THE ART OF POLITICAL SOLIDARITY

A thesis in fulfilment of the requirements for the
Degree of Doctor of Philosophy in
Social and Political Thought

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2 | **THE ART OF POLITICAL SOLIDARITY**
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ABSTRACT

Waves of contemporary social justice movements keep bringing people together to address urgent crises of our time. In their attempts to mitigate economic inequality, social oppression, and climate change, social movements draw upon everyday practices to re/generate political solidarity in ways that can preserve or transform the world. In doing so, movements build collective capacities to identify problems, develop political solutions, and create new economic, social, and ecological relationships.

My thesis complements these efforts by re-thinking political solidarity to better understand how it can be practiced in more thoughtful, sustainable, and effective ways. I use a mix of philosophical methods—genealogy, perspicuous representation, hermeneutics, situational analysis, and normative and conceptual argumentation—to better understand the meanings, motivations, practices, and prospects for political solidarity today.

What does political solidarity mean? What moves people to come together and take collective action? How do social movements sustain solidarity throughout their lifecycles, and across time and difference, in order to achieve their goals? How can we improve our understanding of solidarity, our involvement in it, and the practices which sustain it in order to achieve greater economic equality, social freedom, and environmental sustainability?

The Art of Political Solidarity responds to these questions by arguing that collective political action and transformational struggle are crafts which require the development of skill and know-how. My thesis argues for a distinctive mode of solidarity that involves practices of reflection, affectual attunement, skill cultivation, and proto-typing the new worlds that communities of practice are trying to expand or bring into being. Each practice offers ways to overcome the limits of outmoded conceptualisations, debilitating affects, and rigid models of solidarity. By re-iterating, re-articulating, and refining the art of political solidarity, we partake in an apprenticeship of social change that increases our capacities to come together and build a better world.

STATEMENT OF AUTHORSHIP

This thesis contains no material that has been extracted in whole or in part from a thesis that I have submitted towards the award of any other degree or diploma in any other tertiary institution.

No other person's work has been used without due acknowledgment in the main text of the thesis.

All research procedures reported in the thesis received the approval of the relevant Ethics/Safety Committees (where required).

I can confirm that this thesis was researched, written and edited without any collaboration or assistance of another person or persons beyond standard academic support. My supervisors, Professors Nikolas Kompridis and Allison Weir, provided oral and written feedback with respect to the preparation of this final text. Additionally, some postgraduate students and academic staff at the Institute for Social Justice, Australian Catholic University, and external examiners also provided feedback which was taken into consideration in the finalisation of this thesis.

LIST OF IMAGES

TABLE OF CONTENTS

THE ART OF POLITICAL SOLIDARITY
Simon A. Dougherty

PART I

INTRODUCTION

The Art of Political Solidarity

CHAPTER ONE

PART II

SOLIDARITY IN THEORY

Meanings and Modes

CHAPTER TWO

Developing an Analytical Framework:

PART III

SOLIDARITY IN PRACTICE

Moods and Movements

CHAPTER THREE

CHAPTER FOUR

CHAPTER FIVE

Solidarity and Occupy Wall Street 171

PART IV

RENEWING SOLIDARITY

Problems and Possibilities

CHAPTER SIX

PART V

CONCLUSION

The Art of Political Solidarity

CHAPTER SEVEN

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PART I

INTRODUCTION

The Art of Political Solidarity

CHAPTER ONE

Introduction to *The Art of Political Solidarity*

1.00   Introduction

In this chapter I introduce the topic of my thesis: *The Art of Political Solidarity*. After a popular account of the significance of political solidarity (1.01), I provide some background context to situate myself in relation to my research topic (1.02). I introduce key problems, motivations, questions, texts, and methods which underpin my thesis (1.03). Finally, I provide a summary of my argument to conclude this introductory chapter (1.04).

1.01   Chickens and eggs:

Hatching a thesis on *The Art of Political Solidarity*

In the animated comedy, *Chicken Run* (2000),[1] the hero-hen, Ginger, is cooped up in a factory farm in Yorkshire, England. Ginger's 'choices,' like those of her fellow hens, are limited

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[1] *Chicken Run,* animation directed by Nick Park and Peter Lord (Bristol: UK: Aardman Animations, 2000), DVD.

to laying eggs or becoming a chicken pot pie. Ginger wants out, and she doesn't want to leave anyone behind. She wants a new world, and wants to take part of the old one, namely her community, with her. But resistance to any collective escape plan persists from inside and without, from newcomers and old stalwarts. The newly arrived American rooster, Rocky, is a "lone free ranger" who is skeptical of mass liberation: "You wanna get every chicken in this place out of here *at the same time*?" "Of course," replies Ginger. Rocky condescends: "You're certifiable!" Ginger insists she's not crazy, but determined: "Where there's a will, there's a way." But even the most sympathetic hens wonder if another escape plan is worth the effort when "the chances of us getting out of here are a million to one." Undeterred by the odds, Ginger draws upon the unlikely hope of the equation as proof that "there's still a chance." While Ginger isn't short of any hope or determination, the solidarity that eventually helps set them free is initially elusive and difficult to cultivate.

What are the barriers confronting Ginger's attempts to generate solidarity for collective liberation? Is it Rocky's individualism; the hens' collective skepticism; the utopianism of Ginger's hopes and desires? These are not new questions or challenges. We've been here before. After all, *Chicken Run* is a homage to *The Great Escape* (1963).[2] The audience *knows* they can do it despite the apparent impossibilities of a different context. Part of the joy of re-telling an old story in a new way is that we get to see our problems in a new light and overcome them all over again. We've seen this story before, and not just in movies. The original film is based on a non-fiction account of a mass escape from a German Prisoner-of-War camp. History is full of stories of successful collective struggle, though many failures,

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[2] *The Great Escape,* film directed by John Sturges (Hollywood, California: Mirisch Company, 1963), DVD.

too. No matter how many times the escape plan fails, a film keeps the story going until it finally re-imagines what success might look like in the end. History can give us the epistemic confidence of knowing we can get out of a bad situation, together. We've done it before, but how can we do it again under changed circumstances? Re-telling a story through film can help us imagine how *it* might be done again, only differently. The *it* at stake here is political solidarity for liberation. To do *it* again, in a new way, we must re-imagine *it*.

Ginger identifies her community's limited imagination and vision as a significant barrier: "You know what the problem is? The fences aren't just 'round the farm. They're up here, in your heads. There's a better place out there, somewhere beyond that hill, and it has wide open places, and lots of trees—and grass. Can you imagine that?"

Imagining where we'd like to go and how to get there together raises all sorts of questions about solidarity. How have we imagined collective struggle before, and how can we re-imagine it? How can we re-think the problems of political solidarity? What are the "fences" in the world and in our social activities and relationships which separate us from effectively acting together, collectively, for liberation? If some of the barriers are "in our heads," how can we *re-think* political solidarity and the problems we're trying to overcome in ways that might help us get out of 'here,' together? What is particular about the 'here' and now we are trying to escape that is different than before? How do we re-envision our problems? What is the 'better place out there' we are trying to get to? How do we re-envision our problem-solving tools and attune their use to address the problems at hand? If solidarity is one of our problem-solving tools, how can we conceive of solidarity differently so that we might use it

better; so that we can get 'there,' or change this world into that one, together? Questions like these prompt further inquiry into the ideas and practices of political solidarity itself.

1.02   Background context and motivation:

Re-telling stories of solidarity to address the crises of our time

While studying film and philosophy during my undergraduate degree, my appreciation grew for how movies and other cultural products deploy and develop philosophical issues, and how they make real contributions to intellectual debates. I found myself watching films and thinking about them in much the same way as Stephen Mulhall:

> I do not look to . . . films as handy or popular illustration of views and arguments properly developed by philosophers; I see them rather as themselves reflecting on and evaluating such views and arguments, as thinking seriously and systematically about them in just the ways that philosophers do. Such films are not philosophy's raw material, nor a source for its ornamentation; they are philosophical exercises, philosophy in action—film as philosophizing.[3]

I see films like *Chicken Run* and *The Great Escape* in much the same way Mulhall sees film in general. For me, they are cultural products that philosophise solidarity. They do this by telling

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[3] Stephen Mulhall, *On Film*, Thinking in Action (London and New York: Routledge, 2002): 2.

stories of characters coming together to generate collective political power that is used to change the social conditions of their world. The filmmakers, and the characters they bring to life, are reflecting on and evaluating views and arguments on political solidarity, thinking seriously and systematically about them just like many social and political theorists do.

Both films speak to solidarity in important ways. They are set in worlds that their protagonists seek to transcend or transform with others. At the same time, their worlds are populated with characters and resources that help or hinder prospects and possibilities for political solidarity. The characters come from different cultures, and have different ideas about the meaning and value of solidarity, how it should be cultivated and practiced, and how solidarity can be used to best achieve their goals.

Contestations between characters in the cinematic world remind me of many debates in real life. Ginger and Rocky, being from England and America, respectively, bicker and work together like so many people do across their differences. They argue from differing cultural standpoints. They argue across their gendered perspectives. They argue for new and old ways of doing solidarity. They even argue a bit like political theorists and activists on either side of the Atlantic, and beyond. Even within her own culture, Ginger has some convincing to do with her fellow English comrades. While the cinematic characters in these films do not resolve all their arguments, they still find ways to work together to achieve their goals.

Reflecting on how these films situate themselves and argue about solidarity in their stories gives me pause to think about what is at stake in our world, how I situate myself in it,

and what is calling for solidarity. The trans-Atlantic debates particularly resonate with me because of where my family comes from. My parents were born on opposite sides of Europe during the 1940s. My Irish father was born in a part of Liverpool that was decimated during The Blitz. His family left the city to rebuild their lives in Northern England just as the region started to de-industrialise. My Slovenian mother grew up in the former Yugoslavia as the young country struggled to stay together before it was consumed by civil war. All my grandparents lived through the Second World War and passed down stories of how the conflict both demanded and destroyed solidarity. They all endeavoured to make "great escapes" of their own. Some were more successful than others. My parents eventually "escaped" their particular economic and social hardships in Europe, and met each other in North America. Like Rocky and Ginger, they shared many things in common. They also worked through plenty of differences in order to support each other and face new challenges as immigrants to Canada.

I have since found myself repeating their migration story, having moved to another continent, and having found a new life in Australia. Each place has made me appreciate different local problems, how some of them are implicated internationally, and how all of them call for different meanings and modes of solidarity that are appropriate to a given place and time.

In my lifetime, I have seen much of Europe unify after the fall of the Berlin Wall, but also disintegrate and polarise in other ways because of social, economic, and political pressures that have deep historical roots. Across the ocean from the welfare states of Europe,

I have lived my whole life under the growing economic inequalities of neoliberalism—inequalities which returned to historic highs in the wake of the Great Recession of 2007-09.[4] While all this has been happening, no place on earth has been untouched by climate change. Winters are shortening in Canada, arctic sea ice is retreating at greater rates each year, and my new proximity to the struggling coral of the Great Barrier Reef puts the climate crisis into perspective. From my standpoint,[5] the world I live in is confronted with intersecting social, political, economic, and environmental crises.

Much is at stake in these times. Past generations have faced serious crises before. While the problems change and stories unfold in different ways with each passing generation, something remains the same. In each crisis, people have had to come together and generate collective political capacities to change the world. We seem to keep re-telling and re-iterating stories of solidarity in art, culture, and daily life. It is my hope that another re-telling can help us generate the kind of political solidarity we need to address to crises of our time.

There are countless stories of solidarity to share and re-iterate from around the world. My research aims to take in multiple accounts of solidarity from around the world, and to contribute to local and international debates on the topic. At the same time, the scope of my

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[4] According to Robert B. Reich, Thomas Piketty, Emmanual Saez, et al., the share of U.S. national income that went to the top one percent of earners peaked in 1928 at 23.9%, prior to the Great Depression. Post-war New Deal policies gradually reduced this to 8.9% by 1976. The onset of neoliberal policies in the late 1970s reversed this trend. By 2007, the top one percent had nearly matched their peak of income capture at 23.5%. Sources: Robert B. Reich, University of California, Berkeley; "The State of Working America" by the Economic Policy Institute; Thomas Piketty, Paris School of Economics, and Emmanuel Saez, University of California, Berkeley; Census Bureau; Bureau of Labor Statistics; Federal Reserve; in Bill Marsh, "The Great Prosperity and The Great Regression" (archived page), *New York Times*, 4 September 2011:
http://www.nytimes.com/imagepages/2011/09/04/opinion/04reich-graphic.html
[5] Much of my methodology is influenced by standpoint theory. For a key source, see Kristina Rolin, "Standpoint Theory as a Methodology for the Study of Power Relations," *Hypatia* 24, No. 4 (2009): 218-26.

research is also necessarily shaped by, and limited to, where I come from and where I have

been as both an activist and a theorist.

My political activism largely coincided with the rapid growth of the Global Justice

Movement in the late 1990s. Tom Mertes and others called it the "movement of

movements"[6] to describe the disparate groups, working in a multitude of ways around the

world, resisting and building alternatives to neoliberal globalisation. Cultivating solidarity

presented itself as a necessary task and recurring challenge within and between these

transnational social movements. New venues, like the World Social Forum in Porto Alegre in

2001, provided activists with a shared space to give form to emerging solidarities within and

across borders. While participants were coming from very different places, perspectives, and

political orientations, the Global Justice Movement was still managing to bring people

together around shared causes and common opponents. In theory, scholars like Michael

Hardt and Antonio Negri tapped into these movements to reflect on paradoxes of disunity

and commonality that were being held across this "multitude."[7] On the ground, efforts to

build solidarity were also fruitful and frustrating. The 2003 global protests against the war on

Iraq typified the paradoxes of solidarity and the mixed outcomes of the Global Justice

Movement. Unprecedented numbers of people united around the world to protest the war

before it had even started.[8] Some national movements were successful in dissuading their

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[6] Tom Mertes, *A Movement of Movements*, (New York: Verso, 2004).
[7] Michael Hardt and Antonio Negri. *Empire* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press 2000); *Multitude: War and Democracy in the Age of Empire*. (New York, Penguin Books, 2004); Also see *Commonwealth*. (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2009).
[8] Stefaan Walgrave and Dieter Rucht, "Introduction," in *The World Says No to War: Demonstrations against the War on Iraq*. Series: Social Movements, Protest, and Contention 33, (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2010): xiii.

governments from joining the war, as happened in Canada, but many others were not successful. After the war on Iraq was launched, parts of the movement dissipated to focus on different aspects of the struggle. For several years after that, I worked with an ecumenical student movement[9] in Canada that ran campaigns and programs on economic, environmental, and racial justice; feminism and LGBTQ* rights; Indigenous solidarity, and war resistance. On an international level, we worked with anti-war activists in the United States and Latin America to organise annual road-trips to the protests held outside the 'School of Americas' at Fort Benning, Georgia. Along the way, we met with different communities of struggle in the United States, learned about various justice issues facing Latin American countries, and protested war and military training together. (I reflect on some of these formative experiences and their relevance to solidarity in Chapter Three.) It was at about this time that I was exposed to the thinking of Bill Moyer, an American social change activist who studied the lifecycles of social movements. In the 1970s, he developed the "Movement Action Plan" (MAP)[10] as a stadial model for holding social movements together across time. (I cover Moyer's model in Chapter Four.) Moyer's MAP has become a canonical model of how social movements rise and fall, and a touchstone for political activists and theorists alike.

My political thinking has always been enmeshed with activism. The two shape and inform one another in praxis. When the Great Recession hit much of the world in 2007-09, I thought of it in Moyer's terms as a "trigger event" that had the potential to spur social movements into action. In late 2008, the first signs of protest against the political handling of

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[9] See the Student Christian Movement of Canada, online: http://www.scmcanada.org
[10] Bill Moyer, JoAnn McAllister, May Lou Finley and Steve Soifer, *Doing Democracy: The MAP Model for Organizing Social Movements* (Gabriola Island, B.C.: New Society Publishers, 2001).

the financial crisis began to emerge in Iceland. Protests continued until the right-wing government resigned in January 2009 and was replaced by a left-wing alternative in April of that year. Various citizens' forums and assemblies instituted constitutional reforms in subsequent years. It was an example of political solidarity in action that achieved real change.

But, as it turns out, what happened in Iceland was quite an exception at the time. The upheaval in the small North Atlantic country was overshadowed by the election and inauguration of President Barack Obama in the United States. This event seemed to quell and subdue progressive movements instead of "triggering" them into action. It was the reactionary and populist right that responded in the typical fashion described by Moyer. In response to Obama's inauguration and his first financial reforms in January 2009, the conservative Tea Party movement took off in the United States. (I analyse the Tea Party in Chapter Four.) Over another year would pass before different social and political factors triggered the Arab Spring in December 2010. (I reflect on some of these triggers in Chapter Three.) Around the same time, anti-austerity sentiment continued growing in Europe. In May 2011, the *Indignados* Movement in Spain expanded on tactics used during the Icelandic demonstrations and Arab Spring by occupying the Puerta del Sol square in Madrid. Throughout the year, the tactic became contagious, inspiring solidarity actions and occupations of public squares around the world. By September 2011, the Occupy Wall Street movement had taken off in the United States. (I reflect on some political problems for solidarity in relation to Occupy Wall Street in Chapter Five.) In subsequent years, protesters in Brazil, Turkey, Hong Kong, and France employed similar tactics in their respective social movements. Since at least 2008, a new "multitude" of social movements has proliferated around the world, generating solidarity in different ways for a variety of political ends.

My thesis aims to make sense of political solidarity in light of recent world events and the emergence of social movements that are offering different ways of working together in order to respond to the crises of our time. While contemporary movements share some affinities with movements in the past, they are also re-iterating past theories and/or practices of solidarity. I take the disjuncture between past and present incarnations of solidarity as an opportunity—a productive aporia—to rethink and renew the praxis of solidarity itself. In light of these developments, three general questions guide my research on the topic of political solidarity: How is it being theorised? How is it being cultivated and practiced? And, what lessons can we learn from different theories and practices in order to renew our understanding of political solidarity? I expand on these questions and situate them in relation to existing academic literature in the next section (1.03).

To answer these questions, I build on the methodological approach Mulhall takes towards film and philosophy. By extending his ethos to other cultural products, like social movements, my goal is to produce a hybrid work that reads with philosophy, but also reads philosophy out of culture.[11] In other words, I analyse academic literature *and* social movements as 'texts' in order to rethink solidarity in theory *and* practice. In the end, I propose a new normative model of political solidarity, and corresponding analytical and evaluative frameworks for its development in theory and practice, which I have tailored for a praxis of solidarity that is more in tune with the concerns of our time.

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[11] For other works that "read philosophy out of culture," see Stanley Cavell, *The World Viewed: Reflections on the Ontology of Film* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1979); and Clifford Geertz, *The Interpretation of Cultures* (New York: Basic Books, 1973).

1.03   Renewing theories and practices of political solidarity:

Key problems, motivations, questions, texts, and methods

In this thesis, I argue that we need to re-describe political solidarity as a concept, re-vitalise it as a social good, and learn how to cultivate its collective political capacities in practice so that we can develop more efficacious social and political responses to the crises of our time. Behind this argument, several orienting questions, followed by a specific set of research questions, drive my investigation into the theory, practice, and renewal of political solidarity.

1.03a Orienting questions

Why political solidarity? What central problem is it responding to?

Writers and activists like Naomi Klein,[12] David Harvey,[13] and George Monbiot frequently identify neoliberalism as "the ideology at the root of all our problems."[14] Much has been written about neoliberalism's "major role in a remarkable variety of crises,"[15] and how

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[12] Naomi Klein, *The Shock Doctrine: The Rise of Disaster Capitalism* (New York: Picador, 2008).
[13] David Harvey, *A Brief History of Neoliberalism* (Oxford and New York; Oxford University Press, 2005).
[14] George Monbiot, "Neoliberalism – the ideology at the root of all our problems," in *The Guardian*, 15 April 2016: https://www.theguardian.com/books/2016/apr/15/neoliberalism-ideology-problem-george-monbiot
[15] Ibid.

it has been exacerbating economic, social, political, and environmental problems since the late 1970s. The description of neoliberalism as a problem has been well-developed by such scholars and activists. There are even well-developed alternative visions beyond neoliberalism which astutely avoid returning to the authoritarian problems of economic central planning[16] or the overreliance on top-down, capitalo-centric politics.[17]

While there is much discussion among activists and scholars about neoliberalism and its alternatives, nothing has come near to supplanting the former's dominance or solving its crisis-problems. Monbiot admits "we respond to these crises [of neoliberalism] as if they emerge in isolation, apparently unaware that they have all been either catalysed or exacerbated by the same coherent philosophy."[18] I would add that a hyper-individualist philosophy (and political system) like neoliberalism not only encourages people to see crises in isolation, but also tends to generate highly individualised and isolated responses by an atomised citizenry. Responding to isolated crises in isolated ways severely truncates the political capacity of citizens to effectively mitigate persistent problems which require wide-scale *political* and *social* solutions. Conversely, the insufficiency of individual and isolated political responses gives rise to the need for countervailing social and political capacity (i.e. political solidarity) that can sufficiently respond to the crises of neoliberalism. In other words, if people are going to build robust alternatives to rival and potentially replace neoliberalism, they will need to develop more effective social responses to social problems, and they will need more know-how when it comes to developing their collective political capacities.

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[16] See Michael Albert, *Parecon: Life After Capitalism* (London and New York: Verso, 2003).
[17] See J.K. Gibson-Graham, *A Postcapitalist Politics* (Minneapolis and London: University of Minnesota Press, 2006).
[18] Monbiot, "Neoliberalism."

Therefore, new forms of political solidarity need to be developed which have sufficient social and political capacity to remedy the ills of neoliberalism. As a response to this need, I argue in this thesis for a rethinking of what political solidarity is, how it is socially re/generated, and how best to practice it in ways that are both relevant and timely.

How can we make sense of multiple meanings, practices, and ways of reworking political solidarity? Which methods can help describe, interpret, and disclose new ways of innovating and sustaining political solidarity? What literature also seeks to make sense of these problems, and how can we build on what these texts have already contributed?

The matter of re-evaluating political solidarity from these different angles is complicated by the fact of pluralism. As Sally Scholz demonstrates in her book, *Political Solidarity*, there are many types of solidarity which require delineation and classification for conceptual clarity.[19] Beyond her helpful taxonomy published in 2008, there is still much work to do when it comes to making sense of how various meanings of political solidarity continue to evolve. Further conceptual development of political solidarity needs to account for more recent meanings and modes which are emerging from, but not yet integrated between, academic literature and social movements. This is why, in a review of academic literature in Chapter Two, I develop an analytic framework to make sense of the concept's multivalence, particularly five dimensions in which any instance of political solidarity (1) is shaped by and reshapes specific historical traditions of solidarity; (2) and (3) is oriented toward either

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[19] Sally J. Scholz, *Political Solidarity* (University Park: The Pennsylvania State University Press, 2008).

reinforcing or changing the world via different sets of political concerns and normative visions; and (4) and (5) gets enacted through affective and embodied social relationships and practices.

After setting up how these dimensions of political solidarity play out dynamically in academic literature, I take Mulhall's exemplary approach to reading philosophy out of culture by considering recent social movements as narrative 'texts.' Like scholarly texts, social movements also provide important insights into the historical, political, and normative orientations of solidarity, namely: how it's being socially re/generated today; and how its practices are also reshaping how we should think about developing solidarity going forward. While it is common in fields like anthropology and cultural studies to apply interpretive and hermeneutic methods to study people and art, such methods are rarely if ever used to think of political solidarity as an art produced by social movements. Thinking of solidarity in this original way, I blend interpretive methods with genealogical analysis of different stories of solidarity emerging from contemporary social movements. My methodological approach shares some affinities with Craig Calhoun's approach in *The Roots of Radicalism*.[20] Instead of simplifying the achievements of social movements into a unified narrative about progressive social change, Calhoun emphasises the coexistence of different kinds of radicalism, their tensions, and their implications in the early nineteenth century. Although Calhoun and I apply similar methods to analyse different ideas in different periods of time, they remain rewarding approaches for our complementary projects. In my project, these methods afford the opportunity to close gaps between concepts developed in academic texts and corresponding

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[20] Craig Calhoun, *The Roots of Radicalism: Tradition, the Public Sphere, and Early Nineteenth-Century Social Movements* (Chicago and London: University of Chicago Press, 2012).

ideas being reworked in the cultural texts and stories of social movements. The main benefit of this approach is the greater integration of diverse repertoires of political solidarity which are too frequently developed in isolation by scholars in the academy and activists on the ground.

With this kind of scholarly-activist integration in mind, I analyse several social movements as 'texts' which have rich stories to tell about solidarity. But re-evaluating political solidarity through the lens of social movements is once again complicated by the fact of pluralism, particularly historical and ideological difference. Solidarity is not only contested within academic literature and movement traditions over time, but also between movement traditions on the left and right. And yet solidarity is usually associated with left movements by scholars. As such, there remains a large gap in academic literature when it comes to thinking about how solidarity is manifested across the political spectrum. This is why, in Chapters Three, Four, and Five, I analyse multiple forms of grassroots organising and social movements on the right and left—from right-wing populism in North America and Europe to left-wing iterations of the Global Justice Movement—which have been reworking different kinds of political solidarity in light of deepening ideological differences and competing practices which attempt to restore or renew various democratic visions. In contrast to social movement theories which focus heavily on resources, strategies and outcomes, and in contrast to liberal democratic theories of action which emphasise deliberation, representation and voice, I evaluate un(der)theorised ways—particularly affects and practices—which social movements on the right and left use to re/generate different forms of political solidarity in their attempts to develop alternatives to the dominant political

paradigms of their day. By focusing on how political solidarity is re/generated across ideologically different social movements, I hope to enable new ways of seeing how movements understand and enact purportedly democratic ideals, such as constitutionalism and popular sovereignty, in different ways. Some literature, like Michael Kazin's study of American populism gestures in this direction,[21] but such analysis is limited to rhetoric whereas my analysis applies a focused consideration on affect and practice.

After describing and interpreting various accounts of what political solidarity means in theory and how social movements generate and sustain it in practice, there remain normative questions about how we ought to rework political solidarity so that people can develop the social and political capacity to more efficaciously address the greatest problems of our time. In his book, *Together: The Rituals, Pleasures and Politics of Cooperation*, Richard Sennett provides a convincing skill-based model for refining the ways in which we can and should work with others across difference.[22] Unfortunately, his thesis positions cooperation in opposition to solidarity, whereas I argue cooperation is an integral part of another kind of political solidarity which accommodates the difference and pluralism Sennett and I seek to preserve in democratic spaces. Rather than pitting cooperation and solidarity against each other, I take Sennett's insight about developing the former as a skill-based craft, and apply it to the latter in Chapter Six. In doing so, I expand on Sennett's idea of craft by drawing on literature in philosophy and education, particularly the work of Hubert Dreyfus on apprenticeship.[23] By rethinking solidarity as a skill-based craft that can endure through

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[21] Michael Kazin, *The Populist Persuasion: An American History* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1998).
[22] Richard Sennett, *Together: The Rituals, Pleasures and Politics of Cooperation* (London: Penguin Books, 2012).
[23] Hubert L. Dreyfus, *On the Internet* (Milton Park and New York: Routledge, 2001).

apprenticeship in grassroots organising, we can evaluate how movement participants learn to create and sustain various "arts" of political solidarity. In the proto-typing model I propose, I open an avenue to evaluate the ways in which movements alternately discourage or invite experimentation with decentered practices and relationships of power, plural and cross-cutting affects and practices of collective identification, and new constitutional forms which embody norms of radical democracy.

Why analyse radical democracy and social movements for new ideas and practices of political solidarity?

With the general decline of union and political party membership in recent decades, social movements have become increasingly important sites of experimentation to develop viable alternatives to neoliberalism and overcome shortcomings of liberal democracy. Whereas dominant neo/liberal political formations like corporations and think tanks concentrate political power in the hands of capital while markets maintain social cohesion among consumers through economic interdependencies in divisions of labour, social movements tend to challenge neo/liberal conceptions of *political power* and *social cohesion*. The contrasting social-political ontologies of neoliberalism and the social movements which challenge them not only operate with different conceptions of politics and society, they also require citizens to relate to each other and exercise political power in very different ways. Whereas neoliberalism relies on strong individual identifications and the pursuit of personal preferences in market economies, social movements rely on strong collective identities and the pursuit of social goods in more substantive democratic contexts.

In the heuristic configuration of neoliberalism and its prospective alternatives explored by movements, the former generally functions in a social-political dynamic of individual consumer identity within a framework of market sovereignty. For citizens in a neoliberal paradigm, politics is: largely transactional (e.g. choosing a representative or 'voting with one's wallet' in the marketplace); requires strong identification with individuals and distinct brands; and tends towards atomisation, isolation, and plutocracy.[24] By contrast, social movements generally function in a social-political dynamic of collective identity that is the subject of popular sovereignty. For social movement participants, politics is: largely associational; requires strong bonds of political solidarity; and features a kind of solidarity which tends towards some version or another of "radical democracy."[25] Whereas neoliberalism requires the pursuit of individual preferences, social movements require political solidarity.

Contemporary social movements on the left and right both challenge notions of where the locus of political power ought to be located, and how social cohesion ought to be maintained. Both the Tea Party and Occupy movements, for example, throw these basic social and political categories into question even while they propose radically different answers to each other. In either movement, political power is generally decentralised and comes from the bottom up. In other words, the source of sovereignty is understood to come more directly

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[24] In 2014, a BBC opinion piece argued "US is an oligarchy, not a democracy," citing a study by Martin Gilens and Benjamin I. Page, "Testing Theories of American Politics: Elites, Interest Groups, and Average Citizens," *Perspectives on Politics* 12, No. 3 (2014), online: https://www.cambridge.org/core/journals/perspectives-on-politics/article/testing-theories-of-american-politics-elites-interest-groups-and-average-citizens/62327F513959D0A304D4893B382B992B

[25] Ernesto Laclau and Chantal Mouffe, *Hegemony and Socialist Strategy: Towards a Radical Democratic Politics* (London: Verso, 1985).

from 'the people' rather than from an elite, established, or representative group of power-holders. Thus, *popular sovereignty* is a common conception of political power used by social movements. Furthermore, the 'people' who constitute the source of political power in social movements require something more than economic interdependence for social cohesion. While an *individual consumer identity* might suffice to hold people together in a common market which aggregates individual preferences, it does not suffice as a *collective identity* that is strong enough to hold political actors together in social movements. As Alberto Melucci argued in the 1980s, social cohesion in movements requires a process of negotiating "collective identity" through cognitive definition, active relationship, and emotional investments.[26] On questions of political power and social cohesion, social movements tend to rely on conceptions of popular sovereignty and collective identity which challenge neoliberal conceptions of market sovereignty and individual consumer identity. This interdependence between 'radical' political power rooted in a socially cohesive and collectively identifiable 'demos' makes contested forms of 'radical democracy' in social movements ideal objects of study to rethink political solidarity.

Why focus on the concept of political solidarity rather than cognate concepts like popular sovereignty or collective identity?

Admittedly, political solidarity is not the only concept or practice that is threatened by neoliberalism, nor the only one that has contested histories, orientations toward power, normative visions, social and affective relations, and practiced manifestations. Many

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[26]Alberto Melucci, *Nomads of the Present: Social Movements and Individual Needs in Contemporary Society* (Philadelphia: Temple University Press, 1989).

movements often make explicit appeals to other democratic ideas and practices—like popular sovereignty or collective identity—which could readily be analysed by similar methods I employ to study political solidarity. So, why focus on political solidarity over cognate concepts?

Simply put, to exercise power effectively while maintaining social cohesion across difference, political solidarity must integrate corresponding political and social dimensions into its repertoire of ideas and practices. Concepts like popular sovereignty and collective identity are often necessary components of political solidarity, but the former are insufficient on their own to do the political and social work required of the latter. The work of political solidarity is to exercise effective politics from below as a socially diverse yet cohesive group of people. Yet this goal can be compromised when either social or political component is lacking. Strong identifications can exist in the absence of effective politics just as powerful politics can exist without the democratic accommodation of social difference and dissent. In my thesis, political solidarity requires both, which is why I argue for their integration (see sections 2.05 and 2.07 on cross-cutting dimensions of politics and social relations as features of political solidarity), and rethink popular sovereignty (section 5.04) and collective identity (5.09) in ways that work in tandem with radically democratic praxis. Both popular sovereignty and collective identity are integral to my conception of political solidarity because the former provides a radically democratic political orientation while the latter allows for wide-scale social cohesion in conditions of pluralism.

Without such integration, popular sovereignty and collective identity are easily set against each other in ways which undermine the capacity to deliver on the promise and potential of radical democracy. Ultimately, this is why I argue in Chapter Five that the Tea Party's mode of political solidarity is incompatible with radical democracy. While the movement often practices powerful and effective modes of popular power, its reliance on white nationalism,[27] Christian fundamentalist interpretations of the constitution,[28] and other forms of divisive identifications challenge rather than promote social cohesion within the American demos. As such, the Tea Party produces a lopsided mode of political solidarity that strengthens the power of populism but undermines social cohesion. Conversely, the Occupy movement exercised many skillful and successful ways of recognising and accommodating social differences at its General Assemblies (see section 6.07). But the movement's commitment to radically horizontal forms of popular power (covered in section 5.04), along with its tendency to eschew the task of crafting enduring political institutions, produced another kind of lopsided political solidarity. In Occupy's case, the result was a form of political solidarity that temporarily strengthened social cohesion among "the 99 percent," but largely failed in many ways when it came to instituting lasting political and economic transformation.

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[27] See Lisa Disch, "The Tea Party: A 'White Citizenship' Movement?" in *Steep: The Precipitous Rise of the Tea Party*, edited by Lawrence Rosenthal and Christine Trost (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2012): 133-51.
[28] See Theda Skocpol and Vanessa Williamson, *The Tea Party and the Remaking of Republican Conservatism* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2013); Peter Montgomery, "The Tea Party and the Religious Right Movements: Frenemies with Benefits" in *Steep: The Precipitous Rise of the Tea Party*, edited by Lawrence Rosenthal and Christine Trost (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2012): 242-74; and Angelina R. Wilson and Cynthia Burack, "'Where Liberty Reigns and God is Supreme': The Christian Right and the Tea Party Movement," *New Political Science* 34, No. 2, (2012): 172-90.

The lopsided social and political configurations in movements across the political spectrum highlight the need to integrate effective democratic politics from below with successful social cohesion across deep difference. This is why I argue that political solidarity should not only be about creating a sense of group unity (as in collective identification) or situating a group's source of political power in an ideal location (as in popular sovereignty). Political solidarity is more than the sum of these parts. For better or worse, political solidarity puts dimensions like these (i.e. the 'social relations' of collective identity and the 'politics' of popular sovereignty) to work in the collective affects and practices which exert power to either preserve or change the world, at the same time as it develops social cohesion across time and difference. Appropriate forms of popular sovereignty might help us do the former while suitable forms of collective identity can help with the latter, but I argue it is ultimately the integration of both in political solidarity that can advance the social and political goals of radical democracy.

How do we begin to re/define a concept of political solidarity in relation to the

problems, motivations, questions, texts, and methods outlined above?

In this thesis, I set out to re/define political solidarity by developing a theoretical, affectual, and activity-based account of the concept.[29] I begin by defining political solidarity, at its most basic level, as the affects and skillful practices which constitute a "political community"[30] that, in turn, produces regenerative or transformative social and political power. That political community, or solidary group, uses the social and political power of solidarity to preserve or change the world and the group's place in it. On its own, *solidarity* (prior to its political form) can be understood as a set of social relations that generate sufficient cohesion among individuals and groups who work together to do things that can't be done by anyone on their own. This is often understood as *social solidarity*. Solidarity can be further understood as *political* to the degree that group cohesion is sustained across time and difference to produce forms of regenerative or transformative political power which sustain or change the lives of the solidary group and the world they share in common with others.

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[29] By "activity-based," I understand solidarity as a diverse set of skills (phronesis or habitus), constituted by practices of generating and sharing power together—from instrumental solidarities (i.e. enforced unity; fixed order of political concerns; identifications and affects that preserve or expand social and economic hierarchies) to open-ended solidarities (i.e. social cohesion in meaningful community practices that traverse radical alterity, accommodate incommensurable difference, and transform politics in experimental ways).

[30] By "political community," I mean a broad understanding of "polity" that is not reducible to the state; a solidary group that generates and exercises political power together. It could be an affinity group, a social movement, a political party, a state, an international body, etc.

1.03b Research themes and corresponding research questions

In order to unpack and develop this orienting framework and working definition throughout my thesis, three sets of research questions shape my inquiry into three corresponding themes of political solidarity. I elaborate on each set below:

I.

How is political solidarity being theorised? What analytical framework can account for its multivalence?

(1) *Solidarity in Theory: Meanings and Modes*. Before jumping into an analysis of how movements are practicing solidarity to *make* history, it seems pertinent to first ask: what theories of solidarity have we *received* from history, and what bearing does that inheritance have on the meanings and modes of solidarity today? In other words, how do different *historical* modalities of political solidarity shape multiple meanings of the concept? As I show in Chapter Two, a significant historical split in thinking about the concept is oriented around the *normative* question of whether or not solidarity should be thought of as something that explains and maintains social order amidst change or as something that brings about change in the social order. From here, we can ask: how does this split account for different ideological understandings of solidarity across the political spectrum? This is a question which then takes us across *political* and *social* ideas from the right and left; from liberal and conservative conceptions of constitutionalism which prioritise civil frameworks and enforce economic

relationships of mutual obligation, shared liability, and joint debt; to radical conceptions of fraternity which emphasise the cultivation of common law practices and mutual support in civic partnerships with fellow citizens. Through an etymological study of these questions, I uncover how different times and places have required solidarity to be different things to different people so they can come together in various ways to effectively respond to the salient crises of their time. Throughout the chapter, I show that what solidarity means is significantly shaped by what historical crises—and what the people experiencing those crises—demand solidarity to be(come).

With these historical, normative, political, and social dimensions playing out through new and old concepts of solidarity alike, I pursue several corresponding questions in Chapter Two in order to expand the general question about solidarity in theory. In terms of *history*: how do solidary groups tell their story, address their historical problems, and address each other? When it comes to *normativity*: how do they come to share sets of concerns, values, and norms together? Concerning *politics*: how do they order and prioritise their concerns, politically, without alienating group members who might order them differently? And finally, in terms of *social relations*: how do they maintain and regenerate social cohesion across time and difference? By engaging with these questions, I aim to develop a heuristic framework of what solidarity means which, in later parts of the thesis, will help make more sense of the affects and practices required to cultivate it, and the better ways in which we can renew our understandings of political solidarity in the future.

II.

How is political solidarity being cultivated and practiced? What moves people

to come together and take collective action? How do social movements build

and sustain solidarity throughout their lifecycles, across time and difference, in

order to achieve their goals?

(2) *Solidarity in Practice: Moods and Movements*. In addition to its numerous

meanings, political solidarity comes into being through various activities, events, affects, and

practices. In turn, practices of solidarity have numerous normative orientations that say

something about how we ought to be in the world, and what world we ought to preserve and

transform together. Among other normative orientations, responsibility and change are two

common ones. However differently a solidary group construes the world and its place in it,

there is always some sense that it ought to be responsible to the world and for each other,

and that this responsiveness is a normative source of change. Put another way, political

solidarity entails collective responsibility for the world and each other. There is something

about the world we ought to change or preserve, and to do so requires us to transform or

sustain something about how we ought to relate to each other, and vice versa. Drawing on

Nikolas Kompridis, I claim part of the normative work of political solidarity is to "connect the

normativity of [world] disclosure with the normativity of intersubjectivity."[31] The social

activities that "force recognition" of each other make us see social reality in a new way, and

compel us to "[bring] about the necessary change more surely than any argument about

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[31] Nikolas Kompridis. *Critique and Disclosure: Critical Theory Between Past and Future*. (Cambridge and London: MIT Press, 2006): 188.

abstract rights."[32] This normative orientation brings up ontological questions for political

solidarity, namely: How do we see the world and each other differently than before? How do

we change and be changed in light of new recognitions of each other and reality? In Chapters

Three, Four, and Five, I analyse several contemporary social movements with contrasting

normative orientations of political solidarity in order to analyse different ways solidary groups

are using affect and other practices to re/generate and sustain forms of solidarity.

In Chapter Three, I focus on affect in theory and practice to ask: How might affects,

particularly affects of loss, be generative of solidarity? I turn to affect because much

theorising of the subject has been done in relation to various aspects of culture and politics,[33]

but its specific relation to solidarity cultivation remains undertheorised. Some come close,

writing about emotions in social terms where affects "increase or decrease . . . the collective

body's capacity to act,"[34] but even fewer write about "affectional solidarity."[35] Even then, it

is thought of in very limited and personal terms of "intimate relationships of love and

friendship"[36] rather than the potential of a large social or collective body of strangers and

their capacity to be moved into political action.

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[32] Aletta Norval, "Writing a Name in the Sky," in *The Aesthetic Turn in Political Thought*, edited by Nikolas Kompridis, (New York, Bloomsbury Publishing, 2014): 203, citing Charles Spinosa, Fernando Flores, and Hubert L. Dreyfus. *Disclosing New Worlds*, (Massachusetts: MIT Press. [1997] 2001): 81.

[33] See Sarah Ahmed, *The Cultural Politics of Emotion* (New York: Routledge, 2004); Deborah Gould, *Moving Politics: Emotion and Act Up's Fight Against AIDS* (Chicago and London: University of Chicago Press, 2009); Mary Holmes, "Feeling Beyond Rules: Politicizing the Sociology of Emotion and Anger in Feminist Politics," *European Journal of Social Theory* 7, No. 2 (2004): 209-27; and Catherine A. Lutz and Lila Abu-Lughod, eds., *Language and the Politics of Emotion,* Studies in Emotion and Social Interaction (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1990).

[34] Gerda Roelvink, "Collective Action and the Politics of Affect," *Emotion, Space and Society* 3 (2010): 111. Referencing Maria Hynes and Scott Sharpe, "Affected with Joy: evaluating the mass actions of the anti-globalisation movement," *Borderlands e-journal* 8, No. 3 (2009).

[35] Jodi Dean, *Solidarity of Strangers: Feminism After Identity Politics* (Berkeley, Los Angeles and London: University of California Press, 1996): 17-22; 40-41.

[36] Ibid., 17.

I pay particular attention to affects of loss for a few reasons. Firstly, much has been discussed about how love and anger figure centrally in movement politics, but less attention is paid to affects of loss. This has been the predominant case since Wendy Brown famously argued that affects of loss, like melancholia, preclude "contemporary investment in political mobilization, *alliance* or transformation."[37] Yet plenty of movements around the world—from the *Asociación Madres de Plaza de Mayo*, the Arab Spring, numerous Indigenous struggles for liberation, *Black Lives Matter*, to the feminist #MeToo movement—have built viable and enduring political alliances of solidarity directly around the shared sense of loss that is felt across their respective communities. So it seems worth revisiting the re/generative potential of affect, especially affects of loss, when it comes to thinking about re/building the capacities of political solidarity.

In order to revisit the relationship between solidarity and affects of loss, I pursue several questions in Chapter Three: Instead of focusing on attachments to a 'lost' political analysis or *ideal*, as Brown does, what about attachments to the social bonds and relational *practices* that are preconditions for there to be political alliances of solidarity in the first place? What happens when those bonds break down and those practices are disrupted by political and economic crises? Are they really 'lost' forever? Or can they be recovered, recuperated, and renewed? Instead of 'letting go,' 'moving on,' and pretending everything is all right, shouldn't we remain attached to practices that help us re-invest in relationships of political solidarity? If so, how can we respond to loss in ways that might regenerate social bonds, public formations, social movements, and collective capacities for political

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[37] Wendy Brown, "Resisting Left Melancholy," *Boundary 2: An International Journal of Literature and Culture*, 26 No. 3, (1999): 20, my emphasis.

transformation? Ultimately, how might specific affects of loss move people to come together, re/generate social solidarity, and take collective political action?

Once we have a better sense of the role affect plays in moving people to form solidary groups and take political action together, how do they continue to build and sustain solidarity across time and difference in order to achieve their goals? How is solidarity maintained, not just in singular, affectually-charged events, but across the long-term lifecycles of social movements? How do different social movements do this in practice? These are the central questions of Chapters Four and Five.

In Chapter Four, I conduct genealogical, hermeneutical, and situational analyses to re-tell the story of the American Tea Party movement and interpret how it built and sustained political solidarity over time. I argue that the Tea Party can be seen as a contemporary effort to re-inscribe a particular world-shaping story, namely a right-wing brand of modern constitutionalism. As a reaction to the Great Recession of 2007-09, I analyse the genealogical affinities (and tensions) the Tea Party has with longer traditions of libertarian, conservative, and right-wing populist thinking and organising that goes back to reactions against the New Deal in the wake of the Great Depression. My analysis is driven by questions like: How did conservatives react to liberal political responses during a comparable economic crisis in the past? What problems were they captivated by, what issues were they speaking to, and what answers were they seeking? Where did they come from, what did they value, and what goals were they trying to achieve together? How did 'politics-as-usual' fail to address conservative concerns over time? What alternative channels did they begin to set up in order to maintain

solidarity and develop greater political capacity to respond more forcefully to future crises? Ultimately, how did they build upon and change their historical practices in order to sustain solidarity over time and achieve some of their political goals?

In Chapter Five, further questions serve as a bridge to perspicuously contrast the Tea Party's brand of solidarity with that of its political opposite: If a movement like the Tea Party is wedded to a kind of solidarity that undermines economic, social, and political equality, how can Global Justice Movements tell a different world-shaping story of solidarity so that a more radically democratic and egalitarian world can be brought into being? What new picture of political solidarity begins to emerge by speaking against the picture championed by the Tea Party? How does a contrasting movement like Occupy tell a different story that transforms itself and its world through alternative practices of solidarity? What is the world-shaping story of a contrasting movement like Occupy is telling? How should we interpret the a(nta)gonism of the Occupy movement to modern constitutional traditions? Finally, how can the contrasting modes of solidarity covered up to this point be developed to explicitly complement a skill-based model of solidarity cultivation?

III.

What lessons can we learn from different theories and practices in order to renew our understanding of political solidarity? How can we improve our understanding of solidarity, our involvement in it, and the practices which sustain it in order to achieve greater economic equality, social freedom, and environmental sustainability?

(3) *Renewing Solidarity: Problems and Possibilities*. In reckoning with the questions posed so far, solidary group members recognise political problems in the world and work with others to try and solve them. The work of political solidarity creates a collective political subject and agent, the solidary group. Solidary groups take many shapes and forms, but all of them constitute a political polity that seeks regeneration and change; a self-sustaining and transformative "we."[38] How should we constitute ourselves, what should we change and preserve, and how should we generate and use social power to do so? All of these questions become significant ethical-political concerns for solidary groups. How they answer these questions shapes the structure and constitution of solidary groups in practice. There are numerous candidates. Some of them include: binding affects and emotional attachments; common interests and concerns; shared and resistant identities; collectively imagined communities and political visions; reciprocal practices of mutual aid and cooperation; formal and informal networks and partnerships; horizontal and vertical associations of power within and beyond modern institutions and nation states; and so on. How solidary groups emphasise and draw upon varying repertoires of solidarity practices gives each group its own style, identity, and subjectivity.

In Chapter Six, I open an avenue for readers to evaluate how social movements and other grassroots organisations can improve their understanding of political solidarity, their involvement in it, and the repertoires of practices which sustain it in order to achieve greater economic equality, social freedom, and environmental sustainability. Two central questions

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[38] Allison Weir, *Identities and Freedom: Feminist Theory Between Power and Connection* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2013): 82-3; also: "Global Feminism and Transformative Identity Politics," *Hypatia* 23, No. 4 (2008): 110-33.

are considered in this chapter: Firstly, how can we think of cultivating skills of solidarity in more sustainable and enduring ways across time and difference? Secondly, how can we better understand Global Justice Movements, not only as part of a picture of radical democracy, but with a longer view of skillfully re/developing this alternative political ontology? These are particularly pressing questions in a context where popular modes of online activism, for all their strengths, can unwittingly encourage technocratic and disembodied modes of solidarity which result in political atrophy. Micah White has given a name to this contemporary problem: "clicktivism."[39] With new challenges like this, how do we rebuild responsive and supple political muscles for more involved and enduring modes of solidarity? To be more specific, if some of the downsides of clicktivism are detachment, unsustainability, scepticism, and ineffectiveness, then what would a new model of solidarity need in order to accommodate and promote a more involved, enduring, committed, and effective politics? What must activists do beyond online organising in order to acquire the skills they need to be effective citizens in the domain of political solidarity?

I end my inquiry into political solidarity by proposing a distinctive mode that involves practices of reflection, affectual attunement, skill cultivation, and proto-typing the new worlds that communities of practice are trying to expand or bring into being. By offering this evaluative framework in which to integrate and build on the dimensions of solidarity covered in this thesis, I hope to offer ways to overcome the limits of outmoded conceptualisations, debilitating affects, and rigid models of solidarity. Moreover, by the end of this thesis, I aim to have demonstrated that we can continue an apprenticeship in social change which

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[39] Micah White, "Clicktivism is ruining leftist activism," *The Guardian*, 12 August 2010, https://www.theguardian.com/commentisfree/2010/aug/12/clicktivism-ruining-leftist-activism

increases our capacities to come together and build a better world by re-iterating, re-articulating, and refining the art of political solidarity.

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In summary, I weave through these three thematic dimensions of solidarity against the background of academic literature and contemporary social movements. I treat social movements as texts and put them into conversation with academic literature on political solidarity in order to explore these questions and develop a richer understanding of the concept and its practices. My aim is to provide three accounts of solidarity across three parts of my thesis: Firstly, I use academic literature on solidarity to develop an analytical framework of features that account for the concept's multivalence. Secondly, I use situational accounts of political solidarity being employed by contemporary social movements in order to compare contrasting modes of solidarity and rethink what solidarity is, and what it ought to be, in light of contemporary practice. Thirdly, I analyse these contemporary theories and practices of solidarity in order to diagnose problems and propose provisional answers about how social movements can cultivate and enact solidarity in new ways that are more responsive to the crises of our time. Each of these aims, and each set of questions outlined above, correspond with one part of my tripartite thesis summarised below (1.04) and in the Table of Contents.

1.04   Summary of thesis

In the part on "Solidarity in Theory," I survey academic literature on the topic to account for multiple meanings of solidarity (Chapter Two). I identify five common but internally diverse features of solidarity and argue that the diversity of these analytical features accounts for the multivalence of solidarity. I set up these features to account for different modes of political solidarity that are explored in subsequent chapters, namely: the affects that draw people together in solidarity; and the values, theories, and practices which sustain different social movements across their lifecycles. I set up these modes of solidarity in order to present a perspicuous contrast between different practices of solidarity in the next part.

In the part on "Solidarity in Practice," my analysis of political solidarity is situated, historical, and non-exhaustive so that it can be time-responsive and make a relevant contribution to contemporary practices and re-imaginings of solidarity. In my contextual account of modes of solidarity, the scope of social movement texts I engage are limited to some distinct yet thematically related popular movements that have emerged in recent decades. To provide some perspicuous contrast, I refer to a range of social movements. I begin with a look at how specific affects are at play in moving people to re/generate solidarity. I specifically analyse how affects of loss are at play in two examples of solidarity cultivation: (1) at the anti-war demonstrations at the 'School of Americas,' and (2) in the early formation of a social movement like the Arab Spring (Chapter Three). After considering the role of affect in

solidarity re/generation, I use Bill Moyer's social movement framework to develop an original consideration of solidarity cultivation across the lifecycle of the conservative and reactionary Tea Party movement in the United States (Chapter Four). From there, I return to the Global Justice Movement and consider how aspects of the Occupy Wall Street movement can help us rethink political solidarity beyond limiting modern constitutional frameworks (Chapter Five).

In the part on "Renewing Solidarity," I reflect on these contemporary theories and practices of solidarity in order to diagnose problems and explore possibilities about how we can cultivate solidarity differently, in more enduring and effective ways. I propose a normative model of solidarity that understands collective political action and transformational struggle as crafts which require the development of skill and know-how (Chapter Six).

Overall, the development of my thesis across these three parts argues for a distinctive mode of solidarity that involves practices of reflection, affectual attunement, skill cultivation, and proto-typing the new worlds that communities of practice are trying to expand or bring into being. I explore different theories and practices of solidarity with an eye that looks to overcome the limits of outmoded conceptualisations, debilitating affects, and rigid models of solidarity. By re-iterating, re-articulating, and refining the arts of political solidarity, I argue for a continued apprenticeship in social change that increases our capacities to come together and build a better world.

I situate my thesis as complementary to the work of the thinkers and activists who continue to influence the meaning and practice of reflective, transformational, and emancipatory modes of political solidarity that seek to deepen democracy while addressing some of the most pressing problems of our time.

PART II

SOLIDARITY IN THEORY

Meanings and Modes

As outlined in the introduction, my specific research questions are explored across three core parts of my thesis which deal with three overarching themes: Part II: the meanings of political solidarity in theory (Chapter Two); Part III: the practice of solidarity in contemporary social movements (Chapters Three, Four, and Five); and, Part IV: the normativity of a new model of solidarity that builds on the strengths and weaknesses of solidarity in praxis (Chapter Six).

The first set of questions is ontological and hermeneutical: What is solidarity, and what does it mean? The second set is empirical and descriptive: How has solidarity been generated, and how has it fallen apart, across the lifecycles of social movements? Finally, the last set of questions is analytical and diagnostic: In light of contemporary theory and practice, is there a better normative model of solidarity that can be proposed? In summary, what is solidarity in theory and practice, and what should become of it? Overall, my thesis asks and attempts to answer what political solidarity means, how it is practiced, and how it can be developed in arguably better ways than before.

In one way or another, all of these questions are integral to interpreting the meaning of solidarity in this part of my thesis. Because these questions can be answered in more than one way, there is no fixed meaning of solidarity. As I will show in the following chapter, there are multiple meanings of solidarity that can inform our contemporary understandings and practices. The following chapter focuses on expounding the multivalence of solidarity, and on delineating the characteristics, attributes, properties, elements, and dimensions that shape different meanings of solidarity in use by social movements, past and present. In subsequent parts of my thesis, I use the analytical framework established here to make sense of various practices of solidarity, and then, finally, to propose a new normative model of solidarity.

CHAPTER TWO

Developing an Analytical Framework:

A Literature Review of Solidarity

2.00   Introduction

"[T]he experience of crisis may well be the primary inducement to thought in our time,

the time of modernity."

—Nikolas Kompridis, *Critique and Disclosure: Critical Theory Between Past*

and Future (2006)[40]

This is not the first time, and probably won't be the last, when some deep and abiding

crisis, or set of crises, has prompted the rethinking and re-imagining of solidarity. Over two

centuries ago, the Industrial Revolution began to radically change socio-economic relations in

Britain, France, the rest of Europe, and beyond. Amidst this social and economic upheaval,

power dynamics also began to radically change in society. The French and American

Revolutions marked major political upheavals in these countries and around the world.

Together, these socio-economic and political crises presented challenges for those who

wished to maintain social cohesion in the midst of rapid historical transformation. They also

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[40] Kompridis, *Critique and Disclosure*: 3.

presented challenges for those aiming to build the collective political capacity required to make further historical change. In both cases, these challenges prompted thinkers of the time to re/consider how solidarity was practiced, and how it was theorised, in relation to either end.

The challenges of maintaining social cohesion or building collective political capacity at the turn of the eighteenth century gave rise to acute questions about the changing social order, and the particular role of solidarity in it. For instance: should solidarity be rethought as something that explains and maintains social order amidst change, or as something that brings about change in the social order? A split in thinking on this question, among others, gave rise to a multitude of answers in the last two centuries about what solidarity is, what is means, how it is practiced, and what should become of it. Various answers are still playing out and competing with each other in today's social movements. So, before jumping into an analysis of how movements are practicing solidarity to *make* history, it seems pertinent to first understand the theories of solidarity we have *received* from history.

By revisiting, reviewing, and re-searching some of the theoretical accounts of solidarity, it is my hope that we might become more attuned to the multivalence of prior understandings, and thereby open up a freer relation to think about them and practice them in new and better ways. With these ends in mind, I use this chapter to survey salient parts of history and academic literature in order to account for some of the most significant meanings of solidarity we have inherited from history and theory. In addition to accounting for solidarity's multivalence in the history of Western thought, another aim in this chapter is to

develop an analytical framework that delineates some of the main dimensions, features, and aspects of solidarity. In subsequent chapters, I use this framework to analyse contrasting practices of solidarity in recent social movements (Chapters Three to Five), to develop a freer relation with solidarity—to rethink solidarity as a normative ideal in tune with our time (Chapter Five) that can be realised in practice through the cultivation of skill and know-how (Chapter Six).

2.01   Receiving the "call" of solidarity

Before responding to crises, and before holding the world together or re-making it in solidarity with each other, we must first receive the world, its crises, and the understandings of solidarity that have been given to us from history.

The social order of our world is often part of the 'background understanding'—the 'given' of a society—and is rarely thought of reflectively. Nikolas Kompridis sees a crucial connection and a necessary coordination between "the question of how we might transform our relation to our pre-reflective understanding of the world with the question of how we might transform our relation to one another."[41] He sees both Martin Heidegger and Jürgen Habermas as neglecting the interdependence between the normativity of disclosure and the normativity of intersubjectivity:

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[41] Ibid., 188.

> Like [Karl] Marx, Habermas holds the view that human beings make history but not under conditions of their own choosing. What Heidegger adds to this view of history is the idea, rather controversial, to be sure, that the self-conscious transformation of our inherited historical conditions might depend more on how we *receive* rather than how we *make* our history. . . . Heidegger no more welcomes passive submission or blind obedience than Benjamin does. He does suggest the need to listen more patiently, more attentively, to that which "calls" us: *listen*, not obey. . . . Like Benjamin, Heidegger is drawing attention to the fact that we *already* obey—that we have already submitted passively to progress, to modern technology, to modern capitalism, and done so without actually listening to what it is that calls, that beckons, that seduces. The suggestions made in connection with hearing, listening, receiving, are all suggestions that propose a reflective kind of listening, a receptivity that becomes reflexive about its own activity. What is being proposed is therefore nothing like blind submission to fate, but rather, a way by which we might become more attuned to our pre-reflective understanding of the world, to our inherited ontologies, and to our historical circumstances, and thereby open up a freer relation to them.[42]

I am persuaded by Kompridis' account of historical transformation, and the interdependence between world disclosure and intersubjectivity. If we can also understand solidarity as a form of intersubjectivity, then I think this account can have some bearing on the question of solidarity itself. I think solidarity can be thought of as a form of intersubjectivity because it requires some degree of sharing a subjective state with others, and a common sense or shared understanding of the world. If this is the case, then there might also be a crucial

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[42] Ibid., 200-2.

connection between transforming our inherited historical conditions and transforming the ways we relate to one another through solidarity. If my intuition is correct, then we should take the idea of reflectively *receiving* history—the pre-reflective understanding of our world, its crises, and our inherited ontologies and meanings of things like solidarity—at least as seriously as how we might re-*make* history, our world, and our understandings of solidarity with one another. In other words, receiving the "call" of solidarity requires careful hearing, attentive listening, and active reflection on the world, its crises, and prior understandings of solidarity. We need not submit to what we are given, but by reflecting on it we might become more attuned to the problems of our time and the kinds of social relations which might solve them. We might also open up a freer relation to ideas and practices of solidarity; to a praxis of being in tune with the world and each other which can help us develop better ways of relating to each other, and better ways of collectively responding to the crises we face in the world we share together.

To begin this reflection, let us consider some crises that might call us to think about and practice solidarity in new ways. Just as the socio-economic and political upheavals of the Industrial Revolution required past thinkers to re-imagine solidarity, the need to reconsider the concept is being spurred once more by the upheavals of our time. I believe the crises of our day, while bearing some relation and resemblance to past crises of modernity, are unique enough to merit a thoughtful second look at solidarity. In one interpretation, three decades of neoliberalism culminated in the 2007-08 Global Financial Crisis. The ensuing Great Recession of 2007-09 unveiled levels of economic inequality that have not been seen since the Great Depression. Coupled with this economic crisis, are interconnected social, political,

and environmental crises. Capitalist modes of economic production since the Industrial Revolution have played a significant role in climate change which threatens species survival on earth. In the midst of resource wars and drought, economic and environmental crisis are also exacerbating a myriad of social crises: classism, neo-colonialism, racism, sexism, xenophobia, and Islamophobia threaten to further divide and stratify society. Finally, there is a political crisis insofar as modern political institutions continue to prove ineffective in curbing inequality, climate change, and social injustice.

What do these crises demand of us in general, and of solidarity, in particular? It seems to me that they demand a closer look at what is causing economic inequality, what harm it is doing to society, and how we might cultivate solidaristic economic relations that are more cooperative and egalitarian. They also seem to require a closer look at our relationship with the non-human world, and how we might cultivate sustainable and restorative relationships with it. I also think they require a closer look at how to dismantle social relations of domination in order to deal with prevalent forms of social oppression. Moreover, they require us to take a closer look at how we organise political power in our world so that it might be distributed more democratically. Finally, these crises of our times require us to take a look at the theories of solidarity we've inherited, what we might wish to endorse from prior understandings, and what we might wish to change about them. On the latter point in particular, the kind of solidarity we actively receive and re-make should be one that also helps us receive these crises in earnest, and respond to them through social relations that are befitting of their solutions. In other words, if we are to transform solidarity so that it is in tune with, and attunes us to, the crises of our time, it should probably be a model of solidarity

based in transformative social relations, practices, and habits which might also transform the world and solve the crises we've inherited. Thus, we might ask how solidarity has been thought of before, and which features we can build upon in order to cultivate ways of sharing a world together that is more cooperative, egalitarian, environmentally sensitive, socially liberating, and politically empowering.

In light of this way of thinking, it seems a crucial step must take place before moving on to analysing how solidarity is being practiced today, and before developing a better normative model of how it ought to be practiced in the future. What seems crucial is that we first receive and transform the framework in which people have thought about solidarity before. We need to engage in a reflective dialogue about solidarity today which re-frames the past, reflects our times, and offers a new direction in history, out of the crises we are currently facing. I am deliberately echoing Charles Taylor in my suggestion here. Taylor puts it another way:

> many of the great founding moves of a new spiritual direction in history, involve a transformation of the frame in which people thought, felt and lived before. They bring into view something beyond that frame, which at the same time changes the meaning of all the elements of the frame. Things make sense in a wholly new way.[43]

I propose to do precisely this when it comes to receiving and transforming the framework in which people have thought, felt and lived in solidarity before. First we must receive and reconstruct a framework in which to understand certain crucial features of solidarity. From

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[43] Charles Taylor, *A Secular Age*, (Cambridge and London: Harvard University Press. 2007): 730-1.

there, we can find new ways of standing within and beyond this framework of understanding so that we might become open to new ways of thinking about and practicing solidarity.

2.02   Solidarity and multivalence:

Developing an analytical framework

In order to develop an analytical framework for understanding different meanings of solidarity, I conducted a review of academic literature on the topic. From that literature review, I identified five constitutive features of solidarity: its history; its politics; its normativity; its social relations; and its practices. In this heuristic model of solidarity, each of these features can come in various forms, as I outline below. When combined in different ways, these features round out and give shape to the contours of different types of solidarity. Theoretically, there could be as many types of solidarity as there are variations and combinations of these features. In practical terms, the multivalence of solidarity is limited to the scope of its use—the stylistic modes in which the various features of solidarity are expressed in practice. After delineating these five features of solidarity (2.04-2.08), I consider the relationship between meanings and modes of solidarity (2.09)—how the "ideal" imaginings of solidarity are wrapped up in "material" practices—which serve as a framework for analysing social movement practices of solidarity in the next part of my thesis.

2.03   Five features of solidarity

In my review of academic literatures on solidarity, I have come to identify five key features which are regularly present in virtually all types of solidarity. They are:

History. When I say different types of solidarity have their own "history," I am referring to uses of solidarity which share genealogies of meaning over time. In 2.04, I trace solidarity's older roots to Roman and Greek concepts, and some of its more modern meanings which arose from political and sociological uses in eighteenth- and nineteenth-century France. Basically, different types of solidarity feature their own history which is accounted for by the stories and self-understanding a solidary group tells in order to bring members of that group together.

Politics. Different types of solidarity are inflected with seemingly paradoxical political orientations. I sort out some of these political features of the concept in 2.05. Basically, different types of solidarity feature their own account of how power is organised and distributed in a solidary group, how collective power is generated and exercised by the group, how they prioritise their political principles, where its locus of sovereignty is located, and what political projects it serves.

Normativity. The idea of solidarity implies a normative orientation to various goods, values, ethical commitments, and positive moral obligations which bring people together and inspire them to achieve in practice. In 2.06, I outline the normative relationship solidarity often has with values of justice, change, responsibility, and loyalty. Basically, different types of solidarity feature a normative account of a solidary group's ethical purpose and conception of the good.

Social relations. Different types of solidarity imply particular kinds of social relations and affects which draw people together and encourage some degree of unity or group cohesiveness across time and difference. I address this feature of solidarity in 2.07. Basically, different types of solidarity feature a set of social relations which help a solidary group come together, stick together, and cultivate trust to maintain social bonds.

Practices. One of my main claims throughout my thesis is that solidarity is a skill-based practice which not only gives rise to multiple meanings in theory, but multiple modes in practice. I explain this further in 2.08. In subsequent chapters, I analyse practices of solidarity which sustain contemporary social movements.

2.04 "History" as a feature of solidarity

Any type of solidarity has a historical dimension. It gives us some sense of the historically specific ways people cooperate and work together to respond to collective needs and problems of their time. There are many types of solidarity, each with their own histories and trajectories, some of which overlap and diverge over time. I argue the meaning of any type of solidarity is marked by time in two main ways. On one hand, history is always imprinting itself on how solidarity is understood and practiced. We can see this by looking at how the etymology of solidarity enriches current understandings by building on past meanings and practices. Secondly, inherited understandings of solidarity are reshaped by their use and application to collective problems in our present time. How we use a mode of solidarity not only shapes current understandings of its meaning. Its use is also a source to refresh its understanding and develop new iterations of solidarity can come into being now and in the future. In my review of different types of solidarity, any meaningful definition is indebted to the past, responsive to problems of its time, and oriented to future possibilities and solutions. To capture this historical dimension of solidarity and its relation to time, I reconstruct a brief etymology to show where some seminal understandings originate, and what political directions they were taken up. Since any historical reconstruction is partial, and mine is no exception, I will be drawing upon the Western philosophical tradition I know best, not to privilege it as a definitive or even central account of solidarity, but to highlight its contributions to current understandings and contestations of the concept.

Before *solidarité* was introduced as a concept in French, the word could be traced back to Latin origins. In Roman Law, *obligatio in solidum* involved the group liability of joint debtors.[44] Karl Metz provides an extensive history of the concept and also notes it is rooted in the cooperative or "common liability"[45] of civil law. One trajectory of the concept of solidarity continued to sustain this juridical sense and normative orientation towards mutual legal obligations and duties right up to its early use in French. As Laitinen and Pessi note, the juridical notion of solidarity is "the sense of the French word *solidarité* in the Encyclopedia of 1765, and in Napoleon's Code Civil 1804."[46] The history of solidarity from its earliest Roman and French conceptions is tightly bound up in civil, juridical, and legal notions of mutual obligation, shared liability, and joint debt. It is not uncommon for conservative movements, like the modern American Tea Party, to inherit elements of this historical tradition of solidarity, and actively call for national unity based on adherence to a formally posited constitutional order.

Other early French uses point towards another history and trajectory of solidarity that is less bound up in law, and more bound up in social and political relations that indicate bonds of kinship and commonality between individuals and groups. This other meaning of solidarity traces its roots to the more modern idea of fraternity in the Jacobin slogan of the French Revolution of 1789: *liberté, egalité, fraternité*.[47] Fraternity points towards kinship relations of

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[44] Arto Laitinen and Anne Birgitta Pessi, "Solidarity: Theory and Practice. An Introduction," in *Solidarity: Theory and Practice*, (London: Lexington Books, 2015): 1.

[45] See Karl Metz, "Solidarity and History: Institutions and social concepts of solidarity in 19th Century Western Europe," in *Solidarity*, edited by Kurt Bayertz (Dordrecht: Kluwer, 1999); and Scholz, *Political Solidarity*.

[46] Laitinen and Pessi, "Solidarity: Theory and Practice": 1.

[47] Hauke Brunkhorst, *Solidarity: From Civic Friendship to a Global Legal Community*, trans. Jeffrey Flynn, Studies in Contemporary German Social Thought, (Cambridge and London: MIT Press, [2002] 2005): 1.

brotherhood, but with a political rather than legal twist. While indebted to the idea of brotherhood, fraternity signifies less of a familial relationship along bloodlines, and more of a civic relationship between equal men. In this sense, fraternity is a public and political relationship that enables the cultivation of collective political agency to enact a common political will. This public and political character of fraternity has more in common with ancient Greek philosophy than Roman Law. In my reading, fraternity folds together the Aristotelian idea of man as a sociable being with the idea of civic friendship as a mode of citizenship. While law might formally enshrine the status of equality among citizens, it is in the fraternal relations of participation in civic activities that political ideals like equality and freedom are substantively pursued and realised. In fraternity, man is not so much a juridical subject of civil law, but a social and political animal who cultivates common law practices of mutual support in civic partnerships with fellow citizens. It is not uncommon for radically democratic movements, like Occupy Wall Street, to inherit elements of this historical tradition, and actively generate solidarity through civic practices and partnerships in public spaces.

Whether bound up in civil or civic relations, early conceptions of solidarity had to account for who related to each other in bonds of solidarity, and how they did so. In other words, any concept of solidarity has to reckon with subjectivity and style—who counts in relationships of solidarity, and how those relationships are embodied in practice. Some answers to these questions were already being implied by at least 1793 when Georges Jacques Danton declared to the National Convention of France that, "We are all 'solidary' through the identity of our behavior."[48] In an abstract sense, Danton's use of solidarity

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[48] Georges Jacques Danton, quoted by Brunkhorst, *Solidarity*: 1.

enables the constitution of a "we" through a multitude of shared identifications and behaviours—the 'who' and 'how' of solidarity. In the specific context of Danton's France, however, his "we" was rather narrow. The ideal figure of solidarity would have been a Frenchman identifying with revolutionary compatriots whose behavior was set in new relations of equality and fraternity among each other, while remaining resistant to the old hierarchical relations of the *ancien régime*. In this historical case, the fraternal subject is limited to national, gendered and political identifications. It is the French, male revolutionary who relates to his own kind in bonds of social and political solidarity. The constitutive exclusions of early French solidarity are twofold: On one hand, it is marked by resistance to the old and unequal political order of the *ancien régime*. On the other hand, it risks reproducing other forms of inequality through national, gendered, and political exclusions. No matter how inclusive fraternity is or attempts to be, it cannot fully erase the external differences with others it is resisting, nor can it fully erase internal differences among brothers. As Danton came to know all too well, the resistant behaviour of fraternity risks devolving into fratricide when internal differences aren't managed. Danton was executed by guillotine.

Early attempts at fraternity during the French Revolution left a lot of room for subjectivities and styles of solidarity to be developed and expanded. Paradoxically, the new relations of mutual support made possible by fraternity also brought with them new fragilities and vulnerabilities. It became evident that fraternity's spirit of inclusivity could be betrayed by its constitutive exclusions and contingent failures to manage internal difference. So, while concepts of civic friendship and fraternity allow for the development of social and political

subjectivities beyond juridical subjectivities, they still risk excluding those without legal status, like non-citizens, as well as groups outside the gendered relations of fraternity, namely women. In this way, the tension arising between inclusion and exclusion, and the related tension of managing internal group differences, respectively present themselves as issues for theorising solidarity. Although these tensions have not been resolved since they seem to be constitutive conditions of solidarity, some sociologists and social scientists tried to alleviate them by focusing on universal bonds of commonality in their conceptual developments of solidarity in the wake of the French Revolution.

The political upheaval of the French Revolution that emerged amidst the social upheaval of the Industrial Revolution prompted some sociologists to study how social order is maintained during transitions from "primitive" to modern society. Sociologists like Auguste Comte and Émile Durkheim came to focus on the concept of solidarity, more than fraternity, in order to develop a more capacious understanding of who relates to each other in bonds of commonality, and how social cohesion is widely achieved across society. In conceiving of humanity as an organism,[49] Comte designates all of humankind as the universal object of solidarity, with differentiated individuals as subjects of this larger whole. In Comte's conception, solidarity is the achievement of social equilibrium in modern society that results from division of labour and occupational specialisation.[50] While Comte recognised that differentiation and specialisation also pose threats to feelings of community and togetherness, he argued that the interdependencies created by new divisions of labour could outweigh older forms of solidarity and maintain a stable, if tenuous, equilibrium. Aafke

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[49] Scholz, *Political Solidarity*: 9-11.
[50] Aafke E. Komter, *Social Solidarity and the Gift*, (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2005): 103.

Komter notes how several thinkers[51] in the British tradition of utilitarianism at the time also studied processes of individuation in order to emphasise non-interference of self-interest—"the undisturbed interplay of individual interests"[52]—as the basis of modern solidarity. These early sociological theories serve as a counterpoint to older forms of solidarity that emphasise shared beliefs, norms, positive duties or responsibilities, and state regulations. Building on the work of his predecessors, Durkheim came to develop sociology's most well-known theory of solidarity in *The Division of Labor in Society*.[53] His two-fold conception marks a difference between pre-modern and modern types of solidarity which he calls "mechanical" and "organic" solidarity, respectively. Carol Gould provides a useful summary of Durkheim's conception:

> Surprisingly, perhaps, "mechanical" [solidarity] does not apply to post-industrial revolution societies, but on the contrary, pertains to the relation among members of traditional communities where each member is similarly characterized in terms of identities and perspectives, and stands in the same relation as others to the community as a whole. This holistic interpretation is contrasted with the more modern "organic" solidarity, where people are linked in interdependent relations with others through an extended division of labor. Here their ties to each other occur almost behind their backs, especially proceeding via their economic interrelations, in which they function as differentiated parts of a large organism[54]

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[51] Komter, Aafke, *Social Solidarity and the Gift*, 103-4; I'm referring to Herbert Spencer and Ferdinand Tönnies as influenced by Adam Smith
[52] Ibid.
[53] Émile Durkheim, *The Division of Labor in Society,* trans. George Simpson (New York: Free Press, [1893] 1964).
[54] Carol C. Gould, "Transnational Solidarities," *Journal of Social Philosophy* 38, No. 1 (2007): 150.

For all the variation in these conceptions of solidarity, sociologists were responding to a similar historical problem, namely, social upheaval caused by rapid changes in socio-economic relations brought about by the Industrial Revolution. How they conceptualised solidarity was shaped by how they thought it could solve this historically specific problem. Their solution to the problem of social upheaval was to maintain social order, so solidarity was conceived as such, especially in naturalistic terms. All of humanity was likened to an organism. New capitalist relations that broke down pre-industrial communities into atomised individuals were conceived as an organic development in the natural evolution of humanity. Nature supplied sociologists with models of how atoms work together in an 'undisturbed interplay.' Since atomic interplay happens in accordance with the laws of physics, a naturalistic model of social solidarity has less need, if any, for shared feelings, beliefs, and norms to create bonds of commonality, togetherness, and community. In sociology's naturalistic conceptions of solidarity, relations of interdependence between atomised individuals happen "behind their backs." Paradoxically, while these "natural laws" of interdependence appear to transcend solidarity's roots in the positive duties of Roman Law, they also mark a return to a kind of juridical, law-based conception of solidarity. After all, the capitalist divisions of labour that create interdependencies in modern society also require civil law to enforce and reproduce market conditions of non-interference, and to maintain social order amidst the individual pursuit of competing self-interests and occasions of political resistance to the capitalist order itself.

2.05 "Politics" as a feature of solidarity

Political intentions don't need to be ascribed to individual theorists in order to recognise how different types of solidarity lend themselves to different politics. Even though the fraternal and sociological conceptions of solidarity I reconstructed from history developed alongside each other in the same context of eighteenth- and nineteenth-century France, they had quite different political implications. Their differences reveal several paradoxes of solidarity. Lawrence Wilde draws attention to one such paradox: "the word [solidarity] connotes unity and universality, but it is realised only in the course of struggles that entail antagonism and partiality."[55] I take this paradox to correspond with the sociological and fraternal conceptions of solidarity I described earlier. By deducing more differences between these conceptions of solidarity, I develop a few more paradoxes than Wilde. Moreover, I delineate these paradoxes as belonging to different political traditions. In doing so, I hope to illustrate how politics is a constitutive feature of different concepts of solidarity.

As I reconstructed it earlier, the sociological conception of solidarity "connotes universality and unity." Social upheaval is perceived to be the problem while social order is deemed the solution. Solidarity is the achievement of social equilibrium in the transition from a pre-modern and pre-Industrial socio-economic order to a modern, capitalist socio-economic order. Progress from traditional society to modern society is justified in the normative language of science and naturalism. Social cohesion in the midst of change and transition is

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[55] Lawrence Wilde, *Global Solidarity*, (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 2013): 15.

seen as a natural part of social evolution. Solidarity, in this sense, is most politically aligned with traditional forms of progressive liberalism and contemporary forms of reformist conservatism.

In contrast, the historical account of fraternal solidarity I reconstructed "is realised only in the course of struggles that entail antagonism and partiality." An unjust social order is perceived to be the problem while social upheaval is deemed the solution. Solidarity is a partisan political process of antagonism that resists unjust aspects of the social order. Social progress, change, transition, and revolution are dialectical processes that involve the freedom to resist injustice and bring a just order into being. Social orders are rejected or embraced in the normative language of shared significance—group identity, common feelings and affects, social values, beliefs, norms, principles, and cultural practices. Social change in the midst of injustice, domination, and oppression is taken on as a mutual obligation. Solidarity, in this sense, is most politically aligned with anti-authoritarian currents of anarchism, socialism, communism, and radical democracy.

The sociological and fraternal conceptions of solidarity are by no means the only two kinds, but they do well to exemplify political divisions throughout the history of conceptualising solidarity.

Another division in solidarity is not between political traditions, but in practices across the political spectrum. The practice in question concerns the locus of sovereignty and which direction collective power and authority is exercised in order to forge solidarity. Richard Sennett provides a useful distinction to help answer this question. He says "solidarity [historically], as now, was divided between those who sought to forge it top-down and those who sought to create it from the ground up."[56] For Sennett, both of these kinds of solidarity come with their own set of strengths and weaknesses. Top-down solidarity is good at achieving unity at the nation-state level, while bottom-up solidarity is good at achieving diverse inclusion, social cohesion, and strong social bonds at the local level.[57] Conversely, top-down solidarity "faces special problems in practicing cooperation" and coalition politics, while solidarity from the ground up "is often weak or fragmented" in its political force and efficacy beyond local settings.[58] Sennett cites large, militant political parties, labour unions, and think tanks as exemplars of top-down solidarity.[59] Exemplars of bottom-up solidarity include local associations and grass-roots organisations like churches, lodges, *confréries*, guilds, charities, cooperatives, building societies, and workshops. [60] I share Sennett's distinction between top-down and bottom-up forms of solidarity. I also agree that neither form is unique to the political left or right since both kinds are practiced across the political spectrum. The divide is not exclusive to any one political tradition. Rather, it is a divide in how all political traditions practice their politics of association. As Sennett notes:

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[56] Sennett, *Together*:128.
[57] Ibid., 39-43.
[58] Ibid., 128.
[59] Ibid., 40-1, 44.
[60] Ibid., 42-4.

The [top-down] path emphasizes coming to shared conclusions, which is dialectic's goal; the [bottom-up] path emphasizes the dialogic process, in which mutual exchange may lead to no result. Along the one path, cooperation is a tool, a means; along the other, more of an end in itself.[61]

Thus far, the summation of my first two features of solidarity ("history" and "politics") reveals paradoxical meanings of the term which have developed over time because different conceptions of solidarity were responding to different sets of political problems aligned with different political traditions. Either way, concepts of solidarity feature historical and political dimensions, as varied as they are. Furthermore, each political tradition practices solidarity in different ways depending on the kind of normative vision it has of the world, and the kind of social relations that are required to preserve or bring that world into being. From here, I round out the remaining features of solidarity that my account has only started to touch upon, but has not yet developed: normativity, social relations, and practices.

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[61] Ibid., 45.

2.06 "Normativity" as a feature of solidarity

By "normativity" I mean the goods, values, ethical commitments, and positive moral obligations implied by the idea of solidarity and what people aspire to achieve through its practice. While solidarity is a normative value in itself, concepts of solidarity can be distinguished from each another by their normative orientations towards other goods that we try to protect or achieve through collective action. As a normative value in itself, the concept of solidarity suggests we ought to be in social relations of some kind, and that we ought to work together for some things in particular ways. What these other things are defines the normative orientation of a concept of solidarity. In my reading of solidarity in both theory and practice, I identify several normative orientations the concept can hold. I briefly outline them below.

Justice. Jürgen Habermas has said solidarity is the "reverse side" of justice. Whereas justice concerns itself with the equal freedoms of individuals, solidarity concerns itself with the welfare of citizens who are "intimately linked in an intersubjectively shared form of life."[62] For Habermas, solidarity is more than a binding force within groups. It is the realisation of "the idea of a general will formation" between democratic citizens who mutually recognise each other and seek to justify their actions.[63] Justice has many other meanings to which

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[62] Jürgen Habermas, "Justice and Solidarity: On the Discussion Concerning Stage Six," in *The Moral Domain: Essays in the Ongoing Discussion between Philosophy and the Social Sciences,* ed. Thomas E. Wren (Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 1990): 244, discussed also by Lawrence Wilde, "Solidarity, Justice, and the Postnational Constellation: Habermas and Beyond," in *Global Justice and the Politics of Recognition*, Eds. Tony Burns and Simon Thompson, (London: Palgrave Macmillan. 2013): 108-27.
[63] Ibid.

solidarity is oriented. Among social movements, justice often entails liberation from oppression, exploitation, and domination. In this sense, it doubles as a normative orientation to negative conceptions of freedom. In a Rawlsian sense, justice also entails fairness and equality in addition to freedom. In yet another sense, justice is achieved through the restoration of right relations through reparations, reconciliation, healing, or achieving security. Various forms of civic, civil, and political solidarities are often normatively oriented to one form of justice or another.

Change. As we saw earlier with sociological and fraternal conceptions of solidarity, "change" is seen as a good in various ways. In the former account, solidarity is an appropriate response to change that happens to us. Change can be a natural phenomenon or a result of social progress that requires social bonds to evolve and adapt. In this instance, change is the means and solidarity is the end. In the contrasting account of fraternal solidarity, change is the end result of solidarity. Solidarity involves transforming an unjust social order into a better one. It can be about building alternatives, shifting paradigms, world disclosure, creating a new beginning, or rupturing with the past. Various forms of political solidarity are normatively oriented to change in the latter understanding, while social solidarities are more oriented to adapting to changing circumstances.

Responsibility. All social solidarities entail some sort of responsibility to others and the world they inhabit together, however universal or partial the group. Fraternity invokes responsibility to one's brother; sisterhood to feminist values and other women; nationalism to one's people; labour solidarity to fellow workers; human solidarity to all humankind and

the environment we inhabit, and so on. Juridical and civil conceptions of solidarity demand responsibility to fulfill liabilities under the law. Civic forms of solidarity invoke responsibility to fellow citizens through volunteerism, partnerships and associations, and the welfare state. Political solidarity requires responsibility and fidelity to political principles and fellow comrades in the struggle.

Loyalty. Loyalty is the normative orientation I ascribe to utilitarian forms of solidarity that make ethical appeals without moral obligations to the people it enlists. Sally Scholz calls these loose and misleading uses "parasitic" forms of solidarity.[64] Parasitic solidarity is often the misleading use of political solidarity. For example, when politicians invoke norms of freedom during times of crisis in order to procure more power and authority at the expense of civil liberties, solidarity is not built on the principle being invoked. Whereas Scholz assumes nihilism or the lack of moral commitment is what makes some forms of solidarity parasitic, I think that normativity is merely obscured and misdirected. As is the case with invoking a norm like freedom in order to rally people to give up liberties, ostensibly for more security, the operative norm is really loyalty to authority.

This is a non-exhaustive list of common normative orientations various kinds of solidarity often take. Whatever the norm or set of norms solidarity is in service of, normativity is a regular feature of most types of solidarity.

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[64] Scholz, *Political Solidarity*.

2.07 "Social relations" as a feature of solidarity

In concepts of solidarity, norms usually say something about how people ought to relate to each other and the world. All concepts of solidarity speak to a set of social relations that constitute a "we"—a collective subject—who creates a world in common together. Ideally, solidarity is a way of being together that meets collective needs, and individual desires for belonging, as best we can. In practice there is often a gap between meeting and not meeting each other's needs and desires. So, most of the time, solidarity is an aspirational way of relating to each other that strives to meet our needs and desires as both individuals and groups. Coming to know our needs and desires, as partial and incomplete as they might be, requires social skills of discernment. Discernment requires sensitivity to each other and the world we inhabit together. To varying degrees, our sensitivity enables us to 'hold' each other—our bodies and our concerns—together with care.[65] It is in these activities of 'holding' each other with care that we learn creative skills of how to be in solidarity with one another. Sometimes we stand side-by-side, shoulder-to-shoulder, to hold each other up. Sometimes we have each other's backs. As we become proficient at solidarity, we come to trust and rely on each other in increasingly 'solid' relations of interdependence. At the same time, when we depend on others, or they depend on us, our relationships become vulnerable to failure. On occasion, we might not be as careful as solidarity requires. We might 'drop' what was once 'held,' and what were once 'solid' social relations begin to weaken and fragment. Solidarity

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[65] I am using the language of "holding environment" of Donald W. Winnicott, which I develop further as a basis for creative and skillful cultivation of social solidarity in subsequent chapters. See *The Family and Individual Development*, (London and New York: Routledge, [1965] 2006). See also *Playing and Reality*, (London: Routledge, [1971] 2006).

can be resilient, but it is also prone to break. We can trip up and 'drop' each other, and risk 'dropping' out of solidarity. Repeated missteps and mistakes require adjusting our relationships if solidarity is to be restored. If skills for solidarity fall into atrophy and give way to habits of 'dropping' others for whom we are responsible, we might begin to hold others down, or be held down by others, in relations of oppression, domination, violence, or exploitation. In the absence of solidarity, instead of having each other's backs, we 'back-stab' each other, as the saying goes. Such social relations of harm rather than care can also extend to the non-human world. We might be held down by worldly conditions, or we might be damaging the very worldly conditions that hold and sustain our lives in common. In such cases, when we're not holding each other and our world together with sufficient care, adjustments to relations of power might be required. When we work together to make adjustments in relations of power, social solidarity takes on an added dimension and becomes political solidarity. Complex sets of social relations are required to maintain all this work of solidarity.

In one way or another, theorists of solidarity refer to sets of social relations that get the work of solidarity done. Codes of conduct in courts of law and constitutional arrangements in nation-states shape juridical and civil forms of solidarity.[66] Common law practices and diverse cultural customs sustain social forms of solidarity.[67] As mentioned earlier, sociologists have studied how modern divisions of labour generate interdependencies that can hold societies together, or tensions that can lead people to band together and push

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[66] Brunkhorst, *Solidarity.*
[67] James Tully, *Strange Multiplicity: Constitutionalism in an Age of Diversity*, (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, [1995] 1999).

for transformation of social relations and the political order. Oppressed and dispossessed groups often band together around identities of race, class, gender, nationality, and/or ethnicity for protection and empowerment in struggles for recognition and material redistribution. Relationships with allies are often based on affects of empathy and sympathy. On the local and interpersonal level, solidarity is often held together through relations that generate reciprocity of trust, mutual attachments, and shared concerns, in supportive social contexts. On the local and interpersonal level, solidarity is often held together through relations that generate reciprocity of trust,[68] mutual attachments,[69] and shared concerns,[70] in supportive social contexts.[71] On national and trans-national levels, theorists talk about overlapping solidarity networks,[72] cosmopolitan connections,[73] global citizenship practices,[74] social movements, unions and co-operatives,[75] and coalitions and alliances of international political organisations[76] that build solidarity across borders and cultural differences.[77] All of these forms of social and political organisation require appropriate sets of social relations that concepts of solidarity must account for.

Whatever set of social relations is most appropriate for a particular type of solidarity, the social relations in question require skill to cultivate and habits to maintain. This fact leads to one last feature that different types of solidarity must account for: practices.

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[68] See the works of Annette Baier, David Hume, and Ralph Waldo Emerson.
[69] See the works of Kurt Bayertz, and Bonnie Honig.
[70] See Spinosa, Flores, and Dreyfus, *Disclosing New Worlds*.
[71] See the works of Will Kymlicka, Jennifer Nedelsky, Donald W. Winnicott, and Iris Marion Young.
[72] See Gould, "Transnational Solidarities."
[73] See the works of Kwame Anthony Appiah, Martha Nussbaum, and Jeremy Waldron.
[74] See the works of James Tully.
[75] See the works of Richard D. Wolff.
[76] See the works of Jodi Dean, and Karl Marx.
[77] See the works of Ann Ferguson, and Iris Marion Young.

2.08 "Practices" as a feature of solidarity

Different types of solidarity account for how the four prior features are realised in practice. *History*: How do solidary groups tell their story, address their historical problems, and address each other? *Normativity*: How do they come to share sets of concerns, values, and norms together? *Politics*: How do they order and prioritise their concerns, politically, without alienating group members who might order them differently? *Social relations*: How do they maintain and regenerate social cohesion across time and difference?

Until these features of solidarity come to life in practice, they remain non-situational and context free dimensions of an abstract concept. My reading of academic literature has elucidated patterns in theorising the concept of solidarity which I have grouped into the features of history, politics, norms, social relations, and now practices. Together, these features can be construed in many different ways to describe and develop many types of solidarity. They are maxims that say something about one aspect of solidarity or another. But these abstract truisms can only go so far as to define solidarity in epistemic terms of *knowing-this* or *knowing-that* about solidarity. Practices of solidarity are a unique feature of any conception of solidarity because they transform the epistemic character of the concept into activity-based practical knowledge, or *know-how*, of inter-subjectivity, interdependence, and collective political action.

By thinking about more situational aspects of solidarity's practice in the examples and case studies to follow (Chapters Three, Four, and Five), we can begin to discern which features are most salient in given contexts. By getting involved in practices of solidarity, we can develop competence in considering which features matter in relation to the problems we are trying to address and solve through solidarity. With more practical experience of when solidarity succeeds or fails, we gain proficient skills in discriminating which features of solidarity make most sense to apply in a given situation. Additional practice allows us to refine our skills, develop expertise in collective action, and cultivate immediate and intuitive situational responses in contexts that require solidarity. Further practice enables mastery where styles of solidarity can be cross-appropriated and innovated between groups and individuals who practice it differently. Ultimately, I understand solidarity as much more than an abstract concept, but as an embodied practice; a mode of practical wisdom or *phronesis* where solidarity becomes second-nature and is practiced in the appropriate form, at the appropriate time, in the appropriate way.

By considering how people apprentice themselves in skills of solidarity, we can begin to understand concepts and practices of solidarity in richer ways. From a practical perspective, solidarity can be understood as the practice of activities that matter most in the context of community. Put another way, "solidarity is founded on familiarity with, and competence in, practices that support shared concerns."[78] By getting a better sense of some of the repertoires of solidarity being practiced today, we can then discern which modes of

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[78] Spinosa, Flores, and Dreyfus, *Disclosing New Worlds*: 130-1.

solidarity work better than others and return to think about how we might do the work of solidarity better in the future.

2.09   Chapter summary:

Integrating meanings and modes of solidarity

In the next chapters of my thesis I look at how these "ideal" features of solidarity are wrapped up in "material" practices or modes of solidarity. My purpose for doing this is twofold. One is to address a common (though not universal) practical problem between many theorists and practitioners; the other is to bridge a philosophical divide.

The practical problem, as I see it, is a tendency where many theorists primarily study solidarity in ideal and abstract terms that are all too often far removed, if not divorced, from contemporary practices of solidarity. Meanwhile, many activists who wish to cultivate solidarity often focus on the material conditions for their political projects with little consideration for the background understandings which shape how we imagine, and thus practice, solidarity. There are exceptions, of course, but even scholar-activists and activist-scholars must frequently wrestle between the seduction of world-eschewing theory on one hand, and overconfident activism on the other.

The philosophical problem, as I see it, involves an unhelpful and even antagonistic tendency which posits theorising the "ideal" against the "material," or vice versa. I think Charles Taylor helps bridge this divide by focusing on the repertoires of practice which require common understanding through the material or practical use of an idea. On one hand, he acknowledges the need to imagine the ideas which allow us to negotiate and prioritise normative goods in public. On the other hand, bringing certain ideals into material reality often requires practical experience or familiarity with new practices. In general, "a new practice will have both 'material' and 'ideal' conditions,"[79] as Taylor notes:

> when it comes to inaugurating a new political practice, like democratic self-rule, we see many contexts where what is missing is not certain "material" conditions, like mutual proximity of the population concerned, or good communications, and what might be thought of as "material" motivations, like anger at royal oppression or exploitation by aristocrats, but rather the issue is a lack of commonly understood repertory of self-rule.[80]

I believe the same applies for solidarity as it does for democratic self-rule. In the following parts of my thesis, I attempt to address this problem in the literature on solidarity by analysing social movements and their repertoires of solidarity practices.

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[79] Taylor, *A Secular Age*: 214.
[80] Ibid.

PART III

SOLIDARITY IN PRACTICE

Moods and Movements

In this part on "Solidarity in Practice," my analysis of political solidarity is situated, historical, and non-exhaustive so that it can be time-responsive and make a relevant contribution to contemporary practices and re-imaginings of solidarity. In my contextual account of modes of solidarity, the scope of social movement texts I engage are limited to some distinct yet thematically related popular movements that have arisen in recent decades. To provide some perspicuous contrast, I refer to a range of social movements. I begin with a look at how specific affects are at play in moving people to re/generate solidarity. I specifically analyse how affects of loss are at play in two examples of solidarity cultivation: (1) at the anti-war demonstrations at the 'School of Americas,' and (2) in the early formation of a social movement like the Arab Spring (Chapter Three). After considering the role of affect in solidarity re/generation, I use Bill Moyer's social movement framework to develop an original consideration of solidarity cultivation across the lifecycle of the conservative and reactionary Tea Party movement in the United States (Chapter Four). From there, I return to the Global Justice Movement and consider how aspects of the Occupy Wall Street movement can help us rethink political solidarity beyond limiting modern constitutional frameworks (Chapter Five).

CHAPTER THREE

Affects of Loss and the Re/Generation of Solidarity

3.00   Introduction

In the last chapter, I delineated several features of solidarity to lay out a framework of understanding what solidarity is, and what it means. In this chapter, I build on that understanding to begin answering another question: how is solidarity re/generated? In subsequent chapters, I analyse how specific social movements after the Great Recession of 2007-09 generated and maintained solidarity across their lifecycles. But before social movements practice solidarity, they are *moved* to come together. This chapter explores how specific kinds of affect draw people together in ways that prefigure their collective capacity to act.

After four decades of the triumphant hegemony of neoliberalism, and especially after the economic losses suffered in the wake of the Great Recession, it has become a challenge to maintain social bonds of solidarity in a culture of atomisation, hyper-individualism, and ruthless competition. For those seeking emancipatory alternatives to neoliberalism, re/generating social and political solidarity is one of the most significant challenges of our time. In many cases, we have *lost* the capacity to act together in politically effective ways. So,

how can we respond to this sense of loss in ways that might regenerate social bonds, public formations, social movements, and collective capacities for political transformation? And how can we rethink the ways in which specific affects of loss move people to come together and help regenerate social and political solidarity?

It is of critical importance to rethink affects of loss in relation to solidarity for several reasons which were touched upon earlier (see 1.03b). To recap, affects of loss tend to receive less attention than heavily theorised affects of love and anger. This has been the predominant case since Wendy Brown warned against the debilitating and even paralysing trappings of political despair that are associated with affects of loss.[81] Yet plenty of movements around the world—two of which are featured in this chapter—have built viable and enduring political alliances of solidarity directly around the shared sense of loss that is felt across their respective communities. So it seems worth revisiting the re/generative potential of affect, especially affects of loss, when it comes to thinking about re/building the capacities of political solidarity.

With Brown's pessimistic take on melancholy in mind, affects of loss might seem like peculiar candidates for generating solidarity and building political capacity. Brown articulates the concern that left-wing melancholy, in particular, is "attached more to a particular political analysis or ideal—even to the failure of that ideal—than to seizing possibilities for radical change in the present."[84] She associates the affect of melancholia with "a certain narcissism with regard to one's past political attachments and identity" that precludes "contemporary

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[81] Brown, "Resisting Left Melancholy": 19-27.
[84] Ibid., 20.

investment in political mobilization, *alliance* or transformation."[85] In this formulation, melancholia is a problem for the work of building political alliances of solidarity.

It might be tempting to over-state Brown's argument against melancholia, ignore despairing voices, and invest wholesale in the politics of hope, but this, too, would be a mistake. Barack Obama's instrumental use of the politics of hope to deliver little structural transformation, much less "radical change," has also given credence to the arguments of Barbara Ehrenreich who warned against "bright-siding" and its role in denying problems, crashing the economy, and sidelining political solutions.[86] Sometimes it requires the clear identification of serious problems—even despairing ones like climate change, economic inequality, and social oppression—in order to have real hope that we might be able to generate political solidarity and solutions. Instead of trading the narcissisms of melancholy for the narcissisms of bright-siding, it might be more helpful to look at the nuanced ways affects of hope and despair interact with each other to generate alliances of solidarity that can transform politics.

In light of Brown's warning against debilitating melancholy, and Ehrenreich's warning against bright-siding denial, I think it's necessary to re-think affects of loss in a way that acknowledges how they can also generate political solidarity. Instead of focusing on attachments to a 'lost' political analysis or *ideal*, as Brown does, what about attachments to the social bonds and relational *practices* that are preconditions for there to be alliances of solidarity in the first place? What happens when those bonds break down and those practices

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[85] Ibid., my emphasis.
[86] Barbara Ehrenreich, *Bright-Sided: How Positive Thinking is Undermining America*, (New York: Picador, 2009).

are disrupted by political and economic crises? Are they really 'lost' forever? Or can they be recovered, recuperated, and renewed? Instead of 'letting go,' 'moving on,' and pretending everything is all right, shouldn't we remain attached to practices that help us re-invest in relationships of political solidarity? I contend we should.

Moreover, in light of pressing environmental, economic, and political problems, and the urgent need to build the social capacity to solve them, I think we need to learn how to work more productively with affects of loss in order to effectively organise alliances of solidarity. In my view, the old catch-phrase of the Industrial Workers of the World (IWW) was half right. "Don't mourn, organise!" could be a little more generous when it comes to grief, and not just for sentimental reasons. I suggest we don't deny the need to mourn our political losses and the better worlds that could have been, but to learn how to mourn more effectively—to grieve in ways that bring us together, mutually support each other, and regenerate our collective capacity to act together in solidarity. Thus, I propose a revision to the IWW adage: 'Yes, let's mourn together. It's part of how we organise.' Mourning is part of how we recognise problems and seize possibilities for radical change in the present. Given contemporary losses in environmental integrity, economic equality, and political freedom, part of what brings us together in solidarity is our collective capacity to mourn for the better world that could have been. We mourn so that we might organise for the better world we hope to build.

This brings us back to the central question of this chapter, namely: how might affects of loss actually be generative of solidarity? To answer this question, I think such affects need to be conceptually re-imagined as well as contextualised and situated in practice. Conceptually, affects of loss are often split in binary opposition between healthy mourning and pathological melancholia which, in turn, tend to be pitted against each other, antagonistically. In contrast to this view, I think there is actually a productive tension or aporia that can be developed and embraced between the two affects. In section 3.01, I look at internal tensions within the theories of Walter Benjamin and Sigmund Freud to propose a complementary understanding of mourning and melancholia. From there, I begin to theorise the affectual dimensions of mourning and melancholia, and how their dynamics can be generative of solidarity that actually increases the capacity of collective social bodies to act together. After this theorising component in section 3.02, I situate these affects of loss in practice by analysing two contemporary protest events (sections 3.03-3.05) in which mourning and melancholia were operationalised to facilitate the generation of social movement solidarity.

3.01 Rethinking affects of loss as complementary to each other and

solidarity:

Continuous mourning and intermittent melancholia

When it comes to collectively emotive and/or affective responses to loss, many modern theorists have spent time constructing variations of a dualistic theory which roughly corresponds with the distinctions Sigmund Freud originally made between mourning and melancholia in the seminal essay he wrote on the topic over a century ago.[87]

Walter Benjamin is one such theorist. Contemporary theorists, like Eng and Kazanjian, draw on Benjamin to explore the "struggle of . . . an active mourning against a reactive acedia."[88] The latter—"reactive acedia"—is a response to a hopeless historicism; a singular view of history that insists upon fixed and totalising narratives and "[empathises] with the victor"[89] by endorsing triumphant hegemonies. It offers no hope that history might have unfolded differently, that something else—something new—might have been possible. Reactive acedia "despairs of grasping and holding the genuine historical image."[90] This denial of loss and inability to mourn other possible accounts throughout history is, for Benjamin, "regarded as the root cause of sadness."[91] On the other hand, Benjamin's "active mourning"

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[87] Sigmund Freud, "Mourning and Melancholia," In *The Complete Psychological Works of Sigmund Freud, Volume XIV*, ed. James Strachey, (London: The Hogarth Press, [1917] 1995).

[88] D. Eng and D. Kazanjian, "Introduction: Mourning Remains," in *Loss: The Politics of Mourning*, (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2002): 2.

[89] Walter Benjamin, "Theses on the Philosophy of History," in *Illuminations*, ed. Hannah Arendt, trans. Harry Zohn, (London: Fontana Press, [1940] 1968): 248.

[90] Ibid.

[91] Ibid.

is an alternative that induces "a tension between past and present, between the dead and living" that animates history "for future significations as well as alternative empathies" in which something new can be produced.[92] "Benjamin proffers a continuous double take on loss—one version moves and creates, the other slackens and lingers."[93]

Benjamin's "active" and "reactive" double take on loss shares an affinity with some of Freud's early distinctions between mourning and melancholia. Freud's dualistic theory sets up an opposition between healthy mourning and pathological melancholia.[94] In the latter conditions of pathological melancholia, the subject persists in their narcissistic identification with the lost love object. In contrast to melancholia, Freud's theory of mourning encourages the subject to work through their grief, decathect from the absent love object, and successfully accept the loss so as to make room for new attachments. In this way, Freud also proffers a double take on loss. One version is open to the new, and enabling of it, while the other is disabling in its unending attachment to that which cannot be recovered.

Whatever variations are made of Freud's theory of mourning and melancholia, the dualistic structure is often maintained, frequently prompting theorists to assert the conceptual and ethical primacy of one side over the other.[95] Ethically, it is often debated whether or not the subject ought to work through mourning and decathect from the lost love object, or remain in a state of melancholy in which continuous bonds are maintained. Contrary to Freud's pathologisation of melancholia, but in line with Benjamin's "alternative

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[92] Eng and Kazanjian, "Introduction: Mourning Remains": 1.
[93] Ibid., 2.
[94] Freud, "Mourning and Melancholia."
[95] Slavoj Žižek, "Melancholy and the Act," *Critical Inquiry* 26, No. 4 (2000): 658.

empathies," we can frequently find queer[96] and post-colonial[97] theorists depathologising melancholia and asserting the normative primacy of remaining attached to counter-hegemonic gender and ethnic identities; identities that are otherwise threatened or repressed by the heterosexism and racism that prevails in contemporary capitalist societies. In a different twist, but in line with Benjamin's "active mourning," we find other theorists championing the work of mourning which involves decathecting from, and letting go of, the narcissistic attachments we hold on to via the lost love object.[98] Whichever side one takes in these arguments, the debates themselves tend to be framed around a theory with a seemingly inescapable binary that pits one side against the other.

This tendency, as I have reconstructed it, is just that: a tendency that has important and notable exceptions. In his later works, Freud expresses some ambivalence about his original theory. Whereas in "Mourning and Melancholia" Freud thinks that mourning comes to a decisive end, in *The Ego and the Id* he suggests that grief work may well be an interminable labour.[99] In personal letters to friends who were dealing with the death of their children, Freud recalls the death of his own daughter Sophie and concedes that, even in mourning "we shall remain inconsolable."[100] What we have here is a softening of the antagonism between mourning and melancholia. Although the tensions and distinctions

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[96] Judith Butler, "Melancholy Gender / Refused Identification," in *The Psychic Life of Power: Theories of Subjection*, (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1997): 132-50.

[97] Eng and Han, 2002; Eng and Kazanjian, "Introduction: Mourning Remains"; Paul Gilroy, *Postcolonial Melancholia.* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2006); A.A. Cheng, *The Melancholy of Race: Psychoanalysis, Assimilation, and Hidden Grief*. (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2000).

[98] Brown, "Resisting Left Melancholy": 22; Žižek, "Melancholy and the Act."

[99] Tammy Clewell, "Mourning Beyond Melancholia: Freud's Psychoanalysis of Loss," in *Journal of the American Psychoanalytic Association* 52, No. 1(2004): 61.

[100] J.W. Rothaupt, and K. Becker, "A Literature Review of Western Bereavement Theory: From Decathecting to Continuing Bonds." In *The Family Journal* 15, No. 1 (2007): 7; cited in R. Davies, "New understandings of parental grief: Literature review." In *Journal of Advanced Nursing*, 46 (2004): 507-8.

within the dualism are not completely erased, such revisions to the theory allow us to see mourning and melancholia as working together in a productive aporia rather than against each other in a dialectic that necessitates resolution.

I would like to suggest several consequences of moving to a new understanding of mourning and melancholia that works with its internal tensions rather than trying to resolve them. For one, when melancholia is depathologised, the medical binary between health and illness is dissolved. One ethical implication of this is that mourning loses any *a priori* normative primacy over melancholia. The ethical merits of either affect become context-dependent. This allows melancholia to carry normative weight in queer and post-colonial arguments. In other contexts, mourning carries normative weight whenever it is convincingly argued that we ought to overcome, or at least weaken, the narcissisms which inhibit or even disable our receptivity to radical alterity, otherness, and renewal. Consequently, philosophical questions shift from being 'either/or' problems to 'both/and' aporia about decathecting *and* continuing bonds depending on the time and place. Whether or not 'we' should 'let go' or 'hold on' depends upon the context, the lost love object (and whether or not it can be recovered), and the 'we' in question. In certain contexts, it might be possible, desirable, and even ethical to do both at the same time; to negotiate the withdrawal of emotional/affectual energy at the same time energy is reinvested in the same object.

It may seem counter-intuitive, paradoxical, or even contradictory, but the pragmatic relationship I am proposing between mourning and melancholia above can work with a reorganisation of emotional/affectual energy that is being concentrated on an object. I will

explore this point in more depth later on. For now, I will just add the suggestion that for this paradox to work, mourning no longer ends; it continues because there is an "infinite alterity"[101] about lost love objects that "will always and forever exceed the psychic mechanisms of accommodation available to the subject."[102] I will also add, and argue further on, that the "self-revilings"[103] Freud saw as distinct in melancholia might have productive potential and, in that potential, carry some normative weight. Again, this will depend upon context. In some contexts, it may not be possible, desirable, or even ethical to continue reviling the self (or the Other internalised within the self). If this contextual criterion holds up, melancholia cannot be continuous, but it might be ethically and politically justifiable in certain instances. Thus, melancholia will be intermittent. It is this new understanding of 'continuous mourning and intermittent melancholia' (hereupon referred to as 'mourning-melancholia') that I wish to develop and expound in an analysis of some instances of political solidarity in which these affects have been operationalised.

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[101] Jacques Derrida, "By Force of Mourning." Trans. Pascale-Anne Brault and Michael Naas. *Critical Inquiry* 22, No. 2 (1996): 161.
[102] Magdalena Zolkos, through personal correspondence
[103] Freud, "Mourning and Melancholia," 244.

3.02   Re/generating solidarity through affect:

Moving collective bodies together

Thus far, I have been reconstructing a more complementary and integrated understanding of mourning and melancholia in such a way that we could proceed to analyse it as a dynamic emotion or affect. At this point, I would like to make a brief conceptual distinction between 'emotion' and 'affect' so that I can proceed with an analysis of mourning-melancholia as a specifically dynamic affect that operates in the re/generation of political solidarity. In order to make this emotional/affectual distinction with brevity, and to clarify the affectual operationalisation of solidarity, I will succinctly reconstruct some recent theorising on collective action and the politics of affect:[104]

The academic literature makes regular distinctions between emotion and affect. One basic understanding of this distinction is that emotions are felt by individuals while affects are felt by social bodies or collectives. While "emotions are seen as a personal and qualified experience of the body's movement,"[105] affects are seen as social and are felt by collective bodies: "every transition is accompanied by a *feeling* of the change in capacity."[106] These "transitions" and "changes" which accompany the feeling of a social body can be understood

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[104] Roelvink, "Collective Action and the Politics of Affect": 111–8. (Further citations in this section come from this source)

[105] Ben Anderson, "Becoming and being hopeful: towards a theory of affect," in *Environment and Planning D: Society and Space* 24, No. 5 (2006): 736; Brian Massumi, "Navigating movements — with Brian Massumi," in *Hope: New Philosophies for Change*, ed. Mary Zournazi (Annandale, N.S.W.: Pluto Press, 2002a): 213.

[106] Massumi, "Navigating movements," 210-43. Emphasis in Original. See also *Parables for the Virtual: Movement, Affect, Sensation* (Durham, N.C., Duke University Press, 2002b).

in light of Spinoza's view of collective movement and the intensity, or lack thereof, of that motion. For Spinoza, collectives are viewed "as shifting compositions of multiple interacting bodies,"[107] where "bodies are reciprocally distinguished with respect to motion or rest, quickness or slowness, and not with respect to substance."[108] These movements are felt as affect and relate to an "increase or decrease in the collective body's capacity to act."[109] Feeling this change in capacity also has its own effect: "it increases the intensity of affect"[110] and "gives the body's movements a kind of depth that stays with it across all its transitions— accumulating in memory, in habit, in reflex, in desire, in *tendency*."[111]

In my view, contemporary theorists tend to focus on what *increases* "the collective body's capacity to act," thus giving rise to affect as a politics of hope. Some have suggested that affect expands the political field because it introduces awareness of endless possibilities in every moment and brings attention to practices that might capture some of these possibilities to create change.[112] Others conclude that "[a]s a politics, affect can create feelings of possibility in the context of hegemonic ideology and hopelessness."[113]

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[107] Roelvink, "Collective Action and the Politics of Affect": 111.

[108] Baruch Spinoza, *Spinoza: Complete Works*, ed. Michael Morgan, trans. Samuel Shirley (Indianapolis: Hackett, 2002) quoted in Hynes and Sharpe, "Affected with Joy: evaluating the mass actions of the anti-globalisation movement,": 8.

[109] Roelvink, "Collective Action and the Politics of Affect": 111. Referencing Hynes and Sharpe, "Affected with Joy."

[110] Roelvink, "Collective Action and the Politics of Affect": 111.

[111] Massumi, *Parables for the Virtual,* 213. Emphasis in original.

[112] Anderson, "Becoming and being hopeful," 738; cited in Roelvink, "Collective Action and the Politics of Affect," 111.

[113] Roelvink, "Collective Action and the Politics of Affect," 112, citing: Anderson, "Becoming and being hopeful"; Gibson-Graham, *A Postcapitalist Politics*.

As much as I sympathise and agree with this politics of possibility and hope, I am interested in another side of the politics of affect, namely that of despair, which accompanies mourning and melancholia. It might be tempting to assume that feeling despair automatically *decreases* "the collective body's capacity to act." In some cases it might do just that. But I am not interested in reproducing a false binary between despair and hope and, therefore, I do not assume that feeling despair necessarily prefigures a politics of hopelessness. Collectively mourning for the loss of something good can often inspire a deeper political commitment to the hope that such a good can be recovered, recuperated, and/or renewed. This is why I am interested in exploring how mourning-melancholia paradoxically works with hope and, in some cases, might even be a condition for new political possibilities. In my understanding of mourning-melancholia, it might be possible to imagine how affects of loss, grief, and bereavement not only decrease, but also *increase*, the collective body's capacity to act, thus prefiguring possibilities to regenerate capacities for political solidarity.

3.03   Operationalising affect in practices of political solidarity

In order to explore the paradoxical potential of mourning-melancholia for solidarity, I am going to analyse how the affect, as I have constructed it, operates in two contemporary examples of political activism which seek to bring about the renewal and regeneration of political solidarity. The first event (3.04) involves my participation in, and recollection of, the annual demonstrations at Fort Benning, Georgia, which demand an end to American training of Latin American soldiers who have gone on to torture and "disappear" some of the first resistors of neoliberalism in Central and South America. In this example, I focus on analysing the affective dimensions of mourning-melancholia which I developed in 3.02. The second event (3.05) is actually a series of related events—namely, the 2010-2011 protests, uprisings, and revolutions in the Arab world. In this latter example, I analyse how the internal tensions in the understanding of mourning-melancholia developed in 3.01 are operative in the generation of political solidarity which helped instigate the Arab Spring in North Africa and the Middle East.

3.04   Affect and solidarity at the annual "School of the Americas"

demonstration

In this section I analyse the shifting bodily relationships in the mass protests at the "School of the Americas" (hereafter the "SOA") to explain how the affect of mourning-melancholia paradoxically decreases *and* increases the collective body's capacity to act. In doing so, I attempt to show how these shifting capacities open up possibilities to generate and renew solidarity.

The SOA protests began with one person's reaction to the loss of another. They eventually grew into an annual memorial where a collective body of tens-of-thousands of people mourn thousands of others who are perceived to have gone missing or been murdered by SOA graduates. In 1980, Óscar Romero, a Catholic Archbishop and liberation theologian in El Salvador, was assassinated while celebrating Mass one day. He was murdered after giving a sermon calling upon Salvadorian soldiers, as Christians, to obey God's higher order and stop carrying out the government's repression and violation of human rights.[114] On 16 November, 1989, six Jesuit priests, their housekeeper, and her daughter were labelled as "subversives" of the government and murdered by Salvadorian soldiers on a university campus in El Salvador.[115] Some years later, the United Nations identified the assassins as members of a

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[114] Peter A. Geniesse, *Saints and Sinners: A Journalist's 50 Years of Third World Wonders* (Bloomington, IN: iUniverse, 2016).

[115] Cynthia Arnson, "El Salvador, accountability and human rights: the report of the United Nations Commission on the Truth for El Salvador," *Americas Watch* 5 No. 7 (10 August 1993).

death squad trained at the SOA.[116] Among many human rights activists, the SOA earned the

moniker, "School of Assassins."[117] On the anniversary of these murders, Father Roy Bourgeois,

an American Catholic priest who had preached in Bolivia, climbed a tree outside the gates of

the SOA and played a sermon by Romero on a tape player to both protest and mourn the

deaths of all who had been murdered by SOA graduates. From this modest beginning, annual

demonstrations grew into "a large, diverse, grassroots movement rooted in solidarity with

the people of Latin America."[118] Within fifteen years, the protests became regularly attended

by roughly twenty thousand people.

I have attended the SOA protests several times, and in different capacities—

sometimes as a participant, other times as a movement organiser and video documentarian.

Every November, a collective body of protesters congregates along a stretch of road about a

mile long in front of the SOA. They walk up one lane and down another in a funeral procession.

Hundreds of names of those murdered and disappeared by SOA graduates are incanted by a

single speaker over a microphone. The crowd of thousands responds in Spanish: "¡Presente!"

This is to acknowledge the 'presence' of the dead and missing. After hours of collective

mourning, the multiple interacting bodies experience a shift in their composition. The slowly

spoken incantations match the pace of the funeral procession, slowing down the collective

body of protesters. In hypercathecting to memorialisations of the murdered and missing, the

'presence' of all who've been lost is felt with such intensity that the collective body draws

tighter. Friends and strangers alike cry and console each other. Some carry prop-coffins where

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[116] Ibid.
[117] See SOA Watch, online: http://www.soaw.org
[118] See SOA Watch, "About SOA Watch," online: http://www.soaw.org/about-us

the symbolic weight of lost loved ones slows down their motion and decreases their mobility. The motion of some mourners is brought to complete rest as they embody the dead by painting their faces white, wrapping their bodies in black, and lying still at the front of the gates to the SOA. Many protesters kneel before the surrogate bodies of their lost loved ones and mourn in near-motionless reverie. Feeling these changes in the collective body's capacity to move and act increases the intensity of mourning and "gives the body's movements a kind of depth that stays with it across all its transitions—accumulating in memory, in habit, in reflex, in desire, in *tendency*."[119]

It is at this point of decreased action, with the crowd almost in a complete state of rest, that the affected collective body begins to experience a transition in its capacity to act. The synchronisation of the movements in the collective body solidifies the multiplicity of individual bodies as one. Paradoxically, the slowing down and rest of multiple interactive bodies into one body creates a feeling of a change in the capacity to act. In response to the wounded attachments to lost loved ones which paralysed multiple mourners in grief, a transition occurs where bodies join together in resistance. This transition is accompanied by a feeling of the change in the capacity to act. After an initial decrease, an increase in the capacity to act is felt by the collective body while the depth of grief stays with it across this transition. The entire collective body quickens its activity in different but mutually supportive acts of resistance. Parts of the body engage in direct civil disobedience by crossing onto SOA property and incurring arrest while, at the same time, other parts of the body offer support. The collective body, having 'lost' a part of itself during the arrests, proceeds to the local

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[119] Massumi, *Parables for the Virtual:* 213, emphasis in original.

jailhouse where protesters have been incarcerated. The crowd outside has maintained a melancholic attachment—a faithful and continuous bond to, and refusal to decathect from—those separated from them in the jail. One practice to maintain these bonds is for the crowd to sing hymns and songs of solidarity to those on the other side of the prison wall. When the prisoners return the call from outside and sing together, it's as if the lost have been found; the collective body is that much closer to being made whole again. The increased capacity to act brings hope and animates the collective body to celebrate with Latin American flare. Puppetistas, music, and dancing are featured to celebrate this new hope in revitalised solidarity and the renewal of alternative possibilities.

In addition to increasing the protesters' capacity for action, these mass demonstrations often affect those around them, like police and security forces, and decrease their capacity to act violently. Even if it takes hours, days, or months, most protesters are eventually released from prison and return to their communities. This different outcome from the original SOA massacres and disappearances expands political fields of action because it "introduces awareness of . . . possibilities" and "brings attention to practices that might . . . create change."[120] Although mourning continues for the lost who will not return, the repeated performance of collective mourning-melancholia at the SOA protests reminds the participants that history might have unfolded differently; that something else—something new—might have been, and might still be, possible. Contrary to a hopeless historicism that would insist these wounded subjects accept their losses, the "active mourning" of SOA protesters

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[120] Anderson, "Becoming and being hopeful," 738; cited in Roelvink, "Collective Action and the Politics of Affect," 112.

animates history "for future significations as well as alternative empathies" in which something new might be produced.

These new beginnings and alternative futures are only possibilities and may not come to fruition—they may fail or miscarry—but there is no shame in that.[121] Although some reforms have been made to change the SOA,[122] the "School of Assassins" still trains Latin American soldiers who continue to be found responsible for murdering and disappearing political opponents in their home countries. And so the mourning continues, along with intermittent melancholic acts of civil disobedience, at each annual SOA protest.

Because of the mixed results of the SOA protests, it might be easy to dismiss its mournful and melancholic style of solidarity cultivation as geographically and politically limited. Yet there are other examples of mourning-melancholia at work in other places and on larger scales. In the next section, I spend a brief moment analysing the operation of mourning-melancholia in an event with similar beginnings, but an ultimately different outcome, than the SOA protests.

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[121] Kompridis, *Critique and Disclosure*: 258.
[122] Examples of reforms include: the SOA being renamed as the Western Hemisphere Institute for Security Cooperation in the early 2000s; some Latin American countries reducing the number of soldiers trained at the SOA; votes in the United States House of Representatives have come closer to closing the SOA.

3.05   Affect and solidarity at the beginning of the Arab Spring

In the last section, I analysed the local collective action of SOA demonstrators and explored the degree to which mourning-melancholia operates as an affect in that socio-political and cultural event; how it increases *and* decreases the capacity of collective bodies to act; and how it paradoxically works with hope *and* despair to open up possibilities to re/generate bonds of solidarity. In this section, I return to the internal tensions of 'continuous mourning and intermittent melancholia' I established in 3.01. I briefly interpret the productive role I think this affectual dynamic played in generating some of the first instances of solidarity in the Arab Spring of 2010.

While unique in its own right, the Arab Spring shares an important similarity with the SOA protests: both collective actions were spurred, in part, by affectual responses to loss. In December, 2010, a twenty-six year old street vendor in Tunisia by the name of Mohamed Bouazizi was stripped of his wares by police. After suffering this indignity, he self-immolated in protest. Bouazizi's tragedy spurred more self-immolations across North Africa and the Middle East which, in turn, triggered mass demonstrations across the region.[123] Some of these demonstrations grew into uprisings, some of which were successful in forcing regime change like the case of Tunisia. As these social tragedies and political breakdowns were registered on

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[123] Robert F. Worth, "How a Single Match Can Ignite a Revolution," *New York Times*, 21 January 2011: http://www.nytimes.com/2011/01/23/weekinreview/23worth.html

an affectual level, many people in the Arab world felt an increased capacity to act collectively, and to struggle for political change and renewal.

On a social level, these protests, uprisings, and revolutions were not simply a response to the loss of one man's livelihood and dignity. Nor were they reducible to a nostalgic longing for a past that never existed. In the midst of tragedy, they were collective responses to a loss of alternative histories that were never allowed to materialise. Those alternative histories promised possibilities for justice and recognition, but they were suppressed and denied by local dictators and hegemonic structures of political power. The widespread injuries of maldistribution and misrecognition testify to the loss of a history that could have been otherwise; to the lives that could have had the material security and personal dignity that are necessary, not only for survival, but for the ability to function well in the intersubjective relationships within which we inescapably find ourselves.[124] It is in the context of this collectively felt loss and simultaneous hope for something new that we find a few more of the paradoxical potentialities of mourning-melancholia in operation.

The paradox of harming oneself through self-immolation in order to protest another is a tragic manifestation of the "self-revilings" present in melancholia but absent in mourning. Economic and social injuries like maldistribution and misrecognition are dispossessions of security and dignity that occur in a social context of intersubjectivity. In losing these economic

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[124] Axel Honneth, *The Struggle for Recognition: The Moral Grammar of Social Conflicts,* trans. Joel Anderson, (Cambridge: Polity Press, [1995] 2005); Nancy Fraser, "Rethinking recognition: overcoming displacement and reification in cultural politics," in *Recognition Struggles and Social Movements: Contested Identities, Agency, and Power*, ed. Barbara Hobson, (Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 2003): 21-32.

and social needs, we also lose the other who was formerly a love-object when they helped sustain us and when they recognised us in sustaining them. When that love-object betrays us, a part of them is lost and reviled. Incorporating the lost object into the ego includes the incorporation of what is reviled about them. And when the reviled object resides within the melancholic subject, it becomes a source of self-reviling. Self-immolation, in this context, can be understood as a melancholic self-reviling; a paradoxical harming of the self in order to draw attention to the injury the lost love-object has inflicted upon the subject. In some cases, the self-reviling can be so strong that the subject is willing to sacrifice their own ego (and the incorporated lost love object within it) through suicide.

No individual or collective body can sustain self-revilings indefinitely, but intermittent melancholic acts (e.g. sporadic self-immolations, fasting, imprisonment for civil disobedience, etc.) can sometimes draw recognition and support, if not from the original love-object, then from others who might identify with injuries like maldistribution and misrecognition. During the Arab Spring, the hypercathecting of multiple bodies to all these public losses had an affect of its own: mourning-melancholia gave the social body's movement a kind of depth that stayed with it across the transition to feeling an increased capacity for political solidarity. With this increased capacity to act, people collectively struggled to change the social and political order of society.

At the same time protesters operationalise affect to regenerate political solidarity, it is important to acknowledge the specificity and radical alterity of all the different needs and desires of those who find themselves in new relationships with each other. Affect rarely settles uniformly across the collective body. Agonisms remain. Some might feel a sadness—a reactive acedia—in having lost the privileges they once had under the old political regime. Others might persist in their melancholic attachment to their own hopes and visions of the new that didn't come to transpire. While some work to decathect from the narcissisms of the former, others might continue to mourn alternative visions of justice and dignity which have not yet come to fruition. Through these different registers of affect, the possibility for more change and renewal in the future remains alive. And if we want those who inherit any new social order to also have the opportunity to change and renew it when they experience injuries and losses that cannot be foreseen in the present, then it seems imperative that affects like mourning and melancholia be operationalised once again in order to regenerate solidarity for future iterations of social and political transformation.

3.06   Chapter summary

It is one thing to have an overview of what solidarity is made of. It consists of different constitutive features. Solidarity signifies a history, a set of social relations and practices, and norms which shape its political objectives. These interrelated analytical categories were sketched out in the previous chapter and literature review (Chapter Two).

It is another thing to have a sense of how solidarity is generated and regenerated by social movements. In this chapter, we began to look at how some of the constitutive features of solidarity emerge in practice. Affect often plays a significant role in bringing collective bodies together and building their capacity to act politically. While some affects can move people to come together and create solidarity, other affects also risk moving people into debilitating despair, insular narcissisms, or denial. Much has been written about these risks with respect to affects of loss. But in a world where many people have to contend with the increasing losses of environmental integrity, economic equality, and political freedom, I argue that particular collective practices of mourning and melancholia need to be reconsidered as resources in recognising our problems, forging alliances to work on them, and even renewing hope in the possibility that we might be able to solve some of them together. With an eye on the generative potential of affects of loss to produce solidarity and political transformation, I have proposed a complementary rethinking of continuous mourning and intermittent melancholia. To illustrate how mourning-melancholia might help regenerate solidarity and political renewal, I have provided a situational analysis of how this dynamic affect has been

operationalised in two contemporary social movements—the SOA demonstrations inspired by Latin American struggle against the imperial imposition of neoliberalism, and the Arab Spring that challenged political authoritarianism across North Africa and the Middle East. Each movement rallied around and worked through different kinds of loss in its own way. Whatever their results, one thing is clear: affect can be understood as playing an important and productive role in the generation of social movement solidarity.

It is yet another thing to maintain solidarity and put it to good use once it has been generated. Putting affect to work in the service of political solidarity has many risks and possibilities. Once solidarity is cultivated over time, it can be used to serve reactionary or emancipatory movements alike. In subsequent chapters, I explore these possibilities and problems through a perspicuous contrast of two social movements which responded in very different ways to the losses of the Great Recession of 2007-09. One of the first responses in the United States was the reactionary movement embodied by the Tea Party (Chapter Four). After the Arab Spring and anti-austerity protests in Europe demonstrated the successful political tactic of occupying public squares, the Occupy movement took off in America and spread around the world (Chapter Five). Together, I examine how solidarity was maintained and undermined across the lifecycles of these different social movements. After considering what solidarity is, how affect helps generate it, and how social movements sustain it, I combine all of this situational analysis to propose an original skill-based model of solidarity (Chapter Six).

CHAPTER FOUR

Solidarity and The Tea Party

4.00   Introduction

In previous chapters, we have looked at what solidarity is, what it means, and how it can be re/generated by particular affects that move people to come together. In this chapter, I go a step further and begin answering another question: how is solidarity maintained and undermined not just in singular, affectually-charged events, but across the long-term lifecycles of social movements? This chapter re-tells the story of the Tea Party in order to analyse the ebb and flow of solidarity, and disclose salient practices of solidarity, across a movement's lifecycle.

Although the Tea Party is not aligned with the Global Justice Movement, and works against it in many ways, it is a noteworthy example of social movement solidarity for several reasons. For one, it was among the first social movements to take-off in response to the Great Recession. In addition to local political reasons for its emergence, the Tea Party had a fertile ground of historically established conservative politics to draw from. Its strong continuities (and tensions) with historical conservative movements and the infrastructure they left behind are worth considering in stories that explain how solidarity is cultivated and maintained over

time. Furthermore, the Tea Party mobilised affects of loss in ways that other movements in the United States were late to do so. While this underscores the significance of affect in cultivating solidarity, it also illustrates the open-ended possibilities and risks of channeling affects for all sorts of political purposes. Moreover, the example of the Tea Party reveals that much more than affect is necessary to maintain solidarity and create political change over time. As I show in this chapter, solidarity has a story that gets told again and again, in many different ways. In re-telling stories of solidarity by activists and observers alike, salient skills of solidarity emerge in ways that allow us to reproduce or alter inherited meanings and practices of solidarity as well as the political traditions they serve. Although solidarity is often thought of as a creature of left politics, the Tea Party demonstrates that it is not an exclusive property of any one political tradition. It also shows there are plenty of productive and cautionary lessons to be learned from diverse examples of solidarity cultivation that are being practiced across the political spectrum. In this chapter, the Tea Party's unique story of solidarity serves to show how solidarity gets work-shopped over time and in social movements. In subsequent chapters, other stories of social movement solidarity provide perspicuously contrasting examples that can help us develop richer understandings of the diverse meanings and practices of political solidarity.

4.01   Story and solidarity

"The Universe is made of stories, not of atoms."

—Muriel Rukeyser, *The Speed of Darkness* (1968)[125]

The Tea Party movement wasn't made overnight. Like any social movement, it was born out of a particular historical and political context. It has a story of where it came from, and how it brought people together; how it arose as a movement, and how it waned; and what changes it left behind for others to take up in new ways.

In my study of the Tea Party movement, I aim to re-tell its story through a historical and etymological lens which examines its origins and influences as it emerged in relation to decades of prior insurgency and movement politics. At the same time, I aim to re-read this story of the Tea Party in a creative and interpretive way that is similar to how Stephen Mulhall[126] and Stanley Cavell[127] read stories—by reading philosophy out of culture; by treating a cultural product like a film or, in this case, a social movement as a philosophical exercise (see 1.02-1.03). The hermeneutical methods of Mulhall and Cavell guide my interpretation of the Tea Party as a 'text' from which philosophy can be deduced. In the case of the Tea Party and other social movements, contracting philosophies of solidarity are offered through their historically specific stories about citizens who come together to

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[125] Muriel Rukeyser, "The Speed of Darkness" from *Out of Silence: Selected Poems* (Evanston, Il., TriQuarterly Books, 1992). Available at https://www.poetryfoundation.org/poems-and-poets/poems/detail/56287
[126] Mulhall, *On Film*
[127] Cavell, *The World Viewed*

generate collective political power, and who use that power to change the social conditions of their world. By re-telling a story about how social movement actors have done solidarity, we can also deduce what they think about it, and what it means. As such, I set out to re-describe a historical account of the Tea Party's origins and influences in this chapter. Moreover, I interpret this re-description in order to discern *what* kind of solidary group the Tea Party is. Throughout my etymological and hermeneutical study of Tea Party solidarity, I consider the following set of questions: what issues do they care about, what problems are they speaking to, and what answers are they seeking together?

My re-telling of the Tea Party's story is not only a descriptive account of the social movement. I also consider how its story is generative and productive for the movement, its observers, and even its adversaries. In other words, I take into consideration how story is also constitutive of the solidary group and its interlocutors. By assembling meaning and significance across time into a narrative that makes sense of one's world and place in it, a shared story has the power to establish and give organised existence to a group, its world, and its politics. In this way, story is more than descriptive. It also has generative and productive power to constitute *who* a solidary group is by answering another important set of questions: where do they come from, what do they value, and what goals are they trying to achieve together?

Because story-telling has both descriptive and generative properties, I think story is useful to answer these two corresponding sets of questions about the Tea Party, specifically, and about social movement solidarity, generally. A story attuned to what people were doing

to make the Tea Party come together, and what they continued to do to keep the movement together, can also help answer *how* political solidarity is generated and undermined across the lifecycle of a social movement. In this chapter, I re-tell a story of the Tea Party movement in order to develop an account of *what* kind of movement it was, who they were as a solidary group, and how they generated political solidarity.

In order to tell the Tea Party's story in a structured and systematic way, and to compare it to different solidarity movements in later chapters, I look at the Tea Party through Bill Moyer's eight-stage model of social movement lifecycles outlined in *Figure 1* and *Figure 2* on the following pages. Moyer's stadial model of social movement progress already provides a narrative framework that tells a general story of solidary groups that can be told in a multitude of ways. While his narrative template captures common patterns in social movement narratives, each movement has its own unique story in how it comes together to respond to the particular historical and political context of its time. Each stage of social movement development invites further rumination and analysis of salient modes of solidarity cultivation in political groups. Admittedly, Moyer's linear model can appear limited when it gives the impression of a cumulative build-up of solidarity that is inevitably improved over time. Nevertheless, I do not think we need to read a social movement's latest iteration of solidarity as either the final stage of solidarity development or a movement tradition's most successful mode of solidarity. To counter limited readings like this, I go on to develop a new, non-linear model of evaluating how social movements build on their skills of solidarity, and how they make an effort to prototype the world in temporal relationship with movements that came before them. I discuss the limits of linear models (6.13) and outline a non-linear

model (6.14) to mitigate these problems in Chapter Six. In the meantime, Moyer's model

sufficiently serves the heuristic purpose of re-telling and comparing social movement stories

of solidarity. Notwithstanding its limits, Moyer's model enables the necessary work of

understanding different qualitative features of solidarity, namely: *what* kind of solidarity a

movement believes in socially, politically, and normatively; *how* a social movement cultivates

solidarity through affect and practice; and *how* citizens build skills over time to rework—for

better or worse—modes of solidarity which they have inherited from preceding stories and

historical traditions.

Figure 1

Eight Stages of the Process of Social Movement Success

1. Normal Times
- A critical social problem exists that violates widely held values
- Powerholders support problem: Their "Official Policies" tout widely held values but the real "Operating Policies" violate those values
- Public is unaware of the problem and supports powerholders
- Problem/policies not a public issue

2. Prove the Failure of Official Institutions
- Many new local opposition groups
- Use official channels — courts, government offices, commissions, hearings, etc. — to prove they don't work
- Become experts; do research

3. Ripening Conditions
- Recognition of problem and victims grows
- Public sees victim's faces
- More active local groups
- Need pre-existing institutions and networks available to new movement
- 20 to 30 percent of public opposes powerholder policies

4. Take Off
- *TRIGGER EVENT*
- Dramatic nonviolent actions/campaigns
- Actions show public that conditions and policies violate widely held values
- Nonviolent actions repeated around country
- Problem put on the social agenda
- New social movement rapidly takes off
- 40 percent of public opposes current policies/conditions

5. Perception of Failure
- See goals unachieved
- See powerholders unchanged
- See numbers down at demonstrations
- Despair, hopelessness, burnout, dropout, seems movement ended
- Emergence of negative rebel

PROTESTS

POWERHOLDERS

CHARACTERISTICS OF MOVEMENT PROCESS
- Social movements are composed of many sub-goals and sub-movements, each in their own MAP stage
- Strategy and tactics are different for each sub-movement, according to the MAP stage each is in
- Keep advancing sub-movements through the Eight Stages
- Each sub-movement is focused on a specific goal (e.g., for civil rights movements: restaurants, voting, public accommodation)
- All of the sub-movements promote the same paradigm shift (e.g., shift from hard to soft energy policy)

Public Must be Convinced Three Times
1. That there is a problem (Stage Four)
2. To oppose current conditions and policies (Stages Four, Six, Seven)
3. To want, no longer fear, alternatives (Stages Six, Seven)

6. Majority Public Opinion
- Majority oppose present conditions and powerholder policies
- Show how the problem and policies affect all sectors of society
- Involve mainstream citizens and institutions in addressing the problem
- Problem put on the political agenda
- Promote alternatives
- Counter each new powerholder strategy
- Demonology: Powerholders promote public's fear of alternatives and activism
- Promote a paradigm shift, not just reforms
- Re-trigger events happen, re-enacting Stage Four for a short period

8. Continuing the Struggle
- Extend successes (e.g., even stronger civil rights laws)
- Oppose attempts at backlash
- Promote paradigm shift
- Focus on other sub-issues
- Recognize/celebrate successes so far

7. Success
- Large majority oppose current policies and no longer fear alternative
- Many powerholders split off and change positions
- End-game process: Powerholders change policies (it's more costly to continue old policies than to change) are voted out of office, or slow, invisible attrition
- New laws and policies
- Powerholders try to make minimal reforms, while movement demands social change

• Focus more on other sub-goals • Spin off of new social movements

Figure 1: Bill Moyer's stadial model of social movement lifecycles.[129]

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[129] Moyer, et al., *Doing Democracy.*

Because Moyer's heuristic model sufficiently accommodates the general patterns and specific stories of social movements, I apply it to different case studies on the shared topic of political solidarity. In this chapter and the next, I analyse two contrasting social movements which took-off in the United States in the wake of the Great Recession of 2007-09. In this chapter, I apply Moyer's model to the Tea Party. In the next chapter, I branch out from Moyer's framework to analyse the Occupy movement. Together, I develop a perspicuous contrast between different modes of solidarity in order to illuminate how the problem of solidarity is treated in different ways, and to distinguish what works (empirically) from what is right (normative). To start this comparison, I begin with a story—a particularly long historical view—of the Tea Party, through Moyer's narrative framework, to make sense of how the movement came together as a solidary group, and how its members developed a political project to shape their world and their place in it.
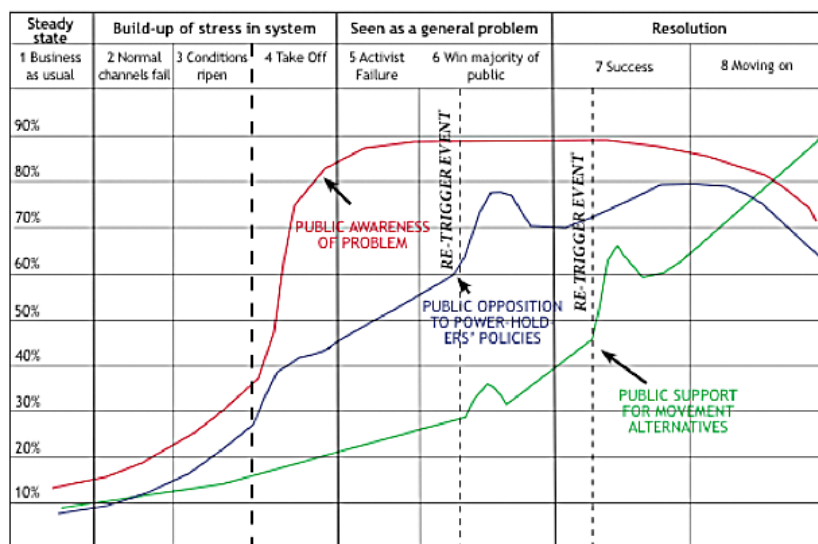
Figure 2: A linear chart of Bill Moyer's eight stages of social movements relative to various public perceptions.[130]

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[130] Bill Moyer, "The Movement Action Plan: A Strategic Framework Describing The Eight Stages of Successful Social Movements." History is a Weapon (1987), online: http://www.historyisaweapon.com/defcon1/moyermap.html; image modification: jessicabell.org

4.02 Lifecycle of the Tea Party movement

(and solidarity development)

Stage 1: Business as usual

(falling back on *novice* modes of solidarity)

"In this first stage—normal times—there are many conditions that grossly violate widely held, cherished human values such as freedom, democracy, security, and justice, and the best interests of society as a whole. Moreover, these conditions are maintained by the policies of public and private power holders, and a majority of public opinion. Yet, these violations of values, sensibilities, and self-interest of the general society are relatively unnoticed; they are neither in the public spotlight nor on society's agenda of hotly contested issues. Normal times are politically quiet times."

—Bill Moyer, *The Movement Action Plan* (1987)[131]

Moyer might have never imagined his Movement Action Plan (MAP) being used to analyse the Tea Party. While the American author and activist's identification with formal values such as "freedom, democracy, [and] security" are also claimed by the Tea Party, there are, undoubtedly, very substantively different understandings of these values between the man and the movement. Despite significant political differences between Moyer and the Tea

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[131] Moyer, "The Movement Action Plan."

Party, Moyer's framework is still a useful device to consider how we might understand the Tea Party and its cultivation of solidarity.

In Moyer's model, there are three stages where people begin to come together before a social movement takes off. In the first stage, a steady state persists and the status quo prevails during "normal times." Relatively atomised individuals across society perceive themselves as holding "widely held" values. In the view of these individuals, their values are being "grossly violated" by "power holders,"[132] but the violations are "relatively unnoticed" and relatively absent from society's political agenda. Rhetorically, it is often said by reactionary movements that a 'silent majority' is yet to see and respond to circulations of power that violate their social values. The people's 'silence' makes for "politically quiet times."

Let us imagine a self-conception of proto-Tea Partiers in Moyer's terms. For decades prior to the movement's take-off in 2009, American social conservatives, economic libertarians, right-wing Christians and populists, and white nationalists were establishing political traditions that the Tea Party would eventually inherit, build upon, and contest. While adherents of these political traditions made up a loose amalgam of individuals across society, they perceived their set of values to be "widely held," if never fully realised. For the Tea Party and its predecessors, the project of building a more perfect political union has been a work in

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[132] For Moyer, "power holders" are generally understood as the political "elites" who operate power over "people" who formally have less power; e.g. politicians versus citizens. This is not to suggest that the dominated party does not hold any power. Substantively, "the people" who constitute social movements also possess power and act on it through their opposition. Thus, I understand Moyer's term "power holders" and use it in the sense of marking dynamic power imbalances and asymmetries that are compatible with relational conceptions of power rather than a binary conception where power is exclusively held by some but not others.

progress since the foundation of the United States. Foundational myths of America are used to help keep these political traditions going in "normal times." They see the American Revolution that took place between 1765 and 1783, not so much as a liberal and republican rejection of British rule, but more as a conservative anti-tax revolt. In this view, the revolution is understood as a means to establish a "divinely inspired"[133] foundational constitutional document that helps secure individual liberty and economic freedom from invasive and unrepresentative government. Patriots of the 1773 Boston Tea Party are revered as ideal role models of this resistant and conservative political subjectivity. Recitations of strict interpretations of the United States Constitution, in addition to re-enactments of Patriots in full colonial garb, are two examples of national rituals that keep this historical imaginary alive across American culture. Embedded in this interpretation of history, subjectivity, and ritual are the political values that predecessors of the Tea Party movement identify as "widely held" across American society. In "normal times," it seems unconscionable that "power holders" entrusted to uphold the Constitution would "grossly violate" the "divinely inspired" foundational values of America's founding fathers.[134] The 'silent majority' would expect "power holders" to have fidelity with these "cherished values" and not violate them.

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[133] Jeffrey Rosen, "Radical Constitutionalism," *New York Times*, 26 November 2010: http://www.nytimes.com/2010/11/28/magazine/28FOB-idealab-t.html

[134] See W. Cleon Skousen, *The 5,000-Year Leap: A Miracle That Changed the World*, (National Center for Constitutional Studies, [1981] 2006) where he argues that the founding fathers rejected "European" collectivism in favour of limited government inspired by fifth-century Anglo-Saxon chieftains who modeled themselves on the Biblical tribes of ancient Israel; also see Jill Lepore, *The Whites of their Eyes: The Tea Party's Revolution and the Battle over American History* (New Jersey: Princeton University Press, 2010) where she tells the right's centuries-long struggle—from Southern segregationists to the contemporary far right—over the meaning of the nation's founding.

In the imaginary of Tea Party predecessors, American democracy is thought of as exceptionally robust and resilient enough to ward off repeated threats to their conservative vision of the nation. "Power holders" who might potentially violate American values are understood as "foreigners" whether they are citizens of the United States or not. This fungible figure of "the foreigner" represents a malevolent and ubiquitous threat to the nation. The figure changes, but it is always there. At first, it is the British loyalist. Over the course of American history, we can imagine interchanging candidates: the "Japanese imperialist," the "Western secular socialist," the "Eastern communist," the "Muslim terrorist," the "foreign-born" president, and the "limousine liberal."[135] For the Tea Party, even "enemies within"—from oppressed racialised groups to elite liberals—are considered "foreign" to a white and conservative vision of a "true American" nation. Whatever the perceived threat to American exceptionalism, it is a "foreign" threat that comes from beyond a "real American" nation. In this xenophobic view, foreign threats can be thwarted off by the defense of "national" values—small government, secure borders, low taxes, individual freedom, and fiscal responsibility in a free market capitalist framework—held by patriotic Americans who truly believe in these ideas. Doing this patriotic duty is just "business as usual" for the Tea Party and their conservative predecessors.

To summarise this first stage in social movement formation as it pertains to the Tea Party and its predecessors, the social bonding that prefigures social movement solidarity begins to be cultivated in three main ways: (1) through strong identification with historically

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[135] For a history of how images of The Other have consolidated disparate elements of American conservative movements for nearly a century, see Steve Fraser, *The Limousine Liberal: How an Incendiary Image United the Right and Fractured America* (New York: Basic Books, 2016).

specific political values; (2) through trust in social institutions and cultural rituals that sufficiently maintain and reproduce those values; and (3) through a collective sense of confidence that shared values can be defended against "foreign" threats.

In terms of developing solidarity as a skill (discussed further in Chapter Six), I think of these forms of collective identification, trust, and confidence as *novice* modes of solidarity. They are "novice" in the sense that the norms (values), social relations (trust), and affects (racial confidence and pride) that are widely shared and taken for granted as given. They are, in a sense, maxims of solidarity—context-free rules and non-situational features that are "known" to keep "the nation" together.

4.03   Stage 2: Normal channels fail

(*advanced beginnings* of political solidarity emerge)

"The intensity of public feeling, opinion, and upset required for social movements to occur can happen only when the public realizes that the governmental policies violate widely held beliefs and values. The public's upset becomes especially intensified when official authorities violate the public trust by using the power of office to deceive the public and govern unfairly and unlawfully."

—Bill Moyer, *The Movement Action Plan* (1987)[136]

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[136] Moyer, "The Movement Action Plan."

In Moyer's model, this is the stage where a social problem begins to be recognised enough to bring small groups together around an issue. While "official policies"[137] appear to tout widely held values, the real "operating policies"[138] are actually violating those values. I would add that the sense of betrayal begins to erode trust between some citizens and power holders. It also shifts affect from a sense of shared confidence into another "intensity of public feeling," like "upset," anger, or resentment. Paradoxically, this affective turn is both a source of polarisation between power holders and opposition groups at the same time that it is a source of growing solidarity in an emergent and resistant identity among dissidents. Nascent opposition groups begin using "official channels" (i.e. civil institutions like courts, government offices, commissions, hearings, etc.) to address the problem. Some gains might be won but, on the whole, these "normal channels" fail or prove to be insufficient in rectifying the problem. By testing the limits of the official political and judicial systems, opposition groups build knowledge of the problem and what is required to solve it.

Again, let us imagine how some conservative predecessors of the Tea Party were beginning to build solidarity at this stage. Since the Tea Party took off as reaction to President Barack Obama's political response to the Great Recession of 2007-09, I think it is instructive to look at similar conservative responses to other economic crises in American history. How did conservatives react to liberal political responses during a comparable economic crisis in

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[137] In his Movement Action Plan, Bill Moyer draws on Noam Chomsky to distinguish between "official" and "operative" policies. Moyer paraphrases Chomsky's distinction as such: "Official policies are fictitious [read: rhetorical] policies which are given to the general public. They are explained in high-sounding moral terms, such as democracy and freedom. Operative policies, on the other hand, are the government's actual policies, which are kept hidden from the public because they violate widely held values and therefore would upset most citizens." (Ibid.)

[138] Ibid.

the past? What issues were they responding to? What problems did they recognise? What answers were they seeking? How did the "normal channels" fail to address conservative concerns over time? What alternative channels did they begin to set up in order to build solidarity and develop greater political capacity to respond more forcefully to future crises? To answer these questions, I briefly consider the evolution of conservative reactions to the most significant economic crisis before the late 2000s: the Great Depression of 1929-39.

The Great Depression is instructive because, like the Great Recession of 2007-09, Democratic presidents came to power in the midst of economic crises and responded with Keynesian stimulus programs. In each case, conservative opposition coalitions formed, recognising similar problems and offering solutions for people to rally behind. Furthermore, Republican opposition was initially weak, which required innovative political realignments to keep a particular set of conservative values and economic conditions alive. While there are some corresponding similarities in these two historical examples, I don't want to stretch the analogy too far. The similarity to which I want to draw attention is not between the reforms of Franklin Delano Roosevelt and Barack Obama (which are quite different in many ways), but to the conservative reaction to the political handling of the earlier economic crisis and the important ways in which it informs the Tea Party's reaction to the latest crisis.

Roosevelt's New Deal was seen to violate many conservative values and economic conditions. Historians often speak of Roosevelt's official policies of the New Deal in terms of "3 Rs"—"Relief, Recovery, and Reform: relief for the unemployed and poor, recovery of the economy to normal levels, and reform of the financial system to prevent a repeat

depression."[139] To provide relief, the size and power of the federal government was expanded to provide social welfare programs. Recovery was pursued through Keynesian stimulus spending funded by a mix of moderate deficit spending and high income taxes.[140] Reform of the economic system was achieved with greater regulation on capital and the empowerment of labour unions in the workplace. The issue for many conservatives was less a matter of whether the reforms were solving a national economic crisis, but whether or not they were violating cherished conservative values and individual economic interests that were seen as fundamental to American identity and material prosperity.

For many conservatives, the New Deal presented a moral, existential, and material crisis that required political change. After Roosevelt won a second term in a landslide, a bipartisan conservative coalition formed in Congress to oppose further New Deal reforms and defend key conservative values and material assets. According to one historical account,

the congressional conservatives . . . agreed in opposing the spread of federal power and bureaucracy, in denouncing deficit spending, in criticizing industrial labor unions, and in excoriating most welfare programs. They sought to "conserve" an America which they believed to have existed before 1933.[141]

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[139] Carol Berkin, Christopher L. Miller, Robert W. Cherny, James L. Gormly, Douglas Egerton, Kelly Woestman, *Making America, Volume 2: A History of the United States: Since 1865*, 6th Edition, (Boston: Cengage Learning. 2011). 629–32.
[140] Before the Great Depression, the top tax rate was 25%; it was raised to 63% in 1932, and progressively increased to a high of 94% by 1944.
[141] James T. Patterson. *Congressional Conservatism and the New Deal*, (Lexington: University Press of Kentucky, 1967): vii–viii.

By the end of 1937, this opposition coalition released a ten-point "Conservative Manifesto"[142] outlining their moral and political commitment to conservative economic principles. The statement called for:

1. lowering taxes on capital gains and undistributed profits,

2. reducing government spending and balancing budgets,

3. restoring peace to the relationship between labor and industry,

4. resisting government competition with private enterprise,

5. recognizing the importance of profit in private enterprise,

6. protecting collateral as a prerequisite for credit,

7. reducing taxes,

8. maintaining states' rights,

9. aiding the unemployed in an economical and locally responsible manner, and

10. relying on American free enterprise.

The Congressional conservative coalition used the "normal channels" afforded by government to address their grievances with the New Deal. While they ultimately failed, politically, to reverse the reforms of the dominant power holders of their time, they did succeed in developing some of the initial conditions for new modes of solidarity among conservatives. Although there was broad public support for Roosevelt's official policies, the conservative coalition believed the operative policies of the New Deal were violating their understanding of American values and hindering the conditions in which to pursue their

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[142] John Robert Moore, "Senator Josiah W. Bailey and the 'Conservative Manifesto' of 1937." *The Journal of Southern History* 31, no. 1 (1965): 34.

individual economic interests. In this sense, the main issues they were responding to were material, political, and existential. The economic crisis had brought about a political realignment that could be perceived as threatening a conservative imaginary of American identity. The existential problem resided in the belief that widespread changes in political and economic values were drastically altering, and even threatening to extinguish, a conservative form of American life. As such, conservatives sought to solve this problem through official channels of government. Nascent opposition groups, like the bipartisan conservative coalition in Congress, were formed. Together, these groups recognised the operative policies of the New Deal as violating conservative values and economic interests. They articulated their values in manifestos and committed to defending their ideal form of life through official political channels for decades to come. Over time, groups who initially shared little beyond opposition to specific New Deal imperatives—groups like Southern segregationists and Northern conservatives—rallied around these values and slowly forged long-term alliances while co-developing national institutions and attempting to rebuild the Republican Party in a new image.[143] Eventually, the Tea Party would come to inherit and rework these social and economic alliances, and their national and political institutions, in order to resist operative liberal policies in the wake of the Great Recession of 2007-09.

To summarise this second stage in social movement formation as it pertains to the Tea Party and its predecessors, the social bonding that prefigures social movement solidarity continues to be cultivated in three main ways: (1) through recognising social, political, and economic problems as collectively shared existential problems; (2) through actively and

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[143] Joseph E. Lowndes, *From the New Deal to the New Right: Race and the Southern Origins of Modern Conservatism* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2008).

publicly re/articulating values; and (3) through developing resistant identities within previously established institutions (i.e. the "normal channels").

In terms of developing solidarity as a skill (discussed further in Chapter Six), I think of these activities of problem-recognition, value articulation, and opposition identity formation as *advanced beginnings* of political solidarity that prefigure social movements. They are modes of solidarity for the advanced beginner because non-situational knowledge of maxims that keeps groups together is no longer sufficient in itself. Knowing a group's values and social relations outside the conditions in which they are challenged is not enough to keep a group together. The advanced beginner must learn situational aspects of solidarity through contextual learning by understanding the domain to which the rules of solidarity apply. In the case of predecessors to the Tea Party, it was through understanding the contextual significance of the Great Depression and the New Deal that conservatives and segregationists were able to address shared existential predicaments, recognise common economic and political problems, articulate conservative solutions, and come together to form opposition groups they identified with.

4.04   Stage 3: Conditions ripen

(*competence* in solidarity grows)

"The 'take-off' of a new social movement requires preconditions that build up over many years. These conditions include broad historic developments, a growing discontented population of victims and allies, and a budding autonomous grassroots opposition, all of which encourage discontent with the present conditions, raise expectations that they can change, and provide the means to do it. / The historical forces are usually long-term, broad trends and events that worsen the problem, upset subpopulations, raise expectations, promote the means for new activism, and personify the problem. They are mostly outside the control of the opposition."

—Bill Moyer, *The Movement Action Plan* (1987)[144]

In Moyer's model, this is the stage where preconditions for a social movement build up over many years. Public recognition of a problem continues to grow, as does corresponding discontent with said problem. Some nascent opposition groups establish themselves as institutions and begin networking with each other. The resilience of opposition groups, their values, and their commitment to alternatives raise expectations among allies. The belief that change is possible grows as the political capacity to achieve that change is built over time. While discontent with the problem grows, so does confidence in the possibility of solving it.

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[144] Moyer, "The Movement Action Plan."

How might we imagine this last stage of ripening conditions before the Tea Party burst onto the scene in 2009? In juxtaposition to the failure of conservatives to stop the New Deal, it seems appropriate to consider a more recent and ascendant moment for American conservatives in the postwar years. I contend that the political success of conservatives since the recession and market crash of the early 1970s is illustrative of such a time.

It took another economic crisis and years of opposition for conservatives to sow discontent with Keynesian economics and New Deal politics. By the 1970s, the American welfare state was fairly robust, taxes were still relatively high, unions were strong, and income inequality was at historic lows. The Republican administrations of Dwight Eisenhower and Richard Nixon had done little to rock the Keynesian consensus. By the time of the economic crash in the early 1970s, conservatives could persuasively make the case to more people across society that the form of this new crisis was shaped by how America got itself out of the last one. Typical elements of their argument posited that the welfare state was too bloated; federal powers of government too expansive; taxes and deficit spending too high; regulations on capital too restrictive; and labour power too strong. As noted by American economic geographer David Harvey, such arguments were bolstered by the establishment of conservative and libertarian organisations and think tanks that started advocating for neoliberal policies in the 1970s.[145] The Heritage Foundation (established 1973), The Cato Institute (established 1974), and the Manhattan Institute for Policy Research (established 1978) are but a few of these influential organisations established in that decade. Typical in missions statements of such organisations is the advocacy for public policy based on the

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[145] Harvey, *A Brief History of Neoliberalism*.

"principles of the American Revolution—individual liberty, limited government, the free market, and the rule of law."[146] While such organisations and think-tanks continued to sow discontent with the status quo, they also raised expectations that conservatives, libertarians, and right-wing populists could change their conditions by rallying around policy solutions. By the end of the decade, opposition to the Keynesian consensus became more popular, both ideologically and politically. The turn away from New Deal politics gave budding conservative networks the opportunity to build the political capacity—locally, nationally, and internationally—to start implementing some of their policy prescriptions. By the end of the decade, Margaret Thatcher began ushering in a neoliberal paradigm in Britain to replace the postwar consensus. Ronald Reagan quickly followed suit in America. Conservatives had finally developed the civic capacity and political means to start implementing structural change that reflected their values, identity, and economic interests.

It took nearly two more decades for the Tea Party's predecessors to solidify their opposition to the resurgence of progressive politics, and to consolidate a significant amount of political capacity within civic society and the Republican Party. Since the 1980s, the neoliberal consensus largely accommodated but never fully secured the values and material aspirations of many conservatives, libertarians, and right-wing populists. For the utopians of these political traditions, building a more perfect union in the image of their political identity remains a work in progress. Even in the early years of neoliberalism, this utopian streak within the American conservative movement continued to encourage some discontent with the pace and progress of change being accomplished by the Republican Party. The politicians applying

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[146] Cato Institute, "Cato's Mission." http://www.cato.org/mission

neoliberal principles to the nation's economic, political, and social structures might have been sufficiently conservative for many supporters, but insufficiently libertarian and populist for others. From these acute ideological differences, a noticeable schism between "grassroots" and "elite" conservatives emerged in the midst of Reagan's presidency. Citizens for a Sound Economy was one such "grassroots" group established in 1984 by two wealthy American citizens, the Koch brothers. In contrast to the "elite" think tanks of the 1970s, Citizens for a Sound Economy was more of an organisation dedicated to mobilising grassroots citizens dedicated to free markets and limited government. In 2002, the group launched a "tea party" movement website, though it didn't take off at the time. The group's first chairman, Ron Paul, would go on to make an unsuccessful presidential bid in 1988 with the Libertarian Party. In 1992, right wing populists supported Independent presidential candidate, Ross Perot, who won nearly 19 per cent of the vote, but still finished third behind the Republicans who lost the White House to the Democrats. Following the failed third party bid of a right wing populist, Ron Paul courted libertarians and populists to support him in a tactic of entryism within the Republican Party. Paul ran unsuccessful but increasingly popular presidential bids in the 2008 and 2012 Republican primaries. Nevertheless, the growing influence of the populist right was formally recognised by the Republican establishment when John McCain chose Sarah Palin as his Vice Presidential running mate in 2008. Although libertarians and right-wing populists initially came short of wrestling power away from establishment Republicans, they continued building upon their organising infrastructure and innovating their political tactics in the decades preceding the "take-off" of the Tea Party in 2009.

A specific example of political innovation by Tea Party predecessors came in 1994. It came at a time when the conservative movement was rebuilding their opposition to a Democrat in the White House. During mid-term elections that year, conservatives from civic organisations and think-tanks worked with Republican representatives to draft the "Contract with America." In many ways, the cooperative effort to develop this campaign document echoed the coalition building that resulted in the "Conservative Manifesto" of 1937 (referenced in the previous section, 4.03). In other ways, it prefigured the "9-12 Project" that helped launch the Tea Party in 2009 (discussed further in 4.07). Like those other two manifestos that came before and after, the "Contract with America" was written when diminished opposition groups found it necessary to rebuild a broad coalition by rearticulating and reaffirming their moral and political commitment to conservative values. The 1994 contract was drafted by Republican Congressmen Newt Gingrich and Dick Armey (Armey would later become the co-chairman of Citizens for a Sound Economy in 2003 and co-author of *Give Us Liberty: A Tea Party Manifesto* in 2010).[147] The Republicans took inspiration from a network of think tanks, like The Heritage Foundation, and transformed the latest conservative ideas of the time into concrete policy recommendations.[148] Their contract promised to implement ten bills:

1. Fiscal Responsibility Act

2. Taking Back Our Streets Act

3. Personal Responsibility Act

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[147] Dick Armey and Matt Kibbe, *Give Us Liberty: A Tea Party Manifesto*, (New York: William Morrow, 2010).
[148] Jeffrey Gayner, "The Contract with America: Implementing New Ideas in the U.S.," The Heritage Foundation, October 12, 1995. http://www.heritage.org/research/lecture/the-contract-with-america-implementing-new-ideas-in-the-us

4. American Dream Restoration Act

5. National Security Restoration Act

6. Common Sense Legal Reform Act

7. Job Creation and Wage Enhancement Act

8. Citizen Legislature Act

9. Family Reinforcement Act

10. Senior Citizens Fairness Act

Together, the bills correspond with many of the values behind the 1937 "Conservative Manifesto." Like the Depression-era document, the 1994 contract reaffirms conservative principles of limiting the federal power of government (bill 8); denouncing deficit spending, encouraging tax credits and tax cuts, and de-regulating capital (bills 1, 4, 7, 9, 10); and excoriating welfare programs (bill 3). Furthermore, it re-articulates and innovates conservatism in relation to its own time by focusing on criminal justice reform and tort reform (bills 2, 6); and by reprioritising unilateral military adventures over international peacekeeping (bill 5).

Although the "Contract with America" was a mixed success in terms of implementation, it was a large success in terms of building political capacity and solidarity across the American conservative movement. Crafting the document from multiple conservative sources also served to bring those disparate right-wing constituencies together. In the end, the "Contract with America" was a culmination of decades of work by the conservative movement. It was brought together by 1990s Republicans thanks to the groundwork laid by civic organisations established in the 1980s, think tanks established in the

1970s, and opposition coalitions that had been developing since the 1930s. In a way, the 1994

contract was a contemporary reincarnation of the 1937 manifesto, only this time it brought

greater political success. The newer contract had the benefit of being buttressed by an even

broader conservative coalition than the one which preceded it decades earlier. By offering a

clear alternative to the Democrats with a platform that distilled conservative principles into a

concise set of policies, the Republicans were elected to a majority in both houses of Congress

for the first time in over forty years. The increased political capacity of the conservative

movement raised expectations among its members and instilled them with a sense of

confidence that they finally had the means to achieve the change they had been seeking since

the New Deal.

Along with an increase in confidence came an increase in frustration and discontent

as a new problem emerged. The old problem of an existential threat to the restoration of a

pre-1933 America had been tempered with the growth of conservative civic institutions and

electoral victories that hadn't been seen in a generation. But a new problem of political

obstruction stood in the way of a conservative movement that now had high expectations of

change and the means to implement it. Democratic President Bill Clinton was the first to

personify this new problem. He used veto power to renegotiate and even reject many of the

policies proposed in the Republican contract. But he also triangulated his policies enough to

sufficiently quell conservative opposition during his terms in office. After Clinton, Republican

President George W. Bush managed to keep most conservative schisms at bay with broad tax

cuts and austerity for welfare programs. Even so, many libertarians grew alienated by costly

wars and restrictions on civil liberties. In December 2007, Bush saw the United States enter

its longest recession since the Great Depression. He lost more support, this time from middle-class conservatives who were losing their savings, their property values, their jobs, and even their homes. By the time the Great Recession was in full swing in 2008, Barack Obama was elected President, returning the White House to the Democrats.

Obama personified a particularly troubling problem for the conservative movement. Worse than merely obstructing the conservative agenda as Clinton did, Obama promised to change political direction altogether. The threat of a Democratic President promising major reforms in the midst of the worst recession since the Great Depression had many in the conservative movement worried there would be a return of FDR-style big government, higher taxes, and deficit spending. While there was no return of New Deal politics, Obama did bring Keynesian economics back into fashion with major stimulus spending and government "bailouts" of key economic sectors to mitigate the recession. This was enough to elicit very strong reactions from conservatives. Bloggers and activists began organising small rallies, independent of each other, against the bailouts.

By the time Obama took office in 2009, the conditions were ripe for conservative reaction to "take off" in the form of a full-fledged social movement. Conservatives felt like they had been here before and were better prepared. This time, they were armed with networks of think tanks, civic organisations, opposition coalitions, policy plans, and a thoroughly discontented population feeling incredibly upset at deteriorating economic conditions. Moreover, many conservatives feared all the political capacity they had built up was going to be undermined by the new Democratic President. With all these preconditions

in place, all it would take was a "trigger event," as Bill Moyer calls it, to set off a reactionary movement.

To summarise this third and final stage of social movement pre-figuration before the Tea Party finally took off in 2009, solidarity continues to be cultivated by opposition groups in five salient ways: (1) by sowing doubt, dissatisfaction, and discontent in the responses of power holders to recurring crises; (2) by collectively codifying, re/articulating, innovating, and advocating historically-developed narratives and alternative solutions to emerging crises; (3) by building trust and confidence in grassroots opposition groups, institutions, think tanks, and networks that advocate reform of civic and political structures; (4) by raising expectations through campaigns that develop political capacity and attempt to implement alternative reforms; and (5) by beginning to embody and personify solutions to group problems.

In terms of developing solidarity as a skill (discussed further in Chapter Six), I think of these forms of social critique, codifying solutions, trust-building, expectation-raising, and embodied activism as part of a set of skills that demonstrate *competence* in solidarity cultivation. They are "competent" modes of solidarity in that they require risky involvement and intervention in the situational context that the advanced beginner has previously come to understand. Competent solidary groups give reasoned consideration to their context by deciphering which mode of solidarity cultivation might matter most to the group, its cause, and potentially sympathetic members of the public. Joy and remorse come from embodied and emotional success and failure in the attempts to cultivate more solidarity.

4.05 Stage 4: Social movement take-off

(activists grow *proficient* in acts of solidarity)

"New social movements surprise and shock everyone when they burst into the public spotlight on the evening TV news and in newspaper headlines. Overnight, a previously unrecognized social problem becomes a social issue that everyone is talking about. It starts with a highly publicized, shocking incident, a 'trigger event,' followed by a nonviolent action campaign that includes large rallies and dramatic civil disobedience. Soon these are repeated in local communities around the country. / The trigger event is a shocking incident that dramatically reveals a critical social problem to the general public in a new and vivid way. . . . Trigger events can be deliberate acts by individuals, governments, or the opponents, or they can be accidents. / By starkly revealing to the public that a social condition and power holder policies blatantly violate widely held cherished social values, citizen self-interest, and the public trust, the trigger event instills a profound sense of moral outrage in the general populace. Consequently, the general population responds with great passion, demanding an explanation from the power holders and ready to hear more information from the opposition. The trigger event is also a trumpet's call to action for the new wave opposition groups around the country."

—Bill Moyer, *The Movement Action Plan* (1987)[149]

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[149] Moyer, "The Movement Action Plan."

This is the shortest stage in Moyer's model. After years of stress building up in the system, and after decades of developing the preconditions for a movement to take off, a major event triggers a public reaction that crystallises a social problem and catalyses people into action.

Trigger Event (1)

On 17 February, President Obama signed the "American Recovery and Reinvestment Act of 2009" (ARRA) into law. It was a $787 billion stimulus response to the Great Recession. The next day, Obama announced the "Homeowners Affordability and Stability Plan" (HASP) which would spend another $275 billion in an attempt to avoid more home foreclosures and mortgage defaults.

On 19 February, Rick Santelli, a business commentator for CNBC, responded from the floor of the Chicago Mercantile Exchange to the recent announcement of government stimulus packages worth over a trillion dollars.[150] Santelli, live on air and backed by traders on the floor, expressed outrage at President Obama and the bailout plan that would have Americans pay for their neighbours' mortgages. In a furious rant against "losers" in the housing market, Santelli called for a "Chicago Tea Party" to save American capitalism from the government's Keynesian reforms. "President Obama, are you listening?" he demanded. The floor of traders erupted in supportive cheers. Within hours, the rant became a viral video and received over a million views online. Within days, Tea Party websites and facebook groups

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[150] Rick Santelli, "Santelli's Tea Party Moment," *CNBC*. 19 February 2009. Video available online: http://video.cnbc.com/gallery/?video=1039849853

appeared online. Some sites were launched by individual citizens, while others were set up by established conservative advocacy groups.[151] All of them echoed Santelli's call for an anti-bailout and anti-tax revolt to protest Obama's stimulus packages. Mass rallies were coordinated and organised across the country that week. On 27 February, the first Tea Party protests were held at the same time in over forty cities across the United States. Thousands attended the rallies which were widely covered by the media. As awareness and coverage grew, more Tea Party rallies and meetings were organised over the subsequent weeks and months.

In this first stage of social movement take-off, solidarity is cultivated in the following salient ways: (1) through an affectually charged and resonant response to a critical event; (2) through the crystallisation of a problem, often personified by a key power holder; (3) through a call to action that is widely transmitted to the general public via media; and (4) through the repetition and innovation of public protest actions that demand accountability from power holders.

In terms of developing solidarity as a skill (discussed further in Chapter Six), I think of these affectual responses to crises, symbolisation of problems, galvanising calls to action, and re-iterations of protest action as part of a set of skills that demonstrate *proficiency* in solidarity cultivation. I consider them to be "proficient" modes of solidarity because they are skills that require experienced involvement and situational discrimination in deciding what event to

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[151] Among these conservative advocacy groups is 'Americans for Prosperity,' an offshoot of Citizens for a Sound Economy, founded in 2004. They registered "TaxDayTeaParty.com" to call for protests against President Obama.

respond to, how to respond to it, and a sense of how to communicate it in a way that draws more people to respond in kind. Intuitive reactions begin to replace reasoned responses for the proficient cultivators of solidarity.

4.06   Stage 5: Perception (and reality) of activist failure

"After [some time], the high hopes of movement take-off . . . turn into despair. Most activists lose their faith that success is just around the corner and come to believe that it is never going to happen. They perceive that the power holders are too strong, their movement has failed, and their own efforts have been futile. Most surprising is the fact that this identity crisis of powerlessness and failure happens when the movement is outrageously successful—when the movement has just achieved all of the goals of the take-off stage. . . . This stage of feelings of self-identity crisis and powerlessness occurs simultaneously with Stage Six because the movement as a whole has progressed to the majority stage."

—Bill Moyer, *The Movement Action Plan* (1987)[152]

The identity crisis experienced by social movements is not a discreet stage in itself according to Moyer. In my view, contending with feelings of activist failure is something that overlaps with even more stages than Moyer suggests. Dealing with activist failure continues concurrently with all stages where solidary groups learn competency and proficiency in

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[152] Moyer, "The Movement Action Plan."

solidarity cultivation. In general, feelings of powerlessness and failure come from the risky and experienced involvement of practicing solidarity (4.04 and 4.05). More particularly, these feelings arise from the remorse and despair that accompanies the embodied and emotional experience of failing to cultivate and maintain solidarity, or failing to achieve the goals of the solidary group sooner rather than later. While these feelings can diminish or subside with the joy of intermittent successes, they are a regular feature of learning to cultivate skills of solidarity through trial and error. They are common feelings in most social movements given the usual power asymmetries between solidary groups and their adversaries, and given the amount of time it takes to dislodge entrenched institutions and habits of power holders.

We can see conservative activists reckoning with failure before and after the take-off of the Tea Party. Decades before the modern Tea Party was born, there was the original failure of earlier conservative coalitions to stop the New Deal. There was also the failure to implement many of the bills in the "Contract with America"; the failure of right-wing populist and libertarian presidential campaigns; and the failure of conservative groups to start a Tea Party movement in 2002. Even after the Tea Party finally took off in 2009, Obama remained in office for two terms to see his bailouts through, and to implement a mandatory health insurance scheme that was seen as another major setback for the movement.

As Obama's tenure and policies continued, feelings of futility led some segments of the Tea Party to engage in increasingly desperate and self-defeating practices that limited the movement's capacity to generate wider circles of solidarity. As Berlet has demonstrated, the election of the first African-American president led to an increase in anxiety, fear, and anger

among many white middle class and working class constituencies which shifted toward

scapegoating liberals, people of colour, immigrants, and other targets.[153] Some Tea Party

protesters indulged in "Birther conspiracies" that the president was not American, but

Kenyan—an allegation that was taken up and amplified by major political figures like Donald

Trump. Instead of maintaining focus on more resonant economic and social issues, parts of

the movement cultivated a kind of racial "solidarity" among whites at the expense of broader

solidarity by directing resentment at everyone from the president to black people who had

disproportionately lost their homes during the mortgage crisis. More often than not, the racist

overtones at many Tea Party rallies became the subject of regular media reports, undermining

the movement's cause and capacity to grow.

While the perceived and real failures of social movements don't correspond with a set

of skills of solidarity cultivation, they do point to the kinds of risky involvements that can, and

often do, compromise solidarity instead of building it. The ability of the Tea Party to

confidently build on less successful campaigns of prior conservative movements, but its

regular failure to channel resentments away from scapegoating, attests to the claim I made

in Chapter Three that affect can move and pull social movements in multiple directions at

once.

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[153] Chip Berlet, "Taking tea parties seriously: Corporate globalization, populism, and resentment." *Perspectives on Global Development and Technology* 10, No. 1 (2011): 11-9; for more on racial anxiety in the Tea Party, also see Christopher S. Parker and Matt A. Barreto, *Change They Can't Believe In: The Tea Party and Reactionary Politics in America* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2013).

4.07   Stage 6: Win majority of public support

(*expertise* in solidarity cultivation)

"The movement must consciously undergo a transformation from spontaneous protest, operating in a short-term crisis, to a long-term popular struggle to achieve positive social change. It needs to win over the neutrality, sympathies, opinions, and even support of an increasingly larger majority of the populace and involve many of them in the process of opposition and change. The central agency of opposition must slowly change from the new wave activists and groups to the great majority of nonpolitical populace . . . and the mainstream political forces as they are convinced to agree with the movement's position. The majority stage is a long process of eroding the social, political, and economic supports that enable the power holders to continue their policies. It is a slow process of social transformation that create[s] a new social and political consensus, reversing those of normal times."

—Bill Moyer, *The Movement Action Plan* (1987)[154]

In spite of real and perceived activist failures after the stage of social movement take-off, successful movements learn from many mistakes made by past and current campaigns. They also transform themselves from a spontaneous protest to a long-term struggle. In this transition from protest to struggle, the social movement fuels grassroots empowerment to win the support of a significant portion of the public. An effectual amount of popular sovereignty is achieved when traditional power holders begin to make concessions to the

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[154] Moyer, "The Movement Action Plan."

social movement. As the movement begins winning changes in its favour, it moves from an oppositional stance to promoting a paradigm shift. Over a long course of time, the solidary group uses new trigger events to re-commit people to the cause. The movement also works to erode the old political order and replace it with the new paradigm of values, policies, and institutions it has been struggling for.

Despite its problems with scapegoating and its antipathy towards the establishment, the Tea Party movement quickly benefited from a lot of communications and organising infrastructure that was already in place and owned by sympathetic public figures and institutions. After Rick Santelli's impromptu rant on CNBC, and after the spontaneous protests that answered his call a week later, the Tea Party was hastily transformed into a sustained struggle.

The quick transition was aided by the endorsement of American television and radio personality, Glenn Beck. On 13 March, Beck launched the "9-12 Project" on his Fox News talk show. The project gave the Tea Party a rallying point for a much longer and wider political struggle. In addition to a call for more anti-government protests culminating in a "Taxpayer March on Washington" on September 12, 2009, the project expanded on and codified Tea Party values into a nostalgic, nationalistic, and theological manifesto:

> The 9-12 Project is designed to bring us all back to the place we were on September
>
> 12, 2001. The day after America was attacked we were not obsessed with Red States,

Blue States or political parties. We were united as Americans, standing together to

protect the values and principles of the greatest nation ever created.[155]

The project claimed to distill the values of America's Founding Fathers into 9 basic principles

and 12 values. Like the "Conservative Manifesto" of 1937 and the "Contract with America" of

1994, the "9-12 Project" of 2009 served to galvanise a new coalition of conservatives to

restore their lives, their economy, and their government to a set of "foundational" principles.

The 9 principles[156] were:

1. America is good.

2. I believe in God and He is the center of my life.

3. I must always try to be a more honest person than I was yesterday.

4. The family is sacred. My spouse and I are the ultimate authority, not the government.

5. If you break the law you pay the penalty. Justice is blind and no one is above it.

6. I have a right to life, liberty and pursuit of happiness, but there is no guarantee of

   equal results.

7. I work hard for what I have and I will share it with who I want to. Government cannot

   force me to be charitable.

8. It is not un-American for me to disagree with authority or to share my personal

   opinion.

9. The government works for me. I do not answer to them, they answer to me.

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[155] Quotes for the 9-12 Project were accessed from a website that is no longer available as of 2016:
The912Project.com
[156] Ibid.

This moral vision of national unity, American exceptionalism, theological and paternalistic sovereignty,[157] punitive justice, individual rights, voluntary charity, and resistant politics of the "9-12 Project" helped inspire other Tea Party manifestos.[158] Moreover, Beck's rhetoric helped mobilise further anti-tax rallies across the country. Republican politicians started to join media personalities as speakers at Tea Party rallies to protest President Obama's stimulus plan.

Re-Trigger Event (2)

By mid-2009, President Obama shifted focus from stimulus to health care reform, and the Tea Party promptly followed suit. Obama introduced measures to make private health insurance more widely accessible with the Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act (PPACA). Nevertheless, it was widely seen by conservatives and libertarians as undue government interference in the market economy and a violation of the autonomy of health insurance providers. The health reforms were dubbed "Obamacare" and mocked by the Tea Party as "socialised medicare." The perceived threat of yet more government intervention prompted over 250 Tea Party groups to rally at local Congressional offices on 4 July, American Independence Day. Protests culminated on the "Taxpayer March on Washington" on September 12, 2009. Glenn Beck addressed a crowd of 75,000 at the rally he announced six months earlier. By December, mounting public pressure managed to stall Obama's health

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[157] For an account of the Christian Right's mastery of solidarity practices in local Tea Party groups and how they reconciled and accommodated their right-wing social issues with economic conservatives, see Wilson and Burack, "Where Liberty Reigns and God is Supreme: The Christian Right and the Tea Party Movement."

[158] Dick Armey of FreedomWorks/Citizens for a Sound Economy, who co-wrote the "Contract with America" (1994), assisted Tea Party activist Ryan Hecker in writing the "Contract from America" (2009) for the 15 April [anti-] Tax Day Tea Party rallies.

care bill in Congress. The concession empowered the Tea Party and emboldened the movement to escalate its tactics and attempt to elect candidates of their own to Washington.

In this stage of the Tea Party's transition from protest movement to popular struggle, solidarity is cultivated in the following ways: (1) through coalition-building between new grassroots activists, previously established conservative institutions, and popular media personalities; (2) through charismatic cultural leaders who retrieve, reconfigure, codify, and articulate conservative values in a national/istic narrative; (3) through sustaining pressure on power holders until they concede to key demands; and (4) by collectively committing to a long-term paradigm shift that has the potential to change the social, economic, and political order.

In terms of developing solidarity as a skill (discussed further in Chapter Six), I think of these activities of coalition-building, evangelising values, sustaining popular pressure, and committing to paradigm shifts as part of a set of skills that demonstrate *expertise* in solidarity cultivation. I consider them to be "expert" modes of solidarity because they are skills that require proficient public performances that matter to people; skills that involve them emotionally, bring them together, inspire change, and motivate action. Such proficiency requires the skill to make subtle and refined situational discriminations and immediate intuitive responses that resonate across a receptive audience. The audience of Glenn Beck, for example, is further apprenticed in his skills of solidarity cultivation as they observe and mimic his style, and then reproduce it at rallies.[159]

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[159] For an analysis of the unifying and conflicting dynamics between Tea Party elites, funders, and media personalities like Glenn Beck and grassroots Tea Party groups, see Skocpol and Williamson, *The Tea Party and*

4.08   Stage 7: Success

(*mastery* in political campaigns)

"Stage Seven begins when the long process of building opposition reaches a new plateau in which the new social consensus turns the tide of power against the power holders and begins an endgame process leading to the movement's success. The Stage Seven process can take three forms: dramatic showdown, quiet showdown, or attrition."

—Bill Moyer, *The Movement Action Plan* (1987)[160]

This is a stage of Moyer's model that the Tea Party never quite transitioned into. Following the popularity of the movement in 2009 and its success in stalling Obama's health care reforms, the Tea Party changed its focus in 2010 from highly visible protests to endorsing and fielding Republican candidates during the mid-term elections. Congresswoman Michele Bachmann founded a Tea Party Caucus on the populist conservative wing of the Republican Party that summer. Tea Party candidates had modest successes in the November mid-term election, but remained a minor faction within the Republican Party that never turned the tide of power against the establishment. Their main achievement was in sowing public opposition to Obama's Affordable Care Act which helped the Republicans regain control of the House of

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the Remaking of Republican Conservatism; while grassroots Tea Partiers mostly approve of Social Security, Medicare, and veterans' benefits, and elite personalities and funders sought to privatise the very same programs on which many grassroots Tea Partiers depend, the disparate conservative groups were ultimately united in their antipathy towards Barack Obama and their shared determination to push the Republican Party sharply to the right.

[160] Moyer, "The Movement Action Plan."

Representatives that year. The modest success of Tea Party candidates in 2010 declined thereafter. They especially lost public favour in 2011 for their obstructionist tactics during the debt ceiling crisis of that year (and again in 2013). After a poor showing in the 2012 election, Tea Party activists largely shifted away from national elections and demonstrations to focus on local issues driven by grassroots members. Although the movement successfully persisted through a decentralised network of local Tea Party chapters, it lost much of its national visibility in subsequent years.

Normally this is a stage in which successful social movements continue to build on their skills of solidarity to a level of *mastery* in which new styles and innovative abilities are developed. Though Donald Trump is tenuously associated with aspects of the Tea Party, most notably through his amplification of the Birther conspiracy against Barack Obama, it could be argued that Trump continued innovating and developing resonant aspects of Tea Party populism and anti-establishment politics. At the very least, Trump mastered many of the same skills of solidarity cultivation as the Tea Party, and probably more. Although presidential challenger, Gary Johnson, appealed to many Tea Party libertarians, Trump's ability to bring right-wing anti-establishment populists together undoubtedly helped him garner enough support from the American conservative movement to win the 2016 presidential campaign.

4.09   Stage 8: Moving on

(*phronesis*)

"The success achieved in Stage Seven is not the end of the struggle but a basis for continuing that struggle and creating new beginnings."

—Bill Moyer, *The Movement Action Plan* (1987)[161]

If the Tea Party achieved some level of success, it wasn't in winning a complete paradigm shift in conservative policy or domination of the Republican Party. That said, the solidarity cultivated by the movement in its heyday of 2009-10 has arguably shifted the conservative discourse in American politics towards even more fiscal conservatism and anti-establishment populism. Tea Party activists also strengthened and expanded the civic infrastructure that amplified their ideas and influenced formal politics in Washington. In 2016, two Republicans affiliated with the Tea Party—Ted Cruz and Marco Rubio—ran unsuccessfully in the Republican presidential primaries, losing to Donald Trump. Despite these losses, Tea Party values became a mainstay of American anti-establishment and right-wing populist politics inside and beyond a Republican party that was swept to power in 2016.

Although the Tea Party has been less active in the United States than it was in its heyday, it undoubtedly injected energy into the libertarian, right-wing populist, and anti-establishment politics of America and beyond. Unstable economic conditions that gave rise

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[161] Ibid.

to the Tea Party in 2009 are adding fuel to similar right wing populist movements in Europe. It does make this author wonder to what degree the Tea Party has influenced the cultivation of solidarity among conservatives of another *kind* in the United States (like Trump) and in other political jurisdictions around the world (like Europe[162]). I consider this kind of transmission of an innovative cultural style of political organisation as a final level of solidarity cultivation that I call *phronesis* and which I develop in the following chapters.

4.10   Chapter summary

In this chapter, we have looked at how social movement solidarity developed, peaked, and waned in the Tea Party. By re-telling the Tea Party's story through the lens of Bill Moyer's canonical model of social movement progression, we can look at the cultivation of solidarity through a longer historical view and from a contrasting political orientation to the Global Justice Movement.

In this reading of the Tea Party, some of the abstract features of solidarity covered in previous chapters are fleshed out in greater detail. One feature that stands out in particular is that each stage of a social movement's lifecycle corresponds with salient practices of solidarity. Another is that practices of solidarity are forged and developed in social

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[162] Gregor Aisch, Adam Pearce, and Bryant Rousseau, "How Far Is Europe Swinging to the Right?" *New York Times*, 23 May 2016; updated 17 November, 2016.
http://www.nytimes.com/interactive/2016/05/22/world/europe/europe-right-wing-austria-hungary.html

movements over time. As these practices are learned and developed skillfully within a social movement, they are also transmitted more broadly across society in a process that transforms both the social movement and the politics of the wider society. The acquisition and application of skills of solidarity also correspond with a story of a political culture and tradition that is also in the process of re-inventing itself. Overall, we can see with more clarity that there is a relationship between processes of political transformation and the stories and skills of solidarity that come out of social movements.

Innovative practices and novel re-iterations of social movement solidarity give rise to another set of questions which are explored in the next chapters. For one, if a social movement like the Tea Party is re-inscribing a particular world-shaping story, what kind of story is it? Moreover, how do contrasting movements like Occupy tell a different story that transforms themselves and their world through alternative practices of solidarity? And, what is the world-shaping story those contrasting movements are telling? Finally, how can the modes of solidarity covered thus far be developed to explicitly complement a skill-based model of solidarity cultivation? These questions are explored in greater detail across the next two chapters.

CHAPTER FIVE

Solidarity and Occupy Wall Street

5.00   Introduction

In previous chapters, we have looked at what solidarity is, what it means, how affects re/generate it, and how it can be is maintained through the stories and skills that are used across the lifecycle of a social movement. This chapter builds on the last one by taking a closer look at the stories and background understandings which shape contrasting social movement solidarities and their politics.

In order to analyse the world-shaping stories of social movements, I look at the generative potential of language that is used to contest different meanings of solidarity (5.01). From there, I analyse background understandings which shape the Tea Party's story and its politics (5.02). Through perspicuous contrast, I describe how the Occupy movement "speaks against" the Tea Party's brand of modern constitutionalism (5.03-5.10) in order to re-constitute another kind of solidarity that speaks for a politics of radical democracy; a kind of solidarity that works to bring more democratic forms of life into being (5.11). The following chapter continues where this one leaves off by taking a closer look at the role of skill in cultivating and maintaining this radically democratic kind of political solidarity.

5.01   Contesting the language of solidarity

Social movements of different political orientations all use solidarity to bring people together and pursue their goals collectively. But if a movement like the Tea Party is wedded to a kind of solidarity that undermines economic, social, and political equality, how can Global Justice Movements tell a different world-shaping story of solidarity so that a more egalitarian and democratic world can be brought into being?

To begin answering this question, I find it helpful to take some philosophical cues from James Tully and Ludwig Wittgenstein who illuminate important relationships between how language is used to expand the meaning of concepts and open up practical possibilities for enlarging freedom and democratic politics. In *Public Philosophy in a New Key*, Tully adapts Wittgenstein's understanding of language in the latter's *Philosophical Investigations* to argue how contrasting concepts and the contesting practices which underpin them can open up diverse solutions to problems. I would like to make a similar point here, regarding contrasting understandings of solidarity that emerge and play out in different social movements like the Tea Party and Occupy Wall Street.

In much the same way that Tully sees 'global citizenship' as a negotiated practice, I see social movement solidarity in a similar way. To echo the point made by Tully, when concepts— like 'social movement' and 'solidarity' in this instance—are brought together, "they not only bring their contested histories of meanings with them. Their conjunction brings into being a

complex new field that raises new questions and elicits new answers concerning the meaning

of, and relationship between [the two concepts]."[163] Tully continues:

> When we enquire into [conjoined concepts] . . . we are already thrown into this
> remarkable complex inherited *field* of contested languages, activities, institutions,
> processes and the environs in which they take place. This conjoint field is the
> problematisation of [the concept]: the way that formerly disparate activities,
> institutions, processes and languages have been gathered together under the rubric
> of [the concept], become the site of contestation in practice and are formulated as a
> problem in research, policy and theory, to which diverse solutions are presented and
> debated.[164]

The reason why the use of a conjoined concept like 'social movement solidarity' is

contestable, rather than fixed and determinant is, as Wittgenstein classically argued, and Tully

reiterates:

> there is neither an essential set of necessary and sufficient criteria for the correct use
> of such concepts, nor a calculus for their application in particular cases. The art of
> understanding a concept . . . is *not* the application of a universal rule to particular
> cases. Rather, the uses of such complex concepts in different cases and contests do
> not have one set of properties in common, but—from case to case—an indeterminate
> family of overlapping and criss-crossing 'similarities, relationship, and a whole series

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[163] James Tully, *Public Philosophy in a New Key: Volume II: Imperialism and Civic Freedom*, (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2008): 244.
[164] Ibid.

of that.' What 'we see,' therefore, is not a single rule (definition or theory) being

applied in every case, but, rather, 'a complicated network of similarities overlapping

and criss-crossing: sometimes overall similarities, sometimes similarities of detail.[165]

In the case of social movement solidarity, there is no correct use of the concept. Rather, there

is an art to understanding solidarity by using it in the different ways that contrasting social

movements do. What we will be able to see through a perspicuous contrast between the

different uses of solidarity by the Tea Party and Occupy, for example, is not a single meaning

of social movement solidarity applied in both cases, but two sets of practices of solidarity that

can open up diverse solutions to different problems. These practices consist of "practical

abilities of thinking and acting"[166] within the field of social movement solidarity. When it

comes to thinking about using the concept of social movement solidarity in a new way, we

can return to Tully and Wittgenstein:

> A language user learns how to use a concept by apprenticeship in the practice of use
>
> and discrimination in everyday life, by invoking . . . similarities and dissimilarities with
>
> other cases and responding to counter-arguments when challenged, and thereby
>
> gradually acquiring the abilities to use it in normative and critical ways in new
>
> contexts. / Since the use of concepts with complex histories 'is not everywhere
>
> circumscribed by rules,' Wittgenstein continues, 'the extension of the concept is *not*
>
> closed by a frontier.' It is almost always possible, to some indeterminate extent, to
>
> question a given normal use, invoke slightly different similarities with other historical
>
> uses or interpret a shared criterion differently, argue that the term can be extended

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[165] Ibid.

[166] Ibid., 246.

in an unexpected and unpredictable way, which is nevertheless 'related' to other familiar uses, and to *act* on it (and sometimes the act *precedes* the argumentation for the novel use). Use, and therefore meaning, is not the application of a transcendental or official theory of [the concept]. It is an indeterminate spatial-temporal 'negotiated practice' among partners in relations of dialogical interlocution and practical interaction in which the possibility of going on differently is always present. This pragmatic linguistic freedom of enunciation and initiation—of contestability and speaking otherwise—within the weighty constraints of the inherited relations of use and meaning is . . . internally related to a practical (extra-linguistic) freedom of enactment and improvisation within the inherited relations of power in which the vocabulary is used.[167]

If we apply the insights of Tully and Wittgenstein to the concept of social movement solidarity, we can say that a language user learns how to use a concept like solidarity by apprenticeship in the quotidian practices of social movements. Because the mode of Tea Party solidarity is not closed by a frontier, it is possible to question its historical and reactionary uses (i.e. *acts*) of solidarity and to invoke different uses by a movement like Occupy. It is by *acting* on those different practices that the meaning of solidarity is altered, and its political ontology is changed. As Tully notes, "sometimes the act *precedes* the argumentation for the novel use." This is certainly the case in how I interpret different meanings of solidarity generated by contrasting social movements like the Tea Party on one hand and new Global Justice Movements like Occupy on the other. New acts and "negotiated practices" of solidarity in the Occupy movement generally precede any argumentation for their novel use, as is often the

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[167] Ibid., 244-5.

case with activism. But this is where "practical abilities of thinking"—like theory, philosophy, and interpretation—can play a productive role in strengthening the "practical abilities of . . . acting" in solidarity. One of the practical ways that theory can open up the "possibility of going on differently"—of doing political solidarity differently than it has been done before—is to engage in a dialogue on solidarity and its inherited relations of use and meanings, and to "speak otherwise." This means speaking about solidarity in a way that is related to the "enactment and improvisation" used in the vocabulary and activism of movements like Occupy.

Before "speaking otherwise," it is imperative to ask what kind of story of solidarity the Occupy movement is implicitly speaking against. Put another way, what kind of story of solidarity are conservative and reactionary movements like the Tea Party captivated by and speaking to? Once we have a better idea of that story, we can look at how Occupy "speaks otherwise," and what the implications of their alternatives are for other modes of political solidarity practiced by Global Justice Movements.

5.02   The captivating story of modern constitutionalism

"A picture held us captive. And we could not get outside it, for it lay in our language

and language seemed to repeat it to us inexorably."

— Ludwig Wittgenstein, *Philosophical Investigations* (1953)[168]

By recalling the mode of solidarity exercised by the Tea Party in the last chapter, and

its historical continuity with American conservative movements which preceded it, an old and

enduring picture of political solidarity emerges. It is a picture that might look so familiar

because it has been used in the language to describe modern nation-states, and has been

repeated inexorably for hundreds of years in the European-American Western world. It is a

vocabulary of solidarity couched in an ideal narrative, or mythical story, of the modern nation-

state. Based on the account of the Tea Party in the previous chapter, we can infer and deduce

that their ideal picture of solidarity is based on an image of America that looks something like

this:

The American Republic, like republics in Europe, is a nation born out of revolution

against monarchical rule. Its enlightened founding fathers came to an original consensus and

established a republican constitution that provides the rules for democratic politics across the

nation. This founding document is universal for all time and preserves the individual identity

of the nation. One estate of citizens constitutes 'the people,' all of whom are treated equally

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[168] Ludwig Wittgenstein. *Philosophical Investigations*. 3rd Edition. Trans. Elizabeth Anscombe (Oxford: Basil Blackwell, [1953] 1986).

and without differentiation under the law. Thus, the nation and the state are one. There is also equality with and between other nation-states with modern constitutions. These modern constitutional states share this equality based on their common Euro-American values and institutions of representative government, separation of powers, rule of law, individual liberty, private property, standing armies, and a public sphere that deliberates and chooses its elected representatives. Legal unity and monism is preserved by courts to ensure the universal protection of these values and institutions from the centralised authority of representative government. This legal monism is a modern advancement from pre-modern forms of political association where the irregularity of customs and traditions threatened individuals in either a state of nature or by subjecting them to the whims of a monarch. The irregularity of pre-modern customs and traditions is homogenised and unified by the Republic in a single code of laws which conforms to the constitution. Sovereignty is placed in the hands of equal individuals (citizens) at a modern level of development (originally, property-owning men) who recognise the authority of the institutions which preserve the constitutional arrangement of the American Republic.

This reconstructed story sketches a picture of political association that would plausibly come to the minds of many Americans, especially conservatives, if they imagined how their nation came together to form an ideal political union. The picture of political association that captivated so many in the Tea Party is derivative of this image of the American Republic. The Tea Party's particularly libertarian and populist style of solidarity only differs in degree from

this conservative image of the American Republic.[169] To the degree there is a difference, it is mainly in the perception of how much America's political representatives have taken the country away from this ideal image, and what it will take to get the nation back on track to restore or expand this picture of a "more perfect political union."[170]

This republican picture of political association remains captivating for many Americans—including but not limited to Tea Partiers—who model their solidarity in its image. Its captivating power endures, in part, because it is a story that has been repeated inexorably in words, images, and rituals of daily life in America. It is the story captured in John Trumbull's massive painting of the *Declaration of Independence* (*Figure 3*) which hangs in the United States Capitol Rotunda. That picture is literally reproduced and circulated on U.S. currency and postage stamps. The vocabulary that gives meaning to the picture is recited in daily rituals. One such ritual is the Pledge of Allegiance. The Pledge opens Congressional sessions, local government meetings, school classes, and has been recited at many Tea Party events. In such a ritual, words, images, and practices converge in a way that demands captive attention. Citizens stand at attention, facing the flag, hand-over-heart, and declare allegiance to the American Republic as "one Nation under God, indivisible, with liberty and justice for all." The re-commitment and re-dedication to this "picture"[171] of political association has become so commonplace in American life that it is simply re-produced and re-performed without much

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[169] For key features of Tea Party's unique style of constitutionalism, see Elizabeth Price Foley, *The Tea Party: Three Principles* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2012); Jill Lepore, "The Commandments: The Constitution and its worshippers," *The New Yorker*, 17 January 2011; and Rosen, "Radical Constitutionalism."

[170] United States Constitution, Preamble, 1787. Available at Cornell University Law School Legal Information Institute: https://www.law.cornell.edu/constitution/preamble

[171] I use "picture" both literally and metaphorically to refer to the symbolic words, images, rituals, and practices.

reflection or re-description. But a critical description can assist our understanding of what,

exactly, is in the picture that so many people are captivated by.

Figure 3: John Trumbull's *Declaration of Independence* (1817)[172]

One of the best critical descriptions I have seen that captures many elements of a

republican picture of the nation-state is what James Tully calls "modern constitutionalism."[173]

Tully describes modern constitutionalism as the "picture . . . of a culturally homogeneous and

sovereign people establishing a constitution by a form of critical negotiation."[174] For Tully,

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[172] John Trumbull, *Declaration of Independence,* 1817, Oil on Canvas, 366cm x 549cm (Washington D.C., Rotunda, U.S. Capitol). Available at https://www.aoc.gov/art/historic-rotunda-paintings/declaration-independence
[173] Tully, *Strange Multiplicity.*
[174] Ibid., 41.

this picture has seven key features, all of which correspond with conservative variations of the features of solidarity I delineated in Chapter Two. Three of these features are what I described earlier as "political": an authoritative account of *popular sovereignty* that rests in 'the people' as equal individuals; the recognition of the authority and *supremacy of European institutions* (and, by extension, American institutions); and the belief in a *founding moment* of an original consensus which established the social contract in a universal and timeless constitution. Each of the four remaining features corresponds with other dimensions of solidarity I outlined in Chapter Two. Tully's contrast of modern constitutionalism with a pre-modern or *ancient constitutionalism* corresponds with the dimension of "history" that all modes of solidarity draw upon. The *legal and political monism* corresponds with the dimension of "normativity" in which social goods and values are ordered, codified, and universalised. Modern constitutionalism's account of *progress and custom* corresponds with the idea of appropriate "practices." Finally, the *individual national identity* as embodied by the state functions as a feature of "social relations." Each of these dimensions of modern constitutionalism is elaborated upon in the next section.

The high level of correlation between Tully's picture of "modern constitutionalism" and the picture of Tea Party solidarity makes the former a useful story of solidarity to "speak against" if we are to open up the "possibility of going on differently."

In the following sections, I look at how particular practices of the Occupy movement contrast with, and speak against, the story of modern constitutionalism that movements like the Tea Party are re-iterating in their own way. In doing so, I argue that the Occupy movement

has helped change the language and meaning of several dimensions of political solidarity: (1) *popular sovereignty* is more bottom-up, provisional, diffuse, and diverse; (2) traditions and customs from *ancient constitutionalism* are accommodated in a multiform assemblage, rather than filtered out of a uniform code of modern rules and regulations; (3) *legal and political pluralism* is seen as more appropriate than legal monism in the accommodation of culturally diverse polities; (4) irregular and diverse *customs* are seen as resources for renewing *progress*, rather than something to be flattened out or unified into a singular view of progress; (5) any presumed *supremacy of European institutions* is rejected in favour of an ambiguous stance towards them, a stance that provincialises their value and doesn't assume they are superior to non-European or pre-modern institutions; (6) a multiplicity of individual and collective identifications are embraced and exceed any presumption of a homogeneous *individual national identity*; and (7) the social contract established during the imagined *founding moment* of constitutional democracy is not universal and applicable for all time, but always subject to democratic revision.

These shifts in the political ontology of modern constitutionalism provide a way out of a picture of solidarity that not only holds captive the Tea Party's mode of solidarity, but also captivates American politics more broadly.[175] By contrast, a new picture of political

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[175] While Tea Party solidarity shares the affinities I have described with Tully's picture of modern constitutionalism, I make no claim that the former is reducible to the latter or that the Tea Party is the only political tradition to be influenced by the background understandings outlined by Tully. To be sure, the Tea Party has its own extreme take on many features of modern constitutionalism, but Tully's picture is also broad enough to include mainstream conservative interpretations as well as liberal visions of constitutionalism in the Lockean tradition. The fact that modern constitutionalism is a picture of political solidarity that captivates so many contemporary political traditions is a testament to its influence, not only on the Tea Party, but on wide swaths of modern American society. Moving forward, my claim is not that Occupy is merely contesting the Tea Party's radical constitutionalism. My claim is that Occupy is contesting a picture of modern constitutionalism that includes the Tea Party but is also more broadly inhabited by mainstream Republicans and Democrats.

association is invoked by the practices of Occupy. As I argue in the next section, it is a picture

we can occupy, use, and develop to speak of another story of solidarity—a mode of solidarity

that works to bring a more democratic world, and more democratic forms of life, into being.

5.03   Occupying an old story of solidarity:

Speaking against seven features of modern constitutionalism

The Occupy movement's mode of solidarity stands in contrast to the Tea Party's

version of solidarity for a variety of reasons. While both kinds of solidary groups generate a

unity of individuals working to preserve and change parts of the world, each of them generate

contrasting meanings of political solidarity through their differing political practices and

commitments. These differences not only come from the contrasting practices, values, and

identities of each solidary group. They also come from the contrasting pictures of the political

world each group is inspired by and trying to bring into being. In the previous section, I

referred to the picture being worked on by the Tea Party as a particularly American type of

"modern constitutionalism."[176] In order to begin sketching another picture of solidarity that

movements like Occupy are working on, I first examine the aspects of modern

constitutionalism that I found the Occupy movement to be "speaking against." My aim is to

put different pictures of solidarity into relief so that we can rethink the social and political

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[176] Tully, *Strange Multiplicity*.

ontologies that are at once sources of contestation between movements and sources of solidarity within them.

In the previous section, I argued that the Tea Party is, in part, captivated and held together by a picture of modern constitutionalism that helps keep particular polities and solidary groups together. In one way or another, I understand the Tea Party's project as one that regenerates and modifies this picture of modern constitutionalism in accordance with its American libertarian style. On the other hand, the Occupy movement tends to work against this picture constructed by the Tea Party and other constitutionalist traditions. This oppositional work is generative of Occupy's resistant solidarity for which it is commonly known. Each gesture of resistance not only deconstructs a picture of solidarity based on modern constitutionalism, it also begins to paint a new picture of solidarity with each 'stroke.' In the following sections (5.04-5.10), I attempt to make room for this new picture by looking at the resistant 'strokes' the Occupy movement and affiliated Global Justice Movements have taken against the seven features of modern constitutionalism which I have adapted and reconstructed from Tully.

5.04   1: Popular sovereignty

(1) *Popular sovereignty.*[177] In modern constitutionalism, the locus of a polity's[178] authority is established as authoritative and singular in a central governing body. Tully gives three accounts of popular sovereignty in representative democracies.[179] Each account of sovereignty is popular because it derives from "the people" who have been granted suffrage. It becomes singular when, through voting, the people transfer their power to representatives of a governing body, like a parliament or congress, and agree to be ruled by their laws. That body derives its authority from the general will of the people it represents. The people are seen as unified through one or a combination of three frameworks: liberalism, nationalism, or communitarianism. In liberalism, unity is established through a presumed equality between undifferentiated individuals. Nationalism presumes a culturally homogenous nation. Communitarianism presumes the polity is held together by commonly shared goods.

The Occupy movement generally rejected these modern conceptions of popular sovereignty. The solidary group's authority was provisional, diffuse, and diverse. The General Assemblies established in so many city squares did not consist of representatives, but of political agents directly participating without any requirement of officially sanctioned

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[177] Ibid.*,* 63.

[178] I use "polity," not in the narrow sense of a formal Westphalian nation-state, but in a broad sense of "political community." Thus, my use of "polity" can refer to international coalitions, global movements, nation-states, etc., all the way down to solidary groups within nation-states, like social movements, civic organisations, political parties, Indigenous nations, etc.

[179] Tully, *Strange Multiplicity:* 63.

suffrage.[180] Rather than the formal status of suffrage or citizenship, the direct act of voluntary participation in General Assemblies and other Occupy activities made any participant an "Occupier." The General Assembly was a provisional space for individuals and groups to differentiate themselves through their testimonies and varied identifications; to raise diverse social concerns and grievances; and to propose actions to be taken up by working groups within the movement or affinity groups allied with it. The delegation of further action to these groups meant the main solidary group could support a diversity of norms and values that were not presumed to be universally shared by every member. The proposals only had to be recognised and given consent, even if the consent included reservation and opposition. In this way, authority was provisional on participation, recognition, and thin but active consent. Pluralism was embraced as diverse concerns and goods were allowed to emerge through dialogue and testimony. Power was diffuse and decentralised within and between Occupy encampments as political actions were delegated to working groups, or even started in the name of Occupy without official sanction from any assembly. Altogether, the practices of Occupy performed a bottom-up form of popular sovereignty that was provisional, diffuse, and diverse.

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[180] For more on Occupy's mode of direct and participatory democracy in contrast to representational modes, see Marina Sitrin and Dario Azzellini, *They Can't Represent Us! Reinventing Democracy from Greece to Occupy* (London & New York: Verso, 2014).

5.05   2: Contrast with ancient constitutionalism

(2) *Contrast with ancient constitutionalism.*[181] Modern constitutionalism is set in contrast to its ancient counterpart. In Tully's framework, the features of ancient constitutionalism commonly proliferated and dominated prior to the birth of modern nation-states that came out of the "Peace of Westphalia" in 1648. Before then, ancient constitutions were based on diverse customs, traditions, and irregularity.[182] Their irregularity accommodated a multiform assemblage of laws across a large number of relatively small political jurisdictions.[183] Laws would often be applied equitably, rather than identically. In the picture of modern constitutionalism, these ancient political forms of political solidarity are viewed as pre-constitutional activities in a state of nature. They represent an earlier and lower stage of development in a narrative of historical progress that leads to a modern stage of development "appropriate to, and a result of a self-conscious critical reflection on, the customs, manners and civilization of modern societies."[184]

In practice, Occupy groups rejected the modern antagonistic stance towards the features of ancient constitutionalism. In the eyes of Occupiers, occupied public spaces became autonomous political jurisdictions where a multiform assemblage of political customs and traditions could emerge and be practiced in different ways across numerous occupations outside the purview of modern constitutional practices. Some examples of pre-modern

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[181] Tully, *Strange Multiplicity:* 64.
[182] Ibid., 41-2.
[183] Ibid., 66.
[184] Ibid., 64.

customs used by Occupy include consensus processes inherited from Indigenous constitutional traditions and modified by groups like Quakers and Students for a Democratic Society.[185] Rules were also applied equitably rather than identically, as was the case with equitable time and resource distribution given to members of underprivileged groups based on race, class, gender, dis/ability, and so on (see 6.07 for an example of this in Occupy's New York City General Assembly).

5.06   3: Legal and political monism

(3) *Legal and political monism*.[186] This feature of constitutionalism is a consequence of modernity's propensity to centralise sovereignty and assume a culturally homogenous political community. The effect and goal is to produce evermore universal laws across the whole polity. This is taken as appropriate because the polity itself is seen as culturally homogenous, bound by commonly shared goods, and constituted by equal individuals under the law who are deserving of identical treatment. The picture of a homogenous polity makes legal monism appear appropriate, and vice versa.

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[185] For more on the Occupy's historical and pre-modern sources of consensus decision-making, see Anna Szolucha, *Real Democracy in the Occupy Movement: No Stable Ground* (New York: Routledge, 2017).
[186] Tully, *Strange Multiplicity*: 66.

Occupy encampments often coalesced around a commonly shared concern. On different occasions there were broad demands for greater democracy, economic equality, decolonisation, climate action, etc. But each solidary group and event tended to treat the uniting concern as an open question to be explored by its diverse members, rather than a common feature of the whole group that was presumed to be known in advance and translatable into a universal law. Instead of demanding universalisable laws or policies, many solidary groups which emerged from Occupy created and modified circumstantial "group norms" based on a shifting terrain of values and expectations of each group as new members joined and others left.[187]

This solidarity practice of establishing stable but revisable group norms operates with a different picture in mind of the polity and its 'laws.' The solidary group is seen as an internally diverse, stable, yet fluid political community. The effect and goal is to reproduce and revise diverse group norms that arise from the diversity of its members. These norms are applied to the specific parts of the polity that consent to be subject to them. In effect, this is a form of legal and political pluralism that is seen as appropriately applied to a culturally diverse polity. Group norms are derived from diverse sets of goods that are commonly ordered in different ways by different members. Groups are bound together, not by a shared *ordering* of goods like in communitarianism, but by a mutual recognition of a shared *set* of unordered goods.[188] When there are seemingly intractable hyper-goods between members

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[187] For examples of pluralism at work at Occupy, see Benjamin Zhou, "Sleeping at Zuccotti: Images of American Pluralism at Occupy Wall Street," *Harvard Political Review*, 13 October 2011: http://harvardpolitics.com/united-states/sleeping-at-zuccotti-images-of-american-pluralism-at-occupy-wall-street/

[188] See Spinosa, Flores, and Dreyfus, *Disclosing New Worlds*: 118-22, on the distinction between sharing the same *set* of unordered goods and sharing the same *ordering* of goods.

of the solidary group, they can either take them up in separate working groups, or learn how to work together across their differences within the same group. Because there is often recognition of difference in power and privilege between different members, individuals and groups are seen as deserving equitable rather than identical treatment. The picture of a diverse polity makes legal or normative pluralism appear appropriate, and vice versa.

5.07   4: Progress and custom

(4) *Progress and custom*.[189] Another convention of modern constitutionalism is the "recognition of custom within the theory of progress."[190] For Tully, this means the irregularity of customs and traditions within ancient constitutional frameworks is seen as a pre-modern condition within an early stage of development prior to the establishment of greater regularity and uniformity in modernity. In other words, progress undermines the ancient constitutional order, smoothing out diversity and irregularity of multiple political estates into one estate: a unified and uniform political state.

In the Occupy movement, diverse customs and practices were employed in the service of a different kind of progress. Progress was thought of less in terms of stadial development towards a more uniform state, and more in terms of freedom—opening up the possibility of

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[189] Tully, *Strange Multiplicity,* 67.
[190] Ibid.

acting otherwise. Diverse customs and practices allowed solidary group members to strengthen alternative practices of relating to each other in ways which diverged from their common use in the dominant political culture. In the United States, for example, Occupiers learned how defaulted loans were sold at a fraction of the cost to debt collectors who then sought to recoup as much of the loan at a profit. A "Strike Debt"[191] working group was formed to buy up debt just like debt collectors, but the group appealed to a different custom to change the practice of debt collection and act otherwise. Instead of reproducing the familiar American custom of profit-making on the debts of others, the solidary group appealed to the ancient custom of Jubilee, or debt forgiveness. As of the fifth anniversary of Occupy Wall Street, the Rolling Jubilee raised over $700,000 to buy and cancel nearly $32 million of student and medical debt. In this example, the appeal to another custom (jubilee) made it possible to change a common practice (debt collection) into a new practice of freedom (debt forgiveness). In turn, the practice of acting otherwise opened up the possibility of Americans adopting more practices of debt forgiveness that increasingly challenge the hegemony of debt collection practices. In this understanding of progress, diverse customs are seen as resources and used for developing new practices of freedom.

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[191] See the Strike Debt's "Rolling Jubilee," website: http://rollingjubilee.org/

5.08   5: Supremacy of European institutions

(5) *Supremacy of European institutions*.[192] In Tully's framework, European institutions are ideal for holding modern constitutionalism together. Based on Kant's theory of republican constitutionalism, modern states require European institutions of representative government to ensure a variety of conventions are followed. Some of those conventions include the separation of powers, rule of law, individual liberty, standing armies, public spheres, and so on.

Occupy movements have more of an ambiguous relationship with European institutions. Generally, such institutions are provincialised rather than accepted as superior or essential to keeping a polity, much less a solidary group, together. As such, there is great diversity in judging and assessing their utility and necessity among other solidarity-generating institutions beyond the European tradition. The assessments can and often do range from critical to affirming, and ambiguous. One of the ambiguous candidates is the favourite institution of Occupy movements around the world—the General Assembly—which precedes modernity and was developed within and beyond Europe.[193] Sometimes these movements explicitly demand representative government. This was a common demand from occupied public squares in the Arab Spring or the Hong Kong Umbrella Revolution. Sometimes there is direct resistance to European institutions that have either not lived up to their promises

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[192] Tully, *Strange Multiplicity,* 67.

[193] For more background on popular assemblies being used in Syria-Mesopotamia well before Athenians, see: John Keane. *The Life and Death of Democracy* (New York and London: W.W. Norton and Co., 2009).

(turning out to be more plutocratic than democratic as alleged by Occupy Wall Street), or they have actively displaced pre-existing or parallel political institutions (like those being re-asserted and recovered by the Idle No More movement led by Indigenous activists in Canada). The common feature in Occupy modes of solidarity is that however ambiguous their relationship with European institutions is expressed, they are not presumed to be superior to non-European or even pre-modern institutions.

5.09   6: Individual national identity

(6) *Individual national identity*.[194] Since the French and American revolutions, the modern state is generally seen to possess an individual (corporate) identity as a nation. In nation-states, citizens share a national identity where they are seen to have common national interests. National subjects are to be treated equally and identically under the law with no differential treatment. Like the individual national subject, individual nation-states are to be recognised as undifferentiated equals among other individual nation-states.

While identity in Occupy movements is thinly constituted by various experiences of dispossession and commitment to a cause, it also tends to be oriented towards multi-versality, plurality, and the transformation of relations of power. If we take the specific example of the Occupy Wall Street movement in the United States, solidary group members

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[194] Tully, *Strange Multiplicity,* 68.

were united by a common experience of, or identification with, dispossession that was both local and global. International bodies like the Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) confirm that the stark levels of inequality cited by Occupy are a global phenomenon, unprecedented in our times:

> The enormous increase of income inequality on a global scale is one of the most significant—and worrying—features of the development of the world economy in the past 200 years. [. . .] It is hard not to notice the sharp increase in income inequality experienced by the vast majority of countries from the 1980s. There are very few exceptions to this.[195]

After three decades of neoliberalism in the United States, the country returned to record levels of income inequality it hadn't experienced since 1928, a year before the 1929 Wall Street crash.[196] In 1928, the top ten percent of the population took in 49.29 percent of all income. This share fell to about one third of national income in the post-war years until the 1980s. By 2007, a year before the 2008 Wall Street crash, income inequality set a new record where the top ten percent took in 49.74 percent of all income.[197] At each peak of inequality in 1928 and 2007, nearly 24 percent of income went to the top one percent (its share was less than ten percent in the 1970s). It was from this experience of economic

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[195] Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD), "How Was Life? Global Well-being since 1820" (2 October 2014), http://www.oecd.org/statistics/how-was-life-9789264214262-en.htm; Deirdre Fulton, "Global Inequality Reaches Levels Not Seen in Nearly 200 Years," *Common Dreams,* 2 October 2014, http://www.commondreams.org/news/2014/10/02/global-inequality-reaches-levels-not-seen-nearly-200-years

[196] Emmanuel Saez, "Striking it Richer: The Evolution of Top Incomes in the United States (Updated with 2012 preliminary estimates). Berkeley, University of California, 3 September 2013. http://eml.berkeley.edu/~saez/saez-UStopincomes-2012.pdf

[197] The record was broken again in 2012; the top ten percent took in 50.42 percent of all income

inequality, coupled with the experience of an unresponsive political system, that Occupiers

came to identify as "the 99 percent." Compared to "the 1 percent," the majority of Americans

had experienced either stagnation or dispossession in their share of national income since the

1980s. The further dispossession of homes during the 2010 foreclosure crisis, and the

dispossession of the political means to reverse growing inequality, resulted in a call from

Adbusters to "#OCCUPYWALLSTREET" in September 2011.[198] The first call to unite as a

solidary group in New York City was based on identification with these experiences of

economic and political dispossession, and a commitment to renew democracy in order to

reverse income inequality and address other pertinent grievances.

Beyond these thin identifications with a common experience and commitment, the

identity of the solidary group was further defined in terms of locality, plurality, and relations

of power. Rather than constituting an individual identity as a nation, Occupiers had a

multiplicity of identifications that were in excess of a unified national identity. While the

experiences of inequality and insufficient democracy had their own American characteristics,

they were recognised as part of wider global struggles for greater democracy and against the

globalisation of capitalism. American Occupiers looked within and beyond their nation to

address their economic and political grievances. They took tactical inspiration from local

(national) occupations in Wisconsin and global (international) occupations during the Arab

Spring, the Spanish *Indignados* Movement, and anti-austerity demonstrations across Europe.

In turn, the globally identifiable grievances, commitments, and tactics of Occupy Wall Street

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[198] *Adbusters*, "#OCCUPYWALLSTREET," 13 July 2011, archived: http://www.webcitation.org/63DZ1nIDl

helped the movement spread to over nine hundred cities around the world.[199] The

identification of solidary groups with an inter-nationally recognised tactic (occupying public

space as a political practice) stood in contrast to conventional identifications along national

lines (common interests and goods attributed to a homogeneous culture). As outlined by Jodi

Dean, conventional solidarity presupposes a single shared history and tradition or set of

interests and values.[200] Other than the common grievance with inequality, Occupiers had few

conventional pretenses. While they identified as "the 99 percent" in opposition to "the 1

percent," Occupy's opposition to a "them" based on their membership in such a broad

identity category was not the solidary group's singular focus. Once people gathered in New

York City's Zuccotti Park, the main focus turned to what Dean calls practices of "reflective

solidarity."[201] Occupiers were encouraged to reflect on an open-ended question that had

helped draw them together: "What is our one demand?"[202] The question presupposed

dialogue was necessary to hear a multiplicity of [hi]stories and concerns before presuming to

understand what became accepted as a plurality of interests and demands.[203] For Dean,

language creates a common social space where relationships are forged. Solidarity is

internally constructed by the solidary group through dialogical practices like the ones

facilitated in Occupy's General Assemblies. Assemblies became dialogical spaces for dissent,

disagreement, questioning, critique, and conflict, as much as they became spaces for sharing

a sense of common experience and common cause. They were also spaces in which to amplify

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[199] Christopher Alessi, "Occupy Wall Street's Global Echo," Council on Foreign Relations, 17 October 2011, Archived online: http://web.archive.org/web/20140502234350/http://www.cfr.org/united-states/occupy-wall-streets-global-echo/p26216
[200] Jodi Dean, *Solidarity of Strangers*
[201] Ibid.
[202] See *Adbusters* original poster for Occupy Wall Street (*Figure 4*)
[203] New York City General Assembly of Occupy Wall Street. *Declaration of the Occupation of New York City*, 29 September 2011.

the voice of the group so that it might come to know its demands, common causes, political goals, etc., and to communicate them with its members and with the larger society. Sally Scholz delineates these three relationships—between a solidary group's members, with its cause, and between the group and larger society—as constitutive of any solidary group.[204] For Dean, it is through participation in the dialogical practices that mediate all such relationships that a solidary group constructs a communicative "we." Because these dialogical practices also risk exposing the solidary group members and larger society to uncomfortable truths, self-critique, confrontation, connection, re-identification, and critical identification, the group also creates the conditions for changing power relations within itself and society. Allison Weir calls this the construction of a transformative "we."[205] Altogether—the transformation of relations of power; the reflective and communicative spaces to deal with pluralism; the multiplicity of national and inter-national concerns; the identification with common experiences of dispossession; and the commitment to economic and political emancipatory causes—these are the qualities of identity among solidary groups within the Occupy movement and associated Global Justice Movements. In contrast to stable, individual national identities in the tradition of modern constitutionalism, Occupy's solidary groups oriented their fluid and plural identifications towards multi-versal experiences of inequality as well as commitments to transformative political and economic projects.

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[204] Scholz, *Political Solidarity*.
[205] Allison Weir, *Identities and Freedom*: 82-3; also: "Global Feminism and Transformative Identity Politics": 110-33.

5.10   7: Founding moment

(7) *Founding moment*.[206] The final feature of modern constitutionalism is the polity's fidelity to a real or imagined founding moment. The founding moment is the event where the national community is said to establish an original consensus for a social contract that is reached through critical negotiation. The contract provides the rules for democratic politics that are understood to be universal and applicable for all time.

How should we interpret the a(nta)gonism of Occupy movements to constitutional democracies? For radical democrats, anarchists, socialists, and neo-communists, it might be tempting to interpret Occupy's uprisings and demonstrations as intermittent and spontaneous events that "rupture"[207] the hegemonic order of modern constitutional orders. Perhaps this temptation arises out of a desire, undoubtedly shared by many movement participants, for something radically other to emerge from these events; something that will re-ignite a historical contest against liberal capitalist "democracy." The desire for a radical break from the modern constitutional tradition is understandable given many attempts by modern constitutionalists (both liberal and authoritarian) to co-opt and diminish the transformative goals of most Occupiers. Against the background picture of modern constitutionalism, the incommensurable differences in Occupy's radically other political ontology does give the appearance of rupture. On occasion, the incommensurable features

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[206] Tully, *Strange Multiplicity:* 69.
[207] Paul Eisenstein and Todd McGowan, *Rupture: On the Emergence of the Political*, (Evanston, Il.: Northwestern University Press, 2012); see also: Alain Badiou, *The Rebirth of History: Times of Riots and Uprisings,* trans. Gregory Elliott (London: Verso, 2012).

of these competing political ontologies have prevented Occupiers from issuing demands on the constitutional order it seeks to displace. Conversely, the same incommensurable differences have resulted in nation-states refusing concessions and violently dispersing those protesting for another political order that cannot perceivably be accommodated by modern constitutionalism. In this picture of radical incommensurability, the two world views are forced to confront each other in a violent contest that renews history as a dialectical struggle. The risk of proceeding with this picture of history is that modern surveillance states are becoming more militarised and capable of disciplining local and international solidarity movements. While rupture might allow us to see light through cracks in the system, or light at the end of the tunnel, there are reasons to remain skeptical that the light is signifying some return to a dialectical politics of inevitable historical progress. As Slavoj Žižek often pessimistically jokes, the light might be another train coming at us.[208] Despite the best efforts of the Arab Spring, the replacement of some authoritarians with others seems to confirm the risk of interpreting these global uprisings in terms of rupture.

At the same time that Occupy movements have been violently dispersed because they've been seen by authorities as incommensurable with, or too demanding of, modern constitutionalism, there have also been important exceptions to this pattern. Occupy movements have also demanded constitutional amendments, greater suffrage and voting rights, and other reforms that would preferably reduce inequality and expand democratic

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[208] For example, see: Slavoj Žižek, "Slavoj Žižek on Greece: the courage of hopelessness," *New Statesman,* 20 July 2015, http://www.newstatesman.com/world-affairs/2015/07/slavoj-i-ek-greece-courage-hopelessness

practices across civil institutions and within everyday life.[209] In cases like Iceland, many of these demands have been won through similar protest tactics, constitutional assemblies, referenda, and other forms of direct democracy.[210] This presents another possibility for solidarity movements to proceed with a transformative political vision that is neither completely incommensurable with, nor wholly resigned to the political order of modern constitutionalism. To keep this transformative possibility open, the picture of constitutional democracy's founding moment must be re-visited by both modern constitutionalists and those seeking to transform the current order. Both political constituencies have histories and practices in the tradition of *democratic constitutionalism*, even though both of them don't always practice it. Whereas constitutional democracy maintains a social contract of written and unwritten rules for democratic politics, the rules are neither universal nor applicable for all time. The real or imagined original consensus in the founding moment is an act of democratic will to change the political order from the one that preceded it. When the original consensus breaks down or becomes insulated from further contestation and amendment in law and in practice, then it loses its democratic character. In this way, meeting demands to amend constitutional laws and practices is an integral part of maintaining solidarity across a state and within its internal solidary groups. Put another way, the principle of solidary groups to subject the political order to democratic and transformative revision is equiprimordial with the principle of any modern state or polity to have stable political rules (laws) and customs (practices) which keep diverse societies and their constitutive parts together. James Tully is

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[209] For an overview of Occupy's reforms and amendments within quotidian and civil frameworks, see Michael Levitin, "The Triumph of Occupy Wall Street," *The Atlantic*, 10 June 2015:
https://www.theatlantic.com/politics/archive/2015/06/the-triumph-of-occupy-wall-street/395408/
[210] This is a reference to Iceland's 'Pots and Pans Revolution' which, in the wake of the Global Financial Crisis, achieved changes in both its government and constitution.

even more concise in this regard: Constitutional democracy is equiprimordial with democratic constitutionalism.[211] Thus, modern constitutionalism's primacy of a universal and unalterable founding moment needs to be subjected to the democratic negotiation that made it possible in the first place. Equally, the implication for an Occupy-inspired picture of political solidarity is that the customs and practices of acting otherwise should not be thought exclusively as radical, disjointed ruptures with constitutional democracy, but as practices of freedom that are continuous with struggles for the freedom to democratically transform the constitutional order of its time.

5.11 Occupying a "new" story of solidarity:

Speaking (and acting) for radical democracy

By using modern constitutionalism to paint a picture of the kind of world-shaping story the Tea Party and others are telling, the Occupy movement can be positioned as "speaking against" this story. What new picture of political solidarity begins to emerge by speaking against this other picture? What world-shaping story are movements like Occupy "speaking for"?

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[211] James Tully. *Public Philosophy in a New Key: Volume 1, Democracy and Civic Freedom*, (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2008).

By situating the practices of Occupy in contrast to modern constitutionalism, as done above, the first glimpses of a new picture of political solidarity begin to appear. While the Tea Party's mode of solidarity brings the complex history of modern constitutionalism with it, we can recall that "it is not everywhere circumscribed by rules" (5.01). Furthermore, the extension of what solidarity can mean and how it can be practiced "is *not* closed by a frontier." "It is almost always possible," as noted earlier, "to question a given normal use, invoke slightly different similarities with other historical uses or interpret a shared criterion differently." As I have shown in this chapter, it is possible to position ideas and practices of the Occupy movement against other historical ideas and practices (like modern constitutionalism) in order to question modes of solidarity used by contrasting movements like the Tea Party. In doing so, we can invoke slightly different similarities with other historical uses of solidarity and interpret shared features or criteria differently.

One picture of an alternative modality of solidarity that begins to emerge is that of radical democracy: one that practices radically bottom-up forms of popular sovereignty; one that accommodates diverse traditions and practices; one that works with cultural diversity and legal pluralism; one that embraces diverse customs in order to renew progress; one that is open to non-Western and pre-modern institutions; one that works with a multiplicity of heterogeneous identifications within groups; and one where constitutive rules and group norms remain subject to democratic revision.[212]

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[212] Even more succinctly, Occupy conjures a picture of radical democracy based on freedom, equality, and solidarity that accommodates difference and pluralism, and challenges conservative and neo/liberal conceptions of modern constitutionalism. In many ways, this picture is continuous with the tradition of radical democracy described by Laclau and Mouffe, but with notable discontinuities. Whereas Laclau and Mouffe are wary of consensus in deliberative democracy for its propensity to suppress difference, Occupy's re-iteration of radical democracy attempts to accommodate difference through directly democratic forms of consensus. In my view,

By thinking about and acting on this radically democratic picture of solidarity, the "possibility of going on differently"—of telling a new story of solidarity—can be realised. In this section of this chapter, I not only consider what this different story of solidarity is "speaking against," but what it means to speak for a story of radical democracy.[213] I then consider, in the next chapter, how we can build on the practical skills of thinking and acting in solidarity that can help bring a more democratic world, and more democratic forms of life, into being.

To tell a contrasting story of solidarity, it helps to have a contrasting image. What picture captures a story of solidarity that speaks for radical democracy? What picture speaks against modern constitutionalism? What image stands in stark contrast to John Trumbull's *Declaration of Independence* (*Figure 3*, in section 5.02), a monumental hallmark in the story of modern constitutionalism?

As discussed earlier (5.02), the latter picture is a massive painting. It features roughly fifty white men drafting a political document in a neoclassical room of the U.S. Capitol. The painting hangs in the building it depicts, and also appears on U.S. currency. Yet it is elusive for

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such discontinuities can be seen as a difference in style of radical democracy that stands in contrast to liberal and conservative styles of modern constitutionalism.

[213] My reading of Occupy's solidarity practices in radically democratic terms does not preclude the possibility of reading Occupy's story in other political frameworks. Jodi Dean, for instance, tells another story of Occupy's solidarity practices in communist terms. See Jodi Dean, "Occupation as a Political Form" (Lecture, Transmediale Festival, Berlin, 3 February 2012). My reading of Occupy through a lens of radical democracy hinges around the commensurate importance of accommodating difference, pluralism, and multiple identifications within new modes of political solidarity. Dean, on the other hand, "reject[s] interpretations of the movement that highlight multiplicity, democracy, and anarchism" in order to "locate the truth of the movement in class struggle." My claim is that a radically democratic interpretation of Occupy can do both; it can highlight multiple democratic traditions that are rooted in an anti-capitalist class struggle at the same time they also radically draw upon and accommodate differing opinions, races, classes, genders, and worldviews.

most Americans in more ways than one. The two-dollar bill which features an image of the painting is in low circulation. One can imagine an Occupy activist joking that the rare two-dollar bill is about as uncommon as the money required to afford a trip to see the original painting in Washington. Yet it is an apt picture of modern constitutionalism: something harkening a previous age that is grandiose, masculine, white, and not very accessible for most people in more ways than one. It is an image that betrays its democratic pretenses.

Now, let us contrast Trumbull's painting with the poster that advertised the original protest for Occupy Wall Street (*Figure 4*). A ballerina perches gracefully, somewhat precariously, on the *Charging Bull*[214] in front of the New York Stock Exchange. The bull, a symbol of aggressive financial capitalism, should be able to shake off the interloping dancer, but it cannot. The illusion of the bull's strength and dynamism is betrayed by the reality that it is a frozen asset, a bronze sculpture. It is the woman poised atop the bull who has the power of movement, and a powerful movement behind her. Emerging from the fog or tear gas, a crowd advances forward, arm-in-arm with batons and gas masks, ready for whatever lies ahead. The text above the fog is not a declaration of democracy, but a democratic question: "What is our one demand?" The question and the poster are inviting and accessible. The question is an open-ended public provocation to be answered in a public place. The poster is a medium of the street delivering content about the street—a visual re-iteration of democratic politics "of the people, by the people, for the people."[215] Yet the street poster also doubles as a digital poster with a hash-tag. Those who cannot bring a tent to the bright

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[214] Arturo Di Modica. *Charging Bull,* Bronze sculpture, (New York City: Bowling Green Park, Manhattan, 1989).
[215] Abraham Lincoln, "The Gettysburg Address," Speech, Gettysburg, Pennsylvania. November 19, 1863. Available at http://www.abrahamlincolnonline.org/lincoln/speeches/gettysburg.htm

lights of New York can participate in the movement in front of the glow of a computer screen.

The revolution will be online and in the streets. Emma Goldman[216] and Barbara Ehrenreich[217]

would be happy to know there will be dancing.

Figure 4: *Adbusters* original poster for Occupy Wall Street (2011)

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[216] Emma Goldman. *Living My Life (Two Volumes in One)* (New York: Cosimo Classics, [1931] 2011): 56. This passage is the source of several variants of a statement commonly attributed to Goldman which imply "a revolution without dancing is a revolution not worth having." She was responding to a young activist who said "it did not behoove an agitator to dance." The full passage goes like this: "I did not believe that a Cause which stood for a beautiful ideal, for anarchism, for release and freedom from convention and prejudice, should demand the denial of life and joy. . . . If it meant that, I did not want it. "I want freedom, the right to self-expression, everybody's right to beautiful, radiant things." Anarchism meant that to me, and I would live it in spite of the whole world — prisons, persecution, everything. Yes, even in spite of the condemnation of my own closest comrades I would live my beautiful ideal."
[217] Barbara Ehrenreich, *Dancing in the Streets: A History of Collective Joy* (New York: Holt Paperbacks, 2006).

The image of dancing captures a picture of solidarity, and not just the one practiced by Occupy Wall Street. The dance has been part of a wider story about radical democracy for quite some time. I will consider two other examples to illustrate this point. One example comes from political philosopher Johannes Althusius. The other example is from the Idle No More movement being led by Indigenous people in Canada.

As a political philosopher living in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, Althusius was overshadowed by thinkers who advocated state sovereignty across Europe. In-between the time Jean Bodin[218] and Thomas Hobbes[219] were advocating absolute sovereignty, Althusius was developing bottom-up conceptions of power and authority, like "consociations."[220] His thought influenced the early development of federalism based on proto-solidary groups like consociations, instead of individualism: "The communal aspects of village life, such as *dances*, are an example of Althusius's idea of a consociation: individuals forming a group based on shared needs, services, or values."[221] It is from consociations that Althusius believes power and authority should move upward, not down from a sovereign. In his theory, sovereignty belongs to these social groups, not the monarch. Moreover, elected representatives "do not represent individuals or a single common will, but a plurality of wills— of all the communities that exist within the one larger community of the nation."[222] Althusius's idea of consociation not only conjures up the picture of dancing, but can be

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[218] Jean Bodin. Les Six livres de la République (The Six Books of the Republic) (Paris: Iacques du Puys, 1576).

[219] Thomas Hobbes. *Leviathan,* (London: Andrew Crooke, 1651).

[220] Johannes Althusius, *Politica Methodice Digesta, Atque Exemplis Sacris et Profanis Illustrata* (*Politica, or Politics: A Digest of its Methods*), edited and translated by Frederick Smith Carney, (Indianapolis: Liberty Fund, [1603] 1997).

[221] Paul Kelly, editor, *The Politics Book*, (London: Dorling Kindersley, 2013): 93.

[222] Ibid., 93.

considered as part of a political tradition of solidarity that runs parallel to, and largely against, the currents of modern constitutionalism and top-down sovereignty centered in the state. Althusius's political philosophy is described as redefining "politics from an activity relating only to the state, to one that permeates many aspects of social life and unfolds in political associations well below the level of the state."[223] For Althusius, politics is a social activity of everyday life. I take his image of dancing as both a picture and practice of grassroots political solidarity that is part of a larger story of radical democracy.

Dancing remains an important political practice three hundred years after Althusius thought of it as an example of consociation. The round dance, in particular, is one of the most recognisable images from the grassroots Idle No More movement that took-off in Canada in late 2012. The movement has also been called "the Round Dance Revolution" in Canadian media. And dancing has become "the most enduring image of the Idle No More movement."[224] Like the idea of consociations, the round dance is a communal aspect of life where individuals form groups based on shared needs. David Courchene Jr., an Ojibwe spiritual leader, describes the social power of the round dance:

> Our people had this great faith that there was great power in the round dance. . . .
> The dancing itself was calling the spirit to help in healing whatever the community
> was in need of healing.[225]

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[223] Ibid., 92.
[224] Melissa Martin, "Round Dance: Why it's the symbol of Idle No More." *CBC Manitoba,* 28 January, 2013, http://www.cbc.ca/manitoba/scene/homepage-promo/2013/01/28/round-dance-revolution-drums-up-support-for-idle-no-more/
[225] Ibid.

There is an origin story of the round dance ceremony that is another illustrative example of the relationship between affects of loss and their mobilisation into political practices of hope and celebration covered in Chapter Three:

> One story of its origin tells the story of a Cree mother grieving the death of her child. After weeks of mourning, the Creator came to her in a dream, and gave her a song and dance to help soothe her tears.[226]

Ray "Coco" Stevenson, a Cree traditional singer, elaborates on this connection between grief, healing, and transformation:

> The way I was taught, is the round dance was a ceremony that was done when somebody passed on, that would help them in their journey to the spirit world. . . . So when you had a round dance, you had your faith, you smoked your pipes. And sometime, somewhere, things kind of changed.[227]

In addition to its traditional use in healing ceremonies, the transformative power of the round dance has also been applied by Idle No More in protests, flash mobs, and at blockades of rail lines. Thus, dancing is a multi-purpose activity that serves the social movement in multiple ways. It serves social needs, like healing. It serves cultural rejuvenation and builds resilience for a ceremony that had been outlawed by colonialism. It serves political needs in protests and blockades that protect the environment from government deregulation and Treaty

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[226] Ibid.
[227] Ibid.

violations. And it serves the cultivation of political solidarity in flash mobs by inviting non-Indigenous people into relationship with Idle No More activists and their cause.

5.12   Chapter summary

Modern constitutionalism can be thought of as a story of political solidarity that the Tea Party and others speak for. As a story, it can be re-told, re-imagined, and done differently by speaking and acting otherwise. Occupy and other Global Justice Movements are among those speaking and acting against this story. In doing so, activists are changing the meanings and modes of political solidarity and cultivating a new democratic ethos. By speaking against one story of political solidarity, they are speaking for another: the story of radical democracy.

When I think of a captivating picture that tells this different story of political solidarity—one that works to bring a more democratic world, and more democratic forms of life, into being—the image of dancing comes to mind. It is a captivating picture and practice that has been used to tell stories of radical democracy for centuries. The dance is more than a metaphor. It is both a symbol and practice of political solidarity for radical democracy. It is an embodied social activity that can bring people together and serve communal needs. It can also be a democratic political practice that has the power to heal, protect, protest, and bring life and joy to the art of political solidarity. It was dancing that invited philosophers like Althusius to think of social and bottom-up forms of life and politics. It was an image of a

dancing ballerina that invited people to Occupy Wall Street. And it is the Round Dance that continues to invite solidarity between Indigenous and non-Indigenous people to come together and heal relationships with the earth and each other.

In the next chapter, I take this "new" picture of political solidarity for "radical democracy"[228] and explore how we can build more practical skills of cultivating the kind of solidarity that will help bring a more democratic world, and more democratic forms of life, into being. More specifically, I will suggest how modes of solidarity that I have covered thus far can be developed to explicitly incorporate a skill-based model of political solidarity that is critically reflective, affectually-attuned, and tailored for radical democracy.

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[228] For more thinking on radical democracy as an aesthetic and practical political project, see: Romand Coles, *Visionary Pragmatism: Radical and Ecological Democracy in Neoliberal Times*, (Durham and London: Duke University Press, 2016); as a political project emerging from Occupy Wall Street, see: David Graeber, *The Democracy Project: A History / A Crisis / A Movement*, (London: Penguin Books, 2013).

PART IV

RENEWING SOLIDARITY

Problems and Possibilities

In this part on "Renewing Solidarity," I reflect on the contemporary theories and practices of solidarity covered so far in order to diagnose problems and explore possibilities about how we can cultivate solidarity differently, in more enduring and effective ways. I propose a normative model of solidarity that understands collective political action and transformational struggle as crafts that require the development of skill and know-how.

CHAPTER SIX

Solidarity and Skill

6.00   Introduction

In previous chapters, I looked at what solidarity is and what it means; how affects help re/generate it; and how it can be maintained through the stories and skills that are used across the lifecycles of social movements. This chapter builds on the previous ones by taking a closer look at the role of skill in cultivating and innovating styles of solidarity befitting of radical democracy.

In the last chapter, specifically, I started to sketch a "new" picture of political solidarity that furthers the tradition of radical democracy. What that style of political solidarity looks like is defined, in part, by the language, stories, affects, and symbols that thinkers and activists use to bring people together and cultivate democratic forms of life. As powerful and important as these aesthetic aspects of solidarity are, I contend that they require something more if solidarity is to be more enduring across time and difference, and if it is to deliver on the promise of transforming our world into a better one. In this chapter, I argue two central points. The first is that, for radically democratic solidarity to be sustainable and enduring, we should consciously cultivate an *apprenticeship* model of learning how to turn the story of

radical democracy into a political reality of everyday life. The second point is that, for solidarity of this kind to be politically effective, we need to integrate and innovate different styles of solidarity in order to *proto-type* the radically democratic word we are building upon and bringing into being.

6.01   The art of political solidarity:

Crafting radically democratic solutions to modern problems

Before articulating some of the ideas that can help sustain and fulfill the transformative potential of political solidarity, allow me to elaborate on two of the problems they offer to solve. Simply put, political solidarity based in apprenticeship is an antidote to the alluring but limited modes of technocratic and disembodied solidarity that are relegated to online activism, colloquially known as "clicktivism." Furthermore, a kind of solidarity committed to proto-typing the better world we wish to build is an antidote to the alluring but limited modes of protest that seek to rupture the old order yet skeptically refrain from committing to fleshed-out alternatives. Essentially, the first problem is one of detachment solved by involvement. The second problem is one of skepticism solved by a commitment to open-ended experimentation and innovation. To get a clearer picture of these two problems and their remedies, let us return briefly to the *Adbusters* poster for Occupy Wall Street introduced in Chapter Five (*Figure 4*).

If the dancing ballerina atop the *Charging Bull* in the poster captures a radically democratic picture of skillfully embodied people-power over undemocratic political and economic forces, then the text above and below her points to the problems of detachment and skepticism I address in this chapter. At the bottom of the poster, a hashtag invites people captivated by the promise of radical democracy to connect, at least at first, in disembodied ways online: "#OCCUPYWALLSTREET." Above the ballerina, people are invited to answer a question instead of endorsing a pre-made alternative of a platform or manifesto: "What is our one demand?" The question is not a skeptical one in and of itself, but it does suggest a sort of skepticism, perhaps a healthy kind, towards ready-made blue-prints and unconvincing "solutions" on offer by mainstream political parties and organisations. Together, these two lines of text framing the ballerina can be thought of as pointing towards the less embodied and more cerebral aspects of a larger picture of radically democratic solidarity. In other words, part of the message is 'come together online and discuss.' To be clear, I am not arguing that we should do away with online activism, nor skepticism of master-narratives, but to be vigilant of their limitations and trappings which undermine solidarity. My hope is that such vigilance will allow us to readily develop better practices which sustain solidarity and cultivate sufficient political capacity to maintain the continuity of a solidary group's problem-solving power.

Whether the text around the ballerina signifies a frame to captivate critically questioning citizens, or whether it signifies a box to hold the potential of radical democracy captive is an open question. Of course, the poster also implores people to come together in solidarity, meet in person, "bring [a] tent," and put our bodies on the line to do politics. In

this way, the promise of Occupy Wall Street was ambiguous from the beginning. At its best, it did a mix of all these things: It brought people together online, started important political discussions, and didn't stop there. It also brought people to assemble in person to protest and temporarily rupture the old political order in a specific time and place. And, more than just facilitating General Assemblies and protests of resistance, it also initiated working groups of people who ran makeshift libraries, media centres, and enduring campaigns that outlived the Occupy movement itself. But, as happens with all movements, parts of Occupy did not endure, solidarity eroded, and some people retreated back into the alluring comfort of "clicktivism" and spontaneous, disjointed protest. Embedded within any project of radical democracy is this paradox of problems and possibilities. My aim going forward is to unpack some of these problems, and to amplify best practices as antidotes to them so we can re/develop political solidarity in more enduring and effective ways.

6.02   Innovating styles of political solidarity:

Re/developing solidarity as a skill-based craft

If we work with the ambiguous picture of problems and possibilities exemplified in the Occupy Wall Street poster, then it is possible to see political solidarity of this style as an unfinished work in progress. In other words, we can think of political solidarity not as leading to a "more perfect union" that erases difference and diversity in the tradition of modern constitutionalism, but as a dynamic and ongoing collective process of cultivating and renewing diverse practices, concerns, and commitments of a radically democratic politics. In this vein, I propose an understanding of political solidarity, not as a broken chain of spontaneous events that rupture the ontology of modern constitutionalism, but as a series of re/iterations in an unfinished, unfolding, multi-versal experiment that is uncovering and renewing another mode of political solidarity altogether—radically democratic solidarity. I argue it is better to think of social movement practices as iterations among past and future iterations of solidarity in a long, slow, experimental process of cultivating skills for a new political ontology that is radically democratic and participatory, economically egalitarian, and socially pluralist. I see these burgeoning skills that re/emerge from each subsequent iteration as part of developing and enacting a new style of political solidarity; as contributing to a not-yet fully realised phronesis/habitus (or, in the case of Indigenous movements, the recovery of a suppressed phronesis/habitus) of solidarity that, in practice, re-inscribes and innovates radical democracy.

If we seek to build on this mode of political solidarity even further than Occupy and Global Justice Movements have taken us so far, then questions of skill cultivation through embodied apprenticeship that builds on past iterations of political solidarity need to take precedence over more isolated, disembodied, detached, and technocratic modes of solidarity. Questions of long-term development that pre-figure and proto-type political alternatives also need to take precedence over narratives of spontaneous rupture with the old order. Thus, I consider two central questions in this chapter: Firstly, how can we think of cultivating skills of solidarity in more sustainable and enduring ways across time and difference? Secondly, how can we better understand Global Justice Movements, not only as part of a picture of radical democracy, but with a longer view of skillfully re/developing this alternative political ontology?

To answer the first question about cultivating enduring skills of political solidarity, I adapt Hubert L. Dreyfus' model of apprenticeship and argue for more involved learning in the art of building and sustaining radically democratic forms of politics in everyday life (6.03-6.11). To answer the second question about developing a more effective mode of political solidarity in the long-term, I use the idea of proto-typing to propose a heuristic model of further solidarity development. In doing so, I offer a way to think of more integrative and innovative forms of solidarity (6.12-6.14). With this new normative model of involved and experimental political solidarity, my thesis presents readers—particularly, researchers, activists, and action researchers—with an updated framework to re-interpret the narratives of social movements and other solidary groups as part of a continuous, inter-national apprenticeship in building skills of solidarity for a transformational politics of radical democracy—a mode of political

solidarity that works to re/inscribe a picture of radical democracy from quotidian practices of everyday life. Ultimately, I argue that if we can learn to build on skills of solidarity in more involved and experimental ways, then we will have greater political capacity to effectively proto-type radically democratic forms of life that can help solve some of the most pressing crises of our time.

6.03   Building political capacity:

Involved and enduring solidarity through apprenticeship

The tension between technocratic and disembodied modes of solidarity on one hand, and involved and embodied modes on the other, is notably present in the work of Micah White. He is a former editor of *Adbusters* who created the Occupy Wall Street meme. White is also an academic and journalist who popularised and criticised the idea of "clicktivism" in 2010.

Over a year before the launch of Occupy, White published an essay in *The Guardian* that laid out the stakes between two modes of political solidarity—technocratic clicktivism and face-to-face organising:

> A battle is raging for the soul of activism. It is a struggle between digital activists, who have adopted the logic of the marketplace, and those organisers who vehemently

oppose the marketisation of social change. At stake is the possibility of an

emancipatory revolution in our lifetimes.[229]

He goes on to provide a historical account of how liberal, progressive, pro-Democrat forces in

the United States wedded their ideology of marketing with Silicon Valley's latest computer

programming technology of the late 1990s. By using this technology, "everything digital

activists do is meticulously monitored and analysed,"[230] White explains. "The obsession with

tracking clicks turns digital activism into clicktivism,"[231] a new digital mode of organising that

its proponents herald as the model for twenty-first century activism. Online advocacy groups

like *MoveOn* (established in 1998) were among the first American groups to successfully

adopt the model. Soon after, similar groups like *GetUp!* (est. 2005) and *LeadNow* (est. 2010)

were established in Canada and Australia, respectively. *Avaaz* (est. 2007) developed the

model on an international scale. All of them infused marketing skills of political branding with

technocratic skills of online petitioning and viral campaigning. While White had no problem

managing *Adbusters* online or using internet technology to start the Occupy Wall Street

meme, he remained critically concerned about clicktivism's "exclusive emphasis on metrics

results in a race to the bottom of political *engagement*"[232] (my emphasis).

What, exactly, is being lost in this popular mode of clicktivist politics? Micah White

describes the loss this way:

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229 White, "Clicktivism is ruining leftist activism."
230 Ibid.
231 Ibid.
232 Ibid.

Gone is faith in the power of ideas, or the poetry of deeds, to enact social change. Instead, subject lines are A/B tested and messages vetted for widest appeal. Most tragically of all, to inflate participation rates, these organisations increasingly ask less and less of their members. The end result is the degradation of activism into a series of petition drives that capitalise on current events. Political engagement becomes a matter of clicking a few links. In promoting the illusion that surfing the web can change the world, clicktivism is to activism as McDonalds is to a slow-cooked meal. It may look like food, but the life-giving nutrients are long gone.... They are the Wal-Mart of activism: leveraging economies of scale, they colonise emergent political identities and silence underfunded radical voices.[233]

If White is correct, as I think he is in many ways, then we have much to lose with this "new model for twenty-first century activism."[234] The power of *some* ideas might still remain, which is to say the focus-grouped ideas. But that does not mean diverse, marginalised, controversial or revolutionary ideas get debated or adopted, much less actualised. Radically democratic voices have a hard time surviving the muted world of clicks and computer computations. They are frequently silenced or sidelined, not least of all because surveys pre-determine the framing of issues and are no substitute for actual face-to-face conversations. And even if we could imagine a good, radically democratic idea being used to drive a large online campaign, what is there to stop the targeted politicians from out-maneuvering or outright ignoring the campaign? Why would political interlocutors—both campaigners and politicians—be moved without having any skin in the game? With so little, if anything, to lose, what is the *risk*? Where

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[233] Ibid.
[234] Ibid.

is the political "meat" from White's fast-food metaphor that nourishes and sustains the struggle until a campaign's goals are achieved? White notes that "as the novelty of online activism wears off, millions of formerly socially engaged individuals who trusted digital organisations are coming away believing in the impotence of all forms of activism."[235] What we stand to lose is not just the trust that sustains *enduring* engagement and solidarity, but also the political *efficacy* of a demos that has malnourished, stunted roots.

My use of embodied language to describe what we stand to lose is intentional: *face-to-face*, *voice*, *conversation*, *hearing*, *meat*, *skin in the game*. Like the language of "the dance" in the last chapter, the language used to describe what we lose in clicktivism is the language of lively, animated, socially interacting bodies. It is a loss that has prompted philosophers like Zygmunt Bauman to call solidarity "a word in search of flesh."[236] And it is a loss that requires a better model of political solidarity if movements are going to endure twenty-first century challenges, and if they are going to effectively cultivate radically democratic forms of life.

With technocratic and disembodied modes of solidarity resulting in political atrophy, how do we rebuild responsive and supple political muscles for more involved and enduring modes of solidarity? To be more specific, if some of the downsides of clicktivism are detachment, unsustainability, skepticism, and ineffectiveness, then what would a new model of solidarity need in order to accommodate and promote a more involved, enduring, committed, and effective politics? I propose any new model needs to find key resources for

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[235] Ibid.
[236] Zygmunt Bauman, "Solidarity: A world in search of flesh." *Eurozine*, 8 May 2013, http://www.eurozine.com/solidarity-a-word-in-search-of-flesh/

enduring and effective modes of solidarity in embodied social activities, interactions, and the commitments we make to each other in face-to-face and shoulder-to-shoulder relationships of trust. In order to renew solidarity in this way, I suggest we incorporate a component of *apprenticeship* that can meet the first two needs for a more involved and enduring mode of political solidarity. After that, I will add another component to the model that deals with issues of innovation and efficacy (section 6.12-6.14).

6.04   Apprenticeship

At the same time online solidary groups started championing modes of internet activism over more embodied modes of organising, a similar debate was brewing in the education sector. On one side, advocates of online learning were championing new tools for distance education. On the other side, many educators were arguing that learning requires engagement and face-to-face interaction between teachers and students.

In 2001, philosopher Hubert L. Dreyfus responded to this debate in his book, *On the Internet*. One question he asks is: "can distance learning enable students to acquire the skills they need in order to be good citizens skilled in various domains?"[237] In response to this question, Dreyfus lays out the "stages in which a student learns by means of instruction, practice, and, finally, apprenticeship, to become an expert in some particular domain and in

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[237] Dreyfus, *On the Internet*: 32.

everyday life."[238] In his stadial model of apprenticeship, he demonstrates the possibilities

and limits for skill development in online learning environments. While Dreyfus concludes

some level of competence can be developed through distance learning, he argues that "only

emotional, involved, embodied human beings"[239] can acquire further skills of proficiency,

expertise, mastery, and practical wisdom. His conclusion suggests citizens require embodied

learning of skills in order to become experts in a particular domain.

I think Dreyfus' insights into the problems and possibilities of distance learning have

much to offer citizens and solidary groups who are looking for more enduring modes of

solidarity than what clicktivism has to offer. Akin to Dreyfus, we can ask how best to enable

citizens to acquire the skills they need in order to be effective activists skilled in the domain

of political solidarity. In response to this question, I examine how theories and practices of

solidarity can develop through Dreyfus' stadial model of apprenticeship so that activists can

achieve more enduring modes of political organising. In my overview of the stages outlined

by Dreyfus, I offer illustrative examples to show how we might build upon and re-imagine

social movements and other solidary groups as workshop spaces and "schoolhouses of

democracy"[240] in the skilled art of political solidarity.

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[238] Ibid.
[239] Ibid., 48.
[240] Alexis de Tocqueville, *Democracy in America* (Chicago, US: The University of Chicago Press, [1835-1840] 2002).

6.05   Stage 1: Novice

For Dreyfus, the learning process begins with "decomposing the task environment into context-free features that the beginner can recognise without the desired skill."[241] The non-situational elements of the object of learning are understood as rules, maxims, facts, and procedures without context. They can be understood from reading or instruction.

At this stage, different types of political solidarity can be defined in ideal and abstract terms, much like the five features delineated in Chapter Two. We can learn to recognise different meanings of solidarity coming from different historical traditions. We can see how those different meanings are shaped by various values, norms, and conceptions of the good. Those norms have implications on who comes together, the kind of social relations they share or aim to achieve, and how they develop practices that protect or struggle for a political order that pre/serves their idea of the common good.

As we saw with the Tea Party in Chapter Four, American conservatives, libertarians, and right-wing populists relied on many historically established norms and social relations to take a certain amount of solidarity for granted. As we saw with the Occupy movement in Chapter Five, people can paint another picture of politics and reconfigure the features of political solidarity to serve alternatives like radical democracy. The point to be taken here is that people of different political persuasions can learn to recognise objectively-defined non-

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[241] Dreyfus, *On the Internet:* 33.

situational *features* of solidarity and consider different combinations of those elements, independent of any involvement in a movement or solidary group. Given what we know about abstract features of solidarity, we can simply identify the facts that correspond with an instance of solidarity: the norms being upheld, the social relations being re/produced, the practices which sustain or alter a political order, and the history that accounts for how these features developed over time. By learning the various features of different types of solidarity, we can come to *know what* solidarity looks like, at least in theory.

In any case, understanding this or that language of solidarity requires much more than being able to identify various features relating to the phenomenon. A novice learner, Dreyfus concludes, "needs not only the facts but also an understanding of the context in which that information makes sense."[242]

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[242] Ibid., 33.

6.06   Stage 2: Advanced Beginner

"As the novice gains experience actually coping with real situations and begins to develop an understanding of the relevant context, he or she begins to note, or an instructor points out, perspicuous examples of meaningful additional aspects of the situation or domain. After seeing a sufficient number of examples, the student learns to recognize these new aspects. Instructional *maxims* can then refer to these new situational *aspects*, recognized on the basis of experience, as well as to the objectively-defined non-situational *features* recognizable by the novice."

—Hubert L. Dreyfus, On the Internet (2001)[243]

Advanced beginner activists evaluate the context of social, political, environmental, and economic problems. They consider which constituencies are affected by these problems in order to decide how and when to call for solidarity. They might learn a maxim, for example: re/articulate the values and way of life people stand to lose in order to rally resistant identities among potential allies. Situational events and responses cannot be adequately captured by a list of features. Knowing a feature of solidarity (e.g. the practice of rallying to a cause in a time of crisis), cannot take the place of seeing perspicuous examples and learning relevant distinctions. With experience, advanced beginner activists learn to recognise which groups are being affected by a crisis, and how to appeal to potential allies who might rally to the cause. Similarly, they begin to recognise situational aspects of the group one is appealing to,

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[243] Ibid., 34.

like the modes of communication that might be most resonant. In one time and place, a

solidary group might be most responsive to a manifesto. In another circumstance, a television

audience might be responsive to an inspiring speech. In yet another case, a young crowd using

social media might be responsive to a poster and a hashtag. "Unlike a rule," Dreyfus explains

that "a maxim requires that one already has some understanding of the domain to which the

maxim applies."[244]

Concrete examples of this stage of learning can be seen in the months before Occupy

Wall Street took off in September 2011. In his reflections on how Occupy got started, Micah

White postulates three key maxims that often work to bring protest movements together: a

contagious mood, a new tactic, and a willing historical moment.[245] By late 2010 and early

2011, these catalysing features of new social movements could be found in several different

contexts around the world. The Arab Spring, anti-austerity protests across Europe, and

demonstrations protecting collective bargaining rights in Wisconsin provided perspicuous

examples and different situational aspects of political solidarity. Each protest had its unique

set of circumstances and accompanying grievances. Generally speaking, the Arab Spring was

a revolutionary wave of anti-authoritarian movements that spread from Tunisia across North

Africa and the Middle East. The sustained occupation of Tahrir Square in Egypt became a

broadly inspiring tactic when pro-democracy demonstrators successfully ended the reign of

President Hosni Mubarak who had ruled for almost three decades. Months later, the tactic of

occupation spread to town squares across Europe, most notably in Spain. Demonstrators

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[244] Ibid., 35, also drawing upon Michael Polanyi, *Personal Knowledge* (London: Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1958).
[245] Micah White, *The End of Protest: A New Playbook For Revolution* (Toronto: Alfred. A. Knoph Canada, 2016).

flooded the Puerta del Sol square in Madrid where the *Indignados* Movement responded to the ongoing economic crisis by rallying against austerity policies while working to build alternatives together. The tactic of sustained occupation spread, yet again, to Wisconsin, this time to protect labour rights. While aspects of each protest around the world were unique, they all featured their own set of historical grievances, intensified affects, and innovative practices of protest that were finding new traction and success. These perspicuous examples proved to be instructive for activists like White, who then developed maxims that could be tailored to the situational context in the United States. Months before any occupation took place in New York City, White and his colleagues at *Adbusters* experimented with different memes, images, slogans, blogs, and articles to spread the rebellious mood across the Atlantic and attempt to make history in America. As early as February 2011, *Adbusters* was using print and electronic media to call for a Tahrir moment in America with a march on Wall Street. The website, *OccupyWallStreet.org*, was registered that June. Around the same time, the famous poster of the ballerina atop Wall Street's *Charging Bull* sculpture was designed (*Figure 4*). This stage of learning from occupations overseas and applying maxims to fledgling protests at home took months of developing relatable, if not shared, understandings of the relevant context. Such understanding was mediated by a mix of experience and disembodied analysis and communication that largely took place on the internet and in print.

At this stage of learning, appeals to solidarity are often made in a relatively detached, analytic frame of mind as activists discern which situational aspects of solidarity cultivation might be most appropriate for particular groups experiencing different kinds of problems. An

advanced beginner, Dreyfus concludes, "requires a special kind of *involvement* . . . to progress

further"[246] (my emphasis).

6.07   Stage 3: Competence

At this stage, a competent learner knows more features, rules, maxims, and aspects

of a domain than are relevant to a given situation. If the learner applies an irrelevant aspect

of the domain to a real-life situation, they *risk* failure. But they also stand to gain success if

the application of a relevant aspect pays off. Coping with this uncertainty can become nerve-

wracking, exhausting, or even frightening. To mitigate this anxiety and avoid mistakes, a

competent learner will use their knowledge and reasoning procedures to develop a plan or

perspective. They use discernment and judgment to "determine which elements of the

situation or domain must be treated as important and which ones can be ignored."[247] By

owning their choices, the competent activist or solidary group feels responsible for the

outcome. If the chosen plan or perspective fails, the mistake may lead to confusion, remorse,

disappointment, and discouragement. But if things work out, the success can induce

excitement, elation, joy, and euphoria which can fuel a deeper sense of care, concern, and

emotional involvement with the cause or task at hand.

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[246] Dreyfus, *On the Internet:* 35.
[247] Ibid., 36.

This stage of learning is of critical importance if solidarity is to overcome the limits of online clictivism, especially if social involvement in a political cause is to endure across time and difference. Sticking with the example of the Occupy movement, we can observe some potent consequences of success and failure when it comes to applying different aspects of solidarity in real-life situations. As I am about to demonstrate, learning to cultivate embodied practices of solidarity becomes a vital skill. It also serves as a basis for progress which allows for the development of more proficient skills of solidarity beyond competence. On the other hand, failing to cultivate such skills can lead to stagnation, or even regression, which falls back on complacent and reactive forms of political solidarity. To illustrate the need for competence in skills of solidarity as a stage that enables further growth, I look at some of the early instances of solidarity cultivation in Occupy's formation. One instance involved the failure of official institutions to accommodate public concerns that were eventually taken up by the movement. Another instance took place at a General Assembly where an activist who did not feel like she fully belonged took the risk to have her concerns and objections recognised by the group, and the group took the risk of self-transformation in return. By learning to build on these early successes and failures of solidarity cultivation, we can move on to develop even more involved and enduring skills of solidarity down the line.

My first example shows how solidarity requires competence in practices that support shared sets of concerns. A compelling factor that drew people together at Occupy Wall Street was that it provided a space for people to retrieve concerns that had been dispersed by official institutions. There were so many different concerns in the wake of the Great Recession that the usual channels failed to accommodate them adequately. On one hand, most orthodox

economists continued to appeal to free market capitalism as an objective good that everyone in society should accept. While Keynesians and neoclassical economists debated over how much and how deep to reform the economy, more radical and heterodox concerns with system change were marginalised. On the other hand, politicians on both sides of the aisle were heavily beholden to Wall Street donors. Politically, it seemed impossible to reconcile the values and interests of "Wall Street" and "Main Street," that is to say between finance capital and the rest of society. Any attempt to come to a new shared set of values between capital and labour, as once happened with Roosevelt's New Deal, was considered unthinkable by most politicians of the day. Citizens with lingering concerns who fell outside the official consensus of economists and politicians were left to cope in a terrain of socio-economic inequality that had not been seen since the years that precipitated the Great Depression of the 1930s. Occupy characterised this gaping political and economic inequality as a division between "the 1%" (those who captured nearly all of the post-financial-crisis growth since 2009), and "the 99%" (those who were either barely recovering, stagnating, or had been falling behind during the previous thirty years of neoliberalism). From the perspective of many Occupiers, economists of the 1% were seen as making objectivist appeals to supposed universal laws of the market, while politicians of the 1% were seen as making moralist appeals to the standards of plutocrats revolving between Wall Street and Washington. Both appeals fell flat because they withdrew attention from the anomalies of everyday life that everyone else was experiencing. In other words, the abstract reasoning of economists, along with the bailout procedures that politicians were telling everyone else to adapt to, were simply not speaking to the way of life shared by most Americans, especially those in more vulnerable communities. Put in even starker terms, the activities of the 1% on Wall Street and in

Washington broke down social solidarity across American society because they insisted on

preserving autonomous principles of the market and protecting oligarchic political institutions

at the expense of the 99%. Charles Spinosa, et al, have described this kind of crisis of solidarity

before:

> When we make our values or institutions autonomous, we lose the concrete
>
> way of experiencing concerns that holds us together. Hence, when these
>
> [economic] values and [political] institutions are called on to resolve rifts in the
>
> [national] community, they can only provide abstract solutions in the name of
>
> a technical sounding value or principled form of justice.[248]

One remedy Occupy offered to this crisis of solidarity was a space for people to retrieve

concerns from everyday life—concerns that had been displaced by official economic values

and political institutions. The implicit promise Occupy offered was that the 99% could come

together, retrieve their concerns, and build a new set of shared concerns in ways that had

been previously foreclosed. That work would serve as a foundation for a radically democratic

solidarity of the 99% in opposition to the parasitic and "complacent solidarity"[249] of the 1%.

Instead of the passive experience of a unifying good or a universal procedure, what I think

Occupy offered everyone else was an opportunity to develop a skill-based solidarity "founded

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[248] Charles Spinosa, Flores, and Dreyfus, *Disclosing New Worlds*: 146. For more on the idea of skill-based solidarity as an alternative to detachment that comes from pursuing a highest good or universal procedure, see Chapter 4, "Solidarity: The Ground of Meaningful Community": 116-61, particularly the section on "Value Wars or Adaptive Coping," 144-8.

[249] Sennett. "Solidarity and Isolation," speech at The Institute for Human Sciences, Boston University, Boston, on 26 September 2008: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=WjVv6Go8lYk

in familiarity with, and competence in, practices that support . . . the active cultivation of a set of shared, roughly ordered concerns [that] produces a 'we' identity"[250] for and of the 99%.

While Occupy received a fair amount of criticism for not explicitly clarifying all its demands, much less one demand, the movement's aversion to establishing a highest concern was actually one of its strengths. Suspending the usual pursuit of an objectively defined common good is what enabled Occupy participants to negotiate difference and cultivate solidarity in ways that had been foreclosed by official institutions and even some prior movements. It's not that Occupy totally sidestepped attempts to establish commonly held values, nor did it totally disavow ideas of formal procedures. After all, it did come out with its own statement of values in a Declaration, and it did so through procedures of consensus decision-making. What helped Occupy cultivate stronger bonds of solidarity beyond these habitual methods was that it intuitively knew, as Spinosa, et al, have said before, that "neither the thin substantive good[,] nor the process [from which it is derived]," are sufficient "to support a solidarity capable of demanding sacrifices from a community's members."[251] A deeper solidarity capable of having members set aside private interests for each other requires competence in practices of vulnerability, risk-taking, and trust-building. More than any posited value or procedure, such practices are required for a particular kind of democratic and world-transforming solidarity where citizens develop a "sense of ultimate responsibility to the most encompassing disclosive space that makes [their] activities . . . matter most."[252]

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[250] Spinosa, Flores, and Dreyfus, *Disclosing New Worlds*: 130-1.
[251] Ibid., 129.
[252] Ibid., 116.

Occupy featured numerous instances where these aspects of solidarity were practiced successfully. The story of Manissa McLeave Maharawal is one of them.[253]

*   *   *

Like many in New York City, Maharawal started off relatively detached and skeptical of Occupy in its early days, but that soon changed after getting involved, taking a risk, and being rewarded by a particular experience. Her initial skepticism might be surprising since she taught courses on social movements as a graduate student and also attended Occupy planning meetings, including trainings around consensus decision-making. Like the novice and advanced beginner in this scheme of apprenticeship, she already knew the theory as well as the context in which Occupy planned to apply it. But her experience as a South Asian woman of colour gave her some doubts. She had witnessed police violence in high school and didn't trust that occupying Wall Street would be permitted, much less work. A week after Occupy started, three female protesters were pepper-sprayed by police even though they were already behind barricades. Video of the incident seemed to confirm Maharawal's fears. But it also spoke to her concerns. She went over to check out the Occupy encampment at Zuccotti Park, renamed Liberty Plaza by its new denizens. In contrast to the police violence Maharawal had witnessed, she arrived at the park and observed a diverse group of people practicing something very different:

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[253] For more background on the story of Manissa McLeave Maharawal, see: Greg Jobin-Leeds. *When We Fight We Win! Twenty-First-Century Social Movements and the Activists That Are Transforming Our World* (New York and London: The New Press, 2016): 106-15.

People seemed to be taking care of each other. There seemed to be a general feeling

of solidarity, good ways of communicating with each other, less disorganisation than

I expected and everyone was very, very friendly. The whole thing was quite bizarre:

the confused tourists not knowing what was going on; the police officers lining the

perimeter; the mixture of young white kids with dreadlocks, anarchist punks,

mainstream looking college kids, but also the awesome black women who were

organising the food station; the older man who walked around with his peace sign

stopping and talking to everyone; a young black man named Chris from New Jersey

who told me he had been there all week and he was tired but that he had come not

knowing anyone, had made friends and now didn't want to leave.[254]

People at Zuccotti Park were holding a space together in which strangers could be vulnerable

with each other, and where shared activities of everyday life mattered to everyone. Strangers

were talking with one another across their differences and not only learning to care about

each other, but for each other. Maharawal recognised the potential for a more enduring

movement in these quotidian practices of vulnerability and care:

Maybe this is how movements need to maintain themselves, by recognising that

political change is also fundamentally about everyday life and that everyday life needs

to encompass all of this. There needs to be a space for a talent show across from anti-

patriarchy meetings. There needs to be a food table, medics, and a library. Everyone

needs to stop for a second and look around for someone's phone. And that within all

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[254] Manissa McLeave Maharawal, "So Real It Hurts," in *We Are Many: Reflections on Movement Strategy from Occupation to Liberation,* Kate Khatib and Mike McGuire (eds.), (Oakland, California: AK Press, 2012): 174-5.

this we will keep talking about [the recent execution of] Troy Davis and how everyone

is affected by a broken, racist, oppressive system.[255]

Maharawal quickly recognised that shared practices of vulnerability and care helped form an

elementary basis for continuing bonds of social solidarity.

Another way for us all to recognise the need for such practices is to consider our

shared human vulnerability since birth, and how "holding spaces"[256] are essential in

developing relationships of trust between infants and caregivers. Pediatrician and

psychoanalyst D.W. Winnicott is notable for his account of the initial disclosive space in which

all infants are vulnerable and have no choice but to trust others. It is in these formative

relations of care that we begin a life-long journey of discovering the mystery of others, the

worldly things we become concerned about, and how to creatively navigate the affectual and

material world which is shared in the space between us. Winnicott went so far as to call these

formative relationships between self, other, and world as the "basis for society, and the only

factory for the democratic tendency in a country's social system."[257] I would be a little less

emphatic, but still call them practices of care that form the basis of solidarity—practices which

model the first iteration of disclosive spaces where we begin to skillfully create democratic

activities together. If we are to nurture and develop democratic modes of solidarity

throughout our lives, then we need to develop a sense of responsibility to preserve, expand,

and create new disclosive spaces which make our differing political concerns and activities

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[255] Ibid.
[256] Winnicott, *The Family and Individual Development; Playing and Reality*.
[257] Winnicott,"The Mother's Contribution to Society," in *Winnicott on the Child* (Cambridge, MA: Perseus Publishing, [1965-1987] 2002): 203.

matter to each other. In order to cultivate responsibility to democratic holding spaces, we need to develop a repertoire of practices where we risk ourselves in a group and, through trial and error, learn to trust that some self-surrender will be sufficiently rewarded with having some of our most important concerns held together across our differences.

One of Maharawal's key experiences at Occupy exemplifies this kind of transition where a disclosive space of mutual vulnerability and care enables risk-taking, deepens trust, and engenders responsibility. One day, Maharawal returned to Zuccotti Park with some friends to attend a South Asians for Justice meeting. When they arrived, the New York City General Assembly was finalising the Declaration of Occupy Wall Street. It was a bold statement of solidarity that sought to capture some of the most pressing and widely shared concerns of the group. It began with the recognition that, "As we gather together in solidarity to express a feeling of mass injustice, we must not lose sight of what brought us together."[258] It included a non-exhaustive list of grievances and concerns that touched upon political and economic corruption and inequality, social discrimination, environmental degradation, home foreclosures, food security, student debt, animal cruelty, media ownership, militarism and police violence, colonialism, lack of access to health care, and more. The Declaration ended with an appeal for others to peaceably assemble in public spaces in order to address shared problems and generate collective solutions in the spirit of direct democracy. All of this sounded good, except for one line that stood out for Maharawal and her friends:

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[258] New York City General Assembly of Occupy Wall Street. *Declaration of the Occupation of New York City*.

THE ART OF POLITICAL SOLIDARITY | 239
Simon A. Dougherty

[W]e had looked at each other and noted that the line about 'being one race, the

human race, formerly divided by race, class . . .' was a weird line, one that hit me in

the stomach with its naivety and the way it made me feel alienated. . . . This

movement was about to send a document into the world about who and what it was

that included a line that erased all power relations and decades of history of

oppression. A line that would de-legitimise the movement, this would alienate me and

people like me, this would not be able to be something I could get behind. And I was

already behind it this movement and somehow I didn't want to walk away from this.

I couldn't walk away from this. / And that night I was with people who also couldn't

walk away. [259]

To leave in that moment risked the failure of a movement to which Maharawal and her friends

where already committed. But to confront a problem and raise a concern that others might

not want to hear also risked further pain, alienation, and a failure of authenticity. Maharawal

and her friends were reminded of the consequences of blocking consensus: "we were told

that to 'block' the Declaration from going forward was a serious thing to do, [and] that if our

block to the Declaration was not agreed upon by everyone present we would have to walk

away."[260] As Maharawal recalled, coping with this risk was affectually charged with intense

anxiety. It was the kind of anxiety that accompanies the risk of failure in high-stakes real-life

situations which test the limits of solidarity:

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[259] Maharawal, "So Real It Hurts," 174-5.
[260] Ibid.

> There is something intense about speaking in front of hundreds of people, but there
> is something even more intense about speaking in front of hundreds of people with
> whom you feel aligned and you are saying something that they do not want to hear.[261]

In order to fight to widen a disclosive space of solidarity, it helps to rely on the solidarity we already have at our disposal. Maharawal was buoyed by the shared vulnerability, care, and commitment of the South Asian contingent to which she belonged. With their support, she resolved that "if I have to fight . . . I will. As long as my people are there standing next to me while I do that."[262] Together, they addressed the General Assembly with an invitation and challenge to have their concern recognised as part of the shared set of concerns at Occupy:

> And so when we finally got everyone's attention I carefully said what we felt was the
> problem: that we wanted a small change in language but that this change represented
> a larger ethical concern of ours. That to erase a history of oppression in this document
> was not something that we would be able to let happen. That we knew they had been
> working on this document for a week, that we appreciated the process and that it was
> in respect to this process that we wouldn't be silenced and that we demanded a
> change in the language. [263]

In this act, Maharawal and her friends surrendered a degree of security for vulnerability, and took the risk of leaving the movement if it failed to recognise and accommodate their concerns. Maharawal described the ordeal of challenging liberal white privilege as painful and

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[261] Ibid.
[262] Ibid.
[263] Ibid.

exhausting, as it often is. For its part, members of the Assembly surrendered some of their

security for vulnerability. Instead of claiming 'unity' as an objective good reached by a

universal procedure, the Assembly discussed and reflected upon an important concern they

had ignored up to that point. Members opened themselves to having their privilege

challenged. They engaged in practices of listening and self-reflection where they surrendered

some of their ego, suspended personal assumptions, and empathically listened to the

different experience of others who still faced racial oppression. After some discussion of the

problematic language in the Declaration, the Assembly finally responded to the demand made

by Maharawal and her friends. She remembers the moment when:

> They accepted our change and we withdrew our block as long as the document was
>
> published with our change. I stepped down from the ledge I was standing on and
>
> Sonny looked me in the eye and said 'you did good' and I've never needed to hear
>
> that as much as then.[264]

The risk paid off for everyone. By owning the challenge of the moment, Maharawal and her

interlocutors deepened their trust of each other. Members of the Assembly felt a greater

sense of responsibility for the disclosive space that had made their varying concerns and

activities matter:

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[264] Ibid.

> So the fact that at [Occupy Wall Street] there was space—even if it's space that we
>
> fought for, or had to fight for and that we made that ourselves—it mattered hugely
>
> that there was still space for it.[265]

In the end, various practices of care and vulnerability encouraged risk-taking, and the pay-off not only deepened trust and social bonds of solidarity. And more than developing a shared sense of responsibility for the disclosive space in which concerns and activities came to matter, the whole experience did something politically important. It widened and transformed part of the world and people's sense of their place in it. As Maharawal biked home over the Brooklyn Bridge later that night, she was overcome by a deeper sense of care, concern, and emotional involvement, not just in the movement, but in the world:

> I somehow felt like the world was, just maybe, at least in that moment, mine, as well
>
> as everyone dear to me and everyone who needed and wanted more from the world.
>
> I somehow felt like maybe the world could be all of ours.[266]

*   *   *

I have paid particularly close attention to this stage of competence because I consider it to be the threshold for embodied skill acquisition, in general, and for the development of practiced-based skills of solidarity, in particular. Without this initial level of involvement and mattering, we cannot acquire the skills that make solidarity enduring. And without disclosive

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[265] Maharawal quoted in Greg Jobin-Leeds. *When We Fight We Win! Twenty-First-Century Social Movements and the Activists That Are Transforming Our World* (New York and London: The New Press, 2016), 109.
[266] Maharawal, "So Real It Hurts," 174-5.

spaces to develop competence in shared practices of vulnerability, risk-taking, and trust-building, we will struggle to develop an effective politics with the capacity to build a meaningful world in which to live and share together.

As Dreyfus notes in his apprenticeship model of skill acquisition, all subsequent stages of advancement require building on the emotionally involved and embodied experiences of the competent learner.[267] For this reason, I will briefly outline the remaining stages as I think of them in relation to solidarity. With each stage, I will cite some salient examples of solidarity to illustrate how solidary groups and their members can continue becoming more skilled at their craft.

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[267] Dreyfus. *On the Internet*: 48.

6.08 Stage 4: Proficiency

"[The] resulting positive and negative emotional experiences [from involvement] will strengthen successful responses and inhibit unsuccessful ones, and the performer's theory of the skill, as represented by rules and principles, will gradually be replaced by situational discriminations, accompanied by associated responses. Proficiency seems to develop if, and only if, experience is assimilated in this embodied, atheoretical way. Only then do intuitive reactions replace reasoned responses."

—Hubert L. Dreyfus, *On the Internet* (2001)[268]

In my adaptation of Dreyfus' schema, the main difference between a competent activist and a proficient one is that some limited experience of involvement in practices of solidarity enables the latter to see problems that need to be solved without as much consideration as the former who still needs to gain experience. With the benefit of some experienced involvement, the proficient activist or solidary group "sees goals and salient aspects, but not what to do to achieve these goals."[269] Without sufficient experience, the proficient activist or group still must decide what to do. And those decisions still require falling back on rules and maxims. But with more involvement, irrelevant aspects fall to the wayside, and less time is spent considering a vast array of alternatives. Decision-making becomes easier and less stressful as problems become more familiar, even if their solutions are not immediately apparent.

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[268] Ibid., 40.
[269] Ibid.

The 'working group' is a classic example of proficient activists coming together and forming an *ad hoc* group to address a problem or common concern they have come to recognise through a certain amount of experience. Together, members of a working group assess needs and resources of the group, and formulate plans to solve problems together. While the problem might be clear, the path forward is not. In order to cooperate and hold the group together through disagreements over how to proceed, proficient activists occasionally need to fall back on maxims of social solidarity. Richard Sennett advocates four such maxims to facilitate cooperation: (1) cultivate understanding prior to agreement by engaging in "dialogics" instead of "dialectics" (i.e. practices of good listening, rather than arguing); (2) work through ambiguity before arriving at clarity by dialoguing in ways that use "subjunctive" rather than "declarative" language (i.e. practices of vulnerability and receptivity, rather than certainty); (3) deal with internal group differences by working through "informal" rather than "formal" procedures (e.g. practices of informal conversation and discussion are more open to difference than, say, Robert's Rules of Order); and (4) practice "empathy" instead of "sympathy" (i.e. practices of curiosity which honour differences instead of reducing other people's experiences to identification).[270] With more practice and experience of working together, proficient activists learn what matters to each other and how to make decisions together which honour different concerns in the working group. While competence might be enough to keep people coming back protest rallies or General Assemblies, proficiency is needed if activists are to stick together and work on problems over sustained periods of time.

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[270] Sennett, *Together*.

6.09 Stage 5: Expertise

"The *expert* not only sees what needs to be achieved; thanks to his [or her] vast repertoire of situational discriminations, [s]he also sees immediately how to achieve his [or her] goal. Thus, the ability to make more subtle and refined discriminations is what distinguished the expert from the proficient performer."

—Hubert L. Dreyfus, *On the Internet* (2001)[271]

At this stage, expert activists and solidary groups have a vast amount of experience in cultivating social solidarity. That repertoire of experience enables them to see how their group can work together to solve political problems. Experts make immediate and intuitive situational responses which replace reasoned decisions. Hardly any analysis or comparison of alternatives is required. As a whole, a solidary group with expertise in collective action establishes a particular style of doing solidarity work. Further apprenticeship and development of skills of solidarity are learned through observation and imitation of other expert activists and groups.

With enough expertise in cooperation and problem-solving, one or more working groups might formalise into a civic organisation or unite across a decentralised network of chapters and affiliate groups. *Strike Debt!* is a good example of expertise in action. As described earlier (5.07), Occupy activists concerned with student and medical debt formed

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[271] Dreyfus. *On the Internet*: 41.

working groups to figure out what to do about the problem. After analysing how debt is traded in society, proficient activists learned that it could be bought for pennies on the dollar. If they were going to be able to cancel some of that debt, they knew they would have to buy it up first, and learn the workings of the system in order to cancel it. So activists, writers, and academics worked together to develop organising kits, conduct fundraising drives, and write a "Debt Resisters' Manual."[272] After teaching each other new techniques of debt resistance, a network of groups across the country became experts at buying up and cancelling debt. By fund-raising several hundreds of thousands of dollars, the network cancelled tens of millions of dollars in student and medical debt. And by observing and imitating the success of groups like *Strike Debt!*, other working groups from Occupy developed their own expert styles of organising. *Occupy Homes* went on to resist home foreclosures. *Occupy Sandy* organised 60,000 volunteers to help with hurricane relief efforts. Many other working groups went on form tenants' unions, social centres, cooperative enterprises, and a number of other movement support organisations.

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[272] Strike Debt! "The Debt Resistors' Operations Manual," http://strikedebt.org/drom/

6.10 Stage 6: Mastery

"Working with several masters destabilizes and confuses the apprentice so that [s]he can no longer simply copy any one master's style and so is forced to begin t develop a style of his [or her] own. In so doing [s]he achieves the highest level of skill. Let us call it *mastery*."

—Hubert L. Dreyfus, *On the Internet* (2001)[273]

At this stage, veteran activists and solidary groups work together with other communities of practice that have mastered their own style of solidarity. Doing so affords the opportunity to further develop skill-sets and new styles of solidarity. This innovation helps solidary groups become more effective in their local campaigns, and enables them to make a unique contribution to the political capacity of larger networks or coalitions.

Examples of mastery include any instance when veterans of social movements or civic organisations work together across their networks to learn from one another and "cross-pollinate" their organising skills. For instance, many Occupy organisers in New York relied on what they had already learned from the occupied squares in North Africa and Europe. Domestically, they also learned practices of consensus decision-making from Indigenous people, Quakers, and student activists. Once the movement took off, union members used their experience to help organise solidarity strikes and demonstrations. After the movement

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[273] Dreyfus. *On the Internet*: 46.

dropped out of the public spotlight, many activists contributed to new movements which developed their own style and set of tactics. In the North American context after Occupy, movements like the Maple Spring in Quebec, Idle No More, Black Lives Matter, and the 'Fight for [a] $15' minimum wage became masterfully skilled in different styles of political solidarity. As activists and solidary groups continue learning from each other's struggles and victories, they incorporate skills from other communities of practice into their own repertoires.

6.11   Stage 7: Practical Wisdom (*phronesis*)

"It is only by being an apprentice . . . that one gains what Aristotle calls practical wisdom—the general ability to do the appropriate thing, at the appropriate time, in the appropriate way.

—Hubert L. Dreyfus, *On the Internet* (2001)[274]

The final stage of apprenticeship is one where activists and solidary groups have become so skilled and innovative in social and political organising that they transmit a new cultural style of political solidarity across society.

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[274] Ibid., 48.

If we go back to some of the movements which inspired Occupy, we might find more mature examples of *phronesis* where a new style of solidarity has been transmitted across culture and society. The *Indignados* movement in Spain provides a candidate. Less than three years after the first occupation of town squares in May 2011, the movement rapidly grew across the country and, by January 2013, established a political party called *Podemos*. Since then, the party has continued to cooperate with movements and other parties, resulting in early success. Within two years of founding, *Podemos* had over 300,000 members. At the end of 2015, it won over five million votes (a fifth of the popular vote) in the first general election it contested. Their success broke through the long-standing two-party system in Spain. Moreover, *Podemos* serves as a rather unique example of lateral and horizontal solidarity worth further study beyond the scope of this thesis.

Considering the example of *Podemos* is not to say a hybrid movement-party form is the pinnacle of political solidarity. The movement-party is simply one form, among others, which features a complex web of solidarity practices where people and groups learn how to cooperate and exercise power in a new and innovative style across society and in politics. How long such a new style of political solidarity can last, and how effective it can become over time, will ultimately depend on whether its practitioners can keep practicing the appropriate mode of solidarity, at the appropriate time, in the appropriate way. In other words, practical wisdom in the art of political solidarity requires continuous apprenticeship.

6.12   Maximising the efficacy of radical democratic politics:

Innovative and integrated solidarity through proto-typing

In order rebuild muscular modes of solidarity that are more involved and enduring, I have argued that a skill-based mode of solidarity, grounded in apprenticeship, is necessary to overcome the political atrophy incurred by technocratic and disembodied modes like clicktivism. But even if apprenticeship solves the problem of detachment by facilitating enduring involvement, another problem remains: efficacy or, more precisely, the challenge for solidary groups to achieve their political goals and effect change.

There is a perception that social movements are not as effective as they used to be. Bill Moyer often cited the American civil rights movement as an example of success because it won real, tangible gains. In the past, public pressure from solidary groups changed laws, policies, and cultural attitudes. But efficacy appeared to wane in the 1980s once Ronald Reagan and Margaret Thatcher fended off strikes by air traffic controllers and coal miners, respectively. Even the relative successes of the protests in Seattle of 1999 seemed limited by historical comparison. And then, in 2003, "the largest protest event in human history"[275] failed to stop the imminent Iraq War. After Occupy, the United States elected Donald Trump. His victory might be welcome news to some in the Tea Party, but certainly not for any solidary group working for a more radically democratic world. In light of such failures, Micah White

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[275] Walgrave and Rucht, "Introduction," xiii.

has argued that the old organising model of social change is broken because it is founded on

a false narrative about how real change happens:

> There is a story of activism that we tell ourselves which is basically: if you can build a
>
> social movement with millions of people and they are largely nonviolent, that the
>
> movement cuts across demographics and has people from all over the country and
>
> different socioeconomic levels, and that the movement has a somewhat unified
>
> message then real change will happen. . . . We've been chasing a story about how
>
> social change happens that isn't actually true. [276]

While I am not as skeptical as White, I do agree that movements need to be much more

effective than they've become, especially if they are to sustain their problem-solving power

and achieve greater goals. But I also acknowledge that Occupy and related Global Justice

Movements have seen their fair share of success, however limited it might be. They have done

well to raise awareness, cultivate solidarity, instigate moments of rupture, change public

discourses, establish off-shoot organisations, and inspire subsequent movements. But it is

difficult to argue that social movements have made enough political gains to turn the tide of

serious problems like economic inequality and climate change. To live up to these challenges,

we need to re-think how solidary groups can build their capacity and become even more

effective at bringing radically democratic forms of life into being.

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[276] Micah White, speech to *Ideas City*, New York, 2015. https://www.micahmwhite.com/the-end-of-protest-at-ideas-city/; see also *The End of Protest.*

So far, in this thesis, I have outlined features of what solidary is and what it means; I have drawn attention to ways affect plays a key role in re/generating solidarity; I have used Moyer's model to track how solidarity develops through social movement practices and the stories they tell; I have demonstrated how movements can change those narratives and the political pictures which frame them; and I have used Dreyfus' model of apprenticeship to show how movements can and do bring their politics to life by developing solidarity as a skill-based craft. Finally, I propose one last heuristic formula in order to integrate all these components of solidarity and encourage greater political efficacy. For solidary groups to become more politically effective, I argue against a linear model of solidarity development which relies on rupture and treats solidary groups as discreet and autonomous entities. Instead, I argue for an understanding of solidarity development based on a cyclical model of integration and proto-typing.

6.13   The linear model of solidarity

Heuristic models of social and political change are usually one variation or another of a linear, stadial model. Bill Moyer's Movement Action Plan is one example. Hubert Dreyfus apprenticeship model is yet another. Each model has a beginning and an end, with sequential and non-iterative stages or steps in between. Each stage after the first builds off the one preceding it, and adds something new for the next phase to build on. Incremental progress is made through each stage until some sort of achievement or outcome is produced at the end.

Visually, the linear, stadial model resembles a staircase and is sometimes described as a "reverse waterfall" model in the field of software development (*Figure 5*).
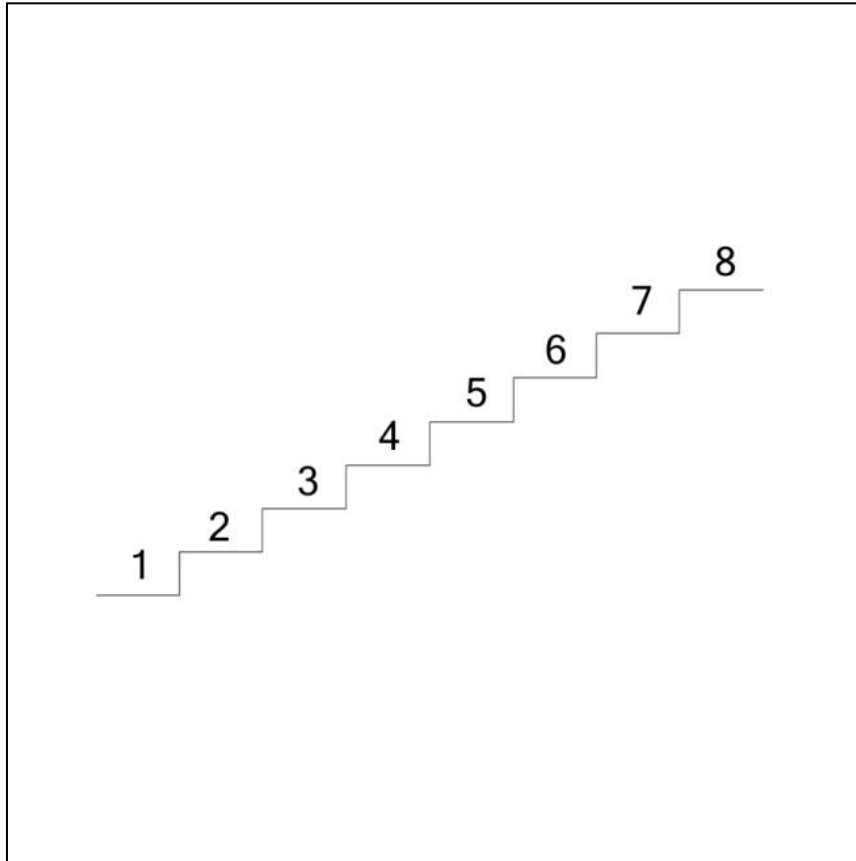

Figure 5: Staircase Model

Quite often, the structure of this linear model goes unexamined, and little consideration is given to the effect the model itself might have on what it is trying to achieve. For Dreyfus, the apprentice begins as a novice and learns in incremental phases to become a master: (1) Novice; (2) Advanced Beginner; (3) Competence; (4-5) Proficiency; (6) Expertise; (7) Mastery; (8) Practical Wisdom. For Moyer, a crisis grows until an event of rupture intensifies a process of social change until laws or policies are changed: (1) Business as usual;

(2) Normal channels fail; (3) Conditions ripen; (4): Social movement take-off; (5) Perception (and reality) of activist failure; (6) Win majority of public support; (7) Success; (8) Moving on. Even if the model is open to repetition, as Moyer's is with "spin-off" movements, the form of the object being reproduced remains largely the same. An environmental movement can spin-off from a social movement, but they still look similar in form if not content. Likewise, a novice chess player can become a grandmaster through apprenticeship, and a novice musician can master their instrument, but the goal of mastery remains the same. Continued learning through unending apprenticeship is not part of the plan. So, while there can be great variation in the skills an apprentice sets out to learn, or the issues a social movement deals with, the form of progression remains the same. Linear models stress autonomy that doesn't enable interaction with concurrent processes (i.e. they don't prompt us to ask what the activist and musician can learn from each other), and they tend not to innovate the form of development, nor the form of the object that is being developed (i.e. activists follow the same 'roadmap,' and their 'vehicle'—e.g. a social movement—remains the same). Linear models don't lend themselves well to integration, innovation, self-transformation, or adaptation.

A linear model might not be a problem for the musician who follows a reliable method of apprenticeship and achieves desired improvement in their skills. But I contend the model is a problem for social movements and solidary groups that are not as effective as they once were. Their repetitive forms and tactics have become predictable to governments and politicians who have learned to ignore or contain them. Frustrated practitioners of radical democratic politics are keenly aware that solidary groups need to innovate and adapt if they are to become more effective. As Lia Haro and Roman Coles suggest:

> We must rapidly shift toward a creative, modulating and multi-modal politics—out of the ruts of rote protest in which our gatherings often become boring liturgies of outrage, defeat, impotence, and the minimalist solace of having at least raised our voices.[277]

If we are to live up to this challenge and initiate a paradigm shift away from impotent and repetitive modes of protest, I propose we use a more appropriate development model that can accommodate a multi-modal and innovative politics which creatively modulates between the most effective ideas, affects, narratives, and practices that the domain of solidarity has to offer. In the next section, I argue that a proto-typing model would be better suited to bring more effective multi-modal forms of radically democratic solidarity into being.

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[277] Lia Haro and Romand Coles, "Eleven Theses on Neo-Fascism and the Fight to Defeat It," *Theory & Event* 20, No. 1 (January 2017 Supplement): 105.

6.14   A proto-typing model of solidarity

The etymology of the word *prototype* leads back to the Greek idea of a "primitive form."[278] Implicit in the idea of prototyping is not only development, but trans-formation. Prototyping is a particularly powerful design tool in software development that is often represented by a "spiral model."[279] As a recurring feature in nature, from tiny but resilient shells to gargantuan galaxies, the spiral has also inspired ecological activists like Joanna Macy and Chris Johnstone. In their book, *Active Hope*, they devote a chapter[280] to strengthening personal capacity in activist work that builds on the model of a spiral:

> The journey through these stages has a strengthening effect that deepens with every repetition. While each time round is never quite the same, the dynamic of this spiral reveals itself as a powerful and trustworthy structure of support.[281]

The spiral model of proto-typing repeats stages of development several times in a re-iterative process that not only builds upon previous stages, but re-works the same path with variations and innovations that continually transform the path and the object on that path. The process, the object, and any products produced along the journey often change over the course of

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[278] "Prototype," in *Science in Context: UXL Encyclopedia of Science*, Amy Hackney Blackwell and Elizabeth Manar, (eds). 3rd edition, (Farmington Hills, MI: Cengage Learning/ Gale, 2015).
[279] Barry Boehm, "Spiral Development: Experience, Principles, and Refinements," Special Report CMU/SEI-2000, (Hanscom, MA, Carnegie Mellon University Software Engineering Institute, 2000). Available at https://www.sei.cmu.edu/reports/00sr008.pdf
[280] Joanna Macy and Chris Johnstone, "Trusting the Spiral" in *Active Hope*, (Novato, California: New World Library, 2012): 35-42.
[281] Joanna Macy and Chris Johnstone, Active Hope, website, http://www.activehope.info/contents.html

each cycle. And, as with webs and shells, strength and resilience are compounded with every

re-iteration. Visually, proto-typing models resemble spirals or webs (*Figure 6*).
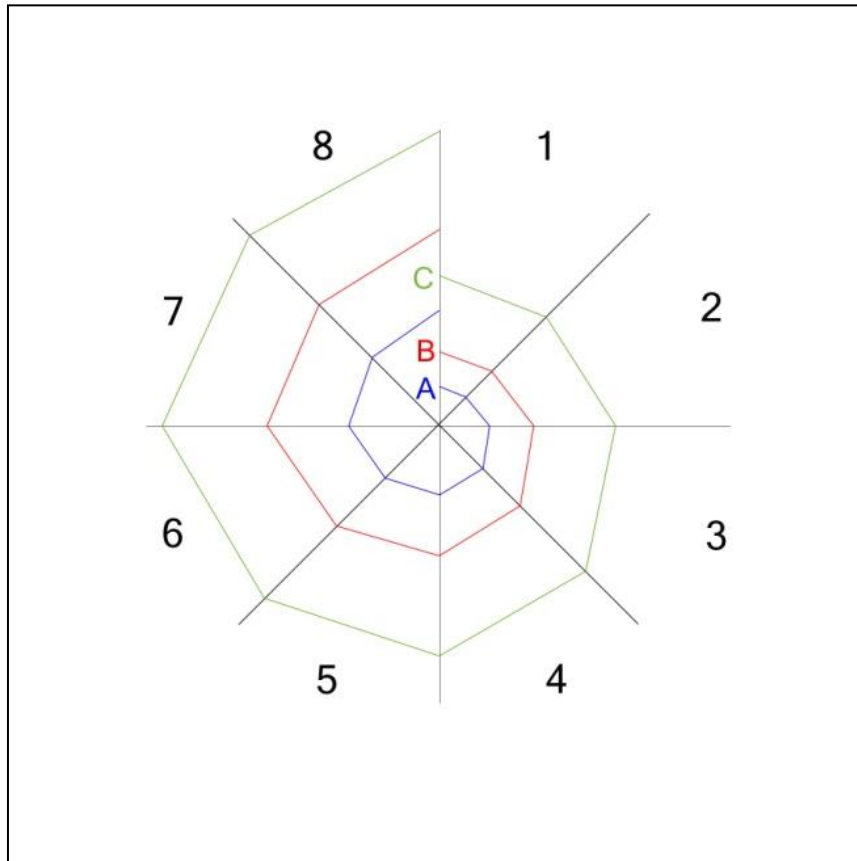
Figure 6: Spiral Model[282]

In my heuristic model, above, we need not totally abandon linear models of solidarity;

we only need to incorporate them. We can adapt them and integrate them within this new

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[282] Spiral models can have any number of anchor points. This one has eight for the purpose of imagining the eight phases of Moyer's social movement model. The number of anchor points would be modified depending on how many dimensions of solidarity exist between the different forms of solidarity being compared or reiterated. The number of forms (A, B, C, etc.) is also arbitrary—a single social movement might go through several re-iterations, for example, or any number of forms of solidarity might be developing concurrently, independently, or at different times in history.

model so that we can build upon and draw from multiple modes of solidarity cultivation at once. At least four aspects of multi-modal solidarity could be proto-typed through a spiral model: (1) best practices; (2) new theories; (3) adaptive organisational formations; and (4) networked political coalitions.

(1) *Strengthening best practices of solidarity*. If one form of political solidarity is already proving particularly effective (say, the tactic of occupying public squares), we can repeat the form without much change or variation. So, we could think of (A) as the occupation of Tahrir Square in Egypt during the Arab Spring; (B) as the *Indignados* movement's occupation of the Puerta del Sol square in Madrid; (C) as the Occupy movement in New York City and beyond. We could also add (D), and so on, for any subsequent movement that was re-iterating the practice of occupation. The point of thinking of movements related to each other in this way would be to learn from the unique trials and errors in each phase of each movement and to develop inventories of best practices and skills that could be used in a current movement, or employed to start another movement. We can learn to mimic and modify best practices, through comparison of past movements, or in real time by sending skilled activists between movements to train each other for different phases.

(2) *Developing new theories of solidarity*. We could use the spiral model to integrate one feature of solidarity with another. (A) could be typologies of solidarity; (B) could be affects which re/generate solidarity; (C) could be narratives of solidarity development, like Moyer's MAP; (D) could be my adaptation of Dreyfus' skill model for solidarity; and so on. The point of mapping different features in this way would be to interpret how typologies, affects,

narratives, and skills of solidarity could be better integrated by solidary groups and researchers.

(3) *Modifying organisational forms of solidarity*. A spiral model can also be used to change an organisational form into a more effective one, depending on the context. If a number of skilled activists want to continue working together beyond the lifecycle of a social movement (A), they might get together to develop an advocacy group (B), that evolves into a formal organisation (C), which incorporates as a co-operative enterprise (D), or splits off to form a political party[283] (E), and so on. The point here is to recognise that solidary groups can and should change form to do the most effective work they can in changing times and circumstances.

(4) *Networking solidary groups into political coalitions*. Finally, a spiral model can be used to build relationships between different solidary groups that are developing concurrently. Instead of one group of evolving its form into another over time, different groups at different stages of development could network with each other and form a coalition that shares the political "commitment to act in concert"[284] across their differences. (A) could be a feminist group; (B) could be an anti-racist group; (C) could be a union; (D) could be an environmental group; (E) could be a political party; (F) could be an assembly of delegates from all of the above who form a movement-party[285] hybrid like *Podemos.* The point here is to scale

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[283] For a contemporary re-thinking of mass protests and how they can evolve into a party form, see Jodi Dean, *Crowds and Party* (London and New York: Verso, 2016).

[284] Amy Allen, *The Power of Feminist Theory: Domination, Resistance, Solidarity* (Boulder, Colorado: Westview Press, 1999): 110.

[285] For more on movement-party hybrid form, see Herbert Kitschelt, "Movement Parties," in *Handbook of Party Politics*, edited by Richard S. Katz and William J. Crotty (London: Sage, 2006): 278-90.

up political capacity to affect change across society, not only through protest or even formal

civic organisations, but also, possibly, through government.

6.15   Chapter summary

In this chapter, I have focused on the role of skill in cultivating and innovating styles

of solidarity befitting of radical democracy.

The need for the skillful development of solidarity arises in the face of popular digital

modes of political organising, like clicktivism, which have been heralded as the model for

twenty-first century activism. But digital democracy raises two key problems for political

solidarity. Firstly, the detachment and atomisation it creates weakens solidarity and makes it

difficult to sustain any deep or meaningful modes of political action. Secondly, its political

ineffectiveness breeds skepticism and stagnation.

To overcome these problems, I have argued that skill development is essential to

cultivate and innovate radically democratic forms of solidarity that can endure across time

and difference, and that can deliver on the promise of transforming our world into a better

one. For solidarity to be sustainable and enduring, involvement and skill development are

necessary. To this end, I have proposed an *apprenticeship* model of learning to help turn the

story of radical democracy into a political reality of everyday life. Moreover, for solidarity to be politically effective and adaptable to the problems we face today, it must involve a commitment to experimenting with and innovating multiple modes and styles of solidarity. To this end, I have proposed a *proto-typing* model that can integrate and innovate different styles of solidarity so that radically democratic politics can become more effective in responding to the pressing problems of our time. Ultimately, it is through an embodied and involved process of apprenticeship that we develop quotidian skills of solidarity, and it is through proto-typing new modes and styles of solidarity that we strengthen the political efficacy of solidary groups.

PART V

CONCLUSION

The Art of Political Solidarity

Overall, my thesis argues for a distinctive mode of solidarity that involves practices of reflection, affectual attunement, skill cultivation, and proto-typing the new worlds that communities of practice are trying to expand or bring into being. I have studied different theories and practices of solidarity with an eye that looks to overcome the limits of outmoded conceptualisations, debilitating affects, and rigid models of solidarity. By re-iterating, re-articulating, and refining the arts of political solidarity, I have argued for a continued apprenticeship in social change that increases our capacities to come together and build a better world.

CHAPTER SEVEN

Conclusion to *The Art of Political Solidarity*

7.00   Summary of thesis

"In multiple ways the word "solidarity" is patiently looking for flesh which it could become. And it won't stop seeking eagerly and passionately until it succeeds. / In this search for flesh by a word we, the inhabitants of the twenty-first century, are both agents and objects of the quest. We are the point of departure and the final destination, but also wanderers following this route and tracing it with our footsteps. With our footsteps, this route will ultimately emerge. . . . not [as] a map of an as yet untraveled route but a collection of positioning instructions regarding the technique of planning the route when it is travelled in the future."

— Zygmunt Bauman, "Solidarity: A world in search of flesh"[286]

In this spirit as a fellow traveller—as a researcher, activist, and concerned citizen—I have been on a journey to flesh out this theory of political solidarity. I have wandered through ideas, affects, stories, images, and practices which all contribute to the picture of political solidarity I have sketched out in this thesis. From that journey, I have assembled "a collection of positioning instructions" to chart the contours of the road I have travelled, and to help

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[286] Bauman, "Solidarity."

navigate new terrain ahead. Looking back, I have a clearer sense of the theories of solidarity that have come before, and the practices in which they have been grounded. Moving forward, I have a better sense of the skills of solidarity that will be required to face looming political challenges ahead. My thesis is a log of the coordinates I have travelled, some of which point to horizons yet to be explored. It is my hope that the coordinates I have covered can serve as a useful apprenticeship manual in this continuing journey of crafting better understandings and practices of political solidarity for a radically democratic world.

The main 'sign-posts' along the way are the central questions which fuel the journey. What does political solidarity mean? What moves people to come together and take collective action? How do social movements sustain solidarity throughout their lifecycles, across time and difference, in order to achieve their goals? How can we improve our understanding of solidarity, our involvement in it, and the practices which sustain it in order to achieve greater economic equality, social freedom, and environmental sustainability?

My thesis responds to these questions by arguing that collective political action and transformational struggle are crafts which require the development of skill and know-how. I argue for a distinctive mode of solidarity that involves practices of reflection, affectual attunement, skill cultivation, and proto-typing the new worlds that communities of practice are trying to expand or bring into being. Each practice offers ways to overcome the limits of outmoded conceptualisations, debilitating affects, and rigid models of solidarity. By re-iterating, re-articulating, and refining the art of political solidarity, we continue an

apprenticeship in social change that increases our capacities to come together and build a better world.

7.01 Original contribution to knowledge

My dissertation makes several original contributions to knowledge in three main areas which correspond with the central themes of this thesis.

In the part on "Solidarity in Theory," I develop an original analytic framework in which to make sense of multiple meanings and modes of solidarity. I do this by surveying academic literature to account for multiple meanings of solidarity (Chapter Two). I identify five common but internally diverse features of solidarity and argue that the diversity of these analytical features accounts for the multivalence of solidarity. I set up these features to account for different modes of political solidarity that are explored in subsequent chapters, namely: the affects that draw people together in solidarity; and the values, theories, and practices which sustain different social movements across their lifecycles. I set up these modes of solidarity in order to provide an original account of contemporary social movement practices of solidarity in the next part.

In the part on "Solidarity in Practice," I make original contributions to affect theory, social movement analysis, and political theories of modern constitutionalism and radical

democracy. I do this by looking at how specific affects are at play in moving people to re/generate solidarity. I specifically analyse how affects of loss are at play in two examples of solidarity cultivation: (1) at the anti-war demonstrations at the 'School of Americas,' and (2) in the early formation of a social movement like the Arab Spring. In doing so, I develop an original understanding of morning-melancholia (Chapter Three). After considering the role of affect in solidarity re/generation, I use Bill Moyer's social movement framework to develop an original consideration of solidarity cultivation across the lifecycle of the conservative and reactionary Tea Party movement in the United States (Chapter Four). From there, I return to the Global Justice Movement and consider how aspects of the Occupy Wall Street movement can help us rethink political solidarity beyond limiting modern constitutional frameworks, and in terms of radical democracy (Chapter Five).

In the part on "Renewing Solidarity," I offer an original account of skill cultivation in solidary groups. I also lay the groundwork for a new normative and heuristic model in which to interpret and imagine how we might wish to re/develop multi-modal styles of solidarity in the future. I do this by adapting Hubert Dreyfus' model of *apprenticeship* in order to show how we can cultivate enduring modes of solidarity as crafts which require the development of skill and know-how. I then supplement this model with the idea of *proto-typing* in order to promote further development of solidarity in more innovative and effective ways (Chapter Six).

Overall, my thesis addresses several political and theoretical areas in need of further inquiry. Chief among them is the need for, and articulation of, a political theory of the craft

of solidarity in terms of skill and know-how. Knowing how to rework and sustain this "art of political solidarity" in both theory and practice is indispensible in light of key challenges that people and the planet are dealing with in this neoliberal era. One challenge is in the face of increasing atomisation which not only endangers solidarity in practical terms, but also diminishes how we make sense of solidarity together in theory. Impoverished and outmoded theories and modes of solidarity not only weaken our prospects to deal with social conditions of deep difference, they also impinge our ability to effectively mitigate economic and political problems of severe inequality. In order to rectify this problem, my thesis offers a series of 'sign-posts' which point in new directions to rethink and renew practices of solidarity.

The first sign-posts in Chapters Two and Three consist of analytic and affectual frameworks in which ideas and collectively shared feelings can be reconfigured in ways to help renew and regenerate political solidarity in practice. Together, these frameworks allow us to reconsider and reframe how any instance of political solidarity (1) is shaped by and reshapes specific historical traditions of solidarity; (2) and (3) is oriented toward either reinforcing or changing the world via different sets of political concerns and normative visions; and (4) and (5) gets enacted through affective and embodied social relationships and practices. The subsequent sign-posts continue in this trajectory towards affect and practice.

Chapter Three presents a new take on affects of loss which are too often assumed to paralyse people from putting energy into political mobilisation, alliance-building, and social transformation. While avoiding the pitfalls of paralysing grief on one hand and uncritical optimism on the other, I show how mournful and melancholic attachments can actually help

us learn to regenerate solidarity; how those attachments can revitalise commitments to better worlds that could have been had they not been lost to political, economic, or environmental crises; and how social movements show us productive ways to mourn lost social bonds and relational practices that are preconditions for there to be alliances of solidarity to begin with. Through a new understanding of mourning and melancholia, I discuss how social movements learn to recover, recuperate, and renew worldly visions and relational practices that move people to come together and re-invest in relationships of political solidarity.

Moving forward, Chapters Four and Five integrate these analytic and affectual frameworks with literature on social movements, democratic theory, and education, as well as case studies of current social movements on the left and right, to evaluate how solidarity is being reworked and rethought in light of neoliberal challenges. By evaluating tradition, story, affect, and practice in the Tea Party and Occupy movements, I contribute to an understanding of differences between social movements on the right and left that claim to restore or renew democracy. Moreover, by cutting across different ideological modes of solidarity, I offer an original way of seeing how these movements understand *and* enact purportedly democratic ideals, such as constitutionalism and popular sovereignty, in different ways. The perspicuous representation of these movements provides contrasting modes of solidarity cultivation which alternately discourage or invite experimentation with decentered practices and relationships of power, plural and cross-cutting affects and practices of collective identification, and new constitutional forms which embody norms of radical democracy.

The last sign-post in Chapter Six points towards a picture of solidarity that serves radical democratic ends and develops an evaluative framework which argues that gaining proficiency in and mastery of skills of solidarity is vital to current movements that hope to rework and sustain solidarity. This final skill-based framework integrates and builds upon the previously established analytic and affectual frameworks in order to open an avenue for readers to evaluate the ways in which solidarity is proto-typed within movement traditions over time *as well as* between movement traditions on the right and left that vie to change the world.

Together, I hope these sign-posts offer something like what Zigmunt Bauman was calling for when he spoke of renewing solidarity: "less of a map of an as yet untraveled route and more of a collection of positioning instructions regarding the technique of planning the route when it is travelled in the future."[287] As both agents and objects of this quest to renew solidarity, I hope fellow travellers find the conceptual, affectual, and practical coordinates explored in this thesis helpful in tracing the footsteps we have taken along the journey so far. Moreover, at this point of departure where we look ahead at a route that is still emerging, I also hope that we might carry forward a better understanding of solidarity in relation to longer and broader political traditions that take shape through shared stories, long-term efforts to shape meaning and norms, and the repertoires of affect and practice that get picked up and skillfully reworked over time.

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[287] Bauman, "Solidarity."

7.02   Limits of research

As a hybrid investigation of theory and practice, my thesis is focused on how normative and empirical considerations of solidarity inform each other. As such, my thesis is not arguing for a grand theory of solidarity, nor is it attempting to provide the most comprehensive anthropological account of solidaristic skills and practices. Rather, my thesis is more concerned with pragmatically engaging in the ambiguous spaces between theory and practice which are ripe for interpretation. It is in this hermeneutic space that I have attempted to develop insights and understandings of how theory and practice inform each other so that we can learn better ways to re-think and re/develop concepts and practices of political solidarity.

The scope of my thesis is also historically situated within the contemporary modern era, and largely confined to Western social and political thought. My examples and case studies are also largely focused on the North American and European political context. I do not presume either way about the applicability of my claims beyond the scope of my research, although I am interested in considering broader theoretical and empirical understandings of solidarity in other research projects.[288]

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[288] While writing this thesis, I started to explore relationships between Steven Jampijinpa Patrick's Warlpiri concept of "milpirri" and Donald Woods Winnicott's Western concept of the "holding environment" and how they can help us conceive of new political concepts of solidarity like the "democratic holding space." I began developing this concept in conference papers delivered from 2015-17 at the University of Rochester, the University of Oxford, and Australian Catholic University. For my latest abstract on this work, see: "Learning to be at home together in democratic holding spaces: A Winnicottian reading of the Warlpiri documentary, *Milpirri*," Institute for Social Justice, 27 October 2017, https://isj.acu.edu.au/events/learning-to-be-at-home-together-in-democratic-holding-spaces-a-winnicottian-reading-of-the-warlpiri-documentary-milpirri/

7.03   Future considerations

I am concluding this thesis in uncertain political times. Donald Trump presides as president of the United States while reactive forms of exclusive and xenophobic solidarity pose major challenges to counter-projects of radically democratic solidarity. The best impulses and aspirations of the Occupy movement might seem to be growing dimmer, yet they persist and carry on in many ways, as noted by Rebecca Solnit:

> Occupy launched a movement against student debt and opportunistic for-profit colleges; it shed light on the pain and brutality of the financial collapse and the American debt-peonage system. It called out economic inequality in a new way. California passed a homeowner's bill of rights to push back at predatory lenders; a housing defense movement arose in the wake of Occupy that, house by house, protected many vulnerable homeowners. Each Occupy had its own engagement with local government and its own projects; a year ago people involved with local Occupies told me the thriving offshoots still make a difference. Occupy persists, but you have to learn to recognize the myriad forms in which it does so, none of which look much like Occupy Wall Street as a crowd in a square in lower Manhattan.[289]

Just as Occupy changed form, so too will our thinking of radically democratic political solidarity. At the time of finishing this thesis, Indigenous nations have come together to

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[289] Rebecca Solnit, "Protest and persist: why giving up hope is not an option," *The Guardian*, 13 March 2017, https://www.theguardian.com/world/2017/mar/13/protest-persist-hope-trump-activism-anti-nuclear-movement

defend their land and water from oil pipelines; migrant solidarity groups are fending off

deportations; and women's groups are organising some of the largest demonstrations the

United States has ever seen. What these solidary groups can learn from each other across

their differences, and what they can do to build new forms of collective power in and across

these groups, leaves much work ahead, but also a lot to hope for.

7.04   Afterword

Much has happened since my thesis was successfully examined in 2017. Before I

publish this manuscript, it is worth noting where some recent sign-posts are pointing along

the continuous route of apprenticeship in solidarity, and how recent journeys among public

thinkers and activists continue to re-iterate, re-articulate, and refine the arts of political

solidarity.

In terms of re-thinking the meaning of solidarity, we have theorists like Judith Butler

expanding on their analysis of embodied ways of coming together in public assemblies, in

highly visible protests and demonstrations, and in forms of long-distance digital solidarity

under conditions of neoliberal precarity.[290] In a 2017 interview invoking Amy Allen's

solidaristic idea of "acting in concert," Butler discusses the role affects of anger and joy play

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[290] Judith Butler, *Notes Toward a Performative Theory of Assembly* (Cambridge and London: Harvard University Press, 2015).

in moving bodies to come together "on the street and . . . within networks" to take meaningful popular action in alliances that must work with heterogeneity and difference. [291] For Butler, meaningful popular action includes "[g]lobal forms of solidarity [which] are increasingly important to support local actions against corporate power, neo-liberal dispossession, xenophobia, and racism."[292] The challenge for these global and local actions of solidarity is in maintaining "uneasy alliances" across their differences. Noting the co-presence of leftists, liberals, and even conservatives in many of the same demonstrations, Butler senses:

> that an expanding coalition has to be one in which we presume that we are not the same. This is as important for producing a multi-racial and cross-generational alliance as it is for bringing in people who have been de-politicized for a long time or whose politics have in many ways differed from one's own. The future of US democracy depends on those uneasy alliances.[293]

Butler's intuition simultaneously gestures towards complex affects which draw people together while bringing a central question of this thesis back into focus, namely: How can such "uneasy alliances" sustain solidarity across time and difference in order to achieve their political goals and reinvigorate democracy in the process? This question remains a live and highly relevant one which demands fresh answers from thinkers and activists alike.

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[291] Judith Butler quoted in Jean-Philippe Cazier, "Acting in Concert: a conversation with Judith Butler," *Verso*, 6 March 2017, https://www.versobooks.com/blogs/3121-acting-in-concert-a-conversation-with-judith-butler
[292] Ibid.
[293] Ibid.

The #MeToo movement has started re-articulating answers along the lines explored in this thesis. No longer are affects of loss seen to preclude "contemporary investment in political mobilization, *alliance* or transformation."[294] Rather, #MeToo has recognised a more nuanced relationship between affects of grief and anger, mourning and hope, and their potential to re/generate political solidarity and common vision for a better world:

> #MeToo . . . has made it clear that solidarity among women is possible. The working definition of "women," as #MeToo has constructed it, can be understood simply: as everyone who has experienced misogyny. It's a bleak kind of solidarity, this acknowledgment of shared suffering. But #MeToo has transformed that mournful acknowledgment into something much more hopeful. If the #MeToo movement has prompted many women to focus on misogynist behaviour with a unifying grief and anger, it has also led many of them to contemplate our shared power and common vision for a different world. When the social feminists of #MeToo call for changes that would make harassment, assault and other forms of misogyny rare, their very act of collective imagining makes such a world more possible: the more we stand together in this demand, the easier it becomes to imagine a world where respect is common, where cruelty is rare, where all of us think with more empathy and intelligence about the lives of others, and where being women will not doom us to suffering or limitation.[295]

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[294] Brown, "Resisting Left Melancholy": 20
[295] Moira Donegan, "How #MeToo revealed the central rift within feminism today," *The Guardian*, 11 May 2018, https://www.theguardian.com/news/2018/may/11/how-metoo-revealed-the-central-rift-within-feminism-social-individualist

At the same time #MeToo is re-articulating the affects which re/generate solidarity, other movements are refining well-worn arts of political solidarity and building "uneasy alliances" in new and unexpected ways.

2018 also saw a 'Red State Revolt' featuring successful teachers' strikes originating in West Virginia and spreading to Oklahoma, Arizona, and other Republican Party-controlled, conservative states. Through a diverse set of tactics ranging from walk-outs, sit-ins, demonstrations, and internet activism, the waves of teachers' strikes won many concessions from Republican lawmakers and pushed back the tide of neoliberal cuts to education. In observing the impact of the strikes, Thomas Frank remarks that:

> the power of solidarity [is shown through this] wave of teacher walkouts [which] is starting to look like our generation's chance to learn the lesson our grandparents absorbed during the strike wave of the late 1930s: that given the right conditions and the right amount of organization, working people can rally the public and make social change . . . .[296]

Elaborating on the nature of the change achieved, Frank adds that the solidary groups responsible for the strikes do more than change the working conditions in the education system, they also "change the dynamics of a community. They change the balance of social

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[296] Thomas Frank, "Striking teachers show that cutting education to fix it is a neoliberal myth," *The Guardian*, 22 May 2018, https://www.theguardian.com/commentisfree/2018/may/21/teacher-strikes-schools-neoliberal-fantasy-debunking

power. They change the way people think. / Right now they are showing us how rightwing

populism might one day be defeated."[297]

It is tempting to contemplate how recent developments in the #MeToo movement

and 'Red State Revolt' are re-thinking, re-iterating, and refining the arts of political solidarity

across diverse constituencies (women, students, workers, et al.), over long distances (from

progressive urban spaces to conservative rural areas), and in different places (on the streets

and online). How might movements like these continue to grow in power and scale, and even

work together and act in concert against social oppression, economic inequality, and other

challenges of our time? How can they continue to build radically democratic forms of political

solidarity under the precarious and volatile conditions of neoliberalism?

To begin answering these last questions, we can return to the sign-posts provided in

this thesis which point to how we can evaluate new meanings and proto-type new modes of

solidarity that are yet to emerge across different communities in unforeseen ways. While we

might not know precisely what these new forms of solidarity will look like, we do know how

to stitch them together so they can emerge through embodied and affective social

relationships and practices. Continued apprenticeship in the arts of solidarity can help new,

radically democratic systems of political organisation emerge beyond neoliberal atomisation

and precarity. As Margaret Wheatley and Deborah Frieze put it:

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[297] Ibid.

When separate, local efforts connect with each other as networks, then strengthen

as communities of practice, suddenly and surprisingly a new system emerges at a

greater level of scale. This system of influence possesses qualities and capacities that

were unknown in the individuals. It isn't that they were hidden; they simply don't exist

until the system emerges. They are properties of the system, not the individual, but

once there, individuals possess them. And the system that emerges always possesses

greater power and influence than is possible through planned, incremental change.

Emergence is how Life creates radical change and takes things to scale.[298]

Put another way, emergence is the process by which social agents bring new political practices

of solidarity into being which have the potential to create radically democratic systems in the

shell of the old.

As #MeToo shows us, there are many ways to re/generate solidarity through affects

which were once thought to preclude alliance-building. And, as 'The Red State Revolt'

demonstrates, there are new lessons about the power of solidarity that can be learned from

the past and in the most unexpected places. Right now, solidary groups are showing us how

neoliberalism and its right-wing populist alternatives can be defeated, and how radically

democratic systems can emerge in their place. Butler says the better aspects of popular

democracy are still alive because "our usual alliances are confounded"[299] and that

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[298] Margaret Wheatley and Deborah Frieze, "Using emergence to take social innovations to scale," 2006,
https://www.margaretwheatley.com/articles/emergence.html
[299] Judith Butler quoted in Jean-Philippe Cazier, "Acting in Concert."

"confounding of usual alliances is for me a hopeful sign."[300] It is a hopeful sign for me, too, and a direction I wish to explore with others beyond this thesis.

In these final lines, I remain hopeful that this thesis might help new modes of solidarity emerge through practices of reflection, affectual attunement, skill cultivation, and proto-typing the new worlds that communities of practice are trying to expand or bring into being. I trust that we can overcome the limits of outmoded conceptualisations, debilitating affects, and rigid models of solidarity. By re-iterating, re-articulating, and refining the arts of political solidarity, we can continue an apprenticeship in social change that increases our capacities to come together and build a better world.

Solidarity, forever.

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[300] Ibid.

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