The Mechanisms of Mobility and Liquidity: Re-thinking the Movement in Social Movements

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I. Mobility and its Contexts

The metaphors of 'flow' and 'liquidity' have recently captured the attention of social theorists concerned with emergent social processes in a world perceived to be increasingly 'disorganised' and 'complex' (e.g., Urry 2000a; Bauman 2000; Castells 1996; Lash and Urry 1994). (2) Urry, for example, speaks of 'global fluids' as 'the remarkably uneven and fragmented flows of people, information, objects, money, images and risks across regions in strikingly faster and unpredictable shapes' (Urry 2000a: 38). While Bauman suggests that there are 'reasons to consider "fluidity" or "liquidity" as fitting metaphors when we wish to grasp the nature of the present, in many ways *novel*, phase in the history of modernity' (Bauman 2000: 2, emphasis in original). Within feminist cultural theory, however, there has been a trenchant critique of the theoretical project of embracing ubiquitous mobility, unfettered travel, and uprooted nomadism as contemporary 'facts', conditions, or ideals (Kaplan 1996; Ahmed 2000; Franklin, Lury and Stacey 2000; Fortier 2000).

In this paper I would like to come at these questions of mobility and liquidity from another angle, by juxtaposing these theories of the contemporary context with theories concerned with explaining or describing 'social movements'. The liquid imagery and metaphors of surging flows, waves, explosive pressure, turbulence, submergence, and overflow have also long had currency in the description of social movements. Early 'crowd behaviour' approaches depended on a whole set of fluid metaphors, as individuals were lost in the mass psychology of the 'group mind' with its stresses, breaking point, eruptions, and contagion. More recently, though, descriptions of new social movements have again picked up on a fluid imagery (e.g., Melucci 1996; McKay 1996; Castells 1997). In this paper I would like to explore the question of the revival of social movements today by considering what is at stake in re-thinking the 'movement' in social movements in both its metaphorical and literal sense.

One of the most fundamental questions informing the study of social movements concerns how they are first mobilised. (3) How are social movements (or individual protest events) initiated? What leads individuals to join a movement? In short, what causes, generates, quickens and revivifies social movements? In asking about the revitalisation of contemporary social movements, it seems inevitable that today one must also consider how social movements engage in both the literal motion of bodies and things through space and with the 'virtual mobilities' afforded by new information and communication technologies. In what ways are the use of 'fluid' discourses, organisational forms, and action tactics in contemporary 'global' movements related to the changing context of liquidity, ambiguity, and diffuse risk noted by theorists of 'late modernity' and 'postmodernity'? How is this convergence of the apparent liquidity of economic and political structures with the apparent fluidity of social movements informed by what might be termed an anti-structural turn in social theory? And, finally, what sorts of challenges do these developments present for more structurally-grounded methodologies for the analysis of social movements such as those that depend on metaphors of social ties and networks?

To begin, though, I want to address some wider questions concerning the theorisation of movement, mobility, and mobilisation through two digressions concerning the oddities of slime. It hardly needs reiterating that recent '[d]iscussions about globalization are founded on assumptions about movement: that movement generates change, that movement is self-evident, and that increasing mobility characterizes the present (Appadurai 1996; Hannerz 1996)'(Maurer 1999: 2). But the anthropologist Bill Maurer goes on to ask whether the contemporary imagery of 'quicksilver capitalism zipping around the globe in networked circuits' leaves unasked the questions that most need answering: 'what counts as capital, and what counts as movement? How do certain practices and processes constitute "capital" such that it can "move"? How do they also structure its "movements" so that they can have the sorts of effects that [the] globalization literature ascribes to them?' (Maurer 1999: 5). In contrast to these stories of clean, quick, ethereal mobility Maurer suggests that we envision 'different capitalist morphologies, and their leakages and eruptions…write instead a story about an open, porous, seeping and dripping body of global capitalism' closer to the 'sublimated slime' from which it arises. In assuming that 'the objects of property come first, and their movements second', he concludes, we overlook the 'contingent articulations that create objects of property, that underwrite different forms of "capital", and that permit different valences and vectors of "movement" (ibid: 36).

In a similar meditation on foundational narratives Evelyn Fox Keller shows how scientific narratives of biological systems are driven by their own logic to invent 'central governor' or 'activator' cells as prime movers, despite lack of any evidence of their existence (Fox Keller 1985: 154). In her account of scientific understandings of the aggregation process by which a cellular slime mold transforms itself into a slug capable of crawling, she describes how such 'master cells' were thought to act as 'pacemakers' to set off this process of biomorphological change. Yet there was no evidence for these special cells existing and, moreover, 'it was known that when the centers of aggregation patterns are removed, new centers form – that is, aggregation is undisturbed' (ibid: 152). The alternative explanation of the transformation from slime to slug is a far more complex and cyclic model of 'oscillatory dynamics' based on acentric 'successive bifurcations of a single reaction-diffusion system'. She suggests that explanations which 'posit a single central governor… appear both more natural and

conceptually simpler than global, interactive accounts' (ibid: 155) because of the mathematical conventions through which we model 'natural' processes.

Both Fox Keller and Maurer are concerned with our modes of explanation of the *origins of mobility*, and in particular how scientists, sociologists, or anthropologists explain the appearance of movement where there is no evident motor mechanism. Sarah Franklin, Celia Lury and Jackie Stacey also explore the 'animating techniques of life itself' in the construction of narratives of 'auto-enablement' as key tropes in the imagining of the global (Franklin, Lury and Stacey 2000: 76). Much like the question of whether social movements are 'reviving', these analyses of auto-mobility (4) concern fundamental human questions of spontaneous quickening, or the primitive animation of previously inanimate objects. The question of what animates social movements also requires a narration of primary causal mechanisms. In this paper I will consider how current models of social movements are founded on certain kinds of assumptions about what constitutes 'movement' and 'mobilisation'. My aim is to show how particular models or metaphors of social structure and of social movement misrepresent the dynamic and unstable interactions through which social movements and political contexts are mutually constituted. In particular I want to focus on the potential for metaphors and methodologies based on liquidity and flows to provide a better model of these relational mechanisms than the neater, cleaner mechanisms used by network analysts.

Network analysis has recently provided one powerful set of techniques for theorising and empirically studying social movement structures and processes (e.g., Diani 1995). In his critique of some of the directions taken by actor network theory, John Law points out that 'networks are hegemonic. First point. And when we analyse in terms of networks, we help to perform networks into being. Second point. What happens if we bring these two observations together? The answer is that if we write as network analysts what we may be doing, what we're often doing, is *buying into and adding strength to a functional version of relationality*. One that is, to say it quickly, managerialist' (Law 2000: 10-11, emphasis in original). Like Fox Keller's scientists, network analysts also tend to seek out the 'prime mover' which is the source, origin, or generator of mobilisation, *even when there is no evidence of such central governors of action.* Structural metaphors imply that movements begin when certain kinds of actors become motivated to change their social and political context, and are then able to mobilise resources, unite adherents, and take advantage of political opportunities. Yet describing social movement 'actors' as pre-constituted entities within a given political 'context' predetermines our understanding of movement itself and of the kinds of thing that move. What if the relation between social actor, social movement, and political context were put into question? Most significantly, what if we re-thought both actors and contexts as *effects* of mobilisation rather than simply as conditions? (5)

Although network analysis is in some sense always 'relational', it still maintains a clear conceptual separation between actors, networks and contexts.(6) Insofar as network analysts envision social movements as networks of actors within a political and social context posited as stable background (e.g., a structure affording both opportunities and constraints), are they 'performing' the very 'structures' that social movement actors are often up against? As James Jasper points out in his critique of network approaches, structure 'is perhaps the most metaphorical concept we use in the social sciences, for social life is not constructed with walls, floors, roofs, and so on, as the root implies…. Unfortunately, it is easy to forget that a structure is a sign or metaphor, not a real thing' (Jasper 1997: 59). In adapting the metaphor of networks and the formalism of network analysis has the animation of social movements been reduced to a limited negotiation of pre-given structural contexts by preconstituted actors? If networks are simply one convenient 'way of operationalizing social structure' (ibid: 60), perhaps we need to think about other operational metaphors, ones which pay greater attention to the spatial and temporal animation of both movements-in-action and contexts-in-process.

Rather than a logic of actors and networks, means and ends, projects and goals, Law calls for a logic of mobilities and fluidities that are 'not necessarily rigidly consistent, centred, and mono-vocal, but rather perform, reflect and enable fractional and shifting coherences' (Law 2000: 13). In a perspective of radical relationality, he argues, 'the attributes of any particular element in the system, any particular node in the network, are entirely defined *in relation to*

other elements in the system, to other nodes in the network. And it is the analyst's job, at least in part, to explore how those relations – and so the entities that they constitute – are brought into being' (Law 2000: 6). Our question then becomes: how are social movements constituted by the relational settings in which they occur, and how, in turn, do these relations (re)constitute a political context? Or, to re-phrase Maurer's project, I would like to explore the 'contingent articulations that create contexts of politics, that underwrite different forms of "mobilisation", and that permit different valences and vectors of "social movement".' I propose that the study of social movements via metaphors of 'flow' and liquidity offers a different way of understanding the 'movement' in social movement, thus leading to new ways of answering the question of whether social movements are reviving. (7)

In what follows I will first consider the ways in which metaphors of fluidity and liquidity have been used in existing narratives and theories of social movements and their changing political contexts. I then offer an example of a narrative of a recent anti-capitalist and anti-roads protest event, showing how it deploys various forms of liquidity. In the second half of the paper, drawing on existing empirical studies of social movements, I will begin to develop a series of 'fluid relational mechanisms' that operate to produce mobilisation. These are mechanisms that link movements and contexts, and which constitute both partial actors and fractured structures through the process of their interaction.

II. Fluidity in Existing Narratives of Social Movement

Working in a paradigm of fluidity, 'neither boundaries nor relations mark the difference between one place and another. Instead, sometimes boundaries come and go, allow leakage or disappear altogether, while relations transform themselves without fracture. Sometimes, then, social space behaves like a fluid' (Mol and Law 1994: 643, cited in Urry 2000a: 31). The liquid imagery of this more 'rhizomatic' style of forming, growing and spreading holds the potential to generate new insights into how movements arise and dissipate, in short how they 'move'. As described by Urry (2000a: 38-9), fluids:

- demonstrate no clear point of departure, just de-territorialized movement or mobility in particular directions at certain speeds but with no necessary end-state or purpose

- are channeled along particular territorial scapes or routeways which can wall them in

- possess different properties of viscosity and, as with blood, can be thicker or thinner and hence move in different shapes at different speeds

- move according to certain temporalities, over each minute, day, week, year, and so on

- do not always keep within the walls – they move outside or escape like white blood corpuscles through the 'wall' of the scape into tinier and tinier capillaries

To what extent do these characteristics pertain to social movements and their contexts? Here I will concentrate on three areas in which such fluid metaphors operate in relation to social movements: the self-description of social movements by their participants; the theoretical description of new social movements; and the description of the wider contemporary political context by social theorists.

First, it is worth noting that social movement participants themselves often use metaphors of fluidity in their own self descriptions. We are familiar with the common terminology of 'waves' as for example in 'Second Wave Feminism'. Or there are names, such as 'Lavalas', the democratization movement in Haiti led by Jean-Bertrand Aristide, which means the flood or deluge. Intensification of social movement activity is often described as a 'torrent', as in this example from my own research on nineteenth-century democratization in the Caribbean:

> From this moment, political passions became the day in the press with the impetuosity of a torrent that has broken its dikes. It was, as never before, the case of saying: Democracy flowed full to the brim. And what democracy! (Saint-Remy 1845: 681, as cited in Sheller 2000).

It is perhaps quite appropriate that Charles Tilly (1995b) has suggested that 'democracy is a lake'. It is a fitting description not only because democratization movements occur in a number of different ways and at different timescales, as Tilly argues, but also because the

process of democratization shares many of the liquid properties of water: it may be either turbulent or calm, flowing or still, trickling or torrential. And most importantly, like a lake, it is its own context: more flow, more democracy.

Albeit such imagery of 'water pressure against a dam' appears to replicate the notion of irrationality used in outmoded crowd behavior theories and, as James Scott notes, such 'hydraulic structuralism' fails to account for how a single initial act of defiance may launch an 'avalanche' of rebellion (Scott 1990: 219-20). Nevertheless there is a kind of 'reservoir of feeling', a fluid set of relations, which elicits emotions as 'collective psychical configurations' in these intense political 'outbursts' (Emirbayer and Sheller 1999: 175). Thus Raymond Williams describes his concept of a 'structure of feeling' as being a social experience '*in solution*, as distinct from other semantic formations which have been *precipitated* and are more evidently and more immediately available' (Williams 1977: 133-4; cited in Gordon 1997: 201). As Avery Gordon observes, Williams' idea of an emergent solution is '"never mere flux. It is a structured formation,"… which is at the "very edge of semantic availability"' (Gordon 1997: 202). Kevin Hetherington (1998) similarly uses the notion of a structure of feeling to describe the multifaceted constellations or assemblages that constitute contemporary 'expressions of identity'. These barely graspable fluid structures are both a context for social movement and a kind of moving.

Secondly, there has also been another usage of the idea of fluidity in the literature on new social movements (NSMs) in which the metaphor of loosely organized and open networks has begun to hold great salience especially in relation to claims about postmodernity, globalization, and new information technologies. Here, the concept of open-ended networks is used to describe either the special horizontal structures of NSMs (Melucci 1996: 113-17; McKay 1996; Flacks 1997) or the novel non-hierarchical structures of contemporary society as a whole (Castells 1996; Messner 1997). McKay, for example, writes of recent British cultures of resistance such as road protesters, hunt saboteurs, and new age travelers in terms of a 'loose network of loose networks' (McKay 1996: 11; Urry 2000a: 145). He links this structure to earlier anarchist movements, which were said to 'depend not on membership cards, votes, a special leadership and a herd of inactive followers, but on small, functional groups which ebb and flow, group and regroup, according to the task in hand' (Ward 1972, cited in McKay 1998: 52).

Alberto Melucci's work is also well known for picturing a more diffuse model of extra-institutional 'submerged networks' (Melucci 1989) or 'hidden networks' (Melucci 1996: 115). For Melucci, the idea of movements as entities 'acting on the stage of history' should be rejected in favor of an analysis of more processual, relational and interactive constructions (Melucci 1995). He refers to NSMs as having a 'segmented, reticular, multi-faceted structure', which 'consists of diversified and autonomous units' (Melucci 1996: 113). These are given broad empirical specification as a general type of network structure:

> A communication and exchange network keeps the separate, quasiautonomous cells in contact with each other. Information, individuals, and patterns of behavior circulate through this network, passing from one unit to another, and bringing a degree of homogeneity to the whole. Leadership is not concentrated but diffuse….
> Contemporary movements resemble an amorphous nebula of indistinct shape and with variable density (1996: 113-14).

This kind of network perspective has quite different methodological implications from more formal models of network analysis; indeed, many of the strong claims made in NSM theory have been called into question by more empirically grounded network analyses of the actual structures of movements (e.g., Diani 1995: 190-91). Again, though, it is notable that this nebulous structure is close to the description of a fluid.

Thirdly, a range of recent social theory has also linked the metaphor of networks with an imagery of 'flows' as a way of describing the structure of the contemporary social world (Deleuze and Guatarri 1986, 1988; Lefebvre 1991; Lash and Urry 1994; Castells 1989, 1996, 1997; Urry 2000a). Castells, for example, argues that the 'power of flows' has become more important in the 'network society' (Castells 1989: 142, 171). He describes 'resistant networks' of social movements as a defense 'against the placeless logic of the space of flows

characterizing social domination in the Information Age' (Castells 1997: 358, cited in Urry 2000a: 142). While there is then this new language of networks and flows available in the social movement literature, it remains somewhat imprecise. One problem in these post-structural approaches to new social movements as part of a 'network society' is a confusion/conflation of the level at which 'networks' become important. Do they refer to the new information and communication technologies, to sets of specific ties among social movement participants, or to a 'new' kind of social structure which is a 'net' rather than some other kind of structure? Rather than specification of network structures, there is a vague idea of network-ness. Thus it becomes difficult to analytically distinguish what is said to be flowing.

In contrast to these claims to novelty, i.e. using the concept of flows to describe only 'new' social movements or a changing societal condition, I want to suggest that 'social flow' can be used as a new way of theorizing how social movements actually occur. The best way to illustrate the 'auto-animation' of movements in relation to their dynamical contexts is through an account of an actual mobilization event. A classic repertoire of contention used by social movement actors is to flood into public spaces, fill them with a special kind of active presence, and stop other kinds of flows. From the barricades in Paris in 1848 (Gould 1995) to the 'Reclaim the Streets' (RTS) events organised by anti-roads protesters in the 1990s, literal flows of people (and blockages) are crucial to social movements (Jordan 1998). Here I want to cite a narrative of events that occurred during the Mayday 2000 'Guerrilla Gardening' event organized in London by RTS and others (see www.indymedia.org.uk/newsite). In doing so, I will also redirect attention from the macro-question, 'are social movements reviving', to a very micro-level interest in the physical movement (and stilling) of bodies and 'collective actors' occurring in named places.

Following a direct action in London's Parliament Square in which 'turf was "liberated" and laid out on the surrounding roads transforming them into a temporary sea of green', riot police arrived without warning and blocked off all exits from the area. In response, the participants held a spontaneous 'Public Assembly' and took a decision to try to move collectively through the police blockade and reassemble at Kennington Park, on the other side of the River Thames. This is what followed, according to some of the participants who placed this account on their web site:

> With the samba band playing the crowd moved directly towards the police lines. After a short while with no movement the crowd made a push to get through the police line, but failed… Still dancing with the samba band they made another attempt to push through, and this time succeeded with the police line dissolving as people began to pour down Millbank cheering and clapping…. The crowd snaked out of the square up Millbank and over Vauxhall Bridge… As the front of the crowd turned off over the bridge people were still pouring out into Millbank, forming a long procession. A short while later, the crowd became separated after crossing the bridge. Those left behind soon found their path blocked by police vans and had to wind their way through side streets in order to reach Kennington Park, where people had agreed to meet. The tail end of the group which had already gone ahead found itself surrounded by riot police as it approached the park. With tensions again rising there were skirmishes with the police and it was only the arrival of the second group of people that allowed them to finally make it into the park.(8)

As can be seen from this example, one kind of movement in 'social movement' is intrinsically connected to actual movements of people, information and other kinds of flows through geographical space. The crowd coalesces and disperses, 'dissolves' and works its way through barriers, and 'pours' around obstacles and along open routes. Their symbolic messages also surged through the channels of local, national and global media, allowing complex cultural meanings to converge and circulate in a diffuse public. The dynamic quality of such flows and blockages of bodies and information, which are crucial to social movements, is often not captured by an imagery of networks.(9) By paying attention to how social actors are physically mobile through space, when and where they meet with others and how their movements are blocked or interrupted, the dimension of flow is more noticeable. A fluid analysis, therefore, will first require greater attention to the spatiality and temporality of social movements.

Secondly, though, there is a cultural instability evident in this event, which also plays upon shifting spaces and boundaries: a 'People's Assembly' outside Parliament, gardens in the street, Brazilian samba in the financial capitol of Europe, alternative news sources on the web. In this playful spirit, when the protesters discovered that the police had flooded the turf with water in advance of their action in an effort to make it less garden-able, they quickly decided to install a water-feature, making a pond out of the flooded pitch. Like Fox Keller's slime mold, the movement baffled the police efforts to find its center, its motive force, its central governors; instead, from the pond emerged a plague of crawling, mobile 'slugs' – flowing over the surface of London's squares, roads, and bridges, and onto the radiowaves, television and computer screens of people near and far. Most importantly, in light of Fox Keller's argument, the process by which this crowd aggregated and disseminated its message of protest did not necessitate a 'master cell' or 'pacemaker'. While there has been much criticism of network analysis for failing to take account of agency (see Emirbayer and Goodwin 1994; Emirbayer and Mische 1998; Jasper 1997), there is paradoxically a simultaneous failure in its *attribution of agency* only to special nodes in the network (whether individual leaders or movement centers of some kind). What if the 'morphogenesis' of movements lies in the fluid structure, dispersed throughout the 'cells' of the slime, so to speak? Under certain conditions, what might lead to mobilization are not so much opportunities waiting to be seized by agents, but *affordances* allowing for shifts in action to occur (cf. Gibson 1979; White 1995b; Macnaghten and Urry 2000).

The 'green guerrilla' event took advantage of a number of opportunities afforded by the current repertoire of contention and cycle of protest in Britain. It brought the flow of traffic to a halt and made a symbolic connection between the inhumanity of streetscapes and the inhumanity of global capitalism. It coalesced the diverse parts of a diffuse social movement into a temporarily quickened fluid structure. And it made visible the latent power of state authority to exercise coercion at the most personal level by stopping freedom of movement, by hitting people, and by incarcerating people. (10) It also intervened in a global debate about capitalism via the World Wide Web. It tuned into an emerging channel of communication between North American activists and European activists (who share broad inspiration from Earth First! in the use of direct action, but in this case were more specifically inspired by the Green Guerrillas in New York City and the Seattle protests against the WTO in November 1999) (11). This particular 'movement' has no identifiable end-point and its broader impact remains to be seen, as the cycle of protest continues and will undoubtedly 'reterritorialize' elsewhere, moving from Seattle to London to Prague, and onwards. We will continue to lack a language to describe such movements if we stick stubbornly to a paradigm of networks which has been mathematically implemented in a way that ignores social movements' pulsing, ebbing, fractured mobility.

In sum, despite the use of terminology such as 'diffusion', 'resurgence', and 'capillary processes' in describing social movements, current efforts to depict and explain them do not seem to fully capture the mechanisms of mobility and fluidity that they involve. Can we then use the key characteristics of fluids to describe some of the features of social movements? And if so, what kinds of methodological questions would arise? What new perspectives on social movements would be opened by a 'fluid analysis' which are currently overlooked by 'network analysis'? Drawing on the five characteristics of fluids as outlined above, I will apply them in the second half of this paper to re-describing some of the characteristics that researchers have already empirically observed in social movements. However, in doing so, I will also attempt to specify each property of fluidity as a kind of mechanism enabling mobility and liquidity. The identification of such mechanisms is especially useful for carrying out empirical research, putting a theoretical metaphor back into the narrative plot of unfolding temporalities to see what work it will do. (12) Furthermore, the mechanisms that I have identified are in general *relational mechanisms* that describe the relation between a movement and its context as processes or dynamical features, dynamic processes which permit different valences and vectors of movement rather than simply involving opportunities or constraints.

III. Mechanisms of Mobility and Fluidity

Mechanism 1: The 'deterritorialization'of social movements as 'flows' with no clear point of departure and no necessary end-state is the underlying mechanism by which they are animated or 'revivified' after apparent periods of lull.

It is common to speak of flows through social movement networks (of money, of resources, of information), but what if the movement as a whole behaves as a flow and what if that flow can not be cleanly separated from its structuring context? If we define flow as directed movement without beginning or end-point, it is evident that this absence of a clear point of departure or arrival describes many social movements. As Verta Taylor and Nancy Whittier have shown, 'social movements rarely have clear beginnings or endings, and small hold-over networks of activists… often provide continuity for movements during periods of decreased opportunity and activity' (Taylor 2000: 224; Whittier 1995). The movement of movements, with direction and speed but no necessary end-state or purpose is certainly applicable to many social movements that have been studied, and especially those described as new social movements. In the effort to measure 'outcomes' or the 'success' of movements it has become clear that movements seem to dissipate and fissure and keep trickling along after various kinds of actions. There is often no clear 'end' to a movement, and particular campaigns transmute into others or re-emerge after lull periods (Melucci 1989; Hetherington 1998). Actions are taken, campaigns are framed, activities are organized, people are 'mobilized', all with a definite direction, but no necessary terminus. Rather than a particular end-state, *movement* itself may be a movement's *raison d'être*. In this regard movements can be said to create a context for movement.

As for what kick-starts this auto-enablement, while particular organizations may preserve accounts of their own founding, their history, and their goals, it is never so easy to pinpoint when and where an entire movement emerged. Even before mobilization can take place it has been posited that there is a 'capillary process' (Tarrow 1998: 112) in which gradual 'consensus formation' (Klandermans 1988) takes place even though unplanned and undirected. It simply builds up potential adherents though 'critical communities' with 'no necessary movement vocation' according to Rochon (1998 cited in Tarrow 1998: 113). Social cohesion approaches in network analysis have demonstrated how movement recruitment occurs via mobilisation of already existing relational networks. As Tarrow summarizes, 'social networks at the base of society have emerged as the most common sources of recruitment into social movements' (Tarrow 1998: 124; and see, e.g., Whittier 1995 and Gould 1995). Thus the flow of a movement is in one sense a function of the flow of other micro-relations between individuals.

However, as Diani (1995) observes, many existing network analyses of social movements assume that networks function mainly as structural constraints on social movement actors, rather than as outcomes of the actual process of mobilization. In so far as networks are a product of mobilization and not simply a constraint, then it is important to note the 'deep ambiguity' in the notion of a network tie. A 'tie is both part of the architecture of social space and at the same time an action record having to do with quality and/or strength of tie' (White 1992: 101-2). In other words, movement networks are 'emergent structures' and, as Michael Mann (1996: 15) observes, such structures are always 'outrunning the existing level of institutionalization. This may happen as a direct challenge to existing institutions, or it may happen unintentionally and "interstitially" – between their interstices and around their edges – creating new relations and institutions that have unintended consequences for the old' (in Emirbayer and Sheller 1999: 189). Thus as individuals cohere to each other within shifting networks of relations, the entire network is itself creeping, or spreading, and thereby creating its own context

A more fluid analysis of social movement can perhaps take inspiration from recent structural analyses which recognize more of the complexity of nonlinear dynamic social processes (e.g., White 1992, 1995a/b; Mische and White 1998; Watts 1999). Indeed, the furthest frontiers of network analysis are concerned with the relationship between structure and dynamics (Watts 1999) in situations of 'coherent, if not cohesive, structure' (Mische and White 1998: 717). (13)

Urry uses some of the insights of complexity theory to describe the properties of more complex 'iterative' processes that defy the logic of structure and agency dichotomies:

> although there is recurrence, such recurrent actions can produce non-equilibrium, non-linearity and, if the parameters change dramatically, a sudden branching of the social world… such complex change may have nothing necessarily to do with agents actually seeking to change that world. The agents may simply keep carrying out the same recurrent actions or what they conceive to be the same actions. But it is through iteration over time that they may generate unexpected, unpredictable and chaotic outcomes, often the opposite of what the human agents involved may seek to realise (Urry 2000a: 206-7).

In fact the most savvy social movement actors may be aware of exactly this phenomenon, which is why they continue to keep mobilizing repeated campaigns, even following repeated ostensible failure, in the knowledge that eventually 'something will give'.

Mechanism 2: Movements are channeled along 'scapes' but also partly create their own scapes as an effect of their movement; thus the relation between movement and context is always a function of ambiguity and ambage.

The channeling of social movements along particular 'scapes' can be thought of as the way in which institutional structures 'wall-in' movements and shape both actions and actors themselves, even though the movements remain extra-institutional, open-ended, and always 'emergent', as noted above. Social networks are a kind of scape, as are the 'channels of communication' through which they interact with adherents, opponents, and wider publics. Recent attention to changing political opportunity structures has shown the complex ways in which structures of mobilization interact with dynamic processes of opening and foreclosure of political opportunities via framing processes (McAdam, McCarthy and Zald 1996: 4). Rather than simply reacting to political opportunities, the structural positioning of a social movement (as an effect of both bridges and 'structural holes' [Burt 1992]) can produce certain kinds of relational dynamics and hence opportunities. As Sydney Tarrow (1996) argues, collective action *makes opportunities*, both for the group involved, for other groups and even for opponents. The volatile dynamics of these interactions in part generate action.

In cultural terms, as well, movements are channeled by narratives and symbols. Despite strong criticisms of social network approaches from culture-oriented social movement theorists (e.g. Jasper 1997: 58-64), network approaches have contributed to formulating more sophisticated questions of social movement 'culture'.(14) The idea of 'master frames' (Snow and Benford 1992) could be understood as a kind of versatile linguistic vessel which 'carries' the movement. Some frames are more 'robust' – or we could say sticky – than others, in so far as their ambiguity allows them to carry multiple meanings (Gamson 1995). Such 'master frames' are easily available to other movements because they are able to carry many different contents (Tarrow 1998: 118). The movement itself can then be conceived of as a liquid that is always at risk of overflowing its container or ebbing away out of a leaky container. Or it can become too sticky and bogged down by what Kim Voss calls 'cognitive encumbrance' (Voss 1996: 253). Jasper also suggests that meanings, emotions and the 'tacit, implicit knowledge' of 'artful protesters' may be more appropriately captured by '[m]etaphors of flows, webs, and networks' than by the calculations of rational-choice models (Jasper 1997: 81).

Constructing the collective identity of a movement is itself a process of channeling and scaping symbolic meanings; as Melucci points out collective identity is an expanding and contracting field 'whose borders alter with the intensity and direction of the forces that constitute it' (Melucci 1995: 50). Moreover, neither frames nor the people who utilize them stand still. In the globally migratory mass media, as Arjun Appadurai points out, 'both viewers and images are in simultaneous circulation. Neither images nor viewers fit into circuits or audiences that are easily bound within local, national, or regional space' (Appadurai 1996: 4). Even as cultural symbols and codes flow through 'channels' to reach various audiences (who are also circulating), the channels (or scapes) are themselves being reconfigured by shifting technological and social structures. To begin to ask questions about causality, contingency and prediction in regard to these global flows, he argues, will require us 'to start asking them

in a way that relies on images of flow and uncertainty, hence *chaos*, rather than older images of order, stability, and systematicness' (Appadurai 1996: 47).

Crucially, it has become apparent that social structures are not as 'structured' as once thought. Two interacting kinds of *uncertainty* are crucial to the flexibility of social movement processes and outcomes (on these points cf. Mische 1998). There is ambiguity in cultural contexts (arising from the multiple meanings of words and symbols); and there is what Harrison White refers to as 'ambage' in structural contexts. While ambiguity is about fuzzy meanings or interpretations, ambage is a kind of slackness in 'the concrete world of social ties, in networks of ties and corporates among nodes. Thus ambage is dual to ambiguity: fuzz in the concrete embodiment as opposed to fuzz in the rules of perception and interpretation' (White 1992: 107). We can think of ambage, then, as a kind of structural instability, a built-in tendency toward enabling switching from one set of relations to another set of relations. White (1992: 111) argues that the trade-off of ambage and ambiguity in contingent environments is what constitutes 'the social world of disorderly "gels and goos"'. It is precisely the *semi-liquidity* of such 'goos' that is crucial to thinking about different kinds of structures, structures that are more fluid.

If high ambiguity makes a symbol or idea more versatile and inclusive, it also entails the risk of *dilution*; it might be extended so far that it loses its power of signification, or worse yet, is hi-jacked by opponents to be used for their own purposes. High ambage, on the other hand, makes a social structure more flexible and adaptive. Yet, at the same time there are risks of *dissipation*; it might lose all form and momentum, or worse yet be taken over by other leaders who emerge and claim its center. Thus we can imagine these structures not simply as watery liquids, but as somewhat sticky and viscous liquids. As White (1992: 70) suggests, 'A polymer gel is more like social networks. These very long molecules reptate through messy, inhomogeneous environments which include other such chains and induce new ties…polymer chains can be vulcanized into cross-chains, as in rubber.' Also, significantly, these social networks are always grounded in physical space and time, but in contexts of sheer messiness:

> We are creatures living within social goos, shards, and rubbery gels made up by and of ourselves. We, like gels, may dissolve into a different order under some heat. Even the frozen shards exhibit only limited orderliness, and even then an orderliness lacking in homogeneity, and an orderliness made more problematic through its dual relation to physical space (White 1992: 337-8).

While network analysis has made strides in the empirical study of social movements, it still has a long way to go in depicting these processes of uncertain interaction and dynamic social change in non-Euclidean sticky spaces and bending times.

Mechanism 3: Internal effects of viscosity and external effects of pressure effect the shape and speed of movements, while surges in movement activity can also raise the pressure on surrounding structures

Social movements possess different properties of viscosity in so far as they may contain more individual participants during key actions or high-profile periods, but in quieter periods may seem to ebb away to a much thinner consistency, with fewer members or activists. The more mobilized the movement the greater the number of 'cells' flowing within it; however, these constituencies are also effected by the external pressures of repression, public opinion, and antagonist reaction. A distinction may also be drawn between the 'visible network', which is a set of explicit inter-group ties of members or resources among organizations, versus the 'latent network' which is a set of less apparent links among individuals which may or may not be activated (Diani 1995). Such latent networks, or 'connective structures' (Tarrow 1998), are one way to think of these capillary webs that form the 'abeyance structures' (Taylor 1989) of a movement; however, even these notions may be too rigid. No amount of specification of network ties, structural equivalence, or connective structures will help in tracking the rapid surges and sudden overflows of action across boundaries into unconnected zones. The question we must ask, then, is how does the flow of action switch from the latent to the visible realm? What is the chemistry between them? A fundamental problem of social movement

analysis is to understand how latent 'structures of feeling' (Williams 1977) or 'hidden transcripts' (Scott 1990) become articulated in public contentions.

In spite of its mathematical precision (or indeed because of its precision) network analysis does not seem capable of capturing this phenomenon. In some ways the problem here resembles the classic quandary of light and other quantum entities behaving both as particles and as waves. Yes, social movements resemble sets of distinct actors connected together in networks, but not always. At times they behave more like waves in a loosely defined fluid rather than particles in a rigid network. As Zohar and Marshall describe social life more generally, according to Urry:

> [It] has the potential to be both particle-like and wavelike. Particles are individuals, located and measurable in space and time. They are either here or there, now and then. Waves are 'non-local', they are spread out across all of space and time, and their instantaneous effects are everywhere. Waves extend themselves in every direction at once, they overlap and combine with other waves to form new realities (new emergent wholes) (Zohar and Marshall 1994: 326, cited in Urry 2000a: 122).

No matter how carefully we analyze the particles that make up a social movement, we will fail to understand the 'emergent whole' if we are unable to switch into a parallel analysis of flows. Waves have different properties of shape and speed than particles.

As Tarrow (1998: 146) observes, during periods of increased contention there is a frequency and intensity of interaction that depends in part on rapid flows of information. Suddenly, it seems, overlapping sets of lumbering networks seem to jump with life and interanimation. Communication crackles across enemy lines and amongst allies. White has suggested that 'publics' are special social spaces that allow for such an opening of communication. Easing social actors in and out of both social spaces and social times, 'Publics decouple network-domains from each other, and thus enable slippage in social times' (White 1995a: 14; and see Mische and White 1998). In this regard publics are crucial to social movements, allowing participants to switch from everyday interaction rituals into collective action. They are socially designed to hold maximum participants with minimum friction. Indeed the history of the emergence of publics is very much about the history of the emergence of social movements (Emirbayer and Sheller 1999; and cf. Cohen and Arato 1992; Somers 1993; Tilly 1995a). More work remains to be done in showing how an increasingly robust national public sphere not only enables democratic social movements, but also emerges from (and is maintained by) their ongoing mobilization. The long-term pressure of mobilization is part of what keeps democratic public spaces vital and open (cf. Giugni, McAdam and Tilly 1999).

Another key question concerns how a movement is 'quickened' (in both senses of the term). Liquids of different viscosity and make-up have thresholds, or points of radical transformation (i.e., at certain temperatures or pressures chemical transformations occur), and so too do social movements seem to hit threshold points at which they radically change form. Evans, for example, refers to the 'catalytic effect of transnational networks on local struggles' (Evans 2000: 240), suggesting that the introduction of new 'catalysts' can lead to sudden change in seemingly stable and immovable structures such as global capitalism. The idea of fluids moving 'in different shapes at different speeds' is also suggestive of the many different forms a single movement can take, depending on its circumstances. As Rucht (1990) found regarding the antinuclear movements in Germany and France, they engaged in actions that could be 'expressive or instrumental, confrontational, violent or conventional', easily flowing from one tactic to another depending on the circumstances (see Tarrow 1998: 104). Such diversity of action corresponds with the claim that social movements, protest cycles, and revolutions are not different genera of social phenomena (Tarrow 1998: 159; Knoke 1994; Tilly, McAdam and Tarrow, forthcoming). What seems to differentiate them is their viscosity or speed. The interaction of the movement, the state, and the broader social and cultural environments all flow together in particular patterns of turbulence, eddies, or cascades of action. If democracy resembles a lake, then revolution is more like an avalanche in which once solidified institutional structures suddenly give way and behave like liquids (which may or may not form a 'lake' of democracy once loosened).

Developments in complexity theory have led to greater attention to and mathematical specification of various kinds of critical points of instability in both physical and social processes. These range from the idea of 'turning points' (Abbott 1997), 'tipping points' (Gladwell 2000), and 'critical states' (Buchanan 2000), to Tilly, McAdam and Tarrow's attention to 'critical junctures in episodes of contention [which impact on] the strategic interaction of the actors and on their choices in conditions of uncertainty' (Tilly, MacAdam and Tarrow 2000: 73). It is in the effort to identify such critical junctures that attending to conditions of fluidity is so crucial. Much of what constitutes 'social movement' is precisely about a switch from a stable structuration of interaction to a more uncertain and fluid moment of transformation: it is this complex (and at times ungoverned) shift which we name 'mobilisation'.

Mechanism 4: Movements exhibit varying temporalities of flow ranging from creep and spread to surge and avalanche depending on both the channeling effect of scapes and the internal mechanisms of growth processes and critical junctures.

The question of movement temporality is suggestive of the way in which movements look quite different to an ethnographer depending on the period of time over which they are studied. The day-to-day 'running' of a movement takes quite a different shape than the surge of activity over a particular week or the uneven flow over a year. Most importantly, movements appear to occur in waves, or what Tarrow calls 'cycles of protest' and these seem to spread in crescendos of activity that transcend direct interconnections, while ebbing away just as quickly. 'A key characteristic of cycles,' writes Tarrow, 'is the diffusion of a propensity for collective action from its initiators to both unrelated groups and to antagonists' (Tarrow 1998: 145). These unusual patterns of diffusion resemble the nonlinear dynamical processes described by Fox Keller and by Watts, and which have been explored in fields as diverse as biological oscillators, neural networks, epidemiology, and game theory (Watts 1999).

Network analysis, I suggest, assumes Euclidean 'empty' space and linear, even time. Time and space are held constant, while social actors move through it and form networks of ties. In contrast, it could be argued that social movements reconfigure time and space. First, by selectively linking elements of past, present and future through mobilizing narratives, activists shape time to their own purposes. They can speed time up or slow time down, for example by framing millenarian global threats. Movements can also transform 'glacial time' by melting its very underpinnings and allowing 'turning points' to occur (Abbott 1997). Second, by disrupting taken for granted spatial boundaries or thresholds, collective action tends to transform everyday spaces and perception of dimension and scale. For example, anti-roads protestors (like the British activist 'Swampy'), who lock themselves in tree-houses or underground tunnels below the surface of a proposed route, transmute a relatively flat space-to-be moved-through into a dwelling place stretching from the tops of trees to unforeseen depths beneath their roots. Road-space is here literally 'swamped' by a social movement of living human bodies seeping below its engineered surfaces and disrupting the speeding temporality of 'placelessness' (cf. Sheller and Urry 2000a). Hetherington describes such carnivalesque transgression of spatial ordering as the creation of 'heterotopias' (Hetherington 1998:149). Such liminal disruptions of 'normal' time and space not only perform resistance, but also challenge the frameworks of space-time used by movement analysts, leaving their Euclidean assumptions seeming flat and two-dimensional.

Tarrow (1998: 103) cites Zolberg's description of the 'moments of madness' in which 'the wall between the instrumental and the expressive collapses' and 'politics bursts its bounds to invade all of life' (Zolberg 1972: 183). Zolberg's use of fluid metaphors is striking here, as when he describes the paradigmatic change in a repertoire of contention as being 'like a flood which loosens up much of the soil but leaves alluvial deposits in its wake' (Zolberg 1972: 206). These relatively frictionless torrents of activity sweep structured networks away in an instantaneous burst of activity, crashing through the slow temporality of more stable structures with a quickening pulse of life. Moments of agitation or 'effervescence' may activate fluidities of interaction that are qualitatively different from the more regular relations among stable sets of ties. Movements should come with a warning: dangerous when heated, shaken, or stirred.

Mechanism 5: Seepage, evaporation, and sublimation enable movements to escape through the 'walls' of channeling structures, switch into other channels, and disappear

Like blood cells, movements also escape the institutions and structures that try to channel them, as well as seeping across from one institutional arena to another, or indeed evaporating altogether. Some social movement analysts refer to the 'spillover' effect of social movements, as core activists carry one campaign or strategy over into another (Meyer and Whittier 1994). As Jasper points out, in 'discussing the "fluidity" of social movements, Joseph Gusfield sees individuals as capable of both "carry-over" and "carry-ons" between movements, bringing ways of acting and thinking with them to new movements' (Jasper 1997: 57). Such spillover can occur not only across time, but also in special moments of complex interaction between multiple networks. As Gibson and Mische have described: 'If a person occupying positions in multiple networks is like a conduit allowing for the constrained flow of substances between settings, the direct encounter of disparate networks amounts to the opening of the floodgates, although the unidirectional imagery is misleading because the waters flow both ways, intermixing turbulently until such time as the gates are again closed' (Gibson and Mische 1995: 13). (15)

Movements also escape through 'walls' in encounters with structures of power. Faced with state repression, movements seem to melt away into a million fragments of individuals or 'cells'. Faced with top-heavy bureaucratization, parts of movements slip outside and regroup outside the organization. No walls can keep them in. Movements can switch from one 'scape' to another, for example by switching from one campaign or target to another. Keck and Sikkink analyse international non-governmental social change organizations in terms of 'transnational advocacy networks' which transcend national borders and form part of an emerging global public (Keck and Sikkink 1998; Urry 2000a: 146). The prevalence of post-territorial networked structures is also apparent in much of the recent work on the emergence of 'global civil society' or 'world society' (Boli and Thomas 1999; Boli 1997; Meyer et al. 1994), as well as on the 'counter-hegemonic transnational networks' resisting economic globalization (Evans 2000). Such global networks are often described as extremely fluid in form: 'their geographic mobility, loose organizational models, and access to communications provide the capacity to shift their campaigns and resources to venues in which they have the strongest chance to succeed' (Tarrow 1998: 192; cf. Della Porta, Kriesi and Rucht 1999).

In other words such 'global fluids' can easily cross borders with a greater degree of flexibility than ever before. They consists of 'flows or waves of people, information, objects, money, images and risks moving across regions in heterogeneous, uneven, unpredictable and often unplanned shapes' (Urry 2000b: 6). Flows of information have always been crucial to social movements, and difficult to track. From the national 'print publics' (Anderson 1988) that informed movements such as anti-slavery in the nineteenth century (Drescher 1987), to the 'electronic sit-in' by activists blocking the World Trade Organisation's web site during the Seattle protests in November 1999 (Sheller and Urry 2000b), information tends to outrun institutional networks. It flows along more invisible scapes and 'submerged networks'. This ability to 'reterritorialize' elsewhere enables social movements to call into action not only their activist constituents but also their very context; through the vector of mobilisation the context is defined and itself animated.

The notion of 'free spaces' is also relevant in this idea of escaping channeling structures. A number of studies of social movements recognize the importance of such spaces (Evans and Boyte 1986; and cf. Poletta 1997; Emirbayer and Sheller 1999). But only recently has this notion of spatial escape been linked to ideas of cultural fluidity and structural mobility, both by practitioners/activists and by theorists. Fantasia and Hirsch (1995) demonstrate the fluid transformation of the meanings of cultural symbols (such as the veil in the Algerian Revolution) through interactional processes within free spaces. Notions of cultural fluidity are linked to a play on the ambiguity of meaning, which enables words and symbols to escape the narratives or grammars that try to lock them in place. Cultural 'recodings' (Swidler 1995: 33-4) allow switches in meaning which play upon what Bakhtin called the heteroglossia of language (Billig 1995). For example, Reclaim the Streets protests targeted the Treasury Building during a recent May Day mobilization in London and draped it with a banner proclaiming 'The earth is a common treasury for all', thus appropriating the word 'treasury' and imbuing it with alternative meanings, resonance, and history. This is a form of 'liquidity' in the sense of

'exchange of value between different ontological levels and otherwise incommensurable facets of life' (Morse 1990: 194, as cited in Franklin, Lury and Stacey 2000: 25). It is also through such cultural mechanisms that both movements and contexts are mobilised and reconstituted.

The escape from boundaries can be geographical as well as cultural. Accounts of recent social movements in Europe, and Britain in particular, emphasize the extent to which a hidden 'avoidance lifestyle' (Maffesoli 1996) may be cultivated by activists as a way of outrunning the state through disappearance into unpoliced zones (McKay 1998). Such avoidance has involved taking to the road and becoming mobile as a key aspect of the lifestyles of New Travellers in the U.K. and those who frequent the summer music festival circuits. As John Jordan describes the sometimes playful practice of direct action by the Anti-Roads Movement in the U.K.:

> The state never knows where this type of playing ends or begins; it seeps from construction site into the television screen, from the company director's office to the roof of the Transport Minister's house. Its unsteadiness, slipperiness, porosity and riskiness erode the authority of those in power (Jordan 1998: 134).

This ability to slip in and out of different contexts describes a structure with a higher degree of 'ambage' than a mathematically modeled network structure. Fluids are not only fuzzy around the edges, but have properties of spread or seepage. They get into other 'solid' structures, soak through them, and potentially transform them. Without centers or even clear shapes, they are difficult to track, to measure, and to contain, even for social scientists studying them.

Conclusion

In this paper I have tried to re-think the question of how social movements are mobilised by questioning the foundational narratives by which we understand movement, mobility, and mobilisation as auto-enabled (and enabling) processes. Drawing on feminist cultural theory and science studies, I argued that structural analysis of social movements as networks of actors who mobilise themselves within a given political context reifies that which needs to be explained. It is contingent articulations that constitute both the context of politics and the possibility for mobilisation. Vectors of movement are therefore an effect of the relation between many different partial and fractured 'agents' and catalysts, with the possibility for mobility arising as much from the oscillatory dynamics of a system as from particular 'governing' actors. I then suggested that metaphors of flow and liquidity might be a useful way for describing some of these relational mechanisms.

Having indicated where in the existing literature on social movements and in the self-descriptions of movement participants the idea of fluidity has been prevalent, I felt it would be methodologically useful to try to identify particular types of relational mechanisms. In the second half of the paper, therefore, I described a set of these mechanisms, involving properties such as flow, channeling, ambage, surges, critical junctures, and seepage. These closely matched the findings in a number of empirical studies of social movement processes, and could be used to better explain the various forms of 'movement' in which social movements partake. While such messy processes may be less mathematically satisfying than cleaner network analyses, my claim is that they explain more fully the social worlds in question. Most importantly, I have tried to demonstrate that movement does not require either a mover or a primal cause. Movers and apparent movement 'causes' are as much an after-effect as a beginning. Thus the apparent increasing mobility of people, information, objects, money, images and risks – like the apparent revivification of social movements – must be approached as sticky moments in which certain kinds of mobile agents have 'gelled' out of the relational settings of the social slime.

Notes

1. A previous version of this paper was presented at the conference 'Social Movement Analysis: The Network Perspective', Ross Priory, Loch Lomond, Scotland, 22-25 June 2000, whose participants are thanked for their comments. I would especially like to thank

John Urry, John Law, Mustafa Emirbayer, Doug McAdam, Sydney Tarrow, and Jeff Broadbent for their helpful comments and suggestions on earlier versions of this paper.

2. There is also an antecedent preoccupation with flows in the work of Deleuze and Guattari 1983 [1972], which is cited by some of the later theorists. They are especially concerned with 'deterritorialized' flows of libidinal desire which 'exert the irresistible pressure of lava or the invinicble oozing of water' (p. 67).

3. This is, of course, also a fundamental political question: what motivates political participation and collective action?

4. Elsewhere, I have with John Urry analysed auto-mobility in relation to the mobility of cars and car-drivers (Sheller and Urry 1999); this is not entirely unconnected to the broader analysis of autopoietic mobilisation under consideration here.

5. Here I draw partly on Franklin, Lury and Stacey's brilliant analysis of the shift in models of context, wherein an older definition of nature as the context for culture has been displaced by a global imaginary '*able to generate its own context*' (Franklin, Lury and Stacey 2000: 20).

6. Blockmodeling approaches in network analysis offer an approach less oriented toward individual motivation or agentic projects and more cognizant of indirect or unintended structural effects. Here positions in social structures are seen to 'induce' certain classes of equivalent individuals or groups (Bearman 1993), suggesting how various types of ties (or the absence of ties) influence the recognition, exploitation, and even construction of political opportunities. Nevertheless, the definition of the set of ties relevant to the 'movement universe' and its structural context remains under-theorised. As John Scott observes, 'researchers [using network analysis] often have unrealistic views about the boundaries of relational systems' (Scott 1994: 57).

7. More reflexively, I should note that my academic biography has elicited this 'partial assemblage'of North American-inflected social movement theory and European-inflected theories of postmodernity and globalisation. Moreover, as this introduction indicates, my more recent engagement with feminist cultural theory and science studies is thanks to the incredibly generative collective research culture of my colleagues at Lancaster University, especially in this instance: Sara Ahmed, Claudia Castaneda, Anne-Marie Fortier, Sarah Franklin, John Law, Vicky Singleton, Jackie Stacey, and Imogen Tyler. I take full responsibility for the messy result, and hope that those more familiar with one or the other of these areas will bear with the many unfamiliar references from other arenas.

8. www.indymedia.org.uk/newsite/text.php3?text=Chronology.txt (5/8/00).

9. Though see Mische 1998 and Gibson and Mische 1995 for efforts to describe 'network dynamics' in more interactive 'fluid' terms.

10. For an interesting discussion of state repression see Davenport and Reilly 2000, which argues that repression is not merely a response to particular actions, but involves a 'more ambitious and pervasive effort at social control…. This strategy involves responding to dissident acts and to specific geographic areas deemed relevant to challengers – labeled "hotspots" (locales where dissidents live and where they might find support) -- with vaguely defined "dragnets" that envelop more of the general population than what the literature on overt repression would lead us to expect' (p. 4).

11. See Evans 2000 for discussion of the wider movement against global capitalism.

12. I draw here on the work of Tilly, McAdam and Tarrow in *The Dynamics of Contention* in which they identify a whole series of 'causal mechanisms' pertinent to social movements and other scales of political contention. However, I prefer not to designate my mechanisms as 'causal' if this implies that they are the prime movers, or originating springs of action; rather, we can hold this possibility in suspension while still investigating the mechanisms which produce, enable, or perform mobilisation.

13. Watts shows how 'small-world architectures' demonstrate that 'a set of relatively tiny perturbations to the local structure of a highly clustered graph can have a dramatic impact

upon its structural properties' (1999: 517), helping to explain processes of rapid dissemination whether of information, diseases, or other nonlinear vectors. On other social effects of complexity see also Buchanan 2000; Gladwell 2000; Urry 2000b.

14. This is not the place to review the literature on social movements and culture (see e.g., Johnston and Klandermans 1995). Recent efforts to formalize analysis of culture and language (e.g., DiMaggio 1994; Franzosi and Mohr 1997; Mohr 1994; Mohr and Duquenne 1997) may help to illuminate social movement processes such as frame alignment, amplification, diffusion, etc. (Snow et al. 1986; Snow and Benford 1992).

15. Mische (1998) takes up the challenge of finding a more dynamic method for structural analysis of both social and cultural networks, showing how the two co-evolve in processes of engaged and dynamic interaction. She demonstrates the interaction of evolving future-oriented 'projects' with more practical-evaluative situational maneuvers, which together have the potential to redirect action, leading to both new identities and new contexts.

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