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**Student Employee Unionization:
A Comparative Study of Four Canadian Universities**

Heather Fussell

**A Thesis
in
The Department
of
Political Science**

**Presented in Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements
For the Degree of Master of Arts at
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Abstract

Student Employee Unionization:

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Heather Fussell

Graduate students employed as teaching assistants, lab demonstrators and research assistants have been attempting to form unions at Canadian universities since the 1970s with varying degrees of success. To date, there has been little scholarly research on this phenomenon, though it naturally begs a number of valid research questions. This thesis asks why some graduate student attempts at unionization fail while others succeed. It uses social movement theory to compare the experiences of four organizing campaigns at four universities.

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Introduction

This thesis is about graduate and undergraduate students employed as teaching assistants, lab demonstrators and markers who attempt to form unions. It takes unionization as a complex process involving numerous actors, and traces how it either succeeds or fails. It attempts to account for the disparity of outcomes, and concludes that in the end, successful unionization depends on organizational resources including access to networks, strategic decision-making capabilities and a weak counter unionization movement.

In this thesis, I use the term graduate student employee (GSE) to refer to that particular group in universities who commonly work as research assistants (RAs), teaching assistants (TAs), lab demonstrators and markers. These employees are often defined by the fact that the work they do is a condition of their being students as well as employees. Though I use this label as a way of identifying this specific group, it should be noted that in each case of unionization the actual constituency differs. In some cases, only graduate students working as TAs unionize (as in McGill), in others all student employees regardless of occupation or level of education unionize (as in the Université du Québec à Montréal). Thus though GSE is the term I use in this thesis, when I speak of particular institutions I define who exactly is in this group. Broadly, GSE denotes a common group of individuals that have increasingly sought unionization in North American universities.

Across Canada, and especially in Ontario, GSE unions are a normal feature of graduate student life. Of the 36 universities in Canada with significant graduate and

undergraduate populations, 19 have graduate student employee unions (Appendix A). As table 1 demonstrates, GSEs have been forming unions since 1975.

Table 1 Canadian Universities with GSE Unions and the Year the Unions were Certified

Unionized Universities	Province	Year Union Was Certified
University of Toronto	Ontario	1974
York University	Ontario	1975
Simon Fraser University	British Columbia	1978
University of Regina	Saskatchewan	1978
Ryerson University	Ontario	1978
Lakehead University	Ontario	1978
McMaster University	Ontario	1979
Carleton University	Ontario	1979
University of British Columbia	British Columbia	1980
McGill University	Québec	1992
University of Western Ontario	Ontario	1994
Guelph University	Ontario	1994
Dalhousie	Nova Scotia	1994
University of Manitoba	Manitoba	1995
University of Ottawa	Ontario	1997
Brock University	Ontario	1998
University of Victoria	British Columbia	1999
University of Windsor	Ontario	2002
UQAM	Québec	2005

Yet for all the GSE unions that have been formed, attempts at unionization have often failed. Two of the most curious cases are McGill University and Concordia University. In 1992, GSEs at McGill successfully formed the first union of GSEs in Québec. In 1996, GSEs at Concordia also attempted to form a union but failed to do so.

Considering the reputations of the two universities, this outcome was surprising to me. McGill and Concordia are the only two Anglophone universities located in the city of Montréal. While McGill is one of the premier research institutions in Canada, Concordia is an institution that stresses accessible education for a diverse student population. Aside from the rhetoric, students at Concordia have made headlines over the years for their engagement in so-called radical action. Most recently, all of Canada watched as Concordia students enthusiastically protested a speech being given by former Israeli Prime Minister, Benjamin Netanyahu. Given this reputation, it was surprising to learn that where students at McGill had successfully formed a union, Concordia students had failed.

While I was beginning to research this topic in 2004, unionization attempts were underway in both Ontario and Québec. In Ontario, graduate students at Queen's University undertook two consecutive efforts at forming a union, but failed on both occasions. Meanwhile, francophone students in Québec were attempting to unionize with a successful organizing drive at Université du Québec à Montréal and ongoing drives at Université de Montréal, Laval and Concordia.

Thus this thesis asks why some attempts at GSE unionization fail while others succeed. By comparing the four cases of Queen's, Université du Québec à Montréal, Concordia and McGill, I will show that unionization is a complicated process impacted by a number of factors, some of which exist before unionization is actually attempted, and some of which emerge as a bi-product of the actual unionization process. Of course, grievances do play an important role and often underlies the initial attempts to unionize. However, grievances alone do not dictate the final outcome. Instead, unionization must

be understood as a movement that seeks to mobilize participation amongst a defined group. As such the outcome of unionization depends on whether GSEs themselves choose to support unionization and on the level of organization of those that oppose it.

The Context: Canadian Post-Secondary Education and Labour Law

Though this thesis looks at specific GSE unionization attempts it is important to recognize that all GSE's in Canada are similarly affected by the broader political landscape. GSE unionization is embedded in both Canada's system of higher education and its industrial relations regime. Both are unique to the Canadian context and both are shaped by Canadian federalism.

In terms of higher education, all universities fall under the jurisdiction of various provincial and territorial governments (Jones 1997, pg. 1). Although universities are publicly funded institutions, they operate at arms-length from provincial governments and are said to possess a significant amount of institutional autonomy (Cameron 1991; Jones 1998; and Pocklington & Tupper 2002). Of course this autonomy is restricted by the fact that provincial governments are the main source of funding for universities and set the rate of tuition. With the recent tuition hikes across Canada, students have felt the brunt of provincial post-secondary education policy. For example, under the Harris and Eves' 'Common Sense Revolution', Ontario's funding to post-secondary education has been reduced all together by approximately \$1.7 billion dollars, and tuition increased by more than 60% (Shanahan et al. 2004).

In terms of industrial relations, although it was the federal government that originally granted workers the legal right to form unions, today provincial governments decide and administer the rules surrounding collective bargaining (Drache & Glasbeek

1992, p. 57). This means that provincial governments set the procedures that must be followed if groups of workers to unionize and gain legal recognition. These tend to be one of either two types: card-check (as in Québec) or mandatory vote (as in Ontario). Generally mandatory vote systems have been regarded as negatively impacting the potential for unions to organize smaller and traditionally hard-to-organize sectors (Lebi & Mitchell 2003). Thus when Harris introduced the mandatory vote system to Ontario, many labour advocates saw this as an attack on the ability of organized labour to protect the interests of workers (Lebi & Mitchell 2003).

Since GSEs are employed by the university and since university workers are technically provincial employees, most GSEs are unionized with public sector unions. This status as provincial employees also means that the provincial government has the power to enact legislation that affects the terms of their working conditions and their ability to strike. In some instances, provincial governments have even stepped in to block GSE unionization and intervene in GSE labour disputes. In 2002, the BC liberal government legislated GSEs at UBC back to work in its attempt to end their strike (Grant 2003). In Alberta under the *Universities Act* (2000) and the *Post-Secondary Learning Act* (2004), academic staff are excluded from provincial labour law and forbidden to strike. Furthermore, the power to decide who should comprise 'voluntary' bargaining units are left to various Boards of Governors (Province of Alberta 2000, 2004).

Though these are extreme examples, they illustrate how GSE unionization can be impacted by the policies of provincial governments. These policies alone, however, do not explain why Queen's is one of the only universities in Ontario without a GSE union. Alternatively, it does not explain why McGill was for so long the only GSE union in

Québec. Only by examining the individual cases can we begin to understand that though GSE unionization is affected by the broader provincial context, each attempt is also a unique process. The challenge is to find a way of theoretically linking each attempt to the broader setting.

Prevailing Explanations of GSE Unionization

Attempts at explaining GSE unionization in Canada have been limited. To my knowledge, there are only two articles that deal with this topic. One was written in 1984 by Rogrow and Birch just after the first wave of GSE unionization, while the other is more recent and was written by Zinni, Singh and MacLennan in 2005.

In the first article, Rogrow and Birch used a comparative approach and attempted to isolate factors that could explain the occurrence of GSE unionization (1984). The factors they examined included university characteristics, graduate student characteristics, characteristics of Canadian public policy, student leadership characteristics and faculty and part-time faculty bargaining characteristics. In the end they found that there very few specific characteristics that differentiate unionized universities from non-unionized ones. In other words, the authors were unable to identify specific university characteristics that seemed to predict where unionization would occur. What they did find was that a supportive legal environment in Canada seemed to be a necessary condition and that GSE unionization was more a social-psychological phenomenon than an economic one, and that graduate students opposing unionization presented one of the most significant barriers to unionization.

Similarly, Zinni, Singh and MacLennan stress the beliefs and attitudes of GSEs as important determinants of unionization (2005). In an effort to explain how beliefs and

attitudes amongst GSEs might change, they hypothesized that these beliefs and attitudes could be influenced by a number of factors including higher tuition and the precariousness of working as a GSE all of which could lead GSEs themselves to value unionization.

While a favorable legal environment combined with unfavourable working conditions may indeed encourage GSE unionization, both of the pieces fall short of theoretically explaining why exactly unionization fails or succeeds in some places and how it actually occurs. It is the contention of this thesis that GSE unionization emerges from a deliberate set of activities pursued by individuals and groups. Labour legislation only matters if people go out of their way to make use of it. Grievances only matter to the extent that activists invoke them and offer unionization as a solution. In other words, to understand unionization and its various outcomes, we have to begin with a theory that sees it as an active process driven by the actions of individuals and groups of individuals. In this way we can also begin to see how the broader structures surrounding these actors constrain and provide opportunities for action. In this way too, we can begin to understand the importance of strategic decision-making.

Social Movement Theory as a Theoretical Approach to GSE Unionization

Social movement theory, as a general approach to collective action, emphasizes the process of mobilization as key to understanding collective action. Social movement theory is specifically interested in opportunities and constraints that impact upon mobilization processes and in tracing the development of social movements from their emergence through to their development and decline.

Social movement theory calls attention to common properties found in all social movements, but leaves the explanation of why and how these properties impact the outcomes to the researcher (Tilly 2004, p. x). Three properties or conceptual variables have come to define the approach. They are the political opportunity structures that surround these movements, the mobilizing structures in place and developed throughout the course of a movement and the framing processes that occur.

In order for social movements to emerge, there have to be significant opportunities for activists to pursue mobilization. In the case of GSE unionization, both the labour legislation that allows GSEs to unionize, and the precedents set by other successful attempts are important incentives. Though it is an opportunity, labour legislation also constrains the actions of those involved in unionization as it sets the rules of what one can and cannot do during a union drive. It also constrains unionization more generally vis-à-vis lengthy certification procedures that requires some expert knowledge to navigate.

Though opportunities for mobilization may exist, activists have to find ways of actually reaching individuals. Mobilizing structures refer to the networks and organizations that bring individuals together and encourage mutual awareness, solidarity and the development of issue related collective identities. It is generally believed to be the case that some mobilizing structures have to be in place for social movements to emerge. However, mobilizing structures can be built through the process of mobilization as organizers actively try to recruit new members. In the cases of GSE unionization I examine, I find that the attempts to unionize emerged from a variety of organizations including larger existing unions, student associations and networks of activists. Though

the types of networks these groups had access to varied significantly, in all but one case, organizers were successful in their recruitment of GSEs.

Finally, framing processes refer to the way activists frame the goals and ideals of a movement in order to gain support. In terms of framing processes, I find that the rationales given for supporting unionization differ depending on the university setting. For the most part, the issues invoked speak directly to the policies and procedures put in place by university administrators. Interestingly enough, none of the frames used targeted the provincial governments as a source of grievance. This is important because it highlights the fact that GSEs unionization is directed at individual universities and not the broader provincial governments.

Using social movement theory and examining these variables also speaks to some of the recent findings in labour research. As union density declines, labour movement researchers are starting to pay attention to the organizing process and 'organizing the unorganized' is a strategy unions are committing themselves. Within this body of work, the strategies and tactics that lead to mobilized workplaces and the establishment of unions are of particular interest.

One strategy that has been found to be especially successful is the rank-and-file model of training union members themselves to go out and organize workers of a similar background (Yates 2002; Waldinger et al. 1998; Bronfenbrenner & Juravich 1998, p. 27). Researchers have found that using organizers of similar backgrounds encourages relationships of trust, facilitates communication and encourages empathy. In other words, workers in any workplace are more likely to accept unionization if they feel that the issues they face are being recognized and addressed.

The rank-and-file strategy incorporates the same logic as social movement theory. The underlying premise is that in order to mobilize workers, organizers have to use tactics that create bonds of solidarity and speak to the experiences of those workers. With social movement theory, this is understood as occurring through the use of mobilizing structures including networks and suitable frames. In terms of GSE unionization, the added element of political opportunity structure completes this process by taking account of the broader structures that encourage and constrain action.

Social movement theory thus presents itself as an appropriate approach to the puzzle of disparate outcomes in GSE unionization attempts. By looking at unionization as a mobilization process, both the external and internal factors that impact its development are accounted for. Furthermore, it supports a consideration of unionization as a purposive and strategic activity.

Methodology

Since the stories of organizing campaigns have rarely been documented I have employed a variety of means to obtain information. Much of my evidence came from the semi-structured interviews I conducted with participants of union drives. All of the interviews were given under the condition of confidentiality and coded as Q for Queen's, M for McGill, U for UQAM and C for Concordia. The numbers following each of these letters refers to the order in which the interview was conducted. So C1 refers to the first person I interviewed involved in the Concordia drive. After conducting interviews I checked the reported facts through archival research or with other interviewees. I also used the websites of organizing campaigns and other groups, archival information from

university and national newspapers, government reports and statistics on universities and some secondary sources.

The paucity of research on GSE unionization combined with the fact that social movement theory uses broad concepts as variables, led me to use a comparative approach. Through comparison I was able to identify common types of political opportunities and mobilizing structures in all four cases. For example, in each case some academic departments emerged as loci of support or resistance, suggesting that academic departments are sources of networks. This makes sense given the way the university is organized and the fact that GSEs are by definition students as well as employees.

I selected four cases based on both the most different systems method and the most similar systems methods. My cases are McGill University, Concordia University, Université du Québec à Montréal (UQAM) and Queen's. Queen's and McGill are most similar in the sense that they are both medical-doctoral institutions. Concordia and UQAM are most similar in the sense that they are both 'comprehensive' institutions and both located in Québec. Both Queen's and McGill are considered research-intensive universities. In Canada, this means that they are among the top ten research universities in Canada, based on the amount of research funding they receive. These top schools have formed an association of sorts, calling themselves the G10 universities, and generally have a larger number of PhD programs. These medical-doctoral universities are distinguishable from 'comprehensive' universities that include Concordia and UQAM. These universities have significant amounts of research and a wide range of graduate and undergraduate programs. Concordia and UQAM also have traditionally thought of themselves as accessible universities.

In terms of most different systems, Concordia and Queen's, at which unionization efforts failed, have important differences. Concordia again is a comprehensive Anglophone institution located in urban Québec, which at the time of unionization had a very high proportion of part-time graduate students. Queen's on the other hand, is located in a smaller city in Ontario and is a medical-doctoral institution with a very low proportion of part-time students. McGill and UQAM, at which unionization efforts succeeded, are also very different. Although both are located in Montréal, UQAM is a francophone institution created during Québec's Quiet Revolution as part of a state-sponsored university system. McGill on the other hand is one of the oldest universities in Canada, and has emerged as one of Canada's elite institutions.

Table 2 Case Selection

	"Comprehensive" Institution	Québec	Successful GSE Unionization
Concordia	X	X	
UQAM	X	X	X
Queen's			
McGill		X	X

In selecting three cases from Québec, I am able to control for the effects of labour legislation on GSE unionization. Since Queen's is located in Ontario, which has a different set of rules surrounding certification, it provides a useful comparison for understanding the procedural effects of labour law on certification.

The Relevance of GSE Unionization

There are two main reasons why GSE unionization is worth careful examination: one theoretical and the other practical.

Since GSE unionization requires thinking about what conditions allow groups of individuals to act collectively, it is especially germane to political science where 'new institutionalists' are exploring the role of institutions such as the state; the ability of these institutions to act autonomously (March & Olsen 1984, p. 738); and accordingly construct the context within which actors define the goals they act towards (Thelen & Steinmo 1992). Questions about collective action, where it emerges and why continue to be of importance given the supposed stability offered by institutions. GSE unionization emerges as a timely question in that it represents a collective endeavor to alter the power relations in universities.

Practically GSE unionization speaks directly to Canada's system of higher education. As quasi-public institutions, universities do have a relationship with the state although they exercise a significant amount of institutional autonomy. More to the point, although universities are no strangers to student action, the relatively recent phenomena of GSE unionization reflects some of the more recent changes to the system including dramatically decreased government funding and a new reality of universities acting like competitive business-like entities.

Thus, theoretically, GSE unionization is a phenomenon that helps us to understand how groups of institutional actors come to define their interests collectively and mobilize on behalf of those shared concerns. Practically, GSE unionization takes

Canadian universities and demonstrates how and why GSEs as a particular group, challenge these institutions.

Outline

Chapter 1 of this thesis takes stock of previous literature that addresses GSE unionization as well as faculty and part-time faculty unionization. As already mentioned, presently there is little research on Canadian GSE unionization, while faculty unionization in Canada has garnered some attention. In the US, on the other hand, the situation of GSEs has captured the attention of a number of authors. Thus my literature review looks at both. The work on Canadian faculty unionization permits an exploration of the context of Canadian universities and helps to outline the distinguishing features, while looking at American GSEs helps to identify the factors particular to graduate students employed at the university.

In Chapter 2 I explain and defend my decision to use social movement theory to understand the outcome of GSE unionization. I begin with a solid discussion of the approach, paying particular attention to the works of McAdam (1982) and Tarrow (1994), two of the most prominent authors in the field of social movements. I then discuss alternative approaches to GSE unionization including new institutionalism and rational choice theory. Taking seriously the theoretical underpinnings of various versions of new institutionalism, I find that it is incapable of explaining the phenomenon of GSE unionization as it is unable to account for the dynamics of social movements, including the strategies and tactics activists choose. Rational choice theory, on the other hand is better equipped to explain why social movements should not emerge, though it has

difficulty accounting for the fact that in some cases individuals value the collective good and are thus willing to organize others.

In chapters 3, 4 and 5, I take each variable separately and explain how they seemed to affect the process of unionization. Though I treat them separately, it should be understood that these three variables act together to set the constraints and opportunities for unionization efforts. Thus, in each of the chapters, I consistently refer to my findings in other chapters. This allows us to better understand GSE unionization as a continuing event, while helping to sort through some of what makes it so complicated.

In my conclusion I briefly revisit my major finding and suggest avenues of future research.

Chapter One

Academic Unionization

Academic unionization refers to the adoption of a labour union model of organization by those working in an academic environment, involved in the delivery of education and/or the production of research. Although it is common to now find faculty, part-time faculty and GSEs working with collective agreements, academic unionism is a fairly recent development in light of the much longer history of universities themselves (see Boren 2001 for a succinct history of the university as an institution and student activism).

The unionization of academics has always been a controversial issue. At the heart of the debate lies the question of whether or not the work academics do can and should be governed by collective agreements. Yet whether or not one personally believes in appropriateness of academic unionization, the fact of the matter is that academic unionism has emerged, is spreading and is the result of specific circumstances and actions.

Much of the literature on academic unionism is situated within research on the evolution of higher education systems. This is not surprising since the policies of the state and university administrators directly affect the working conditions of academics. Researchers have been quick to point out that decreasing funding and privatization have led to stratification within universities, the casualization of academic labour and an overall decline in working conditions. While these circumstances do encourage unionization, unfortunately they tell us little about the processes of unionization itself. For example, these circumstances do not tell us how those organizing the union overcame

resistance, or why some universities are unionized while others are not. Circumstances alone can not tell us why organizing campaigns succeed in some places but not in others.

Organizing Campaigns

Unions are collective organizations based on the logic that when workers join together and act collectively they have more power over their own working conditions, then when they act alone. Technically a union is any group of workers that come together and identify themselves as such. Generally though, the term union has a legal definition. When unions become legally certified as such they are recognized as the sole bargaining unit for that group of workers. To become legally certified, unions have to prove that a majority of workers in a bargaining unit (i.e. all the TAs at McGill) support that union.

Various provincial governments play a role in the actual certification process by setting out the rules that must be followed in order to prove majority support. In most cases, certification rules require that a majority of the proposed bargaining unit show their support for a union, either by signing a membership card, voting in a referendum, or often both. In other words, forming a union requires that support be mobilized, that groups can prove that the workers they claim to represent actually want their representation.

Organizing campaigns (or union drives) refer to the deliberate attempts to mobilize workers and form a union. These campaigns are complicated, lengthy and exhausting affairs. They often face significant opposition from within the population of workers themselves and from other groups within the university.

For example, when faculty unionized, one of the central concerns was the proper role and identity of faculty members. Faculty, who are among the most highly educated

members of society, were thought of (and often thought of themselves) as autonomous professionals. The notion that faculty would turn to traditionally blue-collar institutions seemed perverse and many faculty members opposed it (Arnold 2000, p. 5, Burke and Naiman 2003).

For GSEs, one of the arguments often used to oppose unionization, is that the work GSEs do as teaching assistants, markers or lab demonstrators is actually a fundamental part of their education. Thus, it is argued, that employment as a GSE does not constitute real employment and therefore does not warrant the creation of a union.

The opposition to academic unions, let alone the time and commitment required to undertake a successful union drive make the frequency with which academic unionization occurs all the more surprising. In the following literature review I take stock of the research on academic unionization, paying particular attention to its supposed causes, the actors involved and the arguments made in support and opposition to it. As I mentioned earlier, there is a dearth of research on GSE unionization in Canada. To make up for this shortfall, I also review works on faculty unionization in Canada and GSE unionization in the US. Highlighting the salient issues of academic unionization allows me to then situate this study.

In the first section I take faculty unionization in Canada and consider the context, organizations and issues and identities that all played a role in its occurrence. I find that most arguments view the conditions of labour as the predominant cause of unionization. I find, however, that these 'causes' alone do not sufficiently explain faculty unionization. Indeed actors pursuing unionization were very strategic in how they did so, suggesting that the driving force behind unionization is the organizing efforts of a few.

In the second section, I review the literature on GSE unionization, examining the same three sets of factors. In most cases, unionization is treated as a legitimate response to the restructuring of higher education. The problem is that this ignores the fact that those pursuing unionization have to be very strategic in how they do so and that success is highly conditioned by the ability to mobilize participation.

None of this is to say that the pursuit of unionization is not inspired by changes to higher education, economic concerns or a belief in the legitimacy of the labour movement. Individuals can have any number of beliefs and values that encourage them to positively regard unions. The point I am making, however, is that these factors alone do not necessarily lead to the formation of a union. Throughout the unionization process organizers face many barriers and constraints. How they are able to overcome these in some situations but not in others, and the differences in these barriers and constraints in some universities but not in others is the primary focus of this thesis. Of course beliefs and values matter, but what I want to avoid is the type of argument that assumes that takes mobilization for granted or sees it as the direct outcome of changing policies and circumstances. For example in the case faculty unionization, changing circumstances did indeed lead to support for faculty unionization, but there was also an important role played by organizations like faculty associations and the Canadian Association of University Teachers (CAUT).

As I mentioned earlier, social movement theory does not tell us which factors matter for mobilization, only that in general three broad sets are usually found. By looking at the literature on academic unionization, I am able to tease out some of the specific factors. For example, I find that labour legislation, student associations,

departments and the dual identities of GSEs as both students and workers seem to be salient issues during the development of unions.

Faculty Unionization

The first faculty union was established in Québec at UQAM in 1966 (Cameron 1991, p. 347). By 1974, 5 universities had faculty unions. This number grew to 24 in 1980 and in 1990, 29 of 49 faculty at Canadian universities were unionized (Cameron 1991, p. 359). Even in the 1990s, faculty continued to unionize at Queen's, Brock and Western.

The authors have addressing the emergence of faculty unions in Canada have done so either directly as in Addell and Carter (1972) and Savage (1994), or indirectly as part of a larger work on universities as in the often-cited work of Cameron (1991). Either way faculty unionization is regarded as an important juncture in the evolution of higher education. In terms of the general context, most authors agree that faculty unionization is the tied to a period in which Canadian universities were undergoing 'rapid changes' (Cameron 1991).

As to why faculty chose to unionize, three main causes are usually listed. First, all authors mention the economic impetus of collective bargaining, citing declining enrolment figures and the funding cutbacks of the 1970s which created a climate of economic uncertainty for faculty members. Second, during this period provincial governments had decided to extend collective bargaining to public employees. Third, authors suggest that faculty members were concerned with the lack of voice they had in the governance of universities.

Along with these causes, researchers have also looked at the actual processes of unionization. Researchers have noted that faculty associations and the Canadian Association of University Teachers (CAUT) played lead roles in organizing efforts. However, the difference in how organizing efforts unfolded is not mentioned.

Finally, researchers have also paid attention to the opposition that faculty unionization faced. For the most part, faculty members themselves saw unionization as too radical. Organizers thus had to be strategic in the way they framed unionization. Forming independent associations as the collective bargaining units, rather than affiliating with large trade unions and becoming affiliates, was the primary tactic used.

Context

The Economic Context

The economic context runs throughout most pieces as a “general cause” (Cameron 1991) of faculty unionization (Adell and Carter 1972, Savage 1994, Horn 1994). Whereas the 1960s had been a period of expansion, the economic outlook of the 1970s was defined by a stagnating economy and massive cutbacks to public spending. As a result, politicians and the public were less supportive of funding universities (Jones 1998, p. 22, Morton 1998 [1975], p. 48). The idyllic belief that universities were protected institutions, whose role as disseminators of knowledge was valued by all of society was no longer a given. For faculty, the 1970s was a period of economic uncertainty as administrators began talk about faculty layoffs and pay reductions as a cost-saving strategy (Morton 1998 [1975], p. 48).

In economic terms, unionization was a means for faculty to collectively gain job security in uncertain times. While it is familiar to think of unionization solely in these

rational/economic terms, researchers note that collective bargaining also addressed issues such as governance, professional autonomy and academic freedom.

The Legal Right to Form a Union

Public employee unionism is now a mainstay of Canadian society. The public sectors at both federal and provincial levels contain more unionized employees than any other sector. However, it was not always the case that public employees had the right to unionize. Though Saskatchewan's CCF government had extended collective bargaining rights to public sector workers in the 1940s, other Canadian provinces did not follow suit until the 1960s and 70s (NUPGE 2005). As Arnold (2000, p. 6) points out and as the upcoming examples of GSE unionization make clear, the legal right to form a union should not be taken for granted and has to be understood as an important factor in the rise of academic unionism.

The Political Context

Universities in Canada, like their counterparts in the United States, have come to adopt such a diversity of roles, they no longer conform to a simple conception of a 'community of scholars' (Pocklington & Tupper p. 4-5). Universities today are internally complex, large organizations divided administratively into large faculties and then specialized departments (ibid). University leadership tends to be highly political and the presidents, vice-presidents and deans are constantly negotiating with each other in an environment of competing interests and scarce resources (Pocklington & Tupper 2002, p. 6; Hardy 1996, p. 8).

The political concerns raised by faculty members through unionization were the administrative power in the university and access to decision-making. During the late

1960s, and in response to demands for accountability by both the public and the state, the majority of universities in Canada had adopted bicameral governing structures, granting both students and faculty seats on these bodies (Jones 1998, p. 10). Bicameralism split the decision making power between two bodies. This is why today in universities we usually find Senates, which are responsible for academic matters, and Boards of Governors, which are responsible for the financial administration.

The creation of these democratic bodies was thought to endorse and strengthen collegiality, which saw the university as a community of scholars (Goodman 1962 cited in Hardy 1996, p. 165) with consensus decision-making (Millet 1962 cited in Hardy 1996, p. 165). However, Adell and Carter (1972), Horn (1994), Rhoades (1998), and Drakich et al. (2002) argue that though the administration of the university seemed to be more inclusive, these organizations were growing both in size and complexity, leading faculty to feel less involved in governance. In other words, the larger bureaucracies stood in the way of any real collegiality.

Donald Savage, former president of the CAUT, argues that collegiality never actually existed in Canadian universities and that it only became real after unions were established (1994). According to Savage, the presence of faculty on governing bodies was “contained” (1994, p. 56).

One of the major concerns behind faculty unionization was the way in which hiring and firing was carried out. Collective bargaining was seen as a way of forcing the university administration to put in place grievance procedures to protect against unfair dismissals and to govern the granting of tenure (Savage 1994, p. 57). Moreover, collective bargaining was the only way for the faculty to force both these governance

concerns along with economic concerns onto the administration's agenda (Savage 1994, p. 58).

Organizations

Faculty associations like student associations, offer their members a voice, "provide academic leadership", and attempt to protect the interests of their members (Anderson & Jones 1998, p. 440). Where unionization has occurred, faculty associations usually became recognized as the collective bargaining units. As Adell and Carter mention, the increased representation of individual faculty on governing bodies, meant that faculty associations had lost some of their *raison d'être* (1972, p. 30). Yet instead of dissolving, faculty associations sought new functions i.e. collective bargaining (Adell & Carter 1972, p. 31).

Cameron (1991, pp. 364-366), Clark (2002, pp. 181-182) and Savage (1994) also emphasize the role of the CAUT an umbrella organization for faculty associations. The CAUT fought to keep faculty from affiliating with already established unions. According to Clark, the CAUT provided faculty associations with important resources such as experience and information, but also person power, legal advice and general support, which enabled faculty associations to pursue unionization (2003, p. 181).

Ideas and Identities

The rise of faculty unionization in both Canada and the US was met with surprise. The idea that faculty members, who were generally considered autonomous professionals should turn to trade unionism seemed absurd (Ladd & Lipset 1975, p. 244). In a survey of early faculty unions, it was shown that most faculty members disapproved of unionism in

principle but supported it at their own university given the circumstances they faced (Savage 1994, p. 57).

For Savage, the spread of faculty unionization was due to the fact that the CAUT offered its assistance early on (1994). Faculty unionization was radical enough, but if faculty associations had attempted to affiliate with established unions such as the Canadian Union of Public Employees (CUPE), they probably would not have enjoyed the same level of success that they have (Savage 1994). By organizing as independent associations, faculty unions were able to maintain some sense of professional autonomy and gain the benefits of collective bargaining.

All of this suggests that faculty unionization in Canada had to be framed in a very specific way. If organizers had tried to persuade members to organize with established unions such as CUPE, faculty would probably have rejected it on the basis that it did not fit with their perceptions of themselves as independent professionals. By organizing as autonomous associations, faculty unions came to resemble craft unions, protecting the interests of their members as skilled professionals.

Conclusion

Faculty unionization was encouraged by a specific context and access to organizational resources. The fact that faculty unions chose to form as autonomous associations indicates that one of the main barriers to organizing was the contradictory identities of faculty as both autonomous professionals and collectively aggrieved workers (Burke & Naiman 2003). One of the ways of overcoming this was to organize as independent associations thus establishing faculty unions as particular to the university

setting and distancing them from the broader labour movement. Thus the actors involved in the formation of faculty unions in Canada were acting strategically.

By isolating the contextual, organizational and identity factors in the literature, I am able to show that the outcome of faculty unionization is a process influenced by a number of internal and external variables. All too often, faculty unionization is treated as something that simply exists and that universities now have to deal with. By looking at how these unions were formed and some of the processes that occurred we can begin to see in greater detail the conflicts and strains that emerged and understand how unions are formed. As this thesis looks at both the successes and failures of GSE unionization attempts, it is important to consider not just why groups want to unionize, but also what might prevent unionization. For example, would faculty unions have formed if faculty associations had not been there to support it?

GSE Unionization

GSE unionization has begun to garner more attention as it occurs (see for example Nelson 1997; Vaughn 1998; Freeman 2000; Hewitt 2000 Julius & Gumpert 2002; Rhoades & Rhoads 2002; Johnson, Kavanagh & Mattson 2003; Lafer 2003, Herman & Schmid 2003 and Lee et al. 2004). Approached from a variety of disciplines, these pieces often benefit from the personal experiences of the authors who themselves have participated in efforts to unionize.

Most of the work on GSE unionization, to date, focuses on the US experience. This is not surprising given that in the US, GSE unionization has come to be regarded as a cross-national movement (Rhoades & Rhoads 2002). There are a greater number of universities in the US, a much greater population density of graduate students, and those

GSEs attempting to unionize at private universities face a greater number of obstacles including legal ones.

In general, most of the authors writing on GSE unionization take as their starting point the increasing funding restrictions placed upon universities. They look not only at how this affects GSEs as both students and workers, but also how it affects the overall labour processes in education delivery and research production.

In these studies, authors have a tendency to include some discussion of part-time faculty as well. Some part-time faculty members are drawn from a pool of PhD students, and thus are technically GSEs. More significantly though, the overall increased frequency with which part-time faculty are being used to teach courses is indicative of the changes to the labour processes within the university (including greater demand for a flexible labour pool) which are also affecting graduate students. Again most of the work on part-time faculty comes from the US where there is more data (Smallman 2000, Rajagopal 2002, Turk 2000). Despite the lack of information, though, authors agree that trends concerning contingent academic employment in Canada mirror those in the United States (Smallman 2000, Turk 2000, p. 8).

The same types of factors that were present in faculty unionization can be found in the literature on GSE unionization. Context, organizations, issues and identities are featured in GSE unionization. In general though, the strategies and tactics used by organizers to mobilize participation are downplayed.

Context

Economic Context

Like the 1970s and 1980s, the 1990s and 2000s have seen a significant number of changes in funding to universities. The bulk of the literature on GSE unionization mentions the growth, restructuring and privatization of universities as the main developments of the last two decades. As provincial governments reduce the amount of per student funding they give, students themselves face ever-increasing tuition fees. In fact the last ten years have seen the greatest increase in tuition since World War II.

One of the ways administrators have compensated for these new funding restrictions is through privatization. University privatization is experienced through a number of processes including the development of universities as marketing sites, the privatization of the delivery of education, managing universities as if they were for-profit businesses and a movement towards user-pay (i.e. increasing tuition fees) (Turk 2000, pp. 5-7). Alongside the increasing commercialization, university administrators are using managerial techniques to ensure that universities are competitive and efficient. A 'lean state' has led to 'lean production' within universities (Burke & Naiman, p. 45). All of these changes have very real implications for academic labour including the increasing use of casual labour and the introduction of labour-replacing technologies (Turk 2000, pp. 7-9). Authors such as Rhoades (1998), Tirelli (1998), Noble (2000), Turk (2000) and Rajagopal (2002) point out that GSEs and part-time faculty provide universities with an excellent source of surplus value. To have a part-time faculty member teach one undergraduate course and only pay them for that course, is far less expensive than hiring

a new full-time faculty member to teach a handful of courses and do research. In the United States, part-time faculty members now undertake about 50% of all teaching at colleges and universities (DeCew 2003, p. 75). Rajagopal estimated that part-timers in 1987-1988 comprised about 32.4 per cent of the total faculty members in Ontario but only received about 7.6 per cent of the total faculty salaries that were paid (2002, p. 40). GSEs, a number of which wish to pursue academic careers, are not blind to the situation of part-time faculty. According to Lafer, the US GSE unionization movement gains strength as graduate students witness the academic careers they work towards disappear (2003, p. 29). For all of these reasons, GSE unionization is viewed by its proponents as a legitimate means of protecting the interests of GSEs as workers, but also as students.

Labour Legislation

As I mentioned in the introduction, Rogrow and Birch cite favourable labour legislation in Canada as one of the deciding factors explaining GSE unionization in Canada (1984). This factor is especially important when we compare the certification rules applied to GSE unionization in Canada with those in the US. With the exception of Alberta, most provincial labour boards have granted GSEs the right to unionize. In the US, the National Labour Relations Board (NLRB) regulates unionization in private universities. The predominant stance of the NLRB has been that GSEs are not in fact employees under the law and that their status is primarily that of students (Zinni et al. 2005, p. 149). In Canada, labour boards have consistently ruled that GSEs are in fact employees since their work is “of direct and immediate benefit to the employer” (Canadian labour Relations Boards Reports 1976, pp. 229-230 cited in Rogrow & Birch 1984, pg. 18). The issue of employment status came up during the second GSE

certification attempt at York University, but since that time, it is generally accepted that GSEs in their capacity as TAs are employees and that they do have the legal right to unionize. The situation with RAs is slightly different. Although RAs are unionized at Carleton and UQAM, currently the University of Western is attempting to argue that RAs are not employees of the university and therefore do not have the legal right to unionize. The core of the argument is whether or not the work RAs do is of greater benefit to their own education or the university.

Organizations

The economic context of reduced funding and the legal right to unionize may be important factors encouraging unionization, but tell us little about what it takes to actually unionize and why these efforts are sometimes unsuccessful. Only Rogrow and Birch highlight the role of organizations in the development of GSE unions (1984). At the time they wrote, they found that GSE unions tended to emerge out of graduate student associations arguing that these associations were a source of leadership (Rogrow & Birch 1984, p. 20).

In the more recent literature on GSE unionization only one article mentions the role of networks and student organizations. Julius & Gumpert (2002) argue that as graduate student populations become increasingly diverse, we should expect to find organizing efforts that exploit this fractionalization. At the same time, they argue that student networks are extensive within higher education and that we should expect to see more student unions making the transition to labour union in highly politicized environments (2002, p. 198).

In fact, I argue that Julius and Gumpert are actually pointing out one of the main dilemmas organizers face when they attempt to unionize GSEs (2002). Indeed networks do exist amongst students both within and among different universities. Student associations often have access to these networks through their roles as representative associations and GSE unionization itself encourages the formation of new networks of activists. At the same time, universities are highly divisive structures. Both Rhoades (1999) and Freeman (2000) point out that in some departments, usually the sciences, students receive higher salaries, thus discouraging these GSEs from unionizing. In her experience organizing GSEs at the University of Iowa, Breitzer notes the resistance of science and engineering students. She credits this resistance to the comparatively high wages and funding these students receive and the fact that they see the work they do as contributing to their future career thus blurring the lines between research and education in these faculties (2003, p. 79). Rhoades and Roads also note the “stratification” occurring in universities along departmental and institutional lines (2002).

The disparities between sciences and engineering and other faculties is related to the primacy of research over teaching in most North American universities and the fact that disciplines in which research is said to have some commercial value tend to receive greater amounts of funding (Gamson 1997, Pocklington & Tupper 2001). Not surprisingly, we often find GSE unionization emerging out of arts departments, where wages tend to be comparatively lower and where future careers (academic or otherwise) are no longer guaranteed. As well, social movement researchers have shown that social movement leaders tend to emerge from the social sciences, humanities and the arts (Keniston 1968, Zald & McCarthy 1987, McAdam 1988, Pinard & Hamilton 1989 all

cited in Staggenborg & Meyers 2004). Staggenborg and Meyers argue that this is because these disciplines often impart “movement-appropriate skills” including the intellectual wherewithal to formulate ideologies, frame goals, interact with media, organize campaigns and strategize (2004, p. 175).

Ideas and Identities

Despite these important differences within the university, all too often, the literature on GSE unionization has treated GSEs as a whole, stressing broadly shared experiences which lead to solidarity and a sense of the collective (see especially Robin & Stephens 1997). Yet given the fractionalization and diversity of graduate students, it is often the case that solidarity and collective identities are produced, reproduced and negotiated in the process of unionization. One book that does look at the interaction of identity and academic unions is Herman and Schmid's edited volume *COGS in the Classroom: The changing identity of academic labour* (2003). Emerging out of the experiences of academic organizers across the US, the pieces in this book all deal with the struggles and conflicts in various unionization efforts, paying particular attention to the diverse and conflicting identities found amongst graduate students, and the central role of activist networks in organizing efforts.

During an organizing campaign, activists attempt to mobilize graduate students around common issues that will encourage collective action. Personal networks of friends and colleagues are often utilized in this process of mobilization, because as social movement researchers have found, individuals are far more likely to be mobilized when they personally know others that are involved. One of the challenges organizers face though, is connecting with graduate students outside their own networks. This challenge

is exacerbated in cases where other networks harbor opinions and beliefs that oppose unionization.

The dual identities of GSEs as both students and workers, has been cited by a number of authors as problematic to the development of GSE unions (Freeman 2000, Lee et al. 2004). In short, GSEs are both students and workers, but their worker identity must be salient if unionization is going to succeed. However, what Dirnbach and Chimonas term the 'academic ideology' encourages students to see themselves primarily as students, not workers (2003).

The academic ideology encourages hierarchy, competitiveness between individuals, the overall belief that graduate students are apprentices and that the university is a collegial institution (Dirnbach and Chimonas 2003). The academic ideology is consistently reinforced through the routines, practices and daily interactions of members of the university (see Shumar & Church 2003 for a good discussion of this process). For some, it is precisely this student/employee ambiguity that has allowed universities to continue benefiting from the labour of graduate students while denying them the rights of unionization (Freeman 2000 p. 251). However, in terms of unionization, the bigger problem is that graduate students see themselves as primarily students (Lee et al. 2004, p. 352).

Identifying as a worker often requires a shift in the self-perception of GSEs within the university. For one, they have to conceptualize their roles as TAs or RAs as employment within the university that has a vital role in the functioning of universities. A common slogan of the academic labour movement is "universities work because we do". This requires, further, that GSEs see the university as a workplace. Once the university is

understood as a workplace, then unions will have a role in addressing workplace issues such as pay, health and safety and benefits (Herman & Schmid 2003). Yet given the prevailing academic ideology that persists in the university, getting GSEs to see themselves as workers, can be the most frustrating part of organizing.

Like faculty, when GSEs see themselves as primarily students, they often see themselves as autonomous individuals primarily in competition with one another. This individualistic perception of themselves, along with negative views about unions in general, discourages GSEs from joining unions (Sullivan 2003, p. 111). Organizers thus have to find creative ways of convincing other of the good of the union.

The student/worker dichotomy very rarely exists in either of its two pure forms. In fact, even after unionization, GSEs may not recognize a distinction between the two. Rhoades writes that GSEs have invoked both images of themselves as apprentices and employees depending upon the issue at hand and argues that both limit the types of demands GSEs can make upon the administration (2004). He argues that if GSEs are going to achieve the most through unionization, they have to connect themselves to the public interest and gain community support. This argument rests on the idea that if GSE unionization is truly going to respond to the restructuring of higher education it has to connect with the broader public's interest in having a system of higher education that is accessible.

The issues and identities that come to the fore during an organizing drive are important factors in the process of unionization. As we saw with faculty unionization, GSE union organizers have to be strategic in how they frame their goals in order to convince others to join. The fractionalization and stratification of the university make this

task all the more difficult as the experiences of graduate students become increasingly disparate. As my thesis argues, GSE union organizers have overcome some of these barriers through innovative strategies and tactics including the use of networks.

Conclusion

In general, the literature on academic unionization tends to treat it as a broad phenomenon with common driving forces. While I agree that economic factors, legal factors and the general restructuring of the higher education have encouraged unionization, I argue that treating it in such a broad manner obscures important details of the process.

If the question of why unionization efforts succeed in some places, but fail in others is to be answered, then the starting point has to be the actual unionization process, and the organizing campaigns that undertake this process. By focusing here it becomes clear that unionization can develop differently depending on a number of factors including access to resources, attempts to block unionization, issues that organizers chose to invoke and collective identities (or lack thereof). By separating out the political opportunities that encourage unionization, the mobilizing structures and organizational resources and how the goals of unionization are framed including the collective identities they attempt to speak to, we also uncover the conflicts and tensions that arise in this process. In sum, considering GSE unionization as a broad phenomenon may help to answer questions such as: what are the main reasons GSEs unionize, or is there any relationship between graduate funding policy and GSE unionization, but it does little to inform us as to why we see different outcomes in different cases.

Chapter Two

Theoretical Approaches to GSE Unionization

According to Glen A. Jones, research on universities and how they function, have tended to employ a pluralist paradigm. Accordingly, most research begins with the assumption that universities are made up of competing interests and values that are articulated at various levels of an open arena. It also assumes that power is distributed amongst many (McAdam 1982, p. 5). Though in all universities we find bicameralism, numerous representative associations and democratic rhetoric underlying university governance, the evidence suggests that in many university settings, power rests in the hands of a few.

More to the point, if universities are pluralist and power is distributed, then forming a union of GSEs would be illogical. When GSEs form unions they are acting collectively to achieve what they cannot individually. Though a pluralist paradigm suggests that power in universities is dispersed amongst all groups, GSE unionization suggests that it is only by forming a collectivity that GSEs have access to decision-makers and power-holders. In other words, GSE unionization forces us to question the idea that power is shared.

Most theories of political science make either implicit or explicit assumptions about the distribution of power in political organizations and how this distribution affects political behaviour. In doing so, theories guide the questions we ask and the ultimate design of our research project. In this chapter I review some of the theoretical frameworks that could be applied to GSE unionization.

In the previous chapter I took issue with the causal assumptions underlying much of the work on academic unionism. I argued that most of the authors treated this

phenomenon in a post hoc fashion (with the exception of the Herman & Schmid volume, 2003). The common assumption was that the restructuring of universities caused academic unionization to occur. Yet, situations alone do not cause social phenomena to occur. Unionization requires significant amounts of co-ordination and effort and is a deliberate activity.

I have chosen to explore my four case studies through social movement theory for two main reasons. First, social movement theory assumes power in political institutions to be unequally distributed and resting in the hands of a few. This assumption fits well with the broad goals of unionization. When groups pursue some sort of collective action they do so because they realize that they can gain more by acting collectively than alone.

Second, social movement theory takes the emergence of social movements as its starting point, but assumes that these movements will be impacted by their external environment and the internal dynamics of the movement itself. Social movement theory is extremely sensitive to the barriers and opportunities that exist for collective action and focuses inquiry on sorting out exactly how these affect the development or decline of movements. Ergo, there is an important temporal element to social movement theory due to its treatment of social movements as a series of events.

This chapter begins with a thorough description of social movement theory and explains why it is applicable to the four cases. Following this I turn to two other theories that could be applied to GSE unionization: new institutionalism and rational choice theory. I explain why they are not suitable to the puzzle I am trying to solve.

Social Movement Theory

Social movement theory, as its name suggests, developed out of and is interested in those types of collective activities commonly called 'social movements'. Defined as

any “collective, organized, sustained, and non-institutional challenge to authorities, power holders, or cultural beliefs and practices” (Goodwin and Jasper 2003, p. 3), social movements can take on a broad range of forms, from cults to large-scale revolutions. The predominant feature that distinguishes social movements from other types of political activity is that they challenge institutionalized political systems and their authorities (McCarthy & Zald 1977). Thus, social movements are characterized by some degree of “contentious collective action” (Tarrow 1994, p. 2).

Social movement theory grew out of the dispute scholars had with the notion that social movements are irrational events driven primarily by widespread social disorganization (McAdam 2003, p. 281). Instead social movement theorists recognize that social movements require significant amounts of planning, organization and coordination to emerge. Social movement leaders act strategically and rationally as they attempt to pursue their goals, often making use of familiar repertoires of action and tactics such as sit-ins, protests or petitions.

The term “social movement theory” is a bit of a misnomer since there is no absolute theory behind this approach. Those working in this area are the first to point out that work on social movements has benefited greatly from the insights and research of scholars working in a variety of theoretical perspectives and disciplines (McAdam, McCarthy & Zald 1996). However, in the last ten years, scholars in this field have noted that social movement researchers continuously emphasize the importance of three broad sets of factors in their analysis (McAdam, McCarthy & Zald 1996). These three factors are political opportunity structures, mobilizing structures and framing processes. When I write of social movement theory I am really referring to a general framework that uses three main variables to explain and analyze contentious collective actions.

The main assumption of social movement theory is that groups are the proper unit of analysis in explaining collective action (Robinson 2004, p. 115). Social movement theorists do recognize that individuals make strategic decisions, but contend that these decisions are made in the context of social relationships, changing structural conditions and cultural norms (ibid.). Furthermore social movement theorists argue that though changing structural circumstances can lead to contentious collective action, groups and individuals may act differently under similar structural opportunities. Given this, not all social movements that face similar opportunities will experience the same results. For example, though various GSE unionization efforts face similar labour legislation, they do not all succeed. Thus favourable labour legislation may in part explain the emergence of various attempts at GSE unionization, but we also have to uncover how groups and individuals acted and how the organizing campaigns developed in order to understand the different outcomes.

Two main perspectives punctuate the evolution of social movement theory to its present form. The first perspective is resource mobilization theory commonly associated with the work of McCarthy and Zald (1977). The underlying assumption of McCarthy and Zald was that social movements were not the result of shared grievances or discontent for these can always be found in any society but do not necessarily lead to social movements (1977, p. 1215). Rather, they argued that social movements were the results of social movement organizations, which mobilize the resources necessary for the emergence of social movements. For McCarthy and Zald social movement development could be understood in terms of which social movement organizations were able to attract resources from a "conscience constituency" (1977). These resources were defined predominantly as financial resources. McCarthy and Zald's work made sense in terms of

the professional social movement organizations such as lobby organizations, but I would argue, could also be applied to unions.

The second predominant perspective is political process theory developed by Douglas McAdam and based on his study of the Black civil rights movement (1982). McAdam took issue with the conception of social movements put forward by resource mobilization theory and argued that it over-emphasized the role of social movement organizations in mobilizing resources; neglected the role of popular support; and defined resources too narrowly (1982, ch. 2). For McAdam social movements were better understood as "rational attempts by excluded groups to mobilize sufficient political leverage to advance collective interests through non-institutionalized means" (McAdam 1982, p. 37). Any understanding of social movements, especially in the US, had to begin with the assumption that political power was concentrated in the hands of a few. Under normal circumstances would-be insurgents face a number of obstacles including "a force of environmental constraints...usually sufficient to inhibit mass action" (1982, p. 39). At certain points in time though, shifts in the structure of power occur and political opportunities become available to activists (1982, ch. 3). If activists have access to sufficient organizational resources including informal networks of individuals, then social movement emergence is possible. To these necessary conditions, McAdam also added the crucial intervening process of cognitive liberation. Groups had to understand their own situation as unjust and have the perception that the social movement was the appropriate response to these grievances (McAdam 1982, p. 48). Cognitive liberation is not independent of the other two factors and "one effect of improved political conditions and existent organizations is to render this process of "cognitive liberation" more likely" (ibid.).

Drawn out McAdam's model of political process theory looks like this:

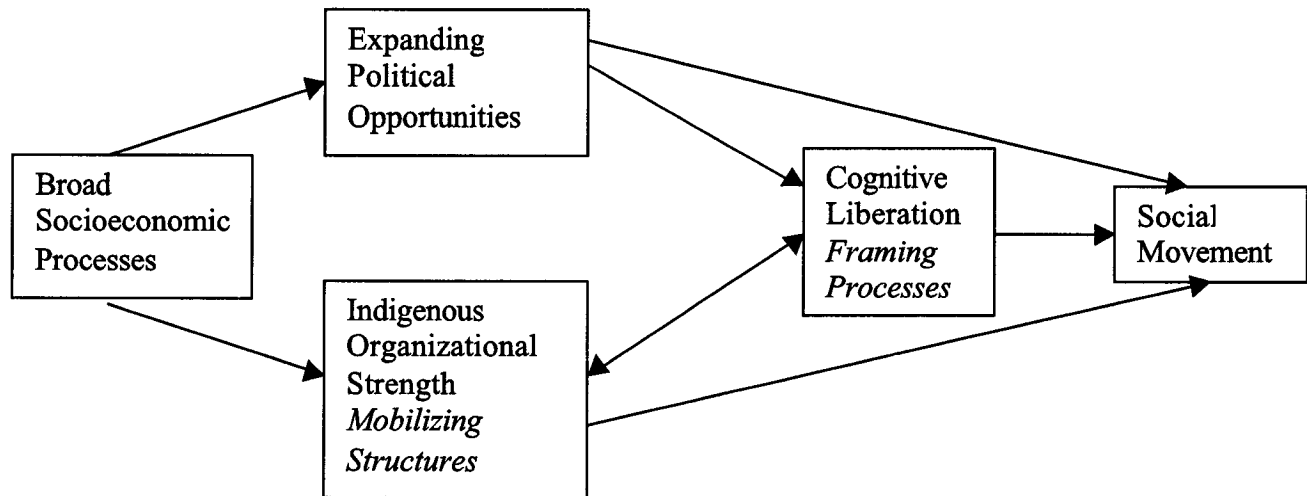


Figure 1 Taken from McAdam (1982, p. 51) "A Political Process Model of Movement Emergence" (italicized parts added).

Since McAdam, McCarthy and Zald researchers analyzing social movements have continued to build upon the factors they identified. Of particular note, McAdams' indigenous organizational strength has been replaced by mobilizing structures and cognitive liberation by framing processes. Nonetheless, scholars maintain that social movements are dynamic processes and abide by a similar causal model, though they recognize that these factors can shift during the process of mobilization, thus consistently affecting the assumptions and calculations actors make.

Using these variables social movement researchers have been able to build upon our knowledge of social movements' functions and refine more precisely how these variables impact their development and decline. Indeed social movement research comprises a rich body of study (see for example compilations of essays edited by Morris & Mueller 1992, McAdam & Snow 1997, Goodwin & Jasper 2003 and Snow, Soule & Kriesi 2004). In the following section, I take each of the variables and explain exactly how they are theoretically said to impact contentious collective action. I also develop

research hypotheses based on each variable. I end by briefly discussing failed social movements and how social movement theorists treat these outcomes.

Political Opportunity Structures

The first variable is the institutionalized political system that surrounds collective action. The idea that political opportunities give rise to action is not unique to political process theory. March, Cohen and Olsen used the concept of choice opportunities to explain when decisions get made in organized anarchies (interestingly they base their model on the example of universities) (1972). John Kingdon later elaborated upon this 'garbage can model' to suggest that for public policy, the reason why certain issues appear on the agenda when they do is directly related to the opening of 'policy windows' at certain times (1994). The importance granted to the institutionalized political system affirms the assumption that social movements are embedded in, and respond to, the broader political systems. This variable has been used to answer questions about both the timing of movement emergence and the forms they take.

On the one hand, social movements emerge when they do because of some change in a political system that gives groups of actors the incentive to act. For example, we could explain the rise in faculty unionization as a result of two shifts in the political opportunity structure. The first was provincial legislation allowing workers in the public sector to unionize. The second shift was the declining enrolments and budget cutbacks in the 1970s that marked a fundamental shift in the public perception of universities and led faculty to suddenly question the security of their employment. As Tarrow notes, political opportunities provide groups with the needed incentive to act because they suggest an opportunity for success (1994, p. 85).

Social movement theorists have also come to realize that not only do specific opportunities explain the emergence of social movements, but they also affect the forms that movements take. Thus, researchers have found that changes in institutionalized political systems that afford some groups more formal access will tend to result in movements that use tactics targeted specifically at the new openings. This tends to be less relevant to the question of GSE unionization since the form of the collective action is already given, though it does point out that as an institutionalized process, GSE unionization efforts often use similar tactics and strategies that are informed by the rules of certification. What is interesting here is that at the same time as labour legislation provides an opportunity to organize unions. It also constrains actors who must abide by certain rules and procedures.

Political opportunities can be distinguished by whether or not they are long-term or short-term (Tarrow 1996, pp. 56-57). Long-term opportunities are profound changes to the political system, such as when universities in Canada introduced bicameral governance structures, or public employees gain the legal right to unionize. Short-term changes tend to be more fleeting, such as when a crisis occurs in the university, polarizing interests and creating an opportunity for action, as with the financial strains of the 1970s.

Social movements themselves can create new opportunities for other groups (Tarrow 1994, p. 96). By exposing weaknesses in the system, 'early-risers' demonstrate to like-minded groups the opportunity for action and success. These movements may also create opportunities for counter-movements to mobilize against them. When social movements act, they communicate their goals not only to those power holders they challenge, but also to other aggrieved groups. Tarrow makes the important point that

although social movement theorists tend to speak of individual movements we also have to be aware that these individual groups are part of larger waves of contention (1996, ch. 9). For example, if we chose to look at academic unionization as a broader social movement, we would see that as faculty unions formed they created more political opportunities for other academic groups to unionize as well. Partly because unionization became a familiar form of resistance and partly because faculty unions established a legal precedent for others to follow suit (this of course is dependent on the provincial labour code), faculty unionization created new opportunities for other academic groups.

Hypothesis Number One

Given the frequency with which GSE unionization occurs in Canada and the fact that it contains a similar form of contention in each case, I expect to find in each case study that organizers were responding to broadly similar sets of opportunities. Furthermore, I expect that each of these attempts to unionize had some awareness of the previous success of others.

Indigenous Organizational Strength / Mobilizing Structures

If movements are to survive beyond their initial emergence, they must be organized to some extent and be able to connect with formal and informal networks of people (McAdam 1982). In his study of the black civil rights movement, McAdam found that churches and black colleges played a crucial role in mobilizing participation (1982). These indigenous organizations had the capacity to provide the civil rights movement with important resources such as leaders, communication networks, organization and solidary incentives (1982). Along with the formal organizations resource mobilization theory saw as necessary to movement emergence, McAdam and others emphasized the

various informal grassroots organizations that social movements frequently emerged out of (see especially Tilly 1975, 1978).

Mobilizing structures refer to both the various types of organizations social movement have access to when they emerge, and those that they create through the process of contention. Mobilizing structures provide the crucial leadership and coordination necessary for sustained collective action (Tarrow 1998, ch. 8).

In some cases, mobilizing structures are found in formal organizations that social movements emerge out of, i.e. faculty associations. In other cases mobilizing structures are loose networks of individuals. McAdam argued that if social movements are to survive past their initial emergence, then formal and enduring structures need to be established (1982). In many ways this is one of the primary goals of unionization. Unionization is based on the strategy that in order to protect the interests of GSEs, a union, which is a formal organization, needs to be established.

Mobilizing structures draw attention to the underlying connectedness individuals have to one another and to social movement organizations. As Snow et al argue, individuals are embedded in networks and it is the individual's location in a network that strongly predicts whether they will be recruited into a social movement (1980). Their findings suggest that where social movements have access to extra-movement networks and where potential participants are available to participate, recruitment will be facilitated.

GSE unionization provides an interesting case for the application of the network thesis. Unionization as a movement is restricted to the university within which it occurs and all of the potential participants have to be GSEs. The university itself as a complex organization is also the institutional point through which GSEs are connected. GSEs may

know each other through friendships, as colleagues within departments or through other associations. Any network that includes more than one GSE can be useful to union organizers as they attempt to recruit GSEs by getting them to sign union cards. At the same time these networks may have a reverse impact on unionization and encourage opposition to unions.

Organizations and networks speak to the central task of any social movement: mobilization. Mobilization refers to the shift that occurs when individuals and groups of individuals become actively involved in the pursuit of some collective good (Tilly 1978). Organizations and networks all impact upon the ability of unionization efforts to mobilize members. Given the rules surrounding the formation of unions, the limited number of potential participants and the time constraints within which organizing drives operate, unionization efforts have to be very strategic. One useful strategy that they may be able to access is networks of individuals that share similar beliefs, have relationships of trust and may be willing to join a union.

Hypothesis Number Two

In order for GSE unionization attempts to succeed, activists must be organized to a certain extent, be it through an informal collection of individuals or a formal structure. Furthermore, GSE unionization efforts will be facilitated by access to networks of individuals. Where these networks are unavailable or weak, we should find that organizers have had to be extremely strategic in their recruitment methods.

Cognitive Liberation / Framing Processes

McAdam writes that, 'mediating' between political opportunities and mobilizing resources is the essential factor of cognitive liberation (1982, p. 48). Whereas political opportunities and mobilizing structures are structural prerequisites of movement

emergence, neither of these lead to a full-fledged movement unless people believe they can enact the change they seek. Cognitive liberation occurs when people come to view their normal situation as unjust, and come to believe they can do something about it.

Cognitive liberation is especially important given the way social movement theory views the distribution of power. Social movements emerge amongst otherwise excluded groups, who nevertheless live out their day-to-day lives in the very political system that excludes them. For social movements to occur, these groups have to have an awareness of this exclusion and the injustice of their situation, which for many might seem normal. The only problem with cognitive liberation as a variable is that while it is necessary to a social movement, there is no indication as to how it occurs. Thus, McAdam and others have come to replace this variable with David Snow's 'framing processes', which treats the collective mindset of social movement participants not as a given, but rather as something that is produced over time.

Framing and framing processes refer to when objective conditions (or situations, events and experiences) become "punctuated and encoded" (Snow & Benford 1992, p. 137). Framing processes single out some aspect of social life and define it as unjust and attribute blame to some authority or institution (Snow & Benford 1992, p. 137). Social movement scholars argue that movement leaders make strategic choices about how to frame their goals and movements that speak to the cultural setting of the target population, thus inscribing meaning onto participation in a movement (Tarrow 1994, p. 123). Also known as collective attribution or social construction (see especially Cox 2001 and Hall 1993), framing processes help us to understand the role of ideas in a successful social movement and how participants are motivated to action by a very specific interpretation of their reality (McAdam & Snow 1997, p. 232).

In order for organizers to successfully mobilize GSEs they have to frame their goals in such a way that resonates with GSEs. As Charlotte Yates argues, unions actively search for ways to “forge unities of interest and mobilize support for common goals” (1993, p.17).

As was evident in the literature, identities and issues have to come to be defining features of GSE unionization. On the one hand, those who argue against unionization see GSEs as primarily students and the work they do as benefiting their studies. Those that argue for unionization propose a separation of these two identities and encourage GSEs to see themselves as workers making a contribution to the functioning of the university and thus deserving of the right to collectively bargain. As part of this second identity, organizers often promote shared injustices that all GSEs experience as a way of creating a collective identity necessary for unionization.

Hypothesis Number Three

Successful attempts at GSE unionization will employ frames strategically in ways that fit with the broad experiences of GSEs, thus justifying unionization. These frames will also make use of the mobilizing structures available and the political opportunities present.

Social Movement Theory and Failure

One of the fundamental assumptions of social movement theory is that social movements are embedded within the broader structures that surround them. Though leaders are often skilled at using innovative tactics and strategies, all social movements face the reality that their actions threaten and challenge the status quo. Those that oppose the goals of social movements or see themselves threatened by the social movement may take the opportunity to organize themselves into counter-movements (for a good discussion of counter-movements see Staggenborg & Meyer 1996). Just as social

movements are embedded within political structures and institutions, so are other groups that may see themselves negatively affected by the actions of social movements. Aside from a lack of opportunity or mobilizing resources, this is the main source of failure for social movements.

For example, in Kim Voss's study of the failure of Knights of Labor in the early 20th century, traditional explanations of "American exceptionalism" are rejected as she uncovers how well-organized and powerful employee associations undermined the Knights and weakened the American labour movement as a whole (1993).

For McAdam, the response by other groups to insurgency is a direct effect of the tactics and goals these groups employ (1982, p. 57). The type of tactics a group employs communicates varying degrees of threat to other groups. McAdam distinguishes between institutionalized tactics such as using 'proper channels' and non-institutionalized tactics which threaten the very structure of power (1982, p. 57). The goals of insurgency will also affect the response of other groups. McAdam distinguishes between revolutionary and reform goals, stating that the more revolutionary the goals of a movement are, the more likely that movement will be met with unified opposition (1982, p. 57).

While the short term goals of unionization may simply be collective bargaining, this comes with a whole set of other goals which in and of itself creates a high level of uncertainty for other actors especially administrators charged who are technically managers. Thus in the case of GSE unionization, the main goal is forming a union, but administrators are well aware of the other goals of wage increases, tuition waivers, and employer paid health benefits which GSEs might be prepared to strike for should a union form.

The dilemma that confronts social movements is trying to find the middle ground between non-institutionalized tactics and revolutionary goals, avoiding both “crippling repression and tactical impotence” (McAdam 1982, p. 58). In the case of faculty unionization, the CAUT felt that its support instead of CUPE provided this middle ground. Instead of joining larger unions and signifying their solidarity with a broader labour movement, faculty unions formed as independent associations, thus preserving their members’ sense of professional autonomy. Similarly, the actions that university administrators can take against the formation of a union are constrained by provincial labour law. Nevertheless, as my case studies shall demonstrate, administrators have opposed the formation of unions and used a variety of ‘legal’ methods to do so. In terms of the social control response to unionization efforts, the greatest threat comes from the GSEs themselves because they hold the power to decide whether or not the organizing campaign is going to succeed. They may choose not to sign union cards, or vote against certification and they may be more convinced by arguments against a union, or be ideologically opposed to unions in universities.

With every type of collective action, there is always uncertainty as to how events will unfold and what the actions of contenders will be. In many ways this relates to the fact that organizers have imperfect information on the opinions and beliefs of those they are attempting to mobilize. In this sense, each union drive represents a unique process. In this thesis I attempt to explain and report on each of these processes in order to determine why two of them failed, while the other two succeeded. Instead of approaching each one blindly however, it makes much more sense to isolate and compare a few key variables, thus permitting a more systematic investigation. Social movement theory provides a model for doing so.

According to social movement theory, power in institutionalized political systems rests in the hands of few. This is the opposite of the pluralist conception of institutions that sees various interest groups forming and vying for power in a relatively open system. Furthermore, if we are to understand the ultimate outcomes of GSE unionization, then we have to move beyond a simple causal argument that sees restructuring as leading to unionization. Instead, we have to understand unionization as complex processes variously impacted by a number of factors.

How is GSE unionization best understood given all the difficulties and reasons that make it counter-intuitive? How do universities as political environments combined with the internal networks of GSEs impact upon unionization efforts? These are questions this thesis will answer as it investigates the process through which GSE organizing campaigns either succeed or fail.

In the sense that I am using social movement theory to investigate GSE union drives, I am also testing it. In my decision to do so I have considered other theories that could also explain GSE unionization. Discussed below are new institutionalism and rational choice. The main difference between the three approaches is the proper unit of analysis they see as being to explain political outcomes. New institutionalism sees institutions as the important starting point for explaining political behaviour, while rational choice begins with the individual. Social movement theory takes a middle of the road approach to both these theories, recognizing that institutions do shape preferences and enable and constrain action, but that groups of individuals are able to challenge these structures. Individuals are important, but individual preferences cannot be separated from the social world (Robinson 2004).

New Institutionalism

The political paradigm of new institutionalism understands political behaviour as heavily influenced by political institutions such as the state or the legislature. The main argument of new institutionalists is that institutions represent an autonomous force in society and that political analysis will be best served by taking institutions as a starting point (Lecours 2005). Although new institutionalists can be divided into historical institutionalists, normative institutionalists or rational choice institutionalists, and each differently conceptualizes the exact details of how institutions affect actors, they all agree that institutions do impact on political action and agency (Peters 1999).

In a recent essay by March and Olsen, the authors elaborate on the basic assumptions and theoretical core of new institutionalism (2005). New institutionalists see institutions not simply as structures or organizations but as collections of rules, norms and standard operating procedures. In this way, institutions both constrain and enable the actions of individuals. Through their rules and operating procedures, institutions give the individuals within them some sense of predictability and expectation about how others will act. Actors within institutions have some sense of what appropriate behaviour is and tend to make decisions accordingly. In this way institutions are understood as fundamentally shaping political behaviour because they prescribe and reinforce certain rules and identities about what is allowed and what is not. Institutions themselves are constantly reproduced by an abeyance to these rules and procedures, and thus become powerful and autonomous forces of political life.

New institutionalism could usefully be applied to the broad phenomenon of academic unionism in Canada. The starting point would be the evolution of higher education in Canada, through federal legislation and the decentralized system of

provincially run universities that have emerged. Through this evolution, we could begin to tease out the institutional norms and values stressed by universities as they developed. Of particular interest would be the differences among various provinces in their policies towards universities. For example, in Ontario the policy of the provincial government has been to raise tuition, while in Québec, the government has avoided this course of action.

Next, we could begin to look at the organization of power within each university and how this impacted the ability of key decision makers in their actions. According to Clark, university governance structures, particularly participatory bodies, have led to the inability of administrations to effectively and strategically plan the university's direction (2005). One theoretical proposition could be that the decision-making structure of universities, combined with fiscal constraints rendered the decision-making capabilities of university administrators inefficient and thus restricted the ability of some universities to adapt to the changing environment within which they exist. Theoretically, academic unionization could be explained as an important outcome of some universities inability to adapt to changes in their environment. We could compare the strategies and tactics used at some universities in dealing with retrenchment and compare them to others. In Hardy's work she finds that one of the strategies administrators at McGill have used to deal with retrenchment is extensive consultation with deans, chairs and faculty (1996). According to Hardy this consultation style has decreased the amount of competitiveness between departments and created a greater sense of collegiality (1996). Hardy also credits McGill's avoidance of faculty unionization with this method (1996).

Through political opportunities, social movement theory makes many of the same theoretical assumptions as new institutionalism. Social movement actors are understood as enabled and constrained in their activities by the broad political environment in which

the movement is embedded. Yet social movement theory looks at this environment less as an assortment of institutions with rules and standard operating procedures, but more as structures of power that can at various times be vulnerable to protest. Institutions matter to the extent that they allow collective action to occur and those social movements that are able to access institutions will be shaped by those very same institutions.

Social movement theory accepts the claim that institutions are autonomous structures. However, social movement theory is interested in how purposeful action can challenge these structures. In the case of GSE unionization, unionization challenges the institution of the university by demanding the rights of collective bargaining. Through social movement theory we can see how the university as an institution constrains this collective action. One way is by inscribing identities of GSEs as students rather than as workers. However, through mobilization, GSEs are sometimes able to challenge this norm.

New institutionalism could be a useful approach for faculty unionization and could perhaps explain why some universities were able to resist this phenomenon while others were not. It might also be useful for explaining why research intensive universities have overwhelmingly not seen the development of faculty unions as opposed to comprehensive institutions. New institutionalism might also be effective in explaining the outcomes of the rules and procedures put in place as a result of the institutionalization of collective bargaining. How these rules have impacted the direction and development of universities and how they have enabled actors within universities could be a very fruitful research question.

Rational Choice

The rational actor model of collective action was developed by Mancur Olson in his book *A Theory of Collective Action* (1971 [1965]). Olson's main argument was that "rational self-interested individuals will not act to achieve their common or group interests" (1971 [1965], p. 2). In other words, he was disputing the widely held belief that group action was the derivative of shared interests amongst rational individuals. Of course trade unions, which are by their very definition common interest organizations do exist, but according to Olson this is the result of compulsory membership, selective incentives and coerciveness (especially violence on picket lines), without which the large national unions we see today could not survive. Thus, even though groups of individuals may have a common interest in obtaining some good, that common interest itself will not necessarily lead to collective action. This assumption is also found in social movement theory, which in a sense is asking what leads social movements to form, given all the reasons they should not.

As an economist, Olson was primarily interested in how groups and organizations managed the costs of providing collective (public) goods in light of the fact that no single rational individual would choose to bear the costs themselves. Put differently, Olson expected all individuals to free ride on the work of others when and where they could. A public good, as opposed to a private good is something which once provided can not be excluded from use by others. The public goods provided by trade unions are shorter working days, higher wages and grievance arbitration procedures. The problem is that unions need membership and member dues in order to offer these goods. At the same time though, once these goods are offered it is impossible to exclude non-union workers from free riding: receiving them without contributing to their provision. Herein lies the

collective action dilemma: unions rely on membership to protect the interests of workers, yet no rational individual would voluntarily become a member when they could simply free ride and receive those same benefits without paying dues, going on strike or at any other cost to him or herself.

Besides the costs and benefits involved in collective goods, Olson also considered how the size of a group affected its ability to provide goods. For Olson, smaller groups seemed to have a distinct advantage in their ability to provide collective goods. If one individual in a small group would derive from the provision of a collective good a benefit greater than the total cost to that individual, then the good would be provided (Olson 1971 [1965], p. 34). Because the size of the group is relatively small the fraction of the collective good available to each member is large, thus there is a greater chance that individuals will see it in their personal interest to bear the costs of providing that good. Large, latent groups on the other hand face numerous obstacles in providing collective goods. Since they include more individual members, they require significantly more “agreement and organization” (Olson 1971 [1965], p. 46). These are the costs of the organization, which Olson stresses must be differentiated from the other costs of simply providing some good. These are especially important to consider in terms of union formation, where the costs of union dues are extracted to support the union as an organization itself.

Another factor which favours small groups is that it is much more difficult for larger groups to provide social incentives to its members (Olson 1971 [1965], p. 62). Social incentives such as acceptance into a group or conversely social sanctions such as exclusion from the group are utilized by small groups that have face-to-face interactions (similar to the 'solidary incentives' of McAdam).

Olson argued that national trade unions only existed as a result of the success of smaller local unions (1971 [1965], p. 67) and the local union's interest in organizing all workers in the same industry. If only the unionized company has to pay higher wages, it makes it much more difficult to remain competitive (Olson 1971 [1965], p. 67). But how were these groups able to overcome the collective action dilemma? Olson argued that large unions were able to survive because of the compulsory membership that already existed at the smaller local union level (1971 [1965], p. 68). However, compulsory membership only applied where individuals were already unionized and could not explain union formation itself. Here Olson misses a vital point. Compulsory membership actually does shape the process by which unions are formed. As all workers will be members of the union, once that union is certified, organizers must show that a significant proportion of workers actually want to be members. Thus in this sense unionization efforts resemble social movements in that they also have to mobilize the support of workers. This is at the heart of the unionization process, the costs involved and the strategies organizers and opponents use.

Olson's work does provide an illustrative analysis of the calculations involved in the provision of collective goods, but it neglects some important aspects of unionization, especially in the case of GSEs. First of all, the benefits of forming a union are never immediately realized once certification occurs. In fact all of the immediate benefits of certification exist only as potential benefits until the first collective agreement is negotiated. Therefore, instead of deriving any immediate benefit from forming a union, GSEs are only given the hope that the collective agreement will benefit them and the legal ability to flex their new found leverage by striking. The immediate benefits are more symbolic than anything else and unionization comes closer to resembling a form of

protest against the structure of power in the university. Combine this with the fact that GSEs are only temporary employees of the university and as such have a definite end to their employment and it is even more unlikely that any GSE would choose to bear the costs of a union. The cost-benefit analysis simply does not fit GSE unionization.

However, the most important reason why Olson's rational choice theory is not sufficient to explain why GSEs unionize is because there is no ideological component. True, individuals may take into account costs and benefits when deciding whether or not to join a union, but as the literature revealed, identities, values and beliefs are also an important component of unionization success or failure. If we followed Olson, chances are we would expect to be able to answer the question of unionization success or failure based simply on a narrow economic calculation of atomistic, unattached individuals. As Tarrow (1994) and McAdam (1982) separately write, the free-rider problem is over-exaggerated. Individuals participate in collective action because they want to and because they believe in the goals being pursued. Collective action is less a problem of free-riders and more a social problem of coordinating loosely dispersed groups into action (Tarrow 1994, p. 16). All of this fits with the earlier realization that the belief in the need for a union amongst GSEs was based less on any objective reality, and more on the perception of injustice. Social movement theory recognizes of course that with all forms of collective action there is a free-rider problem but that collective action often stems from the previous existence of organizations that already have solidarity incentives and social networks to draw upon (1982, p. 45). In other words, individuals including GSEs are embedded in social networks and share collective identities and beliefs that will shape how the costs and benefits of unionization are understood and perceived (Mueller 1992, p. 7).

Conclusion

In considering unionization and the reasons why groups of workers seek to form these collective organizations, it is not uncommon to think solely about what they stand to gain by doing so. Organizing campaigns themselves will stress the benefits of joining a union as they attempt to mobilize workers. Yet some campaigns fail, while others succeed. Why this occurs is the topic of this thesis. How I should go about investigating it has been the topic of this chapter.

Although there was no clear consensus in the literature on academic unionization about how best to approach the topic of GSE unionization, one area of agreement did emerge: that academic unionization is a contentious issue amongst all members of the university, including GSEs themselves. Furthermore, given the situation of GSEs as temporary employees, it is not rational for them to invest all the time and energy needed to form a union. These basic problems call for a theory that would view the organizing campaigns of GSE unionization as political endeavors, seeking to change the distribution of decision-making authority within the university

Social movement theory offers the best means of exploring this topic. This theory conceptualizes the emergence and result of collective action as conditioned by four main variables that are both external and internal to the movement itself. It treats the university as the political system GSEs are embedded in as important, while examining how the idea to unionize is spread amongst GSEs while others oppose this course of action. Furthermore, drawing on normative institutionalism it treats GSEs as socially embedded actors, thus taking seriously the shared understandings of different organizational forms, how these organizations function, and what they signal to the rest of society.

Each of the following chapters takes one of the variables and applies it to the four case studies to see first of all if the theory holds, and secondly if any variables seemed to matter more in terms of explaining why the organizing campaigns at Queen's and Concordia failed, while those at McGill and UQAM succeeded. For the sake of clarity each variable is discussed separately, yet it is important to remember that they all interact with each other. The final task will be to explain the overall dynamics of the organizing drives at each of the universities and determine in what ways our expectations were met and in what ways they were not. Only then will I be able to draw a conclusion about GSE unionization in Canada.

Chapter Three

Political Opportunity Structures

This chapter analyzes the political opportunity structures surrounding GSE unionization efforts. The importance of political opportunity structures as variables in social movements follows directly from the hypothesis that social movements are embedded within (and therefore affected by) broader political systems. Social movements both react and orient themselves to the opportunities and constraints present in the political environment (McAdam et al. 1996, pg. 3). The important thing to remember about political opportunity structures is that they are the factors *outside* of the actual movement (Meyer & Staggenborg 1996, p. 1633). They influence the decision of actors to pursue collective action. In this these opportunities can also affect the decisions and choices actors make about the form a social movement should take, the target of the social movement and its overall strategy.

Though political opportunities exist in the external environment, different movements are affected by different types of political opportunities. Obviously the women's movement will be affected by different opportunities than a GSE movement (Meyer & Staggenborg 1996, p. 1634). In the case of GSE unionization the political opportunity structure includes the legal environment of labour law, the historical precedents of GSE unionization, low wages, disparate wages, outside unions willing to assist the campaign and a student association willing to assist in the campaign.

The fact that four campaigns emerged on four different campuses, suggests that something in the broad political environment encouraged the pursuit of unionization. By comparing the four opportunity structures of the four campaigns, I reveal the factors that were in place at all four campaigns and identify those that some campaigns had access to,

while others did not. In the end, I find that in every case there was, at a minimum, the knowledge of previous GSE unionization efforts, the legal ability to form a union and the presence of allies to support the campaign. On the other hand, the types of grievances, types of organizations willing to assist, and the exact rules of certification differed depending on the university. Explaining how these campaigns developed given the different sets of opportunities and constraints they faced, is really the heart of this thesis. For example, in the chapter that follows I look at how each campaign developed effective strategy given the constraints that it faced. Meanwhile, explaining the immediate circumstances that encouraged unionization is the focus of this chapter. Comparing the political opportunity structures that surrounded each attempt also serves as an effective means of introducing the unique context of each campaign.

This chapter's first section briefly explains what is meant by 'political opportunity structure' and how it is used in social movement research. The second section employs Kitschelt's work *Political Opportunity Structures and Political Protest* to operationalize this variable so that it can be applied specifically to the cases of GSE unionization, and outlines the questions that I ask in my comparison. The third section turns to the four case studies themselves. In my conclusion and throughout this thesis, I argue that the context surrounding GSE unionization attempts is generally favourable to the emergence of these movements but that in order for these opportunities to be activated, there must be individuals willing to pursue unionization. Moreover, although the opportunities for unionization were present, this did not necessarily ensure success.

Given this chapter's findings, GSE unionization appears to be a highly institutionalized process, conditioned by the institution of industrial relations; the various provincial labour regimes; and the rules of certification. Labour codes offer GSEs a point

of access to an institutionalized political system and are thus a central component of the political opportunity structure surrounding GSE unionization attempts. However, the rules of certification also constrain the actions of those trying to unionize and the employers. These rules render GSE unionization a costly and difficult process primarily because of the part-time, casual and flexible nature of GSE work. In this the support of an organization and the resources it offers are absolutely necessary for a successful GSE organizing drive. At the same time, labour codes usually have some provisions regarding 'unfair labour practices' which forbid employers from punishing those attempting to unionize their coworkers. Historical precedents, grievances and the widespread shifts in higher education in Canada (including greater numbers of enrolled graduate students, higher tuition and less full-time faculty) are all motivations for attempting unionization as well, but to a lesser extent.

The importance of labour legislation for the emergence of GSE unionization attempts is also related to the fact that, with the exception of the first GSE unionization attempts at York University and the University of Toronto (in the 1970s), all other GSE unionization attempts resemble 'spin-off movements'. These movements draw their inspiration from "early risers" that demonstrate weaknesses or openings in the political opportunity structures that other groups can take advantage of (Tarrow 1998, McAdam 1996). A quick look at table 3 demonstrates that there have been 3 waves or "cycles" (Tarrow 1998) of successful GSE unionization.

Table 3 - Waves of GSE Unionization

First Wave of GSE Unionization 1974-1980	Toronto (1974), York (1975), Lakehead (1978), SFU (1978), UBC (1979), Carleton (1979), McMaster (1979), Western (1980)
Second Wave of GSE Unionization 1992- 1998	McGill (1992), Windsor (1992), Dalhousie (1994), Guelph (1994), Ottawa (1997), Brock (1998), Victoria (1998)
Third Wave of GSE Unionization 2002-present	UQAM (2004), Attempts currently underway at U de M, Concordia, Laval and Memorial.

According to McAdam, in the case of spin-off movements ‘expanding political opportunities’, usually have less of an impact on movements than mobilizing structures and framing, which continue to remain significant determinants of movement development (1996). My findings in this chapter concur with McAdam’s. Though the university has obviously changed in terms of funding and enrollment since the 1970s, there is little evidence of large ‘shifts’ in the political opportunity structure where GSE unionization emerged. Rather, in all of the cases labour legislation, historical precedents and the presence of willing organizers were found.

Within the range of social movement types that exist (reform movements to revolutions), GSE unionization is an institutionalized reform process. As such we should not expect to find ‘expanding political opportunities’ accounting for the emergence of these movements (McAdam 1996, pg. 32).

Political Opportunity Structures

Political opportunity structures can be defined as “consistent -- but not necessarily formal, permanent, or national – dimensions of the political struggle that encourage

people to engage in contentious politics” (Tarrow 1998, pgs. 19-20). Changes, also termed as the expansion or contraction of opportunities, in these structures are believed to impact the incentives or disincentives for collective action (Robinson 2005, pg. 116). For example, in her study of the gay and lesbian movement in Canada, Miriam Smith argues that the entrenchment of the Canadian Charter of Human Rights created a new opportunity for the gay and lesbian movement to demand legal rights and equality (1999). At the same time the entrenchment of the Charter also led to new forms and strategies used by individuals within the gay and lesbian movement (ibid.).

According to McAdam (1996) the political opportunity structure includes:

1. The relative openness or closure of institutionalized political systems;
2. The relative strength or weakness of the system a movement seeks to change;
3. The presence or absence of elite allies; and
4. The state’s capacity or propensity for repression.

Political opportunities or constraints exist outside of social movements. Their presence or absence signals to a movement whether it has a chance for success. For example, one of the main reasons for faculty unionization, according to Cameron, were the changes in provincial policy that allowed public employees to unionize (1991, pg. 344). In terms of allies and organizational resources, the CAUT stepped up to help faculty unionize and the university itself had little recourse to prevent unionization since the right of all employees to unionize is protected by law.

According to Tarrow, the concept of political opportunity should not be understood as a single variable that predicts the emergence of a social movement. Instead, he argues that changes in the political opportunity structure can provide clues as to when groups of actors are presented with increased incentives for action (1996). In this

chapter I follow Tarrow's approach by evaluating a number of possible factors that could have encouraged organizers at each of the four universities to undertake a campaign. As a result, I find that the only consistent factors in all four case studies are the ability to unionize under labour legislation and the willingness of individuals to undertake a campaign.

Kitschelt's Notion of Political Opportunities

Gamson and Meyer point out that there is a danger in employing political opportunity structure because it has come to be used to explain so much it runs the risk of becoming meaningless (1996). In order to avoid this pitfall it is important to clearly define what exactly is meant by political opportunity structure when using it. The challenge is to clearly define the main components of political opportunity structure, and how variations amongst them are expected to affect mobilization attempts. Kitschelt does just this in his seminal piece *Political Opportunity Structures and Political Protest* (1986).

Kitschelt writes that political opportunity structures include the configurations of resources that social movements can access, the institutional arrangements which shape the relationships between power holders and constituents and the historical precedents of mobilization that a social movement may draw upon (1986, p. 58). Institutional arrangements refer to the institutional rules that condition the access challengers have to power holders. Resources include any resources a group has including remunerative and informational. Historical precedents refer to the appearance of other social movements that indicate chances for success of other groups. These three components are essentially the same as the dimensions listed by McAdam above. The main difference is that Kitschelt's typology is more concrete and allows us to identify specific aspects of the

political opportunity structure. Table 4 takes the three components and lists the questions that will be asked in order to establish how the political opportunity structure was configured at the time of the union campaign and identify similarities and differences.

Table 4 - Components of Political Opportunity Structure and Corresponding Research Questions

Components of Political Opportunity Structure	Questions
Historical Precedents	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Were there other TA unions formed in similar circumstances or at universities of similar types? - Were there TA unions formed in the same province? - Had GSEs at any of the universities ever tried to form a union before?
Institutional Arrangements	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Were GSEs legally allowed to form unions? - What were the rules or legal requirements of forming a union? What percentage of employees had to sign a card? What were the restrictions around signing cards? - How was the university constrained in terms of its ability to prevent unionization?
Specific Configurations of Resources	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Did the attempts to unionize have any allies (including the help of another union)? - Did GSEs have any substantial grievances against the university that might have led to widespread mobilization? - Was there organizational support for unionization?

These questions allow me to compare the four cases of GSE unionization and clearly identify the differences and similarities amongst them. Along with explaining movement emergence, the political opportunity structures that surround each, help also to explain the similarity in the strategies and tactics each movement used. For instance, the rules concerning the certification of a union meant that a certain percentage of union cards had

to be signed. In order to get these cards signed a range of tactics were used including, going door-to-door, emailing individuals, seeking out GSEs in places they were known to be and so on. However, in all four cases the main strategy revolved around getting cards signed. Discrete variations of this theme are the result of differences in the mobilizing structures that were present.

Although it is more difficult to discern in the individual examples, the entire system of post-secondary education in Canada does contribute to expanding opportunities for GSE unionization. In the first place, the number of both Master's and PhD students has steadily increased since 1990. According to the Canadian Association of Graduate Students in both categories combined there has been an increase from 84 Masters and 730 PhD programs in 1990 to 105 Masters and 365 PhD graduate programs in 2001 (CAGS 2004, pg. 1). Increases in the number of graduate students attending university are most apparent at universities like UQAM and Concordia which are considered to be 'comprehensive' institutions as opposed to medical-doctoral institutions like Queen's and McGill (see table 5).

At the same time as universities are admitting greater numbers of graduate students, reports indicate that graduate student funding is both "inadequate and uncertain" (Farr 2000, pg. 10). In the words of Claude Bedard, former dean of graduate studies at Concordia, "University budgets are nowhere near covering the needs of a majority of students. For all the internal fellowships, bursaries, donations and endowments, the bottom line is, there is not enough money to go around" (quoted in Farr 2000, pg. 14).

Universities themselves also tend to unintentionally promote unionization. Hardy's work on university retrenchment strategies in the 1980s helps to explain why this is so (1996). According to Hardy, the general characteristics of the university sector are

“goals [that] are more ambiguous, authority [that] is less hierarchical, and power [that] is more decentralized” (1996, pgs. 5-6). When university administrators had to make tough decisions about where to cut budgets, Hardy found that in the case of McGill at least, administrators worked with faculty, chairs and deans to keep them on board (and incidentally non-unionized). The problem is that while this decentralized structure may increase the power of faculty members, chairs and deans, it tends to exclude graduate and undergraduate students as a whole. At both McGill and Concordia, GSE wages were left up to the discretion of individual departments and thus were incredibly disparate. This disparity and a lack of power concerning working conditions underlie all attempts at unionization as a form of collective action. While GSE wages at UQAM and Queen’s were the same across the board, there was still a sense amongst organizers that in the face of the structure of decision-making at universities, students were generally left powerless to affect their own wages and working conditions.

Examining the individual cases of GSE unionization allows us to move away from a broad-based explanation, and focus specifically on the opportunities and constraints faced by these movements, some of which they all share, and some of which differ. Through this I am able to determine the specific factors in the political structure that encourages and constrains unionization.

Case Studies

McGill University (1991-1993)

GSEs in universities in Québec have come fairly late to unionization. The one exception is McGill. The Association of Graduate Student’s Employed at McGill (AGSEM) was established in February 1992 and was officially accredited as the sole bargaining agent representing all TAs at McGill on February 17, 1993 (February 17,

1994 Report of the Bargaining Committee). AGSEM is affiliated with the Fédération Nationale des Enseignantes et Enseignants du Québec (FNEEQ) / Confédération des Syndicats Nationaux (CSN).

The following demonstrates that efforts to form a union at McGill were shaped by a history of organizing around GSE issues within McGill; the success of other GSEs at other universities; the decentralized nature of governance at McGill and the attendant wage disparities; relatively favourable labour legislation; and the support of the Post Graduate Student Society (PGSS).

Historical Precedents

In 1974, the TAs in the faculty of Arts at McGill formed the McGill Teaching Assistants' Association (MTAA). In 1976, the MTAA held an eight-day strike, forcing the university administration to negotiate with the TAs. An agreement was reached whereby all TAs would receive a base salary and those salaries would be indexed to increases in the cost of living. In 1980, the MTAA was still in existence, though the promises of the university had yet to come to fruition (AGSEM). When the MTAA threatened to strike and affiliate with another union, once again the administration negotiated with the students.

In 1986, David Schulze was commissioned by the PGSS at McGill to investigate working conditions amongst TAs. Schulze found that there were huge disparities among the wages, workloads and hours TAs were working in different departments (Schulze Report).

By the time PGSS executive members decided to pursue unionization in 1990, there was a substantial history of grievances concerning GSE wages. When the decision to unionize was made, there were already GSE unions at UBC, Toronto, York, Carleton

and SFU, all of which already had collective bargaining and standardized pay. According to one activist at McGill, many of the graduate students at McGill had come from universities in other parts of the country and so were aware of the benefits of unionization (M1).

Institutional Arrangements

The decentralized governance structure that existed at McGill explains the disparity of GSE wages across departments at McGill. According to a 1987 report of the Teaching Assistants' Organizing Committee of the PGSS, in 1986 the Dean of Graduate Studies had responded to a request for information on McGill's policy on TA wages by writing:

I cannot answer your request for information of 'a policy for standard TA salaries,' because McGill does not have one as far as I know. Likewise, I have never seen a 'list of TA salaries in effect in all Departments'. This is a matter which is decentralized at McGill, and not regulated by any central authority at the University...

(Report of the Teaching Assistant's Organizing Committee, November 20, 1987, pg. 3).

Unionization as a strategy to improve GSE working conditions, sought to take wages out of the control of the departments and standardize them through a university-wide collective agreement. While McGill's decentralization had not addressed the question of GSEs as employees and the university as the employer, unionization forced the university to recognize itself as the actual employer. Incidentally, the negotiation of AGSEM's first collective agreement took over four years, and salaries remained varied across departments (Smith, 1998).

The other important institution that set the stage for unionization was the Québec Labour Code (administered by the Office of the labour Commissioner General and the Labour Court), which recognizes the right of all employees to form a union if they wish

to do so. The defining feature of the Québec Labour Code is that the procedure it requires for certification is 'card-check' as opposed to the system of a mandatory representation vote currently found in Ontario. Under the card-check procedure, union organizers have to collect evidence of support for a union in the form of signed membership cards. In Québec, organizers also have to collect \$2.00 from every individual that signs a card to further show that these individuals do support the union. If organizers are able to collect the signed cards of more than 50% of the entire proposed bargaining unit, then they are automatically certified. If they collect between 35% and 50% of the unit, then the Labour Commission can order a certification vote to be held. Most scholars have found that the card check procedure usually favours workers in the certification process, with a higher rate of success amongst organizing drives than under the mandatory vote system (Johnson 2002, Slinn 2003). Primarily, it gives employers less of an opportunity to oppose the union, since technically organizers could obtain the support of a majority of employees without the employer even being aware that a drive was happening.

In the case of McGill and UQAM, organizers were unable to obtain over 50% of support through card-check and so certification votes were always required. Part of the difficulty in getting over 50% support is determining how many GSEs are actually employed by the university and what their names are. The casual and varied nature of GSE work and the fact that graduate students are transitory, makes locating GSEs extremely difficult. The result is that although card check may prove to benefit some groups of workers in the certification process, this is not the case with GSEs. This difficulty is compounded by one other factor. Under Québec's Labour Code, if the labour commission determines that a certification vote be held, an absolute majority of all the employees in the proposed bargaining unit must vote in favour of the union in order for it

to be certified. This means that over fifty percent of all the GSEs at McGill and UQAM had to turn out to vote and had to vote in favour of the union. Under mandatory vote certification, a vote is held no matter how many cards are signed, although certification only requires that a majority of those who turn up for the election vote yes. In the case of GSE unionization, the card check procedure actually ends up being more difficult and expensive than mandatory vote certification.

In terms of the university's ability to oppose unionization, the Labour Code in Québec restricts the employer, and the Commissioner General may even order that a prospective bargaining unit be automatically certified if the employer is found to be engaging in unfair labour practices. Under section 12, the code states that any interference on behalf of an employer will not be tolerated.

Resources

One of the most important resources the unionization drive at McGill had was the support of the PGSS. Members of the executive took it upon themselves to form an organizing committee and begin the task of mobilizing fellow GSEs through the networks and organization of the PGSS. As we will see shortly, this situation contrasts sharply with drives at Concordia, Queen's and UQAM, which tended to rely on the support of affiliated unions and paid organizers. In the case of McGill, only after the decision to pursue unionization was made, was the FNEEQ-CSN invited to help with the drive.

In sum, the political opportunity structure surrounding the formation of a union at McGill included the institutional configurations at McGill (decentralized governance structure), combined with favourable labour legislation and the support of the PGSS. This structure was bolstered by the historical precedent of GSEs that had formed unions across the country and the awareness students at McGill had of these successes. The following

chapter takes a closer look at the role of the PGSS and how it facilitated the mobilization of GSEs at McGill. Suffice it to say the support of individuals within this organization was what activated the emergence of GSE unionization.

Concordia University 1995-1996

During 1995-1996, a handful of graduate students at Concordia decided to follow AGSEM's lead and attempted to organize a union. However, the organizing committee was unable to get very far and in the end a union was never formed. The most distinct feature about the political opportunity structure at Concordia is the absence of organizational resources. Neither the union that organizers at Concordia were working with (the FNEEQ-CSN), nor the student association were heavily involved in the organizing campaign. As I detail in the following chapter, this accounts for the failure of the organizing drive at Concordia even though there was some card signing undertaken by a handful of those involved.

Historical Precedents

The main historical precedent that spurred the attempt to unionize at Concordia was the recent success of AGSEM at McGill. Along with being located in close proximity, organizers at Concordia were friends with organizers at McGill. In the interviews I conducted, organizers at Concordia stated that the unionization of McGill students and one of their strikes were the main inspirations for unionization attempts at Concordia (C1, C2).

Institutional Arrangements

In 1993, the Dean of Graduate Studies at Concordia struck a Task Force on Graduate Student Life. The report that emerged from the meetings of this group reveals much about the state of graduate education at Concordia in the period leading up to the

attempts to unionize GSEs. The Report stated, “Graduate studies is a relatively young area of focus and concern at Concordia,” and described how members of the Task Force were “struck by the wide diversity and dynamism of the graduate student experience at Concordia (Task Force on Graduate Student Life 1993, pg. 2). The Task Force also commented on the situation faced by TAs and RAs at Concordia and argued that; “the issue of teaching assistantship support is one which requires much clarity, particularly the discrepancies in norms for the allocation of monies between departments and programmes” (1993, pg. 3).

GSEs at Concordia faced a similar situation as their counterparts at McGill in terms of disparate wages across departments. At the same time, there were aspects of graduate student life as a whole that differed significantly from McGill. Table 5 looks at the size of the student populations at both McGill and Concordia including the number of part-time students to full-time students.

Table 5 - PhD and Master’s Populations at McGill and Concordia in 1995

McGill 1995

	Full-time	Part-time
Number of Masters Students	2,810	775
Number of PhD Students	2,115	20

Concordia 1995

	Full-time	Part-time
Number of Masters Students	1,040	1,045
Number of PhD Students	440	55

Source: Statistics Canada (2005)

The relatively high number of part-time graduate students at Concordia can be attributed to one of Concordia’s central missions of providing accessible education “for a diverse range of clientele who, by reason of various circumstances and cultural

backgrounds, have perceived university education inaccessible” (Lightstone 1997, pg. 4). In terms of the political opportunity structure facing unionization attempts, we might be tempted to argue that the high number of part-time students makes it difficult to locate GSEs at Concordia. However, the case of UQAM dismisses this finding. At UQAM there is also a high ratio of part-time students as opposed to full-time students and yet the campaign at UQAM was successful.

Resources

As the UQAM and Queen’s cases will demonstrate shortly, where an attempt to organize GSEs into a union does not have the support of a strong student association, what is needed is the support of an outside organization, such as a union. The organizers at Concordia did approach the FNEEQ-CSN to support their drive, however the CSN did not play as large a role in organizing GSEs at Concordia as other unions did in similar cases. It did not provide a full-time organizer, nor did it offer the drive any financial resources. One potential explanation for this is that the FNEEQ-CSN did not see as large a potential for success at Concordia as at McGill. By the time organizers at McGill approached the FNEEQ-CSN, they were already highly organized and had the ability to reach a large number of GSEs. While card check certification procedures tend to be less costly because organizers only have to mobilize participants once to sign a card, this is not the case in GSE unionization attempts due to the difficulty of locating GSEs. Thus it makes sense that the FNEEQ-CSN would not be willing to devote extensive resources to a campaign that only had a small chance of success and that would be costly and time-consuming. Furthermore, the FNEEQ-CSN has not emerged as an ‘organizing union’ to the same extent as PSAC or CUPE which have adopted the strategy of ‘organizing the unorganized’ to maintain their membership levels.

In terms of the student association at Concordia, it was involved to a small extent although it did not take as strong a role as the PGSS did at McGill. The PGSS is a large highly structured organization with a significantly larger council and more resources than the Graduate Students' Association (GSA) at Concordia. The following chapter explores how this ultimately impacted the two drives.

In sum, the opportunity to attempt unionization at Concordia was present in the form of labour legislation that allowed GSEs to unionize, grievances, historical precedents and the willingness of individuals to pursue unionization. We already know that this campaign was not successful and the main reason for this was the lack of support from a strong student association or union. These organizational resources are necessary because of the rules surrounding certification and the difficulty of locating GSEs. Again unionization is a timely and costly process, even more so in the case of GSEs that are a transient and difficult population to locate.

UQAM 2003-2005

After less than a year of organizing efforts, SéтуÉ (Syndicat des Étudiantes Employées de l'UQAM) was recognized as the official bargaining agent of all student employees at UQAM. The UQAM case is distinct for three main reasons. First, it is only the second university in Québec to form a union of student employees. Second, students at UQAM unionized with the Public Service Alliance of Canada, a pan-Canadian union, and not the FNEEQ/CSN, the largest Québec union. Third, SéтуÉ includes all student employees at UQAM including undergraduate and graduate teaching assistants, research assistants, monitors, correctors and demonstrators. SéтуÉ is to date the most inclusive union of student employees in Canada.

The first union drive at UQAM began in August 2003 with SétuÉ applying to the labour board with what it thought was a majority of all signed membership cards. UQAM submitted a list to the labour board that suggested that SétuÉ did not in fact have enough cards. The organizers regrouped and decided to try again. When they submitted their cards in February of 2004, they did not quite have fifty percent plus one of all employees, but they did have enough for a referendum. The referendum was held and SétuÉ won an absolute majority of support.

Historical Precedents

One of the most puzzling things about GSE unionization in Canada is the almost complete absence in francophone universities. In speaking with organizers of UQAM, I was told that one of the reasons why francophone universities had not unionized was simply that no one had ever tried. Organizers found that there was little awareness among student employees that they could organize and many students believed that they were ineligible for union memberships because they were only contract employees. Furthermore, organizers found that there was a general un-awareness of GSE unionization in the rest of Canada among francophone students (U1, U2, U3). Though unionization has come fairly late to Québec it has spread. Presently, there are at least three other union drives underway at Université de Montréal, Laval and Concordia.

Within UQAM there is a strong history of academic unionization. The faculty members at UQAM were the first to form a union in 1966 with CSN (Cameron 1992, pg. 348). Cameron credits this to UQAM's history, which has been influenced by Québec's Quiet Revolution, and led to radical nationalists finding homes at UQAM as faculty (1991, pg. 347). The most recent example of UQAM's radicalism was the extended student strike in 2005. Students in seven faculties left their classes to protest Premier Jean

Charest's cuts to Québec's student bursaries (Curran 2005, pg. 1). Organizers also found that there was little resistance on the part of the administration at UQAM. In fact, one of the members of the first bargaining team told me that the administration even stated how proud they were that their students took it upon themselves to organize (U4).

Institutional Configurations

Unlike Concordia and McGill, student employees at UQAM get paid about the same basic rate based on the type of job they are doing, not because of which department they are in. Yet, UQAM students were receiving some of the lowest pay in the country, with rates falling somewhere between \$9.00 and \$14.00/hour as opposed to rates as high as \$38.00 at York University. Students also found that the amount of work they were expected to complete usually took longer than they were paid for (U2).

Similar to Concordia, UQAM also has the same mandate of accessibility. Enrolments in graduate programs at UQAM have grown significantly through the 1990s, and UQAM continues to have a higher number of part-time graduate students than full-time (see table 6). The formation of a union at UQAM, suggests that a high number of part-time students does not necessarily constrain unionization. Although as we will see in the following chapter, organizers at UQAM had the same challenges finding student employees as did every other drive. In fact, one of the reasons why they unionized all student employees at UQAM was because most research assistants are given office space, and thus are locatable. With a high percentage of research assistants supporting the union, this helped to offset the difficulty of finding other types of student employees including lab demonstrators and tutors.

Table 6 - Full-time and Part-time Graduate Student Populations at UQAM in 1992 and 2001

Year	Full-time	Part-time
1992	1,350	2,050
2001	1,990	3,175

Source: Statistics Canada (2005)

In terms of labour legislation, the unionization campaign at UQAM faced the same labour regulations as the campaigns at Concordia and McGill, rendering unionization possible, yet difficult.

Configuration of Resources

The lead organization in the unionization of student employees at UQAM was not a student association, but the Public Service Alliance of Canada (PSAC). PSAC provided the leadership and organizational resources to pursue unionization at UQAM. Though students were involved in organizing, the drive at UQAM was really an effort of both the union and individual students. This fits with PSAC's organizing mandate adopted at the 2000 PSAC Convention (PSAC). The support and resources of the union were incredibly important at UQAM, which has no central graduate student association, such as the PGSS at McGill. The other resource that presented itself to organizers was the fact that student employees at UQAM were paid so much lower than their counterparts in other universities.

In sum, there were a similar set of factors contributing to the emergence of a GSE organizing drive at UQAM as at McGill and UQAM. In terms of explaining its relative lateness, this could be due to the lack of awareness by GSEs of their ability to form a union, as opposed to GSEs at McGill, Concordia and Queen's. However, the arrival of PSAC allowed individuals who were willing to undertake unionization to emerge. The

GSE unionization campaign at UQAM also demonstrates that the ratio of part-time to full-time students does not necessarily mean that there is neither the opportunity nor possibility for a successful drive.

Queen's 2003-2005

In the 2003-2004 and 2004-2005 school years, graduate students at Ontario's Queen's University and CUPE organizers attempted to organize the teaching assistants (TAs) and teaching fellows (TFs) into a union. In terms of political opportunity structure, the drive at Queen's is a clear example of how social movements can lead to new opportunities for mobilization.

At UQAM the second union drive was very much an extension of the first, however at Queen's the second drive expanded upon and differentiated itself from the first. The primary difference was that CUPE's role was far less pronounced in the second drive than in the first.

During the first drive CUPE provided resources, including a full-time organizer, money and expertise. In mid-October of 2003, the Society of Graduate and Professional Students (SGPS) organized a town hall to discuss unionization. TAs in attendance were informed that the university administration would be raising wages from \$23.00 an hour to \$32.50 an hour. The timing and nature of this announcement strongly suggests that it was a tactic used by the administration to try and avoid unionization. Nevertheless, the drive continued and Queen's University TAs for Unionization (QUTU) submitted what it thought to be over forty percent of card signed by all GSEs at Queen's. Forty percent is what is required by the Ontario Labour Relations Board (OLRB) in order to have a certification vote. On February 5th, 2004, a certification vote was held with nearly 900 GSEs casting ballots. The administration contested QUTU's claim that it had acquired

forty percent support and claimed that there were 3076 GSEs working at Queen's, which was far greater than the 1157 employees estimated by QUTU. On March 31, 2004, the OLRB ruled in favour of the administration and ordered the ballot boxes of the certification vote to be destroyed.

All PhD students and a significant number of Master's students at Queen's receive funding packages that partially come in the form of scholarships and bursaries and the rest in the form of TA/TF contracts (Clark, 2004). When graduate students returned to school in the fall of 2004 they discovered that the administration had indeed kept its promise of increasing wages, but had reduced the amount of scholarships and bursaries graduate students received. In essence, the university had clawed back the wages it promised. By taking this action the administration created a new set of grievances around which former members of QUTU began to organize themselves. It is impossible to know for certain whether or not the administration would have given a raise to TAs/TFs if it were not for the union drive, but by doing so and then clawing back that wage it gave QUTU the rationale for organizing a second drive.

Though the second drive was defeated in the certification vote by a narrow margin, in terms of mobilization, it achieved much. Using the lessons from the previous drive, QUTU was very strategic in how it signed up members. Specifically, it worked extremely hard at ensuring that it had accurate information regarding the number of TAs/TFs at Queen's and the number of TAs/TFs in each department, so that if need be it could challenge any lists put forward by the administration. In obtaining a recognized certification vote, QUTU was able to achieve much more in the second drive than it did in the first.

One of the main reasons for the ultimate failure of the Queen's unionization attempt was anti-union resistance and mobilization. The fact that QUTU did get as far in the second drive is a credit to the fact that the opportunity to mobilize others was present. Furthermore, as we will see in the following chapter, the mobilizing structures were also available.

The Queen's case demonstrates more than the others that social movements are ongoing processes and that they can be both positively and negatively affected by changes in the structures around them. In the case of the second drive, it was positively affected by a change in the political opportunity structure. This change was the introduction of a new set of grievances brought on by the actions of the administration.

Historical Precedents

In the 1980s, and from 1997-1998, there were other attempts to unionize GSEs at Queen's. This is not surprising given that Queen's University is located in Ontario, which has the largest number of GSE unions in the country. Of 18 universities with graduate programs, 12 are unionized (Zinni et al. 2005, pg. 154). As table 7 demonstrates, Queen's stands out as being the only Medical-doctoral university without a union in Ontario. With the exception of Waterloo, Queen's is also the only university with a significant number of graduate students and no union

Table 7 - GSE Unionization at Ontario Universities

University	Union Affiliation	Year union formed	Undergraduate Population	Graduate Population	Institutional type*
Brock	CUPE	1998	15, 200	400	Primarily Undergraduate
Carleton	CUPE	1979	16, 140	2, 500	Comprehensive
Guelph	CUPE	1994	17, 300	1, 900	Comprehensive
Lakehead	CUPE	1978	7, 050	300	Primarily Undergraduate
Laurention	No union	-----	5,700	200	Primarily Undergraduate
McMaster	CUPE	1979	19, 900	2, 300	Medical-doctoral
Nipissing	No union	-----	2, 750	350	Primarily undergraduate
Ottawa	CUPE	1997	28, 350	3, 900	Medical-doctoral
Queen's	No union	-----	13, 800	2, 800	Medical-doctoral
Royal Military	No union	-----	961	272	Primarily undergraduate
Ryerson	CUPE	1978	26, 450	350	Primarily undergraduate
Toronto	CUPE	1974	56, 200	12, 000	Medical-doctoral
Waterloo	No union	-----	20. 050	2, 200	Comprehensive
Western	PSAC	1980	28, 900	3, 400	Medical-doctoral
Wilfrid Laurier	No union	-----	9, 700	500	Comprehensive
Windsor	CUPE	2002	15, 100	1, 200	Comprehensive
York	CUPE	1975	43, 450	4, 300	Comprehensive

Source: The Directory of Canadian Universities, 2003 cited in Zinni et al. 2005, pg. 157.

At Queen's there were substantial historical precedents for unionization, both within the university and outside of it. This led organizers to be aware of the fact that Queen's was one of the last non-unionized universities in Ontario, although this did not mean that there were not significant challenges to forming a union at Queen's.

Institutional Arrangements

In terms of GSE wages and working conditions, Queen's appears to be much more centralized than the other case studies. Graduate students generally received funding packages that included TA and TF assignments. This centralization enabled the administration to make promises of wage increases.

The conservative government of Mike Harris (1995-2003) also made a number of changes to the rules of union certification in Ontario. Labour experts argue that these changes have had "devastating" impacts on the organizing abilities of unions, and that these changes have resulted in fewer organizing attempts and fewer successes in those attempts (Lebi & Mitchell 2003, Martinello 2000 cited in Slinn 2003, pg. 407). The biggest change brought on by the Harris government was the introduction of mandatory votes for union certification, no matter how many employees signed membership cards (Slinn 2003). When these changes were brought about, unions and other labour activists argued that this system would result in longer and costlier unionization campaigns and increased employer interference (Slinn 2003, pg. 404).

In terms of costs of unionization, researchers have noted that mandatory vote procedures tend to be more expensive than card check procedures because the union has to bear the cost of maintaining the support of workers right up to the certification vote. In other words, the amount of resources required for successful unionization increases along with increases in the mobilization requirement. As a result, unions are more likely to try

to organize large bargaining units (such as GSEs). Unions are less likely to unionize smaller units since the fixed costs of unionization (i.e. a full-time paid organizer) are so high (Slinn 2003, pg. 412).

An organizer from CUPE told me that CUPE invested somewhere between \$100,000 and \$150,000 in the 2003-2004 drive at Queen's (Q1). One reason why CUPE would invest so much is due to declining union membership in Canada, which has resulted in unions turning to organizing new members to maintain and increase their membership and due levels. In light of the requirements of mandatory voting which lead to increased costs of organizing, it makes sense that CUPE would try to organize a large group of workers like TAs and TFs at Queen's, given the potential pay-off in union dues.

At the same time, the Harris government's changes to labour legislation makes it easier for employers to resist unionization attempts. Organizers at Queen's were very vocal about the fact that the promises made by the administration to raise the wages of all TAs and TFs during an organizing drive constituted interference on behalf of the union and therefore was an unfair labour practice. However, due to the changes brought about by the Harris government, the Ontario Labour Relations Boards takes much longer now to adjudicate unfair labour complaints. According to Lebi & Mitchell, this has resulted in labour unions being deterred from filing complaints as they see it as a waste of resources (2003, pg. 479).

Specific Configuration of Resources

As I have already mentioned, CUPE played a lead role in the first attempt to organize the TAs/TFs at Queen's. It provided a full-time staff person, and other resources including money and expertise. Though they managed to gain a significant number of cards signed by the TAs and TFs at Queen's, the type of grievances present were not as

pronounced as at McGill, Concordia and UQAM, where GSE wages were either disparate, low or both. However, the actions of the administrators during the first drive created a new set of grievances that QUTU was able to take advantage of in the second drive.

In terms of organizational support, the SGPS did not support the drive in 2003-2004. During the 2004-2005 drive, it reversed its position and supported the drive, although it offered little in the way of resources or support. Instead QUTU as an organization grew in size and in terms of the level of commitment it generated between the failed drive of 2003-2004 and the beginning of the 2004-2005 drive. Where CUPE was heavily involved in the first drive, its participation waned in the second.

In sum, although mandatory certification generally results in less unionization attempts and less successes where unionization is attempted, it actually makes the unionization of large groups more cost effective for unions. At Queen's there was a common cluster of political opportunities at play. There were some historical precedents for unionization and some grievances (though more in the second drive). Labour legislation made it in CUPE's interest to try to organize GSEs at Queen's as opposed to other groups of workers. There were also individual graduate students who were willing to organize their peers. As one CUPE organizer told me, the 2003-2004 drive started when CUPE was contacted by GSEs at Queen's who desired a union.

Conclusion

What do these comparisons tell us about the political opportunity structure surrounding GSE unionization attempts? More importantly what do these comparisons tell us about GSE unionization as a social movement and why it succeeds in some cases but fails in others?

In all four cases, the attempt to unionize GSEs did occur. Thus we must look at the similarities amongst these cases that might explain why activists felt that there was a chance for success and chose to pursue unionization. In the following table, I summarize the presence or absence of a number of factors which all form the political opportunity structure.

Table 8 - Presence of Absence of Factors Which Form the Political Opportunity Structures of the Four Cases

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
McGill	1	1	1	1	1	1	1
Concordia	0	1	1	1	1	0	1
UQAM	0	1	1	0	1	1	0
Queen's	1	1	0	0	1	1	0

1= The historical precedent of GSE unionization within the university.

2 = The awareness of organizers of historical precedents of GSE unionization at other universities.

3 = The presence of low wages.

4 = The presence of disparate wages.

5 = The presence of labour legislation that allows for unionization.

6 = The presence of a union willing to devote resources to a campaign.

7 = The presence of a student association willing to undertake a campaign.

If the factor is present then the case receives a score of 1.

The two factors that were consistently present at each case were labour legislation which allows for unionization and the knowledge other organizers had of successful unionization efforts. This pattern suggests that at a minimum, GSE unionization efforts are encouraged by labour legislation and the precedents of other unionization efforts. The other main factor that appeared in all four cases was an organizational presence (be it a union or a student association) willing to support the campaign. These can be considered

allies, and although there is a difference in whether a union or a student association is supportive, it suggests that at the very least organizational support usually forms part of the opportunity structure present in unionization attempts.

The presence of these three factors in all four cases, suggests that GSE unionization, as a type of social movement is very much a highly institutionalized one. It is highly institutionalized in the sense that the type of change it seeks to make follows sets of rules and procedures found in the labour codes of Québec and Ontario. This understanding of GSE unionization makes even more sense, when we consider the other two main factors that were present in all four attempts: historical precedent and organizational allies. Again, as an institutionalized process, GSE unionization is not the kind of movement that relies on big changes in the overall structure of political systems. Instead GSE unionization is the type of movement that has the potential to emerge at any point, given the chance it has for success and where there are organizational allies be they in unions or student associations. Labour legislation and the rules of certification also highlight the dual nature of political opportunities. While GSEs are technically given the right to form unions, the rules of certification put limits on how they may do so. In this sense labour legislation is also a constraining force on GSE unionization.

In the following chapters, I explain the development of each campaign and demonstrate how overall, GSE unionization requires a great deal of time, commitment, resources and strategic capacity. What this comparison has shown us, is the minimum requirement of GSE unionization movement. At the same time, it has shown that the case of McGill had a greater number of political opportunities than any other case, especially UQAM that also saw the formation of a union. Thus it is clear that GSE

unionization as a process requires further explanation and that the political opportunity structure alone cannot account for differences in outcomes.

In comparing the political opportunity structures of all four cases, this chapter sought to explain what it was in the broad political environment that encouraged activists to attempt unionization. With social movements, there is often an implicit assumption that widespread grievances are what give rise to collective action. While I agree that these may influence activists' choice to join a social movement or work towards its goals, grievances alone tend to obscure the fact that movements are purposive, strategic actions that are also impacted by the access they have to institutional systems, the examples of other movements before them and their allies. As the following chapters demonstrate, in each campaign, organizers believed that unionization was possible just as strongly as they believed that it was socially just. However, there were still a number of constraints and barriers to unionization. How these campaigns overcame these and their exact nature is the subject of the rest of this thesis. For now, we can see that GSE unionization is a specific type of social movement encouraged by labour legislation, the presence of allies and historical precedent.

Chapter Four

Mobilizing Structures

“The LOC [local organizing committee] is a group of people who have come together out of their interest in unionizing a particular sector of workers in their workplace---their university or institute. Due to the long-term nature of the campaign which will be necessary, and the degree of commitment it requires, it will be helpful if a substantial number of them view unionization as the single most important task facing them.”

Chapter One of CUEW handbook n.d.

The above quote was taken from the former Canadian Union of Educational Workers handbook. It stresses what most union activists already take as a given, that the key to a successful unionization drive, rests in the ability and commitment of the organizing committee. But what makes an organizing committee strong? Is it simply high levels of participation amongst a core group of activists? Is it the support of an outside union, including a full-time organizer? Is it the ability of those involved in organizing to judge the situations around them and develop good strategy in response? Or is it the availability of overlapping networks and social ties that organizing committees have access to that help spread ideas about the justness and legitimacy of forming a union and through which various individuals are encouraged to participate? The findings of this chapter suggest that there is no single element that makes one organizing committee better or more apt to succeed than another. Instead, I argue that the case studies where unionization was successful were conditioned by the availability of networks (both formal and informal) through which activists and the general population of GSEs could be recruited, and by the ‘strategic capacity’ of the organizing committees themselves.

In some ways these two elements seem to oppose each other theoretically. Social movement theorists have long held that formal organizations and social settings comprise

the mobilizing structures through which individuals come to act collectively and to participate in social movements. Over the years, networks have become an especially important area of inquiry and most social movement theorists agree that individuals have a greater chance of joining a social movement if someone they know and trust is already a part of that movement (Snow et al. 1980, McAdam & Paulsen 1993, Passy 2003, Diani 2004). Through that participation new networks may form which may encourage further participation in other movements (Diani 2004). However, networks are anything but straightforward. As McAdam and Paulsen write, individuals are embedded in numerous social relations, some of which may encourage participation, and some of which may actually discourage participation through 'negative influences' (2003). As far as McAdam and Paulsen are concerned, the decision to join a social movement is ultimately an individual one, and networks simply provide a structural opportunity for participation (1993).

I raise this point about individual decision-making because it highlights an important shift in social movement theory, one which speaks to the growing recognition of individual capacity as important elements of social movement development alongside networks and organizations (Ganz 2000, Morris & Staggenborg 2005). In his study of the unionization of farm workers in the US, Ganz attempts to understand why the resource-poor United Farm Workers was successful while the resource-rich Agricultural Workers Organizing Committee failed (2000). He finds that the leaders of the UFW had significantly greater amounts of 'strategic capacity' than the leaders of the AWOC. This strategic capacity in turn was enabled by a number of factors. These factors included the type of information leaders were able to obtain, their motivation, the networks they had access to, personal life experiences of the leaders and the structure of the organizations

(2000). Applied to GSE unionization, Ganz's findings suggest more than just the mobilizing structures and networks that organizing committees grew out of and had access to needs to be taken into account. As important is how leaders of these organizing committees made use of those networks when they could, and how they innovated where there was a lack of networks. In this way, I am able to move beyond a simple structural explanation and incorporate agency (specifically in leadership roles) into my analysis of organizing committees.

The single most important role of an organizing committee is to recruit workers so that a union can be formed. For the most part GSEs are recruited when they sign an authorization card. In this endeavor, organizers use a variety of tactics including organizational networks; personal informal networks; broad-based campaigns which attempt to persuade GSEs about the veracity of unionization; and face-to-face recruitment efforts. Yet, no matter the tactics they choose, every organizing committee faces the same challenge: finding GSEs. As I have stated in previous chapters, GSEs are a diverse, highly fragmented group of workers and are notoriously busy. In terms of unionization, these characteristics are only exasperated by the rules of certification that require organizing committees to find GSEs and sign cards. How organizing committees overcome these (and other barriers) is the subject of this chapter. In the following section, I briefly compare the four case studies. This comparison demonstrates that the mobilization of GSEs has to be explained by both the mobilizing structures available and the leadership capacity of the organizing committees. Following this comparison, I review some theoretical work on mobilization and after I describe in greater detail the empirical evidence which supports my argument.

Comparison

Each of the four unionization attempts provides an interesting window into the internal dynamics of GSE unionization vis-à-vis the organizing committees. As far as mobilizing structures are concerned, McGill's success is predicted by the fact that it emerged out of the PGSS, and therefore had immediate access to a network of individuals in every department through the council. Furthermore, executive members of the PGSS were already student leaders and were able to draw clear links between their role as representatives of graduate students and the need for unionization as a way of protecting the interests of their constituency. I take McGill as the ideal case and compare the other cases to it. Specifically, I compare all four cases along the lines of access to an established organization, a clearly structured organizing committee that held regular formal meetings and enjoyed a high level of commitment from participants, and the presence of a full-time paid organizer provided by a union.

Table 9 - Mobilizing Structures and Organizational Resources of the Four Case Studies

	Established Organization	Structured Organizing Committee	Presence of a full-time organizer	Formation of a Union
McGill	Yes	Yes	No	Yes
Concordia	Yes	No	No	No
UQAM	No	No	Yes	Yes
Queen's (1)	No	Yes	Yes	No
Queen's (2)	No	Yes	No (two part-time organizers)	No

Given the access the organizing committee at McGill had to a student organization and its organizing committee's high level of structure, it is reasonable to assume that it did have access to a number of networks and that its recruitment should have been successful, which it was. However, this table also highlights how completely different the other successful case of UQAM was from McGill. Organizers at UQAM were a loosely connected group of individuals, who joined organizing efforts throughout the course of the campaign and had little ties to each other prior to the unionization drive. The drive at UQAM also had little access to extra-movement networks at the beginning of the campaign. Thus, UQAM presents itself as a theoretical puzzle to be explained.

With the two failed attempts, there is again another puzzle. Though the efforts at Concordia emerged out of the GSA, the commitment and time devoted to organizing efforts were not as extensive as at McGill. The internal structure of the GSA is also different from McGill's PGSS, which is made up of representatives from every department while the GSA's council is only made up of a few faculty representatives. Technically speaking, the GSA did not have as much access to extra-movement networks as the PGSS did, and it is reasonable to expect that the efforts at Concordia should have failed. In the case of Queen's, we are again presented with a puzzle. Although the organizing committee did not emerge directly out of the graduate student's association there, in both attempts the organizers were highly committed and devoted significant time to the efforts, and they had access to a full-time CUPE organizer.

This comparison only sketches out some of the main differences between the four cases. As I explain in my empirical section, the usefulness of networks is conditioned by those actually involved in organizing and the absence of negative influences. Furthermore, networks tend to be of limited use given the high number of individuals that

have to be recruited and the attendant time restrictions. In order to theoretically explain my empirical findings, I also look at a piece written by Bert Klandermans (1984). In this paper, Klandermans argues that when social movements require high degrees of participation, they often have to use a variety of motives, beyond the collective and social motives that explain recruitment within networks.

Networks, Recruitment and Leaders

As discussed earlier, the chances of successful mobilization are believed to be strongly conditioned by existing networks, be they through ties in formal organizations or informal settings (Snow et al. 1980). In either circumstance, networks facilitate connections between individuals and provide channels through which social movements spread. In separate articles, McAdam & Paulsen (1993), Passy (2003), and McAdam (2003) sketch the same basic roles that networks play in individual recruitment. These pieces synthesize structural and rationalist approaches of individual participation.

For McAdam, the chance of successful recruitment is greatly strengthened when three network mechanisms are present (2003). The first is the recruitment attempt itself, whereby organizers attempt to recruit individuals to become members (generally via the signing of certification cards). Often these attempts occur through some prior social tie, such as a close friend, acquaintance or membership in an organization. The second mechanism is identity-movement linkages, whereby an identity held dear by an individual being recruited into a social movement is reinforced by the movement's cause. In all four cases of unionization attempts, the organizers identified with the labour movement broadly and felt that it was the right of GSEs to be protected by a collective agreement, like other workers.

The first two mechanisms show how individuals may be presented with an opportunity to participate in a social movement through their location in a particular network. The third mechanism of positive influence attempts refers to the fact that the decision to join a social movement is at its core an individual decision. McAdam (2003) and Passy (2003) accept the rationalist claim that individuals make decisions based on preferences and the costs and benefits of action. However, they stress that social ties can strongly influence a person's preference structure, because it is within these social ties that common meanings about the world are developed. Networks also inform individuals as to the actions of others, which again can influence their decision to join. McAdam (2003) and Passy (2003) both also recognize that individuals may have a multitude of social ties. Some may influence them to join social movements, while others may have the reverse affect and discourage participation. Strong ties, such as those between close friends, consistently provide the likeliest source of recruitment as these ties impact upon individual identities and encourage a positive association between individual ideology and the goals of the movement (McAdam & Paulsen 1993, Passy 2003 and McAdam 2003). Friendship and strong social ties also help to reduce the uncertainty of participation (McAdam & Paulsen 1993, p. 644). In his account of organizing the University of California campus at Santa Barbara, Sullivan argues that GSEs were more likely to believe in and identify with a union if someone they knew and trusted was promoting it (2003, p. 97).

The main problem for GSE unionization is that these strong networks simply do not provide organizers with a great enough source of participation. Indeed the bulk of recruitment efforts occur through weak ties or no ties at all as organizers attempt to recruit large numbers of GSEs. Given that this is the case, we should not expect GSE

unionization efforts to use recruitment methods that rely exclusively on shared collective identities. In fact what I found in most cases was that the bulk of recruitment relied on the benefits of unionization as opposed to the collective incentives.

In a piece entitled *Mobilization and Participation: Social Psychological Expansions of Resource Mobilization Theory*, Klandermans takes account of movements where high degrees of participation are required (1984). In cases like these, social movements are well advised to appeal to a variety of motives and try to alter individuals' willingness to participate by increasing the benefits and decreasing the costs of participation. This fits with the above findings, where the absence of strong social ties to influence preferences meant that the decision to participate is in the end an individual decision.

According to Klandermans, social movements use three types of motives to convince individuals to participate (1984). These include collective, social and reward motives. Collective motives occur when individuals highly value the collective good and realize that their participation is essential to the provision of that good. Social motives occur when individuals expect that others in their immediate social circle will also contribute to the provision of the collective good. Reward motives appeal to non-social costs and benefits. All of the motives relate to the costs and benefits of individual participation, and for Klandermans successful social movements will find ways of keeping the costs of participating low and the benefits high. Klandermans also argues that social movements will find it much easier to mobilize participants who are already in networks, because they will be able to appeal to their collective and social motives. On the other hand, individuals who might otherwise free-ride on the collective good and who

are unwilling to be reached through networks, will have to be convinced to join using reward motives.

As organizers in all four case studies sought and found perspective members, they would use a variety of incentives and arguments to get cards signed. For some, social and collective benefits were appealed to, while in other cases selective incentives were used. In the case of selective incentives, however, individuals were not induced to join because of something that only they would receive. Rather the reward motives used were framed as the likely benefits and protections that a collective agreement would provide and that all GSEs would receive. For the most part, it was through face-to-face interactions with GSEs that these appeals were made. Other tools were used to gain support for the unions, including the use of departmental networks, print campaigns espousing the arguments for unionization, meetings and informational sessions. Though in each case, it was through face-to-face interactions that the highest numbers of cards were signed. This is explained theoretically by the fact that it required the least amount of effort by prospective members. Prospective members did not have to find anyone, contact anyone or go anywhere to sign a card. They simply had to be found. Of course the irony is that this also requires the highest amount of effort by the core organizers. Significant amounts of labour and information are required to contact such a large number of GSEs. In this sense departmental contacts were key, as was information and manpower. Face-to-face recruitment also allowed organizers and participants to build up their own network. In their account of organizing TAs at Yale University, Robin and Stephens tell us that the work organizers do help to build a sense of solidarity and community amongst otherwise isolated TAs (1997).

The decision to use different types of recruitment methods is ultimately a strategic one and requires that the leaders and leadership teams of the organizing committees are able to make these strategic decisions effectively. Strategy gains even more importance when we recognize that unionization is an ongoing process. Circumstances change and new barriers and opportunities appear over time. Organizing committees have to be able to deal with these new developments as they occur. By including strategic decision-making capabilities of the drive into our discussion of recruitment efforts, I am able to better understand how key members of each organizing committee made use of the resources they had available to them as they attempted to overcome obstacles. Morris and Staggenborg define movement leaders as “strategic decision-makers who inspire and organize others to participate in social movements” (2004, p. 171). In defining leaders this way, the authors are avoiding a conceptualization of leaders as the only important factor in social movements. They are also avoiding a conceptualization that sees leaders in purely authoritarian hierarchical terms. While leaders are key agents within movements, they are also constrained by the structures that surround them, including the political opportunity structure, mobilizing structures and the cultural context (Morris & Staggenborg 171).

For Ganz, certain conditions will encourage greater strategic capacity amongst social movements (2000). These conditions are salient knowledge, heuristic processes and motivations (Ganz 2000, pp. 1012-1014). Salient knowledge refers to the types and sources of information decision-makers have access to. In the case of GSE unionization this knowledge is usually found amongst GSEs themselves. GSEs know through their interactions with others about the working conditions within some departments, know where to find GSEs and have a general ‘local knowledge’ about GSEs at their particular

university. Heuristic processes refer to the ability of actors to imaginatively and creatively devise new solutions to problems as they arise. Ganz relates this process to the availability of “diverse points of view” (2000, p. 1012). The more different individuals are involved in problem solving, the more likely a good solution will be obtained. Finally, motivation refers to the will to pursue objectives under various conditions. For Ganz, leaders and leadership teams that are highly motivated will generally see their work as important and enjoy some level of autonomy in the decisions that they make and receive positive feedback from their peers (2000, p. 1014).

These conditions can be produced through the ways social movements organize themselves. Ganz argues that leadership teams that include a diverse group of members, have access to networks throughout the population they are trying to mobilize and are able to invoke various repertoires of collective action, will thus be able to act strategically (2000, p. 1015). In terms of GSE unionization, it is not enough that organizing committees have access to networks, but they have to be able to make proper use of these networks, drawing from them as they attempt to mobilize populations. One way organizing committees can do so is by structuring themselves as open forums.

Leaders and leadership teams can encourage mobilization in other ways. For Diani, certain social movement organizations may encourage alliances amongst various social movement organizations because of their central position within a social movement community (2003). Similarly, Morris and Staggenborg argue that leaders can connect other activists to each other by encouraging interaction amongst participants and various organizations (2004). In this sense leaders can help to develop networks and connections amongst various groups and individuals.

Leaders and leadership teams are also important to social movements because they are often the ones that have the most time to devote to a social movement. With GSE unionization, availability of participants becomes key given the labour intensive requirement of card signing. Leaders might also have experience and key skills needed to run a successful campaign. By focusing on leadership within the context of mobilizing structures and networks, I am able to explain theoretically the variations in the recruitment processes in each of the four cases. In the following empirical section, I first examine the organizations and networks each campaign had access to and then discuss how the organizing committees structured themselves. I use this to then examine their ability to act strategically given the circumstances they faced. In the case of Concordia, I am able to explain why the effort to unionize ultimately failed based on these findings. In the other cases, however, these findings show how organizing committees were able to overcome some obstacles to mobilization, but not all. This is especially the situation at Queen's where there was a strong anti-union countermovement.

McGill

As noted in the previous chapter, there was a history of concern within the PGSS about the working conditions of TAs at McGill. Following the 1986 Schulze Report a PGSS TA Organizing Committee was formed. In its final report to the PGSS, the committee recommended that: the issue of TA unionization be “shelved” and that alternatively the PGSS confront the Graduate Faculty on issues of wage disparities across departments and workloads (PGSS May 4, 1988). In 1990, a new executive of PGSS was elected and like other executives before them, decided to pursue the issue of TA working conditions.

In the fall of 1990, members of the PGSS executive organized a meeting for TAs. The executive announced that in their capacity as the student association representing all graduate students, they would be holding an information session for TAs. As such, the PGSS requested that each of the departments send at least one graduate student representative to the meeting. According to the records from that meeting, about 35 students attended. The meeting opened with a presentation comparing working conditions and wages of unionized TAs at other universities. It was then followed by an open discussion about the working conditions of TAs at McGill. According to the records, at the end of the meeting the President of the PGSS said: "With regards to organizing. What do you think of it? What are your fears? Let's get it out in the open here. Show of hands for how many are in favour of organizing: Most for, few abstentions, no against." (TA Committee General Meeting, Nov. 15, 1990).

After that meeting a committee of the PGSS was formed, which for all intents and purposes was an organizing committee. The PGSS is comprised of an executive and a council, with at least one councilor from every department. Decisions regarding the policies and direction of the organization are made through democratic council meetings.

The organizing committee started out small, but worked hard on finding representatives from every department to work on the campaign through a variety of means including making announcements at council meetings, word of mouth and department visits. Throughout the winter and fall of 1991, this committee researched unionization and interviewed potential unions. In recalling this period of time, one of the members told me: "In retrospect it would have been a lot easier if we had just contacted a union right away and gotten the ball rolling. But, our first step was to do research. And we were graduate students so we probably went a little bit overboard" (M1).

Since the TAs at McGill were the first to seek unionization in Québec, they could have potentially chosen to go with CUPE, CUEW (which was at that point the union that was organizing TAs and sessionals in Ontario), or CSN. Eventually, the committee chose CSN for two main reasons. Members of the committee were sympathetic to the Québec sovereigntist movement that was growing at the time. This fits with the assumption that members of organizing committees tend to be predisposed to social justice issues including sovereignty and labour issues. As well, McGill was located in the province of Québec and labour law falls under provincial jurisdiction, the committee members felt it was in their interest to go with a union that knew the most about labour law and organizing in Québec (M1).

After choosing CSN, the actual card-signing campaign began in January of 1992. Alongside this campaign, the PGSS organizing committee decided it needed to break off from the PGSS and form a separate organization. AGSEM was thus formed in February 1992. AGSEM basically kept the same structure: with a committee of representatives from nearly every graduate department and two co-coordinators.

One organizer told me that the reason why the McGill drive was so successful was because they were able to develop such an extensive network of individuals in nearly all of the departments who were willing to go out and get the cards signed (M1). All of the organizers were volunteers and CSN provided funding for the print material, communications and offered the organizing committee the use of its offices.

One of the difficulties that organizers faced had to do with the funding structure of McGill. Organizers discovered that although a graduate student may be called a TA, the funds through which they were getting paid might come from the university or might come from an external source. Where an external source was funding a student, that

student was excluded from the bargaining unit (Bourdeau quoted in McGill Reporter Nov. 4, 1992). When organizers submitted the cards they thought they needed to become automatically certified, the McGill administration submitted its list of employees that included all graduate students that were receiving any sort of funds. Between the list of the administration and the number of cards submitted by AGSEM, the Labour Board ruled that there would have to be a referendum to determine whether or not the TAs at McGill did indeed support a union.

On November 24, 25 and 26, 1992, a referendum vote was held on both of McGill's campus for all TAs and demonstrators. About 60% of an estimated 873 TAs and demonstrators cast their ballots. AGSEM subsequently argued to the Labour Board that the voting period should be extended because the turnout was "too low to decide on unionization" and also had concerns about the legitimacy of the voters list provided by the university (Katz 1992). AGSEM was successful in its request and was granted two extra voting days on December 16 and 17, 1992. After this second period of voting, all of the votes were counted and it was determined that an absolute majority of all the TAs and Demonstrators at McGill wanted to be represented by a union. According to one of the organizers, the organizing committee used all of the resources it had at its disposal to communicate with all TAs (M1), using posters, letters to the editors, leaflets and pamphlets. They also mailed booklets to every single member, explaining why they should join a union and sent postcards reminding members of the referendum.

The unionization efforts at McGill benefited from the high level of commitment amongst the organizing committee and the access this organizing committee had to the PGSS. However, by only looking at the mobilizing structures that the PGSS offered to the drive, we miss some crucial aspects of success.

Though the organization of the PGSS did provide a series of social ties to individual departments, the organization itself was not the catalyst for unionization. Instead, Diani's theory of 'social relays' can help us to better understand the role of the PGSS. According to Diani, organizations often do not lead to collective action, but can provide an arena in which individuals with similar beliefs can meet (2004, p. 345). This is exactly what happened with the PGSS. Before specific individuals entered executive positions, the PGSS as an organization had decided not to pursue unionization, although TA wages were identified as a source of unfairness. During one interview I conducted with a former participant at McGill, the effectiveness of the leaders of unionization was stressed as a defining feature of the movement (M2).

While leadership was an important factor in the emergence and success of GSE unionization at McGill, this does not negate the importance of having the PGSS as an organizational resource. Through the PGSS, the leaders were able to access information about the state of working conditions at McGill and had access to a formal network of individuals, who were all situated within departmental networks. At the same time, the founding of AGSEM relates back to one of McAdam's initial observations about social movement organizations - that organizations which social movements grow out of are often not suitable for sustained action and that new organizations often have to be founded in order to continue collective action (McAdam 1982).

Concordia University

The organizing campaign at Concordia did not reach the same stages as McGill. According to participants, there never was a real card-signing campaign, and the entire endeavor seems to have fallen apart when key members of the organizing committee left Concordia at the end of 1996.

The graduate student organization at Concordia is quite different from McGill. There is one Graduate Student Association (GSA) that the university recognizes as the only University wide Association representing graduate students. There are also accredited associations for graduate students in the faculties of Engineering and Computer Science and the John Molson School of Business. Unlike at Queen's and McGill, the council of the GSA did not have representatives from every department, but instead based representation upon faculty, of which there are four main ones.

Following the steps taken at McGill, members of Concordia's GSA called a meeting of all TAs and RAs to discuss working conditions. As at McGill the biggest complaint TAs had was with the disparities between departments, in terms of wages and the amount of time they would be expected to work.

One of the important differences between McGill and Concordia was the amount of part-time graduate students versus full-time graduate students. As table 10 demonstrates, at Concordia there were a far greater percentage of part-time graduate students than at McGill. One organizer mentioned that because there were so many part-time students, finding them was much more difficult than at McGill (C2).

Table 10 - Full-time and Part-time Graduate Populations at McGill and Concordia in 1995

McGill 1995

	Full-time	Part-time
Number of Masters Students	2,810	775
Number of PhD Students	2,115	20

Concordia 1995

	Full-time	Part-time
Number of Masters Students	1,040	1,045
Number of PhD Students	440	55

Source: Statistics Canada (2005)

The amount of influence that the success of AGSEM had on the efforts of Concordia cannot be underestimated. Lead organizers at both universities were connected to each other through their activism in the student movement. It was also through AGSEM, that Concordia was put in touch with CSN. Unlike UQAM and Queen's, however, CSN did not provide a full-time organizer, and it was up to students at Concordia to do all of the work.

The drive at Concordia did not reach the same level of activity or gain enough momentum to progress to a point of getting enough cards to apply for certification. Faced with the same constraints as all the other drives, the Concordia drive had neither the resources of a full-time organizer, nor a large student organization to draw upon. According to one organizer, finding people to work on the campaign was the main problem. This organizer stated, "We just didn't have enough people, didn't have enough bodies. I mean it took a lot of work to get it where we got it, but we needed a lot more bodies and time and level of organizing to do it" (C1).

The case of Concordia, juxtaposes nicely with the others, especially McGill. On the one hand, it demonstrates that the involvement of formal organizations does not automatically mean that the individual members of those organizations will be involved and committed. As McAdam notes, the structural bias of social movement theory tends to over exaggerate the role of formal associations in collective action (2003, p. 290). Whereas at McGill, the leaders of the movement were able to strategically use their access to the PGSS to recruit others, at Concordia there simply was not the same base of participants.

As we will see in the case of UQAM, access to a student organization is not always necessary for a successful union drive. In the absence of this access, what does

tend to important is a committed leader or leadership team, usually in the form of a full-time organizer from a union. On the one hand, this leader has the time and the availability to commit to a drive. Backed by a union, he or she may also bring with them important other resources such as other organizers, experience and the motivation needed to undertake a campaign. While the organizers at Concordia were motivated and committed, they lacked the experience and the resources to fully undertake a union drive. Had they been afforded the time and the resources to attempt a second drive, they might have succeeded.

UQAM

Two campaigns followed each other at UQAM; the first one took place in the summer of 2003. It failed because organizers were unable to get enough cards signed. In the fall of 2003, the organizers decided to do another campaign. Though there was a fair amount of support for the union, there were only about 5 or 6 people actually committed to going out and signing cards nearly everyday (U2). As we will see in this case study, UQAM had little access to networks, formal or informal and in terms of mobilizing structures should have failed. However, organizers focused all of their energy on face-to-face recruitment and were able to persuade student employees to join using mostly selective incentives.

Despite the low wages, history of unionization and apparent radicalism, unionizing student workers at UQAM was far from easy. Alongside, a lack of information about the number of student workers, there was no central graduate student association at UQAM. Québec's *Act Respecting the Accreditation and Financing of Students' Associations* recognizes the right of student's in the same faculty to apply for accreditation if twenty-five percent of the students in that faculty support the formation of

the organization. If an organization is formed, it gains the right to collect fees from those students. At UQAM, there are seven faculty associations, which represent both graduate, and undergraduate students depending on which faculty they are in. They all operate as autonomous organizations.

The organizing committee at UQAM did not work with the faculty associations. In the beginning, it was a very loosely organized group of pro-union students working with organizers from PSAC. The lead organizer from PSAC knew some graduate students from UQAM and organized a meeting amongst their friends and colleagues, from which a few individuals volunteered to help organizing efforts. Participation in the organizing committee waxed and waned as some organizers dropped out and others joined as they came to hear about the unionization efforts. Due to the commitment of the PSAC organizer and a few others, the campaign carried on despite this. Focused as they were on signing cards, organizers found that the research assistants were the easiest to reach, simply because many of them had offices. Everyday organizers would go out to different departments, knock on doors and try to get people to sign the cards. The organizers would do this in pairs, and at the end of the day would get together and discuss how card signing was going. Instead of relying on a structured organization with clear decision-making procedures, the organizing committee at UQAM was a loose network of individuals, who kept the campaign going through action and individual commitment to the cause. At the same time, it must be noted that the presence of an organizer from PSAC was crucial. He served as the stable center of the organizing committee lending it consistency and durability and helping to co-ordinate the actions of the other organizers. In other words, the presence of this individual throughout the campaign facilitated steady exchanges of information and co-coordinated activity.

At the same time, the PSAC organizer encouraged a specific structure for the organizing committee. The organizing committee was a loose group of individuals and was open to participation from outsiders. Encouraging participation this way, was effective for two reasons. In the first place, it gave the organizing committee more access to different viewpoints and different sources of information from a wide variety of participants. According to Ganz, the strategic capacity of a leader will be greater when there is a diverse leadership team because this diversity promotes greater innovation and creativity in terms of strategy (2000). Furthermore in the case of GSE unionization a diverse leadership team is essential for providing information about some of the institutional nuances at particular universities. For example, local students might know the best social spaces for finding RAs and TAs, or they might have some idea about which students in which departments are more likely to support unionization, based on previous interactions. Of course, this information tends to be imperfect, but it is still useful in organizing. Second, encouraging participation allowed organizers to have more ownership over the campaign and identify more strongly with the goals of the drive, thus encouraging greater commitment.

Given the fifty percent requirement of a referendum, the organizers at UQAM tried to avoid a referendum. Due to the relative ease with which they were able to find RAs as opposed to the other student workers, there was even some talk of only applying for the certification of this group. The organizers were confident that if they had only applied for the RAs, they would have been automatically certified. In the end, through discussions and the confidence of some members that they would be able to win a certification vote, the committee decided to apply for the certification of all student workers. In this instance, we can see how inviting knowledge and participation from a

number of sources, allowed the organizing committee to take a risk and make a good strategic decision.

In the days leading up to the referendum, the organizers attempted to get as many people out to the vote as possible. They called every worker on the list that UQAM had provided, put signs and small posters all over the campus and tried to physically locate and convince people to go vote. In the end, over fifty percent of all student workers at UQAM voted for unionization.

As discussed in the previous chapter, UQAM as an institution has a history and reputation of radicalism, however, organizers did not find that this necessarily translated into full-fledged support for a union. Organizers found that in their face-to-face interactions with strangers, they as organizers had to “sell” the union, and appeal to individual motives for why supporting the union and signing the card was of direct benefit to them personally.

The success of the UQAM campaign, unlike McGill is not attributable to access to widespread social ties amongst GSEs. Instead the success of the UQAM campaign is attributable to the role played by the lead PSAC organizer and the structure of the organizing committee. In as much as the PSAC organizer was the centre of the campaign, he was, able to direct activity towards card signing alone. Thus organizers only had one task and that was to find GSEs to sign cards. At the same time, the lead organizer also played an important role in helping to create and facilitate ties amongst organizers. Indeed evidence of the network created at UQAM is seen at the current drives at the Université de Montréal, Laval and Concordia. As these drives progress, a Québec wide network of GSE union activists is being created with students and organizers from each campus volunteering on other campuses during periods of intense campaigning.

Recognizing the role of the PSAC organizer in the success of UQAM, necessarily forces us to recognize the role of PSAC itself. In paying the wages of and encouraging organizers to go out and organize new groups, PSAC has shown that it is committed to 'organizing the unorganized'. At the same time PSAC also seems to recognize the importance of networks within the workplace and throughout PSAC as an organization. According to the *PSAC Organizing Handbook* (2001), talking to workers one-on-one helps to personalize the union; meeting with smaller groups of workers increases the momentum of the campaign, and gives other members wishing to join the campaign the confidence to do so (PSAC 2001). PSAC, focused as it is on organizing as part of its overall activity, also stresses how organizing workplaces should involve also involve other members of PSAC in that it helps to build an "organizing culture" and helps to affirm commitment to the labour movement (PSAC 2001).

Queen's

Like UQAM there were two consecutive attempts at unionization at Queen's. What is unique about Queen's is that the organizers of the second drive were provided with a terrific opportunity to succeed where they had failed before. This opportunity came in the form of the actions of the administration and the resulting general feeling of distrust amongst graduate students that followed. This opportunity was also based on the fact that many of the organizers in the second drive had been organizers in the first and so had a better understanding of what was involved in a unionization drive and could strategize accordingly.

Treating the two organizing drives as separate helps to distinguish between some of the important differences between the two; however, in reality the second drive was very much an extension of the first.

2003-2004

In 2003-2004 the organizing committee had two official co-chairs and a full-time organizer from CUPE, who was a graduate student from another university. There were about 15 volunteers who all met on a regular basis and all shared in the strategic decision-making of the drive. According to one of the volunteers, there was no real system in place that first year for keeping track of which TAs and TFs had signed which cards (Q3). One of the other problems that emerged in the first drive was a lack of experience on the part of those involved (Q4). Faced with a very vocal anti-unionization campaign, organizers found that much of their time was spent trying to counter the actions of these opponents.

Although some members of the organizing committee were involved in the graduate student association at Queen's (SGPS), the SGPS as an organization did not play a strong role in mobilization. The SGPS is composed of five executive members, a council made up of at least one representative from all 50 graduate departments, and 4 other representatives. In March of 2003, the SGPS Council struck a committee to review and report on TA/TF Unionization. In the following October, that report concluded that TA/TF Unionization would benefit the TAs and TFs at Queen's through greater representation of issues surrounding working as a TA/TF and better grievance procedures (2004). The report was finally accepted at the November 2003 council meeting, only after extensive debate and some additions (SGPS Minutes, Nov. 2003). This was the extent of PGSS support to the union drive, and it was implicitly understood that QUTU was a completely separate entity. One of the main arguments for not accepting the report and in essence not supporting the drive was that creating a union was redundant, since the SGPS already represented graduate students at Queen's (Kayssi 2003, pg. 1).

After QUTU deposited what it thought were the signed cards of over 40% (650 members) of the constituency, the OLRB decided that a certification vote would be held that February (QUTU 2004). Just before the vote, the administration of Queen's submitted its own list which included 3, 076 names, more than double the 1,157 estimated by QUTU. Though the vote did occur, the OLRB ruled that the ballot boxes would be sealed until a decision on the actual size of the constituency could be reached. Members of QUTU attempted to contact every name on the administration's list to determine if they were in fact TAs or TFs. Meanwhile, the OLRB was negotiating with representatives from CUPE and Queen's. In the end it determined that QUTU was short the necessary 40% and that the ballot boxes should be destroyed (QUTU 2004).

2004-2005

During the 2004-2005 campaign, the structure of the organizing committee (it kept the name QUTU) and the view of the SGPS changed. Drawing upon the friendships and networks that were built through the first drive, the organizing committee of the second drive formed in August of 2004. In describing the group that emerged out of the first year, one of the core participants stated: "That first year we became a really tight, really good cohesive group that loved each other more than anything in the world. It was just like family, it was just such a network" (Q3). This group decided to do another drive, but was very conscious about how they organized themselves. Realizing that two co-chairs did not reflect the way they worked together, the organizers decided to form a steering committee as a collective. During a meeting to discuss their own process, the steering committee agreed to operate under full consensus, but to maintain an option for consensus minus 10 percent (QUTU Minutes, October 22, 2004). This decision suggests that it was very important for the organizing committee to avoid a democratic structure

where minorities lose to majorities, but that the organizing committee also recognized that in order for the union drive to be successful, decisions would have to be made in a timely manner (QUTU Minutes, October 22, 2004). In September of 2004, there was an active contingent of about 20 or 25 people. Smaller committees and individuals within the larger steering committee were responsible for different aspects of the campaign, including media, communications and research.

At the beginning of 2004, TA unionization was once again on the agenda at the SGPS council meeting. As demonstrative of the dramatic response garnered by the administration's claw back, one member of council that had previously argued against unionization, argued this year, that the TAs should threaten not to work (SGPS Minutes, Sept. 2004). This time, the SGPS not only passed a motion to accept the report of the previous year, but it also passed a motion to actually support the drive and provide information about unionization through its list serve, to write a letter to the Administration addressing the latter's "bad faith" and to provide office space for QUTU information (SGPS Minutes, Sept. 2004).

One of the major differences between the 2003-2004 and 2004-2005 campaigns was that at the start of 2004, QUTU was not sure they would be working with CUPE again. In fact one of the first tasks of QUTU in 2004-2005, was to negotiate with CUPE the conditions of working with them. QUTU asked for two full-time organizers, but instead received two part-time organizers. CUPE also continued to fund the drive through the production of print material, which was used to a greater extent in the second year and included posters, leaflets, weekly advertisements in the *Queen's Journal* and pamphlets targeting international students (Q3).

According to the organizers of the second drive, most of the strategies they used emerged from what they felt had caused them to fail in the first drive (Q1, Q2, Q3). Whereas in the first drive, there was no clear method of keeping track of TAs in different departments, or which TAs had signed cards, in the second year, QUTU kept careful records of who signed which cards in which departments. They also worked hard to establish who the TAs were in each department, by contacting the administrative assistants and searching the Queen's website.

QUTU's greatest source of recruitment, however, came from a strategy that centered on cheque pick up day. At cheque pick up day, all graduate students had to physically go and pick up their scholarship cheques at the School of Graduate Studies and Research, as they registered for school. At cheque pick-up in September of 2004, TAs and TFs were actually faced with the administration's claw back and saw that the amount of straight funding they received, was reduced dollar for dollar at the rate of the wage increase they received for their work as TAs and TFs. In the words of one organizer: "When people came to campus in September, there was this total fire under their asses but now it was a much more pro-union fire, because they were really pissed off with the lies of the administration. At least 50% of the people would say, 'give me one of your fucking cards, I'm so pissed off I can't believe they are doing this'" (Q3). According to another organizer, the number of cards signed at cheque pick up alone surpassed all of the cards they had signed the previous year (Brophy 2005).

After cheque pick up, the rest of the campaign revolved around penetrating the networks within specific departments via connections with TAs who had already signed cards. One of QUTU's main strategies was to keep as accurate lists as possible so that when they deposited cards they would be able to challenge the list provided by the

Queen's administration. After cheque pick-up and after exhausting personal networks, QUTU targeted the TAs and TFs who were neither fully supportive of unionization, nor completely unsupportive. Using information they were able to acquire, QUTU employed a strategy of face-to-face recruitment. One organizer described these interactions as similar to telemarketing (Q2). He would ask a series of questions, deciding what to say next depending on the responses he received. Depending on the interaction, organizers used a number of arguments for unionization, focusing on the benefits that unionization had brought to other universities including higher wages and health and dental plans. During the second year, they also appealed to the lack of a voice TAs and TFs had in the university as demonstrated by claw back of the administration.

Organizers had to be careful about their recruitment tactics. During one meeting, members of the steering committee discussed and formulated a set of guidelines for card signing. These included: always having two organizers sign cards at a time and to make the utmost effort to have gender parity in these groups, never tell the potential member to "just sign the card", to use a 'soft-sell' approach which means providing potential members with as much information as possible, but allowing them to make their own decision, take gender issues seriously and never act in a threatening or aggressive manner, always try to get someone from within the department to sign with organizers, try to arrange meetings within departments and stress confidentiality (QUTU Minutes, Nov. 1, 2004). Although the goal was to get a significant percentage of the members to sign cards, it was also to gain support for the union itself. In appealing to individuals' rewards motives, organizers noted that there was a very fine line between discussing the issues TAs and TFs were facing while they were working and making promises. The

problem, of course, is that signing a union card brings does not bring about any actual benefits, only potential benefits that were dependent on the bargaining process.

Though QUTU started off strong in the beginning of the 2004 school year, organizers reported that conflicts between committee members led to a drop in the number of participants from 20 down to 3, near the end of the fall semester. However, QUTU as an organization maintained itself, even with little participation, and eventually, as the time to submit the cards grew closer, many of the members that had dropped out rejoined the campaign. As QUTU was still an organization in every sense of the word, it continued to draw resources from CUPE, especially in terms of paid staff. Though the decrease in the rate of participation meant that not many cards were signed during this period, QUTU continued to exist.

In the case of Queen's, we again see the impact of leadership on the structure of the organizing committee, the strategies that were used and the method of recruitment. In choosing to structure QUTU as a collective, an effective leadership team was formed, which encouraged the input from a number of participants, thereby increasing the strategic capacity of the organizing committee. Furthermore this strategic capacity was bolstered by the previous experience QUTU members had with unionization in the previous year.

At the same time, this type of structure led to problems within the organizing committee. Participants reported that though it was structured as a collective, conflicts arose when some participants felt that others were dominating the organization. In fact, within the organizing committee two oppositional camps emerged, though these conflicts were amended as the drive came to a close and it appeared as though the drive was going to be successful.

Compared to UQAM, the organizing committee at Queen's was composed of a much less diverse group of individuals. As organizers told me, most of the members of the organizing committee were previously connected as a tight network of individuals. Theoretically this accounts for the initial commitment of the organizers, but poses another problem. According to Ganz, while strong ties amongst leaders promote commitment, weak ties outside of the leadership team are also important because they facilitate connections with a diverse constituency (2000, p. 1016). One of the problems that the organizing committee at Queen's faced was a lack of participation amongst GSEs outside of the social sciences. QUTU attempted to reach out to these students through their recruitment efforts, but the general concentration of union support remained within the social sciences.

As I elaborate in the following chapter, although QUTU had an effective leadership team and demonstrated significant strategic capacity, when it came down to the certification vote, just over half of the individuals that voted, voted against unionization. Though the actions of the administration created a set of grievances across the university, and though the second drive received more support in the sciences than in the first, this could not compensate for the fact that the Queen's drive faced opposition. According to one organizer, a major source of opposition came from the undergraduate population, who believed that they would lose their TA positions if the union forced the university to raise wages (Q3).

Those that opposed to unionization at Queen's were able to frame their arguments in ways that resonated with the values of half of those voting. As I explain in the following section, the unionization efforts at Queen's, driven as they were by ideological commitments to the labour movement, could not overcome the beliefs and values of a

number of students. The fact that the organizing committee had difficulty reaching out beyond its own immediate network is a further reflection of this fact.

Conclusion

The case of Queen's forces us to think carefully about mobilizing structures and the role of leadership in GSE unionization. The case of UQAM demonstrated how effective leadership and commitment could help to compensate for a lack of organizational resources and networks. However at Queen's there was also an effective leadership team able to delegate responsibility and creating strategic capacity, though the Queen's drive ultimately failed.

Instead the case of Queen's suggests that when there is a lack of organizational resources and networks, effective leadership and leadership teams are a necessary condition for unionization. However, this leadership capability will only lead to successful mobilization in the absence of strong opposition.

The main difference between the drive at Queen's and the four other campaigns was that at Queen's there was a counter-movement. Like initial movements themselves, counter-movements mobilize participants through networks and shared belief systems. In the case of GSE unionization, counter mobilization requires that GSEs not sign a union card, and that they do vote against unionization in the referendum. As I show in the following section, although the organizing committee at Queen's mobilized around the issue of wage claw back, the countermovement itself did not oppose QUTU's stance on claw back, but the entire movement.

Although movement leaders can act strategically to make the most out of the information they have, the networks they have access to and the organizational resources at their disposal, other factors can still cause a movement to fail. There may be networks

of individuals with interests, values and beliefs that are threatened by the underlying ideals and goals of unionization. Thus social movements themselves may unintentionally cause counter-movements to emerge.

Chapter Five

Framing

In the last section, I attempted to understand GSE unionization as a product of social ties. What I found was that this approach obscured the crucial role of leaders in the emergence of GSE unionization and the development of networks of organizers. This chapter takes a look at the strategic frames used in each campaign. Consumed as social movement theory is by the structural opportunities and constraints surrounding social movements, frames are often understood as a way of recognizing that social movements activists play an important role in social movements. Framing thus implicitly recognizes the role of leaders in social movements.

The arguments and ideals used in each of the campaigns is the focus of this chapter. If potential participants are going to join social movements, they have to first and foremost come to understand and define their own situation as unjust and believe that joining the social movements will help to rectify their situation. Social movement leaders utilize familiar cultural symbols and construct meanings to try to convince potential participants to join yet must also avoid using symbols that might be seen as too radical or inappropriate. Through speeches, posters, pamphlets, slogans, emails, websites, face-to-face interactions, articles, letters to the editor and face-to-face interactions, social movement activists attempt to persuade others to join.

In the following analysis, I take each of the four case studies and discuss the frames they used and the issues they appealed to. Did these campaigns attempt to appeal to GSEs along ideological or individual interest-based lines? Did they appeal to any collective identities at all? How did these campaigns differ in the issues they appealed to, and in what ways were they similar? What were the general responses to these claims?

The goal of unionization required that each organizing campaign locate and persuade individual GSEs to pledge support for a union by signing a union card. For this to happen, the general populations of GSEs had to see unionization as a legitimate response to the issues they recognized as important. Looking at the frames and the outcomes of these campaigns can help us to understand which issues and arguments had the ability to mobilize participation. In all four cases, the frames employed reflected the political opportunity structure that existed, in the sense that they generally spoke to the broader issues that surrounded the attempts (such as increasing tuition, budget cuts and other successful unionization attempts). At the same time, the frames and communication methods chosen also reflected the amount of access organizers had to informal networks of graduate students.

I begin this chapter with a brief review of the concept of framing. I then describe the four case studies, comparing how each campaign attempted to mobilize support for the union and the responses (and counter frames) these arguments received. In looking at the frames used by each of the campaigns, I will be looking at the content of the frames and the master frames that were used. Specifically I am interested in the variations between how these campaigns defined the situation of GSEs, how they attempted to promote solidarity and if they spoke to any collective identities. I conclude this chapter with a brief look at how the broad literature on academic unionization has dealt with frames.

Framing

McAdam argued that cognitive liberation (a variable akin to framing) was essential to the formation and development of a social movement, and that without cognitive liberation, open political systems and organizational strength could only

provide the “structural potential” for social movements (1982, pg. 48). Cognitive liberation refers to the process in which groups of people come to perceive their situation as unjust and thus see social movements as the appropriate response to those grievances (1982, pg. 48). McAdam was careful to note that cognitive liberation was not independent of the opportunity structures of mobilizing structures (he calls them indigenous resources) and that “one effect of improved political conditions and existent organizations is to render this process of ‘cognitive liberation’ more likely” (ibid.).

Since McAdam, other authors, notably Snow and Benford (1988) have also examined the cognitive processes found within social movements. In their seminal piece *Ideology, Frame Resonance and Participant Mobilization*, Snow and Benford use the verb framing to describe the process in which social movements render situations and events as meaningful, thus interpreting them in ways that encourage collective action (1988, pg. 198). Frames are used by social movements to identify problems or issues and recommend how they should be addressed.

The difference between McAdam’s ‘cognitive liberation’ and Snow and Benford’s ‘framing’ is that cognitive liberation looks specifically at how potential participants understand their own situation. Framing, on the other hand, looks at how the social movements itself describes and communicates its goals to potential participants. Movements are understood as “actively engaged in the production of meaning for participants, antagonists, and observers” (Snow & Benford 1988, pg. 198). Within the concept of framing, the subject or agency are the social movement organizations and activists within those organizations, with cognitive liberation the active subject are the potential participants.

Of course, scholars looking at framing understand that frames have to become meaningful to participants and potential participants in order for social movements to develop. As devices used to promote 'consensus mobilization' (Snow & Benford 1988, Klandermans 1984), and to legitimize a cause, the main task of frames is to speak to broader populations in ways that 'resonate' (Snow & Benford 1988) with the belief systems, symbols and meanings already in place. The ability to resonate is a product of two factors: credibility and salience (Snow & Benford 2000 cited in Williams 2003, p. 105). Credibility requires that a frame be communicated by someone seen as credible and that it be internally consistent (see also Ross 2000). Saliency relates to the fact that if frames are going to resonate they have to relate to the central values and the experiences of the audience. Successful frames must also present some sort of diagnosis of events or conditions, provide a proposed solution and initiate a 'call-to-arms' (Snow & Benford 1988, pg. 199).

In terms of GSE unionization, examining the frames used in each campaign provides a way of understanding the values, ideals and beliefs actively drawn upon and communicated by each group of organizers. It is always important to remind ourselves, however, that social movements leaders do not simply invent new belief systems or values, instead they build on ones that already exist and carry weight in society (Voss 1996, pg. 234). As we will see in the following section, in each case the underlying values appealed to by each campaign were fairness and justice, values that tend to be dominant in liberal democratic societies. However the campaigns and frames used differed depending on the political opportunities present and the access each organizing committee had to students in general and to departmental networks specifically.

Furthermore, we can relate the success of frames to the leadership teams found in each of the campaigns. In the first place, this relates to the credibility of the source of frames. Were the organizers themselves seen as credible, trustworthy sources? Second of all, a diverse leadership team can help in the development of frames by bringing forth their knowledge of the constituency and helping ensure that the frames fit with the experiences of that constituency.

Developing effective frames is difficult. Social movement organizations and activists face significant constraints as they attempt to find effective frames that will persuade others to join. Tarrow points out that framing presents a strategic dilemma for all social movements. In attempting to motivate action, social movement organizations may be tempted to appeal to radical ideologies, however, these frames may actually end up deterring participation if individuals perceive the movement or action as too extreme (1998). Another constraint is the movement's position within a protest cycle. If a master frame has already been developed, then it could prove very difficult for movement organizations to innovate upon that frame. For example, it is possible that GSE unionization attempts were constrained by a broader labour movement ideology, or previous attempts by other GSE unions.

The overwhelming constraint for frames, however, is the individual and his/her experience (Snow & Benford 1988). For a frame to be successful, it absolutely has to fit and resonate with the experiences of the individual. This is why social movement organizations try to stress some sort of collective identity, or use frames to develop new ones. If a group shares a collective identity, it is assumed that they have had similar experiences and share similar values, thus finding a way to appeal to those becomes easier. As Tarrow writes: "it is in struggle that people discover which values they share,

as well as what divides them, and learn to frame their appeals around the former and paper over the latter (1998, pg. 122).

In the case of GSE unionization, though, creating a collective identity can be extremely difficult. As I have mentioned throughout the thesis, universities can best be thought of as loosely connected faculties and specialized departments. As graduate students find themselves spending most of their time in a specific department, there is often little that connects them into one single cohesive group. This can be extremely problematic for unionization, which at its core asks individual workers to act collectively to provide the public good of a union. Organizers have to find ways of convincing a majority of graduate students that they are part of a larger group, that they should see themselves as workers and that their working conditions make unionization a legitimate action.

This chapter looks at the frames used by each of the campaign and establishes to what extent they were able to resonate with the entire graduate population and help create some sense of collective identity that would mobilize participants and make unionization possible. It also looks at the counter-frames employed by other groups in so far as unionization was met with resistance. It is important to note here that for the most part, the administration at all four universities remained silent on the question of unionization, out of fear that if a labour board found any evidence of unfair labour practices, including trying to influence workers, then the union could be automatically certified. However, as we will see in the case of Queen's, although the administration there technically did not interfere in the campaign itself, its actions were very much undertaken in the spirit of preventing a union. Still, in each of the four cases, it was the mobilization of GSEs that proved to be so difficult.

McGill

The main issue evoked during the McGill campaign was disparate wages across departments. This had been a recurring theme within the PGSS since the publication of the Schulze Report in 1987. However, evidence from the archives at AGSEM, suggest that this wage disparity only became an issue once organizers started to focus on it and use it as part of their overall strategy. After the Schulze Report was released, the Council of the PGSS struck an organizing committee in the fall of 1987. Its mandate was to distribute the Schulze Report throughout the university, formulate a list of demands to present to the administration, look into the potential of unionization and organize a general meeting of TAs (PGSS TA Organizing Committee 1988). At the end of the year, the committee reported back to the PGSS. The committee members reported that though there were disparate wages and heavy workloads amongst the TAs at McGill, most of the TAs they spoke with did *not* favour unionization (ibid.).

The organizing committee discovered that TA assignments were viewed as either extra income (i.e. not a main source of income) or as subsidized study. Furthermore, the committee found that many students were not aware of disparities that did exist between departments, and of those that were aware, there was a general complacency. The committee did find that TAs were generally more concerned with workloads, training and supervision. Given this report by the TA organizing committee, it does not appear that TAs at McGill felt that their situation was unfair to the point where unionization would be a legitimate response. In fact, if anything, the attitudes and general complacency of the TAs suggest that unionization was not an option.

The decision to pursue unionization was taken by specific members of the PGSS Executive. In interviews with organizers, it became very apparent to me that leadership

for the drive was an important factor explaining exactly when unionization efforts emerged though the history of TA unionization at McGill dates back to 1974. Those who choose to unionize in 1990, called a meeting of all the departmental representatives to the PGSS, ostensibly to find out what the working conditions were like in each of the departments. However, the meeting was also used to make a case for unionization. The first item discussed was how McGill TAs fared when compared to those at unionized universities, and the function of unions in general. The organizers of the meeting opened the floor to comments from all TAs with the question “Is it too much to ask McGill to set some basic level of rights and some rules?” Afterwards, TAs from each department spoke about their own working conditions. Though each TA had a complaint about the working conditions in their department, in actuality the organizers of the meeting steered the discussion towards unionization. For example, one student stated: “They cut TAs because their work is not seen as being important. There are many TAs who are doing it for financial reasons. We can’t jeopardize the situation with our supervisors. We must convince the university that there should be a block of \$ set aside and standardized.” The response he received was: “Talking about standardization – How do we ensure that the university will abide and how do we monitor? There is no one in PGSS who can. It would require a full-time employee. How do we respond if the university makes changes?” (PGSS Minutes, November 15, 1990)

In many ways, this first general meeting marked the beginning of the unionization campaign at McGill. For years, graduate students had been asked about their wages and working conditions, and the organizers knew that they were generally unsatisfactory. This in and of itself did not mean that the organizers of the union did not still have to persuade other TAs that unionization was a good thing.

In diagnosing the situation faced by TAs at McGill the organizers emphasized the very worst conditions that TAs faced. In a publication entitled: “Why Should TA’s Unionize at McGill?” the number one reason given for TA unionization was wages and it was stated at the outset that “some TA’s are not paid or their salaries are below minimum wage...The practice of not paying TA’s is the worst form of abuse: McGill administrators know that we need to get hired as professors. But “experience” can’t pay the rent or put food on the table”. Here one can also detect the prognostic element as the blame for these injustices was laid directly with the McGill administration.

This framing strategy at once spoke to the experiences of TAs at McGill, within their individual departments and shifted the blame to the administration. Wage disparities were problematic because they left the wages up to the discretion of individual chairs and deans. Low wages were the fault of individual departments, not the administration. However, wage disparities as a whole could be attributed to the administration of McGill. This had to be the case if unionization were going to be viable, since unionization required that a majority of TAs at McGill desired a union. Furthermore by focusing on wage disparities, the organizers created a collective problem that required a collective solution, thus appealing to TAs as a whole, while continuing to recognize departments.

Organizers also raised the issue of rights and benefits which TAs at McGill did not receive, including job security, negotiation procedures, arbitration procedures, anonymous grievance procedures, rights over working decisions, no basic benefits and so on. All of these are standard benefits received in collective agreements. Organizers also pointed out that past protest by TAs had resulted in the administration promising wage indexed wage increases, but that the administration had failed to uphold its commitment.

In writing about the frames used by women's movement, Mayer N. Zald writes that the slogan "a women's body is her own" only makes sense and resonates in a society which values autonomy and equality of citizenship rights (1996). Fairness and rights, indeed, emerged as the underlying rationales for unionization at McGill. While wage disparities obviously have an economic element to them, primarily they draw attention to the fact that individual TAs were being treated differently depending on which department they found themselves in. In this the frames used at McGill drew upon ideals of fairness for students. This was also reinforced by comparing the situation of McGill to the situation of other TAs at unionized universities.

The focus on wage disparities amongst departments also fit with the mobilizing structures in place. Individual departments harbored informal networks of TAs and shared working conditions. The challenge for organizers was to find a way of appealing to these shared experiences and networks, but also creating a collective grievance that spanned the entire university. By focusing on wage disparities, the organizers were able to do just this. While recognizing and acknowledging the shared experiences of TAs within departments, wage disparities forced TAs to consider the arrangements in other departments. This in turn helped to create a broader sense of solidarity based on the identity of being a TA at McGill, not a TA within some individual department at McGill. This strategy was supported by the organizational structure of the PGSS, which acted as a mechanism for linking individuals from separate departments, thus linking these informal networks.

This is not to say that some GSEs did not oppose unionization. GSEs in the hard sciences that received higher wages tended to oppose unionization on principle. However, the lead organizers told me that for the most part at McGill, all GSEs were

being low wages and so the arguments that they were using resonated with enough of the population and secure unionization (M1).

Concordia

Since the Concordia union drive made the least progress and was the least organized, there was considerable difficulty in finding records of this campaign. Through interviews with participants I was able to piece together the events as they occurred. In terms of framing, the only publication I could find was an article written for Concordia's student newspaper, *the Link*. Although this doesn't necessarily equate to a strong publicity campaign, it does speak to the strategic ways in which the organizers tried to frame the issues of TA unionization.

At Concordia, the organizing committee framed the issue of TA unionization as one that would benefit all of Concordia. Organizers argued that if TAs at Concordia became organized, it would help to increase the prestige of the university and increase the number of graduate students interested in pursuing their studies there. This speaks directly to the context in which the organizing committee at Concordia was operating within. Recall that at the time of unionization, Concordia's graduate studies program was still young and by the administration's own admission, struggling to define itself. Furthermore, at the time the article was written, the TAs at McGill had just undertaken a highly publicized strike, and McGill was considered prestigious. In framing the issues of TA unionization this way, the organizers attempted to appeal to the broader university community and presented unionization as something that would benefit everyone, not just the economic interests of TAs. Organizers also claimed that TA unionization would benefit undergraduates and faculty who would benefit from better paid TAs who were more content in their jobs and thus easier to get along with.

The organizers at Concordia also raised the issue of wage disparity, but treated it as a situation that simply existed, avoiding placing blame on the administration. The other injustice that was raised was a potential injustice, but spoke to the broader context surrounding universities in Québec at that time. Organizers claimed that TAs might experience decreased wages and increased workloads when the university had to cut its budget, and that given this situation it was in their best interest to form a union. It was not the foremost reason given for unionization, however. Indeed the bulk of the framing focused on presenting unionization as a normal occurrence within universities, relying heavily on the example of McGill.

As compared to McGill, the frames used in the Concordia drive seemed less intent on targeting the administration, and more concerned with portraying unionization as something that could benefit the entire university. Whereas at McGill the frames used were combined with a strong organizing committee and a large number of volunteers to sign cards, the unionization attempt at Concordia did not have the same resources. Thus though the frames might have potentially resonated with the broader population of GSEs, there was no real way of reaching individual TAs to sign cards. This finding suggests that the ability of these frames to mobilize TAs was only effective if combined with an organizing committee that had the capability of reaching individual TAs.

UQAM

Of all four campaigns, the frames used by UQAM are the least apparent. This has everything to do with the way the campaign at UQAM was organized and the context surrounding it. Instead of trying to devise a master frame, or rationale for why student employees should organize at UQAM, organizers focused all of their attention on recruiting individual student employees one by one. Organizers usually went out in pairs

and scoured the campus for student employees. Upon meeting some, they would start off by explaining who they were and what they were trying to do (UQAM students trying to form a union). Then they would explain some of the benefits of unionization and how the unionization process worked. Organizers told me that at this point they would ask the student if he or she had any questions about what they were saying. Organizers would try to get a feel for where the student stood on unionization and what their concerns were. Given the low wages amongst student employees at UQAM, organizers found for the most part that the students they were able to reach were generally in favour of unionization. One of the most common beliefs they encountered was that as temporary employees student workers were not able to unionize. The tactic of face-to-face recruitment was found in all four cases, but what distinguishes UQAM is the fact that they avoided using other recruitments strategies to reach participants. This is especially evident in the purposive lack of print material.

This overall strategy was a direct reflection of the organizational structure of the organizing committee, namely a loose organization with fluid participation. The campaign to unionize student employees at UQAM was as much about recruiting activists and organizers as it was about recruiting members. In interviews I conducted, organizers from UQAM stressed the centrality of card-signing as the main focus of the campaign. In this, the organizing committee all but ignored other organizations at UQAM. Though they used some networks to try to get in touch with others, the emphasis of the campaign was on locating individual student employees, not on signing up whole departments. Organizers told me that at the beginning of the campaign, the volunteers signed up all of their friends, but that when that network ran dry, they then had to go out and physically find student employees.

In many ways it was almost as if the organizers at UQAM had taken their strategy from Klandermans. As I mentioned in the previous section, Klandermans wrote that social movements demanding a high degree of participation will have to use social and reward motives of mobilization, which appeal to, the selective benefits of participating, as opposed to collective and/or social motives (1988, pg. 587). Reward motives are thus useful ways of convincing individual participants that it is in their best interest to join. Since the organizers could not legally give anything to potential members (organizers could be charged with coercion if they did), they had to find out what the concerns of individual student employees and then talk about how the union would deal with those concerns. Organizers had to find ways of persuading individuals that were not motivated by either the collective or social motives of unionization, that it was in their best interest to join a union.

Generally, when social movement scholars write about framing, they write about the main messages used by social movement organizations. In the case of UQAM, however, we see that if possible, one strategy social movements may want to employ is the use a flexible frame that allows organizers to innovate on the spot as they attempt to recruit members. This increases the prospect of frames resonating with individuals. Furthermore, it also sensitizes us to the fact that successful framing need not occur through mass forms of communication. As the case of UQAM suggests, one-on-one dialogue is also an effective method of reaching individuals and framing the issues of unionization in a way that fits with their experiences. Again, though this is the most effective method of recruitment and framing given the difficulty in reaching students, the success of the entire campaign rests on the recruitment of individuals to go sign cards, which in turn I found to rest on the leadership of the organizing effort.

Queen's

Again it is important to distinguish between the two drives at Queen's. Unlike any of the other cases examined here, QUTU faced an anti-unionization group QUTAU that presented arguments against unionization. The arguments of QUTU appealed to a variety of grievances including: increasing tuition fees, increasing workloads, protections of bursaries and fellowships, a voice with the administration; legally binding protection and a democratic workplace (Churchill 2003). What is interesting about this approach is again, we see how it appealed to the broader context surrounding the campaign.

Organizers specifically made reference to the increasing competitive environment of post-secondary education and even suggested that if the *MacLeans* annual ranking of universities included wage protection and guarantees for graduate TAs, the administration would probably want their TAs to be unionized. They also cited this competitive environment as the reason behind the bursaries and scholarships many graduate students at Queen's received, but argued that without a collective agreement TAs and TFs would receive no protection of these (Clark 2003a). The main difference, of course, between the campaign at Queen's and the others is that during the first drive at least, wages were less of an issue. TAs and TFs at Queen's were paid \$23.00 an hour, and these wages were usually given out as part of an overall funding package. QUTAU's main argument was that a union was unnecessary at Queen's since TAs and TFs were already represented as graduate students through the SGPS and the administration was promising a wage increase to all TAs and TFs.

Similar to the frames used at Concordia, the first Queen's unionization campaign tried to portray unionization as an acceptable measure in terms of the administration. It

did not try to villainize the administration but suggested that it was in the administration's interest to have a representative association that it could sit down and negotiate with.

The arguments against TA unionization, focused on portraying a union (specifically CUPE) as unnecessary. The first part of this argument centered around the SGPS and stated that the SGPS was already meeting with the administration on a regular basis and that the administration was taking steps to ensure that TAs and TFs received fair wages, rules regarding the terms of their employment and grievance procedures. The second part of this argument focused on the negative aspects of joining CUPE, specifically that TAs and TFs would have to pay union dues to a "multimillion-dollar organization based in Toronto" (Kayssi 2003). What should be noted here is that the anti-unionization campaign, did not attempt to deny that TAs should be represented by an organization. Instead the anti-union campaign appealed to an economic rationale, arguing that TAs and TFs had an organization, and that creating a union already represented students would simply be a waste of money. The anti-union campaign, thus invoked the same representative belief system as the pro-side, but also invoked a set of beliefs that saw unions as huge organizations, interested only in gaining dues from members. An article in the Globe and Mail, written in October 2003, propelled this argument. Featuring the organizing committee from Queen's in a photo, the article discussed the decline of union memberships in Canada and stated that "universities are a growth sector for union organizing efforts" In the days leading up to the first referendum, QUTAU placed posters all over the campus, which stated that students would have to pay high fees to CUPE and asking student's if they really wanted to go on strike.

The tone of the campaign and the arguments used changed significantly in the second campaign. In light of the wage clawback and the fact that the ballot boxes had

been destroyed in the previous drive, QUTU targeted the actions of the administration directly. In a letter sent to card signers from the 2003-2004 campaign, QUTU wrote: "We at QUTU believe that the democratic process, supported by the majority of TAs and TFs, has been unjustly invalidated. However, we have not given up hope. Despite the dubious tactics used to keep the ballots from being counted when a sufficient numbers of TAs had signed cards requesting an election, and given the empty promises by an uncooperative administration to raise TA and TF wages, the campaign for unionization continues" (QUTU 2004). Whereas the first campaign avoided placing blame on the administration, the second campaign directly attributed the need for unionization with the actions of the administration, arguing that fundamentally, if a union had been established, it would have been able to prevent the administration from taking measures such as the clawback.

The second drive also devoted a lot of time and energy into publicity and education. Pamphlets were used to communicate the reasons for unionization, and organizers tried to organize talks within various departments. Again the usual issues were addressed including, security, representation, equality, reduced tuition, consultation, fairness, professionalization, responsibility, cost reduction, academic benefits, working hours, enforcement and representative wages. In downplaying the economic reasons for joining a union wages were always listed last or not at all in the reasons for joining a union. In this QUTU was clearly trying to appeal to non-economic issues. QUTU also tried to dispel some of the mis-information they believed was preventing TAs from joining. They ran advertisements poking fun at the idea that if a union were formed TAs and TFs would have to strike, and informed TAs and TFs instead that a strike would only occur if a strike vote were held. They also ran ads reminding students of the so-called

wage increase by the administration and tried to inform international students of their right to join a union.

QUTU also attempted to build a sense of solidarity and collective identity amongst the TAs and TFs. As in all cases of GSE unionization, the strongest informal networks were found within departments. At Queen's this seemed especially amplified. In talking with QUTU and QUTAU members, both sides mentioned that those in favour of unionization emerged from the social science and humanities departments, while those against tended to be in engineering and sciences. The main slogan used throughout the campaign was "United We Bargain; Divided We Beg", and the organizing committee made a concerted effort to reach out to those departments that 'traditionally' did not support unionization. Organizers even wrote articles for the student newspapers, extolling high levels of support from all students, including those in the sciences and engineering (Brophy 2005).

The argument that a union was simply not necessary at Queen's was much harder to make during the second drive in light of the wage clawback. However, union organizers themselves were charged with being "a tiny clique of radical extremists" and "ideological nutcases" (Queen's Journal Editorial, March 4, 2005). This argument targets the core of successful framing, and attacks not the message, but the deliverers of the message.

At the certification referendum, TAs and TFs voted against unionization by a narrow margin (377 against, 343 for). In light of the frames used, and in light of the structural circumstances surrounding the union drive, how are we to account for this outcome? The one thing we have to keep in mind is that frames reflect the ideologies that already exist in society. As Pradeep and Schenk remind us, the media in Canada

often portray unions as undemocratic, self-serving and inflexible organizations (2006). The arguments used against unionization carried this attitude. While the arguments for unionization, tended to focus on fairness and dignity, and emerged from a general pro-union, pro-labour ideological perspective.

Still, these viewpoints do not necessarily explain why there was such a split. Another plausible explanation is that the framing efforts of QUTU were unable to reach out and resonate with the everyday experiences of some of the TAs and TFs at Queen's. In other words the frame did not achieve "experiential commensurability" (Snow & Benford 1988, pg. 208). In an interview I conducted with a member of QUTAU (from the first drive), he explained to me that in the engineering departments, they simply were not experiencing the problems and issues that QUTU was raising. In his opinion, TAships were part of being a graduate student. This was reinforced to him by the fact that TAships were included as part of the overall funding package graduate students at Queen's received. In other words, he did not consider working as a TA a "job" (Q4).

A more compelling argument for why QUTU's frames were ultimately unsuccessful is that the mobilizing structures that were in place mitigated against the development of a broad-based collective identity and instead encouraged oppositional identities. Unlike at McGill, organizers at Queen's did not have access to a formal organization that linked together individual departments. Instead they relied heavily on the organizers already involved and on recruiting new members throughout the drive. Though they tried to appeal to all TAs and TFs in all departments, the fact was that they were unable to reach some departments, while in others they had nearly one hundred percent sign-up. This suggests that within some departments, the networks that existed harbored anti-union sentiments. What emerged as a result of the highly oppositional

situation at Queen's, was very much an us-versus-them situation, with those supporting unionization on one side, and those not supporting unionization on the other. Unlike at McGill, QUTU was unable to create a larger sense of solidarity amongst all of TAs and TFs.

Theoretically, the inability of the frames to resonate with a significant proportion of TAs and TFs at Queen's, can also be explained by the composition of the organizing committee. According to Morris and Staggenborg (2003) leaders that are members themselves of the challenging group "are crucial as they are rooted in the institutional structures and culture of the movement group and enjoy legitimacy given their shared group membership and shared fate" (p. 189). The problem with Morris and Staggenborg's statement is that it assumes that the 'movement group' is always defined. However, as we saw with Queen's, although all TAs and TFs could be considered a group, the more salient group identification seemed to be based on which department one was in. Thus though the leadership team of QUTU were all 'insiders', they actually did not enjoy legitimacy. Group membership is a relative concept and it is in the process of mobilization that groups may come to define themselves as groups and come to share a collective identity. Though having 'insiders' work on organizing campaigns may help this process, it could also make it that much more difficult if the 'insiders' themselves are seen negatively.

Conclusion

The role of ideas and the issues evoked in unionization attempts is very present in the broad literature on academic unionization. As a way of understanding this otherwise puzzling question of why academic workers unionize, authors have focused on the frames used in these campaigns as a way of finding the rationales. Academic unionization was

framed in a very specific way. Organizers did not attempt to appeal to working class identities of faculty, but instead presented collective bargaining as a way to alleviate some of the widespread grievances faculty had with the way in which universities were being governed. Efforts to unionize played upon the contradictions between the collegial models of university governance and the realities of teaching within large, bureaucratic organizations (Savage 1994).

In terms of GSE unionization, Lafer argued that GSE unionization was the result of disappearing academic careers (2003). Julius & Gumpert argued that increased time-to-completion for degrees was a main cause (2002). The most direct study on the frames used by GSEs was undertaken by Rhoades and Roads. They argue that in the early US GSE campaigns the focus was on low pay and poor working conditions (2002). In recent campaigns, however, the authors found that two broader sets of issues also mobilized GSEs: the restructuring of academic labour and social justice issues (2002).

In the four cases this thesis has examined, a variety of frames were used to motivate participation. In the case of McGill, wage disparities proved to be an effective rationale for unionization. In the case of Concordia, much of the argument stemmed from the precedent set by the successful unionization at McGill. At Queen's the organizing committee faced an anti-union campaign that villainized unions and gained support from within key departments. Although organizers stated that the wage clawback of the administration actually led some former anti-unionization members to support unionization, the evidence suggests that there were still some departmental networks that viewed unionization as unnecessary and therefore voted against it. Again, the level of animosity at Queen's suggests that there was an us-versus-them mentality. Finally at

UQAM, the framing strategy centered entirely on using flexible frames and appealing to individual student employees based on face-to-face dialogue.

In the end, we see that though broad economic and/or social issues may be invoked, effective framing has to focus on the lived experiences of potential participants. Thus, even if organizers believe that unions are legitimate institutions in society, the fact is that they should use frames that appeal to the actual situation of GSEs at the university they are working in. Finding an effective frame, of course, does not in itself predict success. As was hopefully made clear throughout this thesis, unionization is a long, resource-intensive process conditioned by the organizational resources available, decision-making capabilities and whether or not there is a strong anti-union presence.

Conclusion

Throughout this thesis, I have explored the question of GSE unionization success or failure through social movement theory. In this conclusion I briefly revisit my main findings and arguments.

GSE unionization is a complicated process affected by a number of external and internal variables. How the four cases organized themselves, the tactics and strategies that they used and the resources they drew upon as they attempted to mobilize GSEs was really the heart of this thesis. In comparing the political opportunity structures, mobilizing structures and framing processes of the four case studies I was able to tease out three main factors that condition whether a group is able to successfully unionize or not. These factors are the organizational resources a group has access to; the strategic decision-making capacity found within that group; and the presence and strength of a counter-unionization movement. I will discuss each of these in turn and then discuss future avenues of research.

Organizational Resources

The importance of organization became apparent in the chapter on mobilizing structures. In this chapter I looked at both the pre-existing organizations and networks out of which unionization efforts emerged, and the organizing committees that formed specifically to undertake unionization. Among the types of organizations and networks involved in and existing prior to unionization efforts there were student associations, networks of friends and colleagues and unions.

The primary reason for looking at the types of pre-existing organizations and networks involved in unionization, was that it gave me an opportunity to look at the types of resources these efforts had access to. As political process theory reminds us, while

formal organizations often provide important resources such as manpower or money, informal organizations and networks provide non-material resources including access to other networks, social incentives, leaders, communication channels and collective identities. As I compared the four case studies, I found that there was a high level of variation amongst the types of resources these groups had access to. The one resource that they all had in common, however, was manpower. In other words, the most important thing provided by the organizations out of which the organizing committees grew, were committed individuals.

At McGill the organizing committee grew out of the PGSS and only sought the assistance of the FNEEQ-CSN after it was established. Before the actual union drive, AGSEM established itself as its own organization separate from the PGSS. At UQAM, it was the PSAC that started the union drive and which sought help from student employees. QUTU initially emerged out of a network of friends and activists in conjunction with CUPE, although during the second drive CUPE had less of a direct role. Finally Concordia grew out of the GSA and had some support from the FNEEQ-CSN and AGSEM. The Concordia case demonstrated that similar organizations may differ in the amount of resources they provide. Case in point, the PGSS at McGill was much more able to support a unionization drive than was the GSA at Concordia.

I also examined the organizing committees themselves, specifically their structures and the level of commitment they garnered.

AGSEM was structured as a democratic organization, similar to the PGSS's structure. Alternatively, QUTU was structured as a non-hierarchical, consensus based organization. UQAM had the least amount of formal organization or structure, and could best be described as a loose, fluid collection of individuals, save for the PSAC organizer.

Finally Concordia was somewhat structured but suffered from a lack of manpower and organizational support.

Despite these variations, what was observable amongst all four cases, was the presence of some organizational resources which led to the formation of organizing committees. Indeed, unionization efforts are always met with serious constraints. The first step in overcoming these constraints, however is for activists to organize themselves and find a way to work together.

Strategic Decision-Making Capacity

While a minimum level of organization was necessary for a unionization campaign, the difference in organizational resources still required explanation. In all four cases organizational resources alone only mattered to the extent that there were individuals who knew how to use them. In other words, where each group was differently endowed with material resources, manpower, access to networks, knowledge and information, successful mobilization depended on the ability of organizing committees to innovate where they lacked resources and to make the most of the resources that they had. In effect the research was pointing out the weakness in a purely structural argument and I needed to find a way to incorporate agency into my argument.

I turned to research on social movement leadership and eventually found that though a certain level of organization is necessary for successful unionization, what was also important was that there were leaders and leadership teams who were able to put in the time and effort and who possessed strategic decision-making capacities. This observation seemed especially apropos to the Queen's case, where the organizers of the second drive benefited greatly from the experience and knowledge they had gained in the first.

Furthermore, the rules of certification were an ever-present constraint on unionization processes as were the time restrictions of the academic school year. Given these constraints, commitment, resources and strategy seemed all the more important. Secondly, good strategic abilities meant that organizing campaigns were able to deal with issues as they arose. Since unionization occurs over an extended period of time, we should expect the surrounding factors to change throughout.

In the case of Concordia, the situation was unique. Though there was leadership, the lack of organizational resources made it difficult for the leadership to take the campaign very far. In the case of McGill there were both formal and informal organizational resources, combined with committed leadership. In the case of UQAM, there were formal organizational resources and committed leadership. The leadership team of UQAM was particularly demonstrative of the importance of strategic capacities, since the organizing committee at UQAM had the fewest networks to draw upon.

A weak or absent counter-unionization movement

While the above two factors explained why UQAM and McGill were ultimately successful, they could not explain why Queen's ultimately failed. In a sense these two factors, could only explain why Queen's *should have* succeeded. Yet Queen's was unsuccessful in the end, and the reason why lay solely in the fact that there was an organized counter-unionization movement.

All social movements face the reality that their mobilization efforts may be met with counter-efforts. The fact that a counter-unionization group led to the failure of the Queen's drive points to one of the weaknesses in using social movement theory. While social movement theory is good at explaining the development of movements internally, it is weak in its ability to explain the interplay between movements and counter-

movements. In an article entitled: *Movements, Countermovements, and the Structure of Political Opportunity*, Meyer and Staggenborg put forward a number of hypotheses about this very relationship (1996).

According to Meyer and Staggenborg there are three conditions under which counter-movements are likely to emerge (1996, p. 1635). The first occurs when the original movement shows signs of success. The second happens when the interests of some population are threatened by movement goals. The third is when there are political allies available. In the case of QUTAU all three were present.

In both campaigns, as QUTU approached the referendum, signaling that it had successfully signed more than forty percent of the membership, the campaign against unionization became more active and more vocal. Among the TAs and TFs there were two main groups that QUTU organizers identified as being against the unionization: undergraduates and graduate students.

A number of QUTU organizers felt that the undergraduate TA population had come out en masse to vote against unionization. Undergraduate TAs were paid lower wages than graduate TAs. There was a belief amongst the undergraduate TAs that if a union were created, it would force the university to pay higher wages, leading to fewer positions, which would result in a loss of employment for undergraduates. Thus unionization was seen as threatening the interests of undergrads.

QUTU organizers also believed that many graduate students, especially in the sciences, voted against the union. The main frames and arguments of those graduate students who opposed unionization was that a union of TAs and TFs was simply unnecessary at Queen's and that CUPE could not represent the interests of Queen's students. After the wage clawback, the tone of the arguments against unionization shifted.

This time the opposition focused on the union drive itself and accused the organizers of being overly ideological and unreasonable.

While the arguments of QUTAU shifted from one campaign to the next, the underlying tone was that if a union were to be formed at Queen's it would change the way Queen's operated for the worse. Those TAs and TFs that were not in favour of joining would be forced to join regardless. In a sense QUTAU was basically protecting the abstract 'individual' TA and TF at Queen's from having to act collectively. Some TAs and TFs who were against unionization, took this a step further and argued that by joining a union they would be taking away the future right of TAs and TFs to decide if they wanted to be members of the union (Reigel 2000).

Finally QUTAU organizers, especially during the first campaign, aligned themselves with the Queen's administration and some student leaders. In this sense QUTAU had important allies in their efforts to prevent unionization.

The case of Queen's points to a more fundamental challenge facing collective action in general, and unionization in particular. The rules of certification mean that unlike other social movements, unionization has to appeal to a defined group and be able to mobilize their support. The problem with having to appeal to a defined group is that it removes any latitude in who is mobilized. Although the university may provide ready-made networks for contacting individuals, these networks may also have a reverse affect and harbor messages and values that oppose mobilization.

Successful unionization depends primarily on the presence of two factors, which in turn are conditioned by the absence of a third. Any successful unionization attempt requires some organizational resources by they formal or informal and some internal organization that allows for co-ordination and coherence. Second, given the constraints

facing unionization, there must be some strategic decision-making capabilities, which usually come in the form of a committed leader or leadership team. I argue that these two factors together are the foundation for a successful union drive. Third, no matter how organized or strategic the teams are, their success will be conditioned by the degree to which a counter-unionization movement is also organized. In the case of QUTU we saw clearly how despite their organization and leadership, anti-unionization efforts were still successful in the sense that they were able to mobilize the opposition.

Areas of Future Research

The main question that still remains, however, is why such a strong anti-union campaign emerged at Queen's but not at any other university. One future area of research that needs could be undertaken is a survey of students at Canadian universities that would look at their background, area of study, attitudes and beliefs. Nakhaie & Brym conducted similar research amongst Canadian faculty (1999). Using survey data of Canadian professors, the authors found that professors in the social sciences, humanities and arts were consistently more left-leaning in their political attitudes than professors in the fields of engineering, natural sciences and business (1999). The researchers also found that Québécois, women and other historically disadvantaged groups also tended to have left-leaning attitudes (1999).

In order to account for their findings, Nakhaie & Bryn argue that intellectuals are embedded in social structures that affect their political allegiances. These structures include class structures, ethnic, gender and religious structures, all of which impact upon the individual's ability to access other opportunities such as education or employment (1999). The authors argue that the social mechanisms of social origins; intellectual milieux and market control of intellectual subcultures all affect who gets recruited into

the professoriate and how different disciplines influence political attitudes. In fact, the authors make a similar point as myself in arguing that each discipline is a “social organization” (akin to a network) that encourages a high level of interaction amongst its members (1999).

To my knowledge there has been no study of students’ political attitudes in Canada. Following Nakhaie & Bryn such a study could reveal some interesting patterns about the social backgrounds of those pursuing graduate studies in Canada and the factors that appear to influence their political attitudes. With graduate students, we could also ask why individual students choose to attend the universities that they do. Do certain institutions have reputations that encourage students with established political attitudes to select them or are political attitudes developed in the course of one’s education?

Another future research project might examine the cases of anti-unionization and try to establish how these fundamentally differ from unionization attempts. Obviously the main differences are the goals, but also the opportunity to mobilize. As opposed to social movements and social movement actors that are sensitive to opportunities within the broader structure, counter-unionization efforts are only sensitive to social movements themselves. Is it any easier to appeal to individual self-interest (i.e. tell someone that if a union is established he or she will receive a wage) than it is to appeal to collective interests (i.e. tell someone that they should unionize to improve the working conditions of all)? How do these different messages affect the strategies and tactics the groups use to mobilize?

A third future research project could compare the collective agreements of existing GSE unions and their evolution. By comparing the terms of work in these agreements, we can compare the gains that some of these unions have made as opposed

to others. One of the research questions we might ask is how do we account for differences amongst collective agreements? Are these collective agreements a reflection of the level of mobilization of GSEs? Are they a reflection of the process of collective bargaining and the actors involved? Are they a reflection of the way the local and national unions are organized? Collective agreements could provide an excellent starting point for further research into GSE unionization. They are also a convenient source of data. One could also look into how these collective agreements impact the lives of GSEs at unionized universities as compared to others. What are the benefits and drawbacks of unionization?

Based on my finding that taken as a whole, GSE unionization is a broad social movement, akin to the labour movement broadly understood, researchers might also want to treat it as such. In order to more fully understand the growth (or stagnation) of this movement, one could undertake an investigation of the networks of activists involved in it. How dense is this network and what are the possibilities for an even stronger broad based movement? How involved in national unions are these local GSE unions? Do GSE unions influence the unions they are members of or are they influenced by the unions? By focusing specifically on networks of actors, researchers can test the theory that networks facilitate the spread of social movements. An interesting comparative study could be undertaken with faculty unions, which are independent associations not affiliated with any union.

As more and more GSEs become unionized, I am sure that researchers will find new ways of approaching this topic. This thesis has demonstrated that above all else, if we are to understand the phenomenon of unionization we have to pay careful attention to the processes, strategies and tactics through which it occurs. By doing so, the tensions

and conflicts within this process become apparent. It also becomes clear that as much as unionization may be encouraged by broader changes in the political environment (i.e. cutbacks to education) it is at its core a deliberate and strategic effort that must be treated as such.

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Appendix A
Public Universities in Canada Arranged by Student Population

University	Number of Full-time Under-graduate Students	Number of Full-Time Graduate Students	Total	Presence of GSE Union Indicated by 1
University of Toronto	47,200	9,800	57000	1
York University	35,050	3,050	38100	1
University of Alberta	26,957	3,800	30757	0
University of British Columbia	22,902	5,972	28874	1
University of Western Ontario	24,200	3,400	27600	1
U de M	20,193	6,768	26961	*
University of Ottawa	22,150	2,900	25050	1
Laval	19,644	5,333	24977	*
McGill	18,596	6,357	24953	1
University of Calgary	21,039	3,494	24533	0
University of Waterloo	20,050	2,200	22250	0
Univ du Quebec a Montreal	17,683	3,099	20782	1
Concordia U	16,611	3,823	20434	*
University of Manitoba	17,205	2,208	19413	1
McMaster University	16,700	2,300	19000	1
Carleton University	15,700	2,200	17900	1
University of Guelph	15,700	1,900	17600	1
Queen's University	13,800	2,800	16600	0
University of Saskatchewan	12,754	1,465	14219	1
Memorial	12,906	1,171	14077	*
Ryerson University	13,650	350	14000	0
Dalhousie	10,554	2,689	13243	1
University of Windsor	11,800	1,000	12800	1
Simon Fraser University	10,050	2,573	12623	1
University of Victoria	10,321	1,889	12210	1
Brock University	11,600	400	12000	1
Sherbrooke	9,192	2,410	11602	0
UNB	10,532	900	11432	0
Laurier University	9,700	550	10250	0
University of Regina	8,976	537	9513	1
University of Lethbridge	6,557	115	6672	0
Saint Mary's University	6,177	268	6445	0
HEC Montreal	4,855	1,303	6158	0
Laurentian University	5,700	200	5900	0
Unv. Du Quebec a Trois-Rivieres	5,016	847	5863	0
Lakehead	5500	300	5800	1

Trent University	5,400	100	5500	1
Moncton	4,702	387	5089	0
Ecole Polytechnique de Montreal	3,492	1,222	4714	0
St. Francis Xavier	4,177	52	4229	0
Acadia	3,943	143	4086	0
Malaspina University College	3,839	125	3964	0
Univeristy of PEI	3266	57	3323	0
Univ. du Quebec a Chicoutimi	2,782	464	3246	0
Univ. du Quebec-Ecole de technologie superieure	2,635	311	2946	0
University College of Cape Breton	2,870	71	2941	0
Univ. Du Quebec a Rimouski	2,242	421	2663	0
Univ. du Quebec en Outaouais	2,358	293	2651	0
Mount Allison U	2,194	387	2581	0
Royal Roads University	201	2,373	2574	0
University of Northern British Columbia	2,284	249	2533	0
Trinity Western University	2,191	183	2374	0
Mount Saint Vincent	2,262	47	2309	0
Brandon University	2,168	6	2174	0
Bishop's	2,166	3	2169	0
Royal Military College of Canada	961	272	1233	0
Univ. du Quebec en Abitibi	734	82	816	0
Nova Scotia Art & Design	756	15	771	0
Nova Scotia Agriculture	562	45	607	0

All of these numbers were taken from the Association of Universities and Colleges of Canada website: http://www.aucc.ca/publications/research/enrol_e.html and represents early fall enrollement for 2003. I have left out any universities that have no graduate students or no undergraduates.

A score of 1 indicates the existence of a GSE union, a score of 0 indicates the absence of a GSE union while a '*' indicates that there is currently a GSE union drive underway or that one has just been completed.