Thinking Intersectionally about the Relationship between Economic and Political Power: Three Lessons & Some New Questions

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Concerns about the role of money in politics are at the centre of many of the most salient developments and debates in contemporary American politics, and questions about the conditions under which economic power does and does not translate into political power have long been central to the study of American politics in general and to scholarship about the politics of race, class, gender and sexuality in particular.

My research does not address the role of money in politics directly, but it does speak to questions about what I will characterize as the relationships among economic and political issues, power, and inequalities. I begin below by discussing some of the ways in which scholarship about interest groups and social movements and the politics of race, gender, and sexuality suggests we might conceptualize these relationships, focusing on three overlapping questions: (1) Can advocacy organizations "purchase power" for marginalized groups? (2) What does an intersectional approach suggest about how we might reconceptualize the relationship between economic and other forms of inequality? (3) How do distinctions between "social" and "economic" issues make it difficult to "see" and address these relationships? I then briefly describe a new project on which I am working in which I take up additional questions about these issues. I end by suggesting that we might broaden the "money and politics" research agenda through a framework that considers more general questions about the relationships between economic and political power and by thinking about forms of and routes to "power" that might not rely so heavily on purchasing it.

Can Advocacy Organizations "Purchase Power" for Marginalized Groups?

Groups such as women, people of colour, and low-income people are typically – and often rightly – viewed as receiving the short end the stick when it comes to the influence of money in politics, as resource disparities often compound their political disadvantages and the power that purchased is often to their detriment (Bartels 2008; Baumgartner el al 2009; Gilens 2012; Hacker and Pierson 2010; Hertel-Fernandez and Skocpol 2016; Schlozman, Verba, Brady 2012).

But in a context in which the political voices of these groups have long been underrepresented by two-party, first-past-the-post, and territorially-based elections, they have also sought ways to supplement and circumvent "normal" electoral and legislative channels using other political means and resources.[1] Lacking financial power, for example, protest movements try to harness the resources that are more plentiful among aggrieved and marginalized groups, including passion and numbers (McAdam 1986; Piven and Cloward 1977).

But protests and movements are difficult to sustain, and they often give way to institutionalized advocacy organizations (Minkoff 1996; Piven & Cloward 1977; Staggenborg 1994). Advocacy organizations try to offset the paucity of legislative representation, influence, and policy responsiveness by providing what I have called "compensatory representation" to marginalized populations in ways that transcend the geographic boundaries of congressional districts (Strolovitch 2007; see also Cohen and Rogers 1992; Rehfeld 2006; Warren 2004; Young 1992). But although national advocacy organizations have provided vital representation to these and other groups that have been under-represented through electoral politics and in legislative bodies, they also require – and deploy – substantial financial resources, both to sustain themselves and to pursue their political and policy goals. How can we understand the role of money in politics and, more generally, the relationship between economic and political power when it comes to organizations that advocate on behalf of marginalized groups?

Until the 1960s, the answer seemed clear: Through the process that E.E. Schattschneider termed the "mobilization of bias," the concerns of weak groups were "organized out" of politics by elites who manipulated the agenda toward their own interests. As a consequence, he asserted, the interests of weak groups were not merely opposed but were actually excluded from the political agenda. But although there were few organizations representing women, people of colour, and low-income people before the 1960s, the last five decades have witnessed an exponential increase in the number of social movement and advocacy organizations that represent these and other marginalized groups in national politics (see Figure 1). The period between 1960 and 1999, for example, saw the formation of 56 percent of existing civil rights and people of colour organizations, 79 percent of existing economic justice organizations, and 65 percent of extant women's organizations (Strolovitch 2007). By 2007, there were over 1000 progressively-oriented organizations representing groups like women, people of colour, and low-income people in national politics (Strolovitch 2014). These include more than 150 economic justice organizations, more than 50 African American organizations, over 100 women's organizations, 30 organizations representing women of colour, and approximately 43 organizations devoted to women's reproductive rights and health (see Table 1). Organizations such as these have become a significant presence in Washington politics, and by addressing racial, economic, and sex-based discrimination and attempting to create new resources and opportunities for women, people of colour, and low-income people, they have also been central players in achieving legal and policy gains for marginalized groups.

[Figure 1 and Table 1 about here]

But while advocacy organizations have long been a crucial source of compensatory representation for these groups, the extent to which they are able to mitigate the relationship between economic political power is far from clear. First, the growth in the number of social and economic justice organizations has been vastly outpaced by increased numbers of business and professional organizations (Baumgartner and Leech 1998; Berry 1989; Danielian and Page 1994; Schlozman and Tierney 1986; Schlozman et al. 2012; Walker 1991), and organizations that represent marginalized groups continue to constitute only a modest proportion of the larger interest group universe. Figure 2 summarizes data that Kay Lehman Schlozman and her co-authors collected about the nearly 12,000 organizations with representatives in Washington.

[Figure 2 about here]

As the figure makes clear, over a third of these organizations represent corporations, while labor unions and social welfare organization, as well as groups speaking for women, people of colour, LGBT people, and the poor each account for a tiny portion ranging from around 4 to a fraction of one percent -- proportions that are almost equivalent to those that Schlozman found in her earlier 1986 study with John Tierney (Schlozman and Tierney 1986; Schlozman et al. 2012, 321).

Compared with organizations concerned with more traditional interests, organizations that advocate for marginalized groups also remain greatly outmatched in terms of financial assets, organizational resources, and political tools. The radical resource disparity is apparent in Table 2, which compares data from broad surveys of all interest groups conducted in 1986 (Schlozman and Tierney) and 1998 (Kollman) with the results of my 2000 study of advocacy groups representing marginalized groups (see Table 2). Less than a third of the organizations in that study employed a legal staff, only a quarter employed lobbyists, and only a fifth had Political Action Committees, whereas three quarters of organizations in the broader interest group universe employed a legal staff and 54 percent had PACs.

Recent studies suggest that his latter disparity has likely been exacerbated by the 2010 Supreme Court decision in the case Citizens United v. FEC, which overturned key portions of the 2002 Bipartisan Campaign Reform Act that had attempted to limit the influence of "soft money" (unregulated donations to political parties) in electoral politics (Ansolabehere and Snyder 2000; Bartels 2008; Baumgartner el al 2009; Franz 2008; Hertel-Fernandez and Skocpol 2016). Organizations that serve disadvantaged groups also do not make as much use of alternative resources that they do have at their disposal. Jeffrey Berry and Henry Arons (2003), for example, show that service providers granted 501c (3) nonprofit status so fear losing this status that they lobby far less than is legally permitted, thereby forgoing opportunities to influence policy in ways that might benefit the disadvantaged groups they serve.

[Table 2 about here]

Intersectionality as an Alternative Framework for Conceptualizing the Relationship between Economic and Political Inequality

In addition to being outnumbered and outmatched by organizations representing dominant groups, advocacy organizations that represent women, people of colour, and low-income people have also been criticized for focusing on the needs of more advantaged members of the marginalized constituencies on whose behalf they speak (Berry 1999; Skocpol 2003; Strolovitch 2007). These concerns take several different forms, with some scholars arguing that liberal advocacy groups have abandoned economic justice issues and the concerns of low-income and working-class people in favour of issues that they characterize as "post-materialist," "social," or "identity" issues. Others allege the reverse -- that organizations concerned with economic issues marginalize issues of race, gender, and sexuality (Frymer 1999).

Another approach to understanding how well organizations represent their disadvantaged members contends that this question should not be understood as a zero-sum tradeoff between addressing economic issues on the one hand and social issues on the other. Instead, adherents of an intersectional approach assert, organizations fail to address issues that affect subgroups of their constituencies whose marginalized positions are constituted by what scholars have come to think of as the *intersections* of different forms of disadvantage (Cohen 1999; Crenshaw 1989).[2]

From an intersectional perspective, forms of marginalization such as race, gender, class, sexuality, and disability are not static or rankable, and they do not operate along single axes or in simple or additive ways. Instead of functioning as separate, fixed, and parallel tracks, they are at once dynamic, simultaneous, and mutually constitutive and they create cumulative and structural inequalities that "define, shape, and reinforce one another in ways that constitute the relative positions and opportunities of differently situated members of marginalized groups" (Strolovitch 2007, 24). For example, low-income women, disadvantaged both economically and by gender, are an intersectionally disadvantaged subgroup of women and of low-income people.

While recognizing that important inequalities persist *among* racial, gender, and economic groups, intersectional approaches highlight inequalities *within* marginalized groups and the ways in which social and political forces construct and manipulate them. These approaches also emphasize the consequent unevenness in the effects of the political, economic, and social gains made by marginalized groups since, and as a result of, the social movements and policy gains of the 1960s and 1970s (Cohen 1999; McCall 2005; Strolovitch 2007, 22-8).

Most germane here is that intersectional frameworks contend that economic and social injustices are not mutually exclusive and that no single form of domination or social relation -- be it racism, classism, patriarchy, or heteronomativity -- is the primary source of oppression (Kurtz 2002, 38). And because they are mutually constituted, specific forms of disadvantage and privilege cannot be understood, much less addressed, in isolation.

Research that I conducted as part of my 2007 book *Affirmative Advocacy* helps to illustrate what thinking intersectionally can illuminate about both the barriers to as well as some the possibilities for and payoffs of thinking about the relationship between political and economic power and among issues of racial, economic, and gender justice. As part of that research, I conducted a survey of 286 advocacy organizations (called the Survey of National Economic and Social Justice Organizations, or SNESJO) and interviewed officers at forty groups. To explore the extent to which these organizations represent disadvantaged subgroups of their constituents, respondents were asked a series of questions about the levels and targets of their advocacy activities on four domestic policy issues. These issues were assigned to different types of organizations based on a four-part policy typology that I created to operationalize key aspects of intersectional theories about power and marginalization and to test them against competing explanations (see Figure 3 and Table 3):

- Universal issues, which affect, at least in theory, the population as a whole, regardless of race, gender, sexual orientation, disability, class, or any other identity or axis of marginalization;
- Majority issues, which affect an organization's members or constituents relatively equally;

- Disadvantaged subgroup issues, which affect a subgroup of an organization's constituents that is intersectionally marginalized, i.e., it is *disadvantaged* economically, socially, or politically compared to the broader constituency; and
- Advantaged subgroup issues, which also affect a subgroup of an organization's constituents, but a relatively advantaged or privileged minority compared to the broader constituency (although, it is important to note, they are nonetheless disadvantaged compared to the general population).

[Figure 3 and Table 3 about here]

So, for example, I asked respondents from women's organizations about their advocacy efforts regarding violence against women (VAW) as a majority issue, as all women are, theoretically, equally likely to be victims of VAW, even if not every women is in fact a victim. I asked them about affirmative action in higher education as an advantaged subgroup issue, as it affects primarily college educated women, a relatively privileged subgroup of all women. Finally, I asked these same respondents about welfare reform as a disadvantaged subgroup issue, as it intersects gender and class and affects low-income women, an intersectionally disadvantaged subgroup of women (all organizations in the study were asked about Social Security as a "universal" issue). Based on this typology, respondents from different kinds of organizations were asked a series of questions, including one that asked them to estimate the proportion of their constituency that was affected by each of four designated policy issues, and how active, on a scale of 1-5, their organization was on each one between 1990 and 2000.

The central and most general finding of the study was that a large majority of organizations were significantly less active on issues affecting intersectionally marginally subgroups of their constituents than they were on those that affect more advantaged members. This result held even when the issues affecting disadvantaged subgroups had a broader impact than those affecting advantaged subgroups (see Table 4). That is, eve after controlling for other possible factors, I found that "single-axis" approaches are most common among the organizations that represent women, people of colour, and low-income people in U.S. politics. Instead of working on issues affecting intersectionally constituted concerns directly, officers at these organizations often assume either that other organizations will address them or that representation for disadvantaged subgroups will occur as a by-product of their efforts on other issues and that the benefits of their other efforts will "trickle down" to intersectionally-disadvantaged constituents.

[Table 4 about here]

When organizations do address issues affecting intersectionally-disadvantaged groups, their efforts tend to be more symbolic and less vigourous than they are when it comes to other issues. This is even true when organizations work together in coalitions, which might seem to be ideally suited to pursuing issues affecting intersectionally-disadvantaged groups because they have the capacity and often the objective to work on issues that intersect the interests and goals of many organizations and movements. However, while organizations are indeed somewhat more likely to work in coalitions when it comes to such issues, the levels of resources and energy that they devote to coalition work on them are lower, on average, than they are when they work in coalition on other issues. Coalitions can also compel groups to moderate or otherwise alter their

positions in ways that forfeit issues affecting disadvantaged subgroups. As a consequence, one defining risk of coalitions when it comes to advocacy on disadvantaged-subgroup issues is that organizations often devote only symbolic efforts to issues affecting these groups, reserving their "best efforts" in coalition work for the issues that they see as central to their main policy goals.

The net result of these dynamics is a paucity of attention to the issues that affect intersectionally marginalized groups -- and a great deal of attention to issues that affect advantaged subgroups -- on the part of the organizations that claim to speak for them. As a consequence, the benefits of the policy gains made possible by their advocacy are distributed unevenly among members of these groups, with members of constituencies who are privileged "but for" one axis of disadvantage reaping the greatest benefits of their efforts. Such disparities serve, in turn, to amplify many inequalities within the populations represented by these organizations, further heightening stratification.

Do Distinctions between "Social" & "Economic" Issues Cloud Our Ability to "See" and Address the Relationships Among Economic & Other Forms of Inequality?

The dynamic in which issues affecting intersectionally marginalized groups were given short shrift was manifest across all issues and organization types in the study. For example, both women's and African American organizations were far more active on affirmative action in higher education than they were on the welfare reform legislation that passed in 1996, which had major implications for low-income women and people of colour. But while these examples might seem to suggest that this disparity is produced by a focus on social issues at the expense of economic ones on the part of these "identity-based" groups, the results in Table 4 reveal the mirror-image phenomenon among organizations that emphasize class and economic justice.

To illustrate the implications of these dynamics for understanding the relationship between economic and political issues and power, it helpful to look at economic justice organizations. Respondents at these organizations were asked about their advocacy work on welfare reform (as a majority issue), the minimum wage (as an advantaged subgroup issue), and public funding for reproductive health services (as a disadvantaged subgroup issue that has a disproportionate impact on their female constituents; see Table 3). As the results in Table 4 make clear, of the sixty-six economic justice organizations in the study, only eight of them -- or twelve percent -- were active on this last issue in any way. This was a smaller proportion of any organization type on any of the twenty two issues in the study. Economic justice organizations' efforts on public funding for reproductive health services also came in dead last in terms of average levels of activity as well (1.16 on a scale of 1-5).[3]

Respondents at organizations devoted to reproductive rights were asked about their advocacy efforts on public funding for reproductive health services as well, and their levels of activity on this issue were somewhat higher than it was among their counterparts at economic justice groups. Nonetheless, their activity on this issue was far less robust than it was when it came to late-term abortion or to regulating abortion coverage by insurance companies and HMOs. The combined dearth of activity on the part of both economic justice and reproductive rights groups creates an advocacy vacuum when it comes to public funding for reproductive health services.[4]

Interviews that I conducted as part of the study help to unpack and understand the sources of this dynamic in which issues that cut across axes of marginalization (in this case, gender, class, and race) can fall through the cracks between the organizations that we would expect to address them (in this case, organizations that focus on economic justice as well as many reproductive rights groups). In particular, the interviews illustrate that it is fueled by the framing of issues of race, gender, and sexuality as being "social" or "post-material" ones having primarily to do with "identity." In the particular case of public funding for reproductive health, such framings explicitly reject the ways in which abortion in general and public funding for abortion in particular are economic issues – both for the individual women who need to control their reproduction for personal financial or professional reasons and also as a broader political economic question about the dedication of state resources to women. Officers at economic justice organizations were consequently reticent to recognize the economic implications of reproductive rights for the low-income women who constitute a significant portion of their constituencies. Failing to recognize that many of the issues that intersect social and economic policies and disadvantages are ones that affect disadvantaged subgroups of their own constituencies, they treat them as issues that "belong" to and should be addressed other kinds of organizations, suppressing their own organizations' levels of attention to them.

An interview that I conducted with the executive director of an economic justice organization was particularly revealing on this point. Asked about his organization's activities addressing the issue of public funding for abortion and other reproductive health services, this respondent told me that there had actually been "none." "Our focus," he explained, "has been on economic questions." Contextualizing this assertion within arguments about strategies to shifting the focus of the Democratic Party away from issues such as abortion, affirmative action, and LGBT rights, he explained that "the only way to defend cultural liberalism is with a strong populist economics" that persuades white men to "vote their pocketbook."

Similarly, I asked the executive director of another economic justice organization about his organization's activity on the issue of public funding for reproductive health services. Although these services are particularly important to low-income women, he said that he does not see this issue as being central to his organization's policy concerns. Consequently, when his organization is active on this issue, it simply signs on to what he tellingly characterized as "other people's stuff." As such, they tend not to devote a great deal of time or energy in such cases. Instead, he said, "we're usually pretty clear about areas where we can devote significant amounts of time and where we can't."[5]

Taken together, these responses make clear that in spite of its clear economic consequences for low-income women, the gendered implications of the issue prevent officers at these organizations from treating public funding for abortion as "an economic issue." In other words, they fail to recognize the ways in which reproductive rights, health, and autonomy are inseparable from economics for the low-income women these groups purport to represent. From this perspective, strategies such as staying away from what the first interviewee characterized as social issues explicitly rejects an approach towards public funding for abortion that would draw connections between these two policy realms. The logic embodied in this strategy and in this officer's statements instead buttresses the boundaries between them, failing to recognize the economic implications of gendered policy issues.

New Questions about the Relationship between Economic and Political Power: Advocacy for Marginalized Groups in an Era of Widening Inequalities and Intersectional Discourses

That organizations representing marginalized groups often perpetuate rather than mitigate intersectional marginalization may help to explain why it is that, despite all of the advocacy, mobilization, and policy and political progress the growth in their ranks has helped to make possible, the last several decades have also witnessed vastly widening economic disparities, stagnation in areas such as reducing the gendered wage gap, and continued assaults (and in some cases backsliding) in some areas of civil and reproductive rights (Bartels 2002, 2008; Hacker and Pierson 2010; Johnson 2013).

Indeed, while the proliferation of advocacy and social movement organizations is a striking feature of contemporary American politics, and although this proliferation has provided a vital compensatory voice to marginalized groups and has helped these populations in significant ways, it has not been able to guard against developments such as increasing economic insecurity and decreasing access to abortion and other aspects of reproductive health care (even in light of increased access to some kinds of reproductive health care under the Affordable Care Act). Together, these developments have exacerbated many extant and ongoing economic, racial, and gender inequalities (Mishel et al. 2012), as the resulting economic inequalities and inequalities have taken a disproportionate toll on groups such as women, people of colour, and low-income people, exacerbating extant and ongoing racial and gender inequalities (Johnson 2013).

But while these trends have shown little sign of abating, they have attracted increasing attention from scholars, policymakers, and the media. Recent events have also resulted in renewed attention to and mobilization around issues of race, gender, and sexuality, and ideas about intersectionality have become increasingly integrated into advocacy and movement discourse, particularly those having to do with police violence, reproductive justice, and gendered violence. What are the implications of these overlapping but seemingly diverging developments for advocacy for marginalized groups and for the relationship between economic and political power? Have organizations' agendas evolved to address the widening gaps, and have they done so in intersectionally sensitive ways? Have they made efforts to strengthen the political voice of and increase democratic responsiveness to those most affected by increased inequities, or have political disparities become even more pronounced in a context of greater economic inequalities?

To address these questions, I have begun work on a new project, "Widening Inequalities and Intersectional Representation for Marginalized Groups," which will combine data from a survey of nationally-active advocacy groups with publicly available information to answer questions about three key facets of advocacy for marginalized groups in an era marked by rising inequality as well by increasing attention to and intersectional understandings of that inequality:

Policy agendas: Have increasing inequalities (and increasing awareness about them) led to changes in organizations' policy priorities such that their agendas address the implications of these disparities for their constituents? Do their policy agendas reflect the proliferation and popularization of intersectional frameworks for understanding marginalization?

Using both a survey of advocacy organizations as well as analyses of publicly available information such as websites and Congressional testimony, I will explore whether, to what extent, and in what ways organizations have addressed widening inequalities and their implications for their constituents. The survey will also replicate open-ended questions I have asked in the two previous surveys, which asked respondents to list the five issues that are currently most important to their organizations and what the five most important issues were five years ago. Coding these issues to determine whether they address the implications of increasing inequalities for their constituents will provide over-time indicators of which issues have been most central to their agendas, whether economic disparities have become more important to their organizations, and whether social and economic justice advocacy has become more (or less) "intersectional."

Political opportunity and policy windows: Recent research shows that, in spite of the surge in organizations representing marginalized groups, the "pluralist heaven" is skewed increasingly toward trade, business, corporate, and professional organizations, and that legislators are more responsive to these and other wealthy constituents (Baumgartner el al 2009; Schlozman, Verba, Brady 2012). Other work suggests that disparities in responsiveness can be mitigated when powerful organizations are aligned with the preferences of lower-income people (Gilens 2012) and that recessions can open opportunities for advocates of redistributive policies (Gilens 2012; Piven and Cloward 1977; Skocpol 2002). We know less, however, about whether and how increasing inequalities expand or contract political opportunities for advocacy organizations that represent marginalized groups. Given recent attention to issues such as the minimum wage that have long been central to the agendas of economic justice organizations, for example, political opportunities might have increased for such groups, even if they have not been successful in their goals.

Resources, capacity, and viability: What are the effects of increased inequality on the resources available to organizations that advocate on behalf of marginalized groups? We might assume that such organizations would suffer as increased disparities have taken a disproportionate toll on many of their constituents and supporters, but some research has found that organizational donations and membership actually rise during adverse climates (Miller and Krosnick 2004). A recent study of nonprofits reported, for example, that many of them saw increased, rather than declining, donations during the Great Recession (NRC 2010). Moreover, the large and much-publicized contributions made to progressive groups by a handful of wealthy donors might suggest that such groups could benefit from concentrated wealth among liberal members of "the 1 percent," who have benefitted disproportionately from widening inequalities. Some large corporations and fiscally conservative foundations, for example, have been on the progressive side of recent issues and have seemed to be decisive in, for example, beating back religious freedom bills in Indiana and Arizona last year.[6] But beyond some anecdotal evidence, little is known about the effects of these changes on levels of membership and contributions, or whether all types of groups have experienced the same kinds of increases or decreases in membership and donations, and we know even less about whether and how these changes affect organizations' representational capacity.

More generally, by combining evidence from this new study with information from the surveys of advocacy groups that I conducted 2000 and 2007 surveys, this research will allow for a unique longitudinal comparison of advocacy organizations over time.[7] It will also provide essential information about questions such as whether advocacy organizations mitigate or exacerbate the effects of unequal political representation in a time of rising inequality and whether the agendas of advocacy organizations that represent women, people of colour, and low-income people have evolved to address the widening gaps of the last three decades. Have they made efforts to strengthen the political voice of and increase democratic responsiveness to the members of their constituencies that are most affected by increased inequities? By focusing on advocacy on behalf of relatively advantaged women, people of colour, and low-income people (as my previous research shows that they have), might these organizations have played a role in the widening disparities within marginalized groups, even as they have improved conditions for some of them?

Conclusion: Ongoing Questions about Money and Politics and the Relationship between Economic and Political Power

In a context of widening economic inequalities and persistent and seemingly intransigent race and gender oppression and inequality, if we are to understand the ways in which power of various kinds is constituted and reconstituted and the conditions under which economic power does and does not translate into political power, we might broaden the "money and politics" research agenda by exploring how forms of marginalization intersect as well as how these intersections shape the very way we conceptualize "money" and the questions we ask about its role in politics. In response to concerns raised by scholars and activists that delegating representation to non-elected entities is itself troubling and that we are weakening collective control over legislation (Walker 1991), building a neo-liberal, nonprofit industrial complex (INCITE 2009), and, to borrow Theda Skocpol's term, diminishing democracy though the very means that many had hoped to buttress it (Skocpol 2003), we might also think about forms of and routes to power for marginalized groups (such as social movements and protest) that rely less heavily on purchasing it.

This memo represents a preliminary attempt to bring together some ideas and thoughts about these questions – I look forward to our conversation and to the opportunity to learn more about these issues from other conference participants.

Notes

[1] See, among many many others, Beckel 2011; Box-Steffensmeier et al. 2005; Bratton and Haynie 2005; Canon 1999; Casellas 2010; Chen and Lee 2012; Childs and Krook 2008; Gay 2001; Highton 2004; Lublin 1997; Minta 2011; Reynolds 2013; Sherrill 1996; tate 2003;

[2] Legal scholar and critical race theorist Kimberle Crenshaw (1989) has termed multiply disadvantaged subgroups of marginalized groups such as women, racial minorities, and low-income people "intersectionally marginalized." Although Crenshaw coined the term, the broader concept has a much longer lineage and was developed by feminists of colour who were frustrated with a feminist movement that privileged and essentialized the experiences and positions of white women, representing these experiences as those of 'all women,' and also with a civil rights movement that similarly privileged and essentialized the experiences and positions of black men (Strolovitch 2007, 22-3. See also, inter alia, Collins 1990).

[3] Respondents were asked, "Please tell me, on a scale of 1 to 5, where 1 is not active, and 5 is very active, how active has your organization been on each of the following policy issues in the past five years?"

[4] Evidence from a subsequent 2007 study, Public Interest Organizations in the New Millennium (PIONM), suggests that this vacuum has grown over the last several years. Data from that study show that disparities between the amount of attention devoted by organizations to issues affecting their more and less advantaged constituents were exacerbated by constraints associated with Republican control of Congress and the Administration and with the War on Terror (Strolovitch 2014). Approximately half of feminist, economic justice, and women's health and reproductive rights organizations, for example, reported that their policy priorities had become harder to pursue after 2000 (Strolovitch 2014). At fifty-eight percent, organizations representing women of colour were even more likely to report that their work had become more difficult during this period. And across all organization types, respondents were far more likely to report that issues affecting disadvantaged subgroups of their constituents became more difficult to pursue.

[5] Interview with organization officer, May 2001.

[6] Other examples include the opposition of some large corporation to "bathroom bills" in states such as NC, SC and the Koch brothers' support for some decarceration efforts (though this alliance seems to be breaking down).

[7] The 2000 survey was a cross-sectionally oriented study concerned primarily with understanding organizations' advocacy on select policy issues in order to gauge how extensively and in what ways they represented intersectionally disadvantaged subgroups of their constituents. The 2007 survey focused on understanding the implications of 9-11 and Hurricane Katrina for advocacy organizations, focusing in particular on whether it had become more difficult to pursue issues affecting marginalized groups in the wake of 9-11, and whether catastrophic events such as Hurricane Katrina had drawn attention to issues of racialized poverty as many hoped it might.

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Tables and Figures

Table 1. Distribution of National Social & Economic Justice Advocacy Organizations, 2007.

Organization Type	Frequency
AIDS/HIV	22
Arab/Muslim	9
Asian American	35
Black/African American	51
Civil Liberties	27
Civil Rights -- Other[a]	66
Criminal Justice/Anti-Death Penalty	17
Disability Rights	36
Economic Justice[b]	147
Farm Workers/Migrant Workers	15
Healthcare	11
Immigration	15
Labor Organization or Union	181
Latino/Hispanic	44
LGBT/Queer	25
Native American/American Indian	39
Progressive Social Change -- General	33
Public Interest[c]	30
Senior Citizens	14
Women of Colour	30
Women's Health/Reproductive Rights	43
Women's Rights/Feminist -- General	125
Total	1015

Sources: The 2007 Study of Public Interest Advocacy in the New Millennium (PIONM; Strolovitch 2015). [a] Includes broadly based civil rights organizations; antiracist organizations; some religious minority groups; and multiculturalism organizations; [b] Includes antipoverty, welfare rights, anti-homeless, and anti-hunger organizations; [c] Includes consumer and "good government" organizations that advocate in the areas of racial, gender, or economic justice.

Table 2. Organization Characteristics

	All Interest Groups		Organizations Representing Marginalized Groups
	Schlozman and Tierney 1986	Kollman 1998	Strolovitch 2000
Employ Legal Staff	75%		31.8%
Have One or More PACs	54%	64%	19%
Mean Budget		$4,029,289	$100,022
Mean Number of Paid Staff		110	39.4

Table 3. Policy Issues Used in SNESJO, by organization type and issue category.

Organization Type	Majority Issue	Advantaged Subgroup Issue	Disadvantaged Subgroup Issue	Universal Issue
Asian Pacific American	Hate crime	Affirmative action in government contracting	Violence against women	Social Security
Black/African American	Racial profiling	Affirmative action in higher education	Welfare	Social Security
Latino/Hispanic	Census undercount	Affirmative action in higher education	Welfare	Social Security
Native American/American Indian	Tribal sovereignty	Affirmative action in higher education	Violence against women	Social Security
Civil rights -- Other [a]	Hate crime	Affirmative action in higher education	Discrimination against LGBT people	Social Security
Immigrants' Rights	Green-card backlog	Availability of H1B visas	Denial of benefits to immigrants	Social Security
Labor [b]	Minimum wage	White-collar unionization	Job discrimination against women and minorities	Social Security
Economic justice [c]	Welfare	Minimum wage	Public funding for abortion	Social Security
Public interest [d]	Campaign finance reform	Internet privacy	Environmental racism	Social Security
Reproductive rights/women's health	Late-term abortion	Abortion coverage by insurance/HMOs	Public funding for abortion	Social Security
Women's rights/feminist [e]	Violence against women	Affirmative action in higher education	Welfare	Social Security

Sources: Issues were selected by the author based on information from *Congressional Quarterly* (1990, 1993, 1996, and 1999); the *New York Times* "Supreme Court Roundup" (1990-2000); the *Congressional Record* (1990-2000); and the *Federal Register* (1990-2000).

Table 4. Mean level of activity and percent of organizations active on each issue type, by type of organization

Organization Type	Majority Issue		Advantaged Subgroup Issue		Disadvantaged Subgroup Issue		Universal Issue	
	Mean	%	Mean	%	Mean	%	Mean	%
Asian Pacific American	3.71	76.9	3.00	84.6	2.43	69.2	1.57	30.8
Black/African American	4.13	85.0	4.53	90.0	3.71	90.0	2.07	45.0
Latino/Hispanic	4.58	100.0	4.25	100.0	2.92	62.5	2.08	50.0
Native American/American Indian	4.00	100.0	3.76	69.2	2.92	69.2	1.67	15.4
Civil Rights -- Other [a]	3.32	74.4	2.86	64.1	2.68	64.1	1.64	23.1
Labor [b]	3.84	78.6	4.00	78.6	3.48	71.4	2.91	54.8
Economic Justice [c]	3.37	69.7	3.39	71.2	1.16	12.1	1.90	30.3
Public Interest [d]	3.25	72.7	2.38	45.5	2.13	63.6	1.75	27.4
Women's Rights/Feminist [e]	3.61	84.8	3.39	77.3	2.88	65.2	2.09	39.4

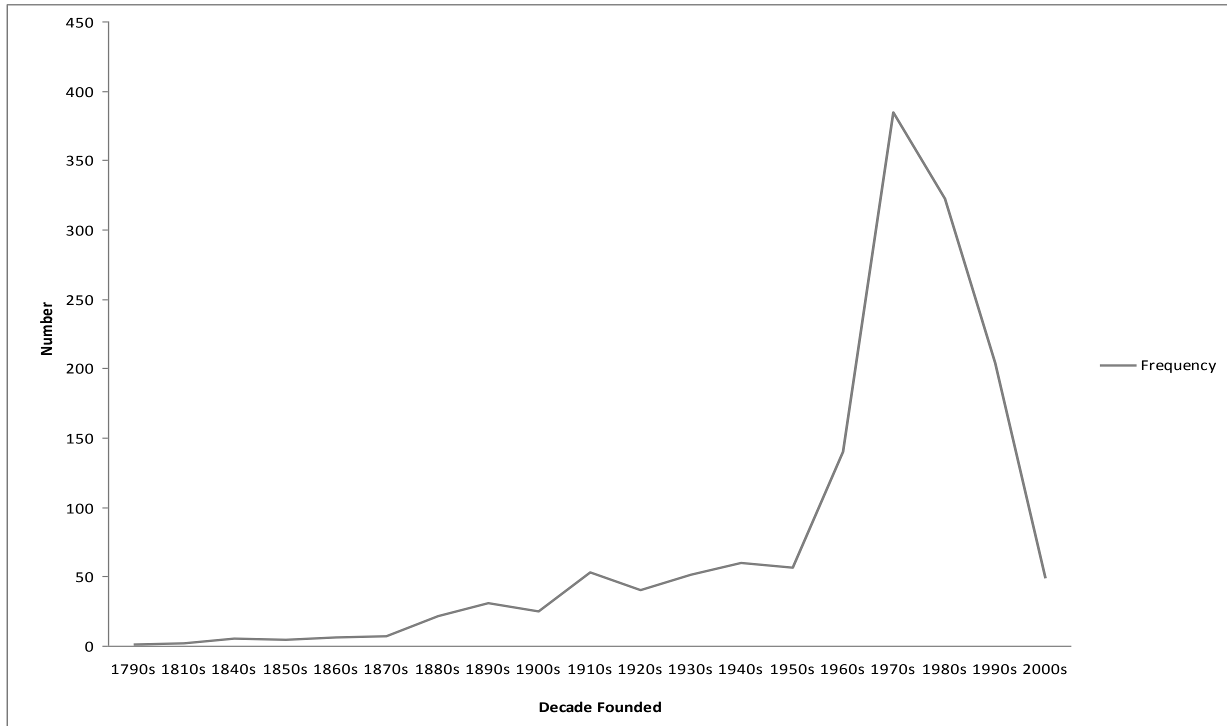

Fig. 1. Number of National Women's, People of colour, and Economic Justice Organizations Founded by Decade, 1790–2009. *Sources:* The 2000 Survey of Social and Economic Justice Advocacy (SNESJO; Strolovitch 2007) and the 2007 Study of Public Interest Advocacy in the New Millennium (PIONM; Strolovitch 2015).

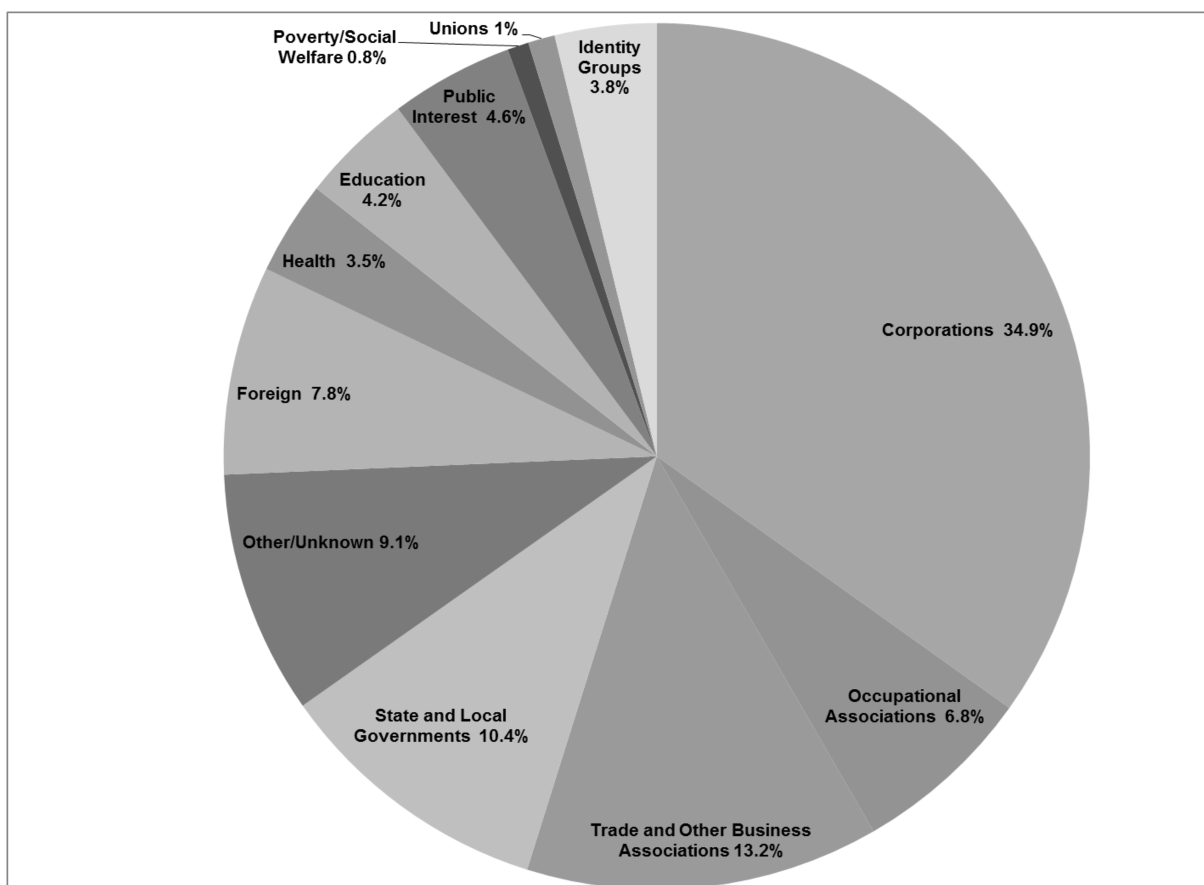

Fig. 2. Interests Represented by Organizations in Washington. *Source*: Schlozman et al. 2012, p.321.

<table>
<tr><th></th><th>Affects Subgroup</th><th>Affects Majority of Group</th></tr>
<tr><td>Low Power</td><td>Disadvantaged Subgroup Issue
e.g. Welfare Reform for Women's Organizations</td><td rowspan="2">Majority Issue
e.g. Violence Against Women for Women's Organizations</td></tr>
<tr><td>High Power</td><td>Advantaged Subgroup Issue
e.g. Affirmative Action in Higher Education for Women's Organizations</td></tr>
<tr><td></td><td colspan="2">Universal Issue
e.g. Social Security</td></tr>
</table>

Policy Typology

Figure 3. Policy Typology