Putting the Organization back in Organizing: The Role of the Union Structure in NLRB Certification Elections

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Project Summary

Current research on union organizing has significantly expanded our knowledge on the role this processes plays in determining the membership size of U.S. unions, which has steadily declined since the 1950s. However, despite a recent recommitment to organizing by many unions, this body of literature fails to systematically account for the central role these organizations play in the complex organizing process. By treating labor unions as social movement organizations (SMOs), we are able to employ resource mobilization theory to identify important union characteristics that should drive new organizing efforts. Given the extensive body or research on union leadership structures, we also expect that unions that are dominated by a stable cadre of leaders should be less likely to risk engaging in organizing drives.

In order to test the utility of these theoretical and empirical works, we will gather systematic time series data on a sample of local unions and their affiliated internationals. These data will be matched to any National Labor Relations Board (NLRB) organizing the union engaged in from 1991-2001, a period when organized labor has rededicated itself to organizing. The primary source of union data are the LM annual disclosure reports that are required of all labor unions by the Office of Labor and Management Standards (OLMS), a subagency of the Department of Labor. A variety of measures will be drawn from these forms, including expenditures made to organizing, the number of organizing officers/employees of the union, the salary and tenure of the administrative officers of the union (president, vice-president, and treasurer), and the degree to which the rank-and-file exercise control over the leadership structure, both in the form of votes and dues. Because organizing is a dynamic, rather than static, process, and because we have time series data on unions, we will employ event history analysis to model the union's risk of organizing, a process which to this point has gone unstudied. We will also model the factors that affect the outcome of these organizing drives. Finally, based on data that has already been collected on a subsample of unions, some initial results that support our theoretical perspectives will be presented.

Project Description

I. Introduction

Research on the steady decline in union membership since the 1950s consistently demonstrates that union organizing efforts are a key determinate of the proportion of American workers who belong to unions (Chaison and Dhavale 1990; Clawson and Clawson 1999; Craft and Extejt 1983; Dickens and Leonard 1985; Freeman 1988; Goldfield 1986; 1987; Seeber and Cooke 1983). While that body of work has significantly enhanced our understanding of organizing, a major gap remains. Few studies have systematically assessed the impact of the organizational capacity of a union upon the likelihood and success of its engaging in organizing drives. The research proposed here assumes that in order to fully understand organizing, a process that requires enormous resources and coordination, the labor union as an organization must be made the central object of examination.

This inattention to the organizational capacity of unions is even more puzzling in light of recent events within the U.S. labor movement. The 1990s in particular was a period of major changes for many labor organizations as they began to confront the remarkable decline in membership, which nationally stands at a post-Great Depression low. Nowhere is the effect of this crisis more evident than in the AFL-CIO, which had its first contested presidential election in 1995. This resulted in the election of John Sweeney under the slogan "A New Voice for American Labor." With his rise came a renewed dedication to reenergizing the labor movement, including the development of a series of new programs (e.g. Union Summer and the Organizing Institute) designed to increase, partially through the reorientation and restructuring of local unions, the recruitment of new members (Breecher and Costello 1998; Bronfenbreener et al. 1998; Clawson and Clawson 1999; Early 1998; Rothstein 1996; Sweeney 1997; Welsh 1997).

The proposed research conceives of the labor unions as social movement organizations (SMOs), the primary collective actors within the broader labor movement. The research agenda outlined here seeks to address the oversight in the current literature by relying upon a synthesis of social movement research with more traditional studies of labor unions. Specifically, we will draw on both the resource mobilization paradigm and analyses of union leadership to examine the relationship between the organizational capacity of unions and their propensity to organize new members. In order to empirically assess the utility of this agenda, systematic time series data from annual government records about personnel and functional allocation of resources on a sample of local unions from 1991-2001 will be collected. These data will then be matched to any traces of an organizing efforts made by the union during this period.

We begin with a brief description of the National Labor Relations Board (NLRB) certification election process, the most common mechanism by which unions organize new members. We then turn to an examination of the relationship between the organizational capacity of unions and their tendency to engage in NLRB organizing. Resource mobilization theory helps to identify those union characteristics that should stimulate new organizing efforts. In contrast to resource mobilization, the extensive work on the leadership structure of unions demonstrates how they frequently become moribund when dominated by a stable cadre of leaders. Unions in such a state are expected to have a decreased commitment to organizing. Next we describe the research methodology employed to collect union data, including the sampling strategy used to select the unions, a description of the primary data source, and the important organizational measures drawn from this source. We then turn to our analytical strategy, which will utilize event history analysis to model the union's risk of engaging in an NLRB election, a process that has thus far been ignored. We also include a description of the techniques used to analyze the outcome of these elections. Finally, based on data collected from two sub-samples of unions, some initial results will be presented to demonstrate the feasibility of the project.

A. NLRB Certification Election Process In this proposal we use the term organizing to refer to the recruitment of nonunion members through the NLRB certification election process[1]. Under the National Labor Relations Act of 1934, a union is able to file for a certification election with the NLRB when 30% of the eligible workforce of an establishment sign authorization cards expressing a desire to have the union represent them in collective bargaining negotiations with their employer. After the union submits these cards to the regional NLRB office, an election is conducted where workers are allowed to vote for or against the union. A simple majority of yes votes is required to certify the union. If the union wins the election the firm is required to "bargain in good faith" with union representatives. In this proposal these elections and their outcomes are the primary dependent variables of interest.

B. Union Capacity and Organizing Although recent studies have increasingly focused on organizing as the determinate of union membership, the lack of attention paid to any organizational characteristics of unions is unsettling[2]. In order to systematically examine the relationship between union capacity and NLRB elections, we draw on two bodies of research. We begin first with a discussion of resource mobilization theory, which is widely used by students of social movements to study SMOs. Although, to our knowledge, no prior research on union organizing has employed this theoretical perspective, a small amount of literature does demonstrate the importance of resources in NLRB elections. Second, extensive research on the leadership structure of social movement organizations has illustrated the prevalence of oligarchization within American unions. We present both these classic leadership studies and current work that suggests the value of including leadership measures when studying organizing.

1. Resource Mobilization and Union Organizing Resource mobilization theory emphasizes the importance of resources and organization structure in all facets of the social movement activity[3]. The basic tenant of the resource mobilization paradigm is that resources (both financial and nonfinancial) are vital in determining the ability of the SMO to achieve its goals. In this project, the resources of the union that are devoted to organizing are of primary interest. While the causal link between the union's organizing expenditures and its ability to recruit new workers through NLRB elections seems to make both theoretical and intuitive sense, very little research exists on this relationship.

To date the work by Paula Voos (1982) represents the most detailed assessment of the role of organizing expenditures in the NLRB process. During her period of analysis (1954-1977) she finds that a union must invest between $500-$1,000 for every new worker organized through an

[1] Recent studies (Crump 1995; Jarley and Maranto 1990; Manheim 2001; Perry 1987) have documented the strategy, collectively referred to the corporate campaign, of organizing outside the NLRB. Manheim identifies 56 such campaigns in the 1990s. During the same time period, there were over 35,000 NLRB certification elections, clearly indicating that the NLRB election remains the primarily mechanism by which unions actively recruit new members.

[2] While some studies do include union measures (cf. Bronfenbrenner 1997; Bronfenbrenner and Juravich 1998; Craft and Extejt 1983; Kochan, McKersie, and Chalykoff 1986; Peterson, Lee, and Finnegan 1992), they only examine union tactics, ignoring the organizational characteristics of the union. Also, by focusing only on election outcomes, they overlook those factors that cause some unions to more frequently engage in NLRB elections than others.

[3] For a discussion of the theoretical basis of resource mobilization, see Jenkins (1983); McCarthy and Zald (1973; 1977). For empirical work using this paradigm, see Cress and Snow (1996); Edwards (1994); Edwards and Marullo (1995); Khawaja (1994); McCarthy and Wolfson (1996); Soule et al. (1999); Walker (1983).

NLRB election. Although she estimates that union organizing expenditures have increased during this period (Voos 1982; 1984), Goldfield (1987) adjusts for the size of the nonunion population and finds that organizing expenditures have dropped from $1.03 per each nonunion worker in 1953 to $.71 in 1974, illustrating a waning in commitment to organizing by unions during this period. In contrast to Voss's work, which stresses the importance of union resources in organizing, Fiorito, Jarley, and Delaney (1995) claim that financial assets are unrelated to successful NLRB organizing drives. Unfortunately, not only do they fail to differentiate union assets into a more direct measure of the union's organizing budget, they also limit their study to international labor organizations, ignoring the local unions, the primary actors in this process.

SMOs often employ resources other than money to achieve their goals, as Cress and Snow's (1996) study of the homeless movement illustrates. In this project, we conceive of organizers as the most important nonfinancial resource of the union. Recent studies of organizing drives have found that predictions of prounion NLRB outcomes are dramatically improved by including organizer measures (Bronfenbrenner 1997; Bronfenbrenner and Juravich 1998; Reed 1989). The employment of these organizers also indicates the degree of professionalization of the union, an important characteristic of a successful SMO (Edwards and Marullo 1995; McCarthy and Wolfson 1996; McCarthy and Zald 1973; Minkoff 1993). While these studies focus on the role of professional organizers in the NLRB election process, others document the overall success unions experience when they rely on volunteers, especially from the rank-and-file (Early 1998; LeBeau and Lynch 1998; Nissen 1998; Turner 1998). From the research outlined above, it is clear that indicators of both financial and human resources the union devotes to organizing are needed if we are to successfully draw upon the resource mobilization paradigm in this project.

2. <u>Leadership Structure and Stagnation</u> While the resource mobilization perspective touts the positive role played by various organizational characteristics in collective action, many studies find that the leadership structure of unions may depress rank-and-file insurgency rather than fuel it. In the classic work on this subject, Robert Michels (1959) argues that SMOs, indeed all democratic institutions, are likely to become dominated by a small cadre of leaders who struggle to maintain their tenuous control over the resources of the organization. According to Zald and Ash (1966), this type of leadership leads to a "movement becalmed", in which a complacent and conservative leadership become more interested in maintaining the environmental niche of the organization than on exploiting new opportunities for growth. Scholars interested in the U.S. labor movement have employed Michels "iron law of oligarchy" with great success.

Although a discussion of the rise of a stable leadership cadre within American labor organizations is beyond the scope of this proposal (see Aronowitz 1973; Burawoy 1985; Edsall 1984; Mills 1948; Piven and Cloward 1977), many scholars have documented the high degree of conservativism and stability among "labor's aristocracy", especially in the period immediately following World War II. Low leadership turnover, a common indicator of stagnation, is most noticeable among international unions (Freeman and Medoff 1984), and is vividly illustrated by the AFL-CIO, which, from its formation in 1955 to the election of John Sweeney in 1995, has had only two presidents, George Meaney and Lane Kirkland. In their groundbreaking work on democracy in voluntary organizations, Lipset, Trow, and Coleman (1956) concluded that the two-party sytem of the International Typographical Union (the only union with a stable two-party system), was a product of a specific set of historical events and occupational characteristics, unlikely to be duplicated elsewhere. Finally, while some claim that labor movement oligarchy was the result of increased membership apathy, Benson (1986) finds that the reverse is true;

stagnant leadership structure in labor organizations *preceded* the decline in the participation of the rank-and-file. This body of research has provided a basis for studies linking leadership stability to organizing decline.

Scholars examining the effect leadership stagnation on union organizing have found that a common strategy among leaders in unions that have developed a stable membership base is to shift resources from organizing to servicing existing members in an effort to secure their own position within the organization (Block 1980; Fisk, Mitchell, and Erickson 2000; Fletcher and Hurd 1998). These established leaders are fearful that an influx of new members will destabilize the union. For example, one of the most successful organizing drives in recent history, the Justice for Janitors campaign of Southern California, was initially hampered by the incumbent leaders of SEIU 399, who were resistant to the disruption in the local organization the drive created (Fisk, Mitchell, and Erickson 2000; Waldinger et al. 1998). Also, Goldfield (1987) attributes much of the recent stagnation within the United Mine Workers to the refusal of conservative leaders to organize the growing number of strip-miners, who would undermine the existing membership of the UMW and threaten the leadership's position within the organization.

Although it is clear that oligarchy measures are needed to fully examine the role the organizational capacity of unions plays in the NLRB process, we also heed the claim of Zald and Ash (1966)-stagnation is not inevitable in SMOs. Many studies find that democratic unions, those whose leaders are selected directly by the rank-and-file, are more successful in organizing new members than unions whose leaders are insulated from the membership (Fletcher 1998; Lembcke and Howe 1986; Maranto and Fiorito 1987). Kochan (1979) finds that nonunion workers react more favorably to democratic unions and are more likely to vote for them in NLRB elections. However, like stagnation, democracy is not an inevitable phenomenon of labor unions. The most common way to ensure a democratic leadership is the direct election of leaders by the rank-and-file (Lembcke and Howe 1986; Lipset, Trow, and Coleman 1956). Formal rules and procedures protecting the rights of the members also ensure mass participation (Strauss 1991), as do major internal changes, such as the emergence of new leaders drawn from outside the union (Voss and Sherman 2000). The proposed research agenda will utilize both indicators of stagnation and those internal mechanisms that operate against oligarchy to asses the role leadership structure plays in the organizing process.

II. Data Collection and Measurement

Having detailed the theoretical framework of our project we now turn to the sources of data and the operational definition of important variables that will be employed to address the research agenda outlined above. We begin with a brief description of the NLRB elections measures. This is followed by an in-depth discussion of the collection of union data. We begin first with the sampling strategy used to select the local unions for this study. Then we describe both the primary source of union information and the data collection process. Finally, we will briefly outline the important measures of the organizational capacity of unions that will be drawn from our union data source.

A. NLRB Certification Elections As stated above, the time frame for this analysis is 1991-2001, a period of great change for organized labor in the United States. Data on our dependent variable, NLRB certification elections, were acquired from the Center for Information on Social and Economic Research located at Cornell University. These records measure a variety of information about the election, including the date of both the filing of the petition and the election itself, the proportion voting for the union, the industry within which the firm is located, and the name of the union participating in the election, which allows us to link these elections to the unions in our sample.

B. Union Measures The primary objective of this research is to collect theoretically driven longitudinal data on a sample of local unions and match them to any NLRB elections they were engaged in during the 1991-2001 period. Before we begin to discuss how these data will be gathered, two important points must be addressed. First, according to Voos (1982), who predicted NLRB election outcomes using organizing expenditures, there is a one-three year lag between the effect of financial predictors and election outcomes. Given the time-consuming nature of organizing, this appears correct. Therefore, we lag all of our union measures by two years. The result of this decision is that while we are analyzing 1991-2001 NLRB elections, our union measures will tap 1989-1999. Second, in this project, the local union is the primary unit of analysis. However, because all local unions are affected by the international union they are affiliated with, data on each local will include a series of variables that measure the organizational capacity of their international (these variables will be identical to those measured at the local level).

1. Sampling Strategy In order to draw a representative sample of local unions, we must have a sampling frame that delineates the entire population of unions in America. Fortunately, the Office of Labor and Management Standards (OLMS), a sub-agency of the Department of Labor, compiles such a list each year. Using annual financial disclosure records required of all labor organizations operating in the U.S. the OLMS creates a database that includes some basic information on each union, such as their membership size, total dues, and whether they are a local or international body (these annual records, which include much more information than what is included on the computer database, are our primary source of data and will be described in more detail below). Given the mission of the OLMS, which was created by the Landrum-Griffin Act of 1959 to monitor all labor unions operating in the U.S., we feel confident that this sampling frame accurately identifies nearly every labor union in existence today.

Rather than drawing a sample of locals from our sampling frame, we begin first by selecting the twenty largest internationals (based on membership size) from which our sample of locals will be taken. The reason for this first stage is that it allows us to compare locals affiliated with the same international, which is important if we are to successfully differentiate the relative importance of both the local and international organization in the NLRB election process. Also, while we recognize that choosing the twenty largest internationals is not a random procedure, our unit of analysis is the local union, not the international. Therefore, by selecting the twenty largest internationals, which represent 82% of all union members, we are ensuring that the population from which we draw our sample of local unions is as broad as possible.

In the second stage, we will draw a random sample of local unions, in which the probability of selection is dependent on the membership size of the local[4]. Although, as in the case of the international unions, I have a sampling frame of all local unions, I am only selecting those locals that filed an LM-2 report with the OLMS in 1999. The LM reports, which will be

[4] This type of sampling strategy has been employed by a variety of scholars interested in both profit and nonprofit organizations (Edwards 1994; Edwards and Marullo 1995; Kalleberg and Mastekaasa 1998: Osterman 1995; Palmer, Jennings, and Zhou 1993). See Parcel, Kaufman, and Jolly (1991) for a more detailed description of this sampling approach. Using the sampling frame supplied by the OLMS, which has basic data (membership size, total receipts), I will weight my sample of local unions to ensure that they resemble the population of locals.

described further below, are annual financial reports that all unions, public and private, are required to file each year. Unions file an LM-2, 3 or 4 form with OLMS each year, depending on the total annual receipts of the union. The LM-2 is filed by the largest unions, those with receipts totaling over $200,000 (1999 dollars). There are two reasons for only selecting unions filing LM-2 reports. The first is that this is the most detailed of the three financial reports, and hence provides us with the most data. The second is that although in 1999 only 23% of all local unions filed an LM-2 report, these unions represented 83% of all union members. This allows us to continue with the strategy of studying the largest proportion of union members possible. Third, after matching unions up with NLRB elections, it appears that about 70% of all elections are conducted by unions filing an LM-2. Again, however, we should not that we are not selecting only unions engaging in organizing, but rather those most at risk. Using this technique, a sample of 15 locals will be drawn from each of the 20 international unions, resulting in a sample of 300 local unions. This sample size was based on an initial sample of 10 locals, which were matched to their NLRB elections from 1990-1999. They were involved in 21 elections. Because the number of events drives the statistical power of event history analysis, it is important to ensure that there are a sufficient number of elections. Projecting from these 10 locals, we should have at least 650 events in our analysis, enough to ensure statistically significant results.

<u>2. Union Data Source and Collection Procedures</u> The primary source of data on the labor unions in our sample is the LM-2 financial disclosure report that all unions, local and international, are required to file annually with the OLMS. This report provides a wealth of information on a variety of union characteristics, including membership size, dues, officers' titles and salaries, employees of the union, investments, and charitable contributions. Although only one study (Fiorito, Jarley, and Delaney 1995) has used these financial forms to study union organizing, other researchers have used these records to examine various characteristics of unions (Allison 1975; Clark 1992; Sheflin and Troy 1983). On the basis of this research, we feel confident using these records as the primary source of data on labor organizations.

The LM-2 records are housed in the Reading Room of the OLMS in the Department of Labor building in Washington D.C. In order to determine how to best collect the data from these reports, the PI and Co-PI traveled to the OLMS on June 26, 2001. David Geiss, the Records Officer at the OLMS, arranged for us to examine the LM-2 records for 200 unions, a sample of 10 unions for the years 1990-1999 and a sample of 100 union reports filed in 1995 (we provided the unions included in both samples). We coded some of the records at the OLMS and the staff photocopied the rest of them for us. From this visit, we created two small data sets, one longitudinal, one cross sectional.

After carefully reviewing the records, some important observations were made. First, the format of the report, which is essentially a codesheet with a set of standardized items, remains virtually unchanged over the 11-year period, which will ease the entry of these records into a database. Second, missing data were almost nonexistent. Of the 200 reports in our two samples, only 5% had a missing data field. Third, after examining the most subjective area of the report, titles of officers, we found that most (90%) of the unions have the traditional president, vice president, and treasurer/secretary structure. The other 10% have alternative titles for their officers, such as manager, which can be easily aligned with more traditional titles.

When we had reviewed all of the records, we identified two alternative strategies for collecting these data. One would be to hire undergraduates to travel to Washington D.C. and enter the data directly from the forms onto a laptop computer. The second strategy would be to have the OLMS staff photocopy the forms and send them to Penn State, where undergraduate research assistants would enter them into a database. We settled on the second option for a number of reasons. First, the second option is less expensive, primarily as a result of travel costs. Second, the latter option keeps the data entry in-house, which allows us to closely supervise the data entry process, thereby resolving any ambiguous coding decisions (primarily pertaining to officer titles). Third, since the public area at the OLMS is quite small, it would be difficult to have more than one person entering data at a time. At Penn State, ample computers are available' so multiple research assistants can be employed.

Given the data collection strategy that we chose, the PI made the following arrangements with David Geiss. He agreed to have the employees of the OLMS photocopy the LM-2 records for the unions we request, at $.15 per page (approximately $.75 per form). While the OLMS is photocopying the reports, two undergraduates researchers will be hired to enter these data into an Access spreadsheet. When the LM-2 reports are received from the OLMS, they will be arranged by union and put into chronological order. The data from the LM-2 reports will then be entered directly into the spreadsheet, with the variable name in the spreadsheet matching the field number on the financial report. Because of the consistency of the LM-2, the training procedure will be very straightforward, similar to entering data from a standard codesheet. A brief instruction manual has been created to assist the research assistants in this data entry process.

3. Union Measures In this section we turn to a description of how we will use these annual disclosure reports to measure the organizational capacity of the unions, especially the resources devoted to organizing and characteristics of the leadership structure. When relevant, we will supply examples from our two datasets to support our measures.

a. Resource Mobilization Measures Because the annual disclosure reports are primarily financial documents, they provide a wealth of information about the monetary resources of the union. The focus of this project is on those expenditures related to organizing. While the LM-2 report does not directly require the union to report its organizing budget, we have identified three separate data fields on the LM-2 report that can be combined to estimate the total organizing expenditures of the union.

The first is Schedule 9, "All Officers and Disbursements to Officers", which reports the name, salary, title and financial information for all of the elected officials of the union. This section indicates any officer(s) with the title "Organizer", as well as their salary and disbursements of official business. Of the ten unions in the longitudinal data set, a substantial minority, three, had such an officer. However, only 10% in the cross sectional sample had an organizing officer. The second data field, Schedule 10, "Disbursements to Employees" is identical to Schedule 9 except that it provides information on union employees. Although only one of the longitudinal unions employed an organizer, 20% of the unions in the cross sectional sample had an organizing employee[5]. While both of these Schedules report disbursements made to an organizer, Schedule 15 "Other Disbursements", requires the union to list any disbursements not explicitly identified by the other fields. In both samples 30% of the unions reported other disbursements related to organizing (most simply itemized them as "organizing expenses").

By totaling disbursements made to organizing officers and employees and other, undifferentiated organizing expenses, we are able to generate an estimate of the organizing budget of each union. Of course, in the likely event that unions disperse organizing funds

[5] While there is disagreement between the two samples on the proportion of unions we can expect to have organizing officers and/or employees, we feel that in the final sample a sizable minority, between 10-30%, will have at least one of these two types of organizers. The reason for this is that of the 32 unions in our sample with either an organizing officer(s) or employee(s), only two had both, indicating that most unions choose one option or the other, but not both.

through other, more indirect channels, our constructed budget is underestimated. However, because our three components are explicit measures of organizing expenditures, we feel confident that our budget most accurately represents the total resources of the union devoted to organizing. Finally, in order to facilitate cross-union comparisons, we will standardize this budget by the total disbursements of the union (Field 74). We expect that unions that devote a greater proportion of their resources to organizing will be more successful in the election process.

Although the LM-2 is primarily a financial report, it is a rich source of data on the amount of manpower devoted to organizing. Obviously the presence and number of organizing officers and employees is an important measure of the human resources of the union. While a professional organizing staff plays an important role in the organizing process, recent studies have shown that many unions are relying increasingly on their rank-and-file to engage in voluntary organizing (Early 1998; Niseen 1998; Turner 1998). Although we do not have a direct measure of the number of volunteers involved in each NLRB election, an approximation is the size of the union's membership, as larger unions have a greater pool of potential volunteers to use for organizing.

b. Oligarchy Measures The annual disclosure reports include very detailed information on the leadership structure of each union. Again, Schedule 9, "All Officers and Disbursements to Officers", which was discussed above, will be used to measure the salary of the administrative officers (president, vice-president, treasurer, and secretary) of the union, which is expected to be negatively correlated to organizing. In order to examine the proportion of resources controlled by the leadership, we will standardize this measure by the total disbursements of the union, as we did with the organizing budget. Because the names of the officers are included, we are also able to estimate the tenure of each of these officers, a very important measure of leadership stagnation.

Based on Piven and Cloward's (1977) expectation that more conservative unions are likely to have more investments, including stocks and property holdings, we will measure both the total amount of investments (Schedule 2) and the proportion of the union's assets (Field 32) that are invested. Finally, Lipset, Trow, and Coleman (1956) claim that large discrepancies between the salary of the union leadership and the earnings of the rank-and-file will depress democracy, both because the loss of office results in a decrease in wages, which provides an incentive for officers to retain their position within the organization, and because the rank-and-file will be unable to identify with the leadership, which will lead to lower levels of participation. Using the union's name to determine the "typical" 3 digit SIC industry code of that union's membership, the Current Population Survey will be used to compare the earnings of the rank-and-file to that of the union officers.

From these annual reports we are also able to include union measures that may prevent leadership stagnation. Lembke and Howe (1986) argue that unions whose leaders are directly elected by the rank-and-file are less likely to become stagnant than unions whose leaders are elected at conventions by delegates. Because each union is required to keeps its constitution on file with the OLMS, we are able to directly measure the method union leaders are selected. The leadership of the union is accountable to the rank-and-file not only through votes, but also via their reliance on dues paid by the membership. To assess the leadership's dependence on dues, the total dues received by the union (Field 39) will be measured as a proportion of the total incoming receipts of the union (Field 55). Union leaders that rely on the dues of their members for revenue are expected to be more responsive to the rank-and-file than leaders who derive most of their resources from other sources, such as property holdings or investments.

III. Analytical Strategy

In our proposal, there are two related question we are seeking to answer. First, what are those organizational characteristics that affect the rate at which unions will attempt to organize new workers? In other words, what increases the risk that a union will engage in an NLRB election? Second, why is one union able to become the authorized bargaining agent for a group of workers while another fails even after both have filed an election petition with the NLRB? Two slightly different analyses will be employed to answer these two research questions.

We begin with the first question. Because we have time-series data on a dynamic process, union organizing, we will utilize event history analysis to maximize the information embedded in our data. An event history is a record of when events occurred to a sample of organizations and data on relevant explanatory variables. Event history analysis allows the researcher to estimate the risk of engaging in a behavior as a function of time and a set of covariates, which also may vary across time (Allison 1982; 1984; Peterson 1986; Yamaguchi 1991). Event history analysis has been used with increasing frequency in the social movement literature (Conell and Cohn 1995; Hedstrom 1994; Khawaja 1994; Minkoff 1993; 1999; Myers 1997; Olzak 1989; 1990; Olzak and West 1991; Soule 1997; Voss 1996) to examine a variety of outcomes, from the risk of adopting a new form of protest to the death of a social movement organization.

While most models of event history assume the stochastic process is continuous, analyses using continuous time present some major difficulties for researchers. As Allison (1982) points out, the continuous time model is often based on discrete time units, such as months or years. In our case data on union characteristics are available only in one-year intervals. Another major drawback of continuous time models is the possibility that two units of analysis, in our case labor unions, could experience an event in the same time interval, which is not easily modeled (Allison 1982). One solution is to treat time as a discrete measure rather than continuous, which allows for simultaneous events.

Therefore, in our analysis the dependent variable is the union's risk of engaging in an NLRB election in a specific year. Besides resolving the major problem of continuous time models, discrete time data sets are much easier to create and there is remarkably little loss of information when grouping data into discrete time units (Allison 1982; 1984; Brewster 1994; Long, Allison, and McGinnis 1993; Yamaguchi 1991; Zhou and Hou 1999). The discrete time hazard rate is defined as:

(Equation 1) $$P_{it} = \Pr[T_i = t \mid T_i \geq t]$$

where T represents a discrete random variable giving the time that the event occurred. In this case time takes a positive integer value (t=1,2,3,…). P_{it} represents the probability that an event will occur to the *ith* union at some discrete moment in time (one year). The specification of the hazard rate as a conditional probability allows us to use a logistic regression function to estimate how the hazard rate for union i depends on time and a set of explanatory variables:

(Equation 2) $$\log[P_{it}/1 - P_{it}] = a_t + \beta' X_{it}$$

where β' is a vector of explanatory coefficients and a_t are a set of constants denoting the year. The subscript t for the set of explanatory variables X indicates that these variables are allowed to vary over time.

The second part of the analysis, which focuses on predicting the success of a union in an NLRB election, is only slightly different from the above models, and so, in the interest of space a very brief description will be given. Only those unions that have filed a petition with the NRLB are included, as this is a necessary precursor to win an election. Now the outcome variable is union victory. For NLRB elections, Goldfield (1987) argues that the researcher should model not only wins or losses (logistic regression), but also the percentage of workers who vote for the union (OLS). Because we are not longer modeling a stochastic process, event history analysis is dropped, but all of the same predictors will be included.

IV. Results

As mentioned earlier, the PI and Co-PI have already collected two union data sets, one of ten unions from 1990-1999, and the other of 100 unions for 1995. Using these data we were able to construct two logistic regression models to predict the likelihood that a union will engage in an NLRB election[6]. The small number of cases in both samples limits the number of independent variables we can include. Also, at this preliminary stage we are more interested in general trends in the data than any strong, statistically significant results. Therefore, we discuss coefficients that fail to reach significance at .05 probability level. The following table illustrates the coefficients from both a cross-sectional (Model 1) and an event history (Model 2) logistic regression analysis to predict the risk of engaging in an NLRB election:

Table 1. Results from logistic regression of the probability of engaging in an NLRB election (numbers in parentheses are odds ratios).

	Model 1 (Cross section)*			Model 2 (Event history)**		
Variable	Coefficient	S.E.	Prob.	Coefficient	S.E.	Prob.
Resource measures						
Membership (in hundreds)	.043 (1.044)	.021	.040	.110 (1.116)	.061	.074
Size of organizing staff	.077 (1.080)	.228	.735	.139 (1.149)	.358	.699
Organizing budget (in thousands)	-.012 (.988)	.008	.136	-.001 (.999)	.002	.522
Percentage of total distribution devoted to organizing	.167 (1.182)	.072	.021	.433 (1.542)	.165	.009
Leadership measures						
Presidential salary (in thousands)	.016 (1.016)	.012	.190	-.060 (.942)	.030	.043
Officer budget (in thousands)	.003 (1.003)	.006	.596	-.004 (.996)	.071	.822
Percentage of total distribution devoted to officers	-.056 (.945)	.042	.178	.069 (1.072)	.063	.267
Percentage of incoming receipts from dues	.005 (1.006)	.013	.676	.063 (1.065)	.074	.400

* N=100 unions, 1995
** N=10 unions, 1990-1999

After reviewing the results of both models, it is quite clear that the organizational capacity of the union plays a major an important role in determining the rate at which unions engage in NLRB organizing. We begin by examining the affect the resource measures had. Both models confirm that larger unions tend to engage in more NLRB elections than do small locals. Whether this is because there is a greater pool of potential volunteers available to large unions or through some other mechanism (large unions may be seen as more legitimate, perhaps) we cannot say. The other human resource measure, number of organizing officers/employees, had little effect on organizing, which is surprising since these individuals are necessary to “spread the word”. Turning to financial measures of organizing, we see that the size of the organizing budget is essentially unrelated organizing in both models. However, both models clearly illustrate that as unions devote a greater proportion of their total disbursements to organizing they are much more likely to engage in an NLRB election. In both models this is the single strongest predictor of NLRB election involvement.

Turning to the leadership structure of the union, Model 2 supports our hypothesized negative relationship between presidential salary and organizing. However, Model 1 actually

[6] Due to the small number of election (21 in the time series and 22 in the cross section), we were unable to examine those factors that affected success.

indicates a positive relationship between the two, which is significant though quite small. In both models it appears that the size of the officer budget is not related to NLRB organizing. The cross sectional model indicates a significant and negative relationship between the proportion of total distributions controlled by the officers and the probability of engaging in an NLRB election. Just the opposite relationship is present in the longitudinal model. Clearly the effect of this variable is still unknown. Finally, we hypothesized earlier unions whose leadership is dependent on dues for revenue will be less likely to become stagnant. While both models indicate that there exists a positive relationship between the proportion of receipts from dues and new organizing, the effect is very small. Although the results presented here represent only preliminary findings, we believe that these models support the central focus of this research: the organizational capacity of the unions is a key factor in the NLRB election process.

V. Time Frame

Beginning in the summer of 2002 the staff at the OLMS will begin photocopying the LM-2 forms for the 300 locals and 20 internationals over the eleven-year period. David Geiss estimates that this process will take six months to complete. The staff will mail us the forms in packages of 50. While the OLMS is beginning the photocopying, two undergraduate coders will be trained to enter the data onto an Access spreadsheet. By the time we receive the first set of records, the training will be complete. We have estimated that each record will approximately 15 minutes to enter into Access. Given that there are 320 unions for 11 years, it will take roughly 880 hours to enter all of the data. Two research assistants should complete the task in about 6 months, which will coincide with the completion of the photocopying by the OLMS. During this time the Co-PI will supervise the undergraduates and resolve any difficult or unusual coding decisions (those records with unusual officers' titles). The winter of 2002 will be spent cleaning the data and matching the unions to their NLRB elections. Data analysis and write-up of results will begin in the spring of 2003 and should be completed by summer 2003.

VI. Budget Justification

There are two separate tasks that must be accomplished in order to successfully carry out the proposed research. The first is the photocopying of the LM-2 financial reports for all of the unions in the sample. Only the staff at the OLMS is allowed to photocopy these records. They charge $.15 per page, which averages out to approximately $.75 per form. Given that there are 3520 union-years in our data set (320 unions x 11 years), it will cost $2640 to have the OLMS photocopy all of the records. The second task is to enter all of these records into an Access spreadsheet. If we employ two Pennsylvania State undergraduates to enter the data at $7.50 an hour, it will cost $6600 to enter all of the data, based on our estimate of 880 hours. During the summer and fall of 2002 the Co-PI will also perform data entry, which should reduce this portion of the budget significantly. Therefore the total budget will be $9240. The Sociology department at The Pennsylvania State University has its own computer facilities with the required software, so no additional expenses will be incurred with respect to equipment.

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