

The Pennsylvania State University

The Graduate School

College of the Liberal Arts

**THE CAUSES AND CONSEQUENCES OF FORMALIZATION AND  
PROFESSIONALIZATION IN THE U.S. ADVOCACY SECTOR, 1960-2009**

A Dissertation in

Sociology

by

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Submitted in Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements  
for the Degree of

Doctor of Philosophy

August 2016

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## **ABSTRACT**

This study documents and examines the growth of the advocacy sector from 1960-2009 in a longitudinal study spanning issue areas. The research allows, for the first time, detailed cross-sector and over-time comparisons within this organizational industry. First, the data collection procedures used to generate LOADS (Leader and Organization Advocacy Data Set), the data set constructed for this research, are discussed in detail. Next, this data set is used to analyze three facets of advocacy organizations in detail. Chapter 3 establishes and examines the formalization and professionalization in the advocacy sector, addressing the consequences of this process, such as the effect of formalization on long-term organizational survival. This chapter finds that while formalization is generally associated with survival, it is not an absolute requisite. In addition, the “iron law” of oligarchy appears to be more of an “aluminum law” in this particular sample. Chapter 4 assesses factors associated with an increased likelihood of leadership transition overall and across three distinct time periods, exploring whether predictors of leadership transition occur most frequently at the leader, organizational, or environmental level. Leader gender and having chapters were associated with more leadership transitions overall, while factors such as founding year and time to formalization affected leadership transitions only during specific time periods. Finally, chapter 5 addresses the subject of leadership and gender in the advocacy sector. The analyses document the widespread feminization of executive leadership in advocacy organizations from 1960 to 2009 and find that female leaders are more likely to be associated with organizational death, suggesting a possible “glass cliff” effect for female advocacy leaders. Models of executive leader compensation for nonprofit advocacy organizations early 2000s through the early 2010s indicate that there is no difference in compensation between women and men holding executive advocacy positions.

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## **Acknowledgements**

Many thanks to my committee for their support and insights during the dissertation process. Special thanks to my co-chairs: John McCarthy, for his constant commitment to developing this project over the past five years, and Alan Sica, for his manifold theoretical insights.

I am most appreciative for Edwin Amenta and his research team for sharing their *New York Times* data with me, from which the sample for this project was developed.

I also gratefully acknowledge the Pennsylvania State University RGSO office and the Dean's Special Fund for dissertation research grants that helped to support the data collection for this project.

My research assistant, Catherine Chen, cannot be thanked enough for her tremendous contributions to the data collection process.

Finally, a heartfelt thank you to my family and friends, and especially to my parents, for all of the non-research things that enable one to complete a dissertation.



This dissertation is dedicated to my grandmothers:  
to Mildred Dollhopf, in honor of her 100<sup>th</sup> birthday,  
and to Helen Evans, in loving memory.

**Chapter 1**  
**Introduction**

Since the 1960s, the sector of advocacy organizations (AOs) has grown dramatically (Walker 1983; Minkoff 1995; Walker 2009). Anecdotal evidence suggests that as this sector has grown, organizations within this sector less often conform to the classical social movement model of grievance-driven, member-dependent organizations (McCarthy and Zald 1973) and are instead increasingly formalized organizations with professional leadership and staff. As organizational formalization and leadership professionalization become more common, however, fewer organizations rely on social movement tactics and leaders' personal movement experience to propel organizational missions, such as in the cases of MADD (Mothers Against Drunk Driving) and Friends of the Earth. This trend toward formalization is highly consequential for organizations and has been the subject of a century's worth of theorizing. Michels (1962 [1915]) and Weber (1946) made enduring arguments about organizational tendencies towards oligarchization and formalization, while social movements researchers have doubted the inevitability of these trends (Zald and Ash 1966; Staggenborg 1988; Cress 1997). Very little systematic evidence exists, though, to empirically document this trend toward formalization and professionalization.

Organizational formalization has been a persistent topic of inquiry in social science research; Robert Michels' "iron law of oligarchy" continues to undergird organizational development research. The *Social Science Citation Index* includes entries for a dozen social science articles with "iron law" in the title alone; moreover, these articles are almost evenly distributed from 1971 to the present (2016). This subject represents a complex and theoretically rich line of inquiry, yet

one that has been difficult to study in a broad or systematic way among advocacy organizations as the result of data constraints. Notable exceptions include Staggenborg (1988), Everett (1992), Kleidman (1994), Cress (1997), Hwang and Powell (2009), and Suarez and Bromley (2012), although these studies are typically limited to a single sector, geographic region and/or narrow time frame. In a sympathetic interpretation, Michels viewed organizational oligarchization as a consequence of organizational formalization when an organization's size becomes too unwieldy to sustain democratic proceedings; consequently, a leadership team (i.e., an oligarchy) emerges to facilitate efficient decision-making (1962). Weber (1946) similarly argued that organizations that become bureaucratically formalized are quite stable. Zald and Ash, however, contended that while these processes may dominate many organizations' trajectories, particularly in the social movement sector, formalization is not inevitable nor does it inherently lead to goal transformation (1966). Studies by Staggenborg (1988) and Cress (1997) reach conclusions supporting Zald and Ash's arguments. What is lacking from these studies, however, is the extensive time frame and cross-sector perspective necessary to evaluate the robustness of these findings—both Staggenborg and Cress study a single sector (women's movement organizations and homelessness movement organizations, respectively) and a limited time frame (17 years and 4 years, respectively).

As advocacy organizations make this transition to being formalized and professionalized, their leaders presumably change as well. For instance, while an organization's founder may be heavily invested in the cause of their organization,

such as in the aforementioned MADD and Friends of the Earth, these same founders may be pushed out as organizations formalize and the founder is perceived to lack the management skills for a large scale, professional operation. Yet, until now, there has been no way to systematically analyze the progression of leaders within an advocacy organization. A common complaint among researchers of the advocacy organization/social movement sector is that while considerable attention has been paid to the conditions correlated with the rise of advocacy organizations and the characteristics of these organizations—tactics, strategies, frames, etc.—particularly in attempts to explain the rapid expansion of the sector since the 1960s (Walker 1983; Minkoff 1995; Walker 2009), very little systematic work has been conducted on the leaders of these organizations. In the words of social movement researchers:

“Surprisingly little is known about leadership in social movements” (Robnett 2013: 687).

“As numerous scholars have noted, however, leadership in social movements has yet to be adequately theorized”(Morris and Staggenborg 2004: 171).

In spite of this research deficit, however, research on the advocacy sector is rich in implications about what leadership in the sector might look like. As the advocacy sector exploded, researchers advanced expectations based upon organizational studies of social movements to generate predictions about the background and career patterns these leaders (Zald and Ash 1966; McCarthy and Zald 1973;

McCarthy and Zald 1977; Staggenborg 1988). Moreover, the role of gender in leadership has been examined within individual movements (such as Kuumba 2001), but the widespread patterns of gender in movement leadership and compensation differences between male and female advocacy leaders are unknown. Even granting the motivation to do so, however, amassing systematic evidence on advocacy organizational leaders has been challenging, in part because systematic data on leaders is unavailable from a single source or even a handful of sources.

This research and the data set developed to conduct it represents three major innovations for social movement research: 1) data on organizations over an extensive time period (50 years), 2) data across all movement sectors, and 3) data about movement leaders. This data set allows, for the first time, testing the pervasiveness of formalization and professionalization, the conditions associated with leadership transition, and gender effects in movement leadership and executive compensation. In addition to establishing these trends, the analyses furthermore consider the effects of environmental context, specifically how political conditions (Johnson, Agnone, and McCarthy 2010, Walker 2009), advocacy sector dynamics (e.g., establishment and growth of sectors such as women's rights, environmental issues, etc.) (Tarrow 1998), and the emergence of institutional channeling mechanisms (McCarthy, Britt, and Wolfson 1991) impact these formalization and professionalization trends.

The data set developed for this research draws upon a variety of resources in order to create the first data set on organizational formalization and professionalization measures in addition to advocacy organizational leader data

spanning both organizational issue sectors and an extended period of time. The *Encyclopedia of Associations* (hereafter *EoA*) is used as the main source for constructing year-by-year histories for each organization in the sample, including information such as members, staff, and the succession of leaders from 1960-2009. This particular time frame was chosen as it captures five decades during which this sector grew and peaked as the civil Rights movement prompted the rise of the women's, peace, and environmental movements. In addition, the *EoA* began publishing in the 1950s, so looking back to 1960 takes the best advantage of available resources. While the current analysis ends at 2009—the fifth full decade of observation—with time, this analysis can certainly be extended.

In addition, data from the Internal Revenue Service (IRS) is used to supplement the *EoA* data, both for time-invariant characteristics and for capturing leader sequences during the 2000s. Also, *Wikipedia* is utilized (supplemented by *Newsbank* and organizational websites) to further supplement organizational data, mainly for less formal organizations that do not appear in the *EoA* or in IRS data. Finally, interviews with the current leaders of a dozen organizations in the sample provide detailed organizational narratives that both supplement the data collection and inform the theoretical expectations of the analyses. Chapter 2 describes the data collection process in more detail.

The following paragraphs will provide a brief justification for the dissertation's research questions and then its expectations in the context of the institutionalization of the advocacy organization sector since 1960. Particularly noted are the conditions under which advocacy organizations do or do not

transition from being the grassroots efforts of loosely-networked activists to being formally-recognized organizations with paid staff and career leaders. The term “advocacy organization” will be explicitly defined so that the organizational domain specified in this research is distinguished from similar domains, such as social movements. The causes and consequences of professionalization and formalization over an organizational trajectory will then be described in addition to a brief discussion of how leaders may mediate these trends—especially the role a leader’s gender may play in these trends over time, how these trends might vary among founding cohorts (i.e., organizations founded in the 1960s, as compared with those founded in the 1980s), and how trends may vary between advocacy organization sectors (e.g., environmental organizations versus human rights organizations), concise outlines of the subsequent chapters and their findings are presented at the end of the introduction.

### **Theoretical Background to Research Expectations**

This section will define some of the major terminology used throughout this research (i.e. advocacy organizations, formalization, and professionalization). In addition, the major research informing the subsequent research expectations will be briefly reviewed.

*The analytical distinction between advocacy organizations and social movement organizations.* The organizations sampled for this study are referred to as



“advocacy organizations” (hereafter AOs), following the definition of Andrews and Edwards (2004): “...advocacy organizations make public interest claims either promoting or resisting social change that, if implemented, would conflict with the social, cultural, political, or economic interests or values of other constituencies and groups” (481). Following this definition, public interest groups, social movement organizations, and nonprofit advocacy organizations all fall under the AO umbrella. This conceptualization was deemed most appropriate to describe the present sample, which includes organizations such as NOW (National Organization for Women), that may be more strongly identified as a social movement organization (see McCarthy and Zald 1977) as well as organizations such as the National Senior Citizens Law Center, which would be more aptly described as a nonprofit AO but may pursue similar activities to NOW such as claims-making and change-promotion. See Amenta et. al. (2012) for a more detailed explanation of the boundaries of the sampling category.

*Operationalization of Formalization and Professionalization.* For this study, organizational professionalization refers to the administrative transition within AOs from a founding leader and/or a volunteer leader to a paid leader who has a career in advocacy leadership (McCarthy and Zald 1973). Such a professional leader possesses generalized leadership credentials and career experience rather than advocacy-specific experience and is not necessarily—in fact, unlikely—to have been a previous part of the organization being led. Moreover, professionalized leaders will have official and increasingly more advanced and prestigious educational

experience and organizational credentials. While the currently available data limits the dimensions along which formalization can be operationalized, professionalization in the subsequent analyses will be operationalized as the transition away from an organization's first leader to subsequent leaders.

This process is expected to occur in tandem with organizational formalization, which is marked by a widespread tendency in the AO sector for organizations to be officially registered with the state (particularly the IRS), working within state-recognized channels, using institutionalized tactics (Staggenborg 1988; see Walker, Martin, and McCarthy 2008 for an exception), having defined offices held by paid staff, and either lacking members or having a paper-based (i.e., non-active) membership (see McCarthy and Zald 1977). As institutional channeling has become more pervasive in American society since the 1960s, organizations founded more recently are more likely to formally register with the IRS sooner than organizations founded earlier (McCarthy, Britt, and Wolfson 1991). Finally, formalized organizations may reorient goals toward sustaining AO survival, may pursue multiple goals rather than a single goal (McCarthy and Zald 1973), or may even neglect to pursue established goals altogether (Perrow 1970). For purposes of this dissertation, formalization is operationalized through pieces of data that are consistently available for all organizations: presence of staff members and appearance in the *EoA*. Further detail on how this variable is operationalized is in Chapter 2.

*The Causes of Advocacy Sector Formalization and Professionalization.* The label “advocacy organization” can elicit very different kinds of imagery. On one hand, the classic AO formulation conjures images of activists holding picket signs in more or less disorderly protest amidst a busy traffic circle while, on the other hand, the formal, professional AO formulation conjures images of a mass-mailed appeal, perhaps featuring a celebrity endorsement. While formalization and professionalization are not inevitable organizational outcomes, these trajectories are likely the far more dominant path for AOs. Highly-structured AOs with well-credentialed executive directors may be viewed with disdain from activists in the more radical wings of a movement; however, such organizations are essential to sustaining a movement in unfavorable political environments or when popular interest wanes on an issue (Staggenborg 1988; McCarthy and Zald 1977). AO leaders, particularly early leaders, may play a critical role in whether an organization more closely resembles the classical model or the professional model, as these leaders can heavily or even completely dictate an organization's development and goals.

Social movement researchers started using the lens of organizational theory after decades of prevailing wisdom that social movements were the result of individual grievances. In the aftermath of the civil rights movement, AO researchers began working with a revised conceptualization of social movements, suggesting that grievances were insufficient to sustain movement activity but rather factors such as resources and political opportunities were the key components to movement galvanization (McAdam, McCarthy, and Zald 1988). Central to this

perspective on AO emergence was an organizational analysis of the advocacy sector, theorizing the structural conditions under which AOs emerge and persist (Zald and Ash 1966; McCarthy and Zald 1973; McCarthy and Zald 1977). One of the major questions in this line of research is whether organizational formalization is as inevitable as Michels (1962) and Weber (1946) suggest or whether the establishment of a formal, bureaucratic organization in the advocacy sector is contingent on organizational features such as membership decline (Zald and Ash 1966) as well as the presence of professional leaders (Staggenborg 1988; Skocpol 1999). Zald and Ash's hallmark 1966 article, in one of the first social movement adoptions of organizational theory, speaks directly to Michels' and Weber's works. They argue that formalization and professionalization are not inevitable and these processes also do not inherently lead to goal moderation, as a small cadre of leaders may be less beholden to an apathetic membership base and can therefore make more radical decisions if they so choose. McCarthy and Zald (1973, 1977) extend Zald and Ash's work, suggesting that professionalization is a function of organizational resources. This hearkens to later organizational research from "New Institutional" theorists who contend that organizations will adopt "legitimate" forms to better access resources in their sector (Meyer and Rowan 1977), implying that both the obtaining of resources and the possession of resources can be a basis for formalization processes among social movement organizations. This suggests, then, that formalization can be seen as less of an unyielding inevitability and more of a tendency or strategy; some organizations may deliberately never formalize while others may disband before formalization. Given the connection between resource

access and formalization, however, long-term organizational survival is expected to be linked to increased levels of formalization.

Existing empirical evidence supports this perspective. Suzanne Staggenborg's 1988 study of pro-choice organizations found that while professionalization was the dominant organizational path, it was not the only path. Professional leaders did tend to formalize organizations (though they generally did not found organizations) and professionalization was able to sustain movements during unfavorable political or resource climates, suggesting that professionalization could be an adaptive strategy in particular environments rather than merely an "iron law." Cress (1997) similarly found that in homelessness advocacy groups, formalization (i.e., nonprofit incorporation) was not inevitable; some groups' benefactors mandated non-profit incorporation while other groups chose or deliberately chose not to incorporate. Also, recalling Zald and Ash, formalization did not guarantee tactical moderation if the formalization process did not involve a resource dependency. Jenkins and Eckert's earlier work (1986) displayed similar results, finding that professionalization did not alter the goals and tactics of civil rights movement organizations. While these studies offer insight into the varied formalization and professionalization processes of AOs, the evidence is limited to specific cases at narrow points in time. This present research offers the most thorough, systematic testing of these fundamental organizational processes to date, examining in detail the conditions associated with formalization, leadership transition, and the increased presence of female executive leaders. In addition, this research also offers a look at the dynamics of these processes over time and across sectors—e.g.,

whether formalization and professionalization occur more rapidly in specific political environments or within specific movement sectors.

*The Role of Leaders in Organizational Trajectories.* If formalization and professionalization are not inevitable for AOs, then the trajectory of such organizations must be examined to delineate the conditions under which an AO formalizes and professionalizes. Integral to these processes in both individual AOs and in the broader AO sector are these organizations' leaders. Leaders, compared to members, are in an especially influential position within such organizations, even given the limits of structural and environmental constraints (Morris and Staggenborg 2004) and, consequently, can directly impact organizational configuration (Han et. al. 2011). For example, leaders with acute "strategic capacity" (that is, who have an abundance of motivation, network ties, and skill) can overcome limited organizational resources to bring about success (Ganz 2009); thus, leader development is a key aspect in contextualizing organizational evolution. Moreover, even within established AOs, leaders can strongly affect factors that contribute to organizational sustainability, such the garnering of public recognition and member engagement (Andrews et. al. 2010). Establishing who the leaders are broadly across movements during this time frame—as well as when these leaders assume power—is important for addressing the lack of advocacy leader data and also may have implications for understanding organizational functioning, as female and male leaders may differ in their approaches to managing organizations (Eagley and Johnson 1990; Kaiser and Wallace 2016).

Given the previously discussed features of formalized and professionalized organizations (e.g. the presence of staff or an active, paper, or nonexistent membership), AO leaders who are in a position to influence these features will directly impact an organization's eventual form. Organizations that create formalized structures early in their existence are more likely to survive (Stinchcombe 1965); early leadership professionalization during a movement's existence increases the likelihood of organizational formalization. Since founders tend to be entrepreneurial leaders and not professional leaders (Staggenborg 1988), an organization that has undergone at least one leadership transition is more likely to be formalized, as founders are expected to delay the formalization process. In addition, the bureaucratic complexity of an AO will also affect a leader's opportunity to swiftly implement formalization measures; therefore, organizations without members and organizations without chapters are both expected to formalize faster than organizations with these features.

The very act of changing leaders itself can also affect an organization's trajectory. Leadership transitions can be associated with higher rates of organizational failure (Haveman 1993); the exit of a founder can be particularly hazardous to organizational survival (Haveman and Khaire 2003). Even if the effects of the leadership change are largely short-term (Chung et. al 1987), this destabilization can disproportionately impact relatively young organizations (Stinchcombe 1965). Very few studies, however, have directly attempted to predict these transitions, instead focusing on the antecedents and consequences of these transitions.

Finally, *who* a leader is may impact an organization's trajectory. The growing upper echelons literature in organization theory argues that an executive's background is important for understanding his or her actions and decisions, since an individual's characteristics and experiences ultimately inform these actions and decisions (see Hambrick and Mason 1984; Habrick 2007). Although this current data set is limited to very basic leader information, such as who the leader was, how long they served, and in what order, one individual characteristic that is known about these leaders is their gender. Research examining early civil rights movement activity in the U.S. noted that women were often excluded from formal leadership but often acted as leaders regardless of titled positions (Kuumba 2001; Robnett 1996). Women virtually dominated leadership positions in the women's rights movement but no research has previously looked systematically across movements to see if women eventually came to dominate, or at least reach parity with men as leaders in other domains through the end of the twentieth century and the beginning of the twenty-first century (although Skocpol (1999) notes the major leadership presence of women leaders in U.S. voluntary associations even prior to 1960). Moreover, little is also known about whether and how compensation varies among leaders, particularly in regards to gender. While the pay differential between men and women has been known to persist in the U.S. broadly, there is some evidence that men and women get paid at similar rates at the very highest positions in the for-profit sector (Adams, Gupta, Haughton, and Leeth 2007). Examining compensation patterns in the advocacy nonprofit sector would provide valuable insight into the internal dynamics of this institutional field as well as offering



another point of reference for understanding the issues of gender and pay in the U.S. more broadly.

*Sector-Level Advocacy Organization Trends.* Many of the previously described organizational patterns are expected to be reflected at the sector level. Driven by isomorphic pressures, formalization patterns are expected to be more similar within a given AO sector than between them (DiMaggio and Powell 1983). As with individual organizations, older AO sectors are expected to formalize more slowly than newer ones. The political environment in which AO sectors emerge, however, is expected to moderate the formalization process at the sector-level, as sectors operating in a friendly political environment are expected to formalize faster than those operating in a hostile political environment (see Johnson, Agnone, and McCarthy 2010).

## **Chapter Summaries**

The chapters in this dissertation together overview the data set, LOADS (Leader and Organization Advocacy Data Set), that was constructed for this project and investigate the characteristics and trajectories of advocacy organizations and their leaders from 1960-2009. In particular, the analyses presented here focus on formalization trends, predictors of leadership transition, and the role of gender in advocacy organizational leadership.

Chapter 2 reviews the sampling frame, sampling procedures, and data collection processes used to construct the data set used in the dissertation analyses. The chapter gives detailed descriptions of the specific pieces of data collected from each source and how this information was captured and coded. The rationale for coding decisions is also included for systematic exceptions to coding rules, particularly when the multiple sources used provided conflicting information. Also, the interviews with current organization leaders are described. While the interviews are not used extensively in the analyses, they were essential for directing the data collecting and identifying potentially important variables and trends. The major variables constructed from this information are then explained and the analytical plans for each chapter are briefly discussed.

The first empirical chapter, chapter 3, focuses on establishing the formalization trends across the advocacy sector from 1960-2009. First, the chapter presents descriptive information on the sample and its formalization trajectory to establish the historical trend. Then, the chapter presents OLS regressions models that investigate the conditions associated with formalization, both with regards to eventual level of formalization and time to formalization. The factors examined contributing to these formalization processes include organizational features such as the presence of members and chapters and whether the first leader is still in control of the organization; also, time and geographic contextual features such as founding year and location in a major city are tested for their role in moderating formalization processes. The chapter addresses whether formalization is inevitable in the advocacy sector and whether formalization is requisite for long-term

organizational survival, as the data set's 50-year time frame allows for an unusually long event horizon for examining this phenomenon.

The second empirical chapter, chapter 4, takes advantage of the longitudinal data structure and predicts the likelihood of leadership transition within an organization over the course of the study's scope as well as during three key time frames in the data. The chapter first unpacks the leadership transition patterns in the advocacy sector over the study's time frame, looking at age, period, and cohort trends as well as the effect of leader gender on leader transitions. Then the potential contributors to leadership transition—leader, organizational, and sector characteristics—are analyzed in logistic regression models. In particular, leader gender, organizational formalization, organizational sector, and the interaction between organizational sector and national political climate are highlighted in the analysis.

In chapter 5, groundbreaking findings on gender and advocacy leadership are presented. The chapter first examines the rate of feminization across the advocacy sector from 1960-2009. The chapter's logistic regression analyses then test the robustness of the trend across organizational types and external environmental conditions. Next, using data collected from advocacy organizations' 990 tax forms covering 1999-2003, the chapter tests associations between gender and executive leaders' compensation among registered nonprofit advocacy organizations. These trends in leader compensation are then contextualized in light of other organizational domains to discuss the implications for the patterns that emerge from the analyses.

Finally, Chapter 6 offers concluding remarks for the dissertation. The findings of the three empirical chapters are summarized and the generalizability as well as the limitations from these findings are discussed. Lastly, directions for future research are discussed, both in terms of developing the existing data set and other research that could build on the research presented here.

## **Chapter 2**

### **Data and Research Methods**

A major component of this project has been the development of a multi-level data set that allows for analyses of advocacy organizations across advocacy sectors and over time. In addition, this data set includes information about the leaders of these organizations, which allows for this organizational population to be studied on multiple levels. The resulting data includes data at the levels of individual leaders, individual organizations, and the national political context in which these organizations emerged and operated. This chapter will detail the sampling, data collection, data set construction, and major variables for this study as well as a brief discussion of the analytical techniques to be used in subsequent chapters. .

## **The Sample**

The sampling frame of this study includes all national non-labor<sup>1</sup> advocacy organizations founded between 1960 and 2000. A limitation of previous studies is that the organizations being sampled are often surviving organizations, which obviously curtails the generalizability of the findings to the larger population of advocacy organizations, not all which operate in perpetuity. For instance, the Moral Majority and Concerned Women for America are both Christian Right advocacy groups founded in 1979, but the Moral Majority folded in the late 1980s while Concerned Women for America remains active in the present day. Typical sampling

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<sup>1</sup> Labor organizations are usually excluded from samples of advocacy organizations, as Jackie Smith (2001) explains: "Labor organizations have typically been considered outside at least the contemporary U.S. social movement sector because of their historical association with institutionalized politics and their tendency to focus on member services and contract negotiations rather than class struggle" (5).

methods would only identify Concerned Women for America; the Moral Majority, despite being well-known, would not appear on current sources of organizations, such as the Internal Revenue Service (IRS) data available through the Urban Institute. In order to overcome this limitation, the sources used to generate the sample need to contain a list of all advocacy organizations regardless of survival. Fortunately, Edwin Amenta and his colleagues undertook the task of compiling such a list for their study of *New York Times* (NYT) coverage of social movement organizations (2009).

In that study, the number of NYT mentions for all national social movement organizations (including labor) during the twentieth century were documented and analyzed. The groups were identified through the use of a variety of sources in order to be as comprehensive as possible. The sources used to compile the list included existing scholarly work that included lists of social movement organizations, articles, monographs, expert opinion, and the *Encyclopedia of Associations* (2009: 639). After identification, analysis revealed that the factors that affected coverage the most included the size of the social movement family to which an organization belonged and, to a lesser extent, an organization's history of disruptiveness and the presence of an enforced social policy linked to the movement's primary issue. That data set provides arguably the most comprehensive listing of national social movement organizations/advocacy groups in existence during the entirety of the twentieth century and one that is less sensitive to longevity and formalization that skew the inclusion of AOs in other similar databases such as *Encyclopedia of Associations* (EoA) and IRS records.

Using Amenta et. al.'s list of organizations as the complete organizational population, a sample for this study was created through the identification of two subsamples: one random sample and one prominence-based sample. The first subsample includes a random sample of 10% of the organizations in the full population of 816 organizations that met the selection criteria (non-union and founded between 1960 and 2000), yielding a total of 82 organizations. The second subsample includes the 190 most prominent organizations in the sample, as measured by number of mentions in the *NYT* (22 of these organizations appear in both the random sample and the prominence subsamples). After these two samples were purged of organizations that were deemed to be outside the sampling frame, the combined sample included 245 organizations.

This sampling approach has multiple advantages. First, a preliminary investigation of the prominence sample compared with the random sample demonstrated that information is much more difficult to procure for AOs in the random sample, so using known characteristics from the full population to weight the prominence sample in addition to the random sample was deemed likely to yield much richer findings than using a random sample alone. For example, in analyzing the current appearance of organizations in three major sources—the *EoA*, IRS records, and *Wikipedia*—93.1% of all prominence sample organizations appeared in at least one source (52.6% appearing in all three), while only 63.1% of the random sample appeared in at least one source (22.4% appearing in all three). Second, restricting the founding time frame to relatively newer AOs allows organizational foundings to be more systematically examined, since more recently founded



organizations are much more likely to have documentation available about their origins. This facilitated the incorporation of hypotheses about organizational processes that may unfold over years or decades, such as the trajectory of organizational formalization, survival, and feminization. Third, the forty-year founding time span captures several cycles of contention (Tarrow 1998) that developed during the last half of the twentieth century and, accordingly, the waves of social movement industries/advocacy sectors that sprang up at various points during this period. This aids in the analyses of cohort effects, such as whether isomorphic patterns characterize social movement industries/advocacy group sectors during particular periods (see DiMaggio and Powell 1983), and also allows the use of organizational age as a relevant variable for understanding the trajectories of leadership professionalization and organizational formalization. Table 1 compares the founding dates of these samples of AOs to the founding dates of all the organizations listed in the public affairs section of the *EoA* in 2005 (Baumgartner and Jones 2013). The table shows similar temporal founding patterns across the samples, with foundings peaking in the 1970s and declining sharply by the 1990s, supporting the validity of the sampling strategy.

In order to make the data set's findings generalizable, a survey weight was constructed in order to correct for the oversample of prominent organizations and also to adjust for organizational sector, given that this feature was a major determinant of *NYT* appearance. This weight adjusts for the probability that an organization in the sampling frame would appear in the prominence sample and

also adjusts the distribution across organizational sectors in order to match the distribution found in the broader population.

**Table 1: Advocacy Organization Founding by Decade**

	AO Random Sample		Prominence Sample		Public Affairs Associations <sup>2</sup>	
	n	% of overall	n	% of overall	n	% of overall
<b>1960s</b>	18	23.7	59	31.0	4,520	18.7
<b>1970s</b>	25	32.9	75	39.5	10,084	41.7
<b>1980s</b>	20	26.3	42	22.1	8,568	35.4
<b>1990s</b>	13	17.1	12	6.3	1,024	4.2
<b>Unknown</b>	0	0	2	1.1	0	0
<b>Total</b>	76	100	190	100	24,196	100

This weighting is used in each of the chapter analyses so that the results are representative of the broader sampling frame. Table 2 compares the known characteristics of the sampling frame to the weighted sample.

## Data Collection

The data sample generated from Amenta et. al.'s population of national advocacy organizations (2009) included only organization name, movement sector, and organizational prominence, which necessitated conducting a large-scale data collection to compile additional data required to address the major aims of this

<sup>2</sup> As derived from the Encyclopedia of Associations from the Policy Agendas Project. See [http://www.policyagendas.org/page/datasets-codebooks#encyclopedia\\_of\\_associations](http://www.policyagendas.org/page/datasets-codebooks#encyclopedia_of_associations) (Bamugartner and Jones 2013).

study. Longitudinal data was deemed optimal for conducting the analyses of this study, since many of the organizational dynamics of interest are not fixed characteristics, but are embedded in ongoing organizational processes and national

**Table 2: Comparing Weighted vs. Unweighted Data on Basic Organizational Characteristics**

	Unweighted %	Weighted %
<b>Survival</b>		
Active	76.6	76.4
Inactive	23.4	23.6
<b>Sector</b>		
Religious Right	8.9	8.5
Civil Rights	15.5	17.6
Environment	12.7	15.9
Women's/Abortion Rights	13.1	12.1
LGBT Rights/Issues	11.4	10.7
Rights: Other	9.4	7.5
Conservative/Right	11.4	11.0
Progressive/Left	10.6	8.0
Anti-War	4.1	6.4
Other	2.9	2.5
<b>Founding Cohort</b>		
1960s	27.6	15.9
1970s	37.5	31.5
1980s	25.1	35.2
1990s	9.9	17.4

Note: percentages may not add up to 100 due to rounding

political dynamics. Although the data necessary to address the aims of this research are unavailable in a single source, combining the unique features of multiple data sources allowed for the assembly of data on the organizations and leaders in the study. With data at the leader, organizational, and environmental levels, hypotheses addressing processes such as formalization, leadership transition, and leader

selection can be tested. The primary sources used to compile information and the data derived from each will subsequently be discussed in detail.

### *The Encyclopedia of Associations*

The main source used for data collection was the *Encyclopedia of Associations* (*EoA*), as this publication encompasses national-level voluntary organizations, spans the broadest time frame, encompasses the most of the organizations in the sample, and typically provides succinct yet detailed information on the organizations listed. First, the *EoA*'s publication history is conveniently coincident with the sample's time frame. This publication has been issued on a semi-annual basis since 1961 and an annual basis since 1974 (Bevan, et al., 2013); a handful of editions are also available prior to 1961. Although this publication was compiled annually to be used as a reference guide in that year and not necessarily for research purposes decades later, the resulting yearly data can be quite useful for capturing long-term organizational trends (Bevan, et. al., 2013). Organizations vary in the frequency with which they update their records—some provide new numbers to the Gale Research Company, which publishes and collects the data, every year while others are less diligent—however, even information that is only updated once a decade is sufficient for discerning an organization's trajectory over 30-40 years.

Of all the sources used to derive organizational information for this study, the *EoA* proved to be the most comprehensive in terms of organizations captured, with 82.0% appearing in the *Encyclopedia's* pages by the last year observed, 2009 (75.9%

appeared in Wikipedia and 53.1% had IRS data) Since the sampling frame includes all known national advocacy groups—living and dead, nascent and established, headline-grabbing and obscure—a single source of information covering these organizations is unlikely to capture the entire population. Flash-in-the-pan organizations may not last long enough to appear on the Gale Research Company’s radar; the smallest organizations may not have the resources to respond to Gale’s inquiry; underground organizations such as the Guerilla Girls are unlikely to breach their anonymity for a chance to appear in the *EoA*. Yet the source is remarkably comprehensive for this particular sample, with even a year or two of organizational data providing confirmation of organizational criteria such as whether or not an organization is membership-based and baseline measurements for other factors such as number of staff members. Of particular importance to this study was the inclusion of contact information in the *EoA* entries. In most cases, the contact listed was the organization’s leader, which could be determined from the contact’s title. Although previously unavailable in advocacy research, this yearly listing allowed leadership sequences for organizations to be constructed.

Unfortunately, despite being the most comprehensive of all the data sources used in this study, the *EoA* was also the least accessible. The annual editions of the *EoA* are only available in print for most years historically, with electronic versions being produced starting in the 2000s. For the data collection, each annual edition of the *EoA* was located and copies of the index as well as the volumes containing

organizational data were obtained.<sup>3</sup> The Pennsylvania State University Libraries contain a nearly complete physical set of *EoA* editions from the inception of the source through 2003; most of the data collected was done so from this collection. The editions spanning 2004-2007 as well as the occasional missing volumes were requested through interlibrary loan and were generously supplied from a variety of educational institutions. In one instance, an edition was proving difficult to locate but was readily available for sale on Amazon.com as a set of decommissioned library books; these were purchased in order to complete the data collection and provide an effective visual aid for presentations on this data collection. Finally, the 2008 and 2009 editions were available electronically through the Pennsylvania State University Library.<sup>4</sup>

In order to collect organizational data from the *EoA* on each organization, first the index of a given year would be searched for all possible organizations in the sample that could have been alive during that year. Organizations would be searched for the year after their known founding date. Previous research found the

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<sup>3</sup> In the earliest years of the *EoA*, the organizational entries and index were contained in a single volume. As the number of organizations grew, the *EoA* eventually began publishing the information across two volumes (along with a separate geographical index which is not used for this study); eventually the *EoA* was published with typically two volumes (later three) containing organizational information with a standalone organizational index. The digital edition can be electronically searched, obviating the distinctions between sections.

<sup>4</sup> For ease of description, the *EoA* editions are being described here by years rather than edition numbers. The editions used here begin with the third edition, published in 1961, and conclude with the 48th edition, published in 2009. The year referred to in the text is the copyright year, which is the standard Bevan et. al. (2013) employ and is maintained here for consistency and accuracy. The year displayed on an edition's front cover is inconsistent, it is sometimes the same as the copyright year and sometimes a year off from the copyright year. Not all editions necessarily display a year on the front cover; some editions were published twice in a given copyright year, such as the 39th and 40th editions, which were both published in 2003. In this instance, the later edition (40th) was used for data in that year. There was no 14th edition published and there was no edition published with a 1982 copyright edition.

modal time to appearance in the *EoA* is 4 years<sup>5</sup> (Bevan 2013) and it was deemed highly unlikely that an organization would be founded and then discovered and contacted by Gale in the same year. Organizations with an unknown founding date would be searched in every year of the *EoA*. If an organization was listed in the *EoA*'s index as defunct multiple years in a row, the organization was considered dead and was no longer searched for in the *EoA*. Commonly, after being listed as defunct, in which case the organization had no corresponding entry, the organization ceased to be listed in the index altogether in subsequent years.

When an organization was found to be listed in the *EoA* index, the entry number for that organization was recorded to be looked up in the organizational description section (in the earliest editions, the page number rather than entry number is listed). After all of the entry numbers were identified and documented, each corresponding entry was then located and the entry captured in a digital photograph. An image was also captured of the entire page or two-page spread in order to record the section and subsection containing the entry. Once all of the entries for a given edition had been photographed, they were uploaded to a computer, archived to an external hard drive, and also uploaded to a secure file-sharing site so that a research assistant could facilitate the transcription of the entries. The transcription work of the research assistant was randomly spot-checked on a regular basis to ensure accuracy. Owing to the high skill level of the research assistant, typically only one to two entries (if any) within a given edition

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<sup>5</sup> Upon completion of the data collection, the modal value for this data set was determined to be 5 years from founding to first *EoA* appearance with an average of 7.2 years.

contained an error, transcribing across 23 variables per entry. The researcher's own transcription was also post-checked after the fact, with a similar error rate.

There were numerous advantages to capturing a digital image of each entry instead of transcribing directly from the physical editions of the *EoA*. First, the images allowed the project to be much more portable, enabling collaboration with a research assistant virtually rather than in person or in physical presence of the volumes. Second, piloting efforts for the data collection yielded a much higher error rate when the location of an entry and transcription were conducted at the same time. Breaking down the task allowed each discrete function to be treated individually and with greater focus. Finally, the creation of a digital record facilitated the accuracy of the project, with the digital photographs being much easier to quickly reference than having to track down the physical volume, some of which are not housed locally at The Pennsylvania State University and often requiring two to three weeks for an interlibrary loan request to be processed and fulfilled. Also, this ease of reference will be valuable for future research projects, which may require additional information beyond what was originally transcribed for the current data set, such as an organization's description or publications.

The *EoA* was most useful for collecting basic organizational data that encompassed the structure and function of a given group. For each organization, the following information was collected:

**Organizational name** – This reflects the name listed for a given entry and varied for some organizations across the sample. At times, this reflected an apparent



evolution in organizational aims; for instance, the Alliance for Displaced Homemakers started out as the Displaced Homemakers Network in the 1980 edition but had become Women Work! The National Network for Women's Employment by the end of the sample in 2009. Other times, this reflected an organizational merger or acquisition. The Moral Majority first appears in the *EoA* in 1981, two years after Jerry Falwell founded the organization in 1979. After some organization struggles, however, the organization became an independent arm of the Liberty Federation. Starting in 1988, the *EoA* index listing for "Moral Majority" points readers to the entry for "Liberty Federation" although the organizational features listed remain virtually the same from its first appearance until the organization disbands. A detailed description of how a merged or absorbed organization was determined to be part of the original organization or a separate entity (and thus reflecting an organizational death) can be found in the section on variables.

**Section** – This refers to the section in which an entry appears. This is a broad categorization that captures a wide array of organizations. Organizations in the sample frequently appeared in the Public Affairs Section but could also be found in sections including Environmental and Agricultural Organizations, Health and Medical Organizations, and Social Welfare Organizations.

**Keyword** – This is the keyword the *EoA* assigns to the organization, which provides a more detailed category for organizational activity than the section in which it

appears. Examples of keywords include Children, Consumer, Aging, Right to Life, Political Party, AIDS, Civil Rights and Liberties, etc.

**Entry** – The entry number, which matches the index listing to the organizational listing.

**Edition** – Edition number for the volume from which a given entry came; typically listed on the front cover and/or with the publication information.

**Copyright Year** – Copyright year for the volume from which a given entry came; found with the publication information.

**Year on the Front Cover** – The year listed on the front cover of an edition; while this is not being formally used in the analysis as discussed previously, it is useful for physically locating the books and as another point of reference when reviewing the digital archives.

**First Entry** – This indicates whether a particular entry is the first time an organization appears in the *EoA*.

**Last Entry** - This indicates whether a particular entry is the last time an organization appears in the *EoA*.

**Death** – this indicates whether an entry makes reference to an organizational death; this was a rare occurrence but useful information for later determining whether and when organizations died.

**Founding Year** – The organizational founding year listed within the entry.

**Contact/Leader** – Most organizations list an organizational contact and this was often the main organizational leader.

**Contact/Leader Title** – The title listed for the person in the previous item.

**Headquarters City**- The city listed with the organizational contact.

**Headquarters State** – The state listed with the organizational contact.

**Headquarters Zip Code** – The city listed with the organizational contact. Although this information is not being used in the current analysis, the intention is that this information can eventually be used with GIS techniques to look at spatial aspects of advocacy organizations.

**Nonmember organization** – This is determined using Walker et. al.'s (2011) criteria from their 2011 article on nonmember organizations using *EoA* data: “[this category] ...includes all groups in which the *Encyclopedia* entry fails to reference a

member base and whose entry also contains a descriptor such as foundation, institute, center, committee, fund, campaign, program, project, conference, department, task force, or mission” (1299). Occasionally, the *EoA* explicitly lists organizations as being nonmember.

**Members** – The number of members listed for an organization, if any.

**Staff** - The number of staff members listed for an organization, if any.

**Budget** - The budget listed for an organization, if any.

**Regional Groups** - The number of regional groups listed for an organization, if any.

**State Groups** - The number of state groups listed for an organization, if any.

**Local Groups** - The number of local groups listed for an organization, if any.

**Organization Description** – This is the description of the organization listed in the entry, which generally includes organization goals and activity. This is currently only collected for 2004-2009, but is an area that can be used to expand the data set in the future.

Of course, there are limitations to using the *EoA*. Although the source lists more organizations than any others used here, it does not encompass the entire population. The organizations that are listed in the *EoA* are likely biased toward those that have reached a certain base level of formalization required to be discovered and complete the requisite paperwork. As a result, appearance in the *EoA* can correspondingly be used as a proxy for level of organizational formalization. In addition, as mentioned previously, even for the organizations that are listed in the *EoA*, on average it takes 7.2 years for organizations in this sample to appear in the *EoA* after its founding (with a range of 0 to 26 years). Not all organizations update their record every year and some organizations are completely missing from some years. Also, the *EoA* does not necessarily index every permutation of an organization's name, which can make tracking down an organization difficult (for instance, whether The Order is listed under The Order or Order, The). Similarly, when organizations change names, the new organization could be unlisted, or if a prior organization name is not known, it could be listed and not found (although the *EoA* systematically lists previous names for organizations in its entry). Finally, the information provided to the Gale Research Company may be simply inaccurate, as the onus is generally on the organization to provide information to Gale (see Bevan, et al., 2013). Despite these shortcomings and given its longevity and scope the *EoA* is an excellent source for longitudinal advocacy organizational data and some of these potential limitations can be mitigated through the use of multiple data sources which can verify the information listed or provide alternative information.

### *Internal Revenue Service*

IRS records for nonprofit organizations were also a valuable source of information in this data collection. 53.1% of organizations appear in IRS records. Using an organization's annual 990 form (the tax return form, which is public information for nonprofit organizations), one can collect annual accounts of information such as leaders, budget, and mission, while also being able to find helpful fixed information, such as IRS registration date, which is used as a measure of organizational formalization. This source, however, was mainly used for supplementing data obtained through the *EoA*, as IRS records are currently only available electronically as far back as about 2001 for most organizations. While more records are being digitized, the present scope of IRS data limits the longitudinal usefulness of the source. Incidentally, since current 990s are being digitized before historical ones, the data set can be expanded to include more recent years using this source.

IRS data was obtained through the Urban Institute's National Center for Charitable Statistics website (IRS 2015). In order to collect this data, first the database was searched for the presence of an organization. For organizations that have undergone name changes, all known permutations of organizational name were searched. In addition, when organizations in the sample had similar names to organizations outside of the sample, the records for each were viewed to verify the correct organization. Once an organization was confirmed, 990s were downloaded

for every year available for a particular organization. The tax year listed on the form was used as the year of observation, as the forms are generally filed the year following the specified tax year. Since some of the IRS yearly observations overlapped with yearly *EoA* observations, the coordination of years was important in order to make comparisons across a given year. From each 990, then, information was transcribed into an Excel spreadsheet that was later included in the master data set.

The IRS data was valuable for generating relatively recent organizational data, particularly leader name, weekly hours worked, and salary information, as this information is mandatory to report. The standard 990 changed multiple times during the years from which data was collected (approximately 2001-2009), so not all data collected was available for all years. In addition, not all of the data collected is being used for the present analysis, but given the time required to access each individual 990 compared to the nominal time to collect additional data during the initial data collection, the additional information was deemed highly useful for subsequent research projects using this data set. The following information was collected on each organization for each year, where available:

**Whether organization is currently registered with the IRS** – Since the database includes all currently registered nonprofit organizations, this can be used as one way to measure an organization’s level of formalization compared to other organizations in the dataset.

**990 Available** – Some organizations are registered with the IRS, but may not have 990s available. For example, the Urban Institute may not have digitized an organization’s files, the organization may have failed to file a 990, or the organization may have a sufficiently small budget that they are only required to file a 990 “Postcard,” which is not digitally reproduced in the Urban Institute archives.

**NTEE Code/NTEE Description** – This is the code the IRS uses to classify organizational activity. The IRS makes this designation internally and it represents what they deem to be the organization’s main function. Each code corresponds with a specific organizational sector. For instance, the NTEE code Q70 corresponds to “International Human Rights.”

**Rule Date** – This is the year an organization received its nonprofit status with the IRS.

**IRS Type** – This refers to the specific type of 501(c) designation an organization received. The majority of organizations in the data set are 501(c)3s, with a few instances of 501(c)4s and one instance of a 501(c)19, which designates an armed forces-related organization (e.g. a veterans association).

**990 Year – NCCS** – This reflects the date the Urban Institute displayed for the 990 where the form could be downloaded. This does not always correspond to the year listed on the form.



**990 Year – On Form** – The tax year listed on the form.

**Name of Organization** – Since organization names change over time, as discussed with the *EoA* data, this was recorded to ensure information across all organizational names could be aggregated.

**Principal Officer** – Typically the organization’s executive director or president. This is the person who signs off on the 990. The information is only available 2008 and after and is used to cross-check the leader determination discussed below.

**Leader Name and Leader Title** – All filing organizations much report “Officers, Directors, Trustees, Key Employees, and Highest Compensated Employees,” which typically includes the organization’s primary leader (the executive director or president).

**Average hours leader worked per week** – This was collected to determine whether a leader is full-time (40+ hours worked a week), part-time, or holds the position symbolically (0-1 hours worked a week).

**Leader's reportable compensation from the organization** – Aside from accounting for the variation in executive pay, this also indicates whether a leader is a volunteer and receives no compensation for her work at the organization.

**Leader's reportable compensation from related organizations; Leader's estimated amount of other compensation from the organization and related organizations** – Some leaders benefit financially from their position aside from their direct compensation, such as when they receive large speaking fees; this information is captured on the 990s.

**Total leader compensation** – The sum of all leader compensation listed.

**Is the Principle Same as Leader** - In most cases, the principle leader is the same as the top leader listed later on the form, but it was useful to flag exceptions so that the proper determination of the primary leader could be made.

**Gross Receipts** – The organization's income for the year.

**Year of Formation** – Year the organization received its 501(c) designation.

**Mission** – All organizations must describe the overarching goal or mission of their existence and activities.

As mentioned previously, the available IRS records do not encompass nearly the range of observable years as available through the *EoA* volumes, so the data

from the IRS was used primarily to supplement and vet existing information. In addition, a few other limitations to this source exist. Currently, the IRS data is only available for active organizations, so defunct organizations in the sample cannot be checked for IRS registration. Given the value of this information for determining organizational formalization, adjustments are made to compensate for this lack of data, which are discussed in the variables section. Even for active organizations, not all organizations choose to register with the IRS, so these are excluded from the data collection. Unlike the *EoA* records, which organizations are not obliged to update, nonprofit organizations must legally file tax returns, which result in more consistent annual reporting. For this reason, when determining certain variables with conflicting information, such as current leader, the IRS data was prioritized as it is likely to be the most accurate. Therefore, while the IRS data was insufficient for being the sole or primary source of data, it provided information unavailable from other sources and helped to ensure the data that was ultimately used in the analyses was as accurate as possible.

### *Wikipedia*

Wikipedia may be a surprising source to include for an academic analysis. Previous studies, however, have attempted to vet the quality, comprehensiveness, and reliability of Wikipedia, among other traits; a recent meta-analysis of research on Wikipedia found that for quality, findings tended to be more positive than negative and, on the whole, “Wikipedia has been shown to be comparable with the

venerable *Encyclopædia Britannica*" (Mesgari et. al. 2015: 237.) For this particular study, Wikipedia was a valuable source of information for less- or non-formalized organizations. As suggested earlier, organizations must reach a certain threshold of bureaucratic functioning in order to be identified as an organization, be contacted by the Gale Research Company, and respond with information, let alone apply for and successfully receive a 501(c) designation. For organizations that are or especially choose to be informal, however, "official" sources of information are unlikely to capture their details. 21 organizations, or 8.6% of the sample, appear only in Wikipedia. For instance, the aforementioned Guerrilla Girls do not appear in the *EoA* or in IRS records, but they do appear in a Wikipedia entry. Although this means that there is no detailed annual information on the organization, general information can be derived from a Wikipedia, which is quite useful in cross-sectional analyses. For example, the Wikipedia page for the Guerilla Girls indicates they were founded in 1985, are still an active organization, and have members.

Since the Wikipedia data is not longitudinal and is not systematically presented, the data collection for this source was much simpler than for the *EoA* and IRS data. Each organization was searched on the Wikipedia website ([www.wikipedia.org](http://www.wikipedia.org)) with any known organization names. If an organization was found and confirmed to be the correct organization based on known characteristics, then the webpage address was recorded as well as the year of access, since the pages have the potential to be revised and updated since the initial Wikipedia data collection, which took place in early 2015. For all organizations found, the following data was searched for in the entry and coded if it appeared:

**Founding Year and Death Year** – Death year in particular was helpful for cross-checking organization death with reports of organizational death in the *EoA* since none of the sources used systematically reports death year.

**Cause of Death** – Such as whether an organization was absorbed by another organization, went bankrupt, went inactive, had a leadership fracture, etc.

**Organization Still Active** – Coded for whether this was definitively mentioned or whether it was unknown/ambiguous from the entry.

**Headquarters City, Headquarters State** – Only the current headquarters, but previous ones were listed in notes and used to cross-reference other data.

**Members** – Both whether an article mentioned that organization definitely has or does not have members and, if so, how many.

**Staff** – Both whether an article mentioned that organization definitely has or does not have staff and, if so, how many.

**Chapters** - Both whether an article mentioned that organization definitely has or does not have chapters and, if so, how many.

**Founder(s)** – Used for confirming leader sequences; coded for both name and whether the founder is still leading the organization

**Current leader/previous leaders** – Generally the president or executive director; also used for confirming leader sequences as some organizational Wikipedia pages list information such as all the executive directors that have ever served an organizations.

**Leader elected or appointed** – This was occasionally included in articles and was collected mainly to test how this data can be obtained for an organization for future analyses. A leader was considered appointed if he or she was named by the old leader or selected through hiring committee; a leader voted on by the organization’s members was considered elected.

Naturally, the first and most vehement criticism of using Wikipedia as a data source is that it is open-sourced and subject to the edits of anyone with an internet connection (protected articles notwithstanding). Aside from quality and reliability, other areas of concern with using Wikipedia as a source have included the source’s comprehensiveness, newness of information, and readability of information (Mesgari et. al. 2015). Being sensitive to this and the limitations of all data sources used to compile the data set, the configuration of sources used to obtain data is tracked for each organization so that source can be used as a control variable in analyses to determine whether, say, use of Wikipedia impacts the final analyses. Given that 8.6% of organizations only appeared in Wikipedia, in practice this source

was mainly used to confirm information in other sources and periodically supplement existing information. For example, organizations may have members, but may not report their membership numbers or proxy membership information (i.e. membership dues) to the *EoA*. The organization's Wikipedia entry, however, may make frequent references to member activity and may even list a membership figure. In combination with the other sources, Wikipedia was useful in refining information and providing information about underground, short-lived, or dead organizations. Moreover, this type of analyses will be helpful in establishing a baseline of accuracy with using Wikipedia as a data source when analyzing this particular population.

### *Other Sources*

A small proportion of the sample did not appear in any of the three major sources used to systematically collect data (7.3%). In these few instances, additional research was conducted in order to establish baseline organizational information, such as founding date, headquarters, and whether the organization was still active. For these cases, organizational websites and Newsbank (<http://infoweb.newsbank.com>) were used to locate any possible additional organizational information. Sources used are recorded in the master data set. In addition, supplementary labor force data was obtained from the Bureau of Labor Statistics and downloaded from the Federal Reserve Bank of St. Louis's Economic

Data (2016). Supplementary political data was obtained from the U.S. House of Representatives (2016) and the United States Senate (2016) online archives.

### *Interviews*

To supplement and complement the systematic data collection efforts, a dozen current leaders of advocacy organizations in the sample were interviewed between 2014 and 2015. San Francisco and Washington, D.C. were selected as interview sites, as these represent two of the three cities with the most organizational headquarters and would also represent both the East and West Coasts.<sup>6</sup> All presently active organizations in the sample located in the general metro area of these cities were identified, and then the current leader and contact information for the leader or organization were identified (generally through the organization's website). For all people and organizations with contact information available, email or phone solicitations were made (depending on the type of information available). Leaders willing and able to meet during the designated travel time frame were scheduled for an interview; those willing but unavailable were schedule for a phone interview. Table 3 describes the general characteristics of the organizations and leaders interviewed.

Interviews were semi-structured, lasting an average of one hour, though interviews ranged from 30 to 90 minutes depending on the availability of the leader.

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<sup>6</sup> 95 currently active organizations are headquartered in Washington, D.C; 23 in New York City, and 8 in San Francisco. The cities with the next-highest concentrations of headquarters are Los Angeles with 5 and Chicago with 4 headquarters.



The interview schedule is available in Appendix A. These interviews were largely exploratory and were used in conjunction with the construction of the data collection and data set construction to develop a sense of organizational trajectories and most salient organizational and leader details for collection and eventually for variable construction. In addition, for the organizations that were interviewed, the resulting narratives of organizational and leader history were used periodically to confirm conflicting details that arose in the data set, and to fill in missing information (such as whether an organization has staff members or chapters or who founded an organization).

**Table 3: Interview Characteristics**

	<b>Count</b>
<b>Location</b>	
Washington, D.C.	9
San Francisco	3
<b>Sector</b>	
Religious Right	1
Environment	3
Women's/Abortion Rights	1
LGBT Rights/Issues	2
Rights: Other	3
Anti-War	1
Other	1
<b>Gender</b>	
Female	2
Male	1
<b>Founding Cohort</b>	
1960s	5
1970s	4
1980s	3
1990s	1

Although the leaders interviewed were not the founders in any instances, all of the leaders had a strong sense of the organization's development and often had insights and reflections on their organization's arc from founding to the present day. Of course, these recollections are limited by the leader's information and recollection; additionally, leaders' biases may influence their perception of an organization. Overall, these interviews were informative and would be a useful way to expand this research in the future, as the narrative insights of the interviews were invaluable for filling in the sorts of details that data collection can rarely capture. For instance, in one organization interviewed, its board pushed out a founder from leadership as the founder was perceived to be lacking management skills. This is a pattern found in other organizations and speaks a great deal to the consequences of the formalization process. Such a pattern, however, is difficult to identify through means other than an interview, as it is not the sort of information that would be reported in a 990 or to an organizational encyclopedia that, at best, would only note that a new leader succeeded the founder.

### **Data Set and Variables**

The data set resulting from the data collection efforts is expansive in both scope of content and time frame and offers a great deal of analytical flexibility. The information is organized as a long-form data set so that longitudinal analysis can be conducted; the data set also includes a cross-sectional component for analytical questions that do not require the full longitudinal data set. The main unit of

analysis for the data set is the organization-year; each organization has a designated ID that is then connected to the sample year in which an observation was taken. Given that some of the organizational data is fixed, and longitudinal information is unavailable for some of the organizations, each organization is also assigned a dummy year which allows the data set to be analyzed cross-sectionally.

The data from the multiple sources used for data collection was combined into a single data set, with source-specific data identified (e.g. leader data from the *EoA* compared to leader data from the IRS). This combined data was then used to generate variables to be used for analysis. Each variable may be the result of a single source or may combine data from across sources. When data conflicted for the construction of a variable, the information found most consistently across sources (e.g., founding year) was used. When available, interview data was also used to verify information. On the occasions where sources were in dispute and there was no mediating third source, IRS data was taken to be most accurate, then *EoA* data, and finally Wikipedia data.

The data set contains a series of variables that are used across analyses. These are describe in detail here:

### *Identification Variables*

**Case ID** - Each line of data (organization-year) has a unique identifier, ranging from 1 to 7506.

**Organizational ID number** – Each organization is assigned a unique identification number, which is particularly important for identification purposes since an organization’s name may change over the course of the sample and each organization is active over a different portion of the 1960-2009 time frame. This ranges from 100-367 non-continuously, as some organizations were removed from the initial subsamples as described earlier.

**Organization Name** – This is coded as the name originally identified in Amenta et. al.’s data set (2009) and is generally the name by which an organization is most often known.

**Organization Sector** – This is coded multiple ways depending on the analytical purpose of the sector information. Along with organizational name and *NYT* prominence information, detailed organizational sector information was included, dividing organizations among 34 sectors. A condensed version of this information is included in a separate variable, which divides the organizations into 10 sectors: Other, Religious Right, Civil Rights, Environment, Women’s/Abortion Rights, LGBT Rights and Issues, Rights: Other, Conservative/Right, Progressive/Left, and Anti-War. Further simplified sector breakdowns are also included for various analyses, including liberal/conservative organizations, liberal feminist/non-liberal feminist organizations, and liberal/conservative/liberal feminist organizations.

The primary organizational sector breakdown used in the analyses is liberal, conservative, and liberal feminist organizations. Although this is a broad way of

categorizing organizations, this categorization addresses the issue of too-small ns with more fine-grained divisions while still retaining the one of the most salient contours of these organizations, overarching political ideology. While liberal organizations could have been included with liberal organizations, these organizations were kept separate given the role gender plays in this study's analyses. The liberal feminist organizations operated in distinctly different ways from the liberal organizations in some cases, so the independence of this category was deemed valuable. These categories include the following organizations:

**Liberal:** Civil Rights (Civil Rights: Asian, Black, Jewish, Latino, Native American, Other), Environment (Environment, Animals), LGBT (LGBT Rights, AIDS), Other Rights (Welfare, Prisoners, Civil Liberties, Consumer, Disabled, Veterans, Children, Old Age), Progressive (Progressive, Communist, Gun Control), Anti-War

**Conservative:** Religious Right (Christian Right, Anti-Abortion), Conservative (Conservative, Nativist/Supremacist, Gun Rights)

**Liberal Feminist:** Women's Rights (Women's Rights/Feminism, Abortion)

### *Survival Variables*

**Founding Year** – This refers to the year in which an organization was established.

Accounts of this information conflicted sometimes between sources and even within sources, so this is usually coded as the most consistent date used.

**Founding Cohort** – This refers to the founding decade for an organization; i.e. 1960s, 1970s, etc.

**Death Year** – The last year in which an organization is active, whether death occurs through closure or merger. An organization was considered dead if it ceased to exist, had been listed as “address unknown” for more than 5 years in the *EoA* with no reappearance, if the organization merged with another organization and was the smaller merging organization, or if an organization merged with another organization and was completely dissolved in the merger.

**Organizational Age/Years Active in Sample** – These variables refer to the age of an organization at a given observed year and the total number of years an organization is active in the sample, whether the number is censored by organizational death or the end of the sampling time frame.

**Active at Sample End** – This is a dichotomous variable that indicates whether an organization was still alive at the end of the sampling time frame.

## *Geographic Indicators*

An organization's location can influence its network and the immediate environment in which it works. The majority of organizations are headquartered either in Washington, D.C. or New York City, with 51.6% being headquartered in one of these two cities at the last reported year for the organization. Organizations were considered to be in a major city if they had addresses in either of these cities or their major suburbs (e.g. Brooklyn, NY or Alexandria, VA). Organizations, however, may move around during their lifespan and whether an organization is headquartered in a major city can vary with time. Therefore, the major city indicator is coded in a variety of ways for various analytical purposes. Each variable is dichotomous, with a 1 indicating the presence of the variable indicator:

**Located in a Major City Annually:** This is a longitudinal indicator, conveying whether in a specific year an organization was known to be located in a major city. In the absence of data on a specific year, the most recent known location within the past three years is used.

**Last Location in a Major City:** This indicates whether the last location of an organization was in a major city. The "last" location for an organization can refer to an organization's location at the end of the sample or the organization's location at the time it became defunct.

**Most Common Location in a Major City:** This indicates if the majority of observed location-years are in a major city. In the rare occurrence of a tie, organizations were coded positively.

**Always in a Major City:** This indicates if an organization has been headquartered in a major city throughout its existence.

**Moved to a Major City:** This indicates if an organization at any time moved its headquarters from a major city to a non-major city. This is coded even if organizations later moved back to a non-major city.

**Moved Away from a Major City:** This indicates if an organization at any time moved their headquarters from a non-major city to a major city. This is coded even if organizations later move back to a major city.

**Ever in a Major City:** This indicates if an organization has ever been headquartered in a major city throughout its existence. This measure includes organizations that have always been in a major city and have moved to or from a major city.



## *Leader Variables*

Data from primarily the *EoA* but also from the IRS and Wikipedia was used to construct a sequence of leaders for each organization. From this sequence and other organizational data, the following set of variables was created:

**Leader name:** This is the leader identified as being in charge of an organization in a given year.

**Leader spell:** This is a unique numeric identifier for each leader that is used for every year leader holds her position. The number is 4 or 5 digits, with the first 3 digits representing the organization's ID number (e.g., 101) and the last digit representing the place in the leader sequence the leader held (e.g. 6 – as in the organization's 6<sup>th</sup> recorded leader). The combined leader spell ID in this case, then, would be 1016.

**Leader gender:** This variable indicates whether a leader is male or female; 1= female and 0=male. When a leader gender is unknown, it is recorded as 9.

**Leader sequence:** This is the order in which a given leader held this position in the organization (first leader, second leader, third leader, etc.).

**Year of leader tenure:** This refers to what each year of observation corresponds to in terms of the leader's tenure – e.g., the first year a leader held office, the second year a leader held office, etc.

**Total leader tenure:** This refers to the total number of years a leader held a position.

**Average leader tenure:** This is an organization-level measure that represents the leader average tenure of across all of the years with an identified organizational leader.

#### *Source Variables*

As mentioned previously, each organization and organization-year is coded to indicate whether any data for the organization overall and organization-year in particular year comes from a given source. These variables are coded dichotomously, with a 1 indicating appearance in the source and a 0 indicating a non-appearance. For each of the following sources, the appearance information is coded overall and for each organization year: The *EoA*, the IRS, Wikipedia, an organization's website, the *NYT*, and other sources.

### *Analysis-Specific Variables*

Variables specific to a particular analysis will be discussed in the context of that chapter. These variables include organizational formalization, staff, chapters, members, presence of founder, number of leaders, number of leader transitions, average leader tenure, organizational birth/death in a given year, leader gender, and contextual variables such as proportion of women in the workforce, national partisan political environment, and hearings on women's issues in Congress.

### **Analytical Strategy**

This paper employs an array of analytical strategies to describe the formalization processes and leader trends in the advocacy sector. Since this data set captures information that previously had been unavailable at this level of depth, extensive descriptive statistics are included within each chapter. For chapter 3 on organizational formalization, Ordinary Least Squares (OLS) regression models are used to predict levels of organizational formalization. In chapter 4 on leadership transitions, logistic regression models are used to predict leadership transitions for organizations overall and across three distinct time periods. Finally, chapter 5 on the feminization of advocacy leadership uses logistic regression to predict the likelihood of female leaders in a given organizational year.

## **Chapter 3**

### **Aluminum Laws:**

### **Organizational Formalization in the Advocacy Sector**

## **Introduction**

Before the mid-twentieth century, social movements were widely thought to arise out of collective pathologies; the product of individual grievances boiling over into concerted action (LaPiere 1938, Turner and Killian 1957). Starting in the 1960s, however, social movements scholars began to see grievances as insufficient to explain the rise of contemporary social movement activity, particularly as they closely observed the U.S. civil rights movement, and scholars began to incorporate organizational theory into analyses in efforts to explain the rise of social movements (Zald and Ash 1966, McCarthy and Zald 1973). Accompanying these trends in movement behavior and analyses was the idea that social movement organizations were not merely composed of angry protestors but instead, many of them were professional organizations with bureaucratic structures and career leaders (McCarthy and Zald 1977).

While such a trend toward professionalization among advocacy organizations has been theorized and widely accepted, the trend has not been as widely documented empirically across the many issue areas of the advocacy sector or over time within individual issue areas. In addition, previous research has suggested that formalization is not necessarily the inevitable fate for all advocacy organizations (Staggenborg 1988, Cress 1997) and that the “iron laws” that have traditionally been associated with organizational behavior (the tendencies toward formalization and oligarchization) are more malleable than theoretically expected—perhaps closer to “aluminum laws.” This chapter aims to provide empirical support for evaluating any tendency toward formalization among advocacy organizations

across issue sectors since the 1960s and, further, to assess whether such organizations can survive in the longer term without some degree of formalization. In addition, this research will examine factors that are associated with higher levels of formalization as well as those factors associated with an increased time to formalization.

In particular, this chapter will test three major hypotheses. First, the analyses will test whether the most formalized organizations are those most likely to survive until the end of the sampling time frame. Second, the iron law of oligarchy will be partially tested with the hypothesis that organizations that have only had one leader during their life span will be less formalized than those organizations that have had more than one leader. Finally, higher levels of organizational formalization are expected to be the dominant trend among the organizations but, consistent with modern studies of advocacy formalization, not all organizations are expected to formalize. Through these analyses, this chapter will contribute to understanding whether the later 20<sup>th</sup> and early 21<sup>st</sup> centuries marked the advent of the professional advocacy organization<sup>7</sup> and to what extent organizations across the sector adhere to professionalization tendencies.

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<sup>7</sup> As detailed in Chapter 2, this dissertation uses Andrews and Edwards' advocacy organization definition, which encompasses public interest groups, social movement organizations, and nonprofit advocacy organizations and was deemed most appropriate for describing organizations in this research: "...advocacy organizations make public interest claims either promoting or resisting social change that, if implemented, would conflict with the social, cultural, political, or economic interests or values of other constituencies and groups" (2004: 481).

## **Review of Literature and Research Expectations**

### *Theoretical Approaches to the Bureaucratization and Formalization Processes*

Is it inevitable that organizations of all kinds become formalized with professionalized leaders? Particularly in the advocacy sector, which is home to plenty of grassroots efforts, can such organizations retain a grassroots character, resisting formalization and professionalization, while also managing to survive in the long-term? These questions have been of great interest to organizational and social movements researchers for the past century.

Most advocacy organization veterans, involved with one from its inception, are likely to have a story about the halcyon days when decisions were made on the fly, the leader was “one of us,” and there certainly was not much paperwork. Organizations of many forms, including nonprofit and for-profit organizations, seem to undergo a developmental trajectory from being a grassroots organization with an enthusiastic but possibly inexperienced founder to becoming an entrenched bureaucracy with a professional leader. In the for-profit sector, the speed of the formalization process may vary when business licensing and other legal requirements loom large, but even international brands may start informally in a founder’s garage. The organizational formalization process is neither new nor unique to a particular domain. For instance, for-profit businesses may take five years or more to complete the founding process, during which many of the

formalization benchmarks occur (hiring employees, government registration, etc.) (Carter, Gartner, and Reynolds 1996; Robb and Reynolds 2009).

The process of bureaucratization—quite similar to the process of organizational formalization—was conceptually developed largely in Max Weber's foundational essay, "Bureaucracy" (1946). He suggested that bureaucracies tend to emerge historically at the same time mass democracy emerges and that bureaucratic organizations, once created, are quite resilient. Bureaucracies are favorable because they are efficient and technically superior to other organizational forms, implying that bureaucracies, once created, will spread throughout organizational domains. Therefore, according to Weber, tends to be dominating trend and one that is generally irreversible. In addition, Weber notes that a characteristic of bureaucracy is the interchangeability of people who hold organizational offices (1946). Therefore, one might expect more formalized organizations to have higher leader turnover, and that increasing rates of leader turnover should follow formalization.

The idea of bureaucracy developed alongside the idea that a small elite group will eventually control any organization—whether a country, a political party, a social movement organization, or an advocacy organization—a process which reinforces tendencies toward formalization and professionalization as leadership roles become entrenched and organizational processes become codified. Formulating this issue in his 1915 *Political Parties*, Michels argued that in organizations, a small group will eventually come to power because as organizations grow, all of their members will ultimately be unable to fit in a single room at the



same time and make quick decisions democratically. As such a small group takes over, leaders emerge and eventually become more difficult to replace as they develop specialized knowledge—the famous iron law of oligarchy (as Lipset 1963 also discusses). Michels, like Weber, was convinced of the universality and persistence of the formalization process; he suggested that the best an organization can do is to attempt to resist the trend, and sometimes reverse it for a short period.

Other theorists have agreed that association of oligarchization with formal, bureaucratic structures is likely a universal one. Mosca (1939) argues that a ruling class is inevitable in political system and that leaders will develop rationalizing myths in order to maintain power, quite similar to the rationalizing myths that undergird organizational rules and forms, whether or not they are ideal, that the New Institutional Theorists posited nearly 40 years after Mosca and are discussed later in this paper (Meyer and Rowan 1977; DiMaggio and Powell 1983). Consistent with Michels, Mancur Olson (1965) argues that large groups are invariably less democratic than small groups because increased group size means that it is less likely that any one member's interests can be represented in the group. C. Wright Mills (1959) takes a more nuanced stance, however (directly criticizing Mosca), suggesting that elite control is not monolithic but the level of control elites can exercise varies over time and across structural circumstances.

While there is a rich theoretical tradition describing the organizational formalization process, much of the theorized processes are difficult to test given the available data. The following hypotheses, however, can illuminate a few specific aspects of the classic writings in this area and can directly contribute to the ongoing

research within social movements literature on the causes and consequences of formalization. A concern from both classic and current literature on formalization is the process's relationship with survival, particularly whether formalization promotes survival. Therefore, the following major hypothesis is proposed:

H1: The more formalized an advocacy organization, the longer it will be likely to survive. Therefore, organizations that survive to the end of the research period (2009) will display higher levels of organizational formalization.

Speedier implementation of formalization structures can be expected help organizations overcome the "liability of newness" (Stinchcombe 1965). Younger organizations of all kinds, other things being equal have been shown to be less likely to survive (Schoonhoven, Burton, and Reynolds 2009). Speed to formalization, however, should also affect organizational survival. Related to H1, the following supporting hypothesis is proposed:

H2: Organizations that survive to the end of the research period (2009) will display a faster time to formalization.

Reasoning from Michel's iron law of oligarchy and his arguments that as organizations grow and leaders become entrenched, organizations will be more formalized, the second major hypothesis is proposed:

H3: Organizations that have only had one leader during their lifespan will exhibit lower levels of formalization than organizations that have had more than one leader.

Relatedly, the following supporting hypothesis is also proposed:

H4: As well, organizations that have only had one leader will have a slower time to formalization than organizations that have had more than one leader.

Finally, reasoning from the tension between Weber's notion that people in bureaucratized organizations are replaceable and Michels' contention that leaders become entrenched as organizations formalize, two competing supporting hypotheses are presented:

H5a: More highly formalized organizations will be associated with a shorter average leader tenure.

H5b: More highly formalized organizations will be associated with a longer average leader tenure.

### *Formalization in Modern Advocacy Organizations*

C. Wright Mills' characterization of the variability in the process of elite control that generally leads to formalization and professionalization is reflected in the advocacy organizations literature, which broadly concludes that

professionalization and formalization may be the modal path but not the inevitable path for advocacy organizations since the presence of elites and resources can sometimes influence the an organization's proclivities. Zald and Ash (1966) speak directly to Michels and Weber and argue that formalization and professionalization are not inevitable and these processes also do not invariably lead to goal moderation, as a small team of leaders may be less beholden to an apathetic membership base and can, in some cases, make a more radical decision if they so choose. McCarthy and Zald (1973, 1977) continue Zald and Ash's line of argument by suggesting that professionalization is a function of organizational resources, which foreshadows insights from later organizational research by New Institutional theorists who strongly argue that organizations will adopt forms considered legitimate in their environments in order to obtain better access to resources (Meyer and Rowan 1977). This implies that both the obtaining of resources and the possession of resources can be a source of formalization among advocacy organizations.

The work summarized, then, suggests that formalization can be seen as less an unyielding inevitability than perhaps a tendency and sometimes, even, a conscious organizational strategy. Empirical evidence is consistent with such expectations. Suzanne Staggenborg's 1988 study of pro-choice organizations found that while professionalization was the dominant organizational path, it was not the only path. Professional leaders did tend to formalize organizations (though those who did so were generally not the organizational founders) and professionalization was able to sustain organizations experiencing unfavorable political or resource

climates, suggesting that professionalization can be an adaptive strategy in a particular environments rather an uncontrollable inescapability. Cress (1997) similarly found in homelessness advocacy groups, formalization (which he defined as nonprofit incorporation) was not compulsory; some groups' benefactors mandated the organizations become nonprofits; other groups simply did not incorporate while others deliberately chose not to incorporate. Also, recalling Zald and Ash (1966), formalization does not imply an inevitable moderation of tactics, especially if there is no resource dependency involved in the formalization process. This same pattern was also shown in an earlier paper by Jenkins and Eckert (1986), who found that professionalization did not alter the goals and tactics of civil rights movement organizations. On the other hand, Everett (1992) found that professionalization coincided with tactical moderation in a study of Washington, D.C. protest events. Expectations from the above research imply the third major hypothesis:

H6: Higher levels of formalization will be the dominant trend among advocacy organizations during the research period, but will not be the inevitable outcome, in that some advocacy organizations will remain relatively unformalized.

Theda Skocpol argues along similar lines in her work (1999) about voluntary organizations that formalization may be an adaptive organizational strategy. She suggests that many of these organizations have become member-less and professionalized in part because professional leaders are functionally necessary for

their skills and also for their ability to generate ties to donors who are increasingly elite. Walker, McCarthy, and Baumgartner (2011), however, found no evidence that member-less organizations are increasing proportionately over time at a more rapid rate than organizations with members. Along similar lines, Kleidman (1994) found that professionalization does not necessarily suppress volunteer participation in advocacy organizations, which may suggest that organizations with members are not necessarily informal. This is consistent with Edwards' (1994) study of formalization of peace advocacy groups. He did not find a strong relationship between increased member participation and formalization. Edwards also found that other "participation pressures" such as increased staff size and volunteers did not result in more formalization; rather, financial measures (such as budget size and budget formalization) were more tied to organizational formalization (329). This further suggests that structural characteristics, such as having chapters, are unlikely to be associated with organizational formalization. Based on these several findings, the following hypotheses are proposed to control for organizational structure in the analysis:

H7: The presence of members in an advocacy organization will not affect its overall level of organizational formalization.

H8: The presence of chapters in an advocacy organization will not affect its overall level of organizational formalization.

### *Environmental Effects on Formalization*

Bob Edwards further asserts in his 1994 examination of organizational formalization among advocacy organizations that “[t]he impetus to formalize does not appear to originate inside the SMO, but rather from outside” (328). Therefore, conditions and structures external to organizations must be examined for their roles in organizational formalization. Organizations increasingly operate in an environment replete with institutional channeling pressures; particularly the Internal Revenue Service (IRS) for advocacy nonprofit organizations (McCarthy, Britt, and Wolfson 1991). As a result, younger organizations may formalize faster than older organizations as a result of the accumulated channeling pressures through historical time, although Edwards (1994) did not find a connection between age and formalization. Stinchcombe (1965) argues that organizations’ founding environment generally affects their long-term structure, however, so examining the effects of founding year rather than simply the effects of age may capture aspects of institutional founding environment that most saliently impact formalization. This reasoning leads to two expectations that control for an organization’s environment:

H9: An advocacy organization’s founding year will be negatively associated with its overall level of organizational formalization.

H10: A later founding year for an advocacy organization will be associated with a shorter time to formalization.

In addition to institutional channeling mechanisms, New Institutional Theory (NIT) suggests that organizations may actively choose to become more formalized in order to gain environmental legitimacy and, in turn, a larger share of resources. Meyer and Rowan argue in their foundational (1977) work argued that formal structure arises within organizations as they adhere to institutional norms and beliefs derived from their larger organizational environment. As an organization adopts these beliefs, they become codified into a rules and practices that comprise an organization's formal structure. These rules, however, having been born out of institutional pressures to appear legitimate—which, as one may recall, is critical in order to obtain resources from the organizational environment—might have nothing to do with efficiency or best organizational practices despite being necessary for resource acquisition and survival, contrary to Weber's assertions (1946). As a consequence, parts of an organization may become decoupled from one another as its leaders seek to avoid conflict between reverence for the mythologized organizational rules and organizational practices designed to be effective and meet actual organizational needs. DiMaggio and Powell (1983) built on NIT by focusing on the institutional forces at the field level that cause organizations to become similar to one another over time. In addition to adopting rules and practices in order to gain legitimacy, organizations may also adopt particular features (for instance, in the advocacy sector, a website) in order to appear normative within a narrow field and also as a strategic way to handle uncertainty by imitating those perceived as the most successful within a given field.



Therefore, the population of organizations that any given organization perceives to be part of its organizational field may affect its overall level of formalization. Within the advocacy sector, it is expected that organizations will be taking cues from organizations in their own issue domain. Therefore, the following hypotheses control for issue area:

H11: Advocacy organizations will have will display different levels of formalization depending upon the issue sector in which they reside.

H12: Advocacy organizations will have distinctly different times to formalization depending upon the issue sector in which they reside.

In addition to an organization's issue sector, an organization's physical location may also influence whom an organization's leaders perceive to be their peers and with whom they believe they will compete for resources. For instance, organizations within the same city or state may compete for the same grants and their leaders may look to local advocacy organizations in order to ascertain signals of normative behavior. The higher concentration of advocacy organizations, presumably the higher pressure to formalize. Finally, the following hypotheses control for location:

H13: Organizations in cities with high concentrations of advocacy organizations will exhibit higher levels of organizational formalization than organizations in other cities.

H14: Organizations in cities with high concentrations of advocacy organizations will formalize faster than organizations in other cities.

*The Formalization Process Among Currently Active Organizations*

In addition to the data collected from secondary sources used to construct LOADS, a dozen current leaders from organizations in the sample were interviewed about their biographical and organizational experiences.<sup>8</sup> A common experience brought up during the interviews that was regarded as formative in an organization's development was the transition away from the founder/first organizational leader. This gives further support to the focus on the founder/first leader transition as discussed with the "iron law of oligarchy" hypothesis (H3). For instance, during an interview with a GLBT rights organization leader, the current executive director spoke of the conflict that arose when the board wanted a leader who was more focused on fundraising than programming, ultimately resulting in the founder being asked to step down as executive director:

"...the model for executive directors here was that they were largely responsible for fundraising administration but the sort of programmatic vision and direction and the most visible person in the organization was [the founder]. ...[T]he organization had also gotten to a point where his leadership style was...driving people out...it was clear that something needed to change."

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<sup>8</sup> See Chapter 2 for more detailed information on interview characteristics.

In another organization, the founding team has been leading the organization since it was established in the 1970s. The organization registered as nonprofit on the advice of the law firm where a co-founder had been working. While throughout the interview, the one founder noted that the scale of operations had increased and decreased over the organization's life span, the co-founder commented that "[We] started very grassroots and I would consider that we are still fairly grassroots and the beauty of that is that we've always stayed really, really focused on...what we're here to do and we're still focused on...our original intent." Unlike in the previously discussed organization, which had transitioned away from the founder as part of a shift in organizational goals, the leader of the latter organization felt the organizational vision had remained consistent throughout its existence.

While organizational goal-change is not part of the current data set, a hidden catalyst of the organizational formalization puzzle—and the role of the founder in the formalization process—may reside in this goal change or "mission drift," as it is also called. The connection between professionalization and goal change was reiterated in another interview with an environmental organization. The organization was small, with few paid staff and an all-volunteer board, but eventually the board decided that they should expand "beyond passionate canoeists" and cultivate an expert staff. In the process, the founder left and went on to start another advocacy organization, perhaps further indicating that founders are more entrepreneurial than the leaders who succeed them.

In each of these previous examples, organizations started out as being relatively informal and then either formalized with time (helped along with the

departure of the founder) or remained at the relatively same level of formalization. In an interview with an anti-war organization that intentionally started as a relatively professionalized organization, however, the trajectory mentioned was different. The board was always comprised of experts, even at the organization's inception. Moreover, as the current leader noted, "One of the most important things the founders did and the leaders in the...decades following [did] is that they created and retained a very sound, fundamental model" that focused specifically and narrowly on the organization's key issues. While the leader suggested the organization took time to truly mature, a "sense of professionalism" was always part of the organization. Like the aforementioned organization that was still founder-led, this organization felt it remained highly focused on its original issues, even though it had undergone a couple of leader transitions.

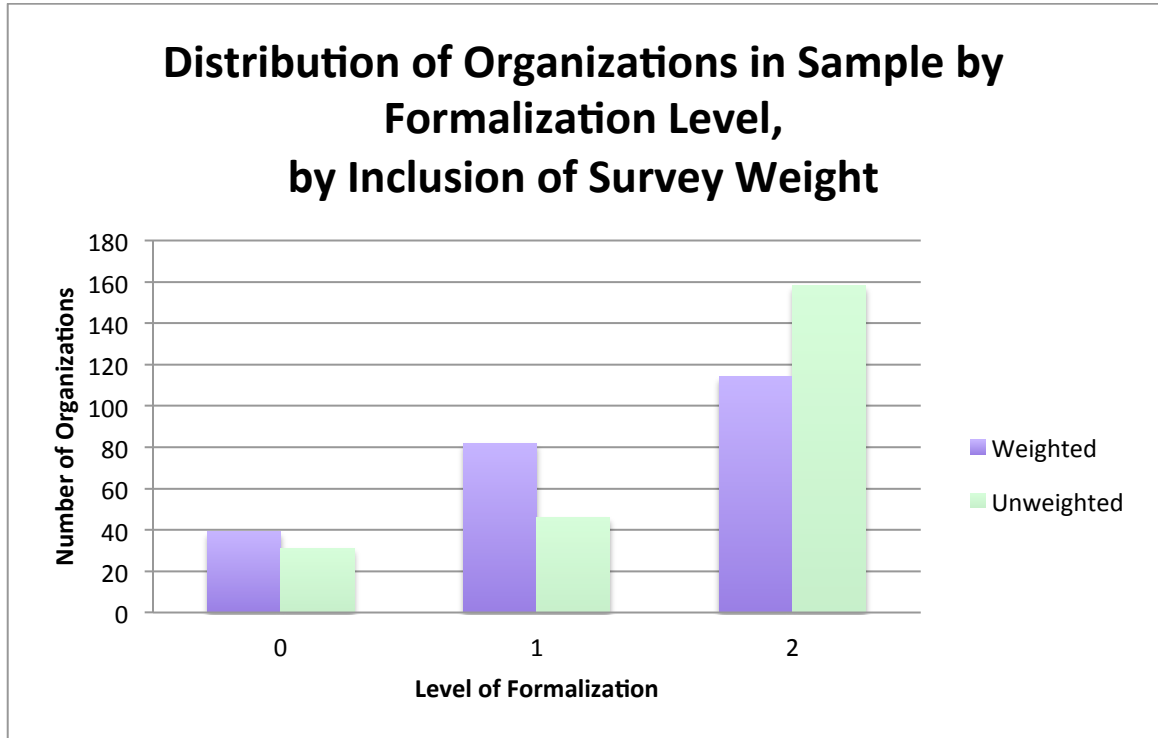
While the interviews conducted are not representative enough of the overall sample for the leaders' comments to be truly generalizable, the role of the founder was something that was discussed in every interview and was something current leaders were acutely aware of, regardless of an organizations' age. From the interviewed organizations' experiences, it appears there may be a connection between the transition away from a founder and the formalization process, though goal change may be both cause and consequence of a founder transition. In any case, it appears that the narrative of current organizations' formalization process is consistent with the expectations grounded in the reviewed literature, particularly that the presence of a founder may suppress the formalization process.

## Data

The data for the following analyses of organization formalization are drawn from LOADS. While the data set includes both longitudinal data covering 1960-2009 and cross-sectional data, the cross-sectional data is employed for the particular analyses included in this chapter as they examine cumulative levels of formalization rather than differences in formalization over time. Data for the variables of interest in these particular analyses was available for 192 organizations, or 78.4% of the sample. While the analyses presented here represent the majority of the sample, organizations with missing data are more likely to be small, short-lived, or defunct, which may bias the results toward more formalized organizations. The overall correlation between being among the most prominent organizations and formalization, however, is low, being only .24, suggesting that the effects of restricted data availability, and hence sample bias, on the results and their interpretations may be quite limited. Moreover, an examination of weighted compared to unweighted data for the organizational formalization variable shows that incorporating the weight inflates the number organizations with a score of 0 or 1 and deflates the number of organizations with a 2, meaning that the resulting weighted sample of advocacy organizations includes a greater proportion of less formalized ones. (See Figure 1 and below for detail on the measurement of formalization.) To make the sample more representative, the analyses are weighted for organizational prominence and organizational sector. This weighting scheme is

discussed at greater length in Chapter 2. Weighted estimates are reported throughout these analyses.

**Figure 1: Distribution of Organizations in Sample by Formalization Level by Inclusion of Survey Weight**



n=235; n for weighted organizations is rounded to the nearest integer  
0=lowest level of formalization, 1=middle level of formalization, 2=highest level of formalization

### *Outcomes*

The two dependent variables used in these analyses each measure an aspect of advocacy organizational formalization: 1) overall level of formalization for an organization as measured at its last year of existence or in 2009, the last year of the sample, and 2) average length of time taken to achieve an organization's final level

of formalization. Measuring formalization has been done in a variety of ways in previous studies. For instance, Pertusa-Ortega et. al. (2010) in a study of businesses use internal organizational characteristics such as whether employees are monitored and whether organizations have resources to ensure rule compliance. In the advocacy sector, Edwards (1994) used as formalization measures whether a group is incorporated, has a federal tax status (IRS), has a formal budget, has a board, and has paid staff. In these studies, however, organizational leaders were surveyed to specifically collect this information. Because information at this level of detail does not exist and is extremely difficult to collect systematically from secondary sources, the current study instead uses proxy indicators for level of organizational formalization.

*Level of organizational formalization*, the first dependent measure, is a scaled variable that represents how many indicators of formalization are present for a given organization during the last year of its existence or the last year of data collection (2009). Each organization receives a formalization point for having appeared in the *Encyclopedia of Associations (EoA)*, as a base level of organizational formalization and coordination is required for organizations to be discovered by the publisher and then to complete and return the annual information form from which organizational entries are constructed. Organizations also receive a point for having reported staff (a feature associated with higher levels of bureaucratization in Hwang and Powell 2009); this information is taken primarily from the *EoA* but in limited instances may

also come from an organization's *Wikipedia* entry. The Chronbach's alpha for this scale is 0.54, which is in the "poor" range.<sup>910</sup>

The second dependent variable used in this analysis is the average length of time to organizational formalization. This represents the average number of years it took a given organization to reach each of its formalization milestones. These include: time to appearing in *EoA* from organizational founding, time to reporting staff from organizational founding, and time to IRS registration from organizational founding. The sum of these items is then divided by the number of items available. Since this is an average across factors, IRS data is included in this measure since organizations without the data simply receive the average of, say, 1 or 2 factors. The information on time to *EoA* appearance is taken from the *EoA* (Gale 1961-2009). Time to first reported staff is also taken from the *EoA*, as no other available source reported this information. Since this piece of data is inherently left-censored as no observation of staff can be reported before the first *EoA* appearance, the variable is normalized based on first *EoA* appearance; that is, the time to first staff appearance represents the years *beyond* first *EoA* appearance that staff was first. Finally, time to IRS registration is taken from IRS records obtained through the Urban Institute (IRS 2015).

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<sup>9</sup> An improved scale for measuring formalization would be a 3-factor scale which also accounts for IRS registration. IRS registration information, however, is only available for currently active organizations, so some of the sample is excluded from having this information available. With the current data available, the Chronbach's alpha for the 3-factor formalization scale is .69, which is about in the "acceptable" range; the items are more highly correlated with the scale than with each other. While the 2-factor scale is presented for this analysis, additional future research may be able to identify which defunct organizations were registered with the IRS and allow the more accurate, 3-factor scale to be used.

<sup>10</sup> Running the models using each factor separately does not change the results.

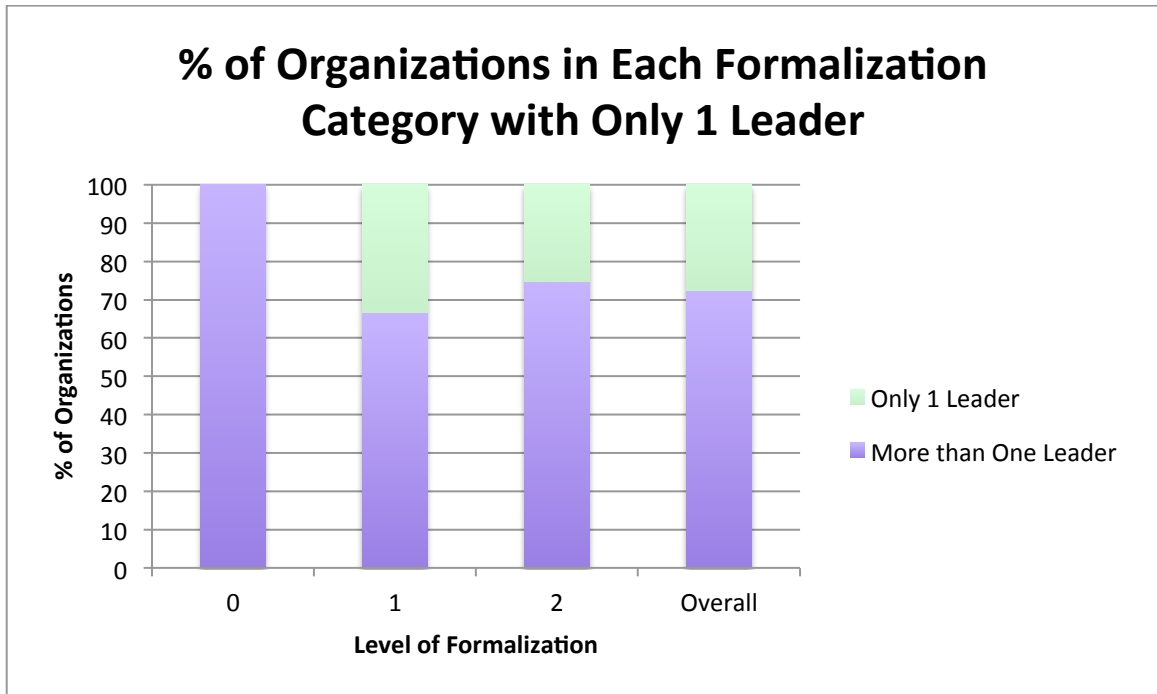


## *Predictors*

A variety of predictors expected to be associated with organizational formalization are included in the models. First, measures of individual organizational characteristics are included to determine whether there is a relationship between organizational features and higher levels of organizational formalization and lengthier times to organizational formalization. Whether an organization was still active at the end of the sampling time frame is included to assess for whether defunct organizations were associated with lower levels of formalization, which could potentially be a factor in organizational death. This measure is dichotomous and is measured as 0-1, with 1 representing an organization that is active at the end of the year 2009. Although this does not capture the timing of organizational death, the variable assumes that there are substantive differences between organizations that remain active from their birth till the end of the sampling time period and those that do not. Since the average organization in this analysis was founded in 1980, the average organization would have nearly 20 years in which to experience a bankruptcy, dissolution, merger, etc., which should be adequate time to observe the impact of formalization on later organizational outcomes, particularly given that the average time to formalization is just under six years. Leader-based measures are also included for whether an organization has had only one leader and the average length of leader tenure. Having one leader is dichotomous, measured as 0-1 with 1 representing having had only one leader. Average leader tenure is measured in years and is derived from the

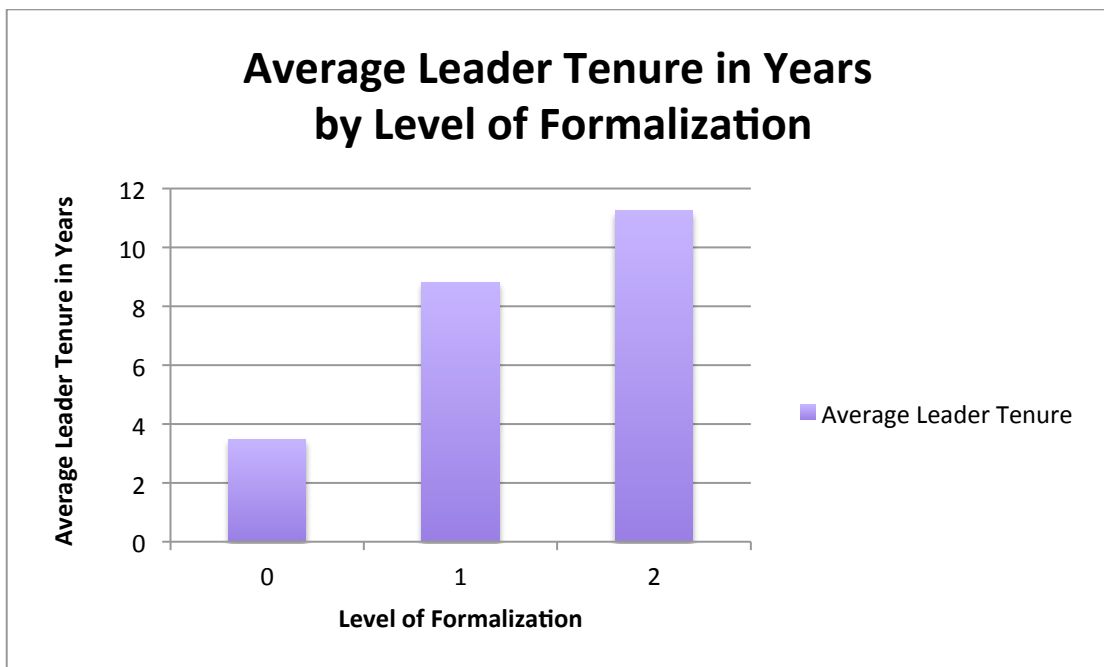
leader data, which is described at greater length in chapter 2. This measure represents the average number of leaders observed over the total number of years with observable leader data. Measures for whether an organization has members and chapters are also included in the analysis. These are both dichotomous measures, with 1 representing the presence of members and chapters, respectively. Figure 2 shows the percent of organizations in each formalization category with only 1 leader. While each of the handful of organizations at 0 formalization had more than one leader, the proportion of organizations with only one leader at higher levels is roughly similar – a third of semi-formalized organizations and a quarter of highly formalized organizations only ever had one leader, suggesting that as organizations are more formalized, they may be less likely to have only had one leader. Figure 3 demonstrates the average leader tenure in years by level of formalization. Clearly, as organizations become more formalized, their executive leaders tend to hold their positions longer.

**Figure 2: Organizations with One Leader by Level of Formalization**



n=184; results incorporate sample weight

**Figure 3: Average Leader Tenure by Formalization Category**



n=184; results incorporate sample weight

Next, measures for organizational sector is included as a series of dummy variables. Each organization in the sample was classified based on their issue focus as being a liberal, conservative, or liberal feminist organization. For these analyses, liberal organizations are used as the reference category as it represents the largest category. The methods used to derive the sectors and sort organizations into them are discussed at greater length in Chapter 2.<sup>11</sup>

Finally, measures of organizational environmental context are included in the analyses. First, an organization's founding year is included to measure the extent to which an organization's historical founding context has an impact upon its enduring organizational form (Stinchcombe 1965). This variable is continuous and ranges from 1960-1999. Further, whether an organization has ever been headquartered in a major city (as defined as organizations that have had headquarters in either of the top two cities with the highest number of advocacy headquarters in this sample, Washington, D.C. and New York, NY) is included as a dummy variable to evaluate whether the effect of being in a high-density area for advocacy organizations results in what are the hypothesized isomorphic behavior effects upon time to and level of formalization. This variable is measured as 0-1, with 1 representing an organization ever having been headquartered in a major city.

Descriptive statistics for the variables in the analyses are included in Table 4.

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<sup>11</sup> The category breakdowns are as follows:

Liberal: Civil Rights (Civil Rights: Asian, Black, Jewish, Latino, Native American, Other), Environment (Environment, Animals), LGBT (LGBT Rights, AIDS), Other Rights (Welfare Rights, Prisoners Rights, Civil Liberties, Consumer, Disabled Rights, Veterans, Children, Old Age), Progressive (Progressive, Communist, Gun Control), Anti-War

Conservative: Religious Right (Christian Right, Anti-Abortion), Conservative (Conservative, Nativist/Supremacist, Gun Rights)

Liberal Feminist: Women's Rights (Women's Rights/Feminism, Abortion)

**Table 4 - Descriptive Statistics for Formalization Models** (n=184; models weighted to account for selection into prominence sample and known distribution of organizational sectors)

	Mean	Std Dev	Min-Max
<b>Formalization</b>			
Level of formalization	1.57	.55	0-2
Time to formalization	5.84	5.09	0-20
<b>Organizational Characteristics</b>			
Organization active at end of sample	.81	.39	0-1
Organization has only had 1 leader	.28	.45	0-1
Average leader tenure	10.13	7.94	2-41
Organization has members	.78	.42	0-1
Organization has chapters	.34	.48	0-1
<b>Organizational Sector</b>			
Liberal organization (ref.)	.68	.47	0-1
Conservative organization	.25	.44	0-1
Liberal feminist organization	.06	.24	0-1
<b>Organizational Context</b>			
Founding year	1980	9.42	1960-1999
Organization ever in a major city	.59	.49	0-1

## Results

### *Descriptive Statistics*

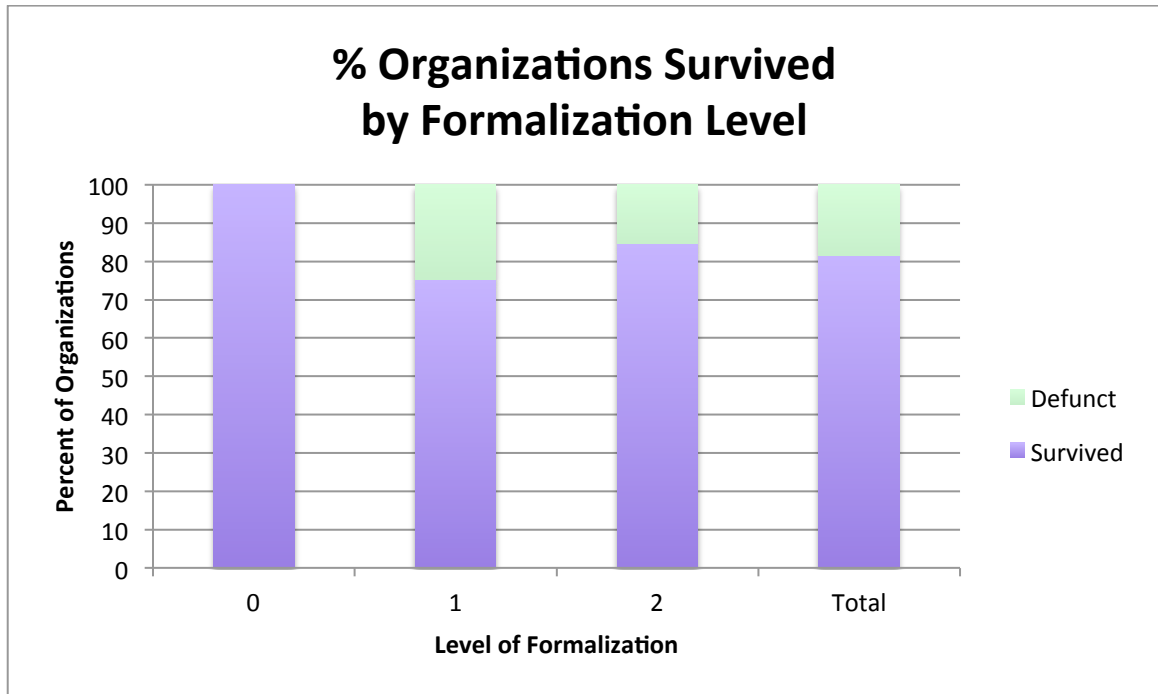
First, descriptive statistics for the sample of advocacy organizations are presented to assess both hypothesis H6, which examines whether formalization is inevitable among advocacy organizations, and to provide a preliminary assessment of H1, which asks if formalization is important for long-term survival. Figure 4 displays organizational survival by level of formalization. H1 is confirmed based upon the survival rate by formalization level among organizations at the end of the sampling period. About 75% of those organizations at the middle level of

formalization survived and about 84% of those at the highest level of formalization survived. In addition, of the organizations observed here, none of the unformalized organizations had died by the end of the research period (2009), although there were very few of these organizations in these analyses.

#### *Level of organizational formalization*

The advocacy organizational characteristics corresponding with higher levels of organizational formalization were evaluated through a series of Ordinary Least Squares (OLS) regression analyses with the outcome variable representing overall level of organizational formalization (which, as reported in Table 1, ranges from 0-2). The weighting is taken into account in the regression analysis. The results are reported in Table 5. The results of running a nested model are displayed so the effect of each additional set of predictors is visible. The results of the full model, Model 4, are discussed.

**Figure 4: Organization Survival by Level of Formalization**



n=184, results incorporate the survey weight.

**Table 5 - Nested OLS Regression of Predictors of Formalization Level by Organization**  
(n=184; models weighted to account for selection into prominence sample and known distribution of organizational sectors)

	Model 1	Model 2	Model 3	Model 4
<b>Formalization</b>				
Time to formalization	-.02	-.03*	-.03**	-.04***
<b>Organizational Characteristics</b>				
Organization active at end of sample	--	.12	.14	.32
Organization has only had 1 leader	--	-.39*	-.30	-.01
Average leader tenure	--	.03**	.03**	.01
Organization has members	--	-.06	-.07	-.18
Organization has chapters	--	-.19	.24	.10
<b>Organizational Sector</b>				
Liberal organization (ref.)	--	--	--	--
Conservative organization	--	--	-.36*	-.28
Liberal Feminist organization	--	--	.12	-.01
<b>Organizational Context</b>				
Founding year	--	--	--	-.02***
Organization ever in a major city	--	--	--	.12
R <sup>2</sup>	.05	.18	.26	.37

\*p<.05 \*\*p<.01 \*\*\*p<.001

Experiencing a longer time to formalization is associated with a slightly lower but highly significant overall level of formalization, which may corroborate what Edwards (1994) and Cress (1996) show in their research, that organizations may often begin quite highly formalized rather than becoming formalized over time.

Of the organizational characteristics tested in this particular model, none of them were significantly associated with overall level of organizational formalization, which further supports Edwards' (1994) previously mentioned assertion that formalization pressures tend to be external rather than internal to an organization. Organizational survival, while not significant at the  $p < .05$  level, was very close to significance at 0.059, particularly given the small  $n$  of this particular analysis. Therefore, it appears that survival is associated with formalization, as initially indicated in Figure 4.

None of the hypotheses surrounding leadership were confirmed, including H3, H5a, and H5b. Organizations with one leader were not significantly less formalized than organizations with many leaders and there was no significant association between formalization and leader tenure. The non-findings of membership and chapter organizations, however, that were anticipated in H7 and H8 were supported, as neither the presence of members nor chapters were significantly associated with overall level of formalization.

Examining organizational sectors, there were no significant differences among, liberal, conservative, and liberal feminist organizations, which disconfirms H11. This may imply that organizational ideology is not a major determining factor in whether and to what degree an organization becomes formalized and further



supports the notion that external organizational factors are more important for formalization than individual advocacy organizational characteristics, such as issue sector and specific issue. Also, these findings may indicate that general political ideology is not a relevant institutional field factor for advocacy organizations as their leaders engage in isomorphic practices.

Finally, in examining organizational context, it appears that founding context is more important than local environmental context in determining levels of organizational formalization. The oldest organizations were associated with higher levels of formalization, which is consistent with the expectations described on H9. This may indicate that, in spite of the increasing spread of institutional channeling mechanisms, simply the passage of time may more important in spurring formalization processes. Having ever had organizational headquarters in a city most dominated by advocacy organizations in this sample did not have a significant effect on formalization levels, disconfirming H13.

### *Time to Formalization*

The next series of nested models evaluate what organizational features are associated with longer times to formalization. This is modeled through a series of OLS regression analyses and employs the survey weight developed for LOADS, described previously. The results are displayed in Table 6. A nested set of models is reported but only the results for the full model, Model 4, are discussed subsequently.

**Table 6 - Nested OLS Regression of Predictors of Time to Formalization by Organization**  
(n=184; models weighted to account for selection into prominence sample and known distribution of organizational sectors)

	Model 1	Model 2	Model 3	Model 4
<b>Formalization</b>				
Level of formalization	-2.12	-2.23	-2.64*	-3.66**
<b>Organizational Characteristics</b>				
Organization active at end of sample	--	3.74**	3.76**	5.10***
Organization has only had 1 leader	--	-1.80	-1.38	.98
Average leader tenure	--	.05	.06	-.08
Organization has members	--	-2.53	-2.53	-3.35*
Organization has chapters	--	-.41	.05	-.94
<b>Organizational Sector</b>				
Liberal organization (ref.)	--	--	--	--
Conservative organization	--	--	-2.10	-1.64
Liberal feminist organization	--	--	-1.20	-2.04
<b>Organizational Context</b>				
Founding year	--	--	--	-.22**
Organization ever in a major city	--	--	--	1.22
R <sup>2</sup>	.05	.18	.21	.32

\*p<.05 \*\*p<.01 \*\*\*p<.001

The pattern of results for time to formalization is similar to those for overall levels of formalization, with a few notable differences. First, increased levels of organizational formalization have a negative and significant effect on the time to formalization, indicating that more formalized organizations tend to reach their end level of formalization more quickly than less formalized organizations, as established in the previous model.

In a similar but much stronger effect as observed in the model for level of formalization, whether an organization was active at the end of the sample had a highly significant effect on the time to formalization outcome measure.

Organizational survival was associated with a five-year increase in time to formalization, in opposition to H2, which expected survival to be associated with decreased time to formalization. Neither of the leader variables had a significant

association with time to formalization, disconfirming H4. Although not explicitly hypothesized, the effect of an advocacy organization having members was negative and significant, speeding up formalization by three years on average, which may indicate that by having members an organization could necessitate the development of organizational apparatuses and procedures that support a membership structure, thereby encouraging formalization. Having chapters had no effect on the time to formalization for advocacy organizations.

Being part of one or another organizational issue sector does not significantly impact an organization's time to formalization, which was observed in this model, and may indicate that organizational leaders do not necessarily respond differentially to isomorphic pressures across broad ideological swaths.

Finally, more recent founding years were associated with a slightly faster time to formalization. This result supports the relationship predicted in H10, as channeling mechanisms were expected to shorten the formalization process for organizations founded later in the sampling frame. This lends further support to the idea that external forces are most important for determining formalization processes and also may indicate that founding environment has long-term organizational consequences. Whether an organization operates in a city dense with advocacy organizations did not have a significant effect on time to formalization, yielding no support for H14.

## Discussion

Summarizing the analyses of the major hypotheses presented in this study, a few key patterns become evident. First, as previous advocacy research suggests, formalization is the dominant path for these organizations, but it is not the exclusive path. This is consistent with the expectations from modern studies of advocacy organization formalization. While formalization does not appear to be strictly required for survival, however, it does appear to facilitate survival, as was expected in from the review of classical formalization theory. In addition, slowing down the formalization process appears to have a positive impact on an organization's long-term survival. Quickly constructing formal structures may prevent Stinchcombe's Liability of Newness for organizations in the short-term (1965), but organizations concerned with their long-term viability may find it wiser to methodically and deliberately pursue organizational formalization. Furthermore, noting the survival pattern in Figure 4 and the lack of information on non-formalized organizations (only five organizations are represented in the graph), it appears that increased formalization does generally improve an organization's survival chances. While the present analysis is unable to address whether causes of organizational death varied across different formalization levels (e.g. whether different formalization levels are associated with bankruptcy vs. being absorbed into another organization), it is possible that death patterns are more complex than presented here. Recalling Weber, if bureaucracies are nearly impossible to kill, quasi-bureaucracies might yield more quickly to the consequences of hardship than full bureaucracies.

Further, with the limited testing possible with the data at hand, Michel's iron law of oligarchy was not consistent with any statistically significant findings. The depth with which the iron law can be tested with cross-sectional data is a bit limited, of course, but having only one leader did not seem to hinder an organization's time to formalization nor affect its overall level of formalization, despite the predictions from the previous literature and current leader interviews. This is not to say that the iron law of oligarchy does not apply to advocacy organizations; at least one interview with an organization's present leader described iron law-like patterns within this particular organization where, despite the organization's best efforts to rotate leadership, a small cadre eventually held all of the organization's power. The evidence in this current study suggests strongly, however, that the iron law is probably not so powerful a law as many believe. Perhaps the iron law is more of an aluminum law—strong, yet malleable.

In addition, while not the primary focus of the analysis, the several models presented here indicate that the catalysts of formalization vary, reflecting the factors that impact time to formalization. While survival lengthened the formalization process, higher levels of formalization shortened the process, as did having members and being founded earlier in the sample. Perhaps many of the advocacy organizations studied here started out highly formalized as a result of environmental pressures, similar to what Cress found in his study of homelessness organizations, while others may find that the choice to adopt organizational features after founding, such as having a membership, encourages the development of formalization structures. Some organizations may form quickly in order to address

a timely issue, which may not facilitate the formation of enduring structures, while other founders may be more carefully deliberate as they found a group so that they can exert influence over a long period of time on a persistent issue, such as environmental preservation.

Finally, the evidence presented here taken as a whole lends further support to Edwards (1994) assertion that external factors influence formalization more than do internal factors. In the model of formalization levels, none of the internal organizational characteristics had a significant effect on the overall level of formalization, in spite the wide variety of features being tested. While the analyses were not able to test the effects of very many external characteristics, founding context was a highly significant factor in predicting formalization. Since the particular data available from LOADS for the formalization analyses was cross-sectional, it was difficult to include additional contextual information, as few contextual features (such as political environment) remain static over the 60-year span of the research. Nevertheless, it is notable that the internal organizational features were not at all predictive of formalization, suggesting clear paths for investigation in future analyses.

## **Conclusions**

The present study offers preliminary insight into the formalization processes of advocacy organizations. Nevertheless, a few limitations may affect the broader generalization of these findings. First, as noted in the data section, the formalization

scale used to create the dependent variable for the first set of formalization analyses has a low Chronbach's alpha, although the variables separately affect the models in the same way the scaled measure does. As previously suggested, this is much improved with the inclusion of a measure for IRS registration; however, given that this information is unavailable for defunct organizations, IRS data is currently not included in the scale, as this limits the scale's coverage of advocacy organizations.

In addition, given the variables used in the sample, only 75% of organizations for which some information was collected were included in the analysis. The organizations excluded from the analysis as the result of lack of information are more likely to be less formalized than other organizations, given that the organizations either did not show up in the sources used or did not provide complete information to those sources. Future analyses may be able to correct for some of these challenges through further data collection or, at the least, use of multiple imputation to handle the missing data. Further data collection will allow for the inclusion of leader characteristics in the analyses so that the impact of biographical and demographic characteristics of leaders can be observed on formalization and oligarchization processes. As well, more reliable data on organization budgets and membership size would also facilitate future analyses.

Finally, this study only includes a sample of national advocacy organizations and, moreover, only those founded 1960-2000. The formalization findings may be quite different for older or newer advocacy organizations. Older organizations, for instance, would have not been subject to pressure for IRS registration as the 501(c)3 designation only was created in the late 1950s, and only became widely

pervasive in the early 1990s. Newer organizations, on the other hand, may face more intense channeling mechanisms but may also have more options than previous groups to foster loose, less-formal associations through the Internet. Also, it is worth noting that the pressures for formalization present in the advocacy sector are likely quite different than those in other sectors. For instance, loosely networked advocacy groups may survive for 30 years but an unlicensed business is unlikely to persist for 30 years without being forced to either formalize or cease operation. Given that the demands and consequences of formalization may be quite different across organizational fields, the patterns that hold for advocacy groups may be absent or quite different for non-advocacy groups.

Despite the present study's limitations, there are rich possibilities for future research with the LOADS data set. First, the collection of additional data would improve the current variables to allow the expansion of the types of analyses that are possible. The acquisition of IRS data on dead organizations would allow the improvement of the formalization scale, including a wider range of organizations in the analyses. Also, information on which factors are related to organizational survival and death may further inform future thinking and research about the relationship between formalization and survival. For instance, if an organization that goes bankrupt tends to be more formalized than an organization that is folded into another organization, it suggests different consequences for formalization and survival. Having data on more organizations would also allow the inclusion of more fine-grained issue categories to be included in the analysis, allowing a more detailed testing of New Institutional Theory, specifically whether organizations are engaging



in mimetic behavior within their issue area field of organizations or whether they appear to be responding to isomorphic pressures emanating from a broader institutional field. Furthermore, given the role of organizational goal-change mentioned in a few interviews in conjunction with the formalization process and the shift away from the initial founder, the codification of mission data collected from the *EoA* may provide an avenue for exploring how goal change directs the formalization process.

The longitudinal expansion of the formalization data would also allow for more in-depth analyses of formalization processes. For instance, although the iron law of oligarchy was not evident in the cross-sectional analyses, knowing when an organization formalizes in conjunction with knowing which organizational leaders are in control could yield more informative findings. Also, longitudinal analyses could more appropriately test the effects of time-dependent environmental factors, such as the extent to which the federal government is sympathetic to one or another given issue sector.

Finally, different analytical methods would allow certain results to be explored in a different light. Structural equation modeling may be another useful method for isolating the theoretical construct underlying organizational formalization. Also, the use of a categorical dependent variable would allow a more nuanced analysis of the factors that lead to different levels of formalization and could offer additional insight into the association between level of formalization and time to formalization with survival found in these models.

Organizations do not inevitably formalize as this research has shown, at least in the advocacy sector. Organizations may even consciously avoid formalization, fearing a loss of operational fluidity and flexibility. Yet organizational formalization can be a strategy for organizations like these and the leaders of such organizations can strive to minimize the downsides to formalization. Skocpol suggests that the best way to overcome some of the negative consequences of formalization, namely skewing their goals toward elite interests, is for leaders and members to actively work toward creating and maintaining organizations that are more democratic, cut across class lines, and have more actual participating members (rather than a paper membership) (1993, 2003). Another strategy offered by social movements scholars is altering the form of an organization to diminish the power of an oligarchical group. Olson (1965) argues that small groups are more democratic than large groups because any individual member's interests are better represented in a small group as a sheer function of size. Thus, one could extrapolate that a series of smaller groups may be less oligarchical and more democratic than the large groups that have typically dominated the social movement (and most organizational fields') landscape. Therefore, smaller groups may be less formalized. Unfortunately, this present research was unable to include organizational size reliably to assess this possibility. Verta Taylor (2000) makes this argument that social movements would be more effective if organizations were small and more loosely coupled; this seems like a likely form that would be functional in transnational social movements where face to face interaction is rare but alliances among organizations around the globe can be leveraged to enact coordinated action (Smith 2001). Moreover, a loosely

coupled form has been shown to make organizations more able to respond to environmental changes, such as Zald and Denton found in their study of YMCAs (1963).

Formalization is not inevitable, but neither are the consequences of formalization. Leaders of emergent advocacy organizations may be pleased to find that lack of formalization is not a death sentence but also that formalization does not have to compromise an organization's principles or voice.

## **Chapter 4**

### **Changing Leaders, Changing Times:**

#### **An Exploratory Study Predicting Leader Transitions in the**

#### **Advocacy Sector across Three Time Periods**

## **Patterns of Leadership Transition in the Advocacy Sector**

Leadership transitions and their consequences have been the source of much research and advice among academics and organizational practitioners alike.

Leadership transitions result in periods of instability and adjustment for organizations, leaving an organization vulnerable as procedures and authority are changed and reestablished. Not to mention, the cost of finding and training a new leader can be quite high for organizations (Manderscheid and Ardichvilli 2008).

That leadership transitions are critical times for organizations is widely accepted. Much less is known, however, about the precipitants of a leadership transition. For instance, are some organizations more likely than others to change leaders? Do some environments foster leaders who stick around? And do the characteristics of individual leaders make it more or less likely for a given leader to stay with an organization? The following study looks at years in which advocacy<sup>12</sup> organizations report having a new leader and aims to predict what circumstances are most closely associated with this transition event.

In particular, this paper focuses on two key aspects of leadership transitions in this exploratory study. Foremost, the study attempts to capture the effects of period on leadership transitions as part of a broader concern with age/period/cohort effects on this process. This analysis will lay the groundwork for

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<sup>12</sup> As detailed in Chapter 2, this dissertation uses Andrews and Edwards' advocacy organization definition, which encompasses public interest groups, social movement organizations, and nonprofit advocacy organizations and was deemed most appropriate for describing organizations in this research: "...advocacy organizations make public interest claims either promoting or resisting social change that, if implemented, would conflict with the social, cultural, political, or economic interests or values of other constituencies and groups" (2004: 481).

future research applying a more complex methodology; i.e., event history analysis, and will focus specifically on variations in effects across organizational periods. Second, the effects of individual leaders on the transition process will be another key area of focus—specifically, the impact of leader gender on the transition process. Along with these primary areas of interest, a variety of organization-level features will be tested in the models to determine whether leadership transitions rates are most likely functions of individual leaders, organizational characteristics, or contextual conditions.

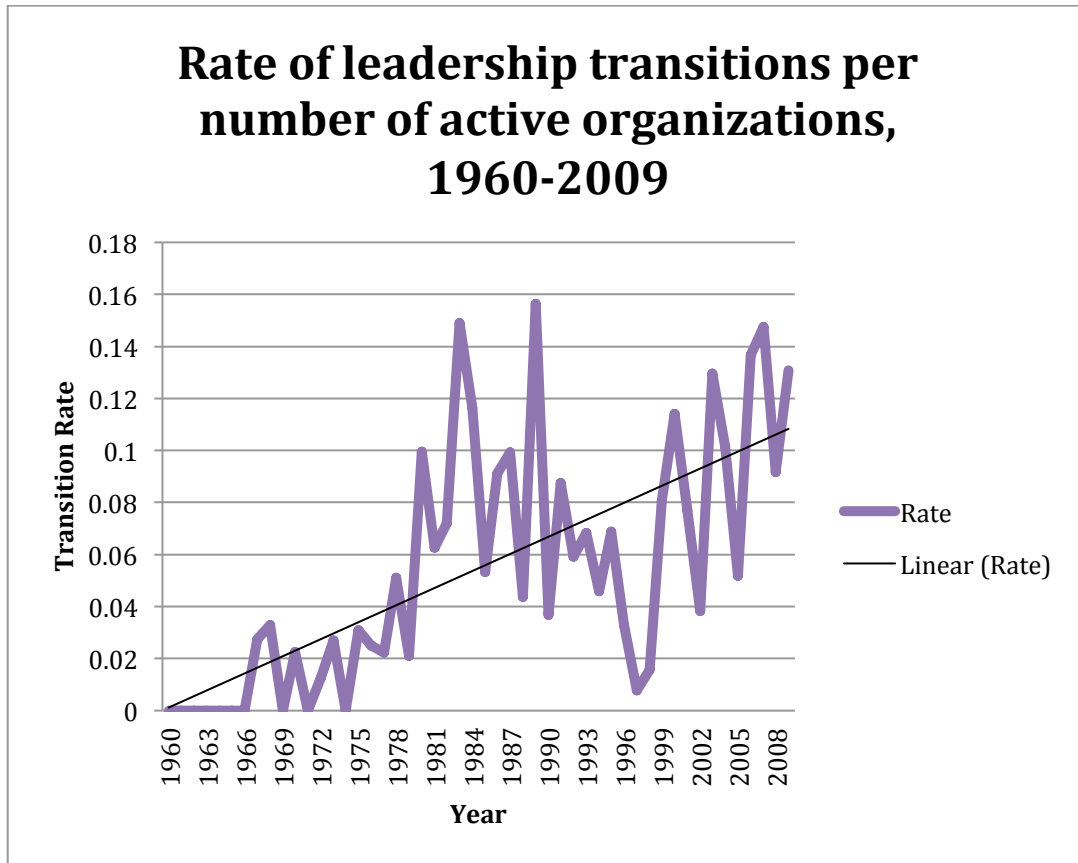
### **Leadership Transitions Across Organizational Age, Period, and Cohort**

One challenge of studying leadership transitions in longitudinal data is untangling the effects of age, period, and cohort on the observed effects. Isolating the effects of each can be difficult in regression analysis, as such variables must be carefully added to the models in order to avoid multicollinearity. While event history analysis may ultimately be the most fruitful way to interpret age/period/cohort effects, in this first stage of exploratory analysis, these will be observed in logistic regression.

#### *Period*

In the organizational data from LOADS, organizations report having a new leader in approximately 9% of the observed organizational years, with about 461

**Figure 5: Rate of Leadership Transitions Per Number of Active Organizations**



transitions observed during 5,122 total organization-years<sup>13</sup>. The transition rate = increases with time, although some variability occurs within the overall trend.

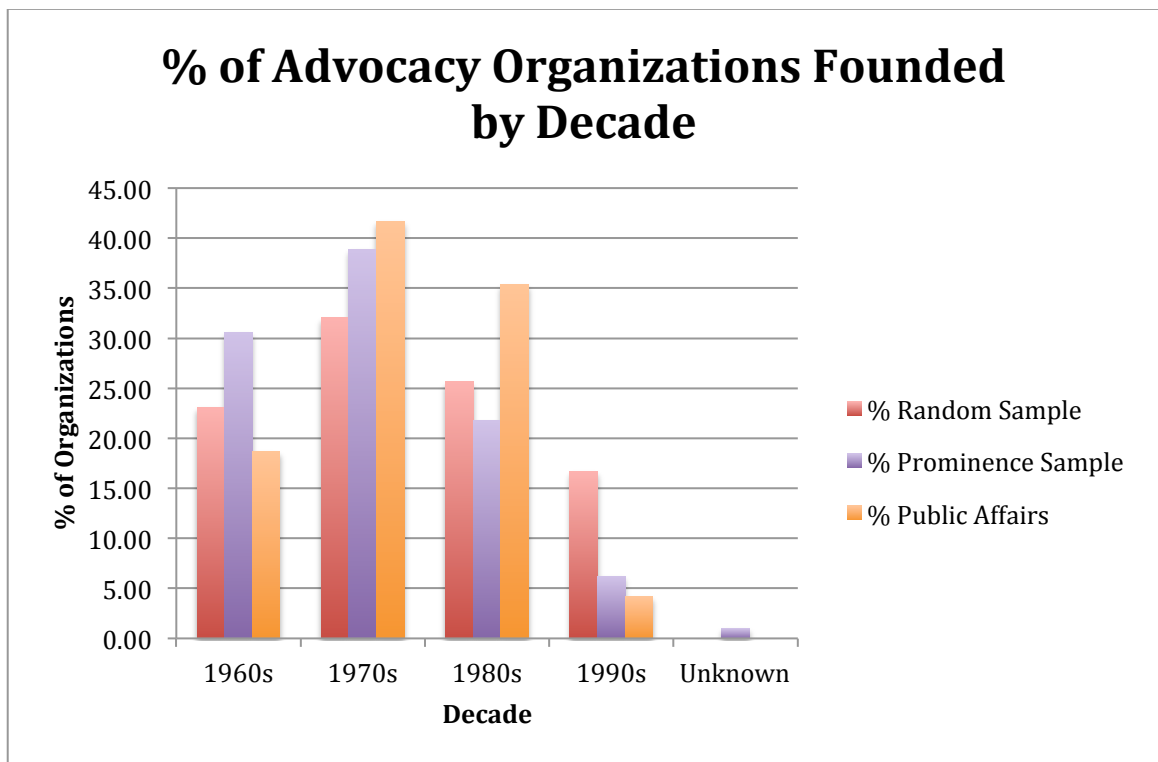
Figure 5 displays the rate of leader transitions per year by the number of live organizations over time. Examining this figure more closely, three distinct periods of leadership transition behavior are apparent. First, from 1960-1980, rate of transitions are relatively low, with only small spikes in transition and a slight overall growth in the transition rate. From 1981-1996, however, the pattern is quite different, with the highest spikes in rate occurring during this time frame, finally

<sup>13</sup> Weighted data reported here and throughout, resulting in non-integer findings. Unweighted, the number of leader transitions is 557, representing closer to 11% of the total observed organization-years.

dipping in the mid-1990s. In 1997-2009, the transition rate grows steadily, ending at close to the same rate levels observed in the pervious period's peaks.

Why, however, do these transitions increase over time? Have organizations generally marched toward an inexorable cycle of changing leaders as the 21<sup>st</sup> century proceeds? Recalling that these organizations represent advocacy organizations founded after 1960 and noting that the average founding year for these organizations is about 1976, it's possible that the increase in leadership transitions is an artifact of coinciding organizational cycles. Recalling the discussion of organizational foundings in Chapter 2, Figure 6 demonstrates the foundings by

**Figure 6: Organizational Foundings by Decade**





decade for the random sample, prominence sample, and the Public Affairs section of the *Encyclopedia of Associations (EoA)* from the *Policy Agendas Project*.<sup>14</sup>

The field of advocacy organizations reaches peak founding levels in the 1970s, and then declines throughout the 1980s and 1990s. Perhaps, then, the explosion of organizations in the 1970s explains the profusion of transitions in the late 1980s, as initial leaders are replaced (the average tenure of the first organizational leader is 17.4 years). This doesn't entirely explain, however, the spike in transitions in the early 1980s or the increase in the 2000.

### *Age*

Another possible candidate to explain transitions is organizational age—perhaps organizations naturally cycle through leaders at various points in time and this can explain some clustering of transitions. Figure 7, then examines the rate of leadership transition by organizational age.

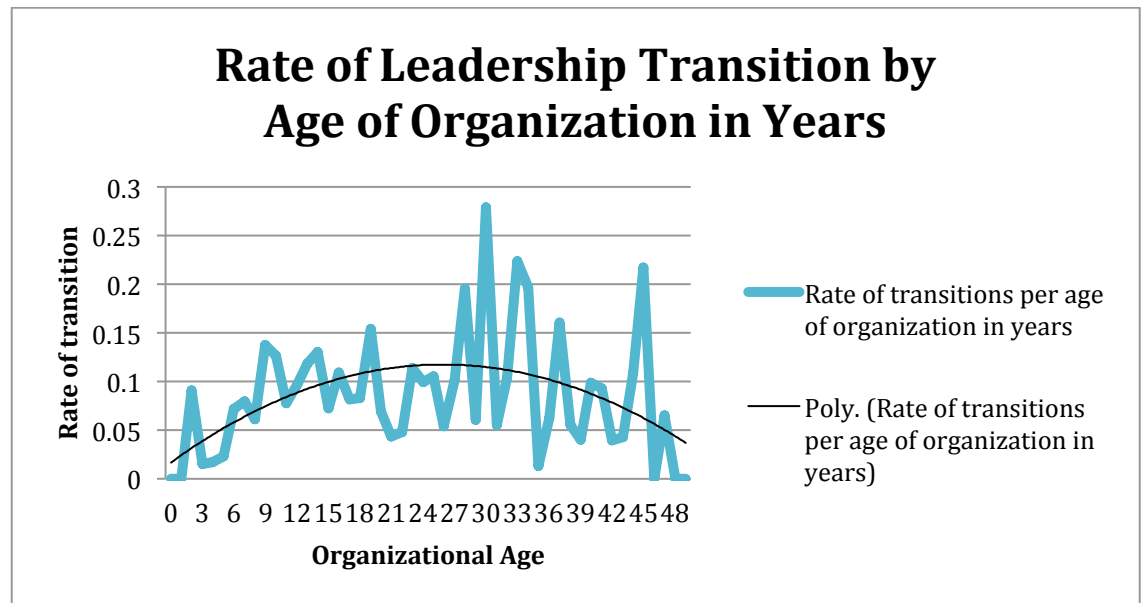
Looking at leadership transitions as a function of organization age, it appears that the process is somewhat curvilinear with organizational age, with transitions peaking at about the 30-year mark. Since most organizations in the sample would be reaching the time of peak transitions around the late 2000s, that could explain the uptick in transitions at the end of the sampling period. Why leadership transitions are at a high rate in the 1980s, though, is less apparent from the graph of

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<sup>14</sup> As derived from the Encyclopedia of Associations from the Policy Agendas Project. See [http://www.policyagendas.org/page/datasets-codebooks#encyclopedia\\_of\\_associations](http://www.policyagendas.org/page/datasets-codebooks#encyclopedia_of_associations) (Bamugartner and Jones 2013).

organizational age. Moreover, since the organizational foundings in the sample are left-censored at 1960, organizational age effects cannot be entirely extracted from founding cohort effects.

**Figure 7: Rate of Leadership Transition by Organizational Age**

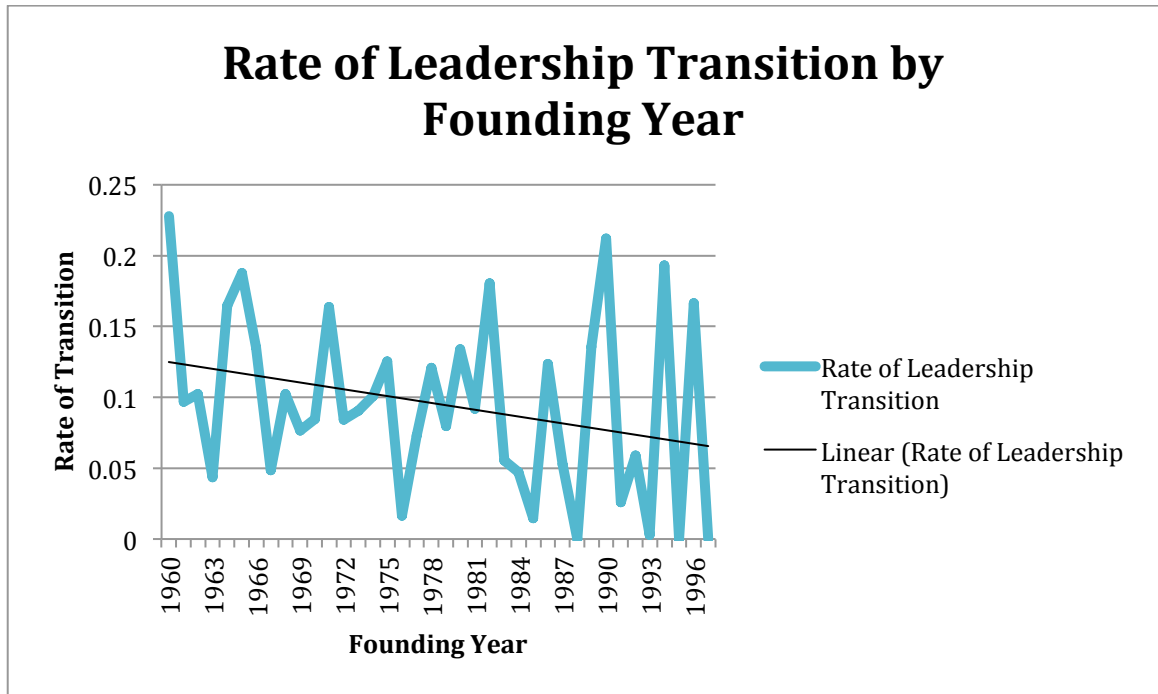


*Cohort*

Looking at leadership transition rates by founding cohort may offer an alternative interpretation to age and period. Figure 8 demonstrates the rate of transition by organizational founding year.

The rate of transitions declines from the oldest to the newest organizations. This is expected, as the oldest organizations would have had the most opportunities for leadership transition from a time perspective. Having observed each of the

**Figure 8: Rate of Leadership Transition by Organizational Founding Year**



age/period/cohort trends separately, each of these perspectives displays a distinctly different trend for leadership transition, suggesting that the overall leadership transition rate may result from a complex interaction of organizational and environmental processes.

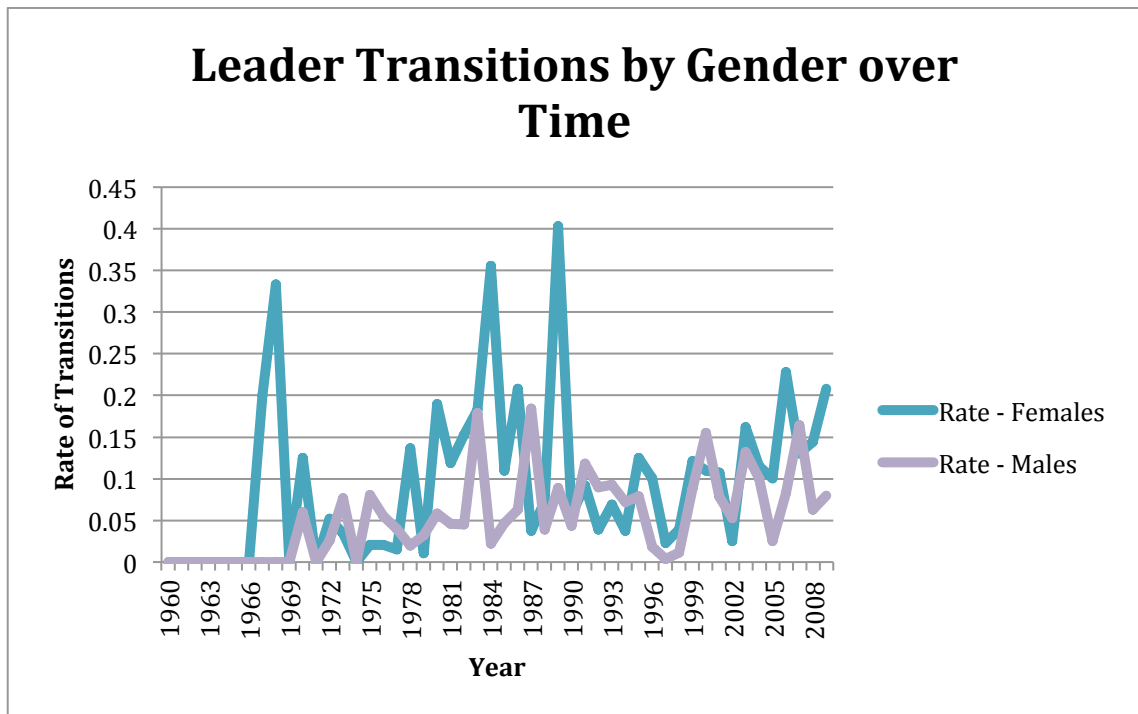
### *Effect of Leader Characteristics on Leader Transitions*

It is possible, then, that leader transitions rates are affected by organizational characteristics, such as age, as well as environmental characteristics, such as founding time period. One other factor, however, may affect leader transitions—characteristics of individual leaders. One potential characteristic that could

influence rate of leader transitions at the individual level is gender. Figure 9 demonstrates the transition rates for each gender.

Women's rate of transition clearly outpaces that of men's even though their trend lines are often similar; their transition rates even appear to shift roughly in tandem during the time frames exhibiting peak transition rates as established earlier in the 1980s and 2000s. Notably, however, women's transition rates also peak in the late 1960s and early 1970s, while men's transition rates do not demonstrate a similar pattern. Further examination of the data reveals that nearly half of all organizational transitions (47.4%) are from one man to another man and nearly another 10% are from a female to a man, yet women are still the most likely to be associated with leader transitions. Looking at leader tenure, women tend to

**Figure 9: Leadership Transition Rates by Gender**



occupy their positions for an average of 8.95 years, while men tend to occupy their positions for 9.94 years. Something about female leaders appears to contribute to their relative volatility in advocacy leadership positions compared to men. The puzzle of leadership transitions, then, may contain elements of environment, organization, and individual to explain the occurrence of a leadership transition.

Notably, there is a sizable literature based on anecdotal experiences on how to be a new leader in an organization (such as Watkins 2003, Bridges 2010) and plenty of leader biographies and autobiographies offering personal insight on leadership and matters of transition, but fewer works that address the process empirically. The extent to which the existing literature applies to leadership transitions in the advocacy realm is difficult to know, as there are no known comparable studies within advocacy organizations that suggest how generalizable findings from other sectors are to the field, particularly since most of the findings are from the for-profit sector. This study, then, will establish some baseline expectations for advocacy organizations and undergird future research, particularly as more data is acquired that can more adequately address the role of leader characteristics. In addition, few studies actually aim to predict events of leader transition; rather, most research focuses on the aftermath of transitions and how organizations can manage the organization disruption of integrating a new leader. Given this dearth of information directly related to advocacy organizations and the data limitations of this study, the subsequent literature review will overview the general streams of research on leadership transitions— consequences and

mitigating factors—as well as previously established expectations. Then, exploratory hypotheses will be presented that will guide the present study. Given the complexities of untangling age, period, and cohort effects, a detailed analysis of period will be the focus of this particular research as these effects can be tested in conjunction with readily available political context data. The subsequent hypotheses will be examined both from the vantage point of the overarching time frame, 1960-2009, and within the three major leader transition phases as discussed above. The first is 1960-1980, “Formation,” which can be said to represent the time period of the highest density of organizational foundings and captures the initial slow increase in transitions across organizations. The second period is 1981-1996, “Maturation,” which captures the highest spikes of leader transition rates and encompasses the time frame in which organizations are generally beyond their initial founding stage and are becoming stable, formal organizations. The third time period, 1997-2009, includes the last major pattern observed in leadership transition, a steady increase. At this point in time, most surviving organizations are firmly entrenched in their processes and environment, so this time frame is referred to as “Well-Established.” The findings will then be discussed and the ways in which this research can inform additional studies will be enumerated in the conclusion.

### **Consequences of Leadership Transition**

The topic of leader transitions is an enduring one of interest for organizations because, simply put, transitions are difficult for organizations, even in

the best of circumstances. Changing an organization's leader is both disruptive and expensive —with potentially disastrous consequences for an organization. Grusky (1960) contends that leadership transitions are always disruptive; the magnitude of disruption will depend on whether the new leader is an insider/outsider candidate and the circumstances under which the outgoing leader left the organization.

Heather Haveman (1993) finds that leader transitions can be more than simply disruptive, finding evidence that that newer organizations were more likely to die after a leader transition than older organizations (providing support for Stinchcombe's 1965 liability of newness). Organizational age, particularly as it relates to resource acquisition, may be an important consideration for organizations looking to change leaders. Even if an organization survives a transition intact, Grusky (1963) found that more frequent leader transitions hindered the performance of baseball teams. Looking at congregations, Dollhopf and Scheitle (2013) found that leadership transitions were associated with higher levels of conflict and membership turnover, although these effects tended to disappear with the passage of time following the transition. Some organizations may elect to take survival and performance matters into their own hands with regards to the effects of leadership transition. One set of authors suggests that, given all of the complications ensuing from a leader transition, organizations should consider being a "time-bound organization" that intentionally ceases to exist after a certain amount of time rather than undergoing the intense planning and preparation necessary to take on a new leader (Berlan and Bruno-van Vikjfeijken 2013: 226).

Assuming an organization does not elect to cease functioning after a leadership transition, organizational instability, regardless of its connection to leadership transition, can be consequential. For instance, Schellenberg found that periods of organizational instability associated with a higher likelihood of employees quitting their jobs (1996). Padilla, Hogan, and Kaiser found that instability can result in more centralized decision-making, which can lead to “destructive leadership” in organizations (2007). Thus, if the act of changing leaders leads to organizational instability, the resulting organizational environment could have negative consequences for new leaders in both the short- and long-term.

Beyond the disruptive aspect of a transition, simply, completing a search for and integrating a new leader can be a significant financial undertaking, as Manderscheid and Ardichvilli discuss in their overview of leadership transition literature (2008). One can assume the costs become exacerbated as organization size increases, as the bureaucratic consequences of the change would likely scale accordingly. Thus, changing leaders would be expected to have nontrivial budgetary implications for advocacy organizations and may make a fledgling organization particularly vulnerable, possibly contributing the effects of being a young organization that are discussed previously in Haveman (1993).

In spite of these organizational consequences of transition, the topic of leadership transitions is likely to become increasingly relevant. Within the for-profit sector, the rate of leadership turnover is fairly high. Some research suggests that 40% of new executives left their positions within 18 months of assuming their roles (Manderscheid and Ardichvili 2008). In the nonprofit sector, Beilenson (2005)



estimated that about 10% of nonprofits undergo a leadership transition in a given year. Most notably, though, is that Liberum Research (as cited in Manderscheid and Ardichvili 2008) found that management turnover has been increasing since 2005. Consequently, the precursors and effects of leadership transition will only become more important to organizations looking to mitigate the worst effects of the process if this trend continues. In the nonprofit sector, at least one study has found that the difficulties of leader transition may become coupled with the difficulty of finding leaders, as a study of nonprofit executive directors in North Carolina found that the retirement of baby boomer executive directors is starting to loom but that young professionals were broadly uninterested in become nonprofit executive directors (Carman, Leland, and Wilson 2010).

It is worth noting, however, that for their complications, leader transitions are not inherently bad for an organization in the long-term. Beilenson (2005) suggests that leader transitions can be positive for an organization, allowing it to refocus and expand. New leaders can create new opportunities; Becker (1999) notes that congregations looking to go in a new direction may use the selection of a new leader (pastor) as a way to facilitate a change congregational styles. Leader transitions may not always be avoidable or desirable, but for some organizations such a change can be beneficial in the long-term and even welcomed.

## **Factors Moderating Leadership Transitions**

### *Insider vs. Outsider Candidates*

Having reviewed some of the consequences of leadership transitions, the factors that can moderate some of these consequences will now be discussed. One of the most popular areas of study for leadership transitions is whether insider or outsider candidates are better for organizations. Some organizations may groom a candidate from the inside who is already intimately acquainted with the organization and its procedures, rewarding a loyal career. Other organizations, however, may want the detached perspective of an outsider, who may be looked to for an infusion of new ideas and energy. While this particular aspect of leadership transitions cannot be directly addressed in the current data, the literature on this facet of transitions will be briefly reviewed given how central this question has been to previous studies of transitions.

The effects of insider vs. outsider candidates are varied by institutional context and by what outcomes are being measured. For instance, Chung and Luo's examination of Taiwanese firms in the late 1990s and early 2000s found that the effects of an insider or outsider candidate varied by the maturity of the organizational field or market in which a given organization was embedded (2013). Within congregations, Dollhopf and Scheitle found that insider candidates had a stronger negative impact on congregational growth than outsider candidates but insider candidates were less associated with conflict than outsider candidates

(2013). Friedman and Saul found in their examination of new CEOs that outsiders were associated with more turnover in top management; outside CEOs caused most disruption and top management turnover in organizations where performance was poor prior to the CEO succession (Friedman and Saul 1991: 637). In gauging firm profitability, however, Chung, Lubatkin, Rogers, and Owers (1987) found that in the long-run, the most important factor determining a firm's success was not whether they hired an insider or outsider CEO but rather the firm's performance prior the transitions. They did find, however, that in the highest performing firms the hiring of an outside CEO was associated with increased stock prices. In a similar vein, Beatty and Zajac (1987) found that insider and outsider CEOs generally had the same long-term effect on stock prices, as the effects of new CEO announcements were generally short-term.

### *Role of Environment*

The general environment in which the leader transition takes place as well as the structure of the institution that a leader is in charge of may influence the timing of leader transition and the transition's outcomes. In one of the few studies that attempt to predict instances of leader transition, Càceres and Malone look at the top governmental executives (e.g. presidents, prime ministers, dictators, etc.) in countries around the world and find that democracies were more conducive to leader transitions than autocracies and that within democracies, "currency crises in times of low economic growth" were associated with higher rates of transition

(2013: 575). Therefore, it is possible that organizational structure interacts with external conditions to create conditions that are more or less favorable to leader transitions.

Beyond determining when transitions occur, environment may determine the outcomes of these transitions. Tilcsik (2014) found that employee performance in periods subsequent to their hiring were associated with their hiring environment, suggesting that people imprint on their initial organizational environment and are socialized to optimally perform in environments most similar to those of their hiring. While this study looked at employees more broadly, this may also apply to leaders. In addition, this phenomenon may suggest that Stinchcombe's assertion that an organization's founding context influences the organization indefinitely (1965) may also apply to positions within the organization—a person's hiring context may influence their performance indefinitely.

How these leaders are appointed, though, may influence the extent to which an organization is sensitive to environmental conditions. For instance, Meyer (1975) found that when leaders are relatively independent from superiors and are elected or appointed through civil service, these leaders were better at insulating their organization from the environment and, as a result, the organization was more stable. On the other hand, potential leaders may want to exploit environmental conditions to their benefit within an organization. Fligstein found that firm employees might use interpretations of environmental conditions to their advantage in order to attain and secure leadership positions (1987). Therefore, it

appears that the environment of a leadership transition can influence its effects, but an environment can also be used to gain leadership and perhaps promote transition.

### *Role of Biography*

Does the individual leader hired matter? Investigating this question can help to determine whether the key predictors of leader transition should be directed toward the transition itself or also the people being transitioned in and out of leadership. Older research has contended that once organizations have attained a level of bureaucracy or institutionalization, leaders are highly replaceable and essentially interchangeable (Weber 1946, Selznick 1957). Empirical tests of leader impact, however, suggested that leaders could make a difference in organizational outcomes. Perrow (2007) argue that leaders matter disproportionately in critical situations. Beatty and Zajac, while they did not find differences in insider and outsider CEO candidates, did find that having a new CEO tended to result in firms pursuing new production and investment strategies (1987). Looking at Methodist churches, Smith, Carson, and Alexander found the highest quality clergy improved organizational performance (1984). Therefore, individual leaders are perhaps not readily dismissible as being interchangeable.

Other studies, focused specific biographical qualities of leaders, have shown particular qualities and life experiences can have a great deal of impact on an organization. The upper echelons literature (Hambrick and Mason 1984; Habrick 2007) argues that a leader's biography informs his or her choices, which then

dictate firm performance. In the social movement realm, a leader's biography and other personal attributes have had a demonstrated organizational effect across a variety of issue sectors. In their study of the Sierra Club, Han, Andrews, Ganz, Baggetta, and Lim (2011) found that leader skill level affected leader quality, which consequently impacted an organization's political presence. Both Baggetta, Han, and Andrews (2013) and Dorius and McCarthy (2011) found that leader biography impacted the leader's commitment. Ganz (2000) found that leader biography can be an important resource and can even overcome a lack of monetary resources.

In a study similar to the present one in predicting leader transition events in organizations, though within Californian high tech companies in this instance, Burton and Beckman state that the traits of person who created an executive position are very influential on subsequent leader transitions (2007). The authors found evidence for imprinting like Tilcsik (2014), but focus on the context of the transition and the effects of the first person to hold a position. They discover that "...the functional experience of the person who creates a position influences the turnover rate of successors who later occupy that position" with atypical first position holders having the highest turnover while the lowest turnover was among people "both typical with respect to the normative environment and similar to the position imprint" (239). Therefore, not only a leader's biography, but the previous leader's biography—particularly as it pertains to work experience, in this case—may be important for predicting leader transitions. Founder effects were also examined in Haveman's work on leader transitions in early American magazines (1993), where the effects of founders to also be pronounced. In this case, though, the

strength of the founder's ideology influenced the rate of organizational death, with the strongest ideologies coinciding with a higher death rate.

In general, it seems that an author's observation expressed in an article appearing in a magazine aimed at talent development professionals also applies to much of the extant empirical testing of leadership transitions:

“The single most important strategy for effective transition of leadership is selection of the right people. Matching the right people to the right jobs leads to high performance and enhances the work environment. With the right people, results improve, morale builds, conflict is reduced, and lawsuits are less likely.”

(Christy 2009: 59)

The leader transition literature is reviewed more exhaustively in Manderscheid and Ardichvii (2008). While the data available limits that questions can be directly addressed here and the factors of predicting leader transitions are relatively unexplored, a few expectations for this exploratory research emerge from the existing literature.

## **Hypotheses**

Given that leader biography and characteristics are expected to have an effect on leader transitions and that women appear to transition at higher rates than men

despite being less represented overall in leadership positions, the following major hypothesis is proposed:

H1: The odds of a leadership transition will be higher for women compared to men when controlling for organizational characteristics and environmental context.

Additional supporting hypotheses regarding organizational structure will also be tested. Returning to Càceres and Malone's assertion (2013) that certain governmental structures facilitated leadership transitions (i.e. democracy), organizational features that facilitate leadership transitions are expected to increase the likelihood of a leader transition. Given the increased organizational complexity of having chapters and the necessity of developing additional organizational procedures to maintain this organizational structure, increased organizational complexity may also enable regular leadership transitions.

H2: Having chapters will be associated increased odds of a leadership transition.

Recalling the organizational stability resulting from organizational formalization and the associated increased of leadership transitions:

H3: Higher levels of organizational formalization will be associated with more frequent leadership transitions.



H4: Longer times to organizational formalization will be associated with less frequent leadership transitions.

Given the importance of founding context and the liability of newness:

H5: The earlier an organization's founding year relative to the time period being observed, the more likely an organization will be to experience a leader transition.

Given the potential interactive effect between organizational features and environment:

H6: Organizational sector will interact with the overarching political environment, resulting in a significant effect on leadership transitions.

## **Data**

The data for this analysis is taken from LOADS, which spans organizational sectors and samples 245 organizations founded between 1960-1999 with observations covering a time frame of 1960-2009. The longitudinal nature of the data makes it ideal for testing phenomena that are somewhat infrequent in a short time frame but consistently recurring in a longer time frame (such as a leadership transition). Additionally, the data also allows for the unique comparison of trends across historical time periods, as the sampling frame encompasses five distinct

decades in U.S. history. In order to account for known population characteristics (i.e. distribution in organizations across sector) and organizational prominence, a weight is included in all of the analyses and weighted data is reported throughout this chapter. For more information on the data and collection procedures, refer to Chapter 2.

### *Outcomes*

The dependent variable in this analysis indicates the occurrence of a leader transition in a given year for a given organization. Each organization-year is coded as 0-1, with a year coinciding with the appearance of a new leader receiving a 1; subsequent years of this leader's tenure are coded as a 0 until a new leader takes power, which would then again be coded as a 1. The data used for identifying leadership transitions is taken mainly from the *Encyclopedia of Associations (EoA)* and supplemented with information from the Internal Revenue Service (IRS) 990 tax forms.

For the three time period models, the leader transition events coded so that, for instance, all of the leadership transitions between 1960-1980 (inclusive) are included in the dependent variable for leadership transitions in the 1960-1980 model. The outcome variable for each period is created in this manner; the periods include: 1960-1980 ("Formation"), 1981-1996 ("Maturity"), 1997-2009 (Well-Established"). The ns for these periods are reported for each regression analysis in

Table 3. The full sample includes 4,820 organization-years with the individual periods ranging from 772 to 2,147 organization-years.

### *Predictors*

Since the analyses in this paper are largely exploratory, predictors are grouped into individual leader characteristics, organizational characteristics, and environmental characteristics.<sup>15</sup> Although, as discussed in the literature review, leader characteristics, such as whether they originate from inside or outside of an organization, can have meaningful effects on organizations, such information is not presently available within this data set. The individual-level leader data that is available is confined to leader gender. Since leader gender is the topic of extensive research more broadly and is discussed in the context of this study at greater length in Chapter 5, this measure is included to offer one look into how individual leader characteristics may be related to leadership transitions. Leader gender is a dichotomous variable which refers to whether a leader is male or female; female = 1 and male = 0. This information is derived from the aforementioned leader data from the *EoA* and IRS 990s.

Considering the organizational characteristics, whether an organization has members or chapters is tested with dichotomous measures for each with 1 representing the presence of such a structure and 0 representing the absence of

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<sup>15</sup> Founding year is more accurately characterized as environmental characteristics that vary by specific organization as opposed the national characteristics that are captured in the political context variables. For simplicity's sake, however, these characteristics are grouped for discussion purposes with purely internal organizational characteristics, such as presence of chapters.

such a structure. Organizational formalization is represented as a 3-point scale, with 0 representing the lowest level of formalization and 2 the highest level of formalization. Average time to formalization is measured in years and reflects the average number of years it took for a given organization to reach up to three indicators of formalization. Further detail on the construction of the formalization variables is included in Chapter 3. Although the current formalization variables are satisfying, they are useful in this exploratory study for developing expectations that can be refined with the acquisition of additional data. Lastly, an organization's founding year is included as a continuous measure.

Issue sector is used in conjunction with political context to effectively measure if, for instance, conservative organizations tend to experience more or fewer leadership transitions as political context becomes more conservative. Organizations are divided among the broad categories of being liberal, conservative, or liberal feminist depending on their narrower advocacy sector (the divisions are discussed at greater length in Chapter 2)<sup>16</sup>. As liberal is the largest category, this is used as the reference group in the analyses. Next, a score for the national political environment is included which measures how Democrat or Republican the national government is in a given year across the presidency, House of Representatives, and Senate. For the presence of each Democrat, a value of 1 is assigned, while each

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<sup>16</sup> The category breakdowns are as follows:

Liberal: Civil Rights (Civil Rights: Asian, Black, Jewish, Latino, Native American, Other), Environment (Environment, Animals), LGBT (LGBT Rights, AIDS), Other Rights (Welfare Rights, Prisoners Rights, Civil Liberties, Consumer, Disabled Rights, Veterans, Children, Old Age), Progressive (Progressive, Communist, Gun Control), Anti-War

Conservative: Religious Right (Christian Right, Anti-Abortion), Conservative (Conservative, Nativist/Supremacist, Gun Rights)

Liberal Feminist: Women's Rights (Women's Rights/Feminism, Abortion)

Republican is assigned a -1. The cumulative scores range from -3 (such as in 2006) to 3 (such as in 1965), representing years dominated completely by one party. Finally, the sector and this political score are included as interaction terms; therefore, the coefficient for political context then becomes the coefficient for the reference interaction term of liberal organization x political environment. Descriptive statistics for these and all of the other variables in the models are included in Table 7.

## **Results**

In order to determine the effect of leader, organizational, and environmental characteristics on leader transitions, logistic regressions are used to evaluate these patterns throughout the entire sampling time frame and during the three distinct periods of leadership transition trends, as observed in Figure 5. These three periods represent 1960-1980, 1981-1996, and 1997-2009. The coefficients are reported in terms of odds ratios and represent the likelihood of a leader transition in a given organizational-year. The sample weight is included in the analysis. The VCE command in Stata is included to account for the clustering of observations within organizations. Results from the nested full model spanning 1960-2009 are reported in Table 8. The results for each of the three transition periods are reported in Table 9 along with the results for the full model reported in Table 8.

**Table 7 - Descriptive Statistics for Measures in Leadership Transition Model** (n=4,820; models weighted to account for selection into prominence sample and known distribution of organizational sectors)

	Mean	Std Dev	Min-Max
<b>Leader Transitions</b>			
Year with leader transition	.09	.29	0-1
<b>Leader Characteristics</b>			
Leader gender (1=female)	.37	.48	0-1
<b>Organizational Characteristics</b>			
Chapter organization	.43	.50	0-1
Level of organizational formalization	1.72	.48	0-2
Average time to formalization	5.51	4.63	0-20
Founding year	1976.53	8.75	1960-1999
<b>Organizational Sector</b>			
Liberal organization	.70	.46	0-1
Conservative organization	.24	.43	0-1
Liberal feminist organization	.07	.25	0-1
<b>Political Context</b>			
National political environment	.02	1.90	-3-3

In observing the overall model in Table 8, the patterns are fairly consistent as the leader, organizational, and sector characteristics are included. Specifically, leader gender and the presence of organizational chapters are significant in every iteration of the model and are both associated with an increased likelihood of leadership transition. The other organizational characteristics and the environmental characteristics, however, do not approach significance in any of the progressive model iterations. Across organization-years in the model, H1 is supported, as organization-years with women leaders being more associated with leadership transition than organizations-years associated with male leaders. Also, H2 is supported, with chapters being associated with a higher likelihood of leadership transition. The remaining hypotheses, however, are not supported.

**Table 8 – Logistic Regression Models Predicting Leadership Transitions, 1960-2009** (n=4,820; Models weighted to account for selection into prominence sample and known distribution of organizational sectors; odds ratios reported; observations clustered by organization)

	Model 1	Model 2	Model 3	Model 4 (Full Model)
<b>Leader Characteristics</b>				
Leader gender (1=female)	1.77**	1.81**	1.64*	1.64*
<b>Organizational Characteristics</b>				
Chapter organization	--	1.48*	1.52*	1.52*
Level of organizational formalization	--	1.57	1.05	1.03
Average time to formalization	--	1.00	1.00	.99
Founding year	--	1.00	1.00	1.00
<b>Organizational Sector</b>				
Liberal organization (ref.)	--	--	--	--
Conservative organization	--	--	.76	.77
Liberal feminist organization	--	--	1.12	1.12
<b>Political Context</b>				
National political environment	--	--	0.96	0.94
<b>Political Context of Sector</b>				
Liberal x political environment (ref.)	--	--	--	--
Conservative x political environment	--	--	--	1.12
Liberal feminist x political environment	--	--	--	.99
Pseudo R <sup>2</sup>	.01	.02	.02	.02

\*p<.05 \*\*p<.01 \*\*\*p<.001

**Table 9 – Logistic Regression Models Predicting Leadership Transitions, Overall and by Period**  
 (Models weighted to account for selection into prominence sample and known distribution of organizational sectors; odds ratios reported; models clustered by organization)

	<b>Overall</b>	<b>1960-1980</b>	<b>1980-1996</b>	<b>1996-2009</b>
<b>n for Model</b>	4,820	772	2,147	1,901
<b>Leader Characteristics</b>				
Leader gender (1=female)	1.64*	2.93*	1.84**	1.43
<b>Organizational Characteristics</b>				
Chapter organization	1.52*	.76	2.02**	1.25
Level of organizational formalization	1.03	.43	1.11	1.12
Average time to formalization	.99	1.06	.95*	.99
Founding year	1.00	.84***	.94**	1.02
<b>Organizational Sector</b>				
Liberal organization (ref.)	--	--	--	--
Conservative organization	.77	2.65	.67	.60
Liberal feminist organization	1.12	1.65	1.53	.87
<b>Political Context</b>				
National political environment	0.94	1.59	1.02	1.02
<b>Political Context of Sector</b>				
Liberal x political environment (ref.)	--	--	--	--
Conservative x political environment	1.12	.64	1.39	.99
Liberal feminist x political environment	.99	.83	.58	1.45
Pseudo R <sup>2</sup>	.02	.10	.08	.02

\*p<.05 \*\*p<.01 \*\*\*p<.001

Given the robustness of the gender and chapter findings, these may be fruitful areas of further research beyond these exploratory models.

While the general model only supported two of the hypotheses, the trends in leadership transition may be sensitive to the time period in which they occurred. Given the distinct transition phases observed in Figure 1, the models broken down by period provide a more nuanced view of leadership transition over time. Moving to Table 3, the results by period do indeed show differentiated patterns in each period. First, looking at 1960-1980, “Formation,” leader gender and founding year



were the characteristics significantly associated with leadership transitions during this time. The effect size of leader gender is the strongest in this time frame, with having a female leader in a given organizational year being 2.93 times more likely to be associated with a leadership transition than having a male leader in a given organizational year. Thus, hypothesis 1 is supported in this time period as it is in the overall model. Unlike the overall model, however, founding year is significant in this period and is associated with a decreased likelihood of leadership transition as organizational foundings become more recent. This supports H5, as earlier-founded organizations would then be the ones to experience more frequent leadership transitions. The remaining hypotheses are not supported in this time frame; notably, though, an organization's total level of formalization is very close to significant in this model (.056) and is actually the opposite effect predicted, with organizational formalization being associated with decreased likelihood of leadership transition. This may indicate that formalization could provide organizational stability early on that promotes leader consistency in the short-term while eventually allowing for smoother (and more frequent) leadership transitions in the long-term, as the effect is the opposite though not significant in subsequent time periods as the observed organizations age in the aggregate.

Next, observing the results for the second time period (1981-1996) ("Maturity"), more factors become significant for predicting leadership transitions than in the previous period. Gender remains significant although the effect size diminishes, continuing to support H1. The presence of chapters is significant in this model, as it is in the overall model, and is associated with a higher likelihood of

leadership transition, supporting H2. Also, the time to organizational formalization is significant in this model, with longer times to formalization being associated with a lower likelihood of leadership transition, as was predicted in H4. Recalling the descriptive statistics, the average organization was founded about halfway through 1976 and took 5.51 years to formalize, meaning that formalization for most organizations was occurring during the 1970s. The significance of this variable only in this time frame could indicate that organizations may be more likely to change leaders as they go through the formalization process, but not necessarily once they are formalized, which would be consistent with the formalization findings suggested in the 1960-1980 time frame. Founding year continues to be significant in the 1981-1996 time period as it was in the previous time period, with newer organizations being less associated with leadership transition, supporting H5. Since most of the organizations in the sample were founded in the 1970s, it is possible that the significance is an artifact of organizational founding timing and may suggest that the initial leaders stays at advocacy organizations longer than subsequent leaders.

Finally, the 1997-2009 time frame ("Well-Established") is perhaps most notable for having no significant predictors of leadership transition. This still yields important findings, however, in that this could indicate that the leader, organizational, and environmental characteristics associated leadership transition may shift over time, as people, organizations, and culture change. For instance, the presence of a female leader in the 1970s would have likely had very different meaning for an organization when it may have never had a female leader before compared to an organization in the 2000s that has routinely had leaders from both

genders. Although none of the hypotheses are supported in the final model, the patterns of significance over all and in each period offer useful clues for further studies of leadership transitions beyond this initial exploration.

## **Discussion**

The analyses presented here offer some insight into the mechanisms underlying leadership transition in organizations, suggesting what organizational aspects are most related to transition and how these elements can be further explored in the future. Furthermore, the analyses demonstrate that period is an important factor for understanding what elements affect leadership transition the most, as distinct patterns emerge in each of the three periods analyzed here—periods which also each differ from the overall model.

First, although only one aspect of leader biography—leader gender—was tested here, the consistent significance of the characteristic suggests that leader biography may have an effect on organizations and their leader patterns, as previous research suggests. Since it is unclear whether the present results are the product of a growing trend toward female leadership or if women leaders are associated with higher levels of transition due to other reasons, it may be useful for future analyses to look into greater detail at whether women are also consistently holding shorter leader tenures, which would lead to a higher transition rate overall, or if there are differences between organizations transitioning between, say, a male

and female leader compared to organizations transitioning between a female to male leader.

The persistent significance of organizational chapters as a predictor of increased likelihood of leader transitions suggests that structural elements of an organization can impact transition, although the mechanisms underlying this process specifically for chapters are not entirely clear, given the dearth of research on the topic. As suggested, the increased bureaucratization required to support a chapter structure might also facilitate regular leader transitions. It is possible, however, that other aspects of the chapter structure result in more frequent leader transitions, such as the geographic dispersal of these chapters (e.g. chapters clustered within a region versus chapters scattered nationally). Further research may help to clarify the causal mechanisms at work here.

Given that recency of founding year appears to suppress the rate of leadership transition in the earliest years of existence for most of these organizations but not in the later years, other factors associated with organizational age warrant further exploration. As observed in Figure 7, the rate of leader transitions as modeled over organizational age shows an increase in transitions that peaks after an organization has been around for 25-30 years and then decreases. While few of the organizations in the sample are observed for more than 30 years, it is possible that as additional years of data were included beyond 2009, the relationship between founding year and leadership transition would be the reverse of what it is earlier in the sampling time period. The factors associated with this

type of trend, such as leader tenure, could also be useful in further unpacking what the pattern means.

Although formalization does not play a major role in these models, with only a nearly-significant coefficient for total level of formalization in the 1960-1980 period and a significant coefficient for time to formalization from 1980-1996, the formalization story told here is likely incomplete. What this does indicate is that formalization may be more important for leadership transitions as an organization is founded and developed, but is less important once an organization has become well established. As discussed at greater length in Chapter 3, the formalization measure being used here currently does not include IRS data, but it is quite possible that as the formalization measure is refined, the effects observed here may become more pronounced. Given that formalization unfolds over time in this organizational population and the other time-based measure, founding year, did have some significant effects, as the formalization measure is strengthened, more accurate relationships between formalization and transition may be observable.

Considering the period analyses as a whole, this approach appears to be a useful way to capture the micro and macro patterns embedded in time and may lend insight into the organizational contributors to cycles of contention (Tarrow 1998). Examining organizations with a broader range of founding years would further allow analyses to untangle period and cohort effects, since organizational foundings in this sample are heavily clustered in the 1970s. It is worth noting, however, that none of the political context or sector/context interactions were significant in these models. The internal affairs of an organization that most impact leader transition

may be somewhat insensitive to the changing features of their operating environment. Alternatively—and perhaps more likely—the environmental features that affect leadership transition may not be adequately captured in the current model specifications. Given that organizational sector is lumped into three fairly general categories, these may be insufficient to reflect the ways in which political context effects specific issues—for instance, the national government is not necessarily going to treat environmental and civil rights issues the same way in a given year, but in the current measure, it is impossible to disentangle differentiating effects. It is also possible that dividing period into different segments would yield different results. Versions of the analysis were conducted using decade as a division, but the results were more difficult to discuss in terms of what the decades reflected in phases of organizational development. Other period divisions may produce different results and allow for different interpretations beyond how the periods generally relate to organizational development. Furthermore, environmental contextual measures not directly related to the federal government may have salient effects on organizations and their leadership, such as national economic conditions or even the local/state governments of where an organization is headquartered.

Finally, it is worth noting that the pseudo  $R^2$  values of the models are quite low; all at or under .10 and only .02 for the overall model. While this analysis was limited to the variables available in the present study, it is likely that variables not included in the model may have more explanatory power than those currently included. It is also possible that leader transitions are a highly complex process and

are inherently difficult to predict. The current analysis, however, gives a useful starting point to continue the exploration of leader transitions in advocacy organizations. Since there are no comparable studies to this one, there are no analogous baseline predictions for this sector of organizations or any sector of organizations to develop expectations for what model fit typically looks like when analyzing predictors of leadership transition.

## **Conclusions**

This exploratory study of the predictors of leader transition naturally comes with a few limitations. Foremost, the exploratory nature of the study is intended to guide further research rather than offer a definitive take on leadership transitions. The current models will be quite useful in refining future models of leadership transition in this population, but the findings on their own should be interpreted more generally only with the highest degree of caution.

Also, as mentioned previously, these analyses are limited by the data available. Many features specific to individual leaders and organizations are not currently included in the data set. Despite the current data limitations, areas of future research are quite promising. Additional data can more fully develop the questions that require more specific information about individual organizations and their leaders. Further data collection would allow this study to fully examine the effect of factors such as the founding leader imprint (Burton and Beckman 2007), whether a leader comes from inside or outside the organization, leader education

level and prestige, leader work history, reason for leader transition, whether leaders are elected or appointed, changes in organizational size, and change in organizational mission, to name a few. The next phase of data collection should be able to incorporate some of this information and the present study will help inform expectations for future research based on expanded data.

In addition, the use of more sophisticated modeling techniques may also contribute to understanding this topic in future research. Event history analysis would allow the hazard rates for the coefficients of interest to be measured over time, which would permit a look at leader transitions in this sector that is more sensitive to the age/period/cohort effects described earlier. Also, given that there appears to be precipitants of leader transitions across levels of analysis—at the leader level and at the organizational level—multilevel modeling may be useful to unpack further which levels are most important to predicting the phenomenon of interest, in a similar vein to Baggetta et. al.'s multilevel analysis of Sierra Club organizations (2013). With the further developed expectations from the present study, these analytical models coupled with additional data collection may be able to provide a powerful look at leadership transitions within the advocacy sector and how transitions shape these people, organizations, and the sector as a whole.

This incipient look into the leadership transition dynamics of the advocacy sector yields some a few useful beacons for further study. For one, it appears that leader characteristics—not just simply having any leader—may influence the likelihood of transitions. Also, it seems that some elements of organizational structure are important for leader transitions, like chapters. It is possible that other



structures, such as an organization's board or size of leader team, may also impact transition. Moreover, it appears that period effects are consequential to leader transitions, although these need to be further isolated from cohort effects for the dynamics to be fully apparent. Beyond providing an informative historical look at the U.S. advocacy sector, this research may be useful for understanding the role of leaders in social movements cycles and for further informing leader transition literature that spans different sectors (business, nonprofit, religious, political, etc.) to see what aspects are generalizable and what may be specific to an industry. Finally, it may be tremendously helpful for individual organizations to have more information on the effects and triggers of leadership transitions so that they can better plan these events and minimize their disruptiveness.

## **Chapter 5**

**Breaking the Glass Ceiling Early and Often?:**

**Female Leaders of Advocacy Organizations**

## Introduction

Prior to the 1970s, women had limited access to jobs and the women who did have jobs were often expected to quit work when they got married or had children. Women eventually gained more widespread and long-term access to employment, but over time it appeared that there were limits to how high a women could ascend in an organization. Thus arose the concept of the glass ceiling, which became a popular narrative to describe the patterns of women's employment in U.S. organizations. Indeed, research from across organizational fields has suggests that women are generally excluded from the higher rungs of management. While this pattern has been documented in fields including business, law, and science, it has been less studied in the nonprofit world. This present research seeks to shed light on this organizational sector and focuses specifically on the advocacy organization<sup>17</sup> subset of nonprofits, particularly addressing the presence of women in top management positions and pay equity between men and women who have attained these positions.

According to Google Ngrams, the phrase "glass ceiling" first starts to notably appear in books in the early 1980s.<sup>18</sup> A brief survey of academic work mirrors these results, with the Social Science Citation Index reporting the first incident of a paper

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<sup>17</sup> As detailed in Chapter 2, this dissertation uses Andrews and Edwards' advocacy organization definition, which encompasses public interest groups, social movement organizations, and nonprofit advocacy organizations and was deemed most appropriate for describing organizations in this research: "...advocacy organizations make public interest claims either promoting or resisting social change that, if implemented, would conflict with the social, cultural, political, or economic interests or values of other constituencies and groups" (2004: 481).

<sup>18</sup> See Appendix B for graph. Source: Google Ngram Viewer, <http://books.google.com/ngrams>. For further detail on the Ngram data set, see Michel et. al, 2010.

with “glass ceiling” as a topic appearing in 1987 (2016). These artifacts of the publication record reflect a growing interest in the question of why women have historically not and continue to not in a variety of sectors hold executive positions in the same proportions as men and what barriers may be preventing changes in this trend. While women’s participation in the workforce has steadily climbed throughout the time frame of this study (Bureau of Labor Statistics 2011), the distribution of women in the highest ranks of the workforce has not be as equally robust.

Advocacy organizations have sought to address employment and compensation inequality, particularly with the rise of the women’s movement in the 1970s, and these movements have given women opportunities to found and lead organizations promoting causes, including promoting women’s leadership, across all types of institutions. One would expect to find women heavily dominating the leadership in women’s issues movements (e.g. workforce rights, abortion rights). Studies of other movements such as the U.S. civil rights movement of the 1960s, however, have noted that women may be underrepresented in leadership and may often go unrecognized for their efforts, as women have been observed to lead in ways that are less hierarchical than men, such as what Kuumba observed in the civil rights movement (2001). A half-century after, however, one might expect the conditions creating leadership opportunities for women to have evolved.

Until this present study, the analysis of women in advocacy leadership roles has been limited to case studies or within-sector studies. Using the LOADS (Leader and Organization Advocacy Data Set) data set, a longitudinal data collection from

1960-2009 of advocacy organizations, this analysis examines the presence of women leaders across advocacy sectors and over time as well as pay equity between recent female and male advocacy executives. While women do not reach representative parity with men advocacy nonprofit executives during the time frame, they increase in number and proportion from 1960-2009, representing nearly 38% of all leaders by the 2000s, which is notably higher than proportions of female executives in other fields (Shaiko 1996). Moreover, from the early 2000s through the early 2010s, women leaders in this sample are paid no different than male leaders.

This paper will attempt to unravel these unusual findings through a discussion of previous research on women's leadership in general and advocacy organizations in particular. In this analysis, the major hypotheses will examine to what extent the proportion of female leaders of advocacy organizations has increased over time and whether there appears to be a "glass cliff" for female leaders of advocacy organizations. Next, the paper will discuss the trends in leader compensation found in other sectors as well as the environmental factors that may shape gender dynamics in the advocacy sector. Then, using the data from LOADS, the factors associated with female leadership and executive leader compensation will be modeled and discussed. This analysis will focus on the major hypothesis that male and female leaders will be compensated equally for top advocacy leadership positions. Finally, the implications for the notable representation of female advocacy leaders and pay equity among these leaders will be considered.

## **Review of Literature and Research Expectations**

### *The Glass Ceiling Across Organizational Sectors*

The representation of women (or lack thereof) across professional fields has been of interest to researchers for some time. Rosabeth Moss Kanter's work from the late 1970s explored the issue of tokenism of women in a corporate setting, or the when women comprise a small minority of people in a firm and experience negative consequences from this position such as isolation and role constraints (Kanter 1977a, 1977b). In the years since then, studies have proliferated looking at gender inequality in a variety of professional settings. Louise Roth found that Wall Street systematically yet subtly discriminates against women and that family ultimately inhibits women's advancement (2006). In the legal field, Jennifer Pierce explores the double standards that challenge female—but not male—lawyers and paralegals (1996). Boulis and Jacobs' study of physicians found that while women enter medical school at about the same rate as men, women still face barriers within the field, including with attaining leadership positions (2008). Examining scientific careers, Xie and Shauman found that gender differences persist in the field and hinder women's careers, particularly when it comes to familial duties (2005). Meanwhile, among public interest nonprofits, Shaiko (1996) found that women dominated employment positions generally, but only filled 20% of leadership positions. Looking specifically at female business executives, women appear to have made advances over time, but perhaps still reflect the tokenism seen in Kanter's

work: In a study of female U.S. executives between 1992 and 2004, “while the number of females in senior executive positions has increased...females represent less than 2 percent of all CEOs in the year 2004” (Adams et. al. 2007). Yet, the overarching trend toward the proliferation of female leaders has some researchers optimistic that the societal patterns required to uphold such trends are taking hold: Eagly and Carli, in a meta-analysis of leader studies, suggest that the increases in female leadership may be the result of changes in women’s behavior and human capital, changes in leadership roles, changes in organizational practices, and changes in the broader culture (2003).

#### *Women Leaders in Advocacy Organizations*

Women have played visible roles historically in U.S. social movements, such as in the suffrage and temperance movements. While some women held leadership positions in particular movements, men most commonly occupied leadership roles. Prior to the 1960s, Theda Skocpol suggests that educated women have been a major leadership presence in voluntary organizations even if they have been in the minority overall as leaders (1999). In the period of this paper’s study, however, the gender dynamics of movements started to shift. Morris and Staggenborg note that the swell of women in universities after World War II gave women more opportunities to participate in social movements (2004). In particular, this growth of university women coincided with the rise of the civil rights movement. McAdam’s study of Freedom Summer volunteers for the 1964 the civil rights project found that

this experience was a wellspring for leaders of subsequent social movements, including the women's rights movements. Moreover, he found that female participants in Freedom Summer generally remained politically active longer than their male counterparts—McAdam suggests this may be due to the timing of the women's movement, emerging on the heels of the civil rights movement, while men may have found fewer activism opportunities after the decline of the anti-war movement (McAdam 1990).

Who was recognized as leaders in these movements, however, may underrepresent the role of women's leadership. Kuumba (2001) argues in her case studies of the U.S. civil rights movement and the South African anti-apartheid movement that social movements replicate the cultural structures of gender hierarchy and the narratives that emerge from the movements replicate these structures, consequently obscuring the role of women in movements. Moreover, she suggests that when women held leadership roles, they were often very constrained and that women may more often pursue leadership through networking and organizing rather than in formal positions. Similar to Kuumba, Robnett (1996) argues that women filled many leadership roles during the civil rights movement even if they weren't necessarily the movement's executive leaders. Since the work only looks at case studies spanning 1950-1970, however, it is possible that the realities faced by the women in these studies are different than women in other movements and across time. It is worth noting, though, Morris and Staggenborg's more recent assessment of female advocacy leadership: "[s]ocial movement leaders are...disproportionately male" (2004). Moreover, like Kuumba, Morris and



Staggenborg argue that studies of leadership tend to use narrow and hierarchical definitions of leadership that likely marginalize the actual role of women in these movements (2004). While, due to data limitations, this present study necessarily uses the sort of classification of leadership to which the authors object, understanding the gender dynamics across analogous positions over time can still offer a tremendous opportunity to analyze the leader dynamics of advocacy organizations as not previously possible.

Given the growth of opportunities that would promote female leadership in advocacy organizations as well as the differences in the way men and women may exercise leadership in advocacy organization, including the historical tendency of women to operate through less formal organization structures than men, the following major two-part hypothesis is proposed:

H1a: The number of female leaders will increase with time

H1b: The proportion of female leaders compared to male leaders will increase with time

The following related supporting hypotheses will also be tested:

H2: The later an organization is founded, the more likely it will be to have female leaders

H3: Female leaders compared to male leaders will associated with lower levels of organizational formalization

## *Movement Sectors*

Dynamics internal to individual movements and advocacy organizations may also impact the observed proportions of female leaders. Considering the business literature again, increased presence of female leaders may be both cause and consequence of more gender-balanced workplaces. For instance, Stainback and Kwon found that the presence of women in managerial positions was associated with less sex segregation at the workplace (2012). On a broader scale, Adams et. al. note that in examining Bureau of Labor and Statistics data, women were more likely to be CEOs in sectors where there were more women in the workforce (2007). This may be related to the findings on role models and female leadership. Previous work has found that female role models can “inspire[] women’s behavior” (Latu, Mast, Lammers, and Bombari 2013) and that role models can be important for women’s advancement within an organization (Mattis 2001). The distribution of female leaders and the opportunity for providing role models, however, is not expected to be even across organizational sectors. Liberal feminist organizations would obviously be expected to have the most female leaders of any organizational sector, while liberal organizations broadly would also be expected to be receptive to female leaders, as liberal organizations would generally be ideologically aligned with liberal feminist organizations. Conservative organizations, on the other hand, would be expected to be less amenable to female leaders. Consequently, these expectations suggest two control hypotheses for this analysis:

H4a: Liberal feminist organizations will be most likely to have female leaders, compared to liberal organizations and conservative organizations

H4b: Conservative organizations will be least likely to have female leaders, compared to liberal and liberal feminist organizations

Since the presence of role models may also be important for the number of female leaders, one would assume that being in a major city for advocacy organizations would generate more opportunities for women to be exposed to other female leaders. Therefore, the following supporting hypothesis is proposed:

H5: Organizations that have ever been located in a major city are more likely to have female leaders than organizations that have not been located in a major city.

#### *The Glass Cliff: Women in Distressed Organizations*

Even if women are appointed to leadership positions within an organization, the circumstances in which a leader may be consequential for both the organization being they led and the leader's career. Research on the idea of a "glass cliff" explores whether women are more likely to be appointed leaders of struggling or failing organizations than men, which may result in negative career consequences for a woman who was charged with commanding the proverbial sinking ship and is then blamed for the ship springing a leak in the first place. The evidence for the presence of a glass cliff is mixed. Ryan and Haslam (2007) found that women were more

likely to be appointed to company boards for organizations that had recently performed poorly. This research team also found that in an experimental setting, a female candidate was more likely to be chosen for an organization with declining performance than an equally qualified male candidate (Haslam and Ryan 2008). In another study however, women CEOs were not more likely to be appointed when companies were in worse financial health (Adams, Gupta, and Leeth 2009). Bruckmüller, Ryan, Rink, and Haslam, in a review of glass cliff literature, find that how organizational performance is measured affects whether analyses finds evidence of a glass cliff and suggests that “[t]his variability in findings suggests that the glass cliff is most apparent on measures of performance that are psychological rather than material” (2014: 205). While the present study does not have data on yearly organizational conditions such that would indicate distress or turmoil, it is known whether organizations ultimately die before the end of the sample. These organizations would be expected, then, to have experienced an unstable environment preceding the organizational death, regardless of whether an organization folded due to instability or was absorbed by another organization.

Given the mixed findings on the glass cliff, opposing major hypotheses will be tested:

H6a: Currently active organizations are less likely to have female leaders than dead organizations

H6b: Currently active organizations are more likely to have female leaders than dead organizations.

While organizations that eventually die are highly likely to have experienced organizational instability, another time period with high levels of organizational risk would be during an organization's founding and early formative years.

Stinchcombe's "liability of newness" suggests that organizations are particularly vulnerable to failure when they are recently founded (1965). Subsequent research from organizational ecology has generally found support for the liability of newness (Carroll 1983, Carroll and Delacroix 1982, Freeman, et. al. 1983), although organizational size may mitigate some of the liability (Aldrich and Auster 1986, Baum and Oliver 1991, Delacroix and Swaminathan 1991). Therefore, with the logic of the glass cliff, women might be expected to become leaders early in an organization's history when its stability is still tenuous. On the other hand, women may be less likely than men to be organizational founders. In the business sector, men start new businesses more than women (Reynolds, Carter, Gartner, Greene & Cox, 2002); Sullivan and Meek suggest that women may have less access than men to resources that are important for the founding of an organization (2012), which could potentially result in fewer female founders. Although the present data set only has data on the sequence of organizational leaders and not whether these first leaders were also founders, it is likely that early leaders were either founders or involved in the founding process. Since there are expectations in both directions for

whether a new organization is more likely to have male or female leaders, opposing supporting hypotheses are presented:

H7a: Initial organization leaders are more likely to be female than male

H7b: Initial organization leaders are more likely to be male than female

### *Pay Equity Between Female and Male Leaders*

In addition to whether women are able to attain top positions, another research concern whether women and men receive equal compensation when they hold these positions. For example, despite controlling for factors like performance, Castilla (2008) found that women were less likely to receive performance review-based salary increases than men. Even in contract work, where the development of firm-specific skills is not requisite and promotion opportunities are irrelevant, Fernandez found that women earned less compared to men over time and that small discrepancies in pay accumulated with time (2009). These differences, though, may be more pronounced in lower-level managerial positions than at the CEO level, where Adams, Gupta, Haughton, and Leeth found that male and female CEOs in the US were compensated similarly though not at other managerial levels (2007). Thus, the last major hypothesis is proposed:

H8: There will be no difference in compensation overall between male and female leaders of advocacy organizations.

### *Environmental Context*

Finally, the political and social context creating the environment for advocacy leadership may be important in determining the trajectory of dynamics for these positions and will be controlled for in the analysis. First, in a demographic sense, women have been increasingly been active labor force participants throughout this time frame of this study (Bureau of Labor Statistics 2011). Therefore, one possible explanation for the increases in female leaders is that there are simply more women available to take these positions. Given the aforementioned structural difficulties women in the workforce have faced; however, this trend is unlikely to account for a rise in women leaders.

More important than the sheer number of women in the workforce may be the cultural support for working women within a country. Themudo (2009), in an international comparative study, found that higher levels of women's empowerment was associated with a stronger nonprofit sector—where women tend to dominate the employment. Therefore, another consideration for moderating a trend toward female leaders may be governmental action promoting women's empowerment. Looking at Baumgartner and Jones' data set on Congressional Hearings (2013), the number of hearings on women's issues during the sampling time frame ranges from 0-10, with the highest numbers of hearings in a given year occurring from the late 1970s through the early 1990s.

Lastly, political opportunities may explain why conditions became favorable for increases in women's leadership positions generally and for movements with

high levels of women leaders more broadly. Political opportunity research in the social movements literature suggests that changes in government leaders or legislators can make the political structure more vulnerable to change or more sympathetic to a movement's cause. For instance, Lipsky (1968) found that protest was only successful under certain conditions and Morris (1981) found that the sit-in movement part of the civil rights movement relied on extensive pre-existing organizational networks to quickly identify and respond to changes in political conditions. Political opportunities were critical to the success of the American suffrage movement, as Banaszak (1996) found when comparing the success of the U.S. suffrage movement with the Swiss suffrage movement. Moreover, additional research has suggested that perceived opportunities are as important as actual opportunities (Kurzman 1996) and movements can generate political opportunities through strategic framing (McCammon 2001). Consequently, the political environment may also be an important factor in the rise of female leaders.

## **Data**

The data for the analysis of female leaders in advocacy organizations is taken from LOADS, which was compiled for this project and represents 1960-2009. This dataset includes both longitudinal and cross-sectional data; for this analysis the longitudinal data was employed, given the rich leader data that documents annually an organization's leader as well as the leader's gender. Although this information is not available for every single organization in the analysis, at least partial leader data



is available for nearly 80% of organizations in the sample. Organizations that are small, short-lived, old, radical, or a combination of these factors were most likely to lack leader data. Additional data collection beyond the scope of this current project may be able to ameliorate some of the issues stemming from lack of data. For instance, less formalized organizations may still be widely covered in the media and the aggregated coverage may yield information such as leader successions and organization structure (i.e. presence of members, chapters, and staff). Given the extensive undertaking this data collection would be, however, this was not feasible for the current project but would be a logical and achievable objective for subsequent data collection.

The resulting sample encompasses 49 organization-years, spanning 193 organizations<sup>19</sup>. To account for discrepancies in organization information more broadly, a sampling weight was developed to make the sample more representative of known population characteristics, adjusting for distribution of advocacy groups across issues areas during this time frame and organizational prominence. This weight is used in the analyses presented here and weighted figures reported throughout. See Chapter 2 for further information on the data used for this analysis.

For the analysis of leader compensation, a subset of data collected for LOADS is used. This data captures all available years of digitized IRS 990 tax returns for the organizations in the sample from the Urban Institute (IRS 2015), which ranges from 1999-2013, though specific years of available data varies by organization. A total of

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<sup>19</sup> No leader data was available in 1960 for the two organizations in the sample founded in 1960.

129 organizations are included in this analysis. The sampling weight is also used in the analysis of this organizational subset.

### *Outcomes*

The dependent variable for the analysis of leader gender composition is a dichotomous variable representing whether an organization had a female leader in a given year. Measuring leadership in this way has multiple advantages. In particular, this allows the presence of leaders to be analyzed independent of leader spells. For instance, if an organization only had one female leader but this leader served for forty years, the presence of a female leader is important along with the sheer amount of time the leader served. Measuring simply the number of female leaders, however, would account for the 40-year leader the same as a one-year leader unless additional statistical controls were included. In addition, this type of analysis allows female leader presence in a given year to be analyzed alongside other factors that may change gradually over time, with each unit of analysis essentially a snapshot in time for each organization and the environment in which it operated.

Once an organization's leader for a given year was identified, the leader was coded as being either male or female based on the person's name and/or known records of the leader (e.g. from an organization's website or *Wikipedia*). In a limited number of instances, the leader's gender could not be determined, such as when a leader is only noted by a set of initials and the observation predates Internet

records. These cases totaled 60 and were excluded from the analysis; when weighted, these cases accounted for just over half a percent of the leader observations.

For the analysis of leader compensation, the dependent variable represents the total leader compensation for a given year in a given organization as reported in U.S. dollars. Leaders receiving no compensation were excluded from the analysis, as these compensation figures skewed the distribution and represent a fundamentally different type of leader (i.e. the voluntary leaders) compared to the paid leaders (i.e. the professional leaders). This figure is composite of all the income that must be reported for a leader on a 990. Some of this information is only specifically asked of leaders in later years of the 990s analyzed, but since some of this information may be collapsed into reportable compensation from the earlier years, the calculated total compensation figure is used for every year. The reported streams of income that comprise total compensation include: leader's reportable compensation from the organization, leader's reportable compensation from related organizations, and leader's estimated amount of compensation from the organization and related organizations (which may include funds such as retirement benefits).

### *Predictors*

To measure the differences in leader composition and compensation over time, a continuous measure for the observed sample year is included. The measure corresponds to the year of observation; e.g. 1960, 1961, 1962, etc. In addition, the

differences generated by founding cohort are measured through the inclusion of a variable for founding year, which is measured as the year an organization was first established as determined through the various data sources. Like sample year, this is also measured continuously as the year of observation. As Stinchcombe (1965) suggests, the time of an organization's founding has long-lasting effects on its structure, so this measure was deemed more useful than organizational age alone, as founding year captures both founding environment and organizational age.

Next, organizational formalization is included to test the extent to which Kuumba (2001) and Robnett's (1996) observations about women's leadership styles may be true for the broader advocacy sector over time. This variable is measured continuously on a scale from 0-2, with 0 representing the lowest level of formalization and 2 representing the highest level of formalization. To construct this scale, organizations received a point for appearing in the *Encyclopedia of Associations (EoA)*, which indicates a base level of organizational formalization wherein an organization is recognized by those compiling the *EoA* and is able to successfully respond to their inquiry for information. A point is also given for having reported staff members, which also indicates that an organization has become formalized beyond the point where ad hoc or regular volunteers are sufficient to sustain organizational functioning. The *EoA* appearance data obviously comes from the *EoA* and most of the staff data does as well, since measure of first of staff appearance comes from the *EoA*, although the general presence of staff is occasionally taken from *Wikipedia* when the data is unavailable in the *EoA*.

An organization's general advocacy sector is also measured. This variable is derived from a more detailed coding of organizational sectors, which is discussed in Chapter 2<sup>20</sup>. The sectors used in this analysis are liberal, conservative, and liberal feminist organizations. The liberal category is the largest of the three categories and is used as the reference group in the analysis.

In order to represent effects of role models, a measure is included representing whether these organizations have ever been headquartered in a major city for advocacy groups—Washington, D.C. and New York, NY. A more detailed explanation of the construction of this variable is included in Chapter 2. This measure is dichotomous, with 1 representing a group ever having been located in a major city and a 0 representing a group never have been located in a major city.

Finally, in order to account for glass cliff effects, variables for organizational survival through the end of the sample as well as the leader order (i.e. whether a leader was an organization's first, second, third, etc.) were included in the models. To capture organizational survival, a measure of whether an organization was currently active during the last observed year was devised. This is a dichotomous measure with 0=not survived and 1=survived. Through the constructed sequences for organizational leadership, each leader was assigned an order number for a leader sequence measure. This measure allows differences between, say, the

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<sup>20</sup> The category breakdowns are as follows:

Liberal: Civil Rights (Civil Rights: Asian Black, Jewish, Latino, Native American, Other), Environment (Environment, Animals), LGBT (LGBT Rights, AIDS), Other Rights (Welfare Rights, Prisoners Rights, Civil Liberties, Consumer, Disabled Rights, Veterans, Children, Old Age), Progressive (Progressive, Communist, Gun Control), Anti-War

Conservative: Religious Right (Christian Right, Anti-Abortion), Conservative (Conservative, Nativist/Supremacist, Gun Rights)

Liberal Feminist: Women's Rights (Women's Rights/Feminism, Abortion)

founder and an organization's last recorded leader to be identified. This measure is continuous and is a minimum of one for any organization with leader data.

For the leader compensation models, the average number of hours per week leaders reported working on their organization's tax return is included as a continuous measure to control for the extent to which pay is associated with time worked. In addition, two measures of organizational characteristics are included: whether an organization has chapters and whether an organization has members. These are included under the assumption that leaders are compensated differently based on the scope of their responsibilities, as overseeing a research organization likely entails a different set of responsibilities than an organization with a national headquarters and chapters in all 50 states. Both of these measures are dichotomous, with 1 representing the presence of chapters and members for the respective variables.

### *Environmental Context*

Three contextual features are included in the female leader model, which attempts to account for the political and social environment that may correspond with the rise in female leaders. First, the rise in women's participation in the workforce is included as the five-year change in the proportion of women participating in the workforce over the entire female adult working-age population. Next, a variable for political environment is included to account for political regimes that may produce policies that are friendlier to women in the workforce and

contribute to women’s empowerment or are more favorable to the movement sectors that are more likely to have female leadership. This variable is measured as the extent to which the national government was Democrat or Republican during a particular year. For each year, a 1 was assigned having a Democratic president, a

**Table 10 - Descriptive Statistics for Measures in Leader Gender Model** (n=4,905; models weighted to account for selection into prominence sample and known distribution of organizational sectors)

	Mean	Std Dev	Min-Max
<b>Leader Gender</b>			
Leader gender (1=Female)	.36	.48	0-1
<b>Time-Based Factors</b>			
Sample Year	1993.72	10.40	1961-2009
Founding Year	1976.36	8.75	1960-1999
<b>Formalization</b>			
Level of organizational formalization	1.73	.47	0-2
<b>Organizational Sector</b>			
Liberal Organization	.69	.46	0-1
Conservative Organization	.24	.43	0-1
Liberal Feminist Organization	.07	.26	0-1
<b>Role Models</b>			
Organization Ever in a Major City	.64	.48	0-1
<b>Glass Cliff</b>			
Currently active organization	.87	.34	0-1
Leader sequence	2.12	1.77	1-14
<b>Environmental Context</b>			
5-year change in women’s labor force participation	.02	.02	-.01-.05
Congressional hearings on women’s issues	2.32	2.29	0-9
Political Environment	-.0002	1.90	-3-3

Democrat-dominated House of Representatives, and a Democrat-dominated Senate and a -1 assigned for each of these institutions that was Republican-dominated. The sum of these scores is then assigned to each year, ranging from -3 (such as in 2006) to 3 (such as in 1965). For years in which two presidents served, such as years in which a new president is sworn in, the president who served the most days in the

year is coded. For Congress, the counts are based on Election Day results. In years where Congressional majorities switch, such as in the case of the 107<sup>th</sup> Congress, the party in the majority for the most number of days is coded. This data was obtained from the online archives of the U.S. House of Representatives (2016) and the U.S. Senate (2016). Finally, the number of Congressional hearings on women’s issues is included for each year; this data was obtained from the Policy Agendas Project website (Baumgartner and Jones 2013). Descriptive statistics for the variables used in each model are included in Tables 10 and 11.

**Table 11 - Descriptive Statistics for Measures in Compensation Model** (n=1,067; models weighted to account for selection into prominence sample and known distribution of organizational sectors)

	<b>Mean</b>	<b>Std Dev</b>	<b>Min-Max</b>
<b>Compensation</b>			
Total leader compensation	129023.00	86614.66	599-745694
<b>Leader Gender</b>			
Leader gender (1=Female)	0.40	.49	0-1
<b>Time Commitment</b>			
Hours worked	37.34	9.27	0-80
<b>Organizational Sector</b>			
Liberal organization (ref.)	.78	.41	0-1
Conservative organization	.17	.38	0-1
Liberal feminist organization	.04	.20	0-1
<b>Time-Based Factors</b>			
Sample Year	2007.26	3.25	1999-2013
Founding Year	1977.80	.36	1960-1996
<b>Organizational Characteristics</b>			
Organization has chapters	.37	.48	0-1
Organization has members	.85	.36	0-1
Level of organizational formalization	1.85	.40	0-2
Organization ever in a major city	.51	.50	0-1

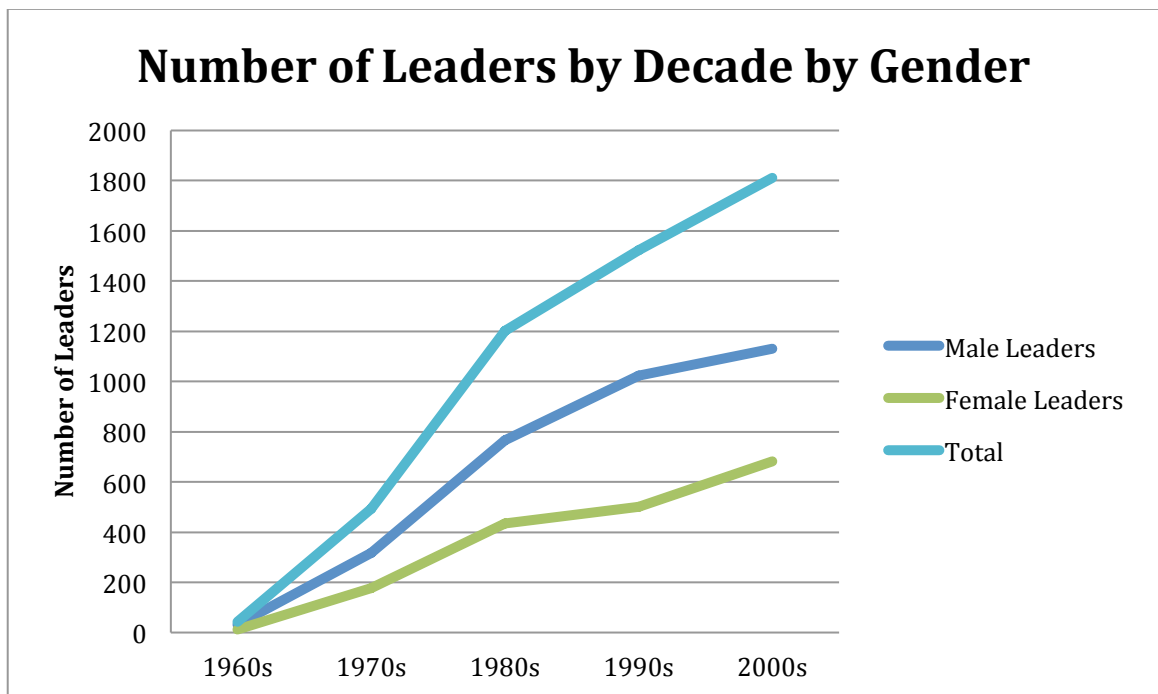


## Results

### *Leader Gender*

In order to evaluate the gender trend of advocacy leaders, first the number and proportion of leaders were examined descriptively. In 10, the number of female leaders can be observed to grow over time, although in similar proportions to male leaders. Table 12 confirms that the proportion of female leaders does increase by decade overall, though fairly gradually.

**Figure 10 – Observed Female Leader-Years by Decade**



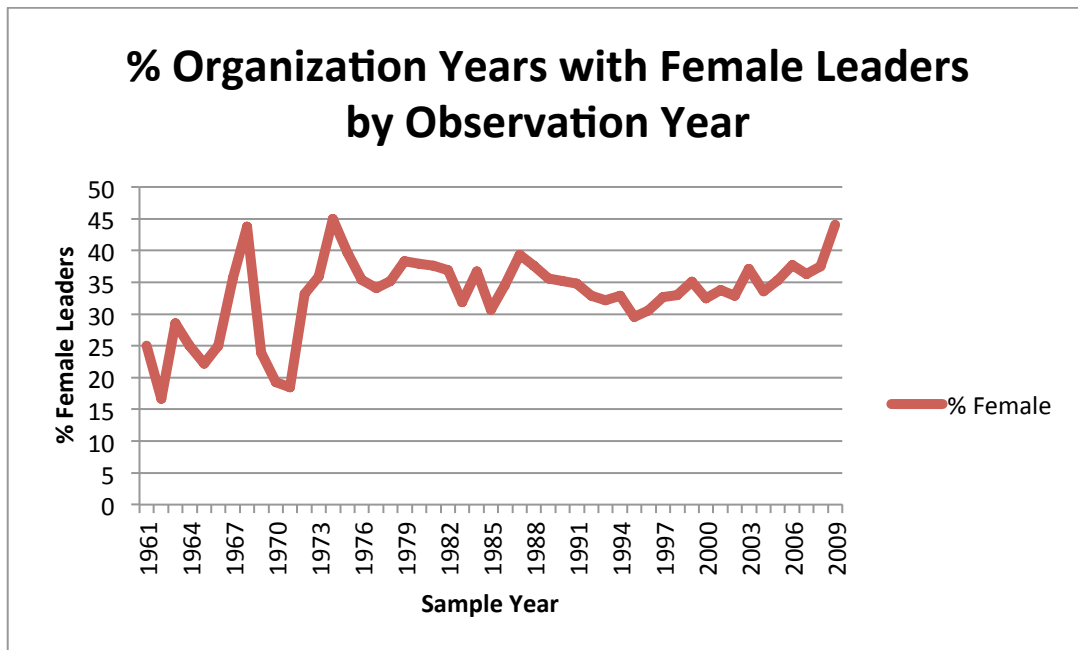
**Table 12 - Proportion of Leaders by Gender Per Decade** (weighted to account for selection into prominence sample and known distribution of organizational sectors)

<b>Decade</b>	<b>Female Leaders</b>	<b>Male Leaders</b>
1960s	28.3	71.6
1970s	35.8	64.2
1980s	36.2	63.8
1999s	32.8	67.2
2000s	37.5	62.4

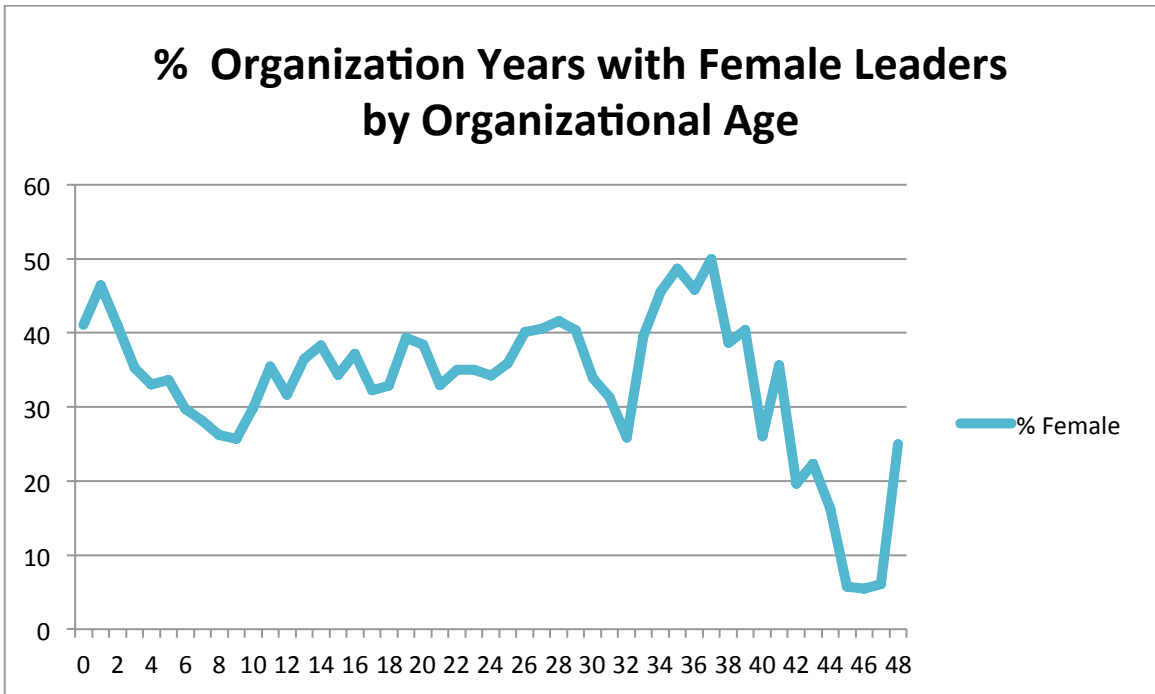
\*Proportions may not add up to 100 due to rounding

Separating age, period, and cohort effects for this rise in female leaders may help to further develop the findings. More complex modeling techniques in extensions of this research will best examine these differences, but for an incipient look into these trends, the proportion of organization years are graphed by period (expanding Table 12) (Figure 11), age (Figure 12), and cohort (Figure 13).

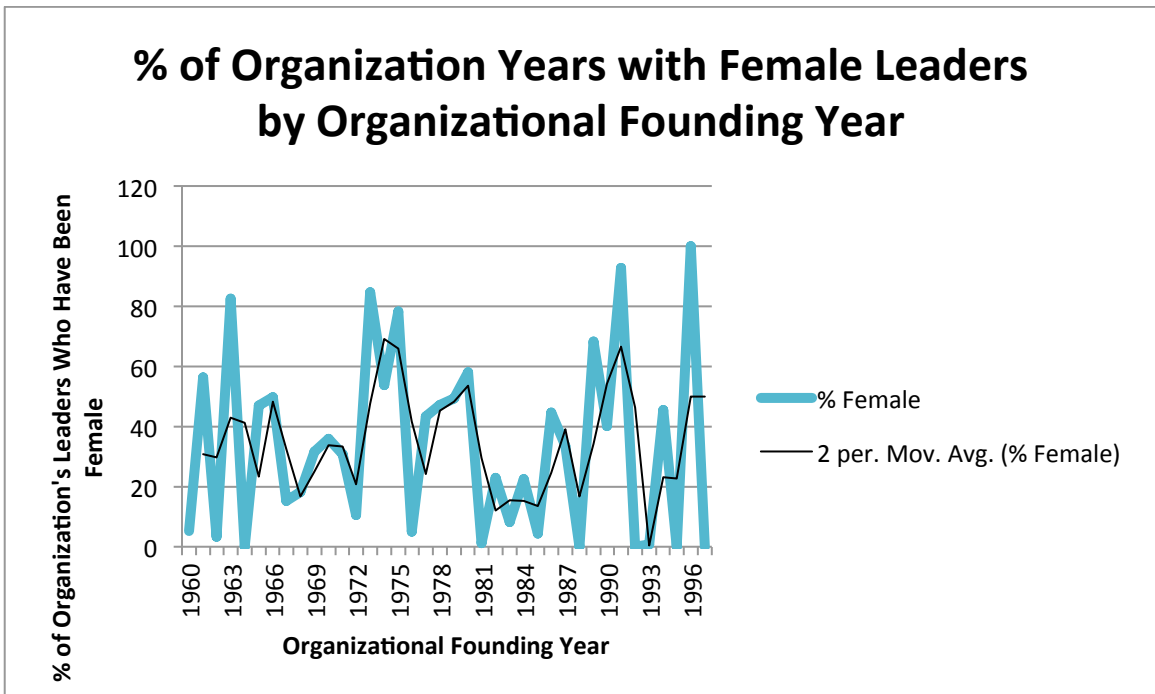
**Figure 11 - Annual Organization Years with Female Leader**



**Figure 12 – Organization Years with Female Leaders by Organizational Age**

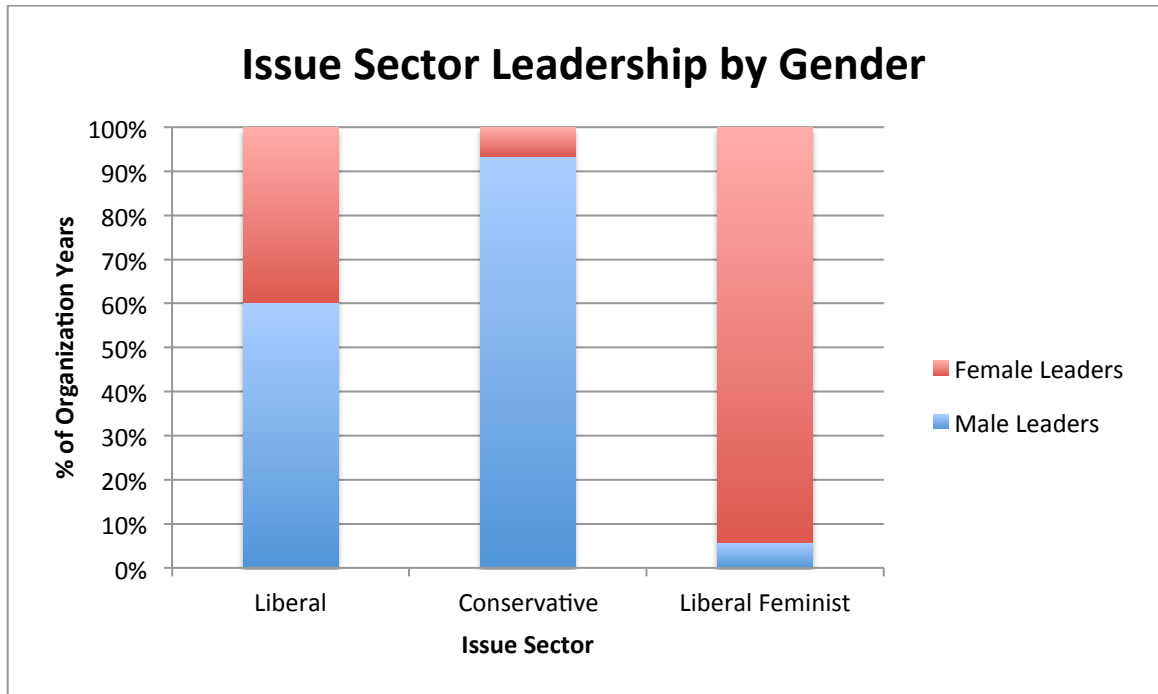


**Figure 13 – Organization Years with Female Leaders by Founding Year**



The overall rate of female leaders by organizational age is reasonably stable, hovering between roughly 30-40% for most ages. As organizations age, they tend to have fewer female leaders at the very oldest ages, which, given the sample, may mostly reflect the small n of observations beyond 40 years of age; these observations only comprise 1% of all observed organizational years. Meanwhile, founding cohort exhibits high rates of organizations with female leadership during particular time frames, namely the mid-1970s and in the early 1990s. This may reflect the types of organizations being founded during these time frames, as these periods coincided with the rise of the women's movement and the GLBT rights movement, respectively. Looking at the breakdown of leadership by issue sector, this is a plausible explanation, as women dominate 94% of organization years in liberal feminist organizations, while women comprise only 6.6% organization years for conservative organizations, many of which were founded in the late 1970s or early 1980s.

**Figure 14– Issue Sector Leadership by Gender**



To further assess the trends in the gender of advocacy organization leaders from 1960-2009, logistic regressions were run with the dichotomous outcome variable predicting the likelihood of having a female leader. The model employs the weight developed to account for likelihood of being selected into the sample based on prominence and normalizes the cross-sector distribution so that it resembles that of the population from which the sample was drawn. See Chapter 2 for more information on the weight construction. The results of the regression are displayed in Table 13. Since the contextual variables do not contribute to the model overall, the results from the full model without the contextual variables, Model 3, are discussed here. The results are presented in terms of odds ratios.

**Table 13 - Nested Logistic Regression of Predictors of Female Leaders by Organization-Year** (n=4,905; models weighted to account for selection into prominence sample and known distribution of organizational sectors; odds ratios reported)

	<b>Model 1</b>	<b>Model 2</b>	<b>Model 3</b>	<b>Model 4</b>
<b>Time-Based Factors</b>				
Sample year	1.01	1.02*	1.02*	1.01
Founding year	.98*	.99	1.02*	1.02*
<b>Formalization</b>				
Level of organizational formalization	.64***	.42***	.50***	.50***
<b>Organizational Sector</b>				
Liberal organization (ref.)	--	--	--	--
Conservative organization	--	.11***	.11***	.11***
Liberal feminist organization	--	24.90***	23.01***	23.12***
<b>Role Models</b>				
Organization ever in a major city	--	1.56***	1.48**	1.48**
<b>Glass Cliff</b>				
Currently active organization	--	--	.33***	.33***
Leader sequence	--	--	1.15***	1.15***
<b>Environmental Context</b>				
5-year change in women's labor force participation	--	--	--	.11
Congressional hearings on women's issues	--	--	--	.99
Political environment	--	--	--	1.01
Pseudo R <sup>2</sup>	.009	.19	.21	.21

\*p<.05 \*\*p<.01 \*\*\*p<.001

As the Figure 10 and Table 13 suggest, the likelihood of an organization having female leaders does increase positively and significantly with time, with each observed year increasing the odds of having a female leader by 1.02. In addition, organizations founded more recently are more likely to have female leaders, with the odds also significantly increasing by 1.02 for every year leader an organization was founded. Thus, hypotheses 1a, 1b, and 2 appear to have support.

As suggested in previous advocacy literature and posited in hypothesis 3, higher levels of formalization are associated with decreased odds of having a female leader at a highly significant level, with an odds ratio of 0.5 for every increase in level of formalization. The findings for organizational sector also follow the anticipated patterns and support hypotheses 4a and 4b, with liberal organizations being 23.01 times more likely to have a female leader than liberal organizations, while conservative organizations are .11 as likely to have a female leader as a liberal organization. Ever being located in a major city does have a significant increase in the likelihood of an organization having a female leader, with the odds being 1.48 times higher than organizations never located in a major city, thus supporting hypothesis 5.

Examining the glass cliff variables, there is mixed support for the concept. First, hypotheses 6a and 6b presented competing hypotheses regarding whether women are more or less likely to be leaders of organizations that do not survive to the end of the sample. The presence of a female leader in a given organization-year was 0.33 less likely in currently active organizations compared to dead organizations, thus confirming hypothesis 6a and suggesting that there may be a glass cliff effect in the advocacy sector, with women more likely to be associated with dead organizations. In examining the effects of leader sequence, however, the odds of having a female leader increased by 1.15 for every later leader in the sequence, confirming hypothesis 7b. This may indicate that the glass cliff concept may specifically apply to only established organizations and that men may be more likely to found or be involved at the early stages of organizational formation than women.

Shifting attention to Model 4, which contains the environmental context variables, it appears that environmental context as it is measured here does not significantly affect the presence of female leaders in advocacy organizations. This suggests that factors endogenous to advocacy sectors and individual organizations may be more important for shaping the trajectory of leader gender within these organizations as compared to nation-wide conditions.

### *Leader Compensation*

Now the results of the leader compensation models will be discussed. The factors contributing to differences in advocacy leader compensation are examined through OLS regression models with the outcome representing total leader compensation for a given organizational year. The results of this analysis are displayed in Table 14; nested results are reported but the findings for the full model (Model 4) will be discussed.

First, it is evident that there are no significant differences between the pay of male and female leaders in this sample of advocacy organizations, even when controlling for factors like hours worked, organizational sector, time, and organizational characteristics. This confirms hypothesis 8 and suggests that there is pay equity between genders, at least in the most recent time period.



**Table 14 – OLS Regression of Leader Compensation Organization-Year** (n=1,067; models weighted to account for selection into prominence sample and known distribution of organizational sectors)

	<b>Model 1</b>	<b>Model 2</b>	<b>Model 3</b>	<b>Model 4</b>
<b>Leader Gender</b>				
Leader gender	12109.48	5668.96	5367.91	-7066.197
<b>Time Commitment</b>				
Hours worked	1350.10***	1231.40***	1329.93***	1077.95***
<b>Organizational Sector</b>				
Liberal Organization (ref.)	--	--	--	--
Conservative Organization	--	-26620.12***	-32985.19***	-43418.99***
Liberal Feminist Organization	--	4728.15	-4092.62	6572.02
<b>Time-Based Factors</b>				
Sample Year	--	--	4498.47***	4141.21***
Founding Year	--	--	-3320.07***	-1292.52**
<b>Organizational Characteristics</b>				
Organization has chapters	--	--	--	35401.14***
Organization has members	--	--	--	9979.06
Level of organizational formalization	--	--	--	20215.04
Organization Ever in a Major City	--	--	--	35852.57***
R <sup>2</sup>	.03	.04	.18	.27

\*p<.05 \*\*p<.01 \*\*\*p<.001

Unsurprisingly, increases in the hours worked per week are associated with a positive and significant increase in pay. Surprisingly, however, there was a significant and large difference between the pay for leaders of conservative organizations compared to liberal organizations, with conservative organizations being associated with over a \$43,000 less in total compensation. Liberal feminist organizations were not significantly different from liberal organizations although a model not shown here indicates that being a leader of a liberal feminist organization compared to a conservative organization was associated with just under a \$50,000 increase in pay.

Looking at time-based factors, the more recently an organization was founded, the less it tended to pay. This makes sense, as older organizations are

likely to have acquired greater resources and sources of funding compared to newer organizations. Chapter organizations were associated with a significant and large increase in compensation, with having chapters being associated with over a \$35,000 increase in annual pay. This may be due to the increased organizational complexity and therefore increased responsibility of leading an organization with chapters. Increased organizational formalization also had a positive effect on compensation, likely due to similar reasons. Having members had no significant effect on compensation. Finally, being located in a major city had a positive and significant increase on compensation, which may be the partial result of differences in the cost of living. New York, NY or Washington, D.C. for instance, would tend to be more expensive than Berkeley Springs, WV, headquarters of Citizens United Resisting Euthanasia, or even Atlanta, GA, which had been home to the Student Nonviolent Coordinating Committee.

## **Discussion**

The enduring paucity of female leaders across organizational domains has been the source of much research and discussion. While the glass ceiling in advocacy organizations has yet to be completely broken, that women have been steadily making advances within the sector in terms of representation and the relatively high proportion of female leaders compared to other organizational sectors are unexpected findings. This may be parallel with the slow, but upward growth of women's representation among leadership in other fields (such as

demonstrated among CEOs in Adams et. al. 2007). In addition, this trend may be driven somewhat by specific movements, such as the liberal feminist movement, that are heavily female-dominated, but it does not appear that these movements are singly responsible for these effects. It is encouraging that women who do reach these executive positions appear to be paid on par with their male counterparts, suggesting that there are some measures of gender equality being attained in the nonprofit advocacy sector in recent years. While this study cannot address the pay equity between men and women at non-executive positions, as Adams et. al. (2007) suggests, is often the case even if top leaders generate similar earnings, it contributes to the understanding of the conditions under which discrepancies in pay by gender are mitigated.

For the other major area of focus for this study, the variables more directly testing the glass cliff effect do find an association between female leaders and organizations that are defunct at the end of the sample period. Given the current support of the glass cliff theory is mixed, the results suggest that there may be a glass cliff effect, but—as some of the mixed research suggests—context is important for the manifestation of the glass cliff. Women in this sample are not as likely to be early leaders of organizations, perhaps indicating that the glass cliff becomes relevant when a stable organization becomes unstable rather than when an organization starts out as unstable.

The supporting and controlling hypotheses also contributed notable insights into the dynamics of female leadership in the advocacy field. The level of organization formalization impacts the likelihood of having a female leader, which

suggests a few possible scenarios. As scholars of social movements have suggested, women tend to be less likely than men to occupy hierarchical leadership positions within social movement organizations (Kuumba 2001, Robnett 1996). This effect of formalization diminishing the likelihood of a female leader persists even controlling for leader order, suggesting that women simply are not just more often leading organizations in their early stages before formalization occurs and official leaders are established; rather, women are more likely organizational leaders later in the sequence of leaders. It's possible that this finding suggests another facet of the glass cliff effect—women may be more likely to be hired to lead not just distressed organizations, but perhaps also less formalized organizations.

Finally, while the distribution of female leaders among organizational sectors is unsurprising, as organizations more supportive of women's rights would be expected to be more likely to have a female leader, the distribution of compensation by organizational sector is rather stark in the differences between conservative and other organizational types. While it is not within the scope of the study to examine these differences in greater detail, the fact that conservative organization leaders make significantly less money than other leaders suggests that there are other factors that are operating to generate these results. For instance, these organizations may rely more heavily on volunteers or may not be able access grants or other sources of external funding as readily as other organizations, perhaps due to ideology.

## Conclusions

While the patterns of women leaders differ between organizational domains, some patterns of leadership appear to be common across these domains, such as pay equity at executive levels of U.S. corporations and the presence of a glass cliff under certain conditions. In addition, understanding how leader dynamics operate within the advocacy sector over the past 50 years is useful for identifying how these trends may have emerged in the first place and how individual organizations can capitalize on this information to provide fair workplaces in the future.

In order to generalize these findings in a meaningful way, however, a few limitations must be addressed. First, data was not evenly available across organizations in the sample. Although about 80% of organizations had some form of leader data available, the 20% of organizations without leader data probably look quite different from the other 80% (though it is difficult to know entirely, due to lack of available data). It is likely, however, that these organizations are less formal, more radical, older (if the organization is defunct), smaller, and more short-lived than the organizations that have leader data. Therefore, these findings should be viewed in the context of the data limitations and should be understood to represent mainly formalized, well-established, mainstream, current organizations. Similarly, the compensation analysis reflects a somewhat narrow band of organizations and in the near past, capturing information from only a recent period and only for currently active organizations registered with the IRS which also submitted a full 990. While some organizational sectors, like the business sector, are likely highly

formalized anyway due to stricter regulatory demands and may have more in common with the organizations represented here than the organizations that are not captured in this analysis, lending to similar patterns, the patterns that emerge here may not hold for the entire advocacy sector. In particular, organizations where leadership is non-hierarchical, such as Queer Nation<sup>21</sup>, are not represented in this analysis even though members may be performing roles with leader duties.

One way this present research can be expanded, then, is to analyze leaders using an expanded definition of the term. As has been noted earlier in the paper, the leadership measure being used in this paper uses a hierarchical definition of leadership, which may exclude other types of leadership from the analysis as well as organizations that choose to have a non-hierarchical leadership structure or have no leaders at all.

In addition, demographic factors such as education, class, race, and family status may also play a major role in determining who is hired for these leadership positions and may complicate the story presented here of the rise in female leadership. As Morris and Staggenborg note about the research on both Western and non-Western countries showing that movement leaders tend to be educated and from middle or upper classes: “[i]t is obvious that privileged class backgrounds provide leaders with financial resources, flexible schedules and social contacts often unavailable to the rank and file (2004). Oberschall (1973) observed early that movement leaders come from the highest levels of society because they have the least to lose if an organization fails (e.g., they may have family money and

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<sup>21</sup> In the entry for Queer Nation in the *EoA*, it is noted the group “[h]as no elected officials or hierarchy of power” (2009: n.p.).

connections to fall back on) but stand quite a bit to gain if they are successful (a leadership position in a noted organization). Clearly, gender is likely only a component of the changing faces of advocacy leadership and the interaction of gender with other factors should be examined in more detail in future research.

Moreover, this study presents another instance of where a glass cliff effect may be operating, but is unable to address the specific conditions under which a glass cliff emerges in a sector nor why women encounter this glass cliff. Future research may be able to test in a real-world setting the experimental findings of Haslam and Ryan (2008) that business leaders were more likely to select a female candidate instead of an equally qualified male candidate as a leader of hypothetical organizations in turmoil in part because women were believed to be better leaders in these situations. Such research may help to address whether glass cliffs are the result of women being perceived as better leaders in a crisis situation or women have more difficulty being hired at strong organizations compared to men and consequently are more likely to get hired at a struggling organization.

Overall, women have made major strides in advocacy organizations with both leadership and compensation. Moreover, in terms of representation in the highest ranks of leadership, this research reveals the surprising finding that women are actually much better represented within the advocacy sectors than in other organizational sectors. Other organizational sectors concerned with gender equality may benefit from studying in greater detail the dynamics of nonprofit advocacy organizations. While some elements of the sector may not be as readily generalizable to other sectors—for instance, the spirit of volunteerism that tends to

pervade advocacy groups and may attract women to work in the sector (Themudo 663) is unlikely to be found in the for-profit sector—other features may be easier to replicate in other industries, such as the presence of role models. In addition, the finding of this study that the measured environmental factors did not impact the likelihood of women leaders suggests that internal industry features and organizational structure may play greater roles in cultivating environments within organizations and organizational sectors that are conducive to women leaders and gender pay equity. Therefore, other organizational sectors may find it within their ability to make changes to promote the presence of female leaders and gender pay equity rather than have to wait for the broader environment to make these changes possible.

While women have made strides in advocacy leadership and appear to have reached pay equity, these issues are far from resolved in the sector. For one, women have not reached complete parity with men as organizational leaders. For the women who do become leaders, as suggested previously, it is unknown if only certain women are making it to the top. It is possible that women are still encountering racial and socioeconomic barriers to becoming organizational leaders. Furthermore, this study has not looked at the pay of mid-level organizational leaders, leaders in less formalized organizations (i.e., those not registered with the IRS), or non-hierarchical leaders such as those Kuumba discusses (2001). Issues of pay equity may persist along these dimensions, which may be valuable sites of study for future research.



Glass ceiling issues in the workforce are far from resolved and, even given current trajectories, appear likely to persist in the near future. The trends within the advocacy sector, however, may offer some hope that there are industries where these issues are being reduced with time and where gender no longer appears to dictate compensation among leaders. Future research and policy should facilitate these trends toward gender equity—with luck, they will be facilitated early and often.

**Chapter 6**  
**Conclusion**

The previous five chapters have presented an original data collection on advocacy organizations of the latter 20<sup>th</sup> and early 21<sup>st</sup> centuries as well as their leaders and have provided analyses of these data, addressing organizational formalization, leadership change, and the rise of female leaders in the sector. From among these discussions, a variety of major innovations and findings have emerged.

First, the data set represents advancement for advocacy and social movement research. The data collected for this project is multi-leveled, multi-sourced, and longitudinal, offering an array of data not often available for this sector. The data covers a significant period in advocacy history, from 1960-2009, which includes the rise of the new social movements in general and movements such as the civil rights, environmental, peace, women's rights, and LGBT rights movements, to name just a few. Moreover, the data set contains information about advocacy leaders, a topic that is usually treated as a "black box" in social movement research due to lack of systematic information. For the first time, data on the succession of advocacy leaders across issue domains and over time is available, offering preliminary insight into what these leaders look like and how they may impact the organizations they lead.

Next, the analysis of organizational formalization among advocacy organizations has yielded some important findings that corroborate previous formalization research on movement organizations and address long-standing theoretical questions about the nature of bureaucracy. The analyses in chapter 3 support the previous assertions from Zald and Ash (1966), Staggenborg (1988) and Cress (1997) that formalization in advocacy organizations is not an inescapable

eventuality nor is formalization a prerequisite for long-term organizational survival. The results do, however, suggest that formalization corresponds with an increased likelihood for organizational survival. This may be a fruitful area of future research, as uncovering a more direct mechanism that leads to organization death among organizations of different formalization levels may yield useful information about broader sector dynamics and the role organization life cycles play in these dynamics. In addition, it appears that founders may have only a limited effect on organizational survival. Thus, the “iron laws” of formalization—that formalization is necessary for survival and that oligarchy is inevitable in an organization—may be more aluminum than iron, holding true only in certain situations. Beyond the factors related to level of formalization, an organization’s time to formalization appears to be sensitive to a few conditions. Organizational survival was predictive of a longer time to formalization, while shorter times to organizational formalization were associated with the presence of members, high levels of formalization, and organizational age. The combined findings suggest that, as Edwards (1994) asserts, conditions external to organizations may be more important than conditions internal to organizations for inducing formalization.

Looking at predictors of leadership transitions, a few major trends dominated the findings. First, it appears that individual leader characteristics may be important for predicting leadership transitions. Gender affected the frequency of leader transitions, with female leaders being associated with a higher likelihood of leader transition in a given organizational-year than male leaders in each of the time periods examined (except for the last one) as well as in the overall model. In

addition, having chapters was associated with a higher likelihood of organization transition in the overall model, which may indicate that certain organizational structures are more conducive to facilitating leadership transitions than others, but in ways that appear to be independent from levels of organizational formalization. Finally, predictors of leadership transition varied over organizational periods. In the first period, “Formation” (1960-1980), recent founding years were associated with less frequent transitions and formalization actually suppressing leadership transitions during this time frame. During “Maturity” (1981-1996), longer times to formalization were associated with a lower likelihood of leadership transition and more recent founding years continuing to suppress leadership transitions. In the last time period, “Well-Established” (1997-2009), none of the factors tested were significant predictors of leadership transition, perhaps indicating evolving conditions within the advocacy realm that result in different conditions being associated with leadership transition than in the previous time frames.

An analysis of gender and organizational leadership produced some useful insights about the specific dynamics of gender in the advocacy sector. First, it is apparent that women have been serving in leadership capacities at increasing rates over the 50 years of the study and have been serving in leadership capacities at higher rates than has been found in other organizational sectors. In addition, specific organizational conditions were associated with a higher likelihood of female leaders. For one, less formalized organizations were more likely to have a female leader, which may indicate either a cause or consequence of female leaders—less formalized organizations may be more likely to recruit female leaders or perhaps

female leaders are less likely to formalize organizations than their male counterparts. Also, the analyses found evidence for the existence of a “glass cliff” in advocacy organizations, as female leaders were more associated with dead organizations than male leaders. This may indicate that troubled organizations are more likely to recruit a female leader, as has been found in studies of other sectors (Ryan and Haslam 2007, Bruckmüller, et. al. 2014). An analysis of executive pay among advocacy nonprofits from the early 2000s to the early 2010s yielded additional findings. There was no difference in the compensation for female and male leaders in this sample, which is consistent with other research that has found that female and male executives in other sectors tend to get paid similarly even if there are wage discrepancies by gender at lower levels of management (Adams et. al. 2007). Furthermore, the biggest wage discrepancies actually occurred by organizational sector as leaders of conservative organizations were paid dramatically less than leaders of liberal feminist or liberal organizations.

As with any study, there are limitations to this data set and research design that limit the generalizability of these findings. For one, the sample covers approximately one third of the known national advocacy groups founded in the period of interest. While efforts have been made to make the combined prominence and random samples representative of the overall organizational population, the necessity of partial reliance on a prominence sample may affect the overall representativeness of the sample. Additionally, the data collected on the combined samples was unequally available across organizations. Organizations that were smaller, defunct, short-lived, extremely new, or underground were

particularly difficult to find in systematic data sources. Consequently, some organizations are underrepresented in the data set, which may skew the findings toward larger, more mainstream, and more stable organizations.

Also, given the longitudinal nature of the data set, the data collected is much richer for the time periods that are post-internet. Older organizations and the earlier periods of long-standing organizations, for instance, are not captured in IRS data, which is only electronically accessible currently through the early 2000s. Older organizational information may become more accessible with time, but currently limits what data is available for particular time frames.

In addition, there were some discrepancies in the data found across different organizational sources. These discrepancies were few and minor, and the use of multiple data sources allowed conflicting data to be independently verified, but the discrepancies do underscore the bias inherent in any source used for data collection. For instance, an organization's founding year would sometimes be listed in the *EoA* differently for the same organization over time. Since the organizations themselves report the data, the source of the inconsistency may be with who filled out the report for Gale or who is controlling the internal organizational narrative at a given moment. While such discrepancies were infrequent enough that they are unlikely to distort the data set overall, it is difficult to know the extent to which systematic source error exists and how that might affect the data reported.

Finally, assembling leader data was challenging as a list of organizational leaders and their tenures is unavailable from a single centralized source, which has precluded extensive previous research on advocacy leaders. While the *EoA*

provided reasonable leadership coverage for a broad swath of organizations and IRS data was able to supplement this data for later years, the information available on leaders was available in only particular ways. For one, the *EoA* only provides information for an organizational contact, who may or may not be the organization's leader. While in almost all of the cases, the contact's title was also provided which allowed administrative assistants to be sorted from the executive directors, unless an organization listed their leader as the contact, it was difficult to obtain leader information for periods before the IRS data is available. Also, the leader data was limited to the sources that listed both particular organizations and their leaders, which may bias the leader data on an organizational level in ways mentioned previously. Since the organizations are generally responsible for updating their *EoA* information, it is possible that organizations changed leaders and this is never captured in the *EoA* data or not captured until much later. Finally, since organizations tend not to show up in the *EoA* until a few years after their founding, the earlier leader information is generally absent from most organizational records and, from the information available, it is often difficult to ascertain if an organization's first leader was also the organizational founder, limiting the assumptions that can be made about analyses of an organization's first leader.

One broad factor that limits the generalizability of the findings presented here is that the study is limited to advocacy groups. Although the research draws on literature that spans organizational sectors, since the type of research conducted here has been limited for advocacy groups, it is difficult to know the extent to which the findings apply to other organizational domains and the extent to which the



expectations derived from other organizational populations are applicable to this particular setting. Moreover, the study focuses on organizations founded after 1960. While the sampling strategy does capture a specific and notable period in advocacy organization history, it excludes organizations that were also very much part of the broader movements discussed here but are not included in the analyses due to their age. For instance, the Sierra Club has been a long-standing advocacy presence and has been the subject of noteworthy advocacy organization case studies (i.e. Andrews et. al. 2010, Baggetta et. al. 2013, Han et. al. 2011), but was founded in 1892, far outside the founding date scope of the study. Also, given the relative clustering of the founding dates the left-censoring of the sample produces, it is difficult to untangle period and cohort effects among these organizations, since the vast majority of organizations were founded and came of age in similar time frames.

Despite these limitations, this data set offers the possibility of much potential future research. For one, the current data set is quite extensive and the chapters here only tap a small portion of potential research. The collection of additional data, however, would strongly enhance the data set and its power to address a variety of topics. First, extending the organizational data would allow for more complete organizational data. For the aforementioned organizations on which it was difficult to collect information, the use of additional sources, especially newspapers but also monographs and periodicals, would likely have the greatest potential for expanding the representation of organizations the first round of data collection insufficiently addressed. In addition, the identification of additional sources that could offer

systematic data over time could also provide another angle of coverage and improve the breadth and accuracy of the data set. Expansion of the years covered in the data set could also prove beneficial. The current data set ends at 2009 but could be easily expanded into more recent years. Expanding the data to include earlier-founded organizations would be more difficult, as the earliest years of the data set coincide with the earliest years of *EoA* publication, but incorporation of news sources may be one potential way to collect data on older advocacy cohorts. Also, expanding the organizations in the study in general may offer a more complete look at the sector. In addition, the initial data collection includes information on organizational mission that has not been systematically coded and analyzed yet; this could generate findings on whether advocacy organizations experience mission drift and what factors most contribute to the phenomenon.

The expansion of leader data may be among the most productive directions of future research. With the current data collection, the most difficult aspect of the collection was tracking down the names of leaders and, with the available sources, generally only name, leader sequence, and gender were identifiable. Given that the names of the leaders now are known, though, it would be possible to expand the data collection to include more detailed biographical information on these leaders. In particular, a leader's educational background—both degree and institution—could be useful in studying prestige effects and whether there is a trend toward “lawyerization” among advocacy leaders. Additionally, leaders' biographic availability could prove informative, such as leaders' marital and family status. Leaders' positions before and after their executive advocacy roles could shed light

on advocacy career trajectories and indicate whether leaders tend to enter these positions from within an organization, from other advocacy leadership positions, or from other fields such as government or business and what kinds of positions these leaders go on to hold after their advocacy leadership tenure. Finally, while the current research looks exclusively at gender for demographic characteristics, future research could benefit from the inclusion of demographic information such as race.

One area of future research that could prove especially useful in providing information on both organizational and individual levels is the expansion of the organizational interviews conducted with present leaders. For the present study, the interviews have been useful to alerting the researcher to trends and histories of individual organizations, but in the aggregate, further interviews could reveal broader trends that are not readily apparent in the current data. Also, the expansion of interviews across organizational sectors and geography would enhance the diversity of perspectives included in the qualitative component of the research.

While this present study likely represents only the start of a new thread of research, the possibilities of this research are promising. The data set compiled for this study expands significantly the opportunities to compare the trajectories of advocacy organizations and their leader over time. The information presented here establishes baseline expectations for future research on the subjects explored here, both within and beyond the advocacy sector. Perhaps most importantly, the study starts to crack open the “black box” of social movement research: leadership. The data collection follows the command of Morris and Staggenborg (2004) that

“...social movement analysts need to open up the black box of leadership and develop theories and empirical investigations of how leadership affects the emergence, dynamics, and outcomes of social movements” (190). This information is both historically illuminating and potentially vital to current advocacy organizations and those who create rules and regulations that govern these organizations. This study contributes much to what is known about advocacy organizations and their leaders, if nothing but how much more there is to learn.

**Appendix A**  
**Interview Schedule**

### **Interview questions:**

1. What is your background? (e.g. where did you grow up, where were you educated). How did this background help you prepare for your current job?
2. How did you become interested in working for an advocacy organization? Where had you worked prior to this position? Do you intend to continue working in the advocacy field? Had you previously been involved with this or other advocacy organizations, either as a volunteer or as staff? What is your leadership philosophy?
3. What is the history of your current organization? How has it changed over time (e.g. strategies, tactics, issue focus)? What direction do you see this organization heading in the future?
4. How have previous leaders shaped this organization? How does the leadership structure affect the organization's decision-making and operation? What have previous leadership transitions been like for this organization? What was your own transition to leadership like?
5. What other organizations do you interact with? Do you cooperate with other organizations? Compete with other organizations? How has the field changed over time? Do you work with organizations outside of your organizational field?
6. Are there organizational archives?
7. Is there anything else you wanted to talk about?

## **Appendix B**

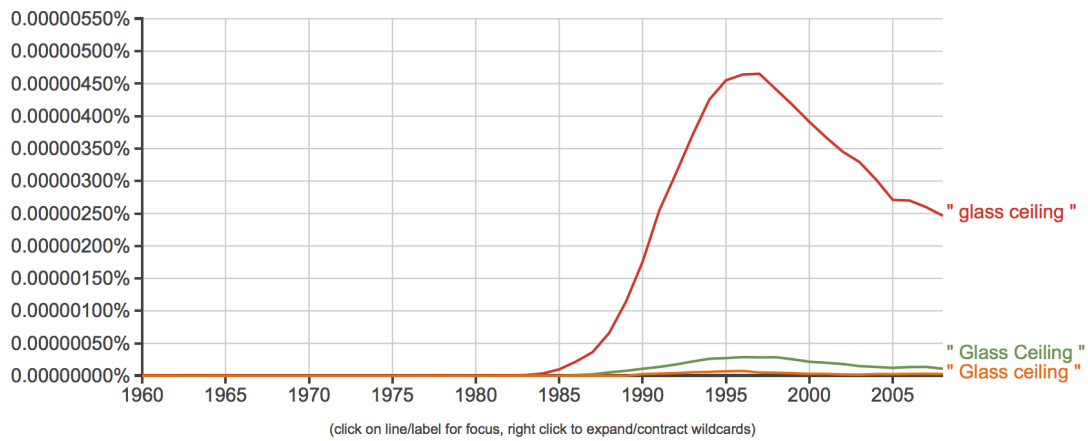
### **Google Ngram Graph of “Glass Ceiling”**

# Google Books Ngram Viewer

Graph these comma-separated phrases: "glass ceiling"  case-insensitive

between 1960 and 2008 from the corpus English with smoothing of 3 [Search lots of books](#)

Replaced "glass ceiling" with " glass ceiling " to match how we processed the books.



Google Ngram Viewer, "Glass Ceiling." <http://books.google.com/ngrams>. Accessed

April 12, 2016.



**Appendix C**  
**Codebook for LOADS Project**

### **General identifying information:**

**caseid** – number attached to each individual line of data; used to readily identify errors when conducting data analyses and ensuring the data set is restored to the correct order when the spreadsheet is sorted during data input procedures. This is automatically assigned with each line of data.

**Organization** – this is the organization name as given in the original samples. Note this can differ from the organizational name at different points in time.

**Org ID** – this is a unique ID number assigned to identify the data attached to each organization.

**Survey Weight** – the survey weight as designed for this data set.

### **Sample Year**

3000 = master year (used to identify cross-sectional organizational information that is not tied to a specific date)

All other years = corresponds to the year of data. YYYY.

### **Data from Ed Amenta, et. al.**

**Movement** – social movement to which an organization belongs, as provided in the original sample from Amenta et. al. (2009).

**Amenta Sector ID** – Numeric indicator of sector from Amenta et. al.

These sectors include:

- 1 – AIDS
- 2 – Abortion and Reproductive Rights
- 3 – Animals
- 4 – Anti-Abortion
- 5 – Anti-Alcohol
- 6 – Anti-Smoking
- 7 – Anti-War

- 8 – Children’s Rights Protection
- 9 – Christian Right
- 10 – Civic
- 11 – Civil Liberties
- 12 – Civil Rights Asian
- 13 – Civil Rights Black
- 14 – Civil Rights Hispanic
- 15 – Civil Rights Jewish
- 16 – Civil Rights Native Americans
- 17 – Civil Rights Other
- 18 – Communist
- 19 – Conservative
- 20 – Consumer
- 21 – Democratic Party-Left
- 22 – Disabled Rights
- 23 – Environment or Conservation
- 24 – Farmers
- 25 – Feminism or Women’s Rights
- 26 – Gun Control
- 27 – Gun Rights
- 28 – LGBT Rights
- 29 – Nativist/Supremacist
- 30 – Old Age
- 31 – Prison Reform and Prisoners’ Rights
- 32 – Progressive

33 – Veterans

34 – Welfare Rights

**Sector** – Broad sector derived from collapsed categories from Amenta et. al. (2009)

**Sector Number** – Numeric indicator of broad sector from collapsed categories

These sectors include:

1 – Other (Civic, Health)

2 – Religious Right

3 – Civil Rights

4 – Environment

5 – Women’s/Abortion Rights

6 – LGBT Rights

7 – Rights: Other

8 – Conservative/Right

9 – Progressive/Left

10 – Anti-War

**Prominence Rank** – prominence rank order for *New York Times* appearances (i.e. 1 = most prominent, 2 = second most prominent, etc.); this is the rank provided with the prominence sample initially

**Prominence Articles** – original number of articles associated with each organization; may be no longer accurate as data was subsequently cleaned and prominence scores adjusted.

**Random Rank** – prominence rank provided with the random sample

**Random Articles** = number of articles in which the organization appears (from Amenta)

Number = number of articles

. = missing

**In prominence sample** = whether an organization is part of the prominence sample from Amenta

1 = in prominence sample

0 = not in prominence sample

**In random sample** = whether an organization is part of the random sample from Amenta

1 = in random sample

0 = not in random sample

### **General Fixed Organizational Data**

**Founding year** = year founded. Most common year across sources used if there were discrepancies. If only founding decade known, the year ending in 5 of the founding decade was used (e.g., 1965). If in EoA but no date given, used first appearing year minus six (based on Bevan et. al.) If founded “early” in a decade, year used ends in 2; if founded “late” in a decade, year used ends in an 8.

**Founding cohort** = corresponds to period in which organization was founded, 19960=6, 1970=7, 1980=8, and 1990=9.

**Death year** = year organization folded, absorbed by another organization, or merged into a new organization and was the smaller party in the merger or assumed a demonstrably different identity if an equal merger. When direct evidence of death found, first year the organization stops appearing in the EoA is used as a proxy (or last year an address was available). If organization dies outside of the sampling frame (i.e. after 2010), organization death not coded

**Cause of death** – if known and applicable, the cause of an organization’s death. Enter as a text string.

**Is organization still active at the end of the study?**

0 = Not active

1 = Active

. = unknown

**Years active in study** – years between an organization’s founding and death or between an organization’s founding and the end of the sampling time frame (2009).

**IRS rule date** – date reported in IRS records that organization received 501(c) status.

**Time to IRS registration** – years between an organization’s founding and the year of receiving 501(c) status

**Overall chapter organization**

1 = has chapters

0 = does not have chapters

**Overall member organization**

1 = has members

0 = does not have members

**Nonmember organization**

1 = nonmember organization

0 = member organization

**Staff Ever**

1=has staff

0=does not have staff

**Year of first staff appearance** – first year staff members are reported for an organization

**Adjusted time to first staff appearance** - since staff appearance is taken from the *EoA*, the first appearance of staff can’t occur any earlier than an organization appears in the *EoA*. To normalize the data for this, this reflects the number of years after an organization appears in the *EoA* that it first reports staff members (0=organization reported staff on the first year it appeared in the *EoA*).

**Overall leaders elected**

1 = Leaders elected

0 = Leaders not elected

**2 Formalization Raw Score** – An organization’s formalization score based on the 2-factor calculation. Ranges from 0-2 based on whether an organization appears in the *EoA* and reports having staff.

**3 Formalization Raw Score** - An organization’s formalization score based on the 3-factor calculation. Ranges from 0-3 based on whether an organization appears in the *EoA*, reports having staff, and is registered with the IRS.

**Composite time to formalization** – sum of the time to formalization in years; includes time to first *EoA* appearance, time to first staff appearance (non-adjusted), and time to time to IRS registration.

**Time to formalization average** – The composite time to formalization divided by the number of factors on which there was information.

**Adjusted composite time to formalization** - sum of the time to formalization in years; includes time to first *EoA* appearance, time to first staff appearance (adjusted), and time to time to IRS registration.

**Adjusted time to formalization average** – The adjusted composite time to formalization divided by the number of factors on which there was information.

### **Organization Headquarters Variables**

*For these variables, “Major City” = having a headquarters located either in Washington, D.C. or New York, NY.*

**Located in a Major City Annually:** This is a longitudinal indicator, conveying whether in a specific year an organization was known to be located in a major city. In the absence of data on a specific year, the most recent known location within the past three years is used

**Last Location in a Major City:** This indicates whether the last location of an organization was in a major city, whether the last due to organizational death or the end of the sample.

**Most Common Location in a Major City:** This indicates if the majority of observed location-years are in a major city. In the rare occurrence of a tie, organizations were coded positively.

1 = Majority of location-years in a major city

0 = Majority of location-years not in a major city

**Always in a Major City:** This indicates if an organization has been headquartered in a major city throughout their existence.

1 = Organization always in a major city

0 = Organization not always in a major city

**Moved to a Major City:** This indicates if an organization at any time moved their headquarters from a major city to a non-major city. This is coded even if organizations later move back to a non-major city.

1 = Organization moves to a major city

0 = Organization does not move to a major city

**Moved Away from a Major City:** This indicates if an organization at any time moved their headquarters from a non-major city to a major city. This is coded even if organizations later move back to a major city.

1 = Organization moves away from a major city

0 = Organization does not move away from a major city

**Ever in a Major City:** This indicates if an organization has ever been headquartered in a major city throughout their existence. This measure includes organizations that have always been in a majority city and have moved to or from a major city.

1 = Organization ever in a major city

0 = Organization never in a major city

### **Leader Variables**

**Leader name:** This is the leader identified as being in charge of an organization in a given year. Derived from all sources.

**Leader spell:** This is a unique numeric identifier for each leader that is used for every year leader holds her position. The number is 4 or 5 digits, with the first 3 digits representing the organization's ID number (e.g., 101) and the last digit representing the place in the leader sequence the leader held (e.g. 6 – as in the organization's 6<sup>th</sup> recorded leader). The combined leader spell ID in this case, then, would be 1016.



**Leader gender:** This variable indicates whether a leader is male or female

1=Leader is female

0=Leader is male

9=Leader gender unknown

**Leader sequence:** This is the order in which a given leader held this position in the organization (first leader, second leader, third leader, etc.). Recorded as 1, 2, 3, etc.

**Year of leader tenure:** This refers to what each year of observation corresponds to in terms of the leader's tenure – e.g., the first year a leader held office, the second year a leader held office, etc.

**Total leader tenure:** This refers to the total number of years a leader held a position.

**Average leader tenure:** This is an organization-level measure that represents the average tenure of across all of an organization's years for all years with identified leaders.

### **Longitudinal indicators for survival analyses**

#### **Organizational birth in year**

1 = Organization founded in this year

0 = Organization not founded in this year

#### **Organizational death in year**

1 = Organization died in this year

0 = Organization did not die in this year

#### **Year with leader transition**

1 = Leader transition occurs in this year

0 = Leader transition does not occur in this year

## **Encyclopedia of Associations Data**

**Organization Name** – The name of the organization that appears in the *EoA* entry for that year. For example, “Common Cause,” or “Environmental Defense Fund.”

**Year of observation** – This is the copyright year for the edition of the *EoA* being used. YYYY.

**Year organization first appears in EoA** – This is the first year an organization has an entry in the *EoA*. YYYY.

**Time to first EoA appearance** – This is the difference between the organization’s founding year and the year an organization first appears in the *EoA*.

**Keyword** – this is the keyword provided in the *EoA* entry. Depending on the era, the location of this keyword may differ. The keyword may be underlined as part of the organizational title or listed specifically in the entry.

**First Entry** – each organization will only receive a “1” for one year:

1 = This entry is the first one that appears for the organization

0 = This entry is not the first one that appears for the organization.

**Last Entry** – This is only coded if an organization stops appearing in the *EoA* before the end of the sampling time period (2009). Surviving organizations will only have 0s for this variable.

1 = This entry is the last one that appears for the organization

0 = This entry is not the last one that appears for the organization.

**Edition** – This is the *EoA* edition from which the entry was taken. The edition number often appears on the cover but can also be taken from the copyright page.

**Copyright year** – This is the copyright year listed on the copyright page. Note that this may differ from the year on the *EoA*’s front cover. YYYY.

**Entry number** – this is the entry number that is displayed at the beginning of each organizational entry and is how the organizations are listed in the index for most years. Prior to entry numbers, the page number can be listed.

**Founding year** – This is the founding year listed in the entry. Note that across years, sometimes organizations will report different founding year. Enter the one that is listed for the particular year being coded.

**Leader/Contact** - The contact name listed for the organization.

**Leader/Contact title** - The title of the contact person listed for the organization.

**Headquarters City** - The city listed in the entry for the organization.

**Headquarters State** - The state listed in the entry for the organization. This should be the two-letter state abbreviation: GA, FL, TX.

**Headquarters Zip** - The zip code listed in the entry for the organization.

**Members** - The number of members listed, if any.

**Staff** - The number of staff listed, if any.

**Budget** - The budget listed, if any.

**Regional Groups** - The number of regional groups listed, if any.

**State Groups** - The number of state groups listed, if any.

**Local Groups** - The number of local groups listed, if any.

**Section** - The *EoA* section in which the entry appears; e.g., Public Affairs. This will be listed at the top of the page on which an entry appears.

**Mission** - The complete narrative organizational description should be included here.

### **IRS Data**

**990 Year on Form** - year that appears on the form, e.g. "2012." Note that this may be different from the year that NCCS lists for the tax return. For consistency, the date on the form is the one being used. When two filings have the same years listed, the return filed second is the one being used.

**990 Available** - code a 1 if a 990 is available for the organization for a particular year. This probably looks a little redundant but when I combine it with the rest of the data, it will be really important. Don't worry about adding any extra years to the spreadsheet, just code this variable for the years that are available. If no 990 is available, code the year as 2014 and a 0 in the 990 available column.

**NTEE/NTEE Description** – this is the code the IRS uses to classify organizational activity. You can find it under the “details” tab of the organizational profile. The NTEE code (e.g. Q70) can go in the NTEE column and the description (e.g. “International Human Rights”) can go in the NTEE description column. This information can be repeated for every year.

**Rule Date** – enter as a year, e.g. 1992. This is the year an organization received its nonprofit status with the IRS.

**IRS Type** – this can be entered as a string of numbers/text, e.g. 501c3

**990 Year – NCCS** – use the date listed on the link from the page where you download the 990

**990 Year – on form** - use the year listed on the form in the upper right hand corner; this may differ from the date listed on the link

**Name of Organization** – this is in box C on the first page.

**Principal Officer** - this is in box F on the first page. Note: This information is only available 2008 and after. For years before then, leave blank.

**Is the Principle Same as Leader** - come back and code this after you’ve completed the leader part at the end of the coding. Note: Will only be codable 2008 and after.

**Gross Receipts** - This is in box G on the first page from 2008-present, in box L in 2007 and before

**Year of Formation** – this is in box L on the first page. (Not available 2007 and before)

**Mission**- This is in Box 1 of Part I on the first page. Just record whatever is written in this section – I will be using this to track organizational goal transformation. Before 2007, this information can be harder to find but generally seems to appear in Part III.

**Leader Name and Leader Title** – these both come from column A (Title in column B 2007 and before)

**Average hours per week** – fill in what is in column B

**Leader's reportable compensation from the organization** – Column D

2007 and before – just “Compensation,” column C

**Leader's reportable compensation from related organizations**- Column E

**Leader's estimated amount of other compensation from the organization and related organizations** – Column F

**Total leader compensation** – this should add up automatically though if you add new rows you may need to copy the formula

**Leader 2 columns** – same as above for when there are two candidates for main leader

### **Wikipedia Data**

**Year retrieved** – The year the data was accessed for research since Wikipedia is not a static source. YYYY.

**Founding Year/Death Year** – year listed in entry if any; if Death Year doesn't apply, just mark N/A in the column

**Cause of Death** – if you see anything noted on the page, include it in the column

### **Organization Still Active**

1=Yes

0=No

2=Unknown

**Headquarters City, Headquarters State** – If listed in the entry, include in these columns; if previous HQ locations are mentioned, use the current one and make a note in the notes column that others are listed. State should be the two-letter code; e.g. PA, NY, WA.

**Members** – Whether an organization has members as referenced in the entry

1=Yes

0=No

2=Unknown

**Members** – If membership numbers are listed, include the number of them in this column.

**Staff** – Whether the entry reports the organization as having staff members; this may be difficult to figure out so don't worry if it's not often mentioned.

1=Yes

0=No

2=Unknown

**Staff** – If number of staff members is listed, include them in this column

**Founder(s)** – If the article mentioned who started the organization, include their names in this column.

Is the founder still leading the organization?

1=Yes

0=No

2=Unknown

**Current leader** – Name of current leader. Sometimes who the leader is isn't obvious – send me an email in these cases.

**Information on previous leaders** – If the article talks about leaders other than the founder or current leader, even if just a list, put a 1 in this column (0 if none)

1 = article has information on previous leaders

0 = article does not have information on previous leaders.

**Chapters** - If the entry references the organization as having chapters, code 1 for Yes; otherwise, 0 for no.

1 = organization has chapters

0 = organization does not have chapters

2 – whether organization has chapters is unknown

**Leader elected or appointed** – This is unlikely to be in many articles but if you happen to find evidence of either, make a note. A leader that is appointed by the old leader or selected through hiring committee would be appointed; a leader that comes to power through organizational elections would be elected (NOW is a good example of elected leaders).

**Link to page** – A link to the Wikipedia page you used for collecting this information.

**Notes** – Any additional information or things that should be noted about the data.

### **Organizational sources**

#### **Organizational data from *EoA* ever**

1 = Organizational data available from the *EoA* at any point in time

0 = Organizational data not available from the *EoA* at any point in time

#### **Organizational data from *EoA* in this year**

1 = Data from the *EoA* was available in this year

0 = Data from the *EoA* was not available in this year

#### **Organizational data from IRS ever**

1 = Organizational data available from the IRS at any point in time

0 = Organizational data not available from the IRS at any point in time

#### **Organizational data from IRS in this year**

1 = Data from the IRS was available in this year

0 = Data from the IRS was not available in this year

**Organizational data from Wikipedia ever** - Coded 1 if organization has a Wikipedia page or organizational information on another Wikipedia page. This code is the same for all years since information is not collected longitudinally.

1 = Organizational data available in Wikipedia

0 = Organizational data not available from Wikipedia

#### **Organizational data from organization's website**

1 = Organizational data taken from organizational website

0 = Organizational data not taken from organizational website

### **Organizational data from the *New York Times***

1 = Organizational data taken from organizational website

0 = Organizational data not taken from organizational website

### **Organizational data from miscellaneous**

1 = Organizational data taken from miscellaneous source (record in “notes” column)

0 = Organizational data not taken from miscellaneous source

### **Organizational data from the *EoA* Public Affairs section data set**

1 = Organizational data taken from Public Affairs data set

0 = Organizational data not taken from Public Affairs data set

### **Organizational data from Erik Johnson’s *EoA* environmental group data set**

1 = Organizational data taken from Erik Johnson’s data set

0 = Organizational data not taken from Erik Johnson’s data set

**Notes** – any additional organizational notes can be recorded here.

### **Contextual Data**

**Proportion of women in the workforce** – the proportion of women in the workforce for a given year

**Five-year change in women’s participation in the workforce** – five year change of previous variable.

**Number of Congressional hearings on women’s issues in year** – count of hearings on women’s issues in a given year

**Number of Congressional hearings on women’s issues in year squared** – previous variable squared

**National Political Context** – scaled variable from -3 to 3 representing how Democrat or Republican the national government was in a given year.



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## PUBLICATIONS

- Scheitle, Christopher P., **Erica J. Dollhopf**, and John D. McCarthy. Forthcoming. "Spiritual  
Districts: Making Sense of U.S. Communities with Highly Concentrated Religious  
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Publications During Presidential Elections, 1960-2008." Available on the Donald T.  
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## HONORS AND AWARDS

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- 2010-2016 **Graduate Scholar Award**, Pennsylvania State University
- 2010 **Campbell Prize**, Lehigh University
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