The Missing Link in the Diffusion of Protest: Asking Others[1]

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Mobilization for protest is a process of diffusion in interpersonal networks. Extant work has found that being asked by people one knows is a key determinant of participation, but the flip side—asking others—has been neglected. The authors examine which prospective participants are most likely to ask others to participate and whom they ask. Drawing on a new and unusual data set including evidence on more than 7,000 participants in 48 demonstrations across Europe, the authors find that activists who are committed to the demonstration's cause (willing to recruit others) and who are part of participation-friendly networks (able to recruit others) are the most active recruiters. Asking others is dependent on being asked: participants tend to recruit people similar to those who have recruited them and, most importantly, participants who are recruited via strong ties are less active recruiters themselves.

Sociologists have spent a lot of time understanding how interpersonal networks work and what the consequences of network membership for people's behavior are. The idea underlying the network approach is that human behavior is a consequence not so much of individuals' attributes but rather of the relation they hold with other individuals (Emirbayer and Goodwin 1994; Emirbayer 1997). Networks have been shown to affect people's lives and behavior in many domains ranging from finding jobs

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(Granovetter 1973), over buying certain products (Kempe, Kleinberg, and Tardos 2005), to joining religious groups (Smilde 2005). One of the most important functions of social networks is that they offer potential channels for the diffusion of innovation or behavior (Rogers 1962; Centola and Macy 2007). Interconnected people tend to embrace similar innovations, and they are more likely to be influenced by each other's behavior than unconnected people (see, e.g., Valente 1995).

Within networks several diffusion mechanisms can be at work. For instance, in a network people can simply observe each other's behavior and imitate what others are doing even without these others explicitly attempting to influence them. Smilde (2005, p. 772) calls this the "modeling" effect of networks (Kitts [2000] labels it the "information exposure effect" of social networks). Spatially close others are observed and can serve as a model for one's own behavior. By observing others in one's network, people get a useful cue to assess how many people in the population will adopt the behavior, and that affects the chance of embracing that behavior oneself (see, e.g., Marwell and Oliver 1993; Kim and Bearman 1997). This emulative diffusion is often not what networks facilitate most, though. Rather, interpersonal networks increase the chance that explicit recommendations and referrals to embrace a similar behavior, innovation, service, or product are made. The key mechanism then is social conformity. When asked by individuals they know, people change their behavior—they join a religion, adopt a certain cultural taste, engage in an association—because they value the relationship with the askers and want to conform (Marsden and Friedkin 1994). Joining reduces the dissonance in (important) relationships (Smilde 2005).

The role of explicit recommendations or referrals in the diffusion of behavior has been studied widely in many sociological subdisciplines. For example, there is plenty of work in consumer behavior showing that recommendations by friends or acquaintances are strongly influential (much more influential than advertisements, for that matter). Studies find that "word-of-mouth" referral is a powerful mechanism of product diffusion in interpersonal networks (see, e.g., Brown and Reingen 1987; Duhan et al. 1997; Goldenberg, Libai, and Muller 2001; Kempe et al. 2005).

The social movement subfield was one of the first to be affected by the boom of network-based diffusion studies in sociology more generally. The relational approach to social behavior was adopted swiftly by social movement scholars (Emirbayer and Goodwin 1994, pp. 1420–22). What network analysts call "diffusion"—the adoption of innovation and behavior—was applied by social movement scholars to the process of "mobilization"—the effort to convince potential participants to join a movement or collective event. Mobilization is a broad process going beyond interpersonal recruitment. It involves organizational efforts and mass media coverage, for example. Yet, initiated by Snow, Zurcher, and Ekland-Olson (1980) more than

30 years ago, students of social movements now widely consider mobilization as a diffusion process primarily happening in interpersonal, social networks (see, among many others, McAdam 1986, 1988; Knoke 1990; Verba, Schlozman, and Brady 1995; Kitts 2000; Lim 2008). Scholars agree that the micro networks in which people are embedded are key in understanding movement participation: "It is now common place to say that social connections to people who are already mobilized are what draw new people into protest movements, religious movements, and identity movements" (Gould 2003, p. 236).

Diffusion of movement participation can occur through different mechanisms as well. Following Smilde's (2005) modeling mechanism, people in a network can simply observe each other's protest behavior and imitate it. For the spread of protest, though, this emulative diffusion is less pertinent since protest participation is often not directly observable and it is costly (for a similar argument, see Lim [2010, p. 343]). Therefore, similarly to the studies on consumer behavior (e.g., Brown and Reingen 1987) or religious conversion (e.g., Stark 1996), social movement scholars have resorted to studying the explicit efforts at recruitment in social networks: the phenomenon of being asked by people in one's network to join and to adopt the same protest behavior. There is now a substantive body of work on the effect of receiving participation requests. It shows that protest behavior indeed passes via explicit recruiting efforts within networks; being asked by people one knows is a strong predictor of movement participation (see, e.g., Schussman and Soule 2005). Note that this literature, and this study as well, focuses on the recruitment of others for the same protest event or movement, although, in principle, people can ask others to join an event or movement in which they are not participating themselves.

Social movement scholars have only partially assumed the relational approach championed by sociological network theorists. They extensively studied who is asked but failed entirely to account for the process of asking itself. Consequently, we know a good deal about being asked but much less about the asking itself. We do not know to what extent and under which circumstances prospective activists pass on incoming participation appeals to other potential participants. We also lack the most basic of knowledge about whom prospective protesters tend to invite.

Following general network theory stating that people are nodes connecting others (Wasserman and Faust 1994), our basic claim in this article is that people are mobilized by people they know and at the same time mobilize other people they know. Participation requests are received and forwarded in networks. Similar to the "cascades of recommendation" known to play a role in the word-of-mouth diffusion of new products (Kempe et al. 2005), the contagious spread of a rumor on first hearing (Centola and Macy 2007) or the

cascading personal persuasion process in election campaigns (Huckfeldt and Sprague 1992), we contend that potential activists act as both message receivers and message generators. Potential protesters are nodes in networks connecting people and groups, and they process, filter, retain, or pass on mobilizing information. If protesters were only mobilized while not mobilizing others in turn, mobilization would peter out quickly after one round of asking and many possible participants would not be reached. Decisions to participate in and adopt the protest behavior may spread through the network from a small set of initial adopters to a possibly much larger group.

So, we argue in this article that, at least as important for the diffusion of participation as being asked is the asking part. In line with Schussman and Soule's (2005) contention that mobilization is a multistaged process, we hold that a full account of how participation diffuses requires evidence not only on being asked but also on asking others. While Schussman and Soule show that being asked acts as an intermediary step, this article adds the next step of mobilization: asking others. In short, the study represents a first attempt to shift attention to the "asking others" part in the diffusion of protest. We engage in answering two research questions: (1) which participants are more likely than others to ask other people to participate, and (2) whom do they ask?

The article presents novel data—comparing across issues, movements, and countries—on the microlevel mobilization process gathered through survey interviews of more than 7,000 participants in 48 protest demonstrations (2008–11) in seven European countries. We find that motivation and capacity determine to what extent prospective participants ask others to participate. People who are committed to the demonstration's cause and more motivated to turn the demonstration into a success (willing to recruit others) and people who are part of participation-friendly networks (able to recruit others) are more active recruiters than others. On top of the effect of motivation and capacity, and more importantly, we find that asking others is dependent on being asked. By whom people are asked to take part affects whom people themselves invite to join. More concretely, people who are asked to participate by a close family member or friend (strong tie) tend to pass on that invitation to fewer different people than people who are asked to participate by someone they do not know well (weak tie). Especially participants who have been asked by a member of an organization or by an acquaintance (weak tie) turn out to be the most active recruiters themselves.

These findings not only contribute to the specific study of recruitment in social movements but speak to the wider sociological field of social networks and diffusion. Although network theory considers people as network nodes receiving and sending messages, it is striking to see that most work on diffusion does not focus on the sending part but mainly on the receiving

part. Our observation that the relational approach has been only partly embraced by the field of social movements applies as well to the wider field of diffusion studies. Most diffusion work focuses on the receivers and deals with the effectiveness of the ties they share with their senders. Hardly any work has dealt with the senders of the signals or, in the words of this study, with the recruiters. This predominant focus on the receiving side of communication in networks has inspired a good deal of criticism on social network theory more generally (see, e.g., Emirbayer and Goodwin 1994). Critics like Gould (2003) and Smilde (2005, p. 758) argue that network analysts consider human beings as "oversocialized" and that they conceptualize human beings "as acted upon by networks rather than acting on them and through them." By focusing on the recruiters and not the recruits, and by showing that recruiters' motivation and attitudes matter for their recruiting behavior, the study provides an example of individuals' agency within social networks.

Added to that, the research contributes to social network studies more generally by explicitly tackling the role of networked individuals as nodes of interaction. In fact, our most compelling finding is that whom people ask to participate is affected by whom they were asked themselves; where the call to arms comes from affects to whom the call to arms is forwarded. Our findings put the crucial connecting role of individuals in social networks center stage. It is by passing on information that individuals connect other people and integrate groups.

THE IMPORTANCE OF BEING ASKED

Why are social networks crucial for participation in social movements? Apart from the emulative behavior through mere observation, the prevalent answer has been that network membership increases the chance that people are asked to participate in collective action (Verba et al. 1995). Via their personal relations, people are connected to opportunities for participation offered by social movement organizations (SMOs). Students of social movements have called this the "recruitment function" of social networks (Passy 2001). Of course, people come to know about an upcoming event via other channels as well—via the mass media, for example, or via information they directly get from an organization—but convincing and activating people to participate, especially for relatively costly activities like participating in a protest demonstration, mostly happen via direct interpersonal contact and calls (Klandermans and Oegema 1987; Lim 2010). In their seminal *Voice and Equality*, Verba et al. (1995, p. 3) contend that there are three determinants of political participation: being willing (agreeing with the cause), being able (having the necessary time and resources), and being asked. They show that, in the U.S. context, there is a substantial effect of being asked. When people are asked, the odds of participation go up considerably: "Any attempt to

understand the roots of participation must take into account the impact of requests from others" (Verba et al. 1995, p. 138).

The idea that being asked is a strong predictor of participation has been widely adopted and confirmed by scholars studying social movements involvement. McAdam and Paulsen (1993, p. 647), for example, in their model of differential recruitment, state that for any participation the first step is that "the individual must be the object of a recruiting appeal." Similarly, Klandermans and Oegema (1987) and Klandermans (2004) state that only individuals who are targeted by mobilization attempts eventually actually participate (see also Snow et al. [1980] for an overview of the older literature on the importance of networks for mobilization and Gould [2003]). Only Lim (2010) recently challenged the quasi consensus about the large effect of being asked by showing that people who are asked to participate in protest are also the ones who are most likely to participate, even when they would not have been asked. As recruitment attempts are made selectively, Lim says, the net causal effect of being asked to protest is significant but smaller than established by previous studies.

Probably the most systematic and direct study of the importance of being asked has been done by Schussman and Soule (2005). Using the same U.S. data set as Verba et al., Schussman and Soule directly measure whether individuals have been asked to participate and confirm that "individuals rarely participate in social movement activities (such as protest) unless they are asked to do so" (p. 1086). They nicely show that the variables that are traditionally expected to affect the odds of participation, most particularly organizational membership, exert only an indirect influence on effective participation. Being a member of networks increases the chance of being asked, but it does not directly affect the chance of participation, only indirectly via the increased chance of being asked.

Extant work demonstrates that potential participants are mostly being asked by people whom they know personally and who belong to their interpersonal network. That is, being asked occurs in micro networks. There still is some debate about what kind of network connection is most effective in bringing about actual participation. Most scholars hold that strong ties rather than weak ties are effective activators (see, e.g., Gerlach and Hine 1970; McAdam 1986; Klandermans and Oegema 1987; McAdam and Paulsen 1993; Jasper and Poulsen 1995; Passy 2001; Somma 2009). Passy (2001), for example, argues that strong ties, loaded with trust and familiarity, reduce the uncertainty of participation so that the level of the subsequent activism goes up (for a similar argument in the field of product recommendations, see Brown and Reingen [1987]). But Lim (2008) recently argued that the strength of the tie between a recruiter and potential recruits in itself does not affect the odds of participation. Rather it is a matter of the connection being embedded in an associational network that leads to participation. Fisher (2010),

in her pairwise comparison of the ties of participants in large events in the United States and France, made a similar argument when finding that associational ties rather than (stronger) personal ties do seem to matter in informing protesters about the protest (see also Fisher and Boekkooi 2010).

The short overview makes it clear that we know quite a bit about whether, by whom, and with what effect potential participants are being asked to participate. The scope of the available evidence, however, remains limited. Six of the studies cited above rely on the same study used by Verba et al. (1995), the U.S. 1990 Civic Participation Study (Brady, Schlozman, and Verba 1999; Schussman and Soule 2005; Lim 2008, 2010; Somma 2009).[2] Strikingly, though, why potential participants in turn ask other potential recruits, and whom, still is left unexplored. We are not aware of any study that empirically considers the "asking others" behavior of prospective participants by directly measuring recruiters' behavior (see Gould [2003] for a theoretical account). The foundational studies of Verba et al. provide only indirect information about who asks others to participate. Their information is collected via questioning people who have been asked rather than via direct surveys of the askers themselves (Verba et al. 1995; Brady et al. 1999; see also Lim [2010], who draws on the same data set). This look at the recruiters through the eyes of their recruits yields only scant and indirect evidence on the recruiters. These scholars lack data, for example, about the motives of the recruiters and rely on imputed preferences.

If being asked is such an important precondition for participation, then the asking of others deserves full attention. For each participant who is being asked, there is logically another participant who made the request. Students of social movements have studied only half of the interpersonal diffusion of the protest process, namely, the receptive part. They have ignored the initiating part. If people were only asked and never passed on these invitations to participate to others, mobilization would be short-winded and would never be able to reach out beyond the directly and formally embedded constituency. Yet, we know for a fact that this is not the case. Mobilization sometimes does spread through networks as a wildfire jumping from one network to another, and very often mobilization does not remain confined to one wave but proceeds in ongoing chains of being asked and asking. Without this contagion process, large gatherings would be impossible as only movement members and their direct contacts would be reached. To mobilize widely, social movements not only need formal channels for "en bloc recruitment" (Oberschall 1973) but also need to rely on their members to bring the message across to

[2] There are a larger number of studies drawing on evidence about "how people heard" about an upcoming protest event (Bédoyan, Van Aelst, and Walgrave 2004; Fisher 2010; Fisher and Boekkooi 2010), but we consider hearing about and being asked as analytically different things. The first just entails the, maybe unintended, dissemination of information, while the second implies an active effort to recruit.

other groups and nonmembers. Members are the rank-and-file marketers of SMOs. In the next section we theorize about what makes prospective participants likely to invite other people and about whom they ask.

WHO ASKS WHOM

Our account of asking others draws on three general propositions. Asking others is determined by motivation, capacity, and compatibility. The first proposition builds on the straightforward idea that asking others to participate is sticking your neck out. By asking others, one publicly displays endorsement of a cause and comes out as a supporter of a movement. Not all targets of a recruiter may react positively: some may disagree with the cause, some may change their opinion about the recruiter accordingly, or some may even react in a hostile way. So, asking others comes with a cost, and not all potential participants are prepared to bear that cost. It depends on the *motivation* of the potential recruiter.

Second, not only should prospective participants be willing to bear the cost and risk of recruiting, but they need to be able to ask others. *Capacity* is the second determinant of asking others. It comes in different guises. To start with, not every potential activist has the same number of connections with others, enabling him to ask others to participate. The more connections one has, the higher one's potential of asking others. Also, recruiters are not very likely to put much effort into mobilizing others who may not be willing to participate anyway. Brady et al. (1999, p. 154) speak of recruiters as "rational prospectors" trying to optimize their recruitment efforts (see also Lim 2010). Whether recruiters can single out other potential participants who are willing to participate depends on the information they have about the background, previous participation, attitudes, and preferences of potential recruits. Lim (2010, p. 343) states that "facing high uncertainty, the recruiters may turn to the people whose political interests and orientations are more visible." Hence, information as well affects a prospective participant's capacity to recruit. This information is, among others, generated by political interactions with others (Lim 2008).

Third, invitations to others are not independent of the participation invitations received from others. Inviting others is consequential. One of the potential consequences of being asked and of asking others is that the recruiter and his or her recruits attend the event together. Indeed, when people personally ask others to take part in a protest event, they most likely ask to join them and to attend the event together. Participation in protest is essentially a social phenomenon: very few people attend protest events on their own. Most are accompanied by friends, family, colleagues, and so forth. When asking other people to participate, in many cases the asker is looking for company to attend the event with. This implies that passing on an invitation

to participate will be targeted specifically to those others who are "socially compatible" with a participant's own recruiter. In order to avoid being stuck at the protest event with a heterogeneous company of people who do not match, prospective participants tend to recruit people who know their own recruiter or who will at least fit their own recruiter socially. Our *compatibility* proposition draws on the more general finding in network studies that similarity breeds connection. Many homophily studies have shown that similar people tend to associate and bond. Sharing common characteristics makes communication and relationship formation easier (McPherson, Smith-Lovin, and Cook 2001). Hence we assume that asking others is determined by being asked because of the aimed-for similarity or compatibility between the recruiter and the recruit.

Ironically, the presented account of asking others thus boils down to a statement that is almost identical with Verba et al.'s (1995, p. 3) famous quote about participation in political activities itself: prospective participants solicit others to participate because they *want* (here: motivation), because they *can* (here: capacity), and because they are *being asked* (here: compatibility). On the basis of these three general principles, we formulate six hypotheses on who asks whom.

Some activists are more committed to a cause and more motivated to take part in protest actions than others. This strong motivation results in a larger willingness to mobilize others. Highly motivated activists are more eager to turn the protest into a success; the more people they ask, the more people will probably attend and the larger the potential impact of the event. Owing to their high motivation, these activists are more prepared to run the risk/bear the cost of being ignored, laughed at, attacked, stigmatized, and so forth by their recruitment targets or bystanders. Added to that, motivated activists are more likely than less motivated ones to know more other potentially willing activists. So, having more suitable potential targets, they have more chances of being successful recruiters (see Verba et al. [1995] for a discussion of the causal order between motivation and recruitment). Hence our motivation hypothesis:

HYPOTHESIS 1.—*More motivated participants are more active recruiters than less motivated participants.*

Some prospective activists know a lot of other people who may be willing to join; others may not. Knowing a lot of people who may be willing to join consists of two things: knowing a lot of people and knowing that they may be willing to join. Hence, recruitment ability has a structural embeddedness aspect and an aspect of being informed about the preferences, political attitudes, and past political behavior of others. In operational terms, both aspects are merged in associational networks. More than potential activists without associational connections, prospective activists embedded in associations know a larger number of other people. Also, associationally embedded activists

have more information about the political stances and protest willingness of others as political issues are a frequent topic of discussion in associations. This leads to a first capacity hypothesis:

HYPOTHESIS 2.—*More associationally embedded participants are more active recruiters than less associationally embedded participants.*

The capacity to recruit others does not depend only on associational embeddedness. Some people talk a lot about politics with others while others do not. If you interact frequently about politics with friends, relatives, or colleagues, the likelihood increases that you know others (your collocutors) who share the same cause as you and who would be willing to join. Talking politics does not increase your chance of knowing many people, but it increases the chances of knowing the politics of the people around you and making selective participation requests. Hence our second capacity hypothesis:

HYPOTHESIS 3.—*Participants who discuss politics more frequently are more active recruiters than participants who talk less about politics.*

If it is true that participants do not like their recruitment efforts to be in vain and avoid being confronted with negative or hostile reactions of others, we expect them to mainly target those other people of whom they expect the highest success rate (Brady et al. 1999; Lim 2010). Again, this is a matter of information about the political beliefs, attitudes, and behavior of potential recruits. The amount of information one has about a potential recruit is a matter of the strength of the tie the potential recruiter has with his potential recruit (Granovetter 1973). By having a strong tie with another person, for example, a close friend, one probably knows the political predispositions of this other person; but one also knows that asking this close person will, on average, result in a higher success chance than asking a person with whom one has a less close tie (for a similar argument applied to consumer referrals, see Brown and Reingen [1987]). Hence, in line with what has been found regarding the effect of being asked on effective participation—although not all authors fully agree—we argue that strong ties lead to more compelling and more difficult to ignore appeals to participate. It is more difficult to refuse a favor to a close friend than it is to a distant acquaintance (Gould 2003, p. 241). Brady et al. (1999, p. 155) speak of the leverage a recruiter has on his or her recruit due to the social conformity pressure mentioned earlier: "Since the desire to please, or not to offend, cements social relationships, friends also command a kind of leverage. Focussing on targets to whom they are close is an efficient strategy for rational prospectors." Added to that, the chance of getting disagreeable reactions is smaller since potential close tie targets are not willing to imperil a close relationship by reacting in a hostile way (Gould 2003). Note that one could also argue the opposite, namely, that refusing to accept an invitation to participate will not really bother a strong tie inviter—they have

a strong bond and their relationship will be enduring anyway—while it may be more offensive for a weak tie inviter. Still, we think that when recruiting a strong tie relationship, the success chance is higher and the hostility risk smaller. Added to that, the simple fact that strong ties are more available and result in more frequent interaction via which referrals may be made (Brown and Reingen 1987, p. 353) reinforces the expectation that strong ties will be activated more often for recruitment than weak ties and that people mainly recruit in their inner circle. This leads to the *privatization* hypothesis:

HYPOTHESIS 4.—*Participants tend more frequently to recruit people with whom they have strong ties than people with whom they share weak ties.*

The asking behavior of soon-to-be participants is also affected by the kind of people the recruiters themselves have been invited by. Invitations to join are primarily passed on to those others who are similar to one's own recruiters (homophily). Following the compatibility proposition, asking others mirrors being asked. For example, people who are asked by friends are predominantly asking other friends rather than, for instance, relatives or close family members. People try to avoid mixing their different social circles when protesting as this may make the actual participation with all those different groups at the same time socially complicated. Note that there may be an alternative and noncausal explanation leading to the same mirroring prediction. Some people may be heavily embedded in weak tie networks while others are situated in strong tie networks populated by numerous family members and friends. These network characteristics can lead to mirroring—people are asking the same kind of people they are asked by—without there being a causal relation between being asked and asking but simply as a consequence of their network composition (the availability of ties). We cannot exclude this alternative account as we have no measure of the attributes of the network the respondents are embedded in. Our *mirroring* hypothesis holds:

HYPOTHESIS 5.—*Participants tend to ask potential recruits resembling their own recruiters.*

Being asked affects asking others in a second way as well. Most, but not all, research on being asked found that the more dense, strong, and primary the relationship between recruiter and recruit, the larger the chance that recruits participate and the more committed they will be (McAdam and Paulsen 1993; Passy 2001; but see Lim 2008; Fisher 2010). This seems to go against Granovetter's (1973) initial idea that weak ties are more important than strong ties for recruitment (but see Granovetter 1978). However, the present study does not deal with a recruit's own recruitment but with a recruit's own efforts at recruiting others. We expect recruitment via strong or weak ties to play a different role in the subsequent recruitment requests the former re-

cruit makes: being asked to participate by someone with whom one has a strong personal connection reduces the chance that one will become an active recruiter compared to when one would have been asked by someone with whom one shares a weak tie relationship. We have two reasons to expect this pattern: the first deals with the nature of strong and weak tie information, the other with the social needs of the recruited.

First, we contend that participation invitations by a distant source are easier to redirect to a wide variety of potential participants—including other weak tie contacts but strong tie connections as well—than invitations from a close and intimate origin. It is easier to privatize (see hypothesis 4 above) invitations provided by strangers to primary contacts than it is to "publicize" information generated by close people to more distant contacts whom one may not know very well and with whom one does not have a trusting or caring relationship. The reason is that the information and requests being shared in primary relationships are more intimate and require more trust—this is what the original definition of strong ties is about (Granovetter 1973, p. 1361)—making it less likely that it spills out of the primary inner circle to reach more different people. The information and the requests being shared with secondary relationships, in contrast, are more factual, are less loaded with mutual trust and intimacy, and can thus more easily be passed on to anyone, to members of one's inner circle, and to outsiders. In other words, information coming in from weak ties is more versatile, more ready to use, and applicable to more different kinds of people than information from strong ties. As a consequence, on average, weak tie information is passed on more frequently than strong tie information. This first mechanism does not imply that weak tie information has more activation potential, nor that weak tie information is somehow more compelling. It only means that strong tie information is less fit for further distribution and has a tendency to lead to deactivation and not passing on the information to others. Weak tie demands, in contrast, are less constrained. They can more easily be amplified and broadened by sending out participation requests to more different kinds of contacts.

Second, our compatibility proposition held that prospective participants ask others to participate in their company. If we accept that individuals like the company of people with whom they hold primary relationships, then the chances are smaller that participation requests from primary contacts would be passed on. If you are asked to participate by someone and plan to do so with that person whom you know very well, why would you still ask other people to join? You already have found good companionship and are socially "satisfied." There is no need to go on asking and searching for better company. This corresponds with our privatization hypothesis stating that people in the first place ask their nears to participate. In contrast, potential partic-

ipants being asked by weak ties are not socially constrained to keep on recruiting since they have not found the best possible company yet. So, again, it is not the case that weak tie recruitment increases the urge to go on recruiting, but rather that strong ties decrease the need for finding other and better company. All this leads to the *deactivation* hypothesis:

HYPOTHESIS 6.—*Being asked by a strong tie relation leads to less active recruitment than being asked by a weak tie relation.*

DATA AND METHODS

Data come from the project "Caught in the Act of Protest: Contextualizing Contestation."[3] This project gathers ongoing, systematic data on protest participants in seven European countries (Belgium, Italy, Netherlands, United Kingdom, Spain, Sweden, and Switzerland). The protest survey methodology of sampling and questioning participants in protest events was used to survey 7,490 participants in 48 protest demonstrations that took place between 2009 and 2011 (for more methodological background about protest surveying, see Walgrave and Verhulst [2011]). In particular, all cooperating country teams used the same methodology of selecting and interviewing protest participants by means of pointers and interviewers in order to obtain a random sample of demonstration participants. Pointers are senior researchers who, on the basis of the estimated size of the demonstration, systematically count and skip rows and indicate which particular protester in the middle, left, or right side of an *N*th row should be handed a postal questionnaire (booklet of 8 A5 pages). For each demonstration, one pointer with a group of interviewers starts at the head and one at the tail of the demonstration. Sampling (pointers) and interviewing (interviewers) are disconnected as interviewers, if let free, tend to select approachable peers, causing selection bias. Protesters fill in the questionnaire at home and mail it back (postpaid envelope). For each demonstration, the aim was to distribute 1,000 questionnaires (800 postal-only questionnaires, 200 including a face-to-face interview).

Table A1 in the appendix summarizes the evidence, presenting information on the number of demonstrators, distributed questionnaires, sent back questionnaires, and useful questionnaires due to missing variables.

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Demonstrations did not yield equal numbers of completed questionnaires; we count an average of 156 fully completed interviews per demonstration. Average response rate is 32%. Analysis shows response bias to be minimal and limited to age and education, usual suspects when it comes to response bias. We do not weigh the data for sample size or for country. The data set includes 11 demonstrations in Spain, 10 in the United Kingdom, 8 in the Netherlands, 7 in Belgium, 5 in Sweden, 4 in Italy, 2 in Switzerland, and one in Denmark. The largest group of demonstrations (labeled "austerity" in table A1) concern budget cuts and austerity measures and are related to the banking crisis and European budget regulations ($N = 18$). Then follow a number of May Day events ($N = 11$). Next are demonstrations dealing with climate change or with the energy issue ($N = 7$); events related to nationalism, regionalism, or the reform of the state (labeled "state reform"; $N = 6$); antiracist or antifascist events ($N = 3$); women demonstrations ($N = 2$); and, finally, a single ($N = 1$) antiabortion event.

The sample of demonstrations is not a perfectly representative sample of all the demonstrations occurring in the countries during the 2009–11 period, but it forms a good sample of the larger demonstrations. Each research team in each country kept a close eye on upcoming protest events (e.g., via regular contacts with SMOs and police and via daily scrutiny of the media) and was ready to go into the field as soon as a major event was announced. As a consequence, in most countries, all large protest events in the research period were covered. The selected demonstrations display a large variety of causes, issues, and movements. The evidence presents a tough test for any general pattern of asking others.

Our design draws on actual participants only and does not include nonparticipants. Thus, we cannot tell whether people would not have shown up if (1) they had not been asked or (2) if they had been asked by other people than actually asked them. But that is not our aim. Previous work has already dealt with the effectivity of being asked and substantiated that being asked is important for effective participation. If we assume that prospective participants start asking other people only when they have decided to attend the event themselves, the self-selection problem of having only effective participants is less of an issue for studying the second step in the diffusion of protest. Indeed, it is likely that asking others is mainly done by people who effectively attend themselves. Obviously, this assumption does not always hold. People who plan to attend and have asked other people may not show up eventually because they have been prevented from attending for practical reasons. Also, individuals may ask other people even if they are unsure about their own participation; in fact, their effective participation may even depend on the (positive) response of the people they asked. Still, it is plausible that a large majority of the people who ask other people to participate in a protest event are planning to participate themselves (and do

eventually show up). Some selection bias remains as some asking of others is done outside the pool of effective participants, but we contend that it is small. If it is true that most participation requests are made by people who are committed to participating themselves, it makes sense to start tackling the asking others puzzle drawing on a sample of participants only.

Each of the 48 demonstrations was surveyed using an identical questionnaire. It contained a question about asking others and an identical one about being asked; these questions form the key variables of the article. After asking the respondents by whom they had been asked to participate, they were asked, "Which people did you yourself ask to participate?" followed by seven closed answer categories of which people could mark as many as applied: (1) no one, (2) partner or family, (3) friends, (4) relatives, (5) acquaintances, (6) colleagues/fellow students, and (7) comembers of an organization of which I am a member. The preceding question about being asked presented identical answer categories.

Recruitment intensity/diversity.—The asking others question was turned into an interval scale measuring the intensity of recruitment—an additive scale counting up the number of different types of other people a participant had asked to participate, not including the no one category in the arithmetic (0–6). Note that this compound scale taps not only the intensity but also the diversity of a participant's recruitment efforts. We do not know how many different individuals a participant actually asked; we have information only about the number of categories of people he or she asked. If people asked five friends, for example, they score 1 on the intensity scale while those asking one friend and one relative would score 2. Still, we hold that the number of different categories of people one recruits forms an indicator of the efforts one undertakes to spread the protest message. The diversity of recruitment is part of the measure as well. We argued earlier that protest can spread widely only if the call to arms is transferred across the boundaries of segmented networks. The more diverse the people recruited, the higher the chance that protest diffuses broadly. Hence, our compound measure taps both intensity and diversity. In the remainder of the article, we will therefore refer to it as "recruitment intensity/diversity." Table 1 presents its distribution and descriptives. The measure is a count measure with a similar mean and variance. This requires in principle a Poisson model. We ran all analyses with Poisson models but report linear models since their results are easier to interpret. The results are the same.

Tie strength.—The being asked question was converted into a scale measuring the strength of the tie between the recruiter and the recruit. Measuring the strength of ties is not an easy task. Strong ties are characterized by a large amount of time spent together, a strong emotional intensity, the intimacy of the interactions, and a high reciprocity of the services rendered

TABLE 1
Distribution and Descriptives of Key Variables

	Frequency	%
Recruitment Intensity/Diversity:		
Number of people (categories asked):		
0	1,150	26.0
1	1,523	34.5
2	813	18.4
3	461	10.4
4	253	5.7
5	149	3.4
6	68	1.5
Total	4,417	100.0
Average	1.52	
SD	1.43	
Asked by . . .: Tie Strength (Weak-Strong):		
Comembers/acquaintances = 1	2,351	53.2
Relatives = 2	212	4.8
Colleagues/fellow students = 3	476	10.8
Friends = 4	799	18.1
Partner/family = 5	579	13.1
Total	4,417	100.00
Average	2.33	
SD	1.56	

(Granovetter 1973, p. 1361). Ties and their strength are multidimensional and depend on the frequency of contact, emotional closeness, commitment, durability, and so forth (Marsden and Campbell 2012). We did not ask the respondents any additional questions about, for example, their precise relationship with the acquaintances they had been asked by or about what kind of relatives recruited them (see also, e.g., Brown and Reingen 1987, p. 356). To make things more complicated, the strength of a relationship can be issue dependent. In professional matters, for instance, it may be colleagues and coworkers who form a person's most important ties while in most other matters it would probably be close family or friends (see, e.g., the study by Wellman and Wortley [1990] showing that the support function of ties varies across domains). Since the demonstrations we surveyed cover a wide range of issues in different spheres of life (e.g., layoffs vs. abortion), devising a unified scale must be done with caution. First, we dropped the asked by no one category; in the absence of a tie we cannot assess its strength. This decision reduces the number of cases for the analyses with tie strength as an independent variable. Since they were offered an explicit no one option, respondents who did not mark any of the answer categories were considered as missing for the strength of tie variable. We propose that partner/family (= 5)

forms on average the strongest tie followed by friends (= 4). Owing to the high frequency of (daily) interaction, we consider ties with colleagues/fellow students as a middle category (= 3) followed by relatives (= 2) with whom people most likely have less frequent interaction (but maybe more intimate relationships). Finally, we collapse the two weakest ties in a single weak tie category consisting of comembers and acquaintances with arguably both a low frequency and intimacy (= 1). We recoded the multiple response—people could mark several answers—in such a way that a weak tie gets priority over a stronger tie. For example, when a person says he has been asked by friends (= 4) and by acquaintances (= 1), we give that person a 1. Since it is tricky to scale the seven categories into a single strong-weak tie variable without additional information, in the results section, we run additional analyses to test for the linearity of the effect of the strength of ties with all five tie categories as separate (dummy) variables. Table 1 contains the frequency distribution and the descriptives of tie strength.

Motivation.—Motivation is measured by three questions. (1) Motivational strength: How determined were you to participate in the demonstration? Answers ranged from "not very" (= 1) to "very much" (= 5). (2) Participation decision timing: When did you make a firm decision to participate in the demonstration? Answer categories ranged from "the day of the demonstration" (= 1) to "over a month ago" (= 5). (3) Organizing SMO identification: To what extent do you identify with any organization staging the demonstration? Answer categories ranged from "not at all" (= 1) to "very much" (= 5). These three constructs correlate to some extent—with the highest Pearson's $r = .47$ for motivational strength and participation decision timing—but not to the extent that multicollinearity is an issue when incorporating them in the same model. An explicit test showed that collinearity was no issue. In fact, the highest variance inflation factor (VIF) was 1.70, way below the threshold of a VIF value of 10. A correlation matrix of all variables in the study can be found in table A3 in the appendix.

Capacity.—Capacity is assessed by three measures as well. (1) Associational membership: If you have been involved in any of the following types of organizations in the past 12 months, please indicate whether you are a passive member or an active member. If you are a member of several organizations of the same type, mark the highest or most "active" category. A list of 13 types of organizations that could be marked followed. We made an additive scale of all memberships whereby passive (and financial) membership counts for 1 and active membership counts for 2. The resulting scale runs from 0 to 26. (2) Organizational involvement: During the last 12 months, in how many different organizations have you actively participated? Answer categories ranged from "none" (= 1) to "more than three" (= 4). (3) Talking politics: When you get together with your friends, relatives, or fellow

workers, how often do you discuss politics? Answer categories ranged from "never" (= 1) to "very often" (= 5). Note that talking politics could also be considered as a measure of motivation instead of capacity.

Question wording and answer categories of all other variables and controls (demographics, general political attitudes, and past political behavior) as well as their descriptives are presented in table A2 in the appendix.

ANALYSIS

Most hypotheses can be tested with the intensity/diversity of a prospective participant's recruitment efforts as the dependent variable. Since the individual observations are clustered in demonstrations, we use a multilevel linear regression model with individuals as level 1 and demonstrations as level 2 observations; such a model accounts for systematic variation between the 48 demonstrations in our sample. Results testing the first motivation hypothesis are presented in model 1 of table 2.

Hypothesis 1 stated that highly motivated participants would be more willing to bear the cost of asking others and running the risk of being ignored or getting negative reactions. Model 1 in table 2 contains the three variables tapping motivation as well as the sociodemographic variables and a number of controls. All three motivation measures are significant predictors of recruitment intensity/diversity. Participants who said they identify strongly with one of the organizations staging the event (organizing SMO identification) are more frequent recruiters but only marginally so ($P = .041$; the effect later vanishes in model 3). People who said they were more determined to participate (motivational strength) and who decided early (participation decision timing) are more active recruiters as well. Participation decision timing indicates motivation—highly motivated people decide earlier—but it also measures something else. People who make up their mind long before the demonstration have more time to ask others to participate (which actually is capacity and not motivation). Imagine a participant who decides the day of the demonstration itself that he will take part in it; he then has very little time to approach others to join. By and large, we can conclude that more motivated people pass on more requests to join than less motivated people. Hypothesis 1 gets support.

Hypothesis 2 stated that recruitment efforts are a function of the capacity of a participant to recruit others. Knowing a lot of people and having information about the politics of these people increases the chance of being an active recruiter. Two variables in model 2 tap structural embeddedness and thus capacity: the number of associational memberships (association membership) and the number of organizations one was actively involved in during the last 12 months (organizational involvement). Both are significant

TABLE 2

MULTILEVEL REGRESSION: RECRUITMENT INTENSITY/DIVERSITY THE DEPENDENT VARIABLE WITH TIE STRENGTH SCALE

	MODEL 1			MODEL 2			MODEL 3		
	Coeff.	SE	*P*	Coeff.	SE	*P*	Coeff.	SE	*P*
Motivation:									
Motivational strength (weak-strong; 1–5)	.299	.029	.000				.279	.028	.000
Participation decision timing (late-early; 1–4)	.286	.025	.000				.247	.024	.000
Organizing SMO identification (low-high; 1–5)	.045	.022	.041				.018	.022	.421
Capacity:									
Association membership (weighed number; 0–26)				.049	.008	.000	.045	.007	.000
Organizational involvement (frequency; 0–4)				.133	.027	.000	.058	.026	.025
Talking politics (frequency; 1–5)				.135	.030	.000	.113	.029	.000
Being asked:									
Asked by . . . tie strength (weak-strong; 1–5)							−.143	.014	.000
Sociodemographics:									
Sex (female)	.051	.041	.208	.104	.042	.013	.062	.040	.120
Age (year born)	.018	.001	.000	.017	.001	.000	.019	.001	.000
Education (low-high; 1–8)	.053	.014	.000	.019	.014	.189	.045	.013	.001
Employment (full-time; no-yes)	−.043	.041	.300	−.021	.043	.623	−.031	.040	.450
Controls:									
Organizing SMO membership (no-yes)	.247	.048	.000	.365	.047	.000	.061	.049	.211
Demonstration participation frequency (low-high; 1–5)	.194	.032	.000	.190	.034	.000	.096	.032	.003
Political interest (low-high; 1–4)	.075	.031	.016	.043	.036	.239	−.041	.035	.236
Left/right self-placement (left-right; 0–10)	−.025	.011	.026	−.038	.012	.001	−.024	.011	.028
Constant	−37.235	2.746	.000	−33.357	2.824	.000	−39.352	2.693	.000
Log likelihood	−7,405.508			−7,546.5104			−7,310.5789		

NOTE.—*N* demonstrations = 48; *N* demonstrators = 4,417; log likelihood null model = −7,782.4886.

predictors of recruitment intensity/diversity. Hypothesis 2 can be maintained. The more connected prospective participants are with others who may be "mobilizable," the more actively they recruit.

Hypothesis 3 held that the capacity to recruit depends on political interactions with other people. If one talks frequently with others about politics, one is better informed about the political convictions of these others and can gauge the odds whether they would participate if asked. In other words, to ask one must talk. The evidence corroborates hypothesis 3. The coefficient is positive and significant. Talking politics leads to inviting others to take part in politics. Note that talking politics correlates strongly with political interest (Pearson's $r = .56$) without posing multicollinearity problems. The substantial effect of talking politics thus comes on top of the (nonsignificant) effect of political interest; it is a pure "talking" effect.

Hypothesis 4 stated that because of better information, lower cost, more leverage, and more opportunity, potential participants mostly invite strong tie relations to join them in protest participation (privatization). Of all kinds of people the respondents could mark as having invited, two types stand out as typical cases of strong ties: partner/family and friends. The data in figure 1 substantiate that prospective participants indeed most frequently invite partner/family and friends to join. Weak ties are invited less. Note that people probably have fewer family members and fewer friends than acquaintances and relatives. So, even though they have more weak ties than strong ties, they tend to solicit more frequently people with whom they hold strong ties. Fifteen paired *t*-tests further confirm hypothesis 4: all pairs differ significantly, with inner circle participation requests occurring most frequently.

Hypothesis 5 held that, because of the compatibility of their social circles, participants tend to pass on invitations to similar kinds of people they were invited by (mirroring). Being asked by friends leads to asking friends, being

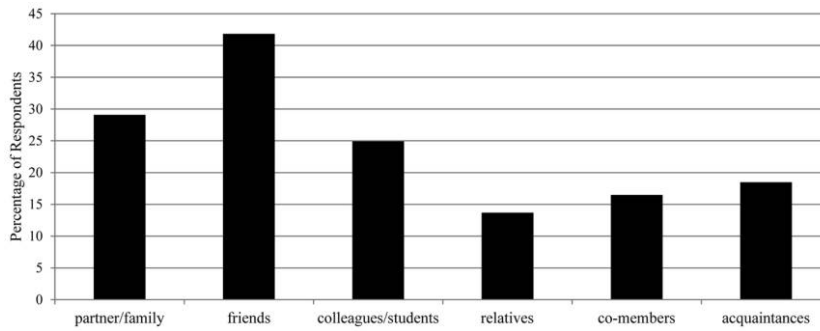

FIG. 1.—Percentage of respondents asking different types of others ($N = 7{,}490$); multiple response.

asked by relatives leads to asking relatives, and so forth. To test this hypothesis, in table 3, we present a summary of a series of seven multilevel binomial regressions each time predicting whether a certain type of recruit (partner/family, friend, colleague/fellow student, etc.) was asked (no/yes). In each model all potential askers were incorporated as dummy variables together with all other motivation, capacity, and control variables.

The evidence supports the hypothesis. In each model the strongest predictor of having asked a specific category of recruits is having been asked by someone in that same category of recruiters. So, the first line in table 3 reports about a single independent variable drawn from a full regression model with asked no one as the dependent variable (no/yes). The strongest predictor in that model with all motivation, capacity, control, and alternative asked variables included was whether that person (who asked no one) was asked by no one in the first place; in that model the coefficient for being asked by no one is 1.433 with a .108 SE. This is the strongest explanatory variable in the model of which the other variables are not reported. Hence, the first model confirms the mirroring mechanism for no one (yes in the first column). People who were asked by no one tend to ask no one themselves, people who are asked by acquaintances do tend to ask acquaintances themselves, and so forth. There is only one exception to this overall pattern: prospective participants asking their partner or family members have not primarily been asked by their partner/family but by acquaintances. The reason may simply be that people who are asked by their spouse cannot ask their spouse in turn; the nuclear family simply is too small to pass on information. That being asked by acquaintances predicts asking partner/family is another indicator of the privatization tendency discussed above whereby people tend to pass on the information acquired from "strangers" to their primary others.

TABLE 3
Summary Table of Seven Multilevel Logistic Regressions: Effect of Being Asked on Asking Others

Asked	Mirror?	Coeff.	SE	z-Value	P	Strongest Predicting Asked By Variable
No one	Yes	1.433	.108	13.29	.000	No one
Partner/family	No	−.044	.084	−.52	.604	Acquaintances
Friends	Yes	1.462	.136	10.77	.000	Friends
Relatives	Yes	.835	.075	11.09	.000	Relatives
Colleagues/fellow students	Yes	1.482	.115	12.84	.000	Colleagues/fellow students
Acquaintances	Yes	1.099	.093	11.87	.000	Acquaintances
Comembers	Yes	.959	.088	10.89	.000	Comembers

Note.—N demonstrators = 7,490; N demonstrations = 48.

By and large, hypothesis 5 is corroborated: there is a robust mirroring mechanism at work.

Hypothesis 6, finally, stated that by whom people are asked to participate affects their own recruitment intensity/diversity. The stronger the tie through which they are activated, the fewer other different people they tend to solicit (deactivation). The reason for expecting this effect was the tendency to stop recruiting once one has close tie company and the fact that intimate information from strong ties is more difficult to pass on to secondary relations than vice versa. We turn again to table 2, more concretely, to model 3. The data support the expectation. Being asked by a strong tie is a significant, negative predictor of recruitment intensity/diversity. Inversely, if people are asked by someone they do not know very well (weak tie), the probability increases that they will ask many other (kinds of) people to participate. Hypothesis 6 gets confirmation.

Since this last finding represents the most exciting result, it requires some more robustness checking. In fact, there is a plausible alternative explanation for the finding that strong tie recruitment leads to less subsequent recruitment by the recruited. Instead of deactivation by strong tie recruitment, there may be several, positive weak tie selection effects at work here. This alternative explanation basically argues that the negative strong tie effect we theorized here actually is a positive weak tie selection effect. First, the initial weak tie recruiter may have selected recruits who are more motivated to extend his or her recruitment effort. In fact, we know that recruiters act as rational prospectors carefully aiming their recruitment efforts at those who are most likely to participate (Brady et al. 1999). Potential recruits may send out some kind of "signal" that they are willing to participate, and this signal may be picked up by the recruiter, who prioritizes recruitment of these most willing recruits (who will start recruiting themselves afterward). Second, and similarly, the tie strength effect may actually be based on the fact that a good deal of the weak ties are ties to comembers of organizations. Rather than being a true tie effect, the fact that one is asked by comembers of an organization may indicate that one is part of the organizational circle of a protest event and thus, again, is more motivated to recruit others. Being part of the organizational circle leads not only to more motivation but also to more capacity to recruit. People who are asked by weak ties (especially those asked by comember weak ties) simply know more prospective participants than people asked by strong ties: they have more capacity to recruit. Third, it may be the case that someone is asked by a weak tie relationship simply because one has a larger network with more weak ties while someone who is being asked by a strong tie relationship typically has a smaller network. When this person starts recruiting himself, he has more potential recruits in his network

simply because his personal network is larger. Although we can partially control for some of these selection effects, we cannot definitely discard them.

To some extent, the alternative explanation stating that what we find is the consequence of higher motivation among the ones who have been recruited via weak ties can be countered by looking at the evidence. In fact, the tie strength effect in model 3 in table 2 comes on top of three motivational measures. Of course, it may be that some motivational factors are not entirely soaked up by the motivational measures, so that it appears that there is a tie strength effect, although it is actually a motivational effect. Moreover, the tie strength effect we find also comes on top of the effect of three organizational measures (see also model 3 in table 2). This makes it unlikely that the results are driven by the fact that being mobilized by organization members makes it more probable that one belongs to the organizational circle with more motivation and capacity as a result. With the data at hand, though, it is not possible to discard the third alternative explanation claiming that the tie strength effect is an indicator of a person's network size, with weak tie recruitment indicating a larger personal network. We would need much more detailed personal network data about the respondents in our sample to control for this third possible selection effect.[4]

To deal further with these worries beyond inserting controls in the model, we estimated a slightly differently specified model, this time not drawing on the single tie strength scale but using a set of dummy variables each representing a separate step on the scale and with the weakest tie category (comembers/acquaintances) as the reference category. Such a model allows us to test whether the found effect is linear across the scale and not merely an artifact of the extreme (and large) category of participants asked by comembers. Results are recorded in table 4.

The series of dummies clearly displays a gradually decreasing effect as ties become stronger. Compared to the weakest tie (comembers/acquaintances), all ties result in significantly less active recruitment. Even people recruited by their partner/family do recruit significantly fewer others than when recruited by their friends. As ties become stronger, the negative effect progressively increases (the coefficient goes from −.232 over −.296 and −.408 to −.601). All this suggests that the tie effect probably is not just a selection effect of organizational capacity and motivation. In fact, if we disaggregate

[4] Although these robustness checks add weight to our deactivation mechanism, a final selection argument would be that individuals who are recruited by weak ties and who are active recruiters themselves are more likely to participate (since they found suitable company). This selection effect would bias the sample of participants. We cannot definitely discard this argument as we rely only on participant data here. Future research including nonparticipants may address this issue.

TABLE 4
MULTILEVEL REGRESSION: RECRUITMENT INTENSITY/DIVERSITY THE DEPENDENT VARIABLE, WITH TIE STRENGTH DUMMIES

	Coeff.	SE	*P*
Motivation:			
Motivational strength (weak-strong; 1–5)	.279	.028	.000
Participation decision timing (late-early; 1–4)	.246	.024	.000
Organizing SMO identification (low-high; 1–5)	.018	.022	.412
Capacity:			
Association membership (weighed number; 0–26)	.045	.007	.000
Organizational involvement (frequency; 0–4)	.057	.026	.029
Talking politics (frequency; 1–5)	.114	.029	.000
Being asked by:*			
Relatives	−.232	.094	.013
Colleagues/fellow students	−.296	.068	.000
Friends	−.408	.058	.000
Partner/family	−.601	.065	.000
Sociodemographics:			
Sex (female)	.063	.040	.116
Age (year born)	.019	.001	.000
Education (low-high; 1–8)	.045	.013	.001
Employment (full-time; no-yes)	−.031	.040	.438
Controls:			
Organizing SMO membership (no-yes)	.058	.049	.234
Demonstration participation frequency (low-high; 1–5)	.095	.032	.003
Political interest (low-high; 1–4)	−.042	.035	.223
Left/right self-placement (left-right; 0–10)	−.024	.011	.029
Constant	−38.598	2.708	.000
Log likelihood	−7,261.4939		

NOTE.—*N* demonstrations = 48; *N* demonstrators = 4,417; log likelihood null model = −7,782.4886.

* The reference category is comembers/acquaintances.

the scale further and split up comembers and acquaintances and insert them in a similar model, we see that people recruited by acquaintances are the single-most active recruiters, even more than those mobilized by comembers (results not shown in the table).

The evidence thus supports that strong tie recruitment leads to fewer recruitment efforts by the recruited. But is the difference between strong and weak tie recruitment substantial? What does it mean in the real world of protest mobilization? To assess that, we ran simulations based on the coefficients of model 3 in table 2 comparing the total number of people reached and the number of "rounds of asking" when departing from 100 people asking their strong or weak ties. The key assumption in the simulation is that being asked by strong ties is as effective (convinces as many people to participate) as being asked by weak ties—something social movement scholars do not agree about (see above). To make things easy, we accept that half of the people who are asked by any tie do decide to participate

and, in function of the strength of the tie they have been asked by, start asking other ties. Note that we ignore the fact that recruitment can go on only till the event actually takes place. In reality, of the 100 people being asked, some are asked the day before the event, and they lack time to ask others. All these limitations apply to all tie categories; our goal is to compare the magnitude of the effect of asking others across the different tie categories. The results reveal that the number of people recruited and the rounds of asking done vary substantially. We take the extreme categories on the strong-weak tie scale as examples. Departing from 100 people who recruit their family, eight rounds of asking are done before recruitment activity peters out (i.e., fewer than one additional participant joins) and 222 people eventually show up at the demonstration. If we start with 100 people who recruit acquaintances or comembers, the diffusion of recruitment goes a good deal further: only after 27 rounds of asking, no more recruitment efforts are undertaken and no fewer than 621 people show up. In other words, on the basis of a similar number of people who ask their strongest or weakest ties, almost three times as many people are recruited when the first round of asking aimed for weak ties compared to when the first round was aimed at strong ties. All other categories of tie strength score in between. Figure 2 presents the results.

A final robustness check for all results entails running separate models for the different demonstration issues represented in our sample of demonstrations. Although we used multilevel modeling to account for the fact that the observations are clustered on the demonstration level, it may still be the case that our findings remain confined to some demonstrations on some issues or are generated by the large size of the data set. Therefore, we ran the original model (with the tie strength scale variable) separately for each of the four issues for which we have at least six demonstrations in the data set (austerity, May Day, climate, and state reform). Table 5 presents the results.

Results show that as good as all effects found in the aggregate, large N models are robust and hold across issues when tested in separate models with much smaller N's. In each separate issue model, at least two of the three motivational measures are significant (hypothesis 1). Participation decision timing consistently is a significant predictor of recruitment intensity/diversity. More or less the same applies to the three capacity measures (hypotheses 2 and 3), but the differences across issues are larger. None of the capacity measures is significant across the board, but with the exception of the climate issue model, at least two capacity measures are significant in each model. Tie strength matters consistently across the board for each issue (hypothesis 6). For all issues, strong tie invitations lead to less active recruitment.

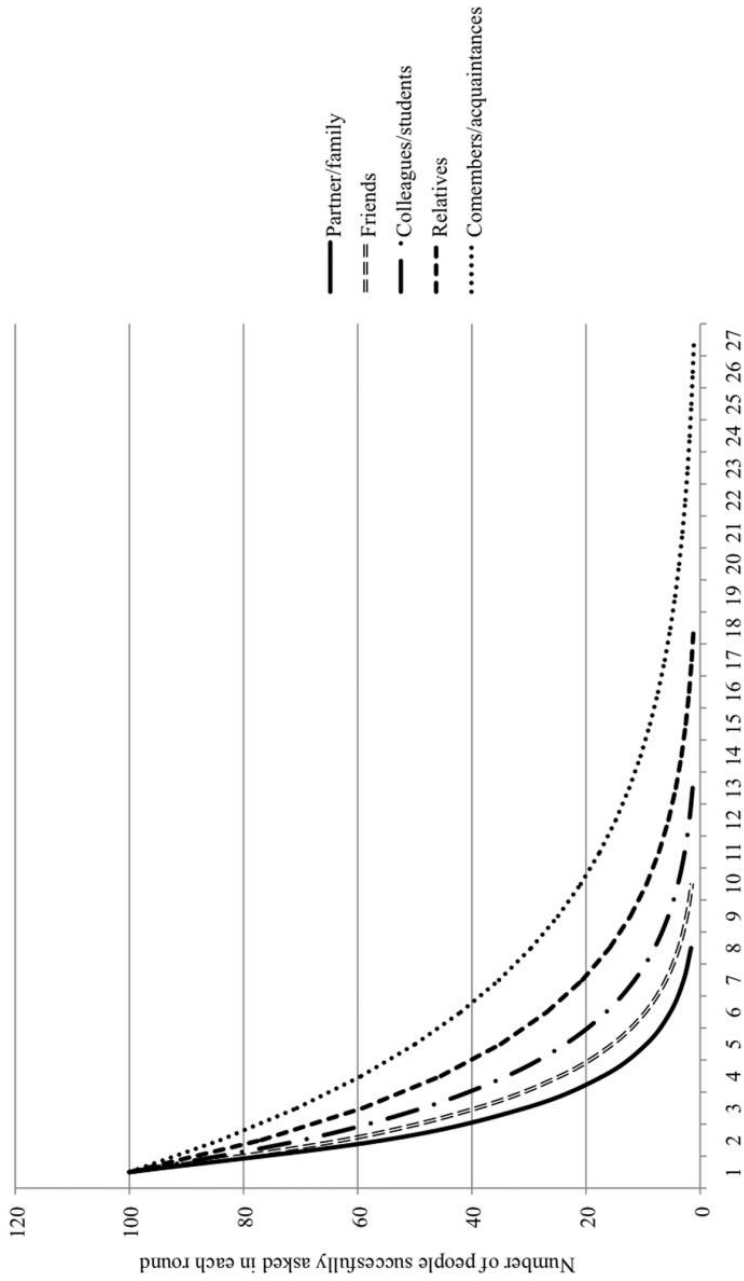

FIG. 2.—Effect of starting with 100 recruiters recruited by each of the tie categories: simulation

TABLE 5

Multilevel Regression: Recruitment Intensity/Diversity the Dependent Variable; Separate Models for Issues

	Austerity			May Day			Climate			State Reform		
	Coeff.	SE	*P*	Coeff.	SE	*P*	Coeff.	SE	*P*	Coeff.	SE	*P*
Motivation:												
Motivational strength (weak-strong; 1–5)	.278	.048	.000	.140	.077	.067	.271	.059	.000	.376	.069	.000
Participation decision timing (late-early; 1–4)	.274	.041	.000	.239	.058	.000	.232	.051	.000	.266	.072	.000
Organizing SMO identification (low-high; 1–5)	.019	.034	.577	.116	.057	.042	−.031	.048	.518	.017	.056	.761
Capacity:												
Associational membership (weighed number; 0–26)	.010	.011	.363	.089	.018	.000	.043	.018	.016	.088	.022	.000
Organizational involvement (frequency; 0–4)	.128	.040	.001	.040	.064	.532	.004	.060	.946	−.044	.070	.523
Talking politics (frequency; 1–5)	.102	.047	.027	.268	.073	.000	−.011	.064	.865	.168	.076	.027
Being asked:												
Asked by . . . . . tie strength (weak-strong; 1–5)	−.170	.025	.000	−.136	.035	.000	−.134	.029	.000	−.156	.035	.000
Sociodemographics:												
Sex (female)	.117	.064	.067	.039	.101	.700	.079	.086	.360	−.038	.105	.717
Age (year born)	.020	.003	.000	.019	.003	.000	.021	.003	.000	.019	.003	.000
Education (low-high; 1–8)	.020	.022	.364	.014	.032	.666	.067	.031	.030	.068	.035	.053
Employment (full-time; no-yes)	.014	.068	.831	.033	.098	.739	−.087	.091	.341	−.029	.102	.780
Controls:												
Organizing SMO membership (no-yes)	−.023	.083	.786	−.089	.125	.479	.092	.099	.351	.191	.132	.148
Demonstration participation frequency (low-high; 1–5)	.172	.052	.001	.112	.074	.133	.099	.071	.168	−.097	.097	.319
Political interest (low-high; 1–4)	−.027	.052	.604	−.164	.100	.102	.027	.078	.730	−.119	.091	.191
Left/right self-placement (left-right; 0–10)	−.019	.016	.243	−.042	.036	.239	−.062	.027	.019	−.018	.027	.501
Constant	−40.916	5.039	.000	−38.403	6.594	.000	−42.472	5.475	.000	−40.304	6.683	.000
N demonstrators	1,605			706			991			650		
N demonstrations	18			11			7			6		
Log likelihood null model	−2,733.136			−1,267.563			−1,769.425			−1,162.231		
Log likelihood	−2,583.435			−1,198.609			−1,693.565			−1,099.948		

To wrap up, our claim that the diffusion of protest via asking others is determined by the motivation of the recruiters, by their capacity to invite others, and by whom they themselves were asked holds water. All hypotheses received support. Protest spreads in networks via asking others—the flip side of being asked—and this asking others is patterned and does not occur randomly. Motivation, capacity, and compatibility lead to a process in which we observe three diffusion mechanisms: people ask their primary contacts to take part (privatization), they tend to ask the same type of people that they were asked by (mirroring), and they tend to forward strong tie invitations to fewer contacts numerically and to less diverse contacts (deactivation). The three diffusion mechanisms of privatization, mirroring, and deactivation are taking place at the same time. The overall picture shows that protest diffusion mostly occurs in participants' primary circles. Recruitment appeals are typically processed and forwarded to people closer in one's interpersonal network. Activating messages are not often "externalized" to people who are more distant and with whom one has a weaker tie than with the person one got the invitation from. But if it happens, the consequences are large as those recruits will be more active recruiters themselves.

CONCLUSION AND DISCUSSION

Students of social movements overwhelmingly agree that being asked is an important precursor of actual participation. Yet there is simply no empirical work dealing with asking others. Our primary aim was to fill that void and to shift the focus to the asking part of protest diffusion. Being asked is only half of the story. Not only are prospective participants recruited; they also recruit others in turn. If not, mobilization would die out rapidly and large protests would be rare. The diffusion of protest requires both receivers and senders of mobilizing calls. This study examined the determinants and patterns of asking others using novel evidence about the recruitment behavior of more than 7,000 participants in 48 protest demonstrations across Europe. All the findings held for different issues increasing the chance that they highlight a general pattern.

In a nutshell, recruitment happens by participants who are strongly motivated and by participants who have the network capacity to recruit. Recruiting activists tend to ask especially their strong tie relationships to join them in protest. These three findings appear to be logical and not very surprising. Even if no other social movement studies have empirically examined recruiting behavior, they are in line with what can be expected from the existing body of studies on being recruited.

The study's most interesting finding is that by whom people are asked has a strong and consistent effect on whom they ask themselves. We discovered

two mechanisms linking being asked with asking others. First, activists tend to ask the same kind of people they were asked by. We called this the mirroring mechanism. Second, activists receiving strong tie invitations tend to become less active recruiters themselves. This is the deactivation mechanism. In other words, and inversely, activists who are being asked by someone with whom they hold weak ties—they do not know this person really well (acquaintance) or they have met this person through an organization—tend to be more intense recruiters; they ask a broader group of other people to join.

These are intriguing and novel findings. They are original with regard not only to the specific literature on protest diffusion but to social diffusion studies more generally. Our best interpretation of the mirroring and deactivation mechanisms is that recruiters mostly address people who socially match their own recruiters. Since participating in a protest demonstration is a social activity and recruits and recruiters tend to show up in each other's company, following the homophily thesis, it is natural that recruiters pick out their potential recruits so that they would be similar to the ones who recruited them in the first place. Added to that, we argued that factual and less intimate information typically coming from weak ties can more easily be passed on to many different ties (both other weak and strong) than vice versa. We are aware of the fact that there may be alternative explanations for the deactivation mechanism. It cannot be excluded that we are actually looking at a selection effect. We controlled for a battery of motivational and capacity measures and ran separate disaggregated analyses that reduce the chance that the effect actually is the consequence of selection and not of deactivation. What we especially lack is better measures of the wider personal network of both the recruiters and the recruits, related to both their political and nonpolitical activities. This would allow us to test for the effect of the size of one's network and of the prevalence of specific types of ties in personal networks. Such data are difficult to collect but would be extremely welcome to fully tease out the mechanism underlying what we found here. Even if what we found would be largely due to a selection effect, the fact remains that strong tie and weak tie recruitment have strikingly different consequences.

Our findings complement a good deal of previous social movement work showing that being asked by a strong tie relation increases the chances of one's own participation more than being asked by a weak tie relation. Although it may not be so effective in convincing people to take part, we showed that weak tie interpersonal recruitment is crucial to the success of a mobilization campaign: the simulation showed that it stimulates the wider spread of participation invitations across and through micro networks. This puts in perspective the limited effect of organizational mobilization

found in previous work. Organizations are effective because their members amplify the call for participation more broadly and beyond truncated networks so that more people are eventually reached. Our evidence pleads for more attention to the double role organizations play in mobilization. On the one hand, they mobilize their weak tie members. On the other hand, organization members act as informal marketers and recruiters in their interpersonal networks. Our evidence suggests that this second role may be of substantial importance. If mobilization occurs completely outside of organizations and within strong tie networks, it reaches out less far. This is the case not only because organizations have many members in many different interpersonal networks but because the asking process in a weak tie context itself generates more recruitment spin-offs. It generates larger "micro waves" of recruitment than strong tie recruitment.

Taken together, our findings lead to what looks like a paradox of recruitment in networks. Asking others with whom a recruiter shares close ties is maybe more effective than asking weak tie relations because the chance is larger that the target decides to join (this is what most extant work on being asked has found). Yet, at the same time, asking others with whom one has weak ties, although with a smaller chance of being successful, leads if successful (the recruit decides to join) to a potentially larger ripple effect because the recruit will most likely turn out to be a more active recruiter himself, extending the mobilizing message to more different others (this is what this study on asking others added). In sum, our evidence confirms Granovetter's (1973, 1978) idea that weak ties are primary sources for diffusion (see also Centola and Macy 2007).

These results speak not only to social movement scholarship but to the field of social diffusion more generally. Very little diffusion research examines whether how and via whom a behavior is adopted has a bearing on to whom that behavior is passed on. In fact, most of the time, once a behavior is adopted, it does not matter any longer through whom one was affected. Compare it with the spread of a disease or the adoption of a new technology. Once sick or using the technology, one is "contagious" irrespective of from whom one picked up the disease or the technology in the first place (Centola and Macy 2007). Mirroring and deactivation suggest that this truism does not apply to interpersonal recruitment. There is a memory in recruitment. In recruitment, people act as conscious and deliberate nodes in a network; they display agency. Information and requests are just passed on not to everyone but mostly to those who match the one who asked the recruiter before. The main difference is that recruitment for protest and for other forms of collective activity entails that the recruiter invites the recruit to a joint activity. Recruitment is socially consequential as, if successful, one spends time with his recruit and with his recruiter. Our findings about mir-

roring and deactivation may be more widely applicable to diffusion processes of joint activities or of time spent together.

The study has a number of weaknesses. First, it draws only on participants, not comparing participants with nonparticipants. Although, most likely, the bulk of the asking is done by people planning to participate, it may be that some people ask others while not attending themselves. These nonattending askers were not in our sample. It is hard to say to what degree the results are affected by this bias. It may be the case that the nonattending askers are less motivated (which is why they do not show up eventually). It may be the case that they have, on average, less information about other potential participants (so that their recruitment efforts fail more often and they more frequently decide not to participate themselves after all). To tease this out, future studies may try to include nonparticipants in the design; but the major drawback is that the number of recruiters among the nonparticipants will be exceedingly small.

Second, the study had no information regarding the channels through which people were invited or invited others. The current proliferation of digital channels and social online networks most likely affects the amount, target, and effect of asking others. A message on a Facebook page is less consequential while targeting many more people than a face-to-face conversation, which may be more compelling but at the same time more demanding. In other words, asking others can take many forms and happen via different media, and it would be interesting to take that into account in future studies (see, e.g., Fisher and Boekkooi 2010). The fact that we found that younger people are systematically more active in recruiting others may be due to their stronger online presence and digital network activity.

Third, we dealt with only one type of protest: taking part in peaceful demonstrations in a nonthreatening context (established European democracies). Other sorts of social movement activities (e.g., direct action) in other contexts (e.g., under authoritarian regimes) may be characterized by different recruitment patterns. The literature provides a few examples of how different types of political participation are differently affected by being asked (Verba et al. 1995; Lim 2008, 2010). We expect that the same factors—motivation, capacity, and ties—will be playing a role for asking others in other cases and contexts as well. Yet their relative weight may be affected by specific circumstances. For instance, motivation and strong ties may be more important when actions are costly, risky, and controversial. If more social support is needed, then weak ties do not suffice (Centola and Macy 2007).

Our goal was to push forward the debate on protest in particular and diffusion in general by incorporating the flip side of the well-examined "being asked" aspect of diffusion and recruitment. Future research could

address similar questions in a variety of protest and nonprotest contexts to establish whether the mechanisms of privatization, mirroring, and deactivation are typical for large-scale, peaceful protest marches or can be applied instead to a variety of social activities. We expect them to apply to many activities in which people invite others to participate in their company.

APPENDIX

TABLE A1
SURVEYED DEMONSTRATIONS, 2009–11

Demonstration	Country	Issue	*N* Demonstrators	*N* Distributed Questionnaires	*N* Sent Back Questionnaires	*N* in Analyses
TUC's March for the Alternative: Jobs, Growth, Justice (London)	U.K.	Austerity	250,000	993	214	120
1 Mei Mars (Antwerp)	Belg.	May Day	2,000	837	216	165
1st May, Labor Day (Barcelona)	Spain	May Day	8,000	700	180	142
Against Labor Law (Madrid)	Spain	Austerity	10,000	780	308	266
Against the Europe of Capital, Crisis, and War (Barcelona)	Spain	Austerity	1,500	300	77	60
Antinuclear demonstration (Stockholm)	Sweden	Climate	1,000	718	283	210
Beat the Heat (Utrecht)	Neth.	Climate	3,500	662	270	216
Celebration May Day (Vigo)	Spain	May Day	15,000	263	66	48
Climate Change (Brussels)	Belg.	Climate	15,000	777	334	268
Climate March (Copenhagen)	Den.	Climate	65,000	789	242	191
Demonstration against Abortion (Madrid)	Spain	Abortion	15,000	871	302	204
Demonstration against language decree (Santiago de Compostela)	Spain	State reform	40,000	1,000	324	254
Demonstration against the new labor law (Santiago de Compostela)	Spain	Austerity	10,000	780	168	143
Euromayday (Milan)	Italy	May Day	5,000	993	126	92
For employment, not capital reforms: Defend Our Rights (Vigo)	Spain	Austerity	2,000	340	168	140
Fund Our Future: Stop Education Cuts (London)	U.K.	Austerity	30,000	995	147	109
General Strike (Florence)	Italy	Austerity	15,000	987	234	164
Knowledge crisis (Den Haag)	Neth.	Austerity	15,000	943	280	214
March for Work (Brussels)	Belg.	Austerity	30,000	466	129	104
Marcia Perugia-Assisi (Assisi)	Italy	Austerity	150,000	1,000	264	185
May 1 March, Left Party (Stockholm)	Sweden	May Day	4,200	430	167	146
May 1 March, Social Democratic Party (Stockholm)	Sweden	May Day	3,000	429	176	141
May 1st Demonstration (Zurich)	Switz.	May Day	8,000	861	135	103
May Day (Florence)	Italy	May Day	500	408	110	71
May Day (Left Party) (Malmö)	Sweden	May Day	2,000	388	142	124
May Day (SAP/LO) (Malmö)	Sweden	May Day	900	281	97	81

May Day Labor March (London)	U.K.	May Day	5,000	977	178	115
Million Women Rise (London)	U.K.	Women	3,000	973	178	106
National Climate March (London)	U.K.	Climate	50,000	606	243	166
National Climate March 2010 (London)	U.K.	Climate	1,500	966	360	239
NL cries out for culture (Amsterdam)	Neth.	Austerity	15,000	353	174	86
NL cries out for culture (Utrecht)	Neth.	Austerity	2,500	385	171	56
No Government, Great Country (Brussels)	Belg.	State reform	45,000	717	365	239
No to Austerity (Brussels)	Belg.	Austerity	70,000	767	144	77
No to Hate Crime Vigil (London)	U.K.	Antiracism	2,000	993	169	100
Nonprofit Demonstration (Brussels)	Belg.	Austerity	15,000	634	200	140
Not in Our Name (Brussels)	Belg.	State reform	700	619	202	149
Pension demonstration (Rotterdam)	Neth.	Austerity	7,000	676	294	216
Real Democracy Now! (Madrid)	Spain	Austerity	25,000	776	350	214
Strong together for public employment (Den Haag)	Neth.	Austerity	8,000	1,000	339	207
Enough of nuclear energy (Amsterdam)	Neth.	Climate	2,500	855	388	304
Second Student National Demo (London)	U.K.	Austerity	20,000	1,000	98	46
Self-determination is democracy (Barcelona)	Spain	State reform	10,000	655	301	223
Stop racism and exclusion (Amsterdam)	Neth.	Antiracism	387	387	124	98
Take Back Parliament (London)	U.K.	State reform	2,000	991	351	254
Unite Against Fascism National Demo (London)	U.K.	Antiracism	3,000	992	189	147
We are a nation, we decide (Barcelona)	Spain	State reform	1,000,000	980	309	226
World March of Women (Bern)	Switz.	Women	6,000	420	150	121
Total					10,436	7,490

TABLE A2

SOCIODEMOGRAPHICS, CONTROL, MOTIVATION, AND CAPACITY VARIABLES (N = 4,417)

Variable	Question Wording	Answer Categories	Mean	SD
Sociodemographics:				
Sex	Are you . . . ?	1. Male 2. Female	1.493	.500
Age	In which year were you born?	Year	1967.7	15.4
Employment	What is your employment situation? I work full-time (including maternity leave or other temporary absence)	0. No 1. Yes	.446	.497
Education	What is the highest level of education that you completed? If you are a student, at what level are you studying?	1. None, did not complete primary education 2. Primary or first stage of basic 3. Lower secondary or second stage of basic 4. Upper secondary 5. Postsecondary, nontertiary 6. First stage of tertiary 7. Second stage of tertiary 8. Posttertiary (PhD)	5.894	1.518
Control variables:				
Organizing SMO membership	Please list the main organizations staging this demonstration. Are you a member of any of these organizations?	1. No/don't know/not sure 2. Yes	1.516	.499
Demonstration participation frequency	How many times have you in the past taken part in a demonstration, during the last 12 months?	1. Never 2. 1–5 times 3. 6–10 times 4. 11–20 times 5. 21+ times	1.950	.712
Left-right self-placement	In politics people sometimes talk of "left" and "right." Where would you place yourself on this scale, where 0 means the left and 10 means the right?	Scale 0–10, left-right	2.565	2.067
Political interest	How interested are you in politics?	1. Not at all 2. Not very 3. Quite 4. Very	3.292	.707
Motivation variables:				
Motivational strength	How determined were you to participate in the demonstration?	1. Not very 2. Rather 3. Somewhat 4. Quite 5. Very much	4.422	.801

Participation decision timing	When did you make a firm decision to participate in the demonstration?	1. The day of the demonstration 2. A few days before the demonstration 3. A few weeks before the demonstration 4. Over a month ago	2.873	.968
Organizing SMO identification	To what extent do you identify with any organization staging the demonstration?	1. Not at all 2. Not very much 3. Somewhat 4. Quite 5. Very much	3.860	1.046
Capacity variables:				
Associational membership	If you have been involved in any of the following types of organizations in the past 12 months, please indicate whether you are a passive member or an active member? If you are a member of several organizations of the same type, tick the highest or most "active" category.	1. Church or religious organization 2. Trade union or professional association 3. Political party 4. Women's organization 5. Sport or cultural organization 6. Environmental organization 7. Lesbian or gay rights organization 8. Community or neighborhood association 9. Charity or welfare organization 10. Third-world, global justice or peace organization 11. Antiracist or migrant organization 12. Human or civil rights organization 13. Other*	4.057	3.176
Organizational involvement	During the last 12 months, in how many different organizations have you actively participated?	1. None 2. 1 3. Between 2 and 3 4. More than 3	2.378	.965
Talking politics	When you get together with your friends, relatives, or fellow workers, how often do you discuss politics?	1. Never 2. Rarely 3. Sometimes 4. Fairly often 5. Very often	3.766	.823

* Other is an additive scale of all memberships whereby passive (and financial) membership counts for 1 and active membership counts for 2; scale 0–26.

TABLE A3

CORRELATION MATRIX OF VARIABLES USED IN REGRESSIONS (N = 4,417)

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16
1. Recruitment intensity/diversity	1															
2. Motivational strength	.285	1														
3. Participation decision timing	.286	.473	1													
4. Organizing SMO identification	.127	.337	.254	1												
5. Association membership	.178	.112	.163	.218	1											
6. Organizational involvement	.181	.153	.209	.254	.585	1										
7. Talking politics	.166	.145	.152	.164	.174	.194	1									
8. Asked by . . . tie strength	.232	.212	.258	.270	.229	.316	.075	1								
9. Sex	.034	.040	−.004	−.047	−.012	−.058	−.015	−.094	1							
10. Age	.153	−.111	−.129	−.223	−.143	−.116	−.041	−.114	.099	1						
11. Education	.068	−.089	−.072	−.089	.024	.000	.129	−.110	.095	.104	1					
12. Employment	−.018	.029	.048	.054	.009	−.010	−.028	.029	−.114	−.064	.007	1				
13. Organizing SMO membership	.095	.202	.256	.408	.230	.260	.034	.419	−.100	−.244	−.191	.101	1			
14. Demonstration participation frequency	.177	.167	.205	.181	.215	.295	.289	.199	−.031	−.020	−.008	.042	.126	1		
15. Political interest	.132	.152	.163	.239	.217	.255	.560	.154	−.112	−.047	.117	−.046	.107	.233	1	
16. Left/right self-placement	−.117	−.119	−.118	−.104	−.093	−.120	−.255	−.057	−.059	−.013	−.041	.016	−.060	−.298	−.268	1

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