Comments on
Connective Action in European Mass Protest

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Two Aims of the Paper

1. Empirically differentiate between types of protest movements
   ▶ Traditional collective action (TCA)
   ▶ Digital networked action (DNA)

2. Catalog differences in characteristics of
   ▶ Organizations
   ▶ Protesters
   ▶ Frames

   ▶ Survey data
     ▶ 70 demonstrations in 9 countries
     ▶ 14,700 protesters and 100 staging organizations
The rise of crowd-sourced inclusive personal action frames that lower the barriers to identification

- “We are the 99%”

Participation channeled through dense social networks via social technology

- Twitter, Facebook, newly developed platforms
- Allows people to share their own stories and concerns

Contrasting DNA and TCA

- DNA frames can be personalized
- More reliant on social media
- Less formal and more loosely aligned organizations
- Participants tend to be younger and less politically active
Key Findings

- Personalization is key for connective action
- Do not find a significant difference between DNA and TCA
  - Wrong sign for frame alignment
- DNA events attract young, unemployed, less politically involved, and less likely to associate with organizations
Survey

- **Sample**
  - ~30% heard about events from organizations or co-members
  - 47% were members of staging groups
  - Is this a lot?
  - How were events chosen to be in the sample? How were participants found?

- **Limitations**
  - Movements may evolve along the DNA - TCA continuum over time and the survey only gives you a snapshot
  - Is it possible that respondents joined organizations as a result of participating in a movement
  - Issues of recall when asking open ended questions
Measurement

- Arbitrary definition of DNA and TCA
  - Why not create a third hybrid category like Bennett and Segerberg suggest
  - Continuous measure

- Non-survey measures
  - Social media messages regarding movements
  - Perhaps better measures of personalization
  - More information about organizations involved in events
Why do we care about distinguishing DNA from TCA?
  ▶ Is one type more likely to occur given types of grievances?
  ▶ How do we measure success?

What types of individuals are likely to participate in each and how might their participation influence other (more traditional) modes of engagement
  ▶ Substitute?
  ▶ Compliment?
  ▶ Efficacy