

## THE PARTISAN DYNAMICS OF CONTENTION: DEMOBILIZATION OF THE ANTIWAR MOVEMENT IN THE UNITED STATES, 2007-2009\*

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*Changes in threats perceived by activists, partisan identification, and coalition brokerage are three mechanisms that help to explain the demobilization of the antiwar movement in the United States from 2007 to 2009. Drawing upon 5,398 surveys of demonstrators at antiwar protests, interviews with movement leaders, and ethnographic observation, this article argues that the antiwar movement demobilized as Democrats, who had been motivated to participate by anti-Republican sentiments, withdrew from antiwar protests when the Democratic Party achieved electoral success, if not policy success in ending the wars in Iraq and Afghanistan. The withdrawal of Democratic activists changed the character of the antiwar movement by undermining broad coalitions in the movement and encouraging the formation of smaller, more radical coalitions. While the election of Barack Obama had been heralded as a victory for the antiwar movement, Obama's election, in fact, thwarted the ability of the movement to achieve critical mass.*

On October 2, 2002, Chicagoans Against War in Iraq (CAWI) sponsored a rally in Chicago's Federal Plaza, attended by 1,000-2,000 people, which was among the first mass demonstrations against the Iraq War. Jessie Jackson, Sr. was an invited speaker, yet the organizers were uncertain if he would accept their invitation. In order to ensure racial diversity among the speakers in the event of Jackson's absence, the organizers reached out to Barack Obama, a young African-American state senator (personal interview with Carl Davidson, December 12, 2008; personal interview with Marilyn Katz, December 14, 2008). Obama accepted the invitation, speaking at the rally along with Jackson, public officials, and community activists. Obama clearly rejected the Iraq War in his speech, though his "just war" perspective was not strictly pro-peace, noting that "we may have occasion in our lifetime to once again rise up in defense of our freedom, and pay the wages of war" (Obama 2002; see also Schroeder 2009).

During his campaign for the Democratic nomination for President of the United States, Obama would often invoke his speech at the CAWI event as evidence of his early opposition to, and "correct" judgment about, the Iraq War. By bolstering his credibility in Democratic circles as an antiwar candidate and expanding his network of supporters for the Iowa Caucus, the speech was one of many factors that helped Obama to defeat his rivals for the Democratic nomination. While economic considerations, rather than foreign policy, may have been decisive for Obama's victory in the general election (Lewis-Back and Nadeau 2009), a strong antiwar following was critical to his victory at the primary stage (Walker 2008: 1096).

Obama's speech at the Chicago antiwar rally illustrates the sometimes-close relationship between peace movements and the Democratic Party. Three of the last four Democratic

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presidential nominees (Bill Clinton, John Kerry, and Barack Obama) had some level of involvement in antiwar activism before they entered the public eye. For Clinton and Kerry, this past was viewed by many observers as a political liability. However, Obama seems to have benefitted electorally from movement participation. Similarly, Democrats leveraged antiwar sentiment in the 2006 midterm congressional elections, allowing them to regain majorities in both houses of Congress, with self-identified Democrats and independents taking a much more critical view of the war than taken by self-identified Republicans (Jacobson 2007). While most Democrats took advantage of a general public sentiment against the war, some, such as 2006 US Senate candidate Jim Webb (D-VA), reaped direct rewards from the work of antiwar activists on their campaigns (Heaney and Rojas 2007). In light of these benefits, it seems reasonable to expect that Democrats would deliver on their antiwar promises upon attaining control of Congress in 2006 and the presidency in 2008.

Yet, the relationship between the Democratic Party and the antiwar movement is not so straightforward. Once in control of Congress, Democrats voted in favor of antiwar resolutions, but were unable to attain the supermajorities necessary to override Republican objections (Donnelly 2007). Democratic leaders never resorted to Congress's "power of the purse" as a blunt instrument to defund the war immediately. When Obama became President-Elect, he quickly ruffled feathers in the antiwar movement by retaining Bush appointees in his government, such as Defense Secretary Robert Gates (Zeller 2008). As president, Obama maintained the occupation of Iraq and escalated the war in Afghanistan. The antiwar movement should have been furious at Obama's "betrayal" and reinvigorated its protest activity. Instead, attendance at antiwar rallies declined precipitously and financial resources available to the movement dissipated (Zeller 2009). In response, peace activist Cindy Sheehan quipped that "The 'anti-war left' was used by the Democratic Party. I like to call it the 'anti-Republican War' movement" (York 2009). Indeed, the election of Obama appeared to be a demobilizing force on the antiwar movement, even in the face of his pro-war decisions.

In this article, we argue that understanding the dynamic relationship between political parties and social movements requires close attention to the mechanisms that drive contention. In particular, we focus on the environmental, cognitive, and relational mechanisms (McAdam, Tarrow, and Tilly 2001) that link parties and movements. Drawing upon 5,398 surveys of demonstrators at antiwar protests held in major American cities during 2007, 2008, and 2009, we model the movement participation of Democrats, members of third parties, and independents, as well as their attitudes toward Obama's policies in Iraq. Using interviews and ethnographic observation, we examine the consequences of partisan-driven dynamics on organizational and coalitional structures within the antiwar movement.

This article begins by exploring the theoretical relationship between political parties and social movements, and by presenting a mechanism-based account of this relationship. Second, we report and explain our procedures for conducting surveys, interviews, and ethnography. Third, we describe the dynamics of antiwar protests. Fourth, we present the results of a simultaneous equations model of these dynamics. Fifth, we present qualitative evidence of how the antiwar movement has been altered as a result of demobilization. We conclude by proposing an expanded research agenda on the connection between parties and movements.

## LINKING POLITICAL PARTIES AND SOCIAL MOVEMENTS

Political parties and social movements were once seen as parts of separate political domains. Political parties were recognized as institutionalized "insiders," while movement participants were considered strictly as "outsiders" (Gamson 1990). While the insider-outsider distinction still retains value, scholars have developed a more integrated view of movements and parties as political scientists and sociologists have increasingly exchanged ideas with one another (see, for example, Kitschelt 1993; della Porta and Rucht 1995; Tarrow 1998: 80; Schwartz

2006; Chadwick 2007). Rather than being entirely antagonistic, social movements and parties may sometimes collaborate toward mutual ends. Movements have become a more routine part of institutionalized politics in recent years (Meyer and Tarrow 1998; McAdam 1998), though party-movement interactions have long been relevant to political outcomes (Schwartz 2010). Jack Goldstone (2003: 2) argues that, as a consequence, “social movements have become part of the environment and social structures that shape and give rise to parties.”

If parties and movements function within the same political environments, then they are likely to exert dynamic feedback upon one another, such as through the timing of protest cycles (Tarrow 1993). For example, Nella van Dyke (2003) observes that the presence of a Republican in the White House made campus protests more likely between 1930 and 1990, while a Democrat in the White House made these protests less likely. She postulates that the threat created by a Republican president is an important explanation for this finding. Van Dyke’s analysis leaves open questions about how that threat is translated into mobilization decisions by social actors. What mechanisms generate a partisan bias to protest cycles?

Parties and movements often share participants as over time activists move between different arenas (Mische 2008: 343). This sharing may occur because of an alignment between the goals of parties and movements. For example, a woman may find herself participating both in the pro-choice movement and the Democratic Party because both these entities advocate for women’s rights. Alternatively, the intersection may occur explicitly for strategic reasons: a woman may become active in the Democratic Party in order to make sure that it continues to advance the cause of women’s rights, or may work with NARAL Pro-Choice America in order to channel its resources toward helping the Democratic Party.

Not all activists appreciate the potential benefits of crossing the boundaries between parties and movements. Party activists may view movements as marginal and unlikely to achieve their goals. Movement activists may reject parties as too willing to compromise principles and too focused on power as an end in and of itself. Yet some participants embrace both approaches to activism, at least under certain circumstances. These *movement-partisans* seek to use social movement tactics to advance the electoral prospects of the party and/or use the party to make progress on movement goals. In an earlier article (Heaney and Rojas 2007), we label the space in which these movement-partisans operate as *the party in the street*. From the vantage point of the party in the street, Cindy Sheehan is right—the Democrats did exploit the antiwar movement for their own electoral success; but she is only half right. The antiwar movement also exploited the Democratic Party by taking advantage of party conventions, voter registration drives, and donors to advance its cause and subsidize its organizational base.

Participants in the party in the street tend to join organizations that already have the party’s well being in mind. In the mid 2000s, these organizations included MoveOn (for Democrats) and the Club for Growth (for Republicans). Movement-partisans are more likely than other movement activists to make use of institutional tactics, such as lobbying, than transgressive tactics, such as direct action. Likewise, within a formal party organization, movement-partisans are drawn to party organizations that advance movement goals (such as ethnic or policy caucuses) and movement-like tactics, such as canvassing. In Heaney and Rojas (2007), we recognize that the party in the street expands and contracts over time, depending on changing goals and the emergence of new political opportunities and threats, but we do not model these changes explicitly. In the present study, we model the partisan dynamics of contention by identifying mechanisms that cause expansion and contraction.

Mechanisms are “chains of aggregations of actors, problem situations, and habitual responses” that unfold over time to mediate between cause and effect, specifying in a general way how aggregate phenomena are driven by events at a lower-order of complexity (Gross 2009: 369). Following McAdam, Tarrow, and Tilly’s (2001) framework, we argue that environmental, cognitive, and relational mechanisms are important in mapping the relationship between parties and movements. By specifying these mechanisms, we offer an account of how and why the antiwar movement and the Democratic Party have co-evolved over time.

First, we argue that a substantial change in a *perceived threat* from a political party is a critical change in the political environment within which activism takes place, thus serving as an environmental and cognitive mechanism that links parties and movement activism.<sup>1</sup> When the balance of power between the parties changes, activists reassess the benefits and costs of taking action. The rise of an unfriendly party may generate suspicions that the movement will soon be threatened by a wide range of hostile policies, while the rise of a friendly party may lead to a sense of relief that the threat has ended. Since people tend to work more aggressively to avoid losses than to achieve gains, grassroots mobilization is more likely to flow from the emergence of new threats than from the prospect of beneficial opportunities (Kahneman, Slovic, and Tversky 1982; Hansen 1985; Berejekian 1997). According to this view, the removal of the threat posed by Bush's presidency should have dampened antiwar activism more than the opportunities created by Obama's election should have increased it. Of course, opponents of Obama and the Democrats may have had exactly the opposite reaction. For example, the perceived threats to conservative ideals from Obama's presidency may have been responsible for the quick rise of the "tea party" movement" in 2009 (Barstow 2010).

Second, we argue that personal identification with political parties, or *partisan identification*, is a cognitive mechanism that links parties and movement activism. Partisan identification is an essential lens through which people interpret changes in political reality (Campbell, Converse, Miller, and Stokes 1960; Gerber and Huber 2010). Parties can help to give a narrative to movement activism and coherence to movement networks by orienting them around a relatively well-articulated agenda (Mische 2008: 345). Parties are especially important in the United States, where partisan polarization is at a relative historic high (Bartels 2000; Bafumi and Shapiro 2009), and on the issue of the Iraq War, where public attitudes are deeply divided according to party (Gelpi 2010). People who identify with the Democratic Party are likely to interpret the election of a Democratic president as a positive step (with Republicans viewing it as a negative step) in the direction of the policy goals that they care about, and as an event unlikely to threaten their interests, even if the new president does not implement any policy changes. In contrast, people who identify with a third party or who reject the party system may be likely to interpret a new Democratic president as "more of the same," even if real policy changes flow from a change in power. Of course, individuals have the ability to update their perceptions of the parties based on the actions or inactions of their elected leaders (Green, Palquist, and Schickler 2002).

Third, we argue that *coalition brokerage* is a relational mechanism that links parties and movement activism. Coalitions play an important role in enabling parties and movements to coordinate their actions and share resources (Mische 2008: 347; Schwartz 2010: 4-5). Both parties and social movements are nonunitary, heterogeneous, decentralized entities that aggregate a wide variety of interests, though movements tend to be more decentralized than parties (Sorauf 1968: 11-12; Cohen, Karol, Noel, and Zaller 2008). If parties and movements are to work together, then formal coalitions are essential for the formation of points of contact that facilitate communication. As Ann Mische (2008: 348) notes in her study of youth activism in Brazil, "partisan ties [are] often a source of backstage mediation that contribute[s] to civic-coalition building." Coalitions may enhance movements' abilities to communicate their policy agendas to parties and to make sure that allied movements do not act in ways that embarrass parties. Coalitions have the potential to synchronize the actions of moderate and radical elements within a movement (Ansell 2001; Tarrow 2005; Heaney and Rojas 2008), thus making cooperation with movements more palatable to parties. For example, during the American civil rights movement, the Democratic Party distributed resources through the Voter Education Project as a means of channeling black activism into forms less threatening to the party's supporters (McAdam 1999: 170). Thus, coalition brokerage has the potential to mediate the transfer of information and resources between parties and movements. The withdrawal of these resources has the potential to undermine coalition maintenance and party-

movement cooperation. Without party support, broad coalitions may break down due to the absence of brokerage, leading to smaller and more fragmented coalitions.

We argue below that, through these mechanisms, the relationship between the Democratic Party and the antiwar movement was essential in accounting for the demobilization of the antiwar movement between 2007 and 2009. The rise of Democratic majorities in Congress and a Democratic president in the White House presented opportunities for activists to press their cause, but this possibility was precluded by the removal of a critical causal mechanism: perceived threat (from President George W. Bush and the Republican Party). Activists identified with the Democratic Party were disproportionately likely to leave the movement as time went on, as they considered Democratic electoral success to be concomitant with the achievement of their policy aims (mechanism: partisan identification). With the loss of Democratic support, coalition resources dissipated, making it increasingly difficult to broker connections across the constituencies of the antiwar movement (mechanism: coalition brokerage). Democratic departures left the antiwar movement fragmented and empowered radical elements within the movement (see Della Porta and Tarrow 1986). In the following section, we outline the research design through which we evaluate these claims empirically.

## RESEARCH DESIGN

We followed the demobilization of the antiwar movement in the United States from 2007 to 2009 using surveys of street demonstrators, interviews with movement leaders, and ethnographic observation of large and small events. We conducted brief, two-page, pen-and-paper surveys on-site at all of the national or nationally coordinated antiwar protest events held between January 2007 and December 2009. The surveys consisted of questions on basic demographics, partisan affiliations, organizational affiliations, reasons for attending the events, histories of political participation, and attitudes toward the movement, the war, and the political system. We learned of events by enrolling in email listservs managed by United for Peace and Justice (UFPJ), the ANSWER Coalition, Code Pink: Women for Peace, World Can't Wait, MoveOn.org, and the Washington Peace Center (in Washington, DC). These listservs informed us about events sponsored by these organizations, as well as by other organizations, as announcements of protests are always cross-posted on multiple lists. Further, we maintained personal relationships with leading activists in order to learn about any major events that may have taken place without being announced on these lists.

National protest events occurred most often in Washington, DC. However, they were sometimes held in New York City (the March on Wall Street, April 4, 2009), Denver, CO (Recreate '68 March and Rally outside the Democratic National Convention, August 24, 2008), and St. Paul, MN (March on the Republican National Committee, September 1, 2008). Sometimes, nationally coordinated protest events were held at locations around the country, such as on the anniversaries of the wars in Iraq and Afghanistan. In the case of these decentralized events, we chose to conduct surveys in Washington, DC, as well as one city on the East Coast, one city in the Midwest, and one city on the West Coast. For consistency, we selected New York, Chicago, and San Francisco, when possible. We substituted Boston for New York when no major protest event was held there on October 17, 2009. We conducted surveys in Los Angeles on March 15, 2008, when the protest in San Francisco was expected to be substantially smaller than typical. In total, we conducted surveys at 27 events (see table 1).

We had several objectives in selecting the cities in which to conduct surveys. First, we planned to conduct surveys in the cities where the largest protests had taken place in the earlier years of the antiwar movement (2001-2006) so that we could obtain data at the largest protests. Second, we aimed for regional balance. Third, we sought to conduct repeated surveys in the same cities over time in order to minimize variations due entirely to locale. We did not conduct surveys in a broader range of cities due to limited resources. In particular,

**Table 1. Events Included in the Study**

| <i>Date</i> | <i>City of Event</i> | <i>Title of Event</i>                             | <i>Leading Sponsor(s) / Coalition</i>                  | <i>ANSWER Leadership<sup>a</sup></i> |
|-------------|----------------------|---|--|--------------------------------------|
| 1/27/2007   | Washington DC        | March on Washington                               | United for Peace and Justice                           | No                                   |
| 3/17/2007   | Washington DC        | March on the Pentagon                             | ANSWER Coalition                                       | Yes                                  |
| 9/15/2007   | Washington DC        | March on Washington                               | ANSWER Coalition                                       | Yes                                  |
| 10/27/2007  | New York             | National Mobilization Against the War in Iraq     | October 27 Coalition                                   | No                                   |
| 10/27/2007  | Chicago              | National Mobilization Against the War in Iraq     | October 27 Coalition                                   | Yes                                  |
| 10/27/2007  | San Francisco        | National Mobilization Against the War in Iraq     | October 27 Coalition                                   | Yes                                  |
| 3/15/2008   | Los Angeles          | Five Years Too Many                               | Five Years Too Many Coalition                          | Yes                                  |
| 3/19/2008   | Chicago              | Five Years Too Many                               | Five Years Too Many Coalition                          | Yes                                  |
| 3/20/2008   | Chicago              | Five Years Too Many                               | Five Years Too Many Coalition                          | Yes                                  |
| 3/19/2008   | Washington DC        | Five Years Too Many                               | Five Years Too Many Coalition                          | No                                   |
| 3/19/2008   | New York             | Five Years Too Many                               | Five Years Too Many Coalition                          | No                                   |
| 3/22/2008   | New York             | Five Years Too Many                               | Five Years Too Many Coalition                          | No                                   |
| 3/19/2008   | San Francisco        | Five Years Too Many                               | Five Years Too Many Coalition                          | Yes                                  |
| 8/24/2008   | Denver               | Recreate '68 March and Rally                      | Recreate '68   | No                                   |
| 9/1/2008    | St. Paul, MN         | March on the RNC and Stop the War                 | Coalition to March on the RNC and Stop the War         | No                                   |
| 1/20/2009   | Washington DC        | Inauguration Protests                             | Washington Peace Center; Arrest Bush, World Can't Wait | No                                   |
| 3/21/2009   | Washington DC        | March on the Pentagon                             | ANSWER Coalition                                       | Yes                                  |
| 4/4/2009    | New York             | March on Wall Street                              | United for Peace and Justice                           | No                                   |
| 10/5/2009   | Washington DC        | October 5th Action Against Endless Wars           | October 5th Coalition to End the War In Afghanistan    | No                                   |
| 10/7/2009   | Chicago              | Protest on 8th Anniversary of War on Afghanistan  | ANSWER Coalition                                       | Yes                                  |
| 10/17/2009  | Boston               | October 17th Boston Antiwar Rally                 | Stop the War Coalition Boston                          | No                                   |
| 10/17/2009  | San Francisco        | U.S. Troops Out Now                               | October 17 Antiwar Coalition                           | Yes                                  |
| 11/7/2009   | Washington DC        | Black is Back Coalition Rally                     | Black Is Back Coalition                                | No                                   |
| 12/2/2009   | New York             | Protest Obama's Escalation of War in Afghanistan! | World Can't Wait                                       | No                                   |
| 12/2/2009   | Chicago              | Protest Obama's Escalation of War in Afghanistan! | World Can't Wait                                       | Yes                                  |
| 12/2/2009   | San Francisco        | Protest Obama's Escalation of War in Afghanistan  | World Can't Wait                                       | Yes                                  |
| 12/12/2009  | Washington DC        | Anti-Escalation Rally                             | enduswars.org  | No                                   |

Note: <sup>a</sup> Refers to leadership by the ANSWER Coalition in the protest event. Also see endnote 9.

we did not conduct surveys in southern cities, which have seldom been the sites of large antiwar protests (Heaney and Rojas 2006). Our approach provides an excellent representation of participants at urban protest events. However, our method does not record events in smaller cities, though we did survey representatives of local peace organizations who attended national or nationally coordinated protests.<sup>2</sup> To the extent that there are differences in the partisan dynamics between events held in large cities and those held in small towns, our approach neglects these differences.

At each event, we hired a team of four to ten survey staff members. Our survey teams selected respondents from the crowd using the anchor-sampling method of randomization documented in Heaney and Rojas (2007, 2008). Overall, we conducted 5,398 surveys with a participation rate of 80.7 percent, slightly lower than the 89 percent response rate reported in Heaney and Rojas (2007) and the 86 percent rate reported in Heaney and Rojas (2008). Further, we asked the members of our survey teams to assess the order of magnitude of the attendance at the event in question as being in the single digits, the double digits, the hundreds, the thousands, the tens of thousands, the hundreds of thousands, or the millions.

In addition to the events at which we conducted surveys, we also attended smaller and more informal events at which antiwar movement activists gathered, including Capitol Hill lobby days, candlelight vigils, fundraisers, small protests, planning meetings, training sessions, parties, the National Assembly of United for Peace and Justice, and the United States Social Forum. We learned of these events through our subscriptions to email listservs and through personal networking with movement leaders. At these events, we observed, took photographs, and recorded field notes. Finally, we conducted 40 semi-structured interviews with movement leaders, identified on the basis of our observation of their leadership at events we attended. Interview questions asked respondents about their personal backgrounds, the inner workings of the antiwar movement, political leaders, and the Democratic Party.

## THE DYNAMICS OF ANTIWAR PROTEST

Antiwar protests were a central part of the American political landscape during the Vietnam War era (Small 2002). Yet the peace movement transitioned into abeyance after Vietnam. It awakened periodically to oppose nuclear weapons, military intervention in Latin America, the Persian Gulf War, and sanctions against Iraq (Meyer 1990; Woehrle, Coy, and Maney 2008). The antiwar movement in the United States reemerged in the immediate aftermath of the terror attacks of September 11, 2001. Believing that the Bush Administration would use the attacks as a rationale for war, peace activists founded International ANSWER (Act Now to Stop War and End Racism) on September 14, 2001, which later became known as the ANSWER Coalition (personal interview with Brian Becker, June 25, 2008). The new movement drew its strength from the antiglobalization-global justice movement that had prospered in the 1990s. As ANSWER National Coordinator Brian Becker explains, "The ANSWER Coalition was really those groups in the antiglobalization movement who quickly transitioned and developed an antiwar focus and began mobilizing against the Bush Administration rather than restricting the target to the IMF [International Monetary Fund], the World Bank, and other financial and corporate institutions" (personal interview, June 25, 2008). In this context, much of the organizing energy of the antiglobalization movement "spilled out" into the new antiwar movement (Hadden and Tarrow 2007).

The new antiwar movement remained relatively small until the Bush Administration's plans for war in Iraq became clear in the fall of 2002 (Hayden 2007; Heaney and Rojas 2007). Broad antiwar coalitions formed, such as UFPJ and Win Without War, which served as umbrella structures for a wide range of pro-peace organizations with moderate to radical political perspectives (Meyer and Corrigan-Brown 2005). These new structures were created, in part, to counter a perception by some activists that the approach adopted by ANSWER would draw only

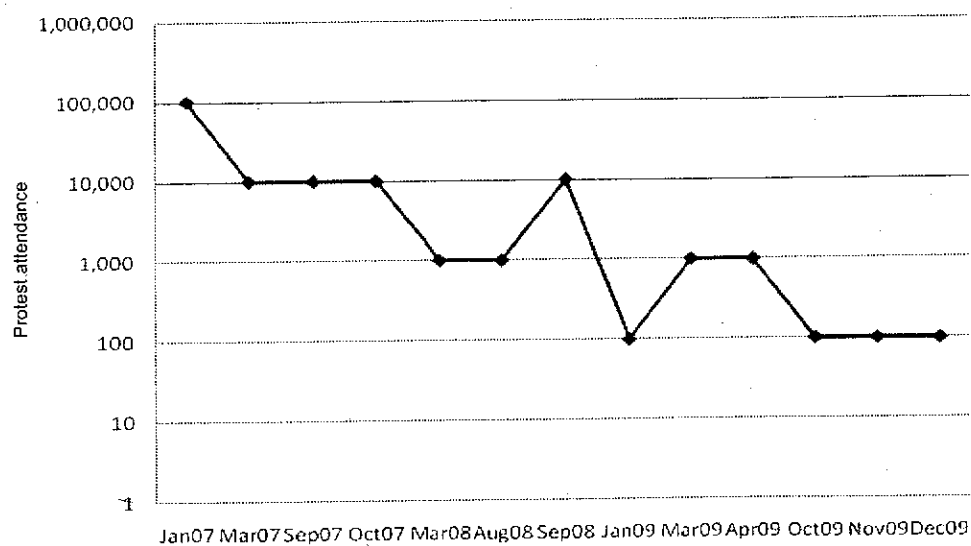
a limited constituency, and that a wider effort was needed to have political influence (Cortright 2004; personal interview with Leslie Cagan, June 30, 2008). By turning to the Internet as an organizing tool (Robbin and Buente 2008; Rojas 2009), these coalitions collaborated with activists around the world for a global day of action on the theme of “The World Says No to War” (United for Peace and Justice 2003). With approximately ten million people mobilized in hundreds of cities worldwide, it was the largest internationally coordinated protest in history (Cortright 2004; Walgrave and Rucht 2010).

The movement continued large-scale mobilization into 2003, 2004, and 2005, with tens and hundreds of thousands of people in attendance at antiwar rallies, such as the massive demonstrations organized by UFPJ outside the Republican National Convention in New York on August 29, 2004, and co-organized by UFPJ and ANSWER in Washington, DC on September 24, 2005, with approximately 500,000 and 300,000 people in attendance, respectively (Heaney and Rojas 2007, 2008). Although the regularity and size of demonstrations began to decline after 2005, the organizations in the movement continued to build their organizational structures and seek new avenues of influence through lobbying, voter education campaigns, get-out-the-vote drives, television advertising, and peace billboards.

The present study begins in the immediate aftermath of the 2006 congressional elections, in which Democrats rode the public’s antiwar sentiment back into a position of bicameral control of Congress for the first time since 1994. In figure 1, we report our estimates of the order of magnitude of attendance at the antiwar protests that we attended. The period began with a fairly sizeable mobilization in Washington, DC on January 27, 2007, which we judged to be in the hundreds of thousands. This march, organized by UFPJ, was framed to capitalize on the Democrats’ ascension in Congress. Its organizing slogans included “Bring the Mandate for Peace to Washington DC on Jan. 27,” “Tell the New Congress: Act NOW to Bring the Troops Home!” and “The voters want peace. Tell the new Congress: ACT *NOW* TO END THE WAR” (United for Peace and Justice 2006, emphasis in the original).

The march was followed by a UFPJ-organized grassroots lobby day on January 29, which would prove to be the final of three lobby days that it sponsored (with the other two held in September 2005 and May 2006). The change in the partisan balance of power seems to have

**Figure 1.** Order of Magnitude of National/Nationally Coordinated Antiwar Protests, 2007-2009



*Note:* Because of the difficulty of judging crowd size surveyors at each event judged the size as falling roughly in the 1s, the 10s, the 100s, the 1,000s, the 10,000s, the 100,000s, or the 1,000,000s.



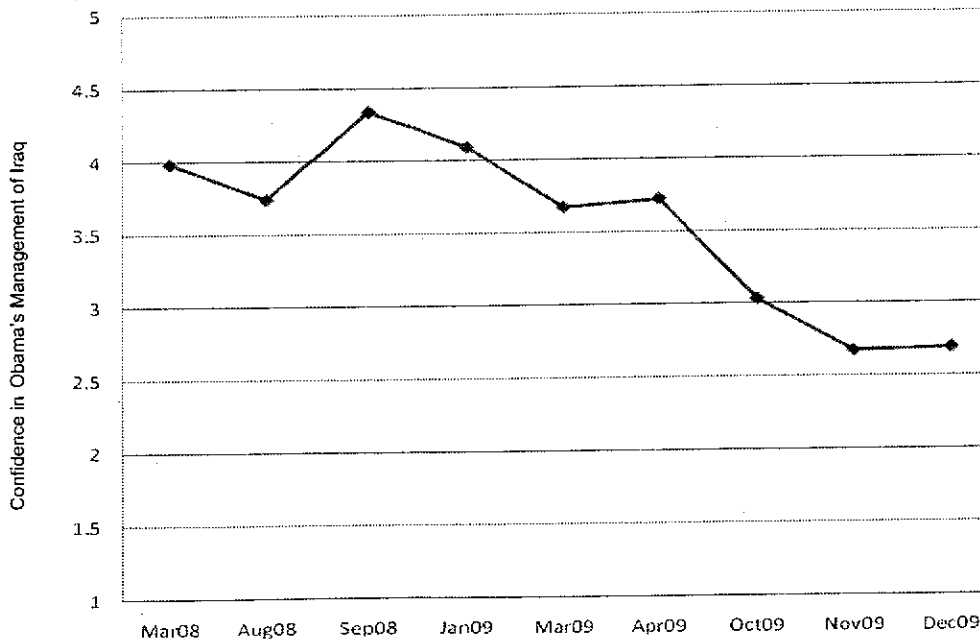
been perceived, both by UFPJ organizers and its grassroots constituency, as a new opportunity around which they should organize.

After January 2007, the attendance at antiwar rallies dropped by an order of magnitude to roughly the tens of thousands, or thousands, through the end of 2008. Consistent with our environmental mechanism, the pending departure from office of President Bush and the prospect that the Democrats would nominate an antiwar candidate for President in Barack Obama, could have been perceived as a diminished threat to peace from the Republicans. After the election of Barack Obama as president, the order of magnitude of antiwar protests dropped again. Organizers were hard pressed to stage a rally with participation in the thousands, or even in the hundreds. For example, we counted exactly 107 participants at a Chicago rally on October 7, 2009. The threat to peace from the Obama Administration, as perceived by the grassroots constituency of the antiwar movement, must have been very small.

Given the collapse of antiwar protests in 2009, we would expect that the satisfaction of antiwar constituents with Obama’s handling of the war in Iraq must have been very high. To assess this expectation, we asked respondents how they thought that Barack Obama “would do” (in 2008) or “has done” (in 2009) in managing the situation in Iraq.<sup>3</sup> In figure 2, we graph the averages of these responses over time on a five-point scale, with five indicating that the respondent thought that Obama would “significantly improve the situation,” four indicating slight improvement, three indicating that he would “make no difference,” two indicating slight worsening, and a one indicating that he would “significantly worsen the situation.”

The results show that confidence in Obama’s handling of the situation in Iraq was fairly strong in 2008, with the highest level of confidence (4.33 on a scale of 5) registered immediately following the Democratic National Convention. This result means that, on average, antiwar demonstrators thought that Obama would do a little more than “slightly improve” the situation in Iraq were he to be elected president. However, after the inauguration, his approval level began to slide in the antiwar camp. As of December 2009, antiwar protesters thought, on average, that Obama had “slightly worsened” the situation in Iraq (2.69). What explains the discrepancy between the tacit approval of Obama implied by the declining size of protests and the survey evidence that his approval is falling?

**Figure 2.** Confidence by Antiwar Protesters in Obama’s Management of Iraq, 2008-2009

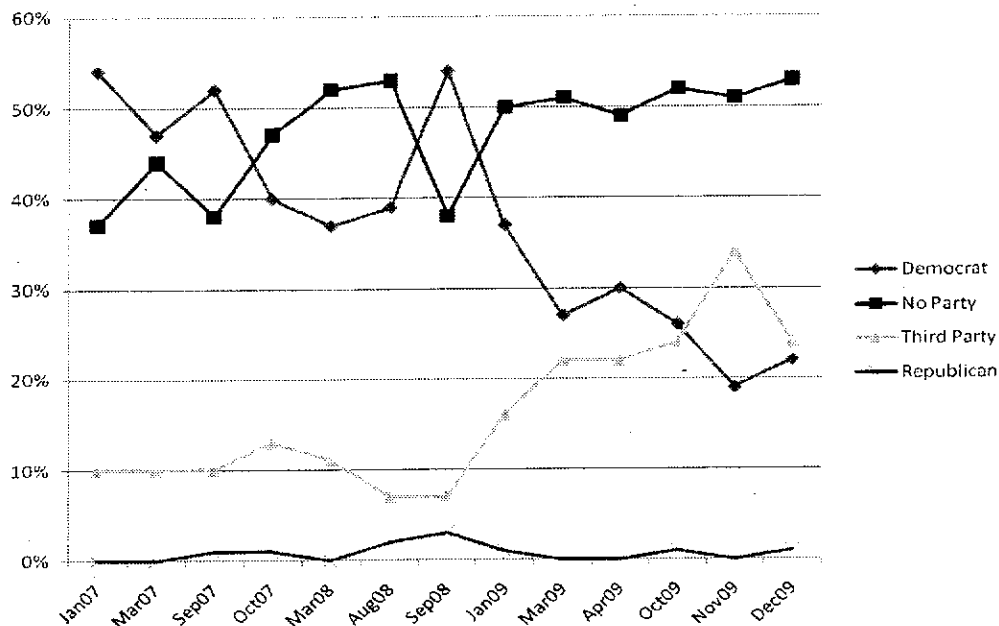


Note: Estimates derived from authors’ analysis of antiwar surveys.

An obvious answer to our question is that the composition of protests changed. People who approved of Obama stopped showing up, so protesters who continued to turn out were proportionately more anti-Obama in their orientation. The interesting question, however, is *how* did the composition of protests change? What explains which people stopped showing up and which kept coming? We argue that partisanship helps to answer this question.

We asked survey respondents to indicate if they considered themselves to be a member of a political party and, if so, which one.<sup>4</sup> Based on this question, we graph changes in the partisan composition of antiwar protests in figure 3. The results show that self-identified Democrats were a major constituency in the antiwar movement during 2007 and 2008, during which time between 37 percent and 54 percent of antiwar protesters thought of themselves as Democrats. In contrast, members of third parties were relatively less common in the movement, falling between 7 percent and 13 percent of participants.

**Figure 3. Partisan Composition of Antiwar Protests, 2007-2009**



*Note:* Percentages add to slightly more than 100 percent because 1.6 percent of respondents indicated membership both in Democratic Party and a third party, with Democratic-Green Party co-membership being the most common.

However, after Obama's election as president, Democratic participation in antiwar activities plunged, falling from 37 percent in January 2009 to a low of 19 percent in November 2009, and registering 22 percent in December 2009. In contrast, members of third parties became proportionately more prevalent in the movement, rising from 16 percent in January 2009 to a high of 34 percent in November 2009, and registering 24 percent in December 2009.

Since Democrats are more numerous in the population at large than are members of third parties, the withdrawal of Democrats from the movement in 2009 appears to be a significant explanation for the falling size of antiwar protests.<sup>5</sup> Thus, we have identified the kernel of the linkage between Democratic partisanship and the demobilization of the antiwar movement. In the following section, we examine environmental, cognitive, and relational mechanisms for this linkage using a simultaneous equations model of protest participation.

### A SIMULTANEOUS EQUATIONS MODEL OF ANTIWAR PROTEST

Understanding the dynamics of antiwar protest requires us to model separately the selection process through which people turn out to protest and the attitude-formation process for the people who are there. We model this two-stage process with a three-equation model. In the first stage—the selection process—we use one equation to model the turnout of self-identified Democrats and a second equation to model the turnout of self-identified members of third parties (such as the Green Party, the Communist Party USA, or the Libertarian Party).<sup>6</sup> In the second stage—the attitude formation process—we use a third equation to model the attitudes of antiwar protesters about Obama’s management of Iraq (using prospective evaluations in the 2008 question and retrospective evaluations in the 2009 question).

Using our three-equation model, we can evaluate the mechanisms outlined above. To test the perceived-threat mechanism, we include variables in the selection equations to measure the perception of threat. In the Democratic-selection equation, we use expression of explicit anti-Republican attitudes in an open-ended question about the reasons for the participation in the protest as a measure of threat.<sup>7</sup> If the respondent volunteered that she or he attended the protest to stop the Republicans, George Bush, neoconservatives, or the like, we considered this as evidence of a perceived threat from the Republicans. In the third-party-selection equation, we use the expression of radical political attitudes that do not fall on the liberal-conservative continuum as an indication that the presence of either a Democratic or Republican administration is threatening.<sup>8</sup>

To test the partisan-identification mechanism, we include measures of Democratic and third-party identification in the attitude-formation equation. If Democratic identification is associated with positive assessments of Obama’s management of Iraq and if third-party identification is associated with relatively negative assessments of Obama’s management, then this evidence suggests that partisan identification filters activists’ assessments of policy.

To test the coalition-brokerage mechanism, we use a measure in the attitude-formation equation of whether the ANSWER Coalition played a leadership role in the event, as indicated by its promotion of the event on web pages and through emails. Our expectation is that ANSWER Coalition leadership inhibits coalition brokerage between the antiwar movement and the Democratic Party. We select this measure because of the well-documented issues related to ANSWER’s work in antiwar movement coalitions (Heaney and Rojas 2008). Their consistent participation in the antiwar movement from its inception to the present makes their sponsorship a reliable and valid measure of how the movement relates to the major parties and to other peace organizations.

In addition to its antiwar positions, the ANSWER Coalition takes positions on a wide range of foreign policy and domestic issues that radically critique U.S. policy. Brian Becker emphasizes that the ANSWER Coalition “is bound together by . . . a shared understanding that the U.S. government is motivated by imperialist designs not just abroad but also internally, and that those designs, satisfy certain sectors of society like corporations and banks or the military industrial complex” (personal interview, June 25, 2008). Because of these positions, participation by the ANSWER Coalition in the leadership of an event may make it difficult to broker relationships with elements in the Democratic Party for those events, inhibiting party-movement cooperation. For example, prominent pro-Democratic organizations, such as MoveOn and Progressive Democrats of America, may be unlikely to provide financial resources and share their mailing lists with antiwar leaders if ANSWER is visibly involved.

Brian Becker views ANSWER’s firm rejection of the Democratic Party as a fundamental difference between it and other movement organizations:

I think the fundamental difference between the ANSWER Coalition and other organizations, like UFPJ, is that we have no faith or confidence that the Democratic Party can be an answer to the problems of militarism, war, colonialism, racism, sexism, [and] class oppression. We do

not believe that the Democratic Party represents any kind of authentic alternative, that the Democratic Party establishment leadership—I'm not talking about the rank-and-file, but the leadership, the ones that determine policy—are incurably connected to the same disease that afflicts the Republican Party. (personal interview, June 25, 2008)

Thus, we expect that ANSWER involvement in the leadership of an event will undermine coalition brokerage with the Democratic Party, thus depressing attendance by Democrats and boosting attendance by participants in third parties.<sup>9</sup>

Our three-equation model includes variables for each of the mechanisms, along with a series of control variables. In the Democratic-selection equation, we model Democratic participation in protests as a function of anti-Republican sentiment (perceived-threat mechanism), ANSWER event leadership (coalition-brokerage mechanism), demographics (sex, age, race, income, and education), and time. In the third-party-selection equation, we model third-party participation in protests as a function of radical political attitudes (perceived-threat mechanism), ANSWER event leadership (coalition-brokerage mechanism), demographics, and time. In the attitude-formation equation, we model activist views on Obama's managing of Iraq as a function of Democratic Party membership (partisan-identification mechanism), third-party membership (partisan-identification mechanism), ANSWER event leadership (coalition-brokerage mechanism), past involvement in high-risk activism as measured by arrest history, past involvement in other social movements, demographics, and time.

In order to estimate a statistical model of the three-equation system that we have specified, an estimator that allows for the different functional forms of our dependent variables is required. In the two selection equations, the dependent variables are limited to values of zero or one, so probit estimators are appropriate. However, in the attitude-formation equation, the dependent variable is reported on a Likert scale of 1 to 5, so an ordered probit model is appropriate. In order to estimate the probit and ordered probit models simultaneously, we use a Fully Observed Recursive Mixed-Process Model (Roodman 2009). To avoid the selection biases caused by "dropped" observations, we estimate missing values of survey questions using complete-case imputation and restrict the range of the imputed values to the actual range of the variable (Wood, White, Hillsdon, and Carpenter 2005).

The results of the simultaneous equation estimation are reported in table 2. The first equation addresses the question of whether Democrats are likely to turn out to antiwar protests. The results show that holding anti-Republican attitudes had a significant, positive effect on the likelihood that Democrats attended antiwar rallies. ANSWER event leadership had a significant, negative effect on the likelihood of Democratic participation in antiwar rallies. Demographics affected participation, with Democratic participation more likely among women, older people, whites, and persons with higher levels of income. Finally, the time component of the equation shows that Democrats increasingly abandoned the movement over time, even after accounting for other explanations for Democratic participation. Democrats may have channeled their activism into other causes (such as health care reform) or decreased their overall level of political involvement.

The second equation addresses whether members of third parties are likely to turn out for antiwar protests. Holding radical political attitudes had a significant, positive effect on the likelihood that third-party members attended antiwar rallies. ANSWER Coalition leadership did not have a significant effect on attendance by third-party members. Demographics affected participation, with third-party participation more likely among men, older people, and persons with lower levels of income. Finally, the time component of the equation shows that third-party members made up an increasing proportion of movement participants over time, even after accounting for other explanations for third-party participation.

The third equation addresses the question of why antiwar protesters approve or disapprove of Obama's handling of the situation in Iraq. The results show that Democrats had a significantly more positive view of Obama's management of Iraq than did non-party members

**Table 2.** Simultaneous-Equation Models, Coefficients and (Standard Error)

| Variables   | Equation 1<br>Democratic<br>Selection | Equation 2<br>Third-Party<br>Selection | Equation 3<br>Attitude<br>Formation | Mean<br>(Std. Dev.)  | Percent<br>Imputed |
|---|---------------------------------------|--|-------------------------------------|----------------------|--------------------|
| <b>Perceived-Threat Mechanism</b>                 |                                       |  |                                     |                      |                    |
| <i>Anti-Republican Sentiment=1</i>                | 0.1752**<br>(0.0620)                  |  |                                     | 0.0901<br>(0.2864)   | 3.22               |
| <i>Radical Political Attitudes=1</i>              |                                       | 0.4069***<br>(0.0708)                  |                                     | 0.1212<br>(0.3264)   | 47.24              |
| <b>Partisan-Identification Mechanism</b>          |                                       |  |                                     |                      |                    |
| <i>Democratic-Party<br/>Member=1 (endogenous)</i> |                                       |  | 1.2600***<br>(0.2036)               | 0.3941<br>(0.4887)   | 0.00               |
| <i>Third-Party Member=1<br/>(endogenous)</i>      |                                       |  | -0.6986**<br>(0.2299)               | 0.1464<br>(0.3536)   | 0.00               |
| <b>Coalition-Brokerage Mechanism</b>              |                                       |  |                                     |                      |                    |
| <i>ANSWER Event<br/>Leadership=1</i>              | -0.1219***<br>(0.0372)                | 0.0762<br>(0.0442)                     | -0.0217<br>(0.0443)                 | 0.4457<br>(0.4971)   | 0.00               |
| <b>Control Variables</b>                          |                                       |  |                                     |                      |                    |
| <i>Number of Past Arrests for Peace</i>           |                                       |  | -0.0124**<br>(0.0045)               | 0.9104<br>(4.2377)   | 8.76               |
| <i>Past Antigloblization Activism=1</i>           |                                       |  | -0.1174**<br>(0.0454)               | 0.3498<br>(0.4769)   | 2.09               |
| <i>Past Womens' Activism=1</i>                    |                                       |  | -0.0615<br>(0.0455)                 | 0.4476<br>(0.4973)   | 2.09               |
| <i>Past Environmental Activism=1</i>              |                                       |  | 0.1079*<br>(0.0452)                 | 0.4835<br>(0.4997)   | 2.09               |
| <i>Past Anti-nuclear Activism=1</i>               |                                       |  | -0.1194*<br>(0.0499)                | 0.3091<br>(0.4622)   | 2.09               |
| <i>Anti-Vietnam Activism=1</i>                    |                                       |  | -0.0247<br>(0.0600)                 | 0.2797<br>(0.4489)   | 2.09               |
| <i>Past Civil Rights Activism=1</i>               |                                       |  | -0.0394<br>(0.0432)                 | 0.4909<br>(0.5000)   | 2.09               |
| <i>Past Immigrant Rights Activism=1</i>           |                                       |  | -0.2504*<br>(0.1235)                | 0.0192<br>(0.1386)   | 4.00               |
| <i>Past LGBT Rights Activism=1</i>                |                                       |  | 0.0017<br>(0.1065)                  | 0.0258<br>(0.1587)   | 4.00               |
| <i>Past Labor Activism=1</i>                      |                                       |  | -0.0271<br>(0.1186)                 | 0.0007<br>(0.0263)   | 4.00               |
| <i>Sex is Female=1</i>                            | 0.4404***<br>(0.0366)                 | -0.1919***<br>(0.0436)                 | -0.0569<br>(0.0574)                 | 0.5179<br>(0.5008)   | 0.53               |
| <i>Age in Years</i>                               | 0.0092***<br>(0.0013)                 | 0.0035*<br>(0.0015)                    | 0.0024<br>(0.0020)                  | 40.4211<br>(18.0451) | 0.67               |
| <i>Race is White=1</i>                            | 0.1689***<br>(0.0487)                 | 0.0353<br>(0.0574)                     | -0.0125<br>(0.0528)                 | 0.8207<br>(0.3837)   | 1.29               |
| <i>Income in Thousands (USD)</i>                  | 0.0008***<br>(0.0001)                 | 0.0004***<br>(0.0001)                  | -0.0001<br>(0.0001)                 | 38.7384<br>(27.8366) | 7.51               |
| <i>Level of Education<sup>a</sup></i>             | -0.0285<br>(0.0152)                   | 0.0260<br>(0.0181)                     | 0.0092<br>(0.0168)                  | 4.9011<br>(1.8509)   | 3.31               |
| <i>Time in Months</i>                             | -0.0218***<br>(0.0017)                | 0.0174***<br>(0.0019)                  | -0.0477***<br>(0.0019)              | 17.0851<br>(11.6295) | 0.00               |
| <i>Constant</i>                                   | 0.5945***<br>(0.1589)                 | -2.6403***<br>(0.1868)                 |                                     |                      |                    |
| N (Sample Size)                                   | 5,367                                 | 5,367                                  | 3,018                               |                      |                    |
| Cut Point 1                                       |                                       |  | -5.5894***<br>(0.5744)              |                      |                    |
| Cut Point 2                                       |                                       |  | -5.2663**<br>(0.5584)               |                      |                    |
| Cut Point 3                                       |                                       |  | -4.1886**<br>(0.5059)               |                      |                    |
| Cut Point 4                                       |                                       |  | -3.1304*<br>(0.4556)                |                      |                    |

Log Likelihood = -8821.6253; Likelihood Ratio  $\chi^2$  (df = 35) = 1,475.53\*\*\*;  $\rho_{12}$  = -0.4784\*\*\*,  $\rho_{13}$  = -0.4132\*\*\*,  $\rho_{23}$  = 0.4407\*\*\*

Notes: \*\*\* denotes  $p < 0.001$ , \*\* denotes  $p < 0.010$ , \* denotes  $p < 0.050$  <sup>a</sup> Education is coded as 1 for less than a high school diploma; 2 for high school diploma; 3 for some college or Associate's degree or technical degree; 4 for college degree; 5 for some graduate education; 6 for graduate or professional degree.

and Republicans, other things being equal, while third-party members had a significantly more negative view of Obama's management of Iraq than did non-party members and Republicans, other things being equal. The presence of ANSWER Coalition leadership at an event did not significantly affect the views expressed by participants about Obama's management of Iraq. Activists with a more extensive history of involvement in high-risk activism took a significantly more negative view of Obama's management of Iraq than activists with fewer arrests. Activists with a history of involvement in movements against globalization, nuclear weapons, and for immigrant rights were significantly likely to take a more negative view of Obama's management of Iraq. However, activists with a history of involvement in the environmental movement expressed significantly more positive views of Obama's management of Iraq. Finally, the time component of the equation shows that participants in the antiwar movement took an increasingly negative view of Obama's management of Iraq, even after accounting for other explanations for attitude formation.

The results of our analysis provide important insights into the dynamic relationship between the Democratic Party and the antiwar movement. Democratic activists left the antiwar movement as the Democratic Party achieved electoral success, if not policy success. While the declining magnitude of protests suggests that activists of all partisan persuasions were leaving the movement, the analysis demonstrates that Democrats left at a greater rate than third-party members or non-party members. As a result, third-party members and non-partisans made up an increasing proportion of activists in the movement, leaving the remaining Democratic activists increasingly isolated in the dwindling movement. Since Democrats, on average, had a higher opinion of Obama's management of the war in Iraq than did non-Democrats, the changing composition of activists helped account for an increasingly negative view of Obama within the movement. However, the withdrawal of Democrats does not account entirely for anti-Obama views within the movement, evidenced by the negative, statistically significant coefficient on the time component of the attitude-formation equation, even after controlling for the changing partisan composition of activists. Thus, while Obama initially had an ally in the movement after his nomination for the presidency, the alliance had largely—if not entirely—vanished by the end of 2009.

Our results convincingly demonstrate a strong relationship between partisanship and the dynamics of the antiwar movement. However, we do not claim that these dynamics are explained entirely by partisanship. Indeed, partisanship may only be one of several factors persuading activists to abandon protest participation. For example, many activists may have concluded that street protest is not an effective means of bringing about policy change after years of watching policymakers ignore their concerns. Or, activists may have shifted their energies to other issues, such as health care reform and the economy (Hadden and Tarrow 2007). Nonetheless, our results demonstrate that partisanship must be taken seriously as one of the major explanations for demobilization.

### RESTRUCTURING THE ANTIWAR MOVEMENT

The withdrawal of Democratic activists from the antiwar movement had consequences that extended beyond the declining size of protest actions. Drawing upon interviews with movement leaders and ethnographic observation, we argue that two important qualitative changes took place in 2009 as a result of Democratic abandonment. First, the withdrawal of Democrats from the movement led to the collapse of UFPI, the movement's largest and broadest coalition. This collapse resulted in the fragmentation of the movement into smaller coalitions and left it relying more on individual organizations acting independently. Second, the adjusted balance of power among activists in the movement promoted the expression of more radical and anti-Obama attitudes by leading organizations.

The election of Barack Obama and the subsequent plunge in activist involvement was devastating to the financial base of the antiwar movement. Peace movements are generally run on shoestring budgets, even during peak periods of mobilization. However, without strong responses to fundraising appeals, the most basic movement activities grind to a halt. UFPJ was able to maintain a budget of approximately a half million dollars at its peak, but was forced to cut that figure in half after Obama's election (Zeller 2009). The group's longtime National Coordinator, Leslie Cagan, retired and was not replaced. By the beginning of 2010, the organization was struggling to pay debts and maintain its website for \$6,000 per year (United for Peace and Justice 2010). On February 1, 2010, the UFPJ Steering Committee voted 14 to 5 in favor of transitioning its organization from a formal "coalition" to an information "network" dedicated to e-advocacy and information sharing within the peace movement (UFPJ Steering Committee 2010). By 2010, UFPJ had unambiguously adopted abeyance structures to preserve the peace movement during the doldrums (Taylor 1989).

During the mobilization phase of the movement, UFPJ had played a critical brokerage role in connecting myriad constituencies toward the end of peace (see Heaney and Rojas 2008: 61). Without the leadership of UFPJ, brokerage across the multiple constituencies of the antiwar movement became much more difficult, shrinking the size of coalitions and prompting organizations to act independently. In fact, we noted a larger number of national or nationally-coordinated protest events in 2009 (8 events) after UFPJ collapsed, than we had in either 2007 (4 events) or 2008 (3 events), when the movement was more coordinated.<sup>10</sup> World Can't Wait, which had previously been a relatively minor player in the movement, took on a much greater role (personal interview with Debra Sweet, December 12, 2009). New coalitions emerged, such as the Black is Back Coalition (which emphasized a black-nationalist rationale for opposing war), enduswars.org (which drew leadership from the Maine Green Party), and Peace of the Action (founded by Cindy Sheehan). Antiwar activists seemed to be grappling for a new way to organize in the Obama years.

While some previously prominent antiwar organizations reduced or ceased their operations, other organizations survived by switching their focus away from the wars in Iraq and Afghanistan. For example, Code Pink: Women for Peace continues to speak out against war, but it has devoted a greater proportion of its energy to other issues, such as health care reform and the Israeli-Palestinian crisis. Code Pink has continued to thrive, in part, because its hybrid identity, rooted in blending women's activism and peace activism, allowed it to sustain mobilization in the face of a more challenging political environment (Goss and Heaney 2010).

As Democratic activists withdrew from the movement, their approaches to activism left with them. While from 2005-2007 UFPJ had sponsored a series of lobby days in the style of quasi-professional grassroots lobbying, the last of these events was held in January 2007. ANSWER, Grassroots America, and Code Pink staged a week of action on Capitol Hill starting September 16, 2007, but their tactics bore greater resemblance to sit-ins than to lobbying. These radical activists were loath to make appointments, to wear suits, or to speak politely using handouts with bullet points. They preferred to show up unannounced in the lobbies of a member of Congress, wear t-shirts and buttons, chant, and sing, leaving both antiwar activists and congressional staff uncomfortable with the results. After this one-time attempt to register a Capitol Hill presence, more radical activists redirected their energies to die-ins outside the White House gates and other forms of direct action. Rather than having a healthy tension between the moderate center and the radical flank, the movement now had only a radical flank (Haines 1988).

The Black is Back Coalition is one example of a coalition that chose to adopt radical and anti-Obama rhetoric. Black is Back activist Chioma Oruh explained the group's view of President Obama as a person who:

adds insult upon injury because now we are doing imperialism with a black face.... Barack Obama has silenced the antiwar movement almost single-handedly by his actions, on the one hand, saying that he opposed war and promoting to pull all troops from Iraq and, on the other

hand, throwing the antiwar movement under the bus by sending 30,000 more troops to Afghanistan. Keep in mind that the war budget is larger under Obama than it was under Bush. Obama has the same Defense Department Secretary as under Bush. Where is the change? (personal interview, December 12, 2009)

According to Oruh, Black is Back has a special role in critiquing Obama because such scathing criticism of the president might come across as racist if it came from white organizations (personal interview, December 12, 2009). In earlier years, Black is Back might have been pressured by other movement organizations to attenuate its rhetoric. However, in a dealigned environment in which the modal participant rejected mainstream politics, messaging for a broad audience was not a primary consideration.

### CONCLUSION

The antiwar movement aspired to create a transgressive politics that challenged the institutions that generate war and imperialism. Yet, because it depended so heavily on the party in the street to mobilize support, it found itself caught up in the institutional, party-driven system that many activists saw as the cause of the problems that it mobilized to solve. In 2001, the antiwar movement began with an eye toward becoming an independent political force, yet it lived in the shadow of the Democratic Party. The Democrats and the antiwar movement struck a useful alliance from 2003 to 2006. The antiwar movement helped to demonstrate grassroots support for a key party issue and the party helped to provide activists, resources, and legitimacy for the movement. By early 2009, however, it was abundantly clear that Democrats were no longer interested in this alliance. Abandonment by the Democrats gave the movement the independence it desired, but also stripped it of its capacity for political influence. While Obama's election was heralded as a victory for the antiwar movement, Obama's election, in fact, thwarted the ability of the movement to achieve critical mass.

In identifying perceived threat, partisan identification, and coalition brokerage as mechanisms that connect the Democratic Party and the antiwar movement, this article takes an important step toward building knowledge about the complex linkages between political parties and social movements. While numerous scholars have stressed party-movement ties, they have only begun to scratch the surface of the myriad ways in which parties and movements feed back onto one another. In order to build deeper and more systematic knowledge of the causes and consequences of this feedback, a more intimate dialogue is needed between political scientists who study parties and sociologists who investigate movements (Heaney 2010; Schwartz 2010). The political science perspective is especially valuable in that it emphasizes the diverse ways through which activists are connected to and shaped by political institutions over the course of their lives (Green, Palmquist, and Schickler 2002). The sociological perspective is especially adept at highlighting the surprising ways that ordinary people subvert political institutions and create new forms for collective action that recombine cultural elements (Clemens 1997). When merged, these perspectives open up new ways of seeing the mechanisms that drive the dynamics of contention.

Understanding the partisan dynamics of contention is particularly relevant in the United States, where virtually all elements of the political system have become divided by partisanship in recent years. Yet, the presence or absence of partisan relationships can matter to social movements in a wide range of contexts. We conclude by proposing several research strategies that promise to enhance our abilities to appreciate these relationships.

First, when documenting biographies of activists, scholars should be sure to probe for histories of both party-based and issue-based experiences. Activists' careers may be shaped, positively or negatively, by exposure to parties and movements throughout their lives, whether by being contacted by a canvasser for a candidate or by witnessing a protest. Second, when examining the partisan connections within movements, scholars should be attentive not



only to the partisanship of activists, but also of the partisanship of potential audiences in the media and the public at large. Even if activists are firmly nonpartisan, they may function in environments where their actions and inactions are interpreted in a partisan light (Luther and Miller 2005). Finally, more investigation of rank-and-file activists within movements is essential to uncovering partisan linkages. Leading activists within a movement may be largely issue-focused, but if rank-and-file activists have strong partisan identities, then the fate of movements may become linked to parties in ways that their leaders fail to foresee.

## NOTES

<sup>1</sup> This mechanism is a cognitive mechanism to the extent that it refers to an individual's perception of threat and it is an environmental mechanism to the extent that changing party fortunes affect the overall perception of threat by activists in the environment.

<sup>2</sup> For a recent study of the dynamics of antiwar groups at the local level, see Blee and Currier's (2006) ethnography of social movement organizations in Pittsburgh before and after the 2004 US presidential election.

<sup>3</sup> The exact wording of the questions was as follows. In 2008, we asked: "If BARACK OBAMA were elected President of the United States this November, how do you think that he would do in managing the situation in IRAQ? Significantly improve the situation in Iraq; Slightly improve the situation in Iraq; Make no difference to the situation in Iraq; Slightly worsen the situation in Iraq; Significantly worsen the situation in Iraq; Don't know" (emphasis in the original). In 2009, we asked: "Since BARACK OBAMA has become President of the United States, how do you think that he has done in managing the situation in IRAQ? Significantly improved the situation in Iraq; Slightly improved the situation in Iraq; Made no difference to the situation in Iraq; Slightly worsened the situation in Iraq; Significantly worsened the situation in Iraq; Don't know" (emphasis in the original).

<sup>4</sup> The exact wording of the question was, "Do you consider yourself to be a member of a political party? (circle one) YES NO If "YES," which political party are you a member of? Examples: Republican Party / Democratic Party / Green Party / Reform Party / Socialist Party" (emphasis in original).

<sup>5</sup> An alternative explanation consistent with the data is that some people who previously identified with the Democratic Party rejected their Democratic identification after Obama's election. This explanation is consistent with our overall story as well, though it would suggest a slightly different cognitive mechanism for partisan attachment. Although partisan identifications are not immutable, they change too slowly over time as peoples' accumulative judgments reevaluate the parties (Green, Palmquist, and Schickler 2002). While we have no doubt that some party switching is going on in the data, we are confident that the withdrawal of Democrats makes up a much larger fraction of cases.

<sup>6</sup> We cannot model the first stage with only one equation because some respondents indicated membership in more than one party, which prevents us from using a multinomial probit model to estimate partisan choice in one equation.

<sup>7</sup> The exact question was, "What are the most important reasons you came to this event?"

<sup>8</sup> The exact question was, "How would you identify your POLITICAL ATTITUDES on the continuum from extremely liberal to extremely conservative? Please check ONE: Extremely liberal; Liberal; Slightly liberal; Moderate, middle of the road; Slightly conservative; Conservative; Extremely conservative; Don't know." We coded respondents' expressions of a radical political attitude if the respondent rejected the scale and wrote in an alternative label, such as anarchist, communist, socialist, leftist, or anti-imperialist. If she or he wrote in progressive, or libertarian, then we did not code these responses as radical.

<sup>9</sup> The far-right column of table 1 indicates if a rally had ANSWER leadership. Events coordinated nationally by one organization, often had the ANSWER Coalition playing a leadership role in organizing local events. For example, national protests were coordinated by World Can't Wait on December 2, 2009, though the ANSWER Coalition played a key role in organizing the local events in Chicago and San Francisco (but not in New York).

<sup>10</sup> We counted the multiple, coordinated protest events held around the U.S. on one day or week as a single event.

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