaged for a particular political use, but they must accept as credible the linkage between the group’s identity and the collective memory. These linkages become the grounds on which movements and rival movements battle, as these case studies show. In other words, McDonnell et al. argue that resonance is emergent upon “relations among [cultural] object, person, and situation (Emirbayer 1997; Griswold 1987; McDonnell 2016).” I argue that resonance is emergent upon relations among messengers deploying cultural object, cultural object, targeted persons, and situation.

Examining this process through these case studies also draws attention to the influential role of rival groups in multi-institutional fields of contention. Rival groups are not only parallel competitors for power and resources, but also direct threats who shape the contexts of mobilization (Gurbuz 2016). Rival movements can both create and diminish opportunities for the other side, depending on the particular strategies organizations deploy (Fetner 2001; Lo 1982; Meyer and Staggenborg 1996). Through interactions between movements and their opposition, strategies can be innovated as insurgents and opponents try to offset one another’s moves (McAdam 1983). In these case studies, rival groups draw on shared cultural meanings to disrupt movement’s strategic linkages between identity and memory by discrediting not only the message (the interpretation of memory), but the linkage between the group who deploys the message and the message. By taking a comparative approach, I highlight patterns in these processes that show how processes of cultural resonance work across different types of social movements with different targets. Comparative work like this provides insights into how wider systems of social relations shape cultural processes in contentious politics.
**Data and Methods**

*Case Selection*

From a large dataset of social movement organizations, I selected two paired cases of social movements representing a range of status positions not initially included in the Civil Rights Act – sexuality (LGBT Movement) and immigration status (Immigrant Rights Movement). From the eleven movements examined in Chapter 1, these four movements in two paired comparisons also represent both progressive and conservative movements, as well as old and new movements. From three dimensions of difference – status position, political ideology, and movement age – I select on one shared dimension of movement strategy deployed among all four movements (Feagin 1991a; Small 2009; Yin 2008): the invocation of the collective memory of the Civil Rights Movement. I combined primary and secondary sources to analyze events in which Civil Rights Memory Strategy was deployed. Secondary sources are highlighted in Table 3.1, including histories and ethnographies that provided rich detail on movement trajectories.

I then selected events by systematically reviewing materials and identifying those that were most publicized, as events that represented highly contentious and pivotal moments within movements. I used this analysis to select the events selected in this study. I examine two paired movements in four highly-publicized movement events across two presidential eras. During the President G.W. Bush Era (2001-2008), I examine the 2002 Campaigns of SAVE-Dade opposed by Take-Back Miami-Dade as well as the 2003 Immigrant Workers Freedom Ride opposed by Nativist groups. During the President Obama Era (2009-2016), I examine the 2012 Campaigns of the Coalition to Protect All NC Families opposed by the Coalition to Protect All NC Families and the 2012 Undocubus Ride for Justice opposed by Nativist groups.
Table 3.1. Secondary Sources for Comparative-Historical Analysis of Four Movements

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Movement</th>
<th>Sources</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Family Values</td>
<td>(Bull &amp; Gallagher 1996); (Diamond 1989); (Diamond 1998); (Freeman 2013); (Green, Rozell, Wilcox 2003); (Gross et al 2011); (Howison 2014); (Liebman &amp; Wuthnow 1983); (Lichtman 2009); (Lienesch 1982); (Martin 2005); (McGirr 2002); (Middendorf 2008); (Moen 1996); (Phillips-Fein 2009); (Rozell &amp; Wilcox 1996); (Stacey 1996); (Teles 2012); (Viguerie 1981); (Williams 2010)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Immigrant Rights</td>
<td>(Baker-Cristales 2009); (Barreto et al 2008); (Fujiwara 2005); (Germano 2014); (Getrich 2008); (Gonzalez 2008); (Hondagneu_Sotelo 2008); (Johnson 2001); (Johnson &amp; Hing 2007); (Milkman 2006); (Milkman &amp; Terriquez); (Narro, Wong, Shadduck-Hernandez 2006); (Lyon 2008); (Nicholls 2013); (Pallares &amp; Flores-Gonzalez 2010); (Pulido 2007); (Romero 2005); (Terriquez 2015); (Voss &amp; Bloemraad 2011); (Yukich 2013)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nativists</td>
<td>(Bennett 1988); (Bennett 1995); (Berlet &amp; Lyons 2000); (Fry 2006); (Gerstle 2004); (Jaret 1999); (King 2009); (Michaels 1995); (Ngai 2014); (Perea 1997); (Sanchez 1997); (Tatalovich 1995); (Tichenor 2009)</td>
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**Methodology**

Using comparative historical analysis, my goal is to investigate the conditions under which Civil Rights Memory Strategy takes shape through rival movement interactions and to develop an explanation of why Civil Rights Memory Strategy evolves in particular ways. Because I am focused on elaborating a process, a comparative case study is the ideal research
method (Becker 1992; Mitchell 1983; Small 2009). Scholars of comparative-historical methodology propose combining multiple modes of inference to both build theory and develop historical explanation (Mahoney 1999; Quadagno and Knapp 1992). To examine the particularistic factors of each event, I applied a narrative strategy, examining how events were situated in time and space. Narratives are the analytic constructs that link seemingly disparate events in a cohesive whole through a sequence of social actions (Abbott 1990; Griffin 1992).

Examining an action in the context of a narrative’s sequence entails linking an action to previous actions in a “causal” and “explanatory” manner.

Social theorists have argued that understanding the processual essence of narrative is at the heart of social inquiry (Abbott 1990), elucidating the relationship between structure and agency embedded in and evolving through time (Sewell 1992). Events are entry points to a narrative and narratives are how we make sense of the meaning of linked events. The benefit of a particularistic narrative strategy as opposed to a generalized atemporal comparative strategy is that it unpacks how a story unfolds, in an order of actions, through conjunctures and dilemmas. Allowing for divergent time paths, or models of “path dependency,” toward outcomes shows how cumulative actions enable and constrain future action (Aminzade 1992; Mahoney 2000). To analyze each event, I construct an event database using archived organizational materials including website content from the web archive archive.org, interviews (available on the internet), as well as secondary historical accounts (Table 3.1) and the population of newspapers articles mentioning each event. I used LexisNexis which is the most widely used news archive for social scientists (Weaver and Bimber 2008). LexisNexis includes roughly 300 newspapers and 500 general print publications covering all big-city newspapers in the United States, as well
as papers from mid-size markets and some local papers. It is a vast resource representing a complex field of media coverage.

Civil Rights Memory Strategies Between Rival Movements in Interaction

In the following analysis, I trace two paired cases of rival movements, briefly describing their histories as they relate to the Civil Rights Movement. Rather than detail every invocation of Civil Rights Memory Strategy ever deployed, I zoom in to highlight central events within each movement. These close narrative analyses illustrate the processual, interactive nature of culturally resonant strategy construction and, importantly, deconstruction.

The LGBT Rights Movement

In 1924, The Society for Human Rights was founded in Chicago, the first known gay rights organization. The first national gay rights organization, The Mattachine Society was founded in 1951 by Harry Hay. Many consider this the start of the gay rights movement, followed by the founding of the first lesbian rights organization, the Daughters of Bilitis, in San Francisco. However, it was the 1969 Stonewall Riots in New York City that sparked the national gay rights movement as we know it today, turning small pockets of activists into a widespread movement for acceptance and equal rights. Though there were gays and lesbians involved in the African American Civil Rights Movement, the movement for LGBT rights did not emerge directly out of the Civil Rights Movement. However, there were important connections worth highlighting. One of the central organizers of the 1963 March on Washington was Bayard Rustin, a gay civil rights leader. Many eventual gay rights activists participated in the march and were inspired by Martin Luther King, Jr. One such activist, Jack Nichols said, "We marched with Martin Luther King, seven of us from the Mattachine Society, and from that moment on, we had
our own dream about a gay rights march of similar proportions,” (Richen 2014). In 1979 then again in 1987 and 1993, there were gay marches on Washington. Although the gay rights movement did not stem directly from the Civil Rights Movement, it was inspired by the Civil Rights Movement and used the collective memory as a strategy, seeking to draw parallels between the struggles of African Americans in the 1950’s and 60’s to those of LGBT individuals today. Scholars have argued that the LGBT movement shifted from a cultural movement centered on sexual liberation to a political movement mirroring ethnic (Seidman 1993) interest-group politics (Altman 1982; Paul 1982; Escoffier 1985; Epstein 1987; Seidman 1993; Gamson 1995; Vaid 1995; Bernstein 1997). Mirroring this view, in 1993, Robert Bray of the National Gay and Lesbian Task Force said, “Right now, gay people are the last minority against which it is socially acceptable to disparage, defame and discriminate,” (Dart 1993).

Following the “minority rights revolution” that came on the heels of the Civil Rights Movement (Skrentny 2004), gay rights activists saw the 1990’s as their “civil rights decade – one future generations [would] liken to the 1960’s battle for black equality,” (Dart 1993). Prominent LGBT organizer, Gregory King of the Human Rights Campaign Fund said, “The quest for lesbian and gay civil rights is the pre-eminent civil rights issue of this decade. I think Americans will look back with pride on the progress that will be made during the `90s.” The mainstream LGBT Rights movement began calling itself the New Civil Rights Movement in the 1990’s. Long-time gay rights activist David Mixner explained, “There were those who were reluctant to call us a civil-rights movement because they felt it would be offensive to African Americans, and for some it was, but we felt that until we really defined ourselves as a civil rights movement, beyond partisan identity, beyond political identity, and certainly not as a political interest group, we would not be successful,” (Eleveld 2013).
Activists turned their attention toward Bill Clinton, described by King as “the Abraham Lincoln of the lesbian and gay community,” (Dart 1993), organizing the 1993 March on Washington for Lesbian, Gay and Bi-Equal Rights and Liberation. As prominent gay activist Tom Stoddard said, “The march marks the crossover of our movement, when we move from the political fringe to the mainstream. We have a movement that is ready. And we have a president who has finally endorsed our goals,” (Nagourney 1993). With the political opportunity in place, activists mobilized for a multi-prong agenda including overturning anti-gay military policy, expanding the Civil Rights Act to protect homosexuals, and increasing funding for AIDS research. While planning the march, organizers strategized to link the march to the Civil Rights Movement to drive home the connection between gay rights and the Civil Rights Movement, arranging for symbolic speakers like civil rights leader Reverend Jesse Jackson and NAACP chairman William Gibson. Torie Osborn, director of the National Gay & Lesbian Task Force said, "We have a million Rosa Parks in our movement who are all taking their own personal steps. After this march, the world had better get ready to talk about gay and lesbian people. After this march, these gay Rosa Parkses are going to go off and live their lives differently,” (Nagourney 1993). While the 1987 march went largely unnoticed with roughly 250,000 activists in attendance, the 1993 march outnumbered its inspiration, the 1963 March on Washington, with roughly 1,000,000 attendees. Speakers like Senator Edward M. Kennedy compared the march to the 1963 march for African American civil rights, saying, "We stand again at the crossroads of national conscience.” (Schmalz 1993).

**The Family Values Movement**

The conservative family values movement originated in the 1950’s, as both law and culture began to shift toward a more pluralistic society protecting the rights of racial and ethnic
minorities, women, and homosexuals. Laws and policies began protecting individual rights rather than granting states the right to draw particular boundaries around morality, whether Stanley v. Georgia in 1969, which protected individual’s right to possess pornography or Roe v. Wade in 1973 which protected women’s right to an abortion. The family values movement mainly fought back in court and made early gains in Southern states, many of which were later overturned. The family values movement gained prominence in the 1980’s under the mantle of the “moral majority,” particularly when presidential candidate Ronald Reagan placed family values at the center of his platform (Liebman 1982).

However, as LGBT activists made gains for gay civil rights under Bill Clinton’s presidency in the 1990’s, a rival family values movement began galvanizing. The former Moral Majority was strategically morphed into a seemingly more benign “pro-family” Family Values Movement (Plotz and Newell 1997). LGBT organizer Robert Bray said in 1993, “We're paying a price for all this newfound political visibility and power. That price is a backlash from the far right,” (Dart 1993). Similarly, Reverend Lou Sheldon of the conservative Traditional Values Coalition said, "Homosexuals are clearly winning the day. They are a viable political force. They are concentrated. They are committed to their cause in an unbelievable manner. But I believe they are beginning to peak and you're going to see a serious backlash," (Nagourney 1993). Anti-gay legislation began popping up around the country, from the repeal of ordinances protecting LGBT groups in Colorado to referendums linking homosexuality to pedophilia in states like Oregon. Gary Bauer, president of the conservative Family Research Council and former adviser for President Reagan, discredited the link between gay rights and civil rights, saying, "On principle, we're against extending civil rights protection to people based on what they do in
bedrooms. If it passed, I don't see how you could avoid extending the same protections to transvestites or pedophiles,” (Nagourney 1993).

A rival strategy began developing to counter the LGBT Movement’s culturally resonant strategies and resulting increase in coalition power. In late 1993, Ralph Reed, executive director of the Christian Coalition, called for Christian conservative activists to take on the example of the Civil Rights Movement, referring to the examples of Martin Luther King, Jr. and John Lewis as he encouraged his fellow conservatives to broaden their appeal and turn into "low-profile political professionals," (Mawyer 1993). By 1997, Reed had developed a strategy called “the Samaritan Project,” deploying Civil Rights Memory Strategies to resonate with and drum up political support among Black and Latino communities. Reed called on Republicans to make “racial reconciliation” the centerpiece of their legislative agenda and highlighted the project as a means for driving funding into minority communities. After quoting Dr. King, Reed said, "For too long, our movement has been primarily--and frankly almost exclusively--a white, evangelical, Republican movement, whose center of gravity focused on the safety of the suburbs. The Samaritan Project is a bold plan to break that color line and bridge the gap that separates white evangelicals and Roman Catholics from their Latino and African American brothers and sisters,” (Mawyer 1993). Rival activists and civil rights leaders expressed skepticism toward these strategies, which ran counter to the anti-civil rights stance of many conservative activists just a decade prior. As historian of the religious right, William Martin said, "These are the circles that were once bastions of segregation," (Monroe 1997). Director of the ACLU in Washington, Laura Murphy, called the agenda, "…window dressing…It is conceivable that black leadership could be siphoned off by Ralph Reed because this is a very slick and sophisticated snow job…But it's a Trojan horse,” (Fulwood III 1997). Seemingly confirming her guess, Michael
Cromartie, director of an evangelical studies project at the neoconservative Ethics and Public Policy Center said, "There is a huge untapped black evangelical constituency out there, and they don't have to be in the pocket of Jesse Jackson and the Democratic Party." Theda Skocpol noted that these strategies had power beyond creating culturally resonant appeals to Black and Brown voters. She said, "The Christian Coalition has always been very astute -- especially Ralph Reed -- about melding into the larger institution. I suspect the real goal is to make it look like they're not racist in the eyes of swing voters." (Monroe 1997).

The Take Back Miami-Dade Campaign

In 2002, conservative Christian groups joined in a “Take Back Miami-Dade” campaign to revoke the inclusion of sexual orientation in a narrowly-passed 1998 “Human Rights Ordinance.” The ordinance prohibited discrimination based on "race, color, religion, ancestry, national origin, sex, pregnancy, age, disability, marital status, familial status, or sexual orientation" in housing, employment, credit and finance, and public accommodation. Take Back Miami-Dade was opposed by the Say No to Discrimination-SAVE (Safeguarding American Values for Everyone) Dade Campaign. This battle garnered a great deal of national attention as 230 municipalities in 11 other states had similar antidiscrimination ordinances. Challenges in other cities were also taking place, including Tacoma and Ypsilanti.

The mobilization was led primarily by the Christian Coalition of Miami-Dade County who sought and received backing by the local African American Council of Christian Clergy (AACCC) and People United to Lead the Struggle for Equality (PULSE). Take Back Miami-Dade initially petitioned to get the issue on the ballot in 1999 but did not obtain enough
signatures. After reorganizing and attracting a broader coalition, they were able to get enough signatures (over 59,000) to put the issue on the ballot in 2002 (Nielsen 2002).

The Take Back Miami-Dade campaign was initially composed of mostly evangelical non-Cuban Latinos (Freiberg 2002; McCraw and Brickley 1999), while the LGBT Movement in Miami had attracted many otherwise conservative Cuban-Americans who were business owners and in positions of political power, including Mayor Alex Penelas. For Take Back Miami-Dade, their failure to repeal the Human Rights Ordinance in 1998 produced a strengthened commitment to expand their networks to obtain the political support they required. In opposition to the inclusion of sexuality in the anti-discrimination ordinance, Take Back Miami-Dade developed a Civil Rights Memory Strategy that contrasted LGBT rights frames with African Americans’ historical struggles in order to diminish claims of anti-gay discrimination. To establish the credibility of these strategies for the general public, they sought the backing of African American community members.

Take Back Miami-Dade targeted African American Christian organizations, first approaching PULSE at an April 2002 board meeting. The campaign distributed leaflets questioning LGBT groups’ claims of discrimination by drawing attention to their economic success. They read, “Homosexuals’ income is nearly five times that of AFRICAN-AMERICANS!” Then president of PULSE, Bess McElroy, said she disagreed with the alliance. "PULSE is a civil rights group that advocates justice and equality for all. Are we saying we're for justice and equality for some?" she argued (Robinson 2002). However, McElroy was out-voted and Take Back Miami-Dade gained PULSE’s support to join the campaign and vote for the repeal. The AACCC’s 15-member executive board also voted unanimously to support the repeal of the anti-discrimination ordinance (Robinson 2002). The support of the AACCC was
particularly notable as the coalition represented 300 ministers and 250,000 parishioners from
churches throughout the county. AACCC Executive Director Richard Bennett estimated that
about 25 percent of the AACCC members disagreed with the board and opposed repeal (Nielsen
2002).

However, with the general support of African American leadership from these groups, the
Take Back Miami-Dade campaign was well-positioned to develop a Civil Rights Memory
Strategy for public support. Together, organizational leaders developed a Civil Rights Memory
Strategy that deployed Martin Luther King, Jr. as a historical figure against the LGBT
Movement’s rights frames. Nathaniel Wilcox, former PULSE president, co-chair of Take Back
Miami-Dade, and an African American, led efforts to distribute campaign flyers displaying an
image of Dr. King juxtaposed with an image of two men kissing with the message, “Martin
Luther King did not march or die for this… King would be OUTRAGED if he knew
homosexualist extremists were abusing the civil rights movement to get special rights based on
their sexual behavior." The flier went on to quote civil rights activist Reverend Fred
“Shuttleworth” [sic] of Birmingham, Alabama as saying, "Dr. King and I were not crusading for
homosexuality. I've heard Dr. King speak out against homosexuality on many occasions. It is
wrong to equate homosexuality with civil rights," (Long and Tutu 2012).

AACCC Executive Director Richard Bennett was quoted on the back of the flyer saying,
“To compare the ‘sexual preference’ amendment to the civil rights movement is embarrassing.
It’s nothing but a smoke screen. Our forefathers fought for us to ride the bus, be able to go to
restaurants. The civil rights movement has nothing to do with homosexuality,” (Long 2012).
Reverend Joe Silas, president of PULSE, said of gay rights, “Biologically it’s wrong, spiritually
it's wrong and with regard to civil rights it's wrong," (Ross 2002). Take Back Miami Dade rolled out the strategy distributing 50,000 flyers by their own estimation (Nielsen 2002).

Amplifying Take Back Miami-Dade’s Civil Rights Memory Strategy, Reverend Wilcox would visit Black churches and preach, “I don't find no gay slums. I don't find no gay water fountains. I don't see no gays riding the back of the bus. This thing isn't about discrimination, it's a smoke screen to mainstream the homosexual lifestyle,” (Bell 2002). The conservative Take Back Miami-Dade movement developed a Civil Rights Memory Strategy that drew on the cultural resonance of Dr. King’s morality to both attract African American support and discredit the LGBT Movement’s claims to civil rights on the basis of sexual orientation.

The pro-LGBT, Say No to Discrimination-SAVE Dade Campaign had been busy enacting their own strategies to encourage voters to oppose the repeal. In response to the successful efforts of the 1998 campaign, executive director of SAVE, Timothy Higdon, said, "Our support was not a landslide by any means, but when you really present the issue as discrimination, people see that. Also, people are very proud of living in a world-class [metropolis] where discrimination's not tolerated. So those are the core messages we're hammering on," (Wire 2000). Similarly, George Ketelhohn, chairman of the campaign said, "We're a world class city and we can't afford a small minority painting us as a community that favors discrimination," (Wire 2000). In focalizing anti-discrimination and tolerance in their messaging, the LGBT Movement had attracted wide support on the pragmatic basis that intolerance was bad for business. For a city economically dependent on tourism and LGBT nightlife, an image of a tolerant Miami was economically and politically advantageous (Canedy 2002). Mayor Alex Penelas was outspoken in his opposition to the repeal saying, "We're trying to build an image of international metropolis, a bridge among cultures, but we would be saying,
'By the way, it's O.K. to discriminate based on sexual orientation. That would just be wrong. We would be turning the clock back several years,” (Wire 2000). As part of his support for the campaign, he recorded a phone message to residents urging them to vote against the repeal. Politicians like African American Representative Carrie Meek and local celebrities including singer Gloria Estefan also backed the No campaign, reflecting very little political and cultural opportunity for the conservative movement.

The Say No to Discrimination Campaign also had the support of prominent African American organizations like the NAACP and Urban League of Greater Miami. However, as Take Back Miami-Dade developed their Civil Rights Memory Strategy to draw in conservative, Christian African American supporters, they also began to unearth divisions within the community, largely along class and ethnic lines. Take Back’s rallies were composed primarily of evangelical poor, recent immigrants from Central America and African Americans (Freiberg 2002), while SAVE Dade was supported by business owners and political elites. In reaction to Take Back Miami-Dade’s culturally resonant Civil Rights Memory Strategy, SAVE Dade had to develop a counter-Civil Rights Memory Strategy to take the campaign head on. They reached out to national organizations seeking guidance on a counter-strategy. Mandy Carter, a founding member of the gay rights group, the National Black Justice Coalition, notified King’s widow, Coretta Scott King of the flyer. King immediately issued a statement through the King Center in Atlanta calling for all groups to follow King’s dream of equal treatment for gay men and lesbians. She also sent a letter explicitly distinguishing King’s position as one in opposition to the AACCC, a position that would have included gays and lesbians in the “beloved community,” (Long and Tutu 2012).
Next, the American Civil Liberties Union created two new rival fliers for the SAVE Dade campaign, quoting Coretta Scott King: "If the basic rights of one group can be denied, all groups become vulnerable." Asked for comment, Take Back’s communications director Eladio Jose Armesto replied, “Coretta Scott King is entitled to her opinion. She can't speak for her husband, though." Howard Simon, executive director of the American Civil Liberties Union of Florida, went on to strategically invoke lesser known figures from the collective memory to emphasize King’s support for LGBT rights. Speaking to journalists, he described how King overlooked emphatic advice to remove Bayard Rustin, who was gay, from his inner circle. Rustin, he noted, went on to organize the 1963 March on Washington that led to the Civil Rights and Voting Rights Acts. Simon said, "What King did with Bayard Rustin mirrors exactly what is happening in Miami-Dade. King gave Rustin probably the most important assignment in the civil-rights movement because he judged him on his abilities, not his sexual orientation. And that's all this battle is about today," (Bell 2002).

In reaction to the counter-Civil Rights Memory Strategy, Take Back Miami-Dade co-chair Wilcox distributed a second flier using King’s image and quoting Bible passages. Communications director Armesto also developed a sort of reverse discrimination frame, using a language of “special privileges” to argue that in protecting sexual orientation under the act, Christian conservatives’ rights were being infringed upon. Armesto argued:

It [the ordinance] is being used to discriminate against institutions such as the Boy Scouts of America, who have decided that they're not going to allow avowed homosexuals to work as scoutmasters and leaders. We need to get rid of it because it establishes special privileges on the basis of sexual conduct, because it is used against institutions such as the Scouts that do not accept avowed homosexualists in their ranks, and because the promoters of this highly divisive amendment which is tearing our community apart are using the amendment to quash any criticism of any type of sexual conduct… (Nielsen 2002).
In reaction to SAVE Dade’s counter-Civil Rights Memory Strategy, the Take Back Campaign evolved their strategy from one discrediting the discrimination claims of the LGBT Movement to one claiming their own discrimination.

Through the processual interplay between rival movements, the evolution of Civil Rights Memory Strategies in interaction, the battle over the anti-discrimination ordinance took place through contestations over the credibility of strategies linking group identities with collective memory. In response to the King Center’s denouncement of Take Back Miami-Dade’s flyer, co-chair Wilcox noted that the King family allowed King’s image to be used for a cellular phone commercial, arguing, "If [Coretta Scott King] can use his image to promote a telephone business why can't I use that image?" (Bar-Diaz 2002). Responding to Take Back’s outcry over the rival fliers, Community Relations Board director Larry Capp said, “[Take Back Miami-Dade is acting] like it has special privileges over the King legacy. When did any one group copyright that strategy?" (Bar-Diaz 2002). In response to allegations that anti-gay group, the Christian Coalition, forged signatures on the petition to repeal gay rights, the National Gay and Lesbian Task Force’s Executive Director Lorri L. Jean said, "In this campaign alone, they lied when they misrepresented the beliefs of the great Martin Luther King to the public; they lied when they said that Dr. King associate Reverend Fred Shuttlesworth supported them; and now it turns out they've lied about the signatures they've collected. It seems that these religious fanatics will break any Commandment in order to promote their hateful agenda of anti-gay bigotry.” (Gay Today 2002).

The repeal did not pass with 53 percent voting against the repeal. Nadine Smith, executive director of gay rights group Equality Florida credited Coretta Scott King’s statement, the counter-Civil Rights Memory Strategy that delegitimized Take Back’s King flyer, as a major
reason for the victory (Long 2012). This battle garnered a great deal of national attention as 230 municipalities in 11 other states had similar antidiscrimination ordinances and challenges in other cities were also taking place, including Tacoma and Ypsilanti. Although the repeal did not pass, the conservative family values movement’s invocations of the Civil Rights Movement became a central strategy by which groups countered gay rights activists’ claims to civil rights. Family values activists began using the discourse of civil rights to counter equal rights laws and amendments for LGBT groups, and invoking Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. as a religious figure to counter LGBT groups’ civil rights frames was central to their strategy. In 2006, Carolyn Garris wrote an article titled, “Martin Luther King’s Conservative Legacy,” writing:

It is time for conservatives to lay claim to the legacy of the Reverend Martin Luther King, Jr. King was no stalwart conservative, yet his core beliefs, such as the power and necessity of faith-based association and self-government based on absolute truth and moral law, are profoundly conservative. Modern liberalism rejects these ideas, while conservatives place them at the center of their philosophy. Despite decades of appropriation by liberals, King’s message was fundamentally conservative. (Garris 2006)

Garris’ declaration was followed by Clarence B. Jones’ 2008 book, What Would Martin Say? in which he interprets King’s position on issues like diversity, the role of government, anti-Semitism, affirmative action, and illegal immigration through a conservative evangelical Christian lens (Jones and Engel 2008) and provides a foundation for conservatives to “create a King in their own image,” (Baldwin and Burrow 2013).

Meanwhile, President Obama expressed his support for LGBT Rights, issuing an even greater perception of threat for the Family Values Movement. In his 2008 inaugural speech, Obama legitimized the LGBT Movement’s Civil Rights Memory Strategies by connecting the civil-rights marchers at Selma to the protesters at Stonewall. In his historic speech, he said:

We, the people, declare today that the most evident of truths – that all of us are created equal – is the star that guides us still; just as it guided our forebears through Seneca Falls, and Selma, and Stonewall; just as it guided all those men and women, sung and
unsung, who left footprints along this great Mall, to hear a preacher say that we cannot walk alone; to hear a King proclaim that our individual freedom is inextricably bound to the freedom of every soul on Earth. It is now our generation’s task to carry on what those pioneers began. For our journey is not complete until our wives, our mothers, and daughters can earn a living equal to their efforts. Our journey is not complete until our gay brothers and sisters are treated like anyone else under the law – for if we are truly created equal, then surely the love we commit to one another must be equal as well. (Obama 2008)

By the end of Obama’s first term, the Family Values Movement had developed strategies specifically centered on discrediting the LGBT Movement’s widely resonant strategy of linking gay rights to civil rights. In leaked documents, the National Organization for Marriage (NOM) strategy titled, “Marriage: $20 Million Strategy for Victory” laid out a plan for defeating Obama in 2012 by targeting religious Black and brown voters to drive in a wedge in the Democratic base. NOW’s “Not a Civil Right Project” specifically targeted African Americans and was detailed as follows:

The strategic goal of this project is to drive a wedge between gays and blacks-two key Democratic constituencies. We aim to find, equip, energize and connect African-American spokespeople for marriage; to develop a media campaign around their objections to gay marriage as a civil right; and to provoke the gay marriage base into responding by denouncing these spokesmen and women as bigots. No politician wants to take up and push an issue that splits the base of the party. (Gallagher and Brown n.d.)

Rival strategies were developed at the national level specifically to discredit grassroots LGBT campaigns, and LGBT groups came to evolve their strategy in response, as illustrated in the next case.

**Amendment One Campaign**

In 2011, with the first legislature with a Republican majority in both House and Senate since 1870, the North Carolina General Assembly began rallying support for a constitutional amendment, Amendment One (SB514), codifying an existing ban on same-sex marriage. The
amendment’s phrase, “domestic legal union,” left open its interpretation, potentially preventing the state from granting rights and benefits to committed but unmarried couples, beyond same-sex couples (Eichner et al. 2011). However, given the obscurity of its aims and the proliferation of misinformation about the amendment, much of the public was unclear on what Amendment One was and sought to do. Just 24 hours before election day, public polls showed that only 46% of voters understood that the amendment would ban both gay marriage and civil unions (Jensen 2012).

In spring 2011, long-active networks of conservative organizations reconvened in Family Values coalitions to generate advertisements, attract media attention, and lobby state representatives in anticipation of the legislative vote in September (Meadows 2015). The initiative did not qualify for the 2011 legislative session. In response to the proposed Amendment, on August 30, 2011, House Speaker Joe Hackney accused Republican legislators of using the Amendment as a political tool to mobilize conservative voters. He said, “This proposed constitutional amendment runs against the tide of history, and has become a form of hate speech. Modern corporations do not tolerate this kind of discrimination and neither should our state. But many of us recognize this unneeded amendment is not about rights or morality. It is part of the Republican political strategy to drive Republicans to the polls in 2012 while suppressing Democratic voting through voter ID legislation and cutbacks in early voting,” (Hackney 2011). Hackney highlighted both the discriminatory nature of the amendment as well as the underlying political motivations of the issue as “not about rights or morality,” but rather politics.

However, in a special session in fall 2011, the initiative passed out-of-committee by one vote. So began the Amendment One campaign, scheduled to appear for a public vote on the May 8, 2012 primary ballot. Family Values coalitions coalesced under the “Vote for Marriage NC”
Campaign, while LGBT Rights groups and allies coalesced under “The Campaign to Protect All NC Families.” The Coalition to Protect all NC Families was founded by the ACLU of North Carolina who led the campaign, joining with local groups like Equality NC and allies at the Courage Campaign. The Campaign hired a full-time organizer and their strategies for gaining public support were executed through a stream of campaign literature, state-wide panels and community meetings, op-eds in newspapers, and grassroots efforts like the Know+Love Project, a website dedicated to sharing stories of committed LGBT families in North Carolina (Meno 2012).

The Vote for Marriage NC Campaign was initially composed of the Baptist State Convention of North Carolina, the Christian Action League, the NC Values Coalition, a coalition of African American pastors, the National Organization for Marriage (NOM), and several policy organizations and civic groups. The amendment was commonly perceived as a ban on gay marriage, a subject with clear moral valence for conservative and religious rural voters. As a result, activists grappled with a context in which their strategies needed to compete with rival groups to make clear appeals to constituents’ values.

As campaigns for and against Amendment One began unrolling through fall 2011, coalitions against the Amendment framed the issue as an infringement on civil rights. Civil Rights Memory Strategies had been readily deployed by the LGBT Rights Movement in mobilizations across the country for over two decades. The principal website for LGBT news was even located at thenewcivilrightsmovement.com. As a result, the opposing Family Values movement had learned to anticipate this strategy and drew from a national plan developed by the National Organization for Marriage (NOM) to discredit the strategy and appeal to religious African American voters.
As they had been for the Take Back Miami-Dade Campaign, Civil Rights Memory Strategies became tools by which Family Values groups sought to establish cultural resonance for their campaign in order to attain political support from African Americans. In September 2011, legislators including House Speaker Pro Tem Dale Folwell (R-Forsyth) gathered a group of Black pastors for a press conference in support of the amendment. The group joined in a Civil Rights Memory Strategy to discredit the equation of LGBT oppression with African American oppression. When Reverend Johnny Hunter of Cliffdale Community Church in Fayetteville spoke, he said, "Blacks know what real discrimination is all about. [LGBT groups are] disrespecting...the foot soldiers of the Civil Rights Movement," (Sturgis 2011).

In response, Reverend Dr. William Barber II, President of NC NAACP issued an "Open Letter to Clergy Who Are Trying to Confuse African American Voters on Wedge Issue of Marriage Equality." He criticized the family values coalitions who sought to discredit LGBT rights as civil rights. Calling the wedge issue a “Trojan Horse trick,” he wrote:

Those who insist on distorting and criticizing the President for doing his sworn duty insult the Civil Rights Movement. These clergy ally themselves with the same extreme right organizations and people who have spent millions of dollars trying to overturn the 1965 Voting Rights Act, what most historians say was the most important achievement of the Civil Rights Movement...These are the same extremists who are stirring the pot about "gay marriage" and other code-slogans they dream up, all designed to divide and conquer the 99% who obviously can out-vote them. Their strategy is based on an arrogant assumption that we, the sons and daughters of the Civil Rights Movement, are too dumb to see through their Trojan Horse trick. They believe they can use wedge issues to seduce us into being a part of their scheme to deny LGBT brothers and sisters of their fundamental rights. This will not happen on our watch!. When you look at voting records and public policy positions carefully, the same forces fighting us on voting rights, educational equality, economic justice, addressing racial disparities in the criminal justice system, are the same forces sponsoring and paying for the current attacks on the LGBT community and the President. No matter our color. No matter our faith tradition. Those who stand for love and justice are not about to fall for their trick. No matter how you feel personally about same sex marriage, no one, especially those of us whose forebears were denied constitutional protections and counted as 3/5ths of extra votes for their slave-masters, who were listed as mere chattel property in the old Constitution -- none of
us -- should ever want to deny any other person constitutional protections. [emphasis is my own] (Barber 2011)

However, the strategy contests to establish cultural resonance among Black voters continued through the fall and into the winter, as the pro-amendment coalitions continued to target African American churches. On January 17, 2012, African American pastor Patrick Wooden joined conservative activists Peter LaBarbera and Matt Barber in a rally against the Southern Poverty Law Center, understood as a bastion of LGBT rights. The rally was organized by the conservative North Carolina Family Policy Council, who propped the Black pastor up as their main speaker. In a speech to the crowd, Wooden exclaimed:

It’s easy for African Americans when they’re not thinking…to equate their beautiful blackness, their beautiful skin color, those of us who are darker than blue, it’s easy for us to equate given the history of the country our plight with those who want civil rights status based on who they have sex with, and it’s deviant, ungodly, unhealthy sex at that. I think that every African American ought to be appalled, ought to be angry, and should begin to wave their fist in the air and declare black power and say to the homosexual lobbyists, the homosexual groups, how dare you compare your wicked, deviant, immoral, self-destructive, anti-human sexual behavior to our beautiful skin color. (Tashman 2012)

With great emotional vigor, Wooden decried the LGBT Movement’s analogy of their oppression to that of African Americans. The Vote for Marriage NC campaign rally also brought out national backers in support of the amendment, including National Organization for Marriage president Brian Brown and the Family Research Council’s National Field Director, Randy Wilson. A treatise called “Marriage Matters: Moral Wrongs aren't Civil Rights - 10 Reasons Why Homosexual ‘Marriage’ is Harmful and Must be Opposed” circulated among conservatives on Facebook and online forums. The list, composed by the pro-Amendment group, American Society for the Defense of Tradition, Family and Property, wrote:
Homosexual activists argue that same-sex “marriage” is a civil rights issue similar to the struggle for racial equality in the 1960s. This is false. First of all, sexual behavior and race are essentially different realities. A man and a woman wanting to marry may be different in their characteristics: one may be black, the other white; one rich, the other poor; or one tall, the other short. None of these differences are insurmountable obstacles to marriage. The two individuals are still man and woman, and thus the requirements of nature are respected. Same-sex “marriage” opposes nature. Two individuals of the same sex, regardless of their race, wealth, stature, erudition or fame, will never be able to marry because of an insurmountable biological impossibility. Secondly, inherited and unchangeable racial traits cannot be compared with non-genetic and changeable behavior. There is simply no analogy between the interracial marriage of a man and a woman and the “marriage” between two individuals of the same sex. (TFP 2012)

These “evidence-based” arguments, rooted in biblical texts, offered pro-amendment activists textual grounds to discredit the equation of LGBT rights with civil rights on the basis of race. As these arguments circulated in virtual spaces, the group of Black religious leaders traveled around the state speaking to audiences, offering their racial identity as a credible disruption of the strategic coupling of LGBT identity with Civil Rights memory. The message resonated with many religious voters. At a city council meeting in February, one resident rose to say, “They want to join themselves with the civil rights movement? Martin Luther King would roll over in his grave. ... To even in any way put that in the same context as the homosexual lifestyle is an abomination. Martin Luther King was struggling against racism. Homosexuality is not a race, but a disgrace,” (Ladd 2012).

In response to this powerful Civil Rights Memory Strategy, the LGBT Movement worked on a counter-strategy. In Spring 2012, anti-amendment group, Every1Against1 began distributing a series of edited black-and-white images from the Civil Rights Era. In one image, segregated water fountains, mimicking the “White” and “Colored” water fountains of the Civil Rights Era instead distinguish the water fountains as “Straight” and “Gay.” Another image shows a restaurant window that reads, “We Serve Married Couples Only.” Another the back of a bus
with a sign that reads, “Unwed Mothers Must Sit Here,” arrows ominously pointing down toward empty seats. One image shows a sign next to a park that reads a list of prohibitions:

“NO
Dogs
Lesbians
Gays
Bi-Sexuals
Single Parents
Bastards
Abused Women
Widows
Widowers”

In the corner of each image, block letters read, “MAKE HISTORY. DON’T REPEAT IT. ON MAY 8, VOTE AGAINST AMENDMENT ONE.” On their website, Every1Against1 adds text to the water fountain image that reads in large letters, “SEPARATE IS NEVER EQUAL.”

The campaign’s website explains these images, writing:

Simply put, Amendment One is an unnecessary, thinly veiled attack on civil rights — a gross injustice to North Carolina’s unmarried couples, children, families, seniors, women and businesses. If Amendment One passes, what’s next? It would mark the first time the North Carolina constitution was amended in order to discriminate against specific individuals. This flies in the face of the state’s tradition of amending the constitution to increase equality. (Every1Against1 2012)

This clear Civil Rights Memory Strategy seeks to draw a culturally resonant parallel between oppressive Jim Crow practices, which discriminated against African Americans and drove the Civil Rights Movement, and Amendment One, emphasized as an act that oppresses groups beyond LGBT constituents. As legal scholars confirmed, Amendment One’s legal ambiguity would not only ban same-sex marriage but also eliminate domestic partner insurance benefits in local governments, jeopardizing child custody and health care for unmarried couples and their children, and potentially invalidating unmarried women’s domestic violence protections.
The campaign emphasized the breadth of the Amendment to appeal to voters who may not have mobilized for LGBT Rights, but who were sympathetic to the plight of women and children. This strategy notably extended the analogy of minority struggle to a universal struggle beyond gay identity, bypassing the pro-amendment campaign’s strategy of discrediting LGBT rights as civil rights. The website listed that “Amendment One is an Attack On: Children; Families; Seniors; Women; Businesses.” The LGBT community was not highlighted as a target of the amendment. Some activists railed against this strategy, arguing that organizers were trying to “de-gay” the issue, obscuring the religious community’s targeted suppression of LGBT rights (Shapiro 2012).

Campaign manager for The Coalition to Protect ALL NC Families, Jeremy Kennedy, argued that focusing on gay marriage and religion would be a losing strategy. He said, “We’re not asking you to make a religious or moral decision about marriage. We’re asking you to make a decision about whether this amendment will hurt people, and it will,” (Shapiro 2012). Governor Bev Perdue also spoke out against the amendment focusing on its threat to women. In a campaign ad, she said, “Whatever your personal, moral, or religious views may be, writing discrimination into North Carolina’s constitution is just plain wrong,” going on to emphasize the amendment as “dangerous to women,” (Wetzstein 2012).

Other politicians sought to similarly avoid the question of morality and, like the SAVE-Dade campaign in the decade prior, emphasized the economic cost of such an amendment in a competitive global market. Politicians like Harvey Gantt, Richard Vinroot and Edwin Peacock III and corporate leaders like Duke Energy CEO Jim Rogers and Bank of America executive Cathy Bessant said if Amendment One passed, many businesses would reconsider working with North Carolinians. Peacock ran an ad emphasizing, "It is bad for business," (Meno 2012). Rogers
intertwined the morality of the issue with its costs for business when he spoke out at a meeting with business leaders saying, “If this amendment passes, we're going to look back 20 years from now, or 10 years from now, and we're going to think about that amendment the same way we think about the Jim Crow laws that discriminated against African-Americans. North Carolina is competing with the world for business, he said, and "we have to be inclusive and open," (Batten 2012). The North Carolina Pediatric Society and the North Carolina Psychological Association came out against the amendment on the grounds that it would threaten families and health care access (Batten 2012). Debates played out in community forums, comment sections on newspaper articles, and on op-ed pages between citizens as well, not only in North Carolina but on the national stage.

In May, President Bill Clinton recorded a robocall phone message for North Carolinians, warning voters that, “What it will change is North Carolina’s ability to keep good businesses, attract new jobs, and attract and keep talented entrepreneurs. If it passes, your ability to keep those businesses, get those jobs and get those talented entrepreneurs will be weakened,” (Stewart 2012). Chelsea Clinton also spoke out against the amendment, as did numerous celebrities including Jeff Tweed of Wilco, George Takei, and Jason Mraz, who tweeted, “Yo north Carolina! On May 8, vote AGAINST Amendment 1. It’s anti-gay, and takes away benefits from committed couples. Boo!” (Stewart 2012).

In a widely-shared video appealing to young voters, numerous indie rock musicians voiced their opposition to Amendment One for reasons ranging from “it is actually against my religion” to “it’s the right thing to do.” Musician Tom Barker cited a language of individualism, often invoked by conservatives, to explain his opposition to the amendment, saying, “This amendment doesn’t just ban same-sex marriage, which is already illegal anyway, it also reduces
the rights of all North Carolina families, giving the government more control over our individual
liberties. I don’t believe any government should have more power than the people it serves, and
that is why I’m voting against Amendment One,” (Latimer 2012). The range of framings of the
issue, often strategically avoiding the question of LGBT rights altogether (“same-sex marriage is
already illegal”), revealed a campaign with great internal variation in positions and approaches.

The campaign for Amendment One was not without internal contestation as well. While
the group of Black pastors, backed by family values coalitions, continued their cross-state
campaign, some of the initial sponsors of the amendment withdrew their support. House Speaker
Thom Tillis confessed he imagined the Amendment would be repealed in a decade or two
anyway (Thomaston 2012). Conservative democrat Jim Crawford who initially voted to put the
amendment on the ballot withdrew his support in late April, listening to constituent concerns at a
public forum and promising, “I will definitely vote against it because I think it goes too far,”
(Thomaston 2012). One resident fought back against his shift in position so late in the campaign,
saying:

It clearly didn’t “go too far” before that forum. What it goes to show is that even the
people who wanted this on the ballot now, seeing the tide turning with conservatives and
people of faith rallying against Amendment One, are running away from their decision to
put civil rights of a minority on the ballot. (Spaulding 2012)

By May, the anti-amendment forces had attracted a major political coalition including
religious groups, libertarians, civil rights groups including the NAACP of NC and Southerners
on New Ground, business groups, the Governor and Attorney General, and former Democratic
and Republican mayors of North Carolinian cities. With major political opposition to the
amendment, broad multiracial coalitions, and the disintegration of Republican consensus over
the amendment, the Campaign to Protect ALL NC Families seemed to stand a good chance.
They had also outspent Vote for Marriage NC by over $1 million, attracting popular celebrities
and media attention to their cause (Wiley 2012). As social movement theories would hypothesize, political opportunities and resources would have predicted a favorable outcome.

On May 8th, Amendment One went to vote. The amendment passed with 61 percent of the vote for Amendment 1 and 39 percent against the amendment. The next day, the Protect NC Families Campaign wrote on their web page, “Together, we have proven to North Carolina and the entire country that fear tactics, discrimination, and division may compete with love, compassion, and solidarity in the short term, but we know that the time is coming for true equality. As Martin Luther King, Jr. said, ‘the arc of the moral universe Is long, but it bends toward justice,’” (PNCFC 2012). Several days after the amendment passed, Governor Perdue discussed her disappointment with reporters likening the results to the violence of the Civil Rights Movement. She said, "People around the country are watching us and they're really confused to have been such a progressive forward thinking economically driven state that invested in education and that stood up for the civil rights people including the civil rights marches back in the 50's and 60's and 70's. People are saying what in the world is going on with North Carolina, we look like Mississippi," (Weinger 2012).

In response, African American Pastor Patrick Wooden, central to the Civil Rights Memory Strategies deployed toward attracting religious Black voters, discredited the governor’s comments saying, "We're not worried about it, to be honest with you, looking like Mississippi. We didn't shoot anybody. We didn't kill anybody. There was no bloodshed. No one was lynched or hung. We voted - one person, one vote. And the voice of the people was heard. I'm disappointed in the governor.” Decoupling the connection between LGBT group identity and the Civil Rights Movement, he said, “I've never seen a sign that says heterosexuals enter the front door, heterosexuals go to the back,” (ABC11 2012).
Despite the failed campaign against the amendment, the Campaign to Protect ALL NC Families had developed an infrastructure for a coalition between LGBT groups and African American civil rights groups that continued to evolve after the vote. In response to the Family Values Movement’s Civil Rights Memory Strategies, “trojan horses” designed to drive wedges in the community, the NC NAACP’s charismatic leader, Reverend Barber, worked to draft language for the national NAACP in support of marriage equality. The statement read:

The NAACP Constitution affirmatively states our objective to ensure the “political, educational, social and economic equality” of all people. Therefore, the NAACP has opposed and will continue to oppose any national, state, local policy or legislative initiative that seeks to codify discrimination or hatred into the law or to remove the Constitutional rights of LGBT citizens. We support marriage equality consistent with equal protection under the law provided under the Fourteenth Amendment of the United States Constitution. Further, we strongly affirm the religious freedoms of all people as protected by the First Amendment. (NAACP 2012)

In 2014, back in Miami, gay couples filed law suits seeking to overturn the ban on gay marriage in Florida. In response, PULSE president Reverend Nathaniel J. Wilcox, also a central figure in the 2002 Save Miami-Dade campaign, compared the fight for marriage equality to Bull Connor’s segregation campaign. As the 1960’s Commissioner of Public Safety in Birmingham, Connor was responsible for the attacks on peaceful civil rights protests by police attack dogs and fire hoses. Wilcox said, “Will Judge Sarah Zabel do to our voting rights what Bull Connor did to our civil rights? The blood of the martyrs cries out for justice. This lawsuit is hardly about the institution of marriage as much as it is about the constitutional right to vote and having our votes counted and protected,” (Caputo 2014). Civil Rights Memory Strategies like these reflected an evolution of strategy focused not only on discrediting the identity-memory link between LGBT identity and Civil Rights memory, but also on establishing their own linkage. These strategies emphasized the Family Values Movement’s oppression, seeking to link the oppression of values
to racial oppression. Similarly, earlier that year at a Utah rally against same sex marriage, 
president of the National Organization for Marriage (NOM) Brian Brown invoked the Civil 
Rights Movement to claim family values were civil rights:

Throughout history, people of faith have stood up against gross injustices, stood up for 
true civil rights going all the way back to Rome where human beings were treated as if 
their value was nothing more than being thrown together in combat to kill one 
another…Christians stood up and said no…We will organize, we will fight…There is an 
attempt if we look forward in history to hijack and whitewash the truth of the Civil Rights 
Movement, and that truth is that leaders like Dr. King and others stood up precisely 
because of their Christian faith against overwhelming odds and were sometimes told it 
was wrong to bring their faith into the public square but they stood up and joined with 
other people of faith. They knew that their arguments were based in reason. They knew it 
was unreasonable to treat people differently because of the color of their skin, but it was 
their faith that gave them the courage. Dr. King in prison, to have his home fire bombed, 
to stand for the truth no matter what. It was faith, that courage to fight for the truth…We 
are standing up for the civil rights of all when we stand up for the truth about 
marriage…Blessed are you when you are persecuted! (Brown 2014)

In claiming Christians were being persecuted for their values, this Civil Rights Memory 
Strategy seeks to establish the Family Values Movement as its own Civil Rights Movement. 

Meanwhile, in April 2014, Equality NC and NAACP-NC worked together to hold a 
Freedom Moral Summer in honor of the 50th Anniversary of Mississippi Freedom Summer. The 
Civil Rights Memory Strategy built on coalitions developed during the Amendment One 
campaign, mobilizing African American, Latino, and LGBT groups in joint efforts for voter 
registration and community organizing (alamancenaacp 2014). As conservative groups worked 
to both discredit identity-memory links and to establish their own identity-memory link, rainbow 
coalitions were forming in a rival movement for LGBTQ rights to respond to the idea that civil 
rights were bound in Black identity.
Immigrant Rights Movement

Immigrant rights movements in the United States date back to before the Cold War when working class immigrants, predominantly from Central America, Mexico, and Asia allied themselves with labor movements. To thwart many of these efforts, the government targeted immigrant rights leaders for deportations. In the 1950’s, the U.S. government simultaneously deported over a million Mexicans while bringing nearly half a million Mexicans into the U.S. under temporary work visas for contract labor under the “bracero” program. The Chicano Civil Rights movement emerged in the 1960’s. In 1964, prominent activists like César Chávez, Bert Corona, Ernesto Galarza, and Dolores Huerta worked to convince Congress to repeal Public Law 78, which sanctioned the bracero program. In 1965, farm workers went on a series of strikes. Mostly Filipino farmworkers from the Agricultural Workers Organizing Committee (AWOC) began a grape strike. Mostly Mexican farm workers from the National Farm Worker’s Association (NFWA) founded by César Chávez followed suit. Given the common visions of the two worker’s rights organizations, the two merged in 1966 as the United Farm Workers Union (Mariscal 2005; Rosales 1996). With other activists, they worked to convince congress to pass The Immigration and Nationality Act of 1965, or the Hart–Celler Act, abolishing the National Origins Formula, which had established strict immigration quotas since 1921.

The Chicano Civil Rights Movement had a multitude of inspirations including the African American Civil Rights Movement, as well as the Young Lords, Brown Berets, and Black Panthers. Student activists drew particular inspiration from their African American counterparts. For example, at the University of Washington, the Black Student Union’s radical efforts to promote campus diversity inspired Chicano student activists to join their efforts in collaborations toward joint civil rights.
Nativist Movement

While nativist movements are rooted deeply in American history, the contemporary nativist movements that rival immigrant rights movements have primarily emerged in the 2000’s in direct response to immigrant mobilization. These conservative groups include the major coalition, the Federal Immigration Reform and Enforcement Coalition (FIRE), the Minuteman Civil Defense Corps (MCDC) and the Minuteman Project (MMP).

The Immigrant Workers Freedom Ride

In 2001 at a brainstorming session for garnering support for immigration reform, leaders of the hotel workers’ union Hotel Employees and Restaurant Employees (HERE) dreamed up an Immigrant Workers Freedom Ride. Union leaders received the backing of the AFL-CIO, and over the next two years, immigrant rights activists organized to secure legal status for undocumented immigrants by organizing a nation-wide freedom ride that would link the struggle for immigrant rights to the culturally resonant African American civil rights struggles of the 1960’s (Bank Munoz and Wong 2004). Before deploying the Civil Rights Memory Strategy, organizers first sought the support of African American Civil Rights Movement Leaders. Led by Maria Elena Durazo, president of HERE Local 11 in Los Angeles, organizers dedicated several months to setting up meetings for one-on-one conversations with Black community leaders. Durazo said, "We wanted to be respectful. We had a lot of one-on-one conversations. If, in the end, people thought it was wrong, we wouldn't have done it," (Cleeland 2003b). Organizers understood the collective memory of the Civil Rights Movement as one with a distinct legacy held by African Americans, and not one to be deployed credibly without their support.

The first strategy, then, was to enlist prominent African American leaders to endorse the Freedom Ride. One of the first leaders to sign on was Reverend Jim Lawson, a trainer for many
of the original Freedom Riders. Lawson acknowledged that his endorsement was not shared by all African American community leaders, explaining, “There are some feelings in the black community that immigrant workers are not a valid concern. This is a beginning. It's a step to launch a new conversation,” (Cleeland 2003b). Organizers eventually won the support of the NAACP and the Congressional Black Caucus. Reverend James Orange, a civil rights activist beaten in Birmingham protests in 1961 was initially hesitant but after speaking to organizers he concluded, "When a worker is packed in the back of a truck and suffocates trying to get across the border, or when someone comes through the airport and gets detained just because his name is Abdullah, those are civil rights issues. The rights we fought for in the '60s are the same rights people are fighting for now," (Cleeland 2003a).

With the support of African American leaders, organizers began developing the modes by which the Civil Rights Memory Strategy of the freedom ride would be deployed. The “Immigrant Workers Freedom Ride” began on September 20, 2003 and consisted of 900 riders on 18 buses departing from ten cities with 103 planned events at stops including the Memphis hotel where Martin Luther King Jr. was shot and all the locations in which major conflicts took place in 1961 (Moser 2003). The Civil Rights Memory Strategy was directed both internally, toward producing a particular collective identity among activists, and externally, toward drawing public support toward the cause. In preparation for the freedom ride, organizers had activists participate in training sessions that illuminated the violence and sacrifices Black activists faced in the 1960’s. One immigrant rights activist said, “To see how badly they were treated - one of the buses was even burned - it gives you a lot to think about. There's a lot to admire. It's not exactly the same for us. We don't have to go to the back of the bus. But still there is no respect at work, and we always, always live with fear," (Cleeland 2003b). During the ride, activists
received an education on the history of the Civil Rights Movement including videos and lectures, further connecting the mission at hand with its historical referent.

Both internally and externally, organizers utilized specific strategies for creating credible linkages between African American and immigrant experience. For example, during stops in Mississippi and North Carolina, union organizers shared stories about how local retailers and hog processing plants were manipulating divisions between groups to create racial tension and avoid contract negotiations. The approach had some success in attracting African American unionists. Willie Robinson, president of the Coalition of Black Trade Unionists in Southern California, said, "Since they are here, they might as well have certain rights. It might eliminate them from being scabs." At a rally in Tucson, Arizona, African American Reverend John M. Fife said, "Then, as now, let the freedom buses roll. Then, as now, vigilantes terrorized and discriminated with guns. Then, as now, there is a moral and ethical issue that must unite church and synagogue and mosque and labor and civil rights and mainstream America in a movement to change the course of history," (Greenhouse 2003).

Former Civil Rights leader, Representative John Lewis called the freedom ride, “a movement that carries the struggle for civil rights for all forward into the new century.” In an Op-Ed in the Washington Post, he wrote:

Like the Freedom Rides of 1961, Freedom Ride 2003 calls on ordinary people to do extraordinary things: to put their bodies on the line at a moment in American history when immigration is a volatile issue everywhere; to stand up for their rights and the rights of many others; to call attention to bad laws that harm good people; and to challenge the federal government to act where it seems determined not to. In this, and in so many other ways, these new Freedom Riders are just like you and me -- seekers after the American dream, makers of the American dream. Just a little more than 40 years ago, on April 16, 1963, the Rev. Martin Luther King Jr. wrote from his jail cell in Birmingham, Ala., words whose meaning comes alive again in the Immigrant Workers Freedom Ride -- words that fuel these new Freedom Buses as they travel across the ever-changing human landscape of America: "Injustice anywhere is a threat to justice.
everywhere. We are caught in an inescapable network of mutuality, tied in a single garment of destiny. Whatever affects one directly, affects all indirectly." Welcome the Freedom Riders, listen to them and join them in the continuing fight for civil rights and human dignity. (Lewis 2003)

The freedom ride culminated in a rally in Washington D.C. to deploy Civil Rights Memory Strategies toward another target: Congress, where activists lobbied 120 members of Congress for legislation that would provide a path to legalization and citizenship. As media coverage of the Immigrant Workers Freedom Ride grew, the rival Nativist movement emerged in protest. Leaders of national organizations strategized around discrediting immigrant workers’ claims to civil rights. Dave Rey, Associate Director of the Federation for American Immigration Reform (FAIR), an organization against “illegal immigration” said, "Civil rights have nothing to do with the opening up of our borders…They are riding on the coattails of a completely different movement," (Nolan 2003).

Head of the California Coalition for Immigration Reform, Barbara Coe, issued members an urgent "Action Now!" message arguing, "These people are criminals. As such, they have NO 'RIGHTS' other than emergency medical care and humane treatment as they are being DEPORTED! We can only wonder how many in this group of foreign invaders have robbed, raped and possibly murdered law-abiding American citizens and legal residents."

Discrediting the Civil Rights Memory Strategy, director of the conservative Center for Immigration Studies, Mark Krikorian wrote in the National Review:

If you wanted a way of persuading Republican congressmen to support something, the last thing you'd do is have the AFL-CIO organize a bus convoy of illegal aliens appropriating the rhetoric of the civil-rights movement, endorsed by the Communist party. And yet, this is just what the open-border crowd has done… the very fact that illegal aliens are hijacking the terminology of a brave struggle for liberty by American citizens is an abomination. The real Freedom Riders traveled the South to challenge Jim Crow segregation in restrooms, restaurants, and other public facilities; a mob in Alabama attacked them, set one of the buses on fire, and beat some of the fleeing
passengers. Other Civil Rights protesters, of course, faced police dogs, high-pressure hoses, and firebombs. The idea that lobbying for amnesty is in any way comparable to this is ludicrous, and yet Rep. John Lewis did just that in the Washington Post, describing the current effort as ‘a movement that carries the struggle for civil rights for all forward into the new century.’ But defending the interests of black Americans is not on the agenda of the open-borders movement. (Krikorian 2003)

While national leadership worked to discredit the immigrant rights movement’s Civil Rights Memory Strategy, protestors on the ground, the visible opposition, projected divergent messages. A self-described “clearing house” for conservative, grassroots organizations “interested in immigration reform,” the Million American March organized counter-protests called “welcoming committees” at every stop on the Freedom Ride. Protesting groups included conservatives, libertarians, nativists, white supremacists, and neo-Nazis, with organizations including Georgians for Immigration Reduction, 9/11 Families for a Secure America, the American Border Alliance, the Counsel of Conservative Citizens, Our Race Is Our Nation, Knights of the Ku Klux Klan, and the White Revolution (Moser 2003).

While scattered protestors deployed strategies countering the Civil Rights Memory Strategy with signs like, “Being Illegal Is Not a Civil Right” more deployed strategies aimed at deviating targets. Some protestors were concerned with immigrants taking their jobs – “No more free rides. No more welfare. No more stolen jobs,” others were concerned with terrorism – “Oppose Illegal Immigration and the Terrorism that it Causes,” while white supremacists opposed the very existence of immigrants – “I Never Asked for Diversity.” After a Chicago rally, an anti-immigrant protestor wrote of jarringly finding herself among neo-Nazis with whom she did not associate, illustrating the fragmentation among the counter-protestors. Of the freedom riders she wrote, “'[I]t broke my heart to...see their solidarity. Our fight is cut out for us!'” (Moser 2003)
Rival mobilizations were relatively small and contained at these stops, but groups culminated for the largest counter-protest the day before the conclusion of the freedom ride, October 3rd, in Liberty Park, New Jersey. Hal Turner, a local radio show host known for posting tirades on his website against African-Americans, Jews, homosexuals, and other minorities, was at the center of organizing efforts. On his show, he said to listeners, “You have a bunch of illegal aliens boarding buses to demand amnesty, with the Statue of Liberty as a backdrop. I say we should lock them all up and send them back to the cesspools where they came from. People don't want them here,” (Hague 2003). Turner’s efforts attracted the participation of white supremacist groups, the National Alliance, Aryan Nation and Ku Klux Klan. The racial solidarity of the rival movement excluded otherwise receptive audiences, and rather than discredit the immigrant workers’ Civil Rights Memory Strategy, rather strengthened its cultural resonance. Images of white nationalists yelling at nonviolent activists harkened to the very historical moment immigrant rights activists sought to project.

Most centrally, the rival movement failed to develop a counter-Civil Rights Memory Strategy to discredit the immigrant rights movement on the ground. In the grassroots arena, immigrant rights activists were actively performing Civil Rights Memory Strategies, activating shared cultural meanings with speeches from Civil Rights leaders, rallies against the backdrop of Civil Rights monuments, activists with arms linked singing “We Shall Overcome” amidst throngs of journalists reporting on the cultural resonance of the moment (Leblanc 2003; Moser 2003; Nolan 2003). While anti-immigrant leaders criticized the equation of immigrant rights with civil rights at the national level, these calls did not manifest in strategies on the ground. Disparate groups without a shared collective identity joined in ad hoc counter-protests, largely projecting their own grievances.
The Immigrant Workers Freedom Ride did not produce immigration reform, but through the use of Civil Rights Memory Strategy, it built a durable multiracial coalition for subsequent mobilizations (Voss and Bloemraad 2011).

Driven by the efforts of the Freedom Ride, the Immigrant Workers Freedom Coalition including the National Immigration Forum and National Council of La Raza, formed the Coalition for Comprehensive Immigration Reform (CCIR), supported by the AFL-CIO and with ties to the Center for American Progress. With the multi-sector support produced through the Immigrant Workers Freedom Ride, the CCIR obtained enough financial and organizational backing to continue the Civil Rights Movement strategy. For example, in 2004, the CCIR used grants from the Atlantic Philanthropies and the Evelyn and Walter Haas, Jr. Fund to sponsor the New American Freedom Summer. Their organizing drew from the strategies of the original Freedom Summer of 1964, which sought to drum up student activism (Munoz 2004). CCIR organizers concentrated their efforts on key battleground states of Arizona and Florida.

The rival Nativist movement also adjusted their strategies after witnessing the outpouring of multiracial public support for the Immigrant Workers Freedom Ride. Leaked documents from conservative political strategist Frank Luntz show a move toward emphasizing the criminality and illegality of immigrants to head off arguments about immigrant rights. The leaked 25-page strategic plan from 2005 titled, “Respect for the Law & Economic Fairness: Illegal Immigration Prevention” highlights “Words that Work” as talking points for Republican politicians seeking political support. Luntz warns campaigning politicians, “be careful of your language; words matter in this upcoming debate” (Luntz 2005). These sound bites juxtapose frightening language about terrorism and criminality with punitive language about border security, law and order, and punishment. The strategic language emphasizes American values and the American dream and
positions “illegal immigrants” as threats to those core principles. More tellingly, the strategy plays up the difference between legal immigrants who “played the rules” and “law-breakers,” seeking to drive a wedge among immigrant, particularly Latino, voters. Luntz writes:

Republicans have made significant inroads into the Hispanic community over the past decade, and it would be a shame if poorly chosen words and overheated rhetoric were to undermine the credibility [emphasis my own] the party has built within the community. Communicating your position on illegal immigration will require a different approach among Hispanics and Latinos.

Luntz prescribes trading the language of punishment, effective for white conservatives, for a language of accountability, emphasizing hope and opportunity. “They believe in the American Dream,” he writes of Latino and Hispanic voters. As a new immigrant rights movement was growing in the 2000’s, deploying culturally resonant Civil Rights Memory Strategies to build coalitions and gain political support, conservative groups were mobilizing in opposition, strategizing to both discredit immigrant claims to civil rights and to establish themselves as the credible protectors of the American Dream. This is the backdrop against which Civil Rights Memory Strategies were interacting, for groups seeking to construct credibility through a continuous interplay between cultural meaning structures, multiple targets in a system of power relations, and shifting political-cultural contexts.

**Immigrant “Undocubus” Ride for Justice**

In July 2012, the Ruckus Society with the National Day Laborer Network organized a “ride for justice” toward multiple targets: mobilizing undocumented residents, generating political support for immigrant rights, specifically undocumented immigrants’ rights, and placing political pressure on lawmakers to enact immigration reform. The bus planned to leave from Phoenix, Arizona, the site of the controversial SB1070 Act, with scheduled stops in New
Mexico, Colorado, Texas, Louisiana, Mississippi, Alabama, Georgia and Tennessee on the way to Charlotte for the Democratic National Convention (Kolb 2012). In each spot, local committees were organized to arrange publicized events and nonviolent tactics like sit ins designed to block traffic, drawing public attention to the issue of immigration reform. Unlike the Immigrant Workers Freedom Ride a decade prior, the organizers refrained from explicitly connecting the bus ride to the Civil Rights Movement’s freedom riders.

On the side of the bus painted by local artists and children read, “No Papers, No Fear, a Journey for Justice.” Almost 30 immigrants departed from Phoenix on July 29th, about half identifying as queer, drawing attention to a strategic theme of “coming out” of the shadows (Myerson 2012). Rider Daniela Cruz emphasized the identity goals of the strategy, seeking to build solidarity and a strengthened movement when she said, “We’re excited to show people that we are not afraid. It feels different this time. We are painting the bus with the words: No papers, no fear. It’s going to strengthen our community,” (Saavedra 2012). Despite deploying a less explicit Civil Rights Memory Strategy than the self-titled Immigrant Workers Freedom Ride, the symbolism of the group’s tactics was clear, reiterated through planned, publicized visits with Civil Rights leaders and historic Civil Rights sites along the route. In New Orleans, riders met with organizers from the Congress of Racial Equality (CORE) who described mobilization in the face of fear and police persecution. In Memphis, Tennessee they visited the National Civil Rights Museum inside the hotel where Dr. King was assassinated and learned about student-led organizing and Dr. King’s tactics. Reporting on the visit, one journalist wrote:

Activists embraced a Frederick Douglass quote they saw in the museum, ‘If there is no struggle, there is no progress’… Drawing inspiration from the 1960’s Civil Rights movement, riders identified most with the Freedom Riders – a group of black and white activists who rode public interstate buses in the segregated South to test a Supreme Court decision to end segregation. These activists were beaten by violent mobs, arrested by local police and were almost killed when a Greyhound was firebombed. They seized
national attention and inspired hundreds more to participate. Their eyes widened when they saw the Freedom rides crisscrossed the same states they were,” (Sabate and Benedetti 2012).

In Nashville, Tennessee, they talked to organizers behind the lunch-counter sit-ins. Like the Immigrant Workers Freedom Ride a decade prior, the Ride for Justice centered on educating riders about the Civil Rights Movement as a central strategy for producing a unified collective identity. While the Freedom Ride was more explicit about this strategy, assigning some riders the role of educators for other riders, the Ride for Justice facilitated contexts in which riders would learn from their experiences along the way. The very process of riding on the bus, interacting with Civil Rights leaders, and visiting historic sites generated cognitive links among riders between their own group struggles and those of African Americans in the past. On the public blog documenting the Ride for Justice, Rider Mari Cruz wrote:

I had heard about the struggle for civil rights in the 60s but it had never mattered to me. I had not realized that I could learn from the struggle, and that it could apply to the situation that I am in. As an undocumented mother from Arizona, the more that I learn and think about organizing for my community, and what strategies we can use to fight for our rights, the more admiration that I have for the civil rights struggles of the African-American community in the United States, and the more that I want to learn from them…The people in the KKK are like the people who are anti-immigrants, the people who want to make us feel fear…While I am looking at the pictures and learning about the history, I feel like I am living those same moments right now. Each picture, each song, each protest, is being reflected in the work that I do. It’s similar to what we are fighting now. Without knowing, I think we are forging a similar path to the one fought for 50 years ago. African-Americans stood up for their rights, they came together with their white allies, and have been able to make gains. Although I understand that there is still a lot left to fight for, I believe one day we will all be equal, including immigrants.

I also know that it wont be an easy path. Another thing I have seen from the civil rights struggle was how much violence they had to face, including beatings, police dogs, bombs. And they remained dignified and peaceful in the face of this violence. I know that it might have to be part of our struggle one day too, and I would do it with the same dignity and pride that students and others in the civil rights struggle faced. And with love, because I know that will make me stronger, to keep going forward. I know I need to learn, just like the students in the 60s did, about thinking about my community, my
dignity, and to never forget about my principles.

It is very important to learn about the history of the civil rights movement. When I go home, I want to tell my children, and the other young people I work with about what I learned, about the strategies they used, and talk about how each of our groups have participated in civil disobedience. I’m going to tell them about how much I identified with the history of discrimination, and the history of struggle, of working with the community.

I got a call from my son yesterday, and I told him about the visit to the museum, and what I had learned about the student movement and Martin Luther King Jr. He told me he was proud of me. I also feel proud of myself, because as I have traveled on this bus I have learned so much and changed. I have been able to give more than I thought I could give to my community. I feel stronger every day. (Cruz 2012)

Cruz’s reflection on the connections between undocumented immigrants and African Americans illustrate a central aspect of this Civil Rights Memory Strategy: generating identity-memory linkages among activists to produce a unified movement. Unlike well-established movements with long-standing grassroots infrastructures, the immigrant rights movement was barely a decade old, and undocumented immigrants were new targets for the movement. The movement for “no papers, no fear” was intended not only to generate public support among targets outside the affected group, but also to generate a sense of collective solidarity and identity analogous to another group who fought tooth and nail for inclusion: African Americans.

Following the nonviolent tactics of the Civil Rights Movement, riders and local activists engaged in civil disobedience at multiple stops along the way. On August 19 in Alabama, protesters rallied outside a hearing on a controversial immigration law supported by Kansas Secretary of State Kris Kobach. Undocubus riders attempted to testify, but when they were refused, they sat in the road and blocked courthouse traffic, then conducted a sit-in at the Sheraton where Kobach was staying, eventually ejected by sheriffs (Sabate 2012). On August 27 in Birmingham, the Undocubus riders parked and chanted outside the Commission on Civil
Rights’ Hearing on Immigration (Collins 2012). In Knoxville, they held a march against the local sheriff’s proposed law to screen immigration status upon arrest. Each stop mobilized immigrants and allies, and organizers arranged training workshops to sustain the activist networks.

Finally, on September 3rd, riders arrived in Charlotte, North Carolina for the Democratic National Convention. Riders blocked an intersection near the convention site, and ten undocumented immigrants held up signs that read “undocumented.” They were immediately arrested. With immense media attention tracking the riders, the ten undocumented immigrants were released the following day without charges. One of the arrested riders, Gerardo Torres, 41, an undocumented immigrant and handyman from Aguas Calientes, Mexico said he had decided to get arrested the night before, during a profound meeting at a local church. He said, "I wanted to prove the point to the (undocumented) community that when we are together and we are united, we have a lot of power," (Gonzalez 2012).

Despite the series of strategies directed toward multiple targets, the Democratic Party did not amend its approach to immigration reform. However, the Undocubus Ride for Justice had inspired, ignited, and mobilized fearful undocumented residents and drawn public attention to their stories and humanity. One of the key organizers of the ride, Carlos Garcia, director of Puente Arizona said, "But what it really comes down to is challenging the law itself and us being able to tell the stories of undocumented people and why they are risking everything," (Gonzalez 2012).

Particularly notable of the ride was the lack of sustained opposition to the riders. Without an explicit strategy linking the group to the Civil Rights Movement, the riders bypassed counter-strategies for discrediting a link they never made outright. Steven Camarota, research director at the conservative think tank, Center for Immigration Studies said:
It's not clear to most Americans that this is analogous to the civil-rights movement. In the civil-rights movement, you had American citizens demanding equality. In this case, you have people who aren't supposed to be in the country demanding the rights of citizens, and to most Americans, or at least a large fraction, that is not roughly the same thing. (González 2012)

Echoing the nativist movement’s strategy of discrediting the link between identity and memory by emphasizing the illegality of undocumented immigrants, their lack of citizenship and claim to American identity, Camarota pointed out that in this case, the analogy was not even clear to bystanders.

However, as the immigrant rights movement developed culturally resonant links between identity and memory to attract supporters, the rival nativist movement began focusing on attracting the support of African Americans as a central strategy in subsequent battles over immigration. Anti-immigrant organizations mobilized African American leaders to speak out against immigrant rights as civil rights, discrediting Civil Rights Memory Strategy. Anti-immigrant group, the Federation for American Immigration Reform (FAIR), funded African American organizations like the Black American Leadership Alliance, a self-described nonprofit dedicated to “Protecting the Futures of Black Americans,” to take on the cause of punitive immigration reform. In 2013, speaking to the House Subcommittee on Immigration and Border Security, African American leader Dr. Frank L. Morris said, “African Americans have paid dearly for the long fight for equal citizen benefits. African Americans have long suffered in the past from the stringent enforcement of American laws such as those enforcing segregation, and when some of these citizen benefits evaporate because labor, immigration, and civil and criminal laws are not enforced against noncitizens, this breach against the American birthright should not be allowed to continue,” (Kammer 2013).
Conclusion

Civil Rights Memory Strategies are deployed to produce culturally resonant linkages between movement identity and shared history. Yet, in this chapter, I have argued that cultural resonance is an interpretive construct processually evolving through complex interactions between movements and multiple targets. In analyzing cultural resonance as a process of contestation between rival movements, cultural resonance becomes a lens through which power relations can be clarified. I have analyzed the processes of “Civil Rights Memory Strategy in interaction” in four highly publicized events, taking two paired cases of rival movements, the LGBT and Family Values Movements and the Immigrant Rights and Nativist Movements. These Civil Rights Memory Strategies are not only deployed toward state targets, but are rather directed toward fields of power relations distributed across institutions and competing groups. By including an analysis of rival groups, I uncovered patterns of dynamics that show how rival movements are central to processes of strategy construction, through deconstruction. As rival movements actively work to discredit linkages used to generate cultural resonance, movements come to anticipate and adapt strategies in direct relation to rival movements.

In an analysis of LGBT and Family Values rival campaigns, I found that Family Values coalitions came to anticipate the strategic link between gay rights and civil rights which had been developing since the 1970’s. In relation to the LGBT Movement, Family Values coalitions developed a national Civil Rights Memory Strategy over time to discredit the analogy between gay and Black identity. In turn, LGBT groups shifted away from a specifically LGBT identity-memory link, incorporating other groups like women and children to bypass the Family Values movement’s strategy. In an analysis of Immigrant Rights and Nativist rival campaigns, I found that when Immigrant Rights activists deployed Civil Rights Memory Strategy for the first time,
Nativist groups deployed disjointed counter-strategies that did not take Civil Rights Memory Strategy on head on. With the identity-memory link left largely unchallenged, immigrant groups successfully generated political support and build coalitions for a sustained national movement. However, as Nativist groups came to understand and anticipate the strategy, they developed successful counter-Civil Rights Memory Strategies to discredit the identity-memory link, emphasizing the illegality and alien-status of immigrants in juxtaposition with African Americans who were distinctly American citizens. In response to a growing counter-strategy, Immigrant Rights activists evolved Civil Rights Memory Strategies to make identity-memory linkages implicit rather than explicit, an UndocuBus rather than a Freedom Ride.

There are three central conclusions I derive from these analyses, from which I suggest possible areas of further research. First, I found that rival movements are central players in strategy processes who both challenge and reproduce power relations. These findings illustrate movements who are not simply competing side-by-side and occasionally engaging, but rather relational rival movements continually engaged in interaction. Evaluating and anticipating a rival movement’s next move and the ways in which they may discredit a strategy is not a peripheral but rather central consideration in strategy-construction. Second, examining how rival groups deploy strategic meaning structures to construct and deconstruct cultural resonance offers a valuable lens into deeply rooted systems of power relations. There is a politics of cultural resonance, patterns of logics through which the relative position of groups in society is clarified. In examining how different groups position themselves relative to a shared cultural structure – collective memory – and how other groups perceive this position, then draw upon shared cultural meanings to challenge this position, we come to understand the relationship between where groups stand materially and where they stand symbolically.
Third, although collective memory exists “out there,” widely available as a social representation social actors can access and invoke, this evidence shows that it cannot be manipulated freely for political purposes. There are bounds on its manipulation, dependent on the perceived identity of the group who is doing the manipulating. This research shows that inequality, both material and symbolic, is not just the target of social movements, but inequality also structures the fields in which contentious politics take place. By taking a comparative approach to the study of cultural resonance in rival movement strategies, this study reveals the patterned, underlying ideologies through which groups make sense of social inclusion and national membership.
CHAPTER 4: RACIALIZING THE AMERICAN MUSLIM RIGHTS MOVEMENT: SHIFTING GROUP IDENTITIES AND CIVIL RIGHTS MEMORY STRATEGY

Introduction

“They saw themselves as others had seen them. They had been formed by the images made of them by those who had had the deepest necessity to despise them.” -James Baldwin

As Chapters 2 and 3 showed, increasingly since the 1980s, mobilizations across the ideological spectrum strategically invoke the memory of the Civil Rights Movement. This “Civil Rights Memory Strategy” is deployed in competing political projects, both to establish and to discredit strategic links between a group’s collective identity and collective memory. Why do groups use Civil Rights Memory Strategies at some times but not others? When groups use Civil Rights Memory Strategies, why do they use them in different ways at some times but not others?

Theories of social movement strategy contend that groups vying for inclusion develop mobilization strategies based on evaluations of their social location (Bernstein 2005; Jasper 2010; J. M. Jasper 2004). However, social locations are not static positions but are rather dynamic political processes shaped through the interaction between macro political-cultural contexts and micro relations between movement actors (Jenkins 2008; Tajfel 2010). Processes of racial group formation are particularly central in shaping the lenses through which groups understand their position in society and develop strategies to negotiate their position (Omi and Winant 1994). By integrating theories of racial group formation and movement strategy, I elucidate the relationship between shifting political-cultural contexts, movements’ relational social locations, and subsequent strategies for challenging these positions.
As a group whose social location explicitly shifted after 9/11, the growing Muslim Rights Movement provides the ideal case for such a study. Scholars have documented how the political-cultural construction of a “Muslim threat” far outweighs the actual risk of terrorism by Muslims (Kurzman 2011), but there is far less research on Muslim mobilization against this exclusion. Although most rights movements evoke the memory of the Civil Rights Movement, the Muslim Rights Movement only began using Civil Rights Memory Strategy in the last decade. Over that decade, their use of Civil Rights Memory Strategy shifted from sanitized interpretations of the Civil Rights Movement to an interpretation of radical struggle. What led Muslim activists to begin using this strategy, then changing this strategy, and what does this tell us about why groups use particular strategies?

Using mixed methods, I analyze archival data and 40 focus groups with approximately 200 Muslim community leaders and organizers in eight cities across the United States. This chapter shows how Muslim activists progress from pre-9/11 strategies centered on maintaining their distance from Black identity to post-2011 Civil Rights Memory Strategies that use Civil Rights memory to bridge Muslim identity with Black identity in multiracial coalitions. I find that Muslim activists’ perceptions of group identity recalibrate with changing political-cultural contexts, reshaping strategies for seeking inclusion. I argue that these identity shifts reflect a process of racialization of collective identity in which post-9/11 policies and discourses stigmatize Muslims, shaping contexts in which Muslims generate perceptions of social location analogous to African Americans. What results is a new strategic focus on coalition-building with people of color through Civil Rights Memory Strategies aimed at establishing common oppression.
Although there is a longer history of Arab-American activism in the United States (Abraham and Abraham 1983; Haddad 2004; Jamal and Naber 2008), the distinctly “Muslim” Rights Movement is rooted in the mid-1980’s. After 9/11, these movements largely merged. However, because this analysis focuses on the construction of Muslim group identity and activism, I center analysis on the latter. The American Muslim Rights Movement has been predominantly constituted by South Asian and Arab immigrants who have arrived after 1965 and their children (Bakalian and Bozorgmehr 2009; Khan 2003; Santoro and Azab 2015). There are an estimated 3.3 million Muslims in the United States, roughly 1 percent of the population, but Muslims are projected to become the second-largest religious group in the United States after Christians by 2040 and represent about ten percent of documented immigrants arriving in the United States. American Muslims are also a highly racially and ethnically heterogeneous group and are self-reported as 38 percent White – including Middle Eastern and North African groups, 28 percent Black, 28 percent Asian, 4 percent Latino, and 3 percent Multiracial/Other (Pew 2015).

Despite their heterogeneity, the homogeneous social category of a Muslim “group” has been largely constructed after 9/11 through national laws and policies that target Muslims and a corresponding cultural narrative about Muslims as a threat to national security (Bail 2012; Haddad 2004; Jamal and Naber 2008; Khan 2003; Kurzman 2011; Qureshi and Sells 2003; Said 1979; Volpp 2002). As a result, disparate ethnic groups have joined under the umbrella of Muslim identity to mobilize against exclusion and for equal treatment. Although Black Muslims are a significant portion of the American Muslim population, the mainstream American Muslim Rights movement has historically centered on the struggles of groups like Arabs and South Asians. Some activists have argued this was in part because these groups were wealthier, more
well educated, and had more economic organizing power than Black Muslims. However, other activists and scholars have argued that anti-Black racism played a significant role in this exclusion (Auston 2016; Khabeer 2016; Khan 2015; Mire 2015; Omar 2015). This chapter evaluates how these claims fit into the trajectory of Muslim mobilization, from early strategies centered on distinguishing Muslims as model minorities akin to whites to recent strategies constructing Muslims as a racialized, oppressed group.

This chapter explains how movements 1) Develop relational perceptions of group position as a process of racial identity formation, and 2) Use collective memory to strategize through these racial subjectivities to negotiate social location. Given the rise of xenophobic and racist discourse in the public sphere and the simultaneous emergence of intersectional social movements to counter these forces, this study has important implications for our understanding of the relationship between racialized macro-contexts and intergroup micro-dynamics in contentious politics.

Identity Formation

In social movement theory, collective identity has largely been an abstract and “slippery” concept (Snow 2001). Much of the development in theorizing movement identities over the past two decades draws from Melucci’s conceptualization of “new social movements,” where collective identity replaced class consciousness as the central mobilizing force. Melucci emphasized a relationality in movement identities, wherein mobilizing groups recognized themselves in relation to the contexts in which they were embedded, making distinctions between “us” and “them” in interactive social-psychological processes (Melucci 1980, 1996). Social movement scholars built on Melucci’s focalization of collective identity, emphasizing
processes of cohesion-building through activists’ common interests and experiences (Taylor and Whittier 1992), forms of organization and ideologies (Hirsch 1990; Hunt and Snow 2004), and symbolic resources and performances (Pfaff and Yang 2001; Taylor et al. 2009). As Snow synthesized in his analysis of these studies:

…discussions of the concept [of collective identity] invariably suggest that its essence resides in a shared sense of ‘oneness’ or ‘we-ness’ anchored in real or imagined shared attributes and experiences among those who comprise the collectivity and in relation or contrast to one more actual or imagined sets of others. Embedded within the shared sense of we is a corresponding sense of collective agency … Thus, it can be argued that collective identity is constituted by a shared and interactive sense of ‘we-ness’ and collective agency. (Snow 2001)

As Snow alludes, the process of developing a sense of “we-ness” is as much about what a group understands itself to be, as it is about “them-ness,” where a group draws a boundary to define what they are not. This sense of “we-ness” is also central in shaping what movements do. Social movement scholars theorize how collective identity shapes how groups interpret their grievances and develop strategies (Bernstein 2005; Polletta and Jasper 2001; Snow and McAdam 2000; Taylor and Whittier 1992). While a group’s perception of self is central in these processes, I argue that the conceptualization of collective identity in social movement studies sometimes obscures a critical element of this identity construction: power. Few social movement scholars would disagree power relations structure the field of strategic decision-making and there is much generative work conceptualizing power in women’s and LGBT movements (Armstrong and Bernstein 2008; Bernstein 1997, 2013; Taylor et al. 2009; Taylor and Whittier 1992). Yet the patterned constraints on collective racial identities, as part of a system of social relations, is less examined.

Yet studies in social psychology and race theory, extending back to Du Bois, similarly argue that group identity is a dialectic construction, but also elucidate the processes through
which identities form (Blumer 1958; Du Bois 1903; Jenkins 2008; Klandermans 2014; Simon and Klandermans 2001; Tajfel 1978, 2010). Group identity is defined not only by how groups view themselves but rather in an ongoing process of interaction between how society perceives groups and how groups view themselves, what Omi and Winant call, the “continuity and reciprocity between micro-level and macro-level of social relations" (Omi and Winant 1994, p.67). The theory of racial formation argues that race is a socio-historical concept, a dynamic set of meanings produced by particular social relations, shaped by social, economic, and political forces, embedded in particular historical contexts. In this conceptualization, race is a central axis through which all social relations are structured, inseparable from group processes. By accounting for racial formation processes, we elucidate the relationship between political-cultural contexts, collective identities, and movement strategies. In the theory of racial formation, racialization is the process through which culture and structure are jointly enacted to ascribe racial meanings to a group (Barot and Bird 2001; Omi and Winant 1994). On this relational space from white to black identity, racial identity has historically been linked to citizenship and national inclusion (Brodkin 1998; Gualtieri 2009; Ignatiev 2008; Katznelson 2006; Roediger 1999, 2006). Muslims provide a useful case study in racialization processes, as scholars have documented the racial construction of Muslim group identity through laws and policies that identify Muslims as subjects of national concern and cultural discourses that paint Muslims as terrorists (Ekman 2015; Jamal 2009; Jamal and Naber 2008; Said 1979; Selod 2015; Selod and Embrick 2013; Stubbs 2004; Volpp 2002). Many Middle Eastern groups who historically fought for legal racial categorization as White to gain American citizenship (Gualtieri 2009; Hassan 2002) now contend with racialization that marks them as “Other” in social interaction.
I bridge these critical insights from racial formation theory with social movement theory in an argument as follows: Social movements’ collective identities are formed in relation to one another against political cultural contexts. This sense of group position shapes a movement’s collective identity and subsequent approach to strategy. Taking the case of American Muslims, through the process of racialization, activists’ perceptions of group position shift toward an understanding of Muslim group identity as a racialized identity. In response, movement strategies shift toward generating a politics of commonality and coalition-building with people of color. Civil Rights Memory Strategies are the cultural bridges deployed toward coalition-building.

**Data and Methods**

Because I am focused on elaborating a process, a case study is the ideal research method (Becker 1992; Mitchell 1983; Small 2009). I specifically select the Muslim Rights Movement as a case study in line with the organizing principle of case study analysis in which cases should be chosen that clearly reflect the process I seek to study (Small 2004, 2009; Yin 2009). Using comparative historical analysis, I trace the trajectory of the Muslim Rights Movement from 1980-2016. I identify how constitutive events shape mobilization processes and develop an explanation of why activists develop particular strategies. Scholars of comparative-historical methodology propose combining multiple modes of inference to both build theory and develop historical explanation (Mahoney 1999; Quadagno and Knapp 1992). I combined primary and secondary sources to analyze central events during the trajectory of the Muslim Rights Movement from 1980 to present. I used this analysis to select the highly-publicized events analyzed in this study.
To examine the particularistic factors of each event, I applied a narrative strategy, examining how events were situated in time and space. Narratives are the analytic constructs that link seemingly disparate events in a cohesive whole through a sequence of social actions (Abbott 1990; Griffin 1992). Examining an action in the context of a narrative’s sequence entails linking an action to previous actions in a “causal” and “explanatory” manner. Social theorists have argued that understanding the processual essence of narrative is at the heart of social inquiry (Abbott 1990), elucidating the relationship between structure and agency embedded in and evolving through time (Sewell 1992). Events are entry points to a narrative and narratives are how we make sense of the meaning of linked events. The benefit of a particularistic narrative strategy as opposed to a generalized atemporal comparative strategy is that it unpacks how a story unfolds, in an order of actions, through conjunctures and dilemmas. Allowing for divergent time paths, or models of “path dependency,” toward outcomes shows how cumulative actions enable and constrain future action (Aminzade 1992; Mahoney 2000). To analyze each event, I construct an event catalogue using archived organizational materials, press releases, organizational publications, interviews (available on the internet), as well as secondary historical accounts (see Appendix B) and the population of newspapers articles mentioning each event. To acquire the population of newspaper articles, I used LexisNexis which is the most widely used news archive for social scientists (Weaver and Bimber 2008). LexisNexis includes roughly 300 newspapers and 500 general print publications covering all big-city newspapers in the United States, as well as papers from mid-size markets and some local papers. It is a vast resource representing a complex field of media coverage.

I supplement archival research with 40 focus groups with approximately 200 Muslim organizational leaders and community organizers in eight cities across the United States from
late 2014 through 2015. Focus groups consist of moderated discussions on a focused topic within a small group, in this case of between 4-6 participants (Blee and Taylor 2002). Focus groups were conducted to examine Muslim community leaders’ perceptions of policing practices but approached these attitudes through a series of open-ended questions about community histories, dynamics, and organization activities. Focus groups are a particularly fruitful tool for generating debate, identifying competing assessments of the same subject, and examining different framings and constructions of meaning to explain divergent evaluations of reality (Bloor 2001; Johnston 2002; Morgan 1997; Porta 2005). All participants were promised a high degree of confidentiality. Given the sensitivity of the highly surveilled Muslim communities (Amer and Bagasra 2013), focus groups were conducted under the stipulation that researchers would not reveal the demographic backgrounds of participants or cities in which they reside. However, the general regions break down as follows: two cities in the Northeast, two cities on the West Coast, three cities in the Midwest, and one city in the South. Participants represent a range of age groups, genders, ethnicities, and levels of religiosity, as we sought to generate conversations with a range of experiences and perceptions. Most participants were South Asian, Arab, or Middle Eastern, with the exception of several Southeast Asian and African American participants. Participants were selected by identifying local Muslim organizations and contacting their leaders, assessing local newspapers for frequently cited Muslim leaders, and snowball sampling. As the participants were not randomly selected, they cannot be generalized as representative of all Muslim activists in the United States. However, combined with archival data, these conversations represent ongoing debates and patterns of meaning-making in American Muslim activism.
As we were interested in understanding group formation processes and the inter-group interactions that drove collective action, focus groups were preferable to interviews. Each focus group yielded different dynamics, with some groups in general agreement throughout the discussion and others engaged in animated debate. As participants explained their attitudes toward policing practices in relation to a wider societal context, conversations extrapolated to perceptions of American foreign policy, Islamophobia, post-9/11 experiences with discrimination, and individual stories of migration and settlement. This chapter draws upon these conversations, which are not separate from but rather situated in the history of Muslim Rights organization. The conversations were taped and transcribed, then using ATLAS.ti, I coded these materials, using a deep analysis of cases to move between generating and applying concepts. First, I used an inductive model of open coding to generate codes from transcripts in order to establish a coding scheme (Corbin and Strauss 2008). These early codes were nearly identical to the language employed by focus group participants to highlight conceptual boundaries like “not those people” and “aspirational whiteness” and themes like “grassroots strategy” and “institutional strategy.” From these codes, I constructed interpretive concepts that progressively scaled up to theoretical categorizations. With unexpected clarity, Muslim Rights activists expressed in their own words changing reflections of their identity in relation to Black and White identities, which closely matched the processes of identity formation outlined in racial formation theory. As I analyzed focus group transcripts, I highlighted recurring events mentioned by participants then investigated these events further through LexisNexis to investigate the conditions under which events took place and how they were reported. Because I sought to understand how groups negotiated their identities through the relationship between shifting macro contexts and group-level perceptions of group identity, it was important that I examine not
only the events that appeared to be important based on the extent of newspaper coverage they received, but also the events that were important to the mobilizing actors. While there was some overlap in these events like 9/11 and the 2011 Associated Press Report, there were also other events with lesser media coverage that seemed to affect community members like the 2007 NYPD Radicalization Report and the 2009 “Newburgh Four” case of FBI entrapment. By going back and forth between focus group transcripts and archival data from newspapers and social movement organizations, I built an emergent analysis.

**Strategizing for Muslim Rights: From Not Black to The New Black**

*Muslim as Not Black*

Egyptian immigrant Maher Hathout formed The Muslim Public Affairs Council (MPAC) in 1986 and three former officers of the Islamic Association of Palestine (IAP), Omar Ahmad, Nihad Awad, and Rafeeq Jaber formed The Council on American Islamic Relations (CAIR) in 1994. MPAC and CAIR have been two of the most prominent mainstream organizations devoted to American Muslim rights, a movement centered largely on South Asian, Arab, and Middle Eastern groups (Bakalian and Bozorgmehr 2009).

The early strategies of the Muslim Rights movement centered largely on modest, incremental strategies like educating Americans about Islam and developing relationships with political and business leaders (Jamal and Naber 2008). Many Muslim organizers were concerned with making political connections and accumulating social capital, rather than enacting grassroots strategies for recognition as so many movements had before them (Abraham and Abraham 1983). In focus groups, organizers described how many of these strategies were constructed through a lens in which Muslims understood themselves as Not Black. One second
generation Muslim community leader described, “Here is the narrative of an immigrant community that wants to enter into all of the privileges of a somewhat smooth transition into middle class American respectability and dare I say whiteness, which assumes non-Blackness within itself…” She went on to describe how Muslims had seen themselves as a model for the American Dream.

Muslims organized with an eye to accumulating social and economic power to maintain their perception of group identity, which several participants described. One first generation organizer said:

…really our mindset is not a minority mindset…How do you transfer that thinking of always feeling like you have the upper hand and you are privileged and…it’s fascinating because we’re not demanding our rights only because we believe in the justice system. We fight for our rights because we’re a high-aspiring community, highly educated, well-placed, economically well to do, and we pay taxes, so we’re not even sucking the system, we’re not those people… that’s why we want to demand our right to be recognized, we’re a high-aspiring community.

She described how Muslims, as a high achieving group, were not the sort of minorities society would describe as leeches on the system, and their strategies should reflect their group position. In her view, these strategies should engage key institutions and policymakers like city councils and police chiefs, leveraging what she described as the highly-educated background of the Muslim community. Many discussions echoed themes of Muslims as a peaceful, law-abiding group compared to “other” groups. One organizer said, “You don't hear about Muslims…killing three people every weekend.”

These understandings of Muslim group identity were translated into rationales for not only how the Muslim community ought to be treated, but also how organizers should frame group goals and strategies. One organizer described resistance in his Muslim Student Association toward working with African American groups. He said, “I was talking about sectarianism in the
MSA. You'd think they'd stand up for all forms of discrimination, but it's not so. It's only about their SES [socioeconomic] status.” Another organizer echoed his concerns about the perceived historical exclusivity of Muslim activists. She said:

I've been to town hall meetings…and those [Muslims] sitting on the panel are always the most politically connected and organized…the most assimilated to American culture, whereas you've got those on the sidelines, the African American Muslims are traditionally on the sidelines, the immigrant and Ethiopian mosques, so many…that are not at the table…leading the conversation and there needs to be genuine effort to shift away and engage with those minority groups who are disenfranchised.

At the same time, there have been many critiques of the Muslim Rights movement as racist, as constructing Muslim identity as predominantly South Asian and Arab, obscuring and excluding African American Muslims (Aimen 2014; Auston 2016; Khabeer 2016; Khan 2015).

For example, in an interview with a local newspaper, a Black Muslim organizer from the Muslim Democratic Club said, "Islam means Muslims aren't racist? That's a great idea but in application Muslims are some of the worst when it comes to racial dynamics," (Khan 2013). In an op-ed, Muslim organizer Maria Khwaja described the relational process by which the movement separated itself from Blackness through an “aspirational whiteness.” She wrote:

The Muslim community hit a critical juncture when non-Black Muslim Americans reacted to the sudden onslaught on their American identities. Many, including myself, chose to respond by aligning ourselves with what is called “aspirational whiteness.” We said, without any hesitation, that we were American and did not deserve to be “Otherized” because we live in the suburbs as a model minority and have successfully assimilated into what we see as appropriate, mainstream American culture. This stance “invalidates,” in the words of Margari Hill from the Muslim Anti-Racism Collaborative, the narrative of Black Muslim Americans…(Khwaja 2016)

Another community leader mirrored this view less explicitly, describing an ongoing negotiation of identity centered on incorporation into the “mainstream” and claiming American identity. He said, “It gets back to the issue of identity. Am I a Muslim from Saudi Arabia who happens to live in America…or am I truly an American who is grateful to live under the
Constitution, who takes the best of American culture and avoids what's un-Islamic? That issue of identity becomes front and center.” Another organizer described it as “being caught in the middle,” referring to a struggle to retain the religiosity of Muslim identity but prove an allegiance to American identity.

Narratives about the early Muslim Rights Movement, led largely by wealthy, well-educated Muslim immigrants, emphasized how Muslims constructed strategies through an understanding about who they were, and more importantly, who they were not. This identity was not independent from other groups, but was constructed in relation to Blackness, specifically one in which they were Not Black. These processes of racial group formation are not new, and historians have described how even groups who are white now like the Irish and Jewish, once enacted active identity work to distinguish themselves from Blacks (Brodkin 1998; Ignatiev 2008; Roediger 2006). Still, movement theories do not account for these racial formation processes in the mechanisms of strategy construction. When do strategies change?

A Political Cultural Shift

September 11, 2001 was a profound historical moment, an “unsettled period,” during which social reality was up for negotiation (Swidler 1986). Scholars have documented the backlash, the vandalism, racial epithets, the hate crimes, for those who were Muslim and those who appeared Muslim (Bakalian and Bozorgmehr 2009; Disha, Cavendish, and King 2011; Singh 2002; Stubbs 2004). The backlash did not only take cultural forms, it also took on structural forms with new policies targeting Muslims as national security concerns. A growing right-wing movement spread misinformation about Muslims, stoking fears and Islamophobia (Ansari and Hafez 2012; Bail 2016b; Yazdiha 2014). In inserting anti-Muslim arguments into the
legal sphere, legislators legitimized and institutionalized Islamophobic discourse, which moved from the fringe into the mainstream, shaping how publics viewed Muslims.

As Muslim group identity was constructed externally, so too did disparate Muslim communities join together under an umbrella collective identity. Furthermore, as the backlash of 9/11 affected all those perceived as Muslim, including non-Muslim Arabs and South Asians, many advocacy groups, which were not distinctly Muslim, joined under the umbrella of Muslim Rights activism. For example, the Arab American Association of New York and American-Arab Anti-Discrimination Committee, which advocated for non-Muslim Arabs for years, became two outspoken organizations mobilizing for “Muslim rights.” As one organizer explained, “For the Muslim community, 9/11 was a curse and a blessing. It forced people to now talk to one another and engage one another.” The number of Muslim advocacy organizations grew with a resolve to counter the growing ominous narrative about Islam (Bakalian and Bozorgmehr 2009). Muslim activists re-assessed their group position against this new context. Many community members knew someone or had heard of someone who was detained by the Immigration and Naturalization Service (INS) or visited by the FBI, so there was a growing understanding that the group conception of Muslims as model minorities was being threatened.

One organizer said, “I think there's a common understanding that we're not seen as citizens,” and she went on to describe how the Muslim community, many of whom had lived in the United States for decades or who were born here, had to grapple with being seen as Other, as not American. Still, many activists expressed that this sense of group position as foreigners was distinctive from being seen as Black. One leader said:

I think the Muslim community is…seen through that lens of terrorism and…every time our name pops up whether it's at the airport, whether it’s something suspicious or something with a package, we’re defined by that. People don't think we're criminals, no one thinks they're going to get robbed, or [a South Asian Muslim] on the street wouldn't
get the same treatment as a Black person, he wouldn’t be seen as an immediate threat, though perhaps if he grows his beard longer…

In a recurring process of comparison, activists explained how they began to relate Muslim experience to Black experience, but still viewed Muslim identity as something other than Black identity. Here an organizer further highlights how there may be physical attributions, like the beard, that may racialize Muslims externally like skin color. Another community leader described how her friend, who wears hijab, faces discrimination from police, and she contextualized her story with a comparison to the relationship between African Americans and police. She explained, “I might not get the same harassment as an African or African American Muslim and I'm sure African American Muslims have a different experience than I do, but nevertheless, as a minority it stays with us and we’re also very aware of how police treat other minorities.”

Echoing this theme, another organizer described the post-9/11 divergence in Muslims’ perceptions of societal discrimination across racial lines. He described how Black Muslims saw the racialization of Muslims as an extension of existing American practices:

When you sit down with some leaders in the [African American Muslim] community, they’ll say, ‘why are you talking about this in terms of Muslims and Islam, the government are using the same tricks from the COINTELPRO intelligence gathering era and this is just the same game different name’…if law enforcement is engaging in tactics that members of the Muslim community find troubling, what's fascinating is how people find it troubling for different reasons. Some find it troubling because they’re like, ‘I’m part of a new community and we’re being singled out,’ while others find it troubling because ‘this is the same thing I saw thirty years ago.’ People are not finding it troubling for the same reasons.

Without seeing their discrimination as analogous to racial discrimination, much of the Muslim Rights Movement’s strategy revolved around shifting public perceptions to show how Muslims were Americans. The mainstream movement held to a perception of a normative group
identity as model immigrants who were “just like you,” you being white, middle class Americans. Although there was a sense that federal policies were unjust, organizers described how Muslims operating in wealthy, mostly-white spaces, felt they were exempt from being targeted.

*Racialized but Not Black*

However, there were several events that drove shifts in how Muslims viewed group position over time. In 2007, the NYPD produced a report called “Radicalization in the West: The Homegrown Threat.” The report was criticized as poorly researched propaganda relying on five atypical cases to make sweeping generalizations about the process of violent radicalization, coupling Islam with violence (MACLC 2008; MPAC 2008). The report identified indicators of suspicious behavior like wearing traditional Islamic clothing, growing a beard, praying five times a day, and participating in community and political activism. These vague guidelines effectively enabled racial profiling and drew immediate criticism from Muslim activists. A group of Muslim lawyers and organizational leaders formed a coalition called the Muslim American Civil Liberties Coalition and deployed institutional strategies, arranging meetings with the NYPD to discuss the report (AAANY 2014). These meetings were quiet discussions with official press releases, strategies shaped in the image of a respectable, well-educated, law-abiding Muslim community. These efforts led to a “Statement of Clarification” from the NYPD two years later, but the clarification was not publicized, the report was not pulled from the training materials, and at this point it had been shared widely and used by other agencies across the country.

Organizers defined this as a moment where they realized that despite their strategies for maintaining an image of respectable Muslim citizens, the NYPD did not respect them and
institutional strategies were not sufficient. One leader described the moment of revelation, saying, “There was nothing to pull the report…and even since then, people have waved it around saying this is a great document and you should use it to target radicalization. It took so much effort to get this little tiny change that, can you imagine what kind of effort it would take [for them to change]?” Referring to institutional strategies, he said, “you’re not going to get anywhere with that.” Much of the activists’ narratives around the report reflected a growing understanding that despite the community’s perception of itself, the external perception of Muslims as threats was more powerful. Another organizer described her growing understanding that despite her best efforts at expressing her American identity, Muslims would continue to be seen as outsiders. She said:

This is colored by my own experience, but I think issues of race and immigration come up for me. What Muslims experience, broadly…the majority of us were raised in this country, seen as people of color, as different…so even when you're 3rd or 4th generation, you still feel like I’m not completely from here… who am I? Who do I belong to?...Racism in general is a big challenge.

Still, as group perceptions of collective identity were shifting for local organizers, national strategies were slower to change. Civil Rights Memory Strategies emerging in the decade post-9/11 linked Muslim group identity to a broader legacy of American history and immigration, emphasizing commonality rather than difference. In November 2006 in what became coined as the “flying imams incident,” six imams aboard a US Airways flight at Minneapolis-Saint Paul International Airport were removed from the flight after several crew members and passengers reported “suspicious behavior.” The incident made national news and sparked a widespread debate over civil liberties and national security (Sander 2006). Many Muslims spoke out about similar travails of “flying while Muslim,” an experience of racial profiling mirrored after the discriminatory experience of “driving while Black.” With CAIR’s
legal counsel, the six imams filed suit and settled out of court in 2009. In a 2009 op-ed in USA Today, CAIR’s then-communication director, Ibrahim Hooper, wrote:

Our nation's civil rights movement has been advancing steadily for decades, despite calls to maintain the status quo or suggestions to curtail the rights of certain citizens. That movement toward justice for all must not be put into reverse because of post-9/11 fears. **When anyone's rights are diminished, all Americans' rights are threatened.** America is an increasingly diverse society in terms of race, religion and ethnicity. The best way to react to that increased diversity, and to prevent situations in which stereotypes or bias can create a snowball effect of escalating discrimination, is to learn more about the faith and background of our fellow Americans. Our nation's history has been marred by periods in which groups -- whether Irish Americans, African Americans, Japanese Americans, or others -- were deemed appropriate targets for discrimination. (emphasis is my own) (Hooper 2009)

Hooper links Muslims’ discrimination to histories of discrimination against other immigrant groups, as well as African Americans, and describes a “nation’s civil rights movement” that is not specifically linked to African American rights. Discrimination against Muslims is framed as a concern for “all Americans’ rights,” and Muslims are normalized, or mainstreamed, in this framework as “fellow Americans.” This approach to inclusion did not emphasize Muslim oppression and racialization but rather continued the assimilationist strategy.

In a 2011 op-ed on Martin Luther King, Jr. Day, executive director of CAIR, Nihad Awad drew a more explicit connection between Muslim struggle and historic African American struggle, writing:

As American Muslims face the challenge of rising anti-Islam sentiment in American society, we can benefit from the example of Dr. Martin Luther King Jr., who used the power of truth and justice to peacefully overcome those who promoted fear and its resulting prejudice and intolerance. **Like African-Americans who faced far more severe challenges** in the 1950s and '60s, American Muslims are now the easy targets of unreasoned hate and suspicion. Like Dr. King, American Muslims must respond to hate with love and understanding...In his letter from a Birmingham jail cell, Dr. King wrote that, "Injustice anywhere is a threat to justice everywhere." This statement clearly indicated that the quest for justice is universal and not limited to a particular time or movement, and that everyone must rise to confront the injustices of his or her own time and place...These words strengthen American Muslims as we face the twin tests
brought on by those few who would falsely claim to commit violence in the name of my faith and by those who seek to exploit fear and mistrust to marginalize an entire minority community. In his most famous speech, Dr. King said: "I say to you today, my friends, that in spite of the difficulties and frustrations of the moment, I still have a dream. It is a **dream deeply rooted in the American dream**. "I have a dream that one day this nation will rise up and live out the true meaning of its creed: 'We hold these truths to be self-evident: that all men are created equal.' ... "I have a dream that my four children will one day live in a nation where they will not be judged by the color of their skin but by the content of their character." This **hope for equality was also expressed by Islam's Prophet Muhammad**, who said in his final sermon: "All mankind is from Adam and Eve ... a white (person) has no superiority over a black (person), nor does a black have any superiority over a white - except by piety and good action." **American Muslims dream the same dream as Dr. King and all those who struggled during the civil rights movement** - that the promise of justice and equality may be fulfilled for all our nation's children. Dr. King said it best when he noted, "The good neighbor looks beyond the external accidents and discerns those inner qualities that make all men human and, therefore, brothers." His **legacy of civility, hope, perseverance, and optimism** is best honored through actions that continue to make his dream our reality. (Emphasis is my own) (Awad 2011)

The national leader of CAIR deployed a Civil Rights Memory Strategy linking the movement for Muslim rights to the African American Civil Rights Movement, but in a very particular way that avoids linking Muslim identity to Black identity. Awad characterizes an African American struggle that is understood to have existed in the past (“in the 1950’s and 60’s) compared to Muslims’ contemporary struggles (“Muslims are now the easy targets”). Making subtle distinctions, Awad avoids analogizing Muslims with African Americans as racialized subjects, but rather compares their discrimination as part of a broader, “universal” quest for justice. The quest for equality, as championed by Dr. King, is strategically ahistoricized and deracialized (“not limited to a particular time or movement”). Like Hooper, Awad does not compare group identities to establish difference and exclusion but rather invokes a language of commonality rooted in shared American identity (“rooted in the American dream,” “American Muslims dream the same dream,” “all men human and therefore brothers”). Awad invokes a sanitized image of Dr. King and activism that is characterized by “love and understanding,”
“civility” and “optimism.” This Civil Rights Memory Strategy projects a particular interpretation of the Civil Rights Movement which emphasizes Muslims’ American identities and universal quests for inclusion, projecting a particular collective identity which avoids racial distinction. Perhaps more glaringly, this characterization of Muslim activism obscures the history of African American Muslim activism, a history intertwined with the Civil Rights Movement, as well as ongoing discrimination against African Americans.

In 2011 the Associated Press released a report that revealed the extent of the NYPD’s surveillance program (Apuzzo and Goldman 2011). This event, akin to a moral shock, was the catalyst for a new sense of group position for American Muslims. As numerous organizers described, to much agreement, this event politicized otherwise apathetic Muslim community members. One community leader said, “Part of [Dr. King’s] speech was about the urgency of now, and definitely in the Muslim community in these past two years it's got urgent. People finally realized you cannot afford not to be politicized because you're going to be targeted either way.” Until now, much of the Muslim community knew there was surveillance. However, the AP report revealed surveillance that left no Muslim untouched. The AP report included hundreds of pages of internal police documents and revealed that undercover officers had infiltrated 250 mosques in New York and New Jersey, Muslim Student Associations at colleges, and identified hundreds of "hot spots" which included restaurants and businesses, looking for terrorists. The NYPD’s strategies ranged from trawling through Facebook accounts to sending an undercover agent on a student whitewater rafting trip where he recorded students' names and noted in his files how many times they prayed. As reports confirmed later, they did not find one terrorist.

Much of the community at large was shocked by the report and it made national news. In focus group discussions, this moment did not just highlight a reason to strategize, it more
profoundly reflected a shift in how the community viewed its identity in relation to other groups, which in turn shifted how they approached their strategy. The following quotes describe some of the ways community members understood the revelation:

It's experiences where you find out that in your local [Muslim Student Association] where everyone was a good liberal, it comes out the cops were there [surveilling]. It's not unlikely for you to start critiquing the system overall…and to start identifying with other communities that have always had adversarial relationships with the police.

…they’re looking at everybody so no one is excluded anymore. It doesn't matter if you come from wealthy family, live in affluent neighborhood, they're looking at everyone.

…Latino and Black communities were the targets then the target became the Muslim community after 9/11, like other communities before, and they surveilled our schools, restaurants, businesses, they sent informants, and paid informants to go after our kids.

These examples illustrate how American Muslims were increasingly viewing their group identity as parallel to communities of color but they also distinguished their group position from that of African Americans. One organizer said, “[in the community there are issues of] anti-Blackness, us not being Black people, about us being gentrifiers, what it means even if we’re not gentrifiers to not be the main target of police skepticism in the same way. How do you relate the targeting of Muslim communities to police targeting of Black communities and that intersection?” This community organizer identifies an anti-Blackness within the community and sees the policing of Muslim and Black communities differently, but identifies an intersection, a space of commonality in which he goes on to suggest the movement should organize. Another organizer described his trajectory of organizing since 9/11 and cited a growing dissatisfaction among fellow grassroots activists with long-standing Muslim leaders who, while focused on deconstructing the narrative about Islamic terrorism, missed its connection to broader “systems of power.” He said:
There is a constant reference to people who are seen as community leaders in more mainstream Muslim organizations…it's a constant negative reference to those organizations and to those leaders that says, we’re not those people, we reject that model, we reject that smooth transition [into whiteness]. It’s not just about freeing ourselves from the national security problem. The system is problematic in so many ways. These are critiques rising among American youth in the last ten years.

These themes illustrated a growing understanding that Muslim group identity had been racialized by the conflagration of political and cultural forces, and strategies for contesting this racialization had not succeeded. From this dialectic process of racial formation, the constant interaction between how the group views itself and how society views the group, processes also structured by laws and institutions like the FBI and local police agencies, comes a new sense of group position and subsequently a new approach to strategy.

*Seeking Solidarity*

Through this changed sense of group position, Muslim organizers issued a call to develop strategies to ally with people of color. One organizer said, “…maybe we need to reject that whole premise [of shedding stigmatic identity] and embrace our solidarity with other people of color and also recognize we’re privileged within that schema.” Again, she highlights an understanding of Muslim identity in relation to other racial groups. Another organizer said, “I think that what we need to do is…activate our connections to communities of Color that suffer from police brutality, turn that into systematic militant action, militant like the Civil Rights Movement.” Emphasizing the connection between the policing of Muslim communities and Black and Brown communities, another organizer said, “I'm not just interested in solutions for the Muslim community. I’m interested in solutions for all minorities in this country because
depending on the color of your skin, it affects how your experience will be with law enforcement.”

Similarly, in a news interview, a community leader explained how Muslims have much to learn from the tactics of the African American Civil Rights Movement. She said, "The time of MLK was the time of a huge social movement that appealed to many people and it wasn't just one small group of people getting involved,” (Khan 2013).

Organizers who had seen Muslim activism as best accomplished quietly through institutional modes were now comparing their group’s position to African Americans, drawing on a memory of African American struggle, and adjusting their strategies accordingly. Grassroots activism and coalition-building had increasing appeal. One organizer who had already been working with a multiracial coalition for police reform said, “…increasingly, Muslims communities are working side-by-side with other communities of color in and learning from other communities of color who have been dealing with these issues for decades, issues that are newer to Muslim communities and immigrants who are newer. So the trust is intertwined, so as things happen in other communities of color it causes more unity among communities.”

Muslim leaders began mobilizing community members toward this new conception of group identity as one not superior to or separate from people of color, but rather in solidarity with people of color. One organizer identified the lessons learned in the shortcomings of the model minority strategy, of learning to move away from aspirational whiteness toward societal critique. She said:

We need to be American by making America live up to the ideas that it aspires to, versus being ‘socially white’ and aspiring to whiteness as our way of asserting our American-ness…We need to examine our identities—we need to see it as an American thing to do, to critique. We need to not have a problem with being the outsider; the one who is rebelling and trying to deconstruct what is going on. That is American. That’s what it means to Black American Muslims to be American versus those of us who are
immigrants, where our identities are more fragile and we’re still negotiating them in the public space. (Khwaja 2016)

This organizer articulates the layered process of identity negotiation for Muslim activists, of reconciling society’s racialized construction of Muslims against competing intra-group conceptions of Muslims against a system of hierarchical racial identities. As activists worked toward group understandings of this racialization, their strategies shifted toward building alliances across this new conception of Muslim identity as racialized, bound in the same systems of oppression as African Americans and Latinos. To produce this solidarity, Muslim activists centralized Civil Rights Memory Strategies that invoked the Civil Rights Movement. One community leader said, “Muslim families who immigrated to this country, in particular, must understand that we owe much to and have much to learn from the leaders of the Civil Rights Movement,” (Khan 2013). In an interview with a newspaper, William Hattar, a leader at the Arab American Association of New York said "When we have a police force that openly flaunts constitutional protections and creates a spying division that seeks out nothing but Muslim and Arab communities there's a problem with that and that's not the dream that Martin Luther King had," (Khan 2013). Muslim leaders deployed similar Civil Rights Memory Strategies in rallies, op-eds and blog posts, a recurring theme of joining in solidarity with people of color, comparing the Muslim Rights Movement to the Civil Rights Movement. These strategies directed toward developing a new collective identity then shifted outward to building alliances across this new conception of Muslim identity as racialized, analogous to Black identity.

For example, in 2012, Muslim organizations like the Arab American Association of New York (AAANY), Council on American Islamic Relations (CAIR), Desis Rising up and Moving (DRUM), and the Islamic Leadership Council joined over 100 other local and national
organizations to mobilize against the NYPD. Under the umbrella issue of discriminatory policing, these groups joined to counter stop-and-frisk policies, surveillance of Muslim communities, and the lack of police accountability. These efforts resulted in the 2013 Community Safety Act, which was signed into law in 2014, a major victory for groups who had been fighting for police accountability for years (HP 2013). In 2013, prominent Muslim leaders publicly endorsed and forged an alliance with the group, the Dream Defenders, a youth organization mostly made up of black and brown youth. They called for Muslim communities to join the Dream Defenders to fight against systemic racism (Abdullah 2013).

However, the Muslim Rights Movement was faced with a dilemma. The memory of the Civil Rights Movement was not perceived as a cultural resource that belonged to them. In comments sections on newspaper articles and on conservative blogs, a counter-narrative actively worked to deconstruct these Civil Rights Memory Strategies for establishing Muslim rights as analogous to African American civil rights. One commenter wrote:

…the Muslim phonies hijack the name of Martin Luther King, Jr.–who was PRO-ISRAEL–and try to make the civil rights struggle of Black people (many of whose ancestors were sold into slavery by Muslim Arabs) into the same thing as defending a violent religion that commits terrorist acts around the world every single hour. It’s amazing that a religion whose US-based “leaders” constantly claim that the 9/11 hijackers hijacked a religion (rather than what really happened–Islam hijacked them), is so consistent in its hijacking of things that stand counter to what Islam stands for. And, with Martin Luther King, Jr., they hijack the name and legacy of a man who stood with Israel and against them. (Schlussel 2013)

As perceived foreigners, Muslim activists had to establish a claim to American identity.

#reclaimking

At the same time, the Ferguson Action committee later joined by Black Lives Matter was unrolling a #reclaimmlk campaign. In twenty cities across the country including New York, there
were Reclaim King demonstrations that emphasized the radical roots of the Civil Rights Movement, highlighting less well-known quotes and speeches from King where he offered critiques of foreign policy like the Vietnam War and critiques of capitalism. This political cultural moment highlighted a cultural sense of ownership, that the memory of King may have been adopted widely as one of colorblind equality, but that it was constituted by racialized meanings, of African American struggle, and that the dream had not been realized. Muslim activists were interacting with and embedded in this shifting context of mobilization.

Having come to understand their group identity as racialized, Muslim activists needed to root themselves in a collective history that would give them a claim to American identity - racialized American identity, but American identity nonetheless. Through the lens of their identity as a racialized group, activists innovated their strategy. Muslim activists drew upon the very history of the Muslim Rights Movement in America, the Black Muslim Rights Movement rooted in the Civil Rights Movement, and they reclaimed Malcolm X and his Muslim identity. For example, a press release from the Muslim Anti-Racism Collaborative which was launched as a collaboration between a Black Muslim woman and a Bangladeshi American Muslim woman, read:

State violence against Black Americans does not bypass American Muslim communities. The killings of Black American Muslim men Imam Luqman Ameen Abdullah and Amadou Diallo weigh heavy on our hearts and minds. Let us join together as one in condemning acts of violence by state and federal law enforcement against unarmed civilians. Our faith mandates that American Muslims advocate for justice in the killings of all innocent civilians irrespective of whether it is the popular stance to take. Let us align ourselves with the countless others who are demanding justice by declaring that this stops today…As Malcolm X noted in his Letter from Mecca after completing Hajj, “America needs to understand Islam, because this is the one religion that erases from its society the race problem.” (Muslim-ARC 2015)
The statement goes on to call for Muslims to honor Malcolm X’s words of courage and dignity, hardly the construction of a militant and violent separatist as constructed culturally at the fringe of the collective memory. The Muslim Rights Movement innovated strategies that gave them a claim to Civil Rights memory and by extension, American identity.

Organizations sprouted to build bridges between non-Black Muslims and Black and Brown groups, like Muslims for Ferguson and joint grassroots efforts with local Black Lives Matter organizers. These alliances came in stark contrast to the strategies of American Muslim activists just a decade prior. Muslim activists were contending with a growing understanding of the deep roots of racialization, which extended beyond individual interactions and attitudes but were hardened in institutional policies and systemic practices. Their experiences were not unique, nor were they new. One of the leaders of Muslims for Ferguson, Mustafa Abdullah said, “I think that for the Muslims…we are really beginning to see that our experiences of racial profiling, our experiences of surveillance…the increasing militarization of the world and American police departments. We are really beginning to see that all of this is tied up with and connected to the experiences of African Americans, particularly black and brown youth in this country.” Again, he speaks to how coalition-building strategy stems from a new sense of group position, of coming to see the Muslim struggle in relation and not opposition to the position of people of color. In August 2013, the Dream Defenders hosted an interfaith Ramadan Iftar and invited prominent Muslim leaders to speak, including Linda Sarsour, the Executive Director of Arab American Association of New York who had been working on police reform efforts in New York City. After the Iftar, other Muslim leaders like Omid Safi and Imam Zaid offered endorsements of the organization. In a video testimony stating his support for the Dream Defenders, Imam Zaid said:
Brothers and sisters, we stand with the Dream Defenders... This is about the moral direction that this country is going to take. Is it going to continue to be a morally corrupt, decaying empire that bludgeons nations into submission, that bombs and murders indiscriminately, that transgresses and tramples on international law, and that puts domestic laws in place that will turn back our country fifty years and send us back to the equivalent of Jim Crow? (Lighthouse Mosque 2013)

These shifts were not just at the local level. At a 2015 conference, Nihad Awad, the Executive Director of CAIR called for Muslim Americans to take up the cause of Black Lives Matter. He said, “Black Lives Matter is our matter. Black Lives Matter is our campaign,” (Kilpatrick 2016). This represented a profound shift in how the mainstream Muslim Rights movement viewed itself, and how they subsequently enacted strategies to mobilize against exclusion. Some activists pushed back against these Civil Rights Memory Strategies, questioning the credibility of the identity equation and the sincerity of the solidarity. One organizer said:

But the African American struggle is different from us who go to private schools and have banquets and go to the [local upscale] hotel and that's a different narrative than civil rights. For a black youth to say I have a fear of police is different, but for Muslims who think they'll lead a revolution out of [city], I can't take you seriously…Their history is not our present…A third of Muslims are Black, I'm not saying they're not ours, but if you're going to co-opt and appropriate that struggle and use Malcolm X and MLK's words, then you have to be there at Ferguson and really own this, then do it all the way. If you're not there because of Mike Brown or Trayvon, where's your work with all the grassroots black populations? You're working with Arab and Indo-Pakistani Muslims, it's schizophrenic, there's no consistency.

These comments highlight ongoing debates within the community who were coming to the table to negotiate collective identity with different backgrounds and positionalities, that complicated strategy-construction. Even within the same organization, Civil Rights Memory Strategies vacillated between those that emphasized Muslim discrimination as distinct from Black/Brown discrimination and those that emphasized their connection. Just a year prior to expressing solidarity with Black Lives Matter, in 2014 CAIR released a video called “Islamophobia and the Civil Rights Movement” in honor of their 20th anniversary. The video
opens with a historic shot of Japanese internment then segues into historic footage of the Civil Rights Movement juxtaposed with present-day images of burning mosques, anti-Muslim vandalism, and interviews with non-Black Muslims about their experiences of discrimination (CAIR 2014).

On conservative forums like Weasel Zippers, critics discredited the comparison between anti-Muslim discrimination and anti-Black racism and deployed counter-Civil Rights Memory Strategies. Comments discredited the comparison between religion and race, for example:

“Laurel” wrote: Rampant emotional rhetoric designed to fool the stupid. I fail to see how subjugation via religion is even remotely comparable to the Civil Rights Movement.

“JohnG911” wrote: I wonder how the 1960s Civil Rights movement would have turned out if blacks acted like Muslims. What if blacks hacked off heads and limbs, stoned people to death, committed mass executions, forced people to change religion, blew up churches, treated women and children as sex slaves, attacked and murdered Jews wherever they lived, used women and children as suicide bombers, crucified people, hung severed heads from bridges and light poles, and fired rockets indiscriminately in to white communities…

CAIR has stated its grand jihad goal is eliminating and destroying Western civilization from within. Don't believe that's a civil right, they're a domestic terrorist org. period. (weaselzippers.us 2014)

These quotes illustrate a strategy of deconstructing Civil Rights Memory Strategy by targeting the very comparison between Muslims, as a perceived religious (non-racial) group and African Americans, as a racial group. Anti-Muslim critics also discredited the crux of the Civil Rights Memory Strategy itself, the appeal to a collective memory of civil rights for legitimacy and cultural resonance. For example:

“planeboy” wrote: This "civil rights" thing has become as used and abused as the race card. Everything these days is falsely tied at the hip with civil rights. Killing innocent life is one, having a house is one, gay marriage, free everything is another...you can add to list infinitely...

“Herb Borkland” wrote: We know from the manuals recovered in raids that the Islamics have elaborately worked out how to use liberal guilt and its attendant panoply of
signs, signals and portents -- all based on state-of-the-art mid-20th century politics -- to baffle and confuse the Politically Correct.

“Per” wrote: Great citations. CAIR starts their video citing Japanese in WW2 camps stateside but they've no common cause with the Japanese. It's context of oppression for the big segue into what they think will resonate with blacks. By their track record, Islam and CAIR peel off the refuse of that community -- Sharpton, OK beheader, et al -- who can't be bothered to look into CAIR's affiliation with known jihadists. Their "faith," "service" and "justice" cause, itemized at the end, is colored by their birds-of-feather bloody hands to say nothing of how the Koran encourages same. Shame on CAIR for thinking all Americans so careless.

“Rufus X” said: Where did this idea of "phobia" come from? I am not "afraid" or fearful of homos, or of the muzz. It gives them a kind of legitimacy, saying that we somehow fear them as "not like us", when the truth is we HATE them. (weaselzippers.us 2014)

Like many counter-Civil Rights Memory Strategies, they harnessed mnemonic capital, interpretations of the collective memory itself, to discredit the analogy. For example,

“good knight” wrote: “Peace for Israel means security, and we must stand with all our might to protect its right to exist, its territorial integrity. I see Israel as one of the great outposts of democracy in the world, and a marvelous example of what can be done, how desert land can be transformed into an oasis of brotherhood and democracy. Peace for Israel means security and that security must be a reality. –Martin Luther King, Jr., March 25, 1968 speech
CAIR hijackers should be booted.”

In one thread, responders wrote:
“Dapandico” wrote: It started when Rosa Parks beheaded the driver.
“planeboy” responded: “Hijacked the bus too!”
“Taqyia2Me” responded: “Reinforced when MLK, Jr. shot up his workplace.”
(weaselzippers.us 2014)

These comments satirize Muslims’ Civil Rights Memory Strategies, turning them on their heads to argue that they are not only factually unsound (per an interpretation of MLK Jr.’s own words), they are also comical based on the incongruence of Muslim and Black identities. These counter-narratives reveal the contexts in which strategies took shape. Muslim Rights activists not only grappled with conceptions of collective identity within the movement, but while competing projections of identity and even competing Civil Rights Memory Strategies were taking shape
inside the movement, so too were opposing movements working to deconstruct strategies outside the movement. The spaces and contexts and times in which activism takes place are multi-layered. Groups’ collective identities are always in flux, dynamic and contested, internally and externally, within organizations, coalitions, and national movements. In focus groups, Muslim Rights activists slipped quickly, seemingly unconsciously, from describing their individual experiences with discrimination and incorporation to describing the experiences of Muslims as a group. The sense was that individual struggles were not unique but rather connected to a broader group plight. This easy conflation reflects the group processes social psychologists theorize, in which identity is a dialectic negotiation between society’s construction of the group and a group, as a set of interacting individuals’, conception of self. What I have shown in this chapter is that this group identity is constituted by processes of racial formation, a product of socio-historical power relations. For newer immigrant groups like South Asians, Arabs, and Middle Easterners who are subsumed under the umbrella construction of Muslim identity, the process of racial formation has been particularly pronounced since 9/11. Examining Muslim Rights activism and the patterned progression of configurations of identity-and-strategy reveals the critical underpinnings of collective identity in social movements as a matter of racial formation.

Conclusion

This chapter has examined how after three decades of organizing, Muslim Rights groups only began using Civil Rights Memory Strategies in the last few years. Through this case study, I have argued that the processual nature of racial group formation shapes movement strategy. The Muslim Rights Movement begins with active identity work distancing Muslim identity from Black identity, but 9/11 provides a context in which discrimination is unavoidable. Through
interactions and individual experiences, Muslim activists come to understand that despite their self-conception as model minorities, the outside world does not view them the way they view themselves. Strategies shift toward working to deconstruct Islamophobia, to show that Muslims “are Americans too.” Though activists increasingly see themselves as stigmatized through a lens of terrorism, they still perceive distance from Black and Brown identity. When the 2011 Associated Press Report comes out, it becomes clear that no Muslim is exempt from surveillance. Everyone is criminalized. In this catalyzing moment, the movement comes to see that their group position is racialized and not unlike the people of color it has worked to distance itself from. With this new group conception in mind, strategies turn toward deploying Civil Rights Memory Strategies that produce solidarity in the name of a common enemy: state violence.

The dynamics I outline here were not without noise and rather highlighted compelling questions for further research. In particular, findings revealed an ongoing tension between two configurations of identity and strategy, largely along generational lines. Findings showed that the movement toward a conceptualization of Muslims as people of color has been led predominantly by the children of immigrants, the second generation. Migration scholars argue that acculturation is a mechanism through which groups develop more nuanced understandings of the boundaries between groups (Portes, Parker, and Cobas 1980). Through this lens, the native-born second generation not only understand where their group stands relative to other groups, but they also have a sense of a claim to American culture and are more likely to identify the strategies necessary to negotiate this group position.

Meanwhile, I found that some first generation Muslim organizers were still holding to a self conception of Muslim group identity as “Not Black,” and they felt that strategies should
focus specifically on educating Americans about Islam to prevent discrimination, protecting Muslim identity as one separate from Blackness. These findings show that racism within the Muslim community did not suddenly disappear with the advent of group racialization. While many first generation Muslim organizers progressed in understanding Muslims were “othered,” there was a resistance to seeing this process as analogous to Black and Brown experience. For example, in multiple discussions, first generation organizers compared Muslim experience to Japanese internment, another “model minority” group who had experienced discrimination. In another example, an organizer said: “I think we have to be at the table, because I've seen attitudes shift, although just a little bit…if you can just shift a few attitudes, be at the leadership table where decisions are being made, and attitudes are being formed.” She understood strategies as best deployed against negative attitudes, toward protecting a sense of group position as she emphasized to the group that Muslims were model citizens and should be recognized as such.

Another first generation organizer said, “The difference I see in the Muslim community from immigrants versus [native-born] generations is immigrants tend to have a lot of reverence for authority so they don't question anything that law enforcement does but kids born here are innately American and believe in the justice system and are willing to fight for it, so there's actually tension between those two. It’s a healthy tension and it can be advantageous because on the one hand the elders are willing to make relationships for respect and honor but the kids are pushing and tugging.” In several focus groups, community organizers described these tensions as a, “conflation of identity…these terms of ‘house Muslim’ and ‘field Muslim.’” Another organizer explained the distinction more, saying, “Those who engage the government are the ‘House Negroes,’ good Muslims, and those who are the oppositional ‘Field Muslims,’ are righteous in their cause and opposition to the government.” Organizers compared Muslim
activists to Malcolm X’s famous delineation of the “house Negro” and “field Negro.” Macolm X’s conceptualization in fact reflected the very idea that the ways in which one perceives their identity, their social location, shapes the way they act and understand their capacity to act. He said:

So you have two types of Negro. The old type and the new type. Most of you know the old type. When you read about him in history during slavery he was called "Uncle Tom." He was the house Negro. And during slavery you had two Negroes. You had the house Negro and the field Negro. The house Negro usually lived close to his master. He dressed like his master. He wore his master's second-hand clothes. He ate food that his master left on the table. And he lived in his master's house--probably in the basement or the attic--but he still lived in the master's house. So whenever that house Negro identified himself, he always identified himself in the same sense that his master identified himself. When his master said, "We have good food," the house Negro would say, "Yes, we have plenty of good food." "We" have plenty of good food. When the master said that "we have a fine home here," the house Negro said, "Yes, we have a fine home here." When the master would be sick, the house Negro identified himself so much with his master he'd say, "What's the matter boss, we sick?" His master's pain was his pain. And it hurt him more for his master to be sick than for him to be sick himself. When the house started burning down, that type of Negro would fight harder to put the master's house out than the master himself would.

But then you had another Negro out in the field. The house Negro was in the minority. The masses--the field Negroes were the masses. They were in the majority. When the master got sick, they prayed that he'd die. [Laughter] If his house caught on fire, they'd pray for a wind to come along and fan the breeze.

If someone came to the house Negro and said, "Let's go, let's separate," naturally that Uncle Tom would say, "Go where? What could I do without boss? Where would I live? How would I dress? Who would look out for me?" That's the house Negro. But if you went to the field Negro and said, "Let's go, let's separate," he wouldn't even ask you where or how. He'd say, "Yes, let's go." And that one ended right there. So now you have a twentieth-century-type of house Negro. A twentieth-century Uncle Tom. He's just as much an Uncle Tom today as Uncle Tom was 100 and 200 years ago. Only he's a modern Uncle Tom. That Uncle Tom wore a handkerchief around his head. This Uncle Tom wears a top hat. He's sharp. He dresses just like you do. He speaks the same phraseology, the same language. He tries to speak it better than you do. He speaks with the same accents, same diction. And when you say, "your army," he says, "our army." He hasn't got anybody to defend him, but anytime you say "we" he says "we." "Our president," "our government," "our Senate," "our congressmen," "our this and our that." And he hasn't even got a seat in that "our" even at the end of the line. So this is the twentieth-century Negro. Whenever you say "you," the personal pronoun in the singular or in the plural, he uses it right along with you. When you say you're in trouble, he says, "Yes, we're in trouble." But there's another kind of Black man on the scene. If you say you're in
trouble, he says, "Yes, you're in trouble." [Laughter] He doesn't identify himself with your plight whatsoever. (X 1963)

Future research might examine how mobilization itself is a segmented mode of incorporation, driving wedges between generations who incorporate into separate racial groups within a community.

Additionally, I found that class, and in relation, place matters. Organizers had different perceptions based on the neighborhoods where they were organizing. In poor neighborhoods, organizers were more likely to identify with people of color through the heavy policing of these neighborhoods. Again, the contexts of mobilization played a critical role in how perceptions of group position were shaped. These findings do not change the theory I have outlined but rather make it more complex and highlight the value of intersectional frameworks that examine how additional dimensions of identity and context shape perceptions of group position and strategy construction.

This theory of social movement strategy does not just gesture to collective identity as one factor among many that may shape social movement strategies. I argue that to understand social movement strategies, meaning why movements do the things that they do, we have to begin by understanding how groups form particular conceptions of themselves, and this process is dialectic, an ongoing negotiation in interaction with shifting political and cultural contexts. These findings have significant implications for understanding the present state of contentious politics. We are in a political cultural moment in which on the one hand, there is rising xenophobia and racism and on the other hand, there are growing intersectional mobilizations for social justice, reflecting an ongoing tension between a politics of exclusion and inclusion. We require the conceptual tools to understand the relationality of these forces.
This case study of the Muslim Rights Movement also highlights how processes of racial group formation can reproduce inequality in mobilizations for social change. In strategies centered on distancing identity from Blackness, the movement reproduced the racial hierarchy within the movement. We need more research that examines these mechanisms and the ways in which movements not only challenge systems of domination but are also constituted by them. Finally, this research has implications for mobilizations themselves, in thinking about the unintended consequences of strategy, about how groups might organize around cultural bridges like Civil Rights Memory Strategies, developing strategies against constraining cultural and political contexts.
In February 2017, an editorial cartoon circulated depicting the recently appointed Education Secretary Betsy DeVos as the new Ruby Bridges. Bridges was the six-year-old African American girl who desegregated an all-white New Orleans school in 1960, an image emblazoned in collective memory and made iconic in Norman Rockwell’s 1964 painting titled “The Problem We All Live With.” The 2017 cartoon depicted the controversial DeVos as a
vulnerable victim of political forces, “Conservative” graffitied viciously behind her and tagged by the NEA, the National Education Association, the largest union in the United States and a vocal opponent of DeVos’. The symbolism was unmistakable, a political commentary on the new political victims and their oppressors. Controversy erupted over the equation of a grown woman in a public, political office which she had chosen to occupy and an innocent child, who wished only to be educated. Cartoonist Glenn McCoy apologized "if anyone was offended" and explained, "My cartoon was about how, in this day and age, decades beyond the civil rights protests, it's sad that people are still being denied the right to speak freely or do their jobs or enter public buildings because others disagree with who they are or how they think.” He said he was "speaking out against hate," (Salaky 2017).

As the last three chapters have shown, such strategic invocations of memory are not new, nor are they individuated. When political actors draw upon collective memory for political purposes, they are not just deploying frames, lifting symbolic structures out of their contexts and deploying them toward targets. These strategies are processes of meaning-making through which groups interpret their social location, interpret cultural meaning structures, and strategize linkages between the two to attract political support from targets. These strategies rely on interpretations of social reality and, as I have shown, their accumulation and interaction produces social reality. In Chapter 2, I showed how eleven different movements generated identity-memory linkages in processes from 1980-2016 that slowly evolved the very meaning of collective memory itself. The Civil Rights Movement’s memory frayed and transformed. In Chapter 3, I looked more closely at these processes of “Civil Rights Memory Strategy in interaction” between two pairs of rival movements, showing how the linkages between identity and memory are continually contested. Generating cultural resonance among targets is not just
about developing credible messages, it is about developing credible linkages between messenger and message, links that are continually contested. Chapter 2 highlighted how the meanings of a group’s identity shape its opportunities and constraints in the cultural symbols that can be credibly deployed. Chapter 4 looked at this process more closely with the case of the Muslim Rights Movement. As the Muslim Rights activists came to understand and accept the constraints of an increasingly racialized identity after 9/11, they worked creatively within the boundaries of their group identity and what it meant to be “othered.” Their evolving conception of group identity to one analogous to African Americans inspired Civil Rights Memory Strategies that would not just claim to be “the new Black,” but would rather produce a bridge toward solidarity, an understanding of *shared* oppression.

These are findings that illustrate that the political uses of collective memory and contention over collective memory are interrelated with significant implications for political culture and contentious politics. Groups situate their social location relative to a collective history, where their group has been relative to other groups, and where they believe their group ought to be. Collective memory structures, the bound symbols that are institutionalized and commemorated, offer symbolic tools for negotiating these social locations. These symbolic structures are widely known and resonant, and they are rooted in a we-ness, a claim to a collective. By linking a group’s identity to the collective memory, a group makes clear their place relative to other groups. Yet, as more groups make and contest linkages, the meanings become muddied. The collective memory itself transforms. It is not clear who “we” are anymore. Donald Trump’s 2016 campaign and subsequent victory have illustrated this cultural incomprehension.
As my analysis of the making of the King holiday showed, the ideological questions at the heart of collective memory are ultimately about equality. What is equality, for whom is equality intended, and in what way should equality be achieved? These are fundamentally questions about power in a system of social relations. In working to disrupt power relations, many groups deploying Civil Rights Memory Strategies reproduced these relations through the old lines of argumentation in which equality is a zero sum game (Bernstein 2005). One group’s gains are another’s losses. Through these logics, manifesting in what African Americans know as “respectability politics” or LGBTQ groups know as “heteronormativity,” a group’s claim to equality is mediated by their ability to assimilate into a hegemonic standard.

However, the result of four decades of Civil Rights Memory Strategies is a deepening knowledge of these constraints among progressive activists. What is remarkable about a movement like Black Lives Matter is not that it rails against incrementalism and respectability politics to uphold a radical legacy of civil rights. It is that it acknowledges and foregrounds the limitations and unfinished work of the Civil Rights Movement. The queer Black men and women who drive Black Lives Matter seek not only to dismantle the systems of relations they see in the present, but also those within the cultural object they deploy. As founders Opal Tometi and Gerald Lenoir wrote in an op-ed in Time Magazine:

…we recognize the current struggle is not merely for reforms of policing, any more than the Montgomery Bus Boycott was simply about a seat on the bus. It is about the full recognition of our rights as citizens; and it is a battle for full civil, social, political, legal, economic and cultural rights as enshrined in the United Nations Universal Declaration of Human Rights.

As black activists from two different generations, we understand that the black liberation movement in the U.S.—from its inception as an anti-slavery movement, through the Civil Rights Era, and up to now—has never been only for civil rights. The movement is a struggle for the human rights and dignity of black people in the U.S., which is tied to black peoples’ struggle for human rights across the globe.
Martin Luther King, Jr. said: "Since we know that the system will not change the rules, we are going to have to change the system.” This vision is critical to our work, as it highlights that that this struggle is beyond just, “Stop killing us, we deserve to live.” We deserve to thrive, and this requires the full acknowledgement of the breadth of our human rights. (Tometi and Lenoir 2015)

Emphasizing humanity, beyond civil rights, as grounds for equality both uses and challenges the cultural object. In Chapter 4, I showed how the Muslim Rights Movement comes to innovate Civil Rights Memory Strategies in order to reject a system in which white identity is the only mode of integration. Muslim activists use Civil Rights Memory Strategies to build bridges toward Black and brown groups, with whom they come to see commonality. Adherence with Black group identity becomes a mode of integration, the way white group identity has been historically (Brodkin 1998; Gualtieri 2009; Ignatiev 2008; Roediger 2006). Only time will tell if these shifting modes of strategy deployment alter intergroup relations. For now, the significance is in the long overdue clarity with which marginalized groups are seeing the paradoxical politics of inclusion. Deeply rooted ideologies die hard, and the path forward may first require a real reckoning with the past.
## APPENDIX A: SOCIAL MOVEMENT ORGANIZATION DATASET OVERVIEW

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Movement Type</th>
<th>Organization (Year of Founding)</th>
<th>Earliest Civil Rights Memory Strategy</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Animal Rights</td>
<td>American Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals (1866)</td>
<td>N/A</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Animal Rights</td>
<td>Anti-Cruelty Society (1899)</td>
<td>N/A</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Animal Rights</td>
<td>Friends of Animals (1957)</td>
<td>2009</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Animal Rights</td>
<td>Humane Farming Association (1985)</td>
<td>N/A</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Animal Rights</td>
<td>Humane Society of the United States (1954)</td>
<td>2005</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Animal Rights</td>
<td>People for the Ethical Treatment of Animals (1980)</td>
<td>2003</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Anti-Abortion</td>
<td>Feminists for Life (1972)</td>
<td>1998</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Anti-Abortion</td>
<td>March for Life (1974)</td>
<td>1985</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Anti-Abortion</td>
<td>National Institute of Family and Life Advocates (1993)</td>
<td>N/A</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Anti-Abortion</td>
<td>National Life Center (1970)</td>
<td>N/A</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Anti-Abortion</td>
<td>National Right to Life Committee (1968)</td>
<td>1978</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Anti-Abortion</td>
<td>Republican National Coalition for Life (1990)</td>
<td>N/A</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Christian Right</td>
<td>Accuracy in Media (1969)</td>
<td>2003</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Christian Right</td>
<td>Christian Action Network (1990)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Christian Right</td>
<td>Christian Family Movement (1940)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Christian Right</td>
<td>Coalition on Revival (1984)</td>
<td>N/A</td>
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<tr>
<td>Christian Right</td>
<td>Eagle Forum (1972)</td>
<td>2002</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Christian Right</td>
<td>Family Research Council (1983)</td>
<td>1994</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Christian Right</td>
<td>Foundation for American Christian Education (1965)</td>
<td>N/A</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Category</td>
<td>Organization</td>
<td>Year</td>
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<tr>
<td>---------------------------</td>
<td>----------------------------------------------------------</td>
<td>---------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Christian Right</td>
<td>National Association of Christian Educators (1972)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Christian Right</td>
<td>Traditional Values Coalition (1980)</td>
<td>1993</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Conservative</td>
<td>American Cause Foundation (1993)</td>
<td>2014</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Conservative</td>
<td>American First Party (1944)</td>
<td>2002</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Conservative</td>
<td>National Campaign to Protect Marriage (1996)</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Conservative</td>
<td>National Taxpayers Union (1969)</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Conservative</td>
<td>Republican Liberty Caucus (1991)</td>
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<td>Environment/Conservation</td>
<td>American Farmland Trust (1980)</td>
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<td>Environment/Conservation</td>
<td>Avian Welfare Coalition (2000)</td>
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<td>Greater Yellowstone Foundation (1983)</td>
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<td>National Wilderness Institute (1989)</td>
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<td>National Wildlife Rehabilitators Association (1982)</td>
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<td>Save Americas Forest (1990)</td>
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<td>Environment/Conservation</td>
<td>Transportation Alternatives (1973)</td>
<td>1998</td>
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<td>Environment/Conservation</td>
<td>Wildlife Forever (1987)</td>
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<td>Gun Rights</td>
<td>American Pistol and Rifle Association</td>
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<tr>
<td>Gun Rights</td>
<td>Citizens Committee for the Right to Keep and Bear Arms (1971)</td>
<td>2001</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gun Rights</td>
<td>Gun Owners of America (1975)</td>
<td>2003</td>
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<tr>
<td>Gun Rights</td>
<td>Law Enforcement Alliance of America (1991)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Gun Rights</td>
<td>Liberty Belles (2013)</td>
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<td>Gun Rights</td>
<td>National Rifle Association (1871)</td>
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<td>Pink Pistols (2000)</td>
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<td>Gun Rights</td>
<td>Second Amendment Foundation (1974)</td>
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<td>Gun Rights</td>
<td>Students for Concealed Carry on Campus (2007)</td>
<td>2015</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Immigrant Rights</td>
<td>American Immigration Council (2003)</td>
<td>2010</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rights</td>
<td>Organization</td>
<td>Year</td>
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<tr>
<td>-------------------</td>
<td>---------------------------------------------------</td>
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<tr>
<td>Immigrant Rights</td>
<td>National Council of La Raza (1968)</td>
<td>2008</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Immigrant Rights</td>
<td>National Immigration Law Center (1979)</td>
<td>2013</td>
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<tr>
<td>Immigrant Rights</td>
<td>U.S. Committee for Refugees and Immigrants (1911)</td>
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<td>LGBT Rights</td>
<td>Anti-Gay Violence Project (1980)</td>
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<td>Gay and Lesbian Advocates and Defenders (GLAD) (1978)</td>
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<td>Gay and Lesbian Alliance Against Defamation (1985)</td>
<td>1990</td>
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<td>LGBT Rights</td>
<td>Gays and Lesbians in Foreign Affairs Agencies USA (1992)</td>
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<td>Lambda Legal Defense Fund (1973)</td>
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<td>National Center for Lesbian Rights (1977)</td>
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<td>National Gay and Lesbian Task Force (1973)</td>
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<td>National Lesbian and Gay Law Association (1988)</td>
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<td>LGBT Rights</td>
<td>Queer Nation (1990)</td>
<td>1991</td>
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<td>Muslim Rights</td>
<td>American Muslim Alliance (2001)</td>
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<td>Muslim Rights</td>
<td>American Muslim Council (1990)</td>
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<td>American-Arab Anti-Discrimination Committee (1980)</td>
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<td>Arab American Institute (1985)</td>
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<td>Muslim Rights</td>
<td>Council on American Islamic Relations (1994)</td>
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<td>Muslim Rights</td>
<td>Islamic Circle of North America (1971)</td>
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<td>Muslim Rights</td>
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<td>Muslim American Society (1993)</td>
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<td>Muslim Rights</td>
<td>Muslim Public Affairs Council (1986)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Nativist-Supremacist</td>
<td>Organization</td>
<td>Year</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>----------------------</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>American Nazi Party (1959)</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Aryan Nations (1977)</td>
<td>1992</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Christian Patriots Defense League (1976)</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Federation for American Immigration Reform (1979)</td>
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<td></td>
<td>New Century Foundation (1994)</td>
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<td></td>
<td>National Association for the Advancement of White People (1980)</td>
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<td></td>
<td>U.S. Border Control (1988)</td>
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<td></td>
<td>White Aryan Resistance (1983)</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Women for Aryan Unity</td>
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<td>Prison Reform</td>
<td>Citizens United for Rehabilitation of Errants (1972)</td>
<td>1999</td>
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<td>Families Against Mandatory Minimums (1991)</td>
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<td>Prison Reform</td>
<td>Innocence Project (1992)</td>
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<td>Prison Reform</td>
<td>Lawyers’ Committee for Civil Rights Under Law (1963)</td>
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<td>Prison Reform</td>
<td>National Coalition to Abolish the Death Penalty (2013)</td>
<td>1989</td>
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<td>Prison Reform</td>
<td>National Police Accountability Project (1937)</td>
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<td>Prison Reform</td>
<td>National Prison Project (1972)</td>
<td>1972</td>
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<tr>
<td>Prison Reform</td>
<td>The Sentencing Project (1986)</td>
<td>2010</td>
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## APPENDIX B: SECONDARY HISTORICAL SOURCES ON ELEVEN MOVEMENTS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Movement</th>
<th>Sources</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Family Values (Anti-Abortion, Christian Right, Conservative)</td>
<td>(Bull &amp; Gallagher 1996); (Diamond 1989); (Diamond 1998); (Freeman 2013); (Green, Rozell, Wilcox 2003); (Gross et al 2011); (Howison 2014); (Liebman &amp; Wuthnow 1983); (Lichtman 2009); (Lienesch 1982); (Martin 2005); (McGirr 2002); (Middendorf 2008); (Moen 1996); (Phillips-Fein 2009); (Rozell &amp; Wilcox 1996); (Stacey 1996); (Teles 2012); (Viguerie 1981); (Williams 2010)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Gun Rights</td>
<td>(Bellesiles 2003; Blocher 2014; Bogus 2000; Chemerinsky 2004; Cornell 2006; Crooker 2003; Dorf 2004; Johnson 1997; Lio, Melzer, and Reese 2008; Massey 2004; Melzer 2009; Winkler 2011)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Immigrant Rights</td>
<td>(Baker-Cristales 2009); (Barreto et al 2008); (Fujiwara 2005); (Germano 2014); (Getrich 2008); (Gonzalez 2008); (Hondagneu_Sotelo 2008); (Johnson 2001); (Johnson &amp; Hing 2007); (Milkman 2006); (Milkman &amp; Terriquez); (Narro, Wong, Shaddock-Hernandez 2006); (Lyon 2008); (Nicholls 2013); (Pallares &amp; Flores-Gonzalez 2010); (Pulido 2007); (Romero 2005); (Terriquez 2015); (Voss &amp; Bloemraad 2011); (Yukich 2013)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Muslim Rights

(Abdo 2006); (Abraham & Abraham 1983); (Abraham & Shryock) 2000; (Akram & Karmely 2005); (Alsultany 2012); (Bakalian 1993); (Bawardi 2014); (Benson & Kayal 2002); (Bozorgmehr & Feldman 1996); (Brittingham & de la Cruz 2005); (Bukhari, Nyang, Ahmed, and Esposito 2004); (Cainkar 2004); (CAIR; 2002-2016); (Checkoway, Rignall, Ramakrishnan 2005); (Elkholy 1966); (Ewing 2008); (Foner 2005); (Gualtieri 2009); (Haddad 2004); (Haddad & Esposito 2000); (Haddad & Smith 2002); (Hagopian 2004); (Henderson et al. 2006); (Ibish 2003); (Jamal 2005); (Jamal & Naber 2008); (Kayyali 2006); (Kibria 2006); (Leonard 2003); (Mamdani 2004); (Marvasti & McKinney 2004); (McCarus 1994); (Mollenkopf 2005); (MPAC 2003-2016); (Muscati 2003); (Naber 2000, 2002, 2005); (Nagel 2004, 2005); (NCTA 2004); (NYCCHR 2003); (Nguyen 2005); (Nisbet & Shanahan 2004); (Orfield 2003); (Peek 2002); (Pew 2005, 2007, 2011); (Project MAPS 2001, 2004); (Read 2006, 2008); (Safi 2003); (Salaita 2006); (Sarroub 2005); (Schmidt 2004); (Shaheen 1994, 2001); (Strum 2006); (Suleiman 1999); (Tehranian 2008); (Tirman 2004); (Whitney 2007)

(Nativists)

(Bennett 1988); (Bennett 1995); (Berlet & Lyons 2000); (Fry 2006); (Gerstle 2004); (Jaret 1999); (King 2009); (Michaels 1995); (Ngai 2014); (Perea 1997); (Sanchez 1997); (Tatalovich 1995); (Tichenor 2009)(Abramowitz 2011); (Arceneaux et al 2012); (Armey & Kibbe 2011); (Ashbee 2011); (Bailey et al. 2012); (Boykoff & Laschever 2011); (Brodry 2012); (Bullock & Hood 2012); (Burghardt & Zeskind 2011); (Cho et al. 2012); (DiMaggio 2011); (Enck-Wanzer 2011); (Formisano 2012); (Fraser & Freeman 2010); (Joyce 2014); (Meyer & Van Dyke 2014); (Parker & Barreto 2014); (Paul 2011); (Perrin, Tepper, Caren 2014); (Rasmussen & Schoen 2010); (Rohlinger et al. 2015); (Rosenthal & Trost 2012); (Skocpol & Williamson 2012); (Street & Dimaggio 2015); (Van Dyke & Myer 2016); (Wilson & Burack 2012); (Zernike 2010); (Zeskind 2012)

(Police Reform)

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