

Student Generated Social Movements: When Students Become Student Activists

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“We can change the world and make it a better place. It is in our hands to make a difference.”

- Nelson Mandela

Introduction

Existing literature discusses various social movements and protests by university students in the United States and globally. While cultural and political circumstances differ from one area of the U.S. to another, and from one nation to another, there are often similarities in the triggers of political dissent, particularly on university campuses. Donoso (2016; p168) contends that “social movements constitute a democratizing force when they are able to compel governments to increase effective participation in the policy-making process.” With the current social environment of discontent in governments and the people with power both in and out of those institutions, along with the sense that little can be done, the question arises: when does this sense of defenselessness morph into a revolution? The purpose of this research is to examine past student generated social movements in comparison to the data collected for this study which represents the opinions of the eight participants interviewed to determine the “spark factor” that facilitated the birth of the movements and their formation. When members of a society become so disenchanted with the institutional structures, along with the rules and laws produced by those institutions, whether public or private, there comes a point where the people raise their voices for change. What events take place to cause the people to raise their voices? To understand the significance of collective action, previous literature must be examined to determine the definition of a social movement for the context of this research.

What is a Social Movement?

Social movements have been defined previously in a multitude of ways: Gill, et al., (2009:208) state “a student movement...relatively organized effort...large number of students to either bring about or prevent change in...policies, institutional personnel, social structure (institutions), or cultural aspects of society.” Amenta et al., (2010:288) citing Tilly (1999) and Amenta et al., (2009) define political social movements as “actors and organizations seeking to alter power deficits and to effect social transformations through the state by mobilizing regular citizens for sustained political action.” However, Benford, et al., (2000:614) citing Snow & Benford (1988), assert that collective action frames operate in manners “intended to mobilize potential adherents and constituents, to garner bystander support, and to demobilize antagonists.” Benford et al., (2000:614) add “Thus collective action frames are action-oriented sets of beliefs

and meanings...inspire and legitimate...activities and campaigns of a social movement organization (SMO).” For the purposes of this study, social movements will be defined as: collective acts by a group or groups of people that are being marginalized by the government and/or other institution(s) or alliances, and with this sense of marginalization and alienation comes an awareness that action must be taken for social change.

Types of Social Movements

Social movements are typically in one of four spheres; political, environmental, workplace, or surrounding issues of peace. Just as there have been and are currently many definitions of what a social movement is, there are also many types of social movement structures, frameworks, contexts and memberships. There are several different types of social movements, as asserted by Aberle (1966), who described four types of social movements: alternative, redemptive, reformative and revolutionary social movements. The descriptions of these four types of social movements were based on two characteristics: Who the movement is trying to change, and the amount of change the action is striving for. Movements are generally not condoned by governmental bodies, as oftentimes governments are the target of a movement, and many times there has been governmental intervention as a show of force in attempting to disband a movement. Change could be in the form of legislature and laws-local, state or federal, or institutional rules and regulations-either regional or national. There are additional characteristics that will distinguish types of social movements such as: the type of change being advocated for: innovative (a change in norms or values), or conservative (maintain existing norms and values); the target(s) of the movement; type of direct action; and finally, whether the movement is local, national, or global.

As described by Aberle (1966), an alternative social movement is characteristically at the micro level, such as communal living within one’s own social system by creating their own space in which to live, they are not considered oppositional in nature. The redemptive social movements seek radical personal change for a specific target audience, this could be in the form of any religious organization that actively seeks people to convert to their belief system. Neither of the former represent collective actions on the part of a group of persons that are striving for social change for the greater good of society, and therefore are not pertinent to this research. However, the last two types of social movements described by Aberle (1966), revolutionary and reformative, are movements that achieve their goals by collective action and have been used in one form or another for decades. The revolutionary movement, as the name implies, is seeking revolutionary radical change in the political institutions of their city, state, country, or perhaps globally and will often try to reach their goals by any means possible, non-violent as well as violent if necessary; an example of a radical revolutionary movement in the American Civil Rights movement of the 1960s. Finally, the reformative social movement seeks minor changes-more specific in their scope-of a variety of institutions public and private, for the greater good of society, examples of this type of movement are the protests against austerity measures playing out on university campuses globally. However, Touraine (1992:126) states that “the notion of social movement...designates a general representation of social life...rather than a phenomenon.” also asserting that the “crisis of the notion of social movement is the replacement of a bipolar image of society by that of a system maintained and reinforced by integrative mechanisms...corresponding mechanisms of marginalization and social inclusion.” Moreover, society must revive the existence of actors within the social context and, as Touraine (1992:145) argues, “strive to understand how history, far from reaching its conclusion, resumes its march.”

This research will utilize both previous research and data collected specifically for this study to determine what generates the presentiment that action must be taken to affect social change.

History of social movements

The 1960s were a decade of unrest on university campuses across the Western world and globally, Salter (1973:330) argues that until the 60s, “universities were functioning like well-oiled socialization machines” whose goal was to produce the right person for the right job, however, something happened, and revolutions were born. What happened in the 1960s was a litany of ‘somethings’, everything from the escalating war in Vietnam to the lack of civil rights for people of color, the need for Black and multicultural studies on campuses, and sexist rules against women on campus to name but a few. The responses to these and other events ranged from peaceful protests on university campuses and in the streets that brought people from all walks of life together to have their voices heard, to those that ended in tragedy as was the case on the campus of Kent State University on May 4, 1970, to the Civil Rights Movement in America. While these movements all may seem completely different from the outside, the issues they were representing and the structure and formation of the movements, they all had one factor in common—those involved realized that for there to be change they needed to stand for what they believed in and make their voices heard...the rest is history.

The ‘multiversity’¹, as discussed by Salter (1973:330) is currently regarded as a microcosm of the wider social disorder rather than the “base for operations against social ills” as it was in the 1960s. Student militancy was typically met with defensive strategies by universities ranging from sanctions and expulsion to police or National Guard units arriving on campus in full riot gear to disband what were most often peaceful protests. Social unrest was not limited to American universities however, Shin et al. (2014:443) assert that the first waves of student movements in Korea began c1945 against authoritarianism and military dictatorship, and in the 1970s due to industrialization of the Korean economy. Moreover, Shin et al. (2014:443) state the movement was “at its peak in 1960” when students protested political corruption in the presidential election leading to the president’s resignation later that year—this revolution was known as the 4.19 Civil Revolution for the April 19 date of resignation². Altbach (1984:1,3) states that student politics in Third World countries “are generally viewed by those in authority as a negative factor—something to be eliminated from academic life.”, however they do at times have “disruptive implications for the political system” given that typically “student activism is motivated by political and social forces in society.”

Kelley (2002:51) argues that, according to many students, the 1960s were the “last great era of social movements” citing the “militancy of the Black Panther Party or the boldness of the Student Nonviolent Coordinating Committee.” However, they tend to overlook the 1980s and the revolutions such as the Divestment Movement³, and the Nuclear Disarmament Movement that were created in that decade, feeling the intensity of 1960s activism has been lost. Kelley (2002:52) also asserts the “domestic protests for...peace, nuclear disarmament...left-leaning

¹ Salter (1973) uses the term ‘multiversity’ in referring to a large university with many departments.

² Shin et al. (2014) Note that Syngman Rhee was the overthrown president of the autocratic First Republic of South Korea.

³ The Divestment Movement initially began in the 1960s against South African apartheid, however regained strength in the 1980s on American University campuses by students in protest of university investments in South African holdings. <https://350africa.org/divestment-from-ending-apartheid-to-ending-the-age-of-fossil-fuels/>

activists believed the time was ripe for revolution.” from the 1980s all seems to have been forgotten. The uprisings at universities, many of which were set in motion after the beginning of the 21st century, anti-austerity movements in Chile and Britain, the ‘Arab Spring’ and ‘Maple Spring’ movements, along with movements in Nepal, India, Colombia, Puerto Rico and America, among others.

Social movement membership

University students who choose to participate in social movements often have been radicalized by an event or events that have occurred that left them with a sense of disillusionment causing them to feel the need to move. Such an event could be oppression and marginalization of an already oppressed and marginalized group, corrupt government institutions and officials, or war to name but a few. Giroux (2013:516) asserts “Many youth are protesting to create a future inclusive of their dreams...principles of justice and equality become key elements of a radicalized democratic and social project.” Begin-Caouette and Jones (2014:412) cite Pross (1986, p11) in defining student organizations as pressure groups as “an organization whose members act together to influence public policy to promote their common interest.” Also stating that these groups are separated from each other by five criteria: organization, a desire for influence, membership, common interest, and autonomy in the use of resources. Allerbeck (1972:257) also argues that “there are strongly marked differences between student and non-student youth” and their participation in social movements, mostly due to the former’s greater political interests and opinions which can be attributed, in part, to their pursuit of an advanced education. Winston (2013:419) argues “Undergraduates become aware of SMOs⁴ through their social networks, courses, or other mechanisms, but take the leap from interest to active involvement depending upon perceptions of a group’s potential to ‘make a difference’.” Campus student organizations afford students the opportunity to associate with other like-minded individuals which may open the door to activism if the time becomes right. Social movement membership tends to grow due to social networks, Afshari et al., (2007:86) argues that the student movement in Iran has the “potential to become a potent force within the democracy movement...natural connection to Iran’s huge youth population...draw on an ever-growing student population for support.” The student population in Iran is characteristically divided into four types of groups: arts associations, student publications, shoray-i senfi (student trade unions), and political groups, all of which test the boundaries drawn by the regime. Broadhurst (2014:3) argues “The expression of the student voice, both on and off campus, has a long tradition throughout the history of American higher education.”, the environment of universities “fosters such expression...suited for student activism.”

The “spark factor”

Spark: anything that activates or stimulates; inspiration or catalyst; something that sets off a sudden force⁵

Previous literature has shown that there are many factors that can spur a person to act for social change, and while university students are no exception to these factors, there appear to be some factors that do, upon closer examination, occur more often in student activists than in activists in general. Broadhurst (2014:10) contends that although many of the traditional forms

⁴ Student Movement Organization

⁵ <https://www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/spark> <http://www.dictionary.com/browse/spark>

of protest did seem to decline after May of 1970 and the shootings at Kent State University⁶, students were and continue to be anything but apathetic to social issues and concerns. This event gave the student revolutionaries more resolve to continue their protests in opposition to the American Vietnam War. If movements are to continue with the motivation that was had in the past, Kelley (2012:15) argues, “We must turn to the youth, particularly young people of color” for this to be accomplished. The youth need to rise and fight against the “policies that have criminalized them and turned their schools and neighborhoods into...prisons.”, this call for action is for all youth of the world, particularly the youth of color. Kelley (2002) discusses that, while motives are known for what they are fighting against, little is known about what students are dreaming of and what they are fighting for. Oftentimes university students will begin with an issue that is directly affecting them at a particular moment in time, i.e., rising tuition rates, erroneous fees charged by the university, loss of vital programs, or the privatization and marketization of their university. With the loss of control over their education, students begin to feel an awakening of a revolutionary principle, they sense that the time is right to rise in protest to what is occurring in their midst. Petronijewic (1998:272) argues, “The challenge comes from the street” where protests come to life and can, at times, turn into a spectacle that the protesters call ‘actions’, adding that the challenge “drew some of its strength from those very streets and their symbolical power, but at the same time it was the action itself that endowed those streets with new meaning and new power.”

Social movement framework and context

The framework of social movements has been the topic of literature regarding social movements for decades and can tell a great deal about the ideologies behind the movement itself. McAdam (1982:18) discusses various models of social movement theory including the classical model which states that social movements transpire “as a collective response to structural weaknesses in society that have a psychological effect on people.”; the mass society theory, that asserts social movements are comprised of marginalized individuals from larger societies who will form a movement to give themselves a sense of empowerment; and collective behavior, which refers to the group actions of a social movement that are typically spontaneous and can range from sit-ins to riots. McAdam (1982:20,22) argues that resource mobilization is a “deficient alternative” however, this “perspective can be seen as a reaction to the deficiencies of the classical model.” Moreover, McAdam (1982:36) notes the political process model is based on “a particular conception of power in America.”, resting on the assumption “that wealth and power are concentrated in America in...a few groups, thus depriving most people of any real influence over the major decisions that affect their lives.” In sum, social movements are formed by oppressed and marginalized groups of people to gain political influence to highlight their collective interests in a public forum.

Touraine (2002:89) discusses the social movement in the context of traditional class conflict and states they are “an answer either to a threat or a hope that is directly linked to the control...social group has...capacity to make decisions, to control changes.” Kelley (2002:54) asserts that movements are many times “incubators for new knowledge, new dreams of the future” which he states are the centers of intellectual activity generating new theories and

⁶ May 4, 1970: Students protesting U.S. armed force’s bombing in Cambodia, National Guard units were dispatched, and the confrontation ended with Guardsmen shooting and killing four students on the campus of Kent State University in Ohio. www.ohiohistorycentral.org

questions to be addressed, therefore confronting systems of oppression will spawn radical ideas for social change. Puga (2016) argues that while confronting the issue at hand is vital, validation of the movement from outsiders is equally as valuable for sustaining the movement. Rosa (2016:826) asserts, "In times of economic and political crisis, student activism has occupied constructed spaces of resistance". Many times, this is generated by the lack of accessibility for all to an education at a public university, citing the 2010-2011 siege at the University of Puerto Rico as an example of the neoliberal government's repression on the youth of Puerto Rico. Broadhurst (2014:11) argues that injustices to marginalized groups spark student movements, which can be associated with the "growing diversity of campus enrollments [that] helps introduce students to varying viewpoints." Rosa (2016) argues that emotions are a part of every portion of a student driven movement and can be either an asset or a hindrance to a movement dependent upon their social, political and cultural constructs. Rosa (2016:827) citing Feigenbaum et al., 2013 notes recognizing "that student movements are both products of and subject to the social, historical, political, economic, and media contexts they are embedded in..." is extremely important in understanding the construction of a student driven social movement. Zamponi and Fernandez Gonzalez (2015:77) argue that "social movements do not appear spontaneously...they must be analysed as part of a cycle of protest" and that many times the cycle began as an opposition to the austerity measures within the individual country where the unrest began as were the cases in Spain and Italy is the struggle against neoliberal policies and austerity measures being put into place both on university campuses and throughout the countries in general.

Movement formation and organization

Cini and Guzman-Concha (2017) argue that as funding for higher education is lost, and with the imposition of tuition fees, fewer students can attend leaving a university education to the wealthy and those that already have power and privilege. Cini and Guzman-Concha (2017:626-627) add, while students at colleges in Chile "usually stage protests of various intensities at the beginning of every academic year" for many reasons such as increased tuition and fees as well as decreasing the amounts of scholarships and loans available to students. The intensity and length of the 2011 student protests in Chile is "unparalleled given its impacts on national politics...and the emergence of student unions as key actors of national relevance." While protests and unrest are most often played out in the streets and university campuses, oftentimes in recent years they get their initial impetus from social media campaigns, as was the case for the #YoSoy132 movement in Mexico in 2012. Guillen (2013:474) argues that Facebook and Twitter were key in the student mobilization and although the initial bond for the movement was constructed on the premise of challenging the media, "the possibility of transcending the level of social networks" was very important for the dissemination of information about the movement. Guillen (2013:475) contends the #YoSoy132 movement is also named the "Mexican Spring" due to the triumphs against authoritarianism and that the students "galvanized dissatisfied citizens who appeared to have resigned themselves to the lack of democracy and the empowerment of the media."

Broadhurst (2014:12) maintains that while the ways in which activism have changed throughout the years, in many ways the causes that are being fought for "mirror those existing since the colonial colleges first opened their doors." Begin-Caouette et al., (2014:412) claim the protests organized by students in Quebec's Maple Spring are similar in nature and issue to those that have been organized in Chile, Italy, Spain and England in the recent past, and while these

student groups are many times politically motivated, they do not have “other organizational characteristics associated with a political pressure group.” Neoliberal politics, austerity measures and the privatization of many universities has led to student unrest in many parts of the world. The 2011 Chilean student movement, like many student movements, must be referenced to the long tradition of mobilization and student organization within the country of origin to understand the current state of affairs as is discussed by Bellei et al., (2014). Puga (2016:264) also argues that multiple issues sparked the 2011 Chilean protests, which were named the “Chilean Winter” by media. Concerns ranging from the first right wing democratically elected president in over 50 years not making progress on any issues in the new administration, to the rising educational inequities and tuition fees within Colombia’s public university system being cited as some of the causes for the protests. Participation is one of the core issues to understanding a social movement, with a multitude of identities and behaviors for the movements, Winston (2013:414) argues that “the sense of one’s contribution will make a difference in the attainment of social movement goals” (Ennis & Scheuer, 1987; Paulson, 1991). Social networks, as discussed by Winston (2013:416) are also an integral part of movement participation, noting that social ties “increase knowledge of the movement, its goals and the potential to create change.” all of which are vital to producing desired outcomes.

Data collection, method, and participant demographics

This study explores questions regarding when the feeling of defenselessness held by students on university campuses will morph into a revolution; and what sparks students to become student activists. Participants were found via a modified snowball method via social networks and word of mouth by my mentor and adviser. A modified snowball method involved initial contact of participants being from a person that is known to them, this method was used due to the specific population that was required for this research and was used rather than the snowball method which would involve participants releasing contact information of other potential participants directly to the researcher.

Due to the sensitive nature of some people’s prior participation in social movements, my name and e-mail address were sent to prospective participants through my mentor, they then would contact me if they were interested in contributing the stories of their activism to my research, and each participant has been given a pseudonym to protect their privacy. The sole criteria for participation was to have been or currently be active in (a) social movement(s) as a university student; there was no consideration of, or discrimination against any interested party regarding age, gender, race, or country of participation for this research. Data was collected through in-depth interviews conducted by myself, either in-person or via skype, and each interview was audio recorded for accuracy of information-with participant’s consent and transcribed for use in this research. Each interview lasted approximately one hour, consisting of a series of open-ended questions which would allow each person to tell their own story in in detail.

The participants in the interview data collection process were given license to relate their stories in their own words at their own pace which allowed for very detailed information disclosure. Follow-up questions were asked if more information was needed regarding any topic

being discussed. Below are some examples (meant to demonstrate the scope of the interviews) of the interview questions⁷ I devised for the purposes of this study:

- Can you tell me about the social movement(s) that you were involved in?
- What was your ‘spark’ to becoming an activist?
- At the time your movement was active, did you think you would be able to affect social change?
- What role do you feel young people have in bringing about social change today?

Although the following demographics may be the result of participant selection biases, they are, however, significant for the purposes of this study. The time span of participant activism ranges from the late 1970s to present day with the age range of participants being from their early twenties to mid-sixties; all participants are either currently attending a university in pursuit of their BA/BS or are graduates of a university and hold either bachelors and/or master’s degrees; in addition, three hold Ph.D.’s, and one is a Ph.D. candidate; six of the eight interviewed are still very active in social movements; and three of the eight have been or are currently active in international movements.

Findings

While many of the findings from this research are consistent with current literature regarding social movements from which I have drawn for this study, there are also findings that are significant for their distinctive correlation from one participant to another. In this research, I was looking for similarities between the persons that were interviewed regarding the reasons they became active in social movements. What drove them to feel the time was right for their voice to be heard?

Significant findings from this research include early politicization, movement formation, activism against neoliberal policies on the university campus, and non-violent direct action by activists, however, the ‘spark factor’ for activism is the most significant finding. The findings will be presented at length with the narratives from participants, this section will also include other significant and important findings from the data collection.

Early Politicization

Politicization is formed early in many activist’s lives, three of the eight people interviewed either became active, or their sense of urgency to become active intensified due to a presidential election in their pre-teen or early teen years. While politicization commonly arises from the environment in which a person is raised, quite often an occurrence within a governmental institution will trigger passions that cannot be quelled, passions that will change the person’s outlook on institutional structures and those in power. Sometimes these passions will ignite a fire in their soul that leads them into collective action against the injustices they or others are experiencing. In this context, politicization refers to the affect a certain person being elected to the highest office within their country had not only the country itself, but on the thought processes of its citizens. Two were left with a sense of frustration after a presidential election in the United States, a feeling that everything they had believed in was now coming into question. However, one was given the perception that solutions to issues such as war and human

⁷ Document containing all interview questions after reference pages of paper.

rights violations that had plagued his country for many years were on the horizon with the newly elected president.

The election of a president in a democratic society can have effects on the people of that country and globally, a president should be well qualified to lead by example into the future. By choosing one person to hold the highest elected office in their country, the people are placing their trust in that person to lead the country in a humane and prosperous direction, that they will protect the people's human and civil rights and, if the country is in war, that they will work to put an end to the conflict. In the interviews that were conducted for this study, the election of a new president in their country sparked the need for activism in three of the participants-two due to the displeasure regarding the person that was chosen, and for one, the anticipation for a brighter future for his country with the newly elected leader. When governments stop affecting positive change for the people, the people will take matters into their own hands and fight for that change themselves, forcefully if necessary.

"The power of the people is real." Karina*

I was twelve-when I wrote an angry letter to a teen magazine in response to how girls were portrayed in the magazine. I was a non-conformist, my clothes didn't match, and I dyed my hair purple, this was a way to survive adolescence, but it was also a framework for seeing the world. I grew up in the 1980s and 1990s, when Ronald Reagan was elected President of the United States. For a kid that grew up in the 80s and 90s, you think 'well the 60s are over' that was in the past. All of those big marches and chances for social change are in the past, get over it...then Reagan won, the world is over. I chose my college to experience activism, I wanted to EXPLODE, I became the president of my university's Amnesty International group as a stepping stone to future activism. Karina*

"I grew up at a time when people had a general anti-authority feeling to be expressed." Landon*

I was raised to be politically aware, my mom was an old-fashioned labor liberal democrat, my dad was more conservative-I inherited my mom's politics. I was a mainstream liberal but the turning point for me was when Ronald Reagan was elected in 1980 which began to radicalize me, it was like cognitive dissonance for me when Reagan was elected. I was sixteen years old, that radicalized my world view, then I went to college-I was primed to get involved. I like working collaboratively with other people and I was given that opportunity in a movement. I have always been someone that when things piss me off I have to do something about it, it is really hard to sit by and watch, but I always try to be constructive in the way I do things-how do I take the way I am feeling and do something constructive. My first real meaningful political involvement was in the nuclear disarmament movement which was the start of my political activism. Landon*

William* also became active due to a presidential election in his home country, of Sri Lanka which had been involved in a civil war of which the "crux of the war was about identity and language" between the Senegalese and Tamil peoples. One of the goals of William's activism was to get legislation passed with the department of education requiring young

Senegalese people to learn the Tamil language and for young Tamil people to learn Senegalese and English.

*“As long as our identities were so deeply entrenched in the language we spoke there would never be reconciliation.” William**

*The first real social movement that I was a part of was in Sri Lanka, I was a high school⁸ student finishing my advanced studies. Sri Lanka had been in a civil war for a long time, this was in 1998, I was fifteen years old, one of the things that we started to realize is that there was a pretty big separation between how our generation viewed the ethnic conflict and how the older generation viewed the ethnic conflict. It particularly became salient when we had just elected a new president⁹ and at that time she began speaking the language we wanted to hear-reconciliation, forgiveness, moving forward-that was all new to me. Until the new president, the rhetoric was ‘they are terrorists, we need to punish them’, etc. William**

Movement Formation and Organization

Existing literature regarding social movements covers various facets of movement formation and organization such as the political process theory argued by McAdam (1982), an example of this type of movement would be the Civil Rights Movement of the 1960s. According to this theory the opportunity for political change needs to be present to achieve success, however there are and have been movements for change when that opportunity was not evident, when there was no clear end in sight. Movements are established with the hope or dream that change can be possible, change is the goal, however there is not a clear path to change and making change is never as easy as applying a process and waiting for the right moment to arrive. The process is, at times, not a process at all but more of an experiment to determine what does and does not work for the specific situation the actors are involved in. A majority of movements examined for this research, along with movements that participants for this research were involved in tended not to form and organize by using only one method for that purpose. Rather, these movements used strategies from many other movements, some with similar goals and some that had goals very different from their own. McAdam and Rucht (1993) argue for this process, a diffusion of techniques and ideas across movements which can be national or international. Collective action takes on many forms, and the ‘borrowing’ of techniques and strategies from one movement to another gives them the strength needed. Peaceful protests, performing in the streets, sit-ins, teach-ins and loud clanging of pots and pans are all means of getting the attention of a government and its officials, private institutions, or to spark others to join the movement. Movement formation is a significant finding from this research as seven of the eight participants were key actors in the formation of a movement. The significance of a student organization in this context helps give students a collective identity while also allowing them to share emotions and injustices which will often stimulate student movements. (Krinsky and Crossley, 2014; Klemencic, 2014) While some of the movements joined were formed from the ground up locally, some participants joined movements that that were either national and/or global. Many of the movements were offshoots of national movements such as the anti-apartheid movement, while some were local movements that had ideologies in alignment with major national movements,

⁸ Advanced studies for high school students in Sri Lanka are similar to general education requirements in the American University system.

⁹ President Chandrika Kumaratunga

however one was a movement that originated out of the desire for peace and reconciliation and an end to his country's long civil war, and his passion for organizing followed him to America.

William* discussed his involvement in movement formation while a student in Sri Lanka. One of the goals of William's activism was to get legislation passed with the department of education requiring young Senegalese people to learn the Tamil language and for young Tamil people to learn Senegalese and English.

There were student leaders from the different high schools and we got together and formed the organization, it was a movement based on school-based peace and reconciliation clubs. We started meeting once a week and we put together a manifesto, a series of operating documents, then we contacted a person who was heading up a not for profit called 'Peace for Sri Lanka' and said we wanted to be at the table when they decide what the new policies are going to be (in the new presidential administration). The movement I was involved with in Sri Lanka disbanded when four of the five main actors left the country due to death threats. William**

I am the president of 'My Body My Choice' at my university, I founded the club, I also work for NARAL¹⁰. . My passion is organizing, with the current Trump administration and his Supreme Court nominee being anti-pro-choice, this has caused many to want to get involved again, reproductive rights are under attack. I am the organizer for campaigns, I am the only leader currently although we just had elections so there will be four leaders next year, many clubs are hierarchical in nature, however we will all be on even ground. Rachel**

*I am very interested in ecofeminism, our destruction of nature and its connection to patriarchy and capitalism. A lot of my values are in line with feminist values, when I was a student at the University, I started a feminist group named 'Feminist Consciousness United', I was one of the founders and originators of this group that began originally in protest to the cut of programs in the Women's Studies department. 'Feminist Consciousness United' is still going today, the University has a long history of racism, sexism, and homophobia on campus, this group will address those issues. Emma**

Sammi* organized and helped form a campus movement after twenty-five majors and minors were cut at her University. People were afraid to speak up, Sammi* said she will speak about it, that she is not afraid that anything will be taken away from her by the University.

*"We are aligning ourselves with students from other universities...make them*¹¹ aware we are still very concerned about the cuts." Sammi**

*We organized a small group and had a few meetings before we joined the Soci-Anthro club at the University, they have more advocates with faculty and staff which gives us a budget to work with for events. Sammi**

Over the summer I became a Marxist and then became an organizer for the 'Youth for Socialist Action'. We petitioned against the power transmission line, protested University tuition hikes and held forums to teach students and community members about

¹⁰ National Abortion Rights Action League

¹¹ Board of Regents

*various issues such as the anti-war movement, we were very strong in the community. We also tried to start a working-class movement, we used a black cat as the symbol (International Workers of the World), we were one of the largest and most outspoken groups on campus. Gabe**

Karina* was involved in 'Amnesty International' as the president of that group at their university, feeling that involvement was a stepping stone to further activism. However, Karina* notes that 'United Students Against Sweatshops' (USAS) whose chapter was formed at their university around the same time the national chapter was formed, was the biggest movement they were involved in at the University, USAS was involved in making global-local links¹².

*Amnesty International is an NGO model, it is not an international model, it is a very narrow model of what you can actually change, this is the model that I grew up on, our range of operations is only this big (or this small). I was also involved locally in an organization called the 'Giving Tree' where there were opportunities for students to be involved in community service projects outside of church or other kinds of activities, we tried to make it more about solidarity. Poverty is a community problem, it is a systemic problem, help now to make a change, paint a house, etc., something tangible that could be accomplished right now. Working with USAS made me even more aware of the anti-globalization movement, also called the global justice movement-it was a kind of activism that was major and prevalent, this was THE discussion on college campuses and on the left in general at that time. I was in college from 1998 to 2002, the timing here is very important, this was during the time when the "Battle in Seattle" was taking place, when the World Trade Organization (WTO) held their meetings in Seattle. November 1999, I can clearly remember, sitting in a room on campus watching those scenes on tv, seeing all of those people in the streets and thinking 'I need to be there', I should have gone to that one I couldn't believe I wasn't there. USAS all connected to what the activism in the 'Battle for Seattle'¹³ was and we were training people on trade policy, what WTO, NAFTA¹⁴, and the IMF¹⁵ are. None of these had ever been protested before, no one knew what they were. Karina**

Landon* noted he was involved in a number of movements while a college student from 1982-1986, he got involved in an established movement about half-way through his first year of college and took on a leadership role in its growth.

The two that I was most involved in were the Nuclear Disarmament Movement and the Anti-Apartheid Movement which were both really big in the 1980s. Anti-apartheid had come and gone over the years, it had swelled in the 60s and had a surge in the 70s with a small group keeping it alive on campuses until the spring of 1985 when there was a big upsurge in organizing nationwide. There were a lot of us that organized on my campus,

¹² In solidarity with garment workers against sweatshop conditions such as unsafe working conditions, poverty wages and sexual harassment. "The reckless business practices of apparel brands...root cause of sweatshops." www.usas.org

¹³ These protests considered the birth of the anti-globalization movement by many. The protests were successful in preventing the opening ceremony of the WTO conference from taking place and the cancellation of several events planned for the conference. <https://www.britannica.com/event/Seattle-WTO-protests-of-1999>

¹⁴ North American Free Trade Agreement

¹⁵ International Monetary Fund

*we jumped on the issue and had a brief mass movement that I helped organize. The form the anti-apartheid movement took on campuses was called ‘divestment’, university endowments are invested in various ways to grow the funds, one of the nationwide movements for divestment was to get corporations to divest from South Africa until apartheid was gone. The movement on college campuses was to get universities to divest funds from U.S. companies that do business in South Africa, and in the spring of 1985, this movement exploded-one of the main universities to get involved initially was Columbia University in New York City which was an easy train ride from my university. Landon**

Activism Against Neoliberal Policies on the University Campus

“Research shows that if you provide too many choices and too many options for students, it can get very overwhelming, which can result in them making misinformed decisions. This often happens with first generation students.” Jordan Milan, director of Strategic Operations UW-Superior. (WPR interview 10/31/2017 Danielle Kaeding)

The perception that first generation college students are unable to make wise and informed choices regarding their education became clear on October 31, 2017 on the campus of the University of Wisconsin-Superior. Current administration announced the cutting of twenty-five majors and minors without the use of shared governance, with the end goal of, in effect, turning the university into nothing more than a diploma mill, similar to what many universities were before the 1960s. The cutting of programs and the statement regarding first generation students sparked a movement to rid this campus and others like it of the neoliberal policies that are stripping universities of liberal arts studies.

Neoliberal policies and austerity measures on the university campus have appeared as tuition increases, breakdowns in mandatory shared governance and loss of educational programs globally. However, market oriented educational policies such as the creation of more private universities and technical professional institutions where admission standards are lowered to attract more students while limiting the available programs are spurring protests across America and the world. (Bellei, Cabalin and Orellana 2014; Begin-Caouette and Jones 2014; Brule 2015; Cini and Guzman-Concha 2017). Privatization and marketization of higher education has influenced many students, often pricing them out of acquiring an education or making their choices for higher education so limited they are forced into a field of study that is not of the greatest interest to them. This may be particularly so for the ‘first generation students’ who are those students with no immediate family members having ever received a college degree. Taking away the class and degree choices does not result in better informed decision making, the only accomplishment achieved with fewer choices is a less balanced education that frequently includes an insufficient amount of liberal arts studies. The illusion of free choice is something that is increasingly occurring on university campuses, with free-market economy becoming more prevalent, universities are, unfortunately, paring away at programs that do not appear to be ‘money makers’, often gutting liberal arts programs. Majors and minors left at the university leave it resembling a diploma mill: get the students in and out as quickly as possible for the greatest amount of profit possible. This leaves many students asking what their diplomas will be

worth in the end, will they graduate with pride from their university, or will the marketization of education devalue their degree? Neoliberal policies are, essentially, the privatization and marketization of anything and everything from healthcare and energy production to the entire education system, including higher education. What this means to citizens globally is that quite often the average consumer will be priced out of participation in all these areas, for the purposes of this research however, only the neoliberal policies that affect higher education will be discussed. Four of the eight interviewed discussed program cuts on campus and/or how segregated fees are used (or misused) on their campus as a reason to become active.

Tony* has been involved at the University from the early 1970s to present day as a student, staff member, administrator and emeritus faculty member viewing issues from many different sides. However, seeing how student fees had been spent by administration in the previous State College system gave the students even more reason to try and assure the new University system would use those funds for their intended purpose.

*In the university system students have primary right to decide where fees that are charged to them are spent, this was not the case in the college system before the merger. Traditionally they were under administration's management, in the new system fees were separated because of past history...some of the fees were, in the past, committed to pay for things that may not have been for what they were intended. Tony**

The loss of the entire Women's Studies department which was merged with Sociology and Anthropology, losing the autonomy of the program as well as its faculty members. University administration noted the loss was due to decreased funding and enrollment which was then blamed on students for not promoting the program stronger.

*Women's studies as a whole have a different way of learning and we need to give those types of majors special treatment. We saw other programs get hit really hard too, and most of them were the ones that women and people of color were heavily involved in-the minority community. Emma**

The neoliberal agenda being implemented at the university Sammi* attends was realized when administration announced the cutting of twenty-five majors and minors primarily in the liberal arts, bypassing shared governance and without consulting affected faculty.

I learned more about the issue, a professor was telling us that the University was going in the direction of a technical school which got me more interested, more of my friends were being affected. Sammi**

Non-Violent Direct Action

During the 2011 protests in Chile against neoliberalism and austerity measures, stranger's support for the movement aided in the strength of the movement. Non-violent demonstrations, some in the form of 'Cacerolazos' which were performed in every major city in Chile. A 'Cacerolazo', which was common in Chile during the dictatorship of Pinochet, is performed by people gathering everywhere, beating on pots and pans, making as much noise as humanly possible (Puga, 2016). This type of demonstration dubbed the 'casseroles' was also held throughout Canada in solidarity with the students in Quebec protesting the neoliberal measures being implemented at their university in 2012. Resistance performances including marching, non-violent civil disobedience and activism via social media have also proven to be successful to

help revive both activists and movements (Rosa, 2016) helping them to reclaim their strategies, objectives and collective identities. Seven of eight interviewed participated in non-violent direct action on and around their university campuses, validating the concept that contrary to what the general public may perceive, protests do not have to be violent to gain attention or intended results. Activists can use the strength of their words and non-violent actions to vent their frustrations regarding their dissatisfaction in governments, and other institutions and people.

*I did some work from outside the country (Sri Lanka) in 2009 when the war was finally wrapping up, there were still a whole lot of civil rights violations occurring in the final stages of the war. We worked with some old networks who were still on the ground to secretly get film narratives out of the country of the violations that were occurring, and they were sent to a news channel in the U.K. They put together an expose about what was happening, information was also sent to contacts on the Human Rights Commission of the United Nations to show what was going on in Sri Lanka. William**

*It (cuts) really wasn't affecting me, so I initially felt I didn't have a voice since I was a psychology major, but then I said I will do whatever you need me to do, if you need a voice then I will be that voice. Sammi**

*We petitioned against the power transmission line, protested University tuition hikes and held forums to teach students and community members about various issues such as the anti-war movement, we were very strong in the community. We also tried to start a working-class movement, we used a black cat as the symbol (International Workers of the World), we were one of the largest and most outspoken groups on campus. Gabe**

*We held a counter-protest during the '40 Days for Life' protest at a women's health care center where the only threat of violence was from a pro-lifer who confronted one of our pro-choice protesters lecturing her for twenty minutes how she is going to hell. It was scary and intimidating, but it was also very motivating. Rachel**

*We stood in front of the administration building and covered ourselves in red tape, even our mouths-they (administration) were trying to say that they could not do it (university logoed apparel from a guaranteed non-sweatshop manufacturer), it would be too hard, we stood there for hours, (it) was the most powerful action I took part in there. Karina**

*There was a group in our movement we nicknamed the "Action Faction" because every time a strategic decision needed to be made, their response was "Let's get arrested." Getting arrested as not one of our goals, we were going to have a one-day blockade because of administration's refusal to talk. We did research on their reactions to strategies such as this in the past, and we thought no one was going to get arrested, that was a tactical miscalculation-they called the town police and we all got arrested. Landon**

The Spark Factor

What sparks a person to become an activist? The 'spark factor' is the most significant finding for this research. There are seemingly hundreds of answers one could give to this question, however when closely analyzed, the answers are quite similar. When asked what their spark was, each of the eight interviewed gave what appeared initially to be a response that was specific to their individual issue. However, further examination of the responses given to all the

questions asked during the interview process, the replies parallel one another more than originally thought. While the spark factor does have a deeper meaning than merely a passion for an issue, the passion felt ignites a profound sense of injustice and an obligation to rise and resist emerges. Issues range from human rights violations and war, women's reproductive rights, neoliberal policies and austerity measures at universities, to student rights and beyond. Many movements that were started on university campuses have not been long-lived due to the short tenure typical of college students. Some will carry on after the initial leadership have graduated while others will live on in other forms, adding new issues or changing their platform to attract new membership or alter their effectiveness. Whether the spark was kindled by one specific event or a series of events, the fire that burns inside an activist may dim at times, though it can never be extinguished.

*It was this one person speaking the language that we were interested in, I was talking with some of my friends from other high schools and we wanted to speak clearly and loudly that the new generation was more in line with this line of thinking and we fundamentally disagreed with the old administration and how they treated this decades-old war. William**

*I wanted to be involved in student government at the university. We were striving to be the student's voice as to how they would participate in the new system, and we were also given voice regarding student rights and responsibilities, Chapters 36, 14, and 16¹⁶, student behavior, academic and non-academic misconduct. Tony**

*The votes of no confidence are being worn like badges of honor by administration. We need Liberal Arts, we need education that will expand us beyond becoming a mechanic-they are expanding our minds with liberal arts; sociology, anthropology, philosophy...they need to stop destroying education. I found my spark in the liberal arts. Sammi**

*November 30, 1999 was the beginning of the world for me. That was my big spark. The day of the Seattle WTO protests- the "Battle in Seattle". To suddenly see tens of thousands of people in the streets, blocking world leaders from getting to their hotels, to see the alliance of environmentalists, union leaders, people from all countries-all in alliance with students, it exists. It still exists. Karina**

*Two years ago, the school was getting rid of two million dollars in budget cuts, the university is made up of a bunch of smaller schools and the College of Liberal Arts was the school that was hit the hardest. Emma**

*There is a pro-life movement on campus, I thought I needed to get involved-sometimes you see that there is someone out there that has a different opinion than you, and you have to put yours out there too. Rachel**

*"When doubt in my mind was created about the construction of the center, I knew I had to do something." Gabe**

¹⁶ Chapter 36: Faculty and Shared Governance; Chapter 14: Academic Misconduct; Chapter 17: Non-Academic Misconduct

<https://www.uwsuper.edu/search/searchresults.cfm?q=chapter+16#gsc.tab=0&gsc.q=chapter%2016&gsc.page=1>

*The University was trying to get rid of the student center to build this huge building that at the very start seemed fishy to me. I started to ask questions, going to the forums... This was my first political action, to hit it from the ground running was exciting. Gabe**

*The election of Ronald Reagan really got me questioning. I grew up at a time when people had a general anti-authority feeling to be expressed-I was in high school in the late 1970s and early 80s and nobody paid any attention to the rules. This got me questioning, I am not going to just take what is handed to me by the people in authority and what they say. Landon**

Discussion

In conducting the data collection for this research, I had an assumption that the spark factor for activism would be one of the top factors of significance to becoming active, however, the spark factor has presented as the most significant finding. Using data collected from the personal interviews conducted for this research along with examination of previous literature regarding social movements, there appears to be a pattern concerning the causal or ‘spark’ factor that will move a person from the category of student by-stander to student activist. Although the pattern is not identical in all activists, similar dynamics appear throughout the narratives in the data collected for this research. Though many factors may come into view, there appeared to be a common thread for those who chose activism over non-participation. While the issue at hand is the most important motivation for participation, there must also be a stimulus that will ignite the spark in the potential activist’s being.

The idealistic hopes and dreams that are part of the university student’s environment can play an active role in them becoming interested in and a participant of a social movement (Gill and DeFronzo, 2009) which is an important element in the spark. University students overall are presented with new ideas of how the world could be both in and out of the classroom, most notably in the liberal arts classroom. The expectations for how institutions are governed and those in power wield the power they have been given is the cause for many to become activists. The motivation can arise from a violation of human rights, a lack of freedom of speech and/or expression, the oppression and marginalization of a group of people or the disaffection of a nation’s people toward their leadership. Chun (2001:11) asserts that people often become active “to experience being a part of a larger movement of reducing the marginalization of people of color, raising social consciousness, and gaining strength from grassroots organizing efforts of the community.”

Early politicization of participants in this research, while a significant finding, does not appear to correlate with existing literature. Many scholars note that activism as a university student will spur the activism to continue into their later adult years, though I was unable to find data to support an assumption that being politicized early in life correlates with becoming an activist. However, previous research does demonstrate that activism as a university student does tend to carry on into the activist’s later adult years (Chun, 2001). Politicization on its own however is a factor in garnering support for a movement, and the election or placement of a new or controversial leader within a country, a city, or even on a university campus will often be the impetus for that politicization. However, changes to the status quo have also been the driving force in many cases, such as austerity measures or neoliberal reforms in higher education as were the cases in Canada, England and Chile (Bellei, Cabalin and Orellana,2014; Begin-Caouette and Jones,2014; Brule,2015; Cini and Guzman-Concha,2017; Donoso, 2016; Giroux, 2013) The

egalitarian ideals that have been fought for on the university campus are once again being quelled by governments and university administrations themselves. Belief in human equality and how it can be achieved is at the forefront of sociological inquiry and research. However, with the loss of crucial programs in the liberal arts university, once again we as humans are struggling for a renewed understanding of how this can be accomplished when the very place that has been conducive to a student's radicalization is becoming nothing more than a marketized revenue producing venue that is turning the classrooms, once again into an exercise in the culture of business (Giroux, 2013).

Movement formation and organization was the goal of seven of eight participants for this research. After identifying that a move for social change must be made on an issue, these activists then either joined an already existing movement or formed an organization themselves to move for change. When students are able to organize and mobilize, they can be and are powerful influences on shaping policy for higher education within their countries (Klemencic, 2014). While there are methods and models regarding movement formation and organization, the activists that joined previously existing national or international movements were not involved in the actual organization of that model as was the case with Amnesty International and the Anti-Apartheid movements. While student organizations are important to a successful movement, many times a movement can emerge from student frustration regarding the lack of initiation on the part of their group, university tuition fees and shared governance are but two of the issues that can begin campus unrest and cause students to mobilize (Klemencic, 2014). However, the significance of the student organization in this context helps give students a collective identity under which to operate. The participants that chose to form their own movements did not follow a set pattern for the organization such as that formed by William* in Sri Lanka, or My Body My Choice* which was created on a campus in America. Collective action can take on many forms such as the political process model (McAdam, 1982) which is based on the theory that only a few groups hold wealth and power in America thus leaving the remainder of the population without a voice in politics or their lives, or by the dynamics of diffusion (McAdam and Rucht, 1993) where actors and organizers borrow bits and pieces from several different movements to form one that is specific to their needs. However, Kebede and Yates (1999:155) argue that the mere "existence of a conducive climate does not necessarily lead to social insurgency" the persecuted populace must also be willing to rise against the political opportunity that is present. Although the idea behind the political process theory is the driving force behind most social movements, the actual model takes many forms dependent upon the needs of the organization to be able to affect change.

Neoliberal policies and the application of austerity measures on the university campus were part of the driving force for four of eight participants in this research. This finding does correlate with existing literature regarding student movements on university campuses in America and globally. The neoliberal university attempts to quell the frustrations and outrage of students by speaking in circles, avoiding the questions being asked, by treating students as if they do not fully understand what it is they are fighting for, or by threatening their rights to free speech through a seemingly arbitrary application of rules and regulations on the campus. This can come in the form of university administration making students feel they are naïve and misguided for their action as was the case for Karina*; repressing the voices of student government representatives as was seen on Sami's* campus; overreaction by administration to peaceful opposition on campus or application of sanctions on students who "violate university

policy” as discussed by Landon*. “Campuses *should* be places that not only allow but encourage and protect a diversity of voices and opinions, including those that challenge the status quo.” (Smeltzer and Hearn, 2015:352) Neoliberal policies and austerity measures on university campuses are a major issue among student activists. These policies affect not only the quality of their education, they also affect the availability of higher education to marginalized groups of people (Lamusse, Morgan, Rakete and Birchall, 2015). By allowing what were once public not-for-profit universities to appoint for-profit entities to increase university revenue which, in turn, commodifies the students, they are also devaluing the education received by lowering admission standards for the sake of higher enrollment (Bellei, Caballin and Orellana, 2014).

Neoliberal policies and austerity measures come in various forms, however slashing programs, particularly in liberal arts appears to be the most common. These cuts are often done under the guise of decreased enrollment in programs, as was the case of the twenty-five majors and minors that were cut at the university Sammi* attends. However, under closer inspection, the programs were cut to gut the liberal arts department and expand the university’s presence in the for-profit on-line degree programs that are becoming more popular due to the possibility of large financial gains for the university.

The increased corporatization and marketization of universities causes the diverse liberal arts degree programs difficult to obtain in a university system intent upon becoming nothing more than a diploma mill. Three of eight interviewed for this research discussed the loss of programs on their campuses as a main reason for their activism. Loss of autonomy for programs such as women’s studies or the complete gutting of entire departments has caused students to move for change on their campus and campuses within their university system. The goals of the movements are to once again make available the programs that teach diversity and the intersectionality of gender, sexuality, race, socioeconomic status and ethnicity among others, and to give a voice to the marginalized and oppressed. The loss of programs such as sociology is akin to returning the university campus back to the 1960s before Black and other ethnic studies were demanded and programs were implemented in San Francisco and other universities across America (Pulido, 2006). The accessibility of sociology, women’s studies and other liberal arts programs are vital parts of a diverse education.

Non-violent direct action on the university campus is prevalent as was demonstrated by seven of eight participants in this research. From covering their bodies in red tape, to sit-ins in front of administration offices, teach-ins, forums, or peaceful demonstrations and rallies on campus grounds and elsewhere in the community, the strategies used by these activists drew the attention of other students, administration and community members. The significance of this finding leads away from an assumption that a protest must be violent to gain the attention of those outside of the movement. Existing literature correlates with this finding with examples of the “Cacerolazos” demonstrations in Chile, and the ‘casseroles’ in Quebec (Puga, 2016; Giroux, 2013). The Black insurgency of the 1960s relied on established institutions within the Black community to assist in not only increasing their numbers but also in introducing new protests techniques such as the student sponsored sit-ins in the fight for Civil Rights for people of color (McAdam, 1982) Other types of non-violent direct action are resistance performances such as marches, street performances (music, dancing, narratives) and internet activism (Rosa, 2016; Petronijewic, 1998; Guillen, 2013) which involves a multitude of techniques to alert non-activists to the cause. However, along with the more visible modes of direct action, several participants in this research also sought to participate in governmental and university policy

change as their form of resistance, for example: Tony* used his voice in formulating student rights and responsibilities in the new university system, and William's* activism changed policy within his country's government by working with parliamentary officials to write new legislature.

While there are many dynamics involved in a social movement, the most important element is what I call the 'spark factor'. The moment in time when a person realizes that there is something wrong in their society, whether it is on their university campus, in their community or elsewhere which may materialize as doubts or feelings of disillusionment in the political structures and those in power (Zamponi and Fernandez-Gonzalez, 2013). This may come to them almost as an epiphany, a sudden awareness that marginalization and oppression must come to an end, that there are laws and policies both in public and private institutions that are not created to treat everyone equally, that changes to policy are going to have lasting effects not only on themselves but on others in their peer group and those to follow. The spark for activism is the most significant finding for this research, and every participant interviewed had that moment when they knew they had to act. Previous literature examined for this research, while discussing what brought about social movements, their framing and context, and alluding to the spark that caused the activists to move, has not focused solely on the "spark factor" and when or how it is ignited within the activists.

The 1969 movement at San Francisco State University began as a fight by students for more control over the content of their education at the university (Pulido, 2006; Salomon, 1997), which is not dissimilar to the battle befalling today's campus. Educational content correlates with the findings for this research, participants such as Sammi*, and Emma* formed movements on the campus of their university in protest to the loss of essential programs such as women's studies, global studies and the eviscerating of a sociology department. What was gained in the 1960s by students demanding ethnic studies, is now being gutted from the liberal arts university's campus. Programs that were meant to teach all students about the histories of people of color, their societies and cultures, and the intersectionality of every aspect of their lives are being lost to the market driven agendas of the higher education system throughout America. Existing literature also claims a potential activist's assessment of goals of the movement and whether they may be achievable (Winston, 2013) are paramount in deciding to participate. However, this research did not find a correlation with that claim, in fact, my findings demonstrate that there was no correlation between *potential* success and action. While all participants felt their movement's goals were valid, and success was conceivable, the capacity for success was not the motivator for action, their impetus to move involves more than a movement's prospective successes or possibility of failure. Although everyone that participates in a social movement has a moment when they realize they need to act, not everyone's spark occurs at the same time within a movement, moreover, not everyone's spark occurs regarding the same issue within that movement. Each participant in this research had a moment when they knew what they were experiencing or seeing was not right and it needed to change. The significance of this finding lies in the fact that while each person does have a spark, the catalyst is different for each individual, even if it is regarding the same or a similar issue. What occurs lies deep within the activist's being, there is something singular about each activist that causes them to feel they can affect social change, and within that something is their spark.

Conclusion

While there are many factors involved in the formation and organization of a student generated social movement, those factors are all similar in both foundation and function, where the differences lie are in the reasons a person becomes involved in activism. Whereas previous literature has intensely examined many facets of the social movement including models and theory, literature examined for this research has not focused solely on the motivations, or the ‘spark’ that will move a person from being a student by-stander to a student activist. This research has attempted to determine the factor or factors involved that will so move a person that they feel it is vital for them to act for social change. What this research has determined however, is that there is more than feelings of marginalization, oppression, or injustice that will spark a person to become active in a movement. Although the inequality, prejudice or bias being raised is a critical piece of progression to participation, there is also something more profound that is experienced in a potential activist. This research, while it has determined the profundity of the spark, has also determined that the spark is a singular experience for each activist. What will cause the fire to ignite in one is distinct from every other activist although the circumstances surrounding the spark may be outwardly similar. Though I feel a sense of success at the completion of this study, I also feel there is more that can be done concerning the spark that ignites in an activist’s soul. Further research should acquire a larger group of participants from a more diverse multinational population of university students, both radical and conservative in nature to further examine what the mitigating factor was for each person to move to activism.

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Questions: Student Generated Social Movements-Interview

1. Can you tell me about the social movement you were involved in?
2. How did this movement begin?
3. What was the purpose of /issue surrounding your movement?
4. What do you think "sparked" the movement?
5. Why do you think that (whatever the "spark" was) caused activism?

6. How extensive was your participation in the movement?
7. What role did you play in the movement?
8. How did the movement develop?
9. Who developed the movement?
10. Who was involved in the movement?
11. Did you have a personal, vested interest in the issue at hand?
12. Are there any instances or events surrounding the movement that stand out in your memory?
13. Can you tell me about those events that stand out in your memory?
14. Did your movement have a pre-planned agenda?
 - Do you recall details of the agenda?
 - Was there a problem preventing dissent among the participants?
15. Was there a problem preventing discouragement among the participants?
16. Was the beginning of the movement spontaneous or had there been a plan in place to organize?
17. At the time the movement was active, did you think that you would be able to affect change for yourself and your community/state/nation?
18. Can you tell me what the “climate” was like around your university before, during and after the movement?
19. Did your movement employ the use of any symbols/objects/signage to construct a visual statement of dissent?
 - Was the visual construction successful in drawing attention to the movement and issues?
20. Did participants in your movement educate the public about the issue (ex: teach-ins, public forums)?
 - Were professors also involved in or affected by the movement?
21. Was there ever police presence during any of the movement’s events?
 - Do you recall the circumstances?
 - Did their presence alter the outcome of the event?
22. Was the media involved in any way regarding your movement?
 - If they were, do you think media’s effect was positive or negative to your cause?
 - If they were not, do you think media attention could have changed the outcome of your movement?
23. What role, if any, did your university have in your movement, either positive or negative?
24. If your university did play a part in the movement, what part of the university was involved?
25. What role do you think young people have in bringing about social change?
26. Were you an activist before this movement?
27. Do you think the movement you were involved in affected social change for the issue at hand?
27. Is there anything else you would like to tell me?