A Learning Theory of the American Anti-Vietnam War Movement*

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Since the end of the Second World War, radical and revolutionary movements have played prominent roles in domestic and international politics. Research on these movements has focused on two separate dependent variables, why individuals join a movement, and why individuals or movements engage in civil strife (cf. Keniston 1968 and Gurr 1970). This dual focus tends to overlook the fact that there is usually a time lag between the formation of a movement and its use of civil strife as a political strategy. This paper will try to fill this gap in the literature by developing a theory that will explain how movements learn to adopt and reject different political strategies. The intention is to provide a complementary explanation to the work cited above, rather than a competing theory.

The theory will be derived by searching the learning theory literature to discover basic insights that might be useful in explaining political behavior. These insights will then be formalized into a model, and applied to the American anti-Vietnam war movement. The use of a single case to inductively generate a set of propositions means that the analysis is strictly theoretical and does not attempt to systematically test the theory.

1. Learning Theory
To interpret adoption of strategies by movements as a function of learning may be fruitful, since learning is formally defined as 'the process by which an activity originates or is changed through reacting to an encountered situation...' (Hilgard and Bower, 1966:2). It could be argued, however, that this definition applies to individuals and not groups. This criticism is easily circumvented by assuming that learning within a movement occurs through the individual learning of its members. Movement learning can be said to occur when a significant number of persons within the movement learn the same lessons, and therefore change the movement's behavior. These individuals will tend to learn the same lessons because they perceive themselves as belonging to a loosely organized 'group' effort, share a common goal and previously learned set of behavior, and confront similar experiences and precedents. Of course, as in any learning situation certain members will learn more quickly than others, and a good theory will be able to not only demark general learning patterns, but also suggest which factors make some individuals learn more quickly than others.

1.1 Stimulus-Response Theories
There are three areas of learning theory that are relevant to this analysis: stimulus-response theories, cognitive theories, and theories of political learning. Of the many stim-

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ulus-response theories, those of Thorndike, Hull, and Mowrer are most relevant. Thorndike’s (1898) major contribution is the law of effect, which maintains that the connection between a stimulus and response will be strengthened if the response is rewarded, and weakened if it is punished. Learning, therefore, consists of a trial and error search for responses that lead to rewards. One of the objections to this S-R model is that it fails to take account of the internal processes of the organism. Hull (1943, 1952) meets this objection by employing an S-O-R (stimulus-organism-response) model, in which the stimulus is interpreted as an internal drive that needs to be satisfied, and consequently gives rise to a response. The connecting bond between stimulus and response is then explained by arguing that reward results in drive reduction and punishment results in frustration. Mowrer (1960) adds to Hull’s model by introducing a feedback process. Rewards and punishments, according to Mowrer, give rise to expectations of fear and hope that a given response will lead to punishment or reward. It is these internal expectations that Mowrer sees as the primary determinants of behavior.

While this review is of necessity brief, three insights can be culled from the S-R literature. First, Thorndike’s law of effect suggests that strategies which have been rewarded in the past will be employed regardless of alternative feasible strategies or rational argument. In addition, the law of effect implies that if a strategy no longer results in a reward, the movement will try to find another strategy by a trial and error process. Second, Hull’s conception of stimuli as drives suggests that the persistent failure of a movement to find a strategy, that will be rewarded, will not lead to the decrement of the stimulus (i.e. the abandonment of the goal), but to a new effect, the frustration of the organism (in this case the members of the movement). Third, Mowrer’s formulation implies that strategies are not adopted solely by trial and error, but are selected with certain expectations in mind. It is these expectations that lead to the adoption or ignoring of certain strategies.

Despite these insights the S-R approach raises a number of problems. Thorndike’s law of effect assumes that the individual is a tabula rasa that randomly selects various responses without any insight or rational (means-end) plan. Hull’s analysis rests on the notion of drives which has not been accepted as a legitimate concept in political science for several generations. Finally, Mowrer’s identification of expectations with the emotions of fear and hope do not seem to apply to the anti-war movement. Members of the antiwar movement were not fearful and hopeful about their strategies; if anything they were ‘confident’ that certain early strategies would work and when the strategies did not, the members were ‘shocked.’ What seems to be lacking in the S-R theories is ‘strategic analysis’, that includes thoughts and emotions in the learning process. To find these it is necessary to turn to the cognitive theories.

1.2 Cognitive Theories
Two cognitive theories are relevant, Tolman’s sign learning theory and applications of cognitive transfer theories in the foreign policy-making literature. Tolman (1932) provides a conceptual framework which is more amenable to strategic analysis as it is conducted in political science. For Tolman animal and human behavior is purposive. One of his contributions, therefore, is to interpret some of the insights of S-R theory so that they are consistent with that assumption. Hull’s drives are replaced with goals, and Thorndike’s trial and error is replaced with insight. The law of effect now becomes a bond between an expectation that a given path will lead to a goal and the achievement of the goal (reward). Behavior that is rewarded is not interpreted in terms of reinforcement as with Thorndike, but as the confirmation of a hypothesis about the nature of the given situation or environment.

Tolman also makes two important substantive contributions to learning theory:
the idea that learning consists of developing cognitive structures which enables the organism to read signs in the environment, and the principle of least effort. Tolman’s notion of cognitive structures means that an organism is not a tabula rasa when it faces a problem, but has a cognitive map of the environment that it has confirmed from prior experience. The map presents the various paths that the organism can take to reach the goal. For Tolman, learning does not consist of a set of habits as it does for the S-R theorists, but of real understanding. The principle of least effort is employed to predict which path the organism will take to achieve the goal, and states that the least difficult and shortest path will always be selected. This principle also maintains that if a path is blocked the organism will not initiate a trial and error search, but will employ its cognitive map to take the second most direct path to the goal.6

Finally, Tolman, as all cognitive theorists, places a great deal of emphasis on transfer learning: i.e., a cognitive map learned in one situation will be applied to all similar situations. To see how transfer learning might occur in political behavior it is necessary to examine the foreign policy literature on precedents.

In this review of learning processes in foreign policy-making, Brewer (1975) makes it clear that both scholars and policy-makers believe that precedents are important for determining behavior in new situations. For example, the World War I experience is used as a precedent in decisions about World War II, and the latter is used as precedent in decisions about the Cold War. Two generalizations are supported by his review: precedents need to be directly experienced in order to be influential, and precedents are classified in terms of successes and failures.

Several insights can be culled from cognitive theory. First, Tolman’s work on cognitive structures suggests that individuals have certain expectations about which strategies will lead to a goal, and that if a strategy is blocked, then, according to the principle of least effort, individuals turn to the alternative strategies within their map in a specific order. In addition, this principle implies that as more of the strategies within the cognitive map fail, individuals will search for a new cognitive map.

Second, Tolman’s reformulation of Thordike’s law of effect suggests that although individuals will tend to rely on previous successful strategies, if these strategies do not work in the current situation, they will be rejected and they will not be expected to work in future similar situations. Hence it would be expected that individuals in the movement, who had tried to employ a strategy and failed, would learn more quickly than individuals who had not yet employed that strategy in the current situation.

Third, since the literature on precedents suggests that precedents come primarily from direct experience, it would be expected that the most influential precedents within the anti-war movement would come from experiences the members of the movement had lived through. Likewise, it would be expected that if the ‘fast’ learners within the movement wanted to teach the ‘slow’ learners, they would try to get the slow learners to go through the same experiences which taught them that a particular strategy did not work. Finally, the literature on precedents in combination with Tolman’s analysis suggests that the attempt to derive a new cognitive map will take place by a search of relevant precedents.

Despite the above insights, cognitive theory has one major problem that must be solved: Where do the initial expectations about the environment come from? Tolman states that they come from previous experience, but most of the young members of the anti-war movement were political amateurs especially in the attempt to influence foreign policy. Where did their expectations come from or didn’t they have any, as Thordike would argue? To answer this question it is necessary to turn to the literature on political learning.
1.3 Theories of Political Learning

Two aspects of the political learning literature are relevant: child socialization and the theory of electoral realignment in the American system. The literature on early political socialization suggests that conceptions and orientations toward government, politics, and regime norms are acquired early in life and tend, all other factors being equal, to persist through adult life (Hyman, 1959; Greenstein, 1965, Hess and Torney, 1967; Easton and Dennis, 1969). Socialization within the U.S. tends to inculcate pre-adults with the following beliefs: that the President and government are good (i.e. moral (Greenstein, 1960; Weissberg, 1974: 44)), that the government does not usually make mistakes (Easton and Dennis, 1969: 133), that democracy is the best form of government (Hess and Torney, 1967: 30ff.), that the President is responsive and accessible to the popular will (Hess and Torney, 1969: 48), that elections and voting constitute the most important form of political participation (Easton and Dennis, 1969: 113-116; Hess and Torney, 1967: 77), and that the foreign policy of the U.S. stands for peace and is moralistic (Greenstein, 1960: 939; also see Kennan, 1951). In terms of learning theory these beliefs constitute a cognitive structure or set of expectations about the environment.

Given these orientations the legitimate channels to bring about change in foreign policy would be to use rational argument to show why the policy is wrong (especially if the policy is viewed as immoral), demonstrate the unpopularity of the policy, and if necessary use the electoral system to change the government. The first expectation on how to change policy stems from the beliefs that the President and the government are moral, that foreign policy is not supposed to be grossly immoral, and that the government does not usually make mistakes. Therefore, if a policy violates the last two assumptions, the first assumption ensures that once the error is pointed out there will be a change in policy. The second expectation stems from the belief that the President is responsive to the popular will, and the third stems from the belief that elections constitute a legitimate means of force.

Socialization within the U.S. is provided by three agencies — the family, school, and media (Weissberg, 1974: Ch. 8) — and is normally supportive of the dominant political myth. Consequently, most people in the U.S. tend to have the same cognitive map of the political environment. However, it is logically possible that some members may be socialized into an alternative cognitive map. Likewise, since there are three primary agencies, there exists the possibility of convergent or divergent socialization; i.e., different agencies providing consistent or conflicting socialization. It is, therefore, possible to distinguish between the content and mode of socialization. The content indicates whether socialization is supportive of societal norms and the mode indicates the degree to which socialization is resistant to change. Thus, four socialization patterns are possible: convergent-supportative (typical pattern in the U.S.), divergent-supportative (supportative agencies override dissenting agencies), divergent-dissenting (dissenting agencies override supportive), convergent-dissenting (individual not exposed to supportive agencies, e.g. Amish).7

Despite the emphasis on early socialization, few scholars maintain that adult socialization is ineffectual (Searing et al., 1973: 416). The most impressive theory that tries to delineate the relationship between early and adult socialization in the U.S. is V.O. Key's (1955; 1966) theory of electoral realignment (also see Campbell et al., 1964 and Sundquist, 1973). This theory is primarily concerned with the effect of adult experience on changing one of the most enduring products of early socialization, party identification. The theory assumes that under normal circumstances party identification is a product of early socialization, but that under certain conditions there will be a realignment of party identification. The condition that causes the realignment is a powerful cross-cutting issue which becomes the distin-
This principle requires the identification of causal factors and individual attributes for people, in terms of their political-social characteristics, learning, and socialization. Some issues have specific attributes, two of which are that the issue is viewed as highly salient and has a direct resonance with people's experiences and interests. The direct experience provided by the critical issue is significant for individuals, who are most directly affected by the issue, to identify with parties on the basis of the present stand of the parties on the issue and on the basis of their socialization. In addition, these individuals socialize their children to adopt the new party identification. Socialization on the basis of realigned identification will persist across generations, so long as a new critical issue does not appear. Party identification, however, becomes weaker the farther away a generation gets from the direct experience of the critical issue (Sundquist, 1973: 296-97).

The literature on socialization provides some important insights for understanding the anti-war movement. The literature on child socialization explains where expectations about the political environment come from, and thereby answers an important question which Tolman's theory raised. It also provides a picture of the cognitive map Americans carry within their heads and use to bring about change in policy. This map, together with the principle of least effort, allows the observer to predict that a movement will, all other factors being equal, first adopt only legitimate political strategies, and will adopt these in their order of difficulty and availability.

Finally, the child socialization literature in combination with learning theory suggests that if the three agencies of socialization — the family, school, and media — teach the same lesson (i.e. reinforce or confirm learning), then this convergent socialization should be stronger and more influential in adult life than divergent socialization. This latter proposition suggests that those members of the anti-war movement that experiences typical (convergent-supportive) socialization would more rigidly follow the principle of least effort than members who experienced atypical socialization. Likewise, members who had been socialized in the typical pattern would be more shocked than other members when the socially legitimate strategies failed. The greater shock is likely to occur in these individuals because unlike those who have been atypically socialized, these individuals have no expectation whatsoever that the legitimate strategies will fail. Consequently these individuals would tend to be more angered and frustrated than other members, and more likely to engage in aggressive behavior. Individuals who had experienced atypical socialization would be less shocked by the failure of the legitimate strategies, and hence less angered, frustrated, and predisposed toward aggressive behavior (the latter would be particularly evident if the alternative cognitive map regarded aggressive behavior as an unworkable strategy).

The literature on electoral realignment suggests that the conditions under which early socialization is most apt to be unlearned is when a critical issue is present. In Tolman's terms it could be argued that the failure of the traditional party structure to effectively resolve the critical issue leads people to reconstruct their cognitive map on political parties and either alter or transform the party system. It could be assumed that the extent to which the Vietnam War possessed characteristics of a critical issue (as perceived by members of the anti-war movement) would predispose members to unlearn early lessons on how to change policy, if these lessons failed to produce results. This last proposition implies that a cognitive map is not abandoned because it fails in one or more instance (as the law of effect states), but that it will be abandoned only when it fails on an issue which has moral implications and is highly salient to members of a group.

Having derived a number of insights from learning theory it is now possible to construct a preliminary model of how groups adopt and reject strategies for changing national policy.
2. A Learning Model of Radical Movements in the U.S.

Social movements for change (as opposed to institutionalized interest groups) are born in response to issues that certain individuals regard as touching upon important moral questions. Such issues are therefore of high salience to members of a movement and are interpreted as fundamentally important to national life. Because of their perception of the issue, these movements are not prepared to abandon the goal of policy change; i.e. they are not prepared to lose.

The strategies these movements will adopt are a function of their collective cognitive map of the political environment which in turn is a function of early and adult socialization. Members of a movement, who have been socialized in the typical manner and who have not directly experienced previous critical issues, will accept the dominant regime norms on strategies of change, and more importantly expect these strategies to work. In other words, social movements are rarely born radical, but only become so by interacting with the environment.

According to the principle of least effort, movements will employ the easiest legitimate strategy first and only turn to the more difficult after the easiest have failed. In the U.S., this means that movements first point out the discrepancy between moral ideals and the policy, then try to demonstrate the unpopularity of the policy, and as a last resort they try to force the government to adopt their position by the use of electoral politics and/or the courts.

The fact that the electoral channel is only open at certain times complicates the principle of least effort and the law of effect. If an election is at hand when the movement is trying to demonstrate the unpopularity of a policy, then the election will become a vehicle to demonstrate the unpopularity of the policy, rather than a real effort to force the government. However, if the movement is ‘ready’ to force the government and no election is scheduled, frustration and moderate anger ensue, and a search begins for an alternative cognitive map. If an election is available, a strong effort will be made to utilize it, and if the effort fails frustration and intense anger will ensue (because this channel will not be open again in the short term). If the election channel is viewed as being illegitimately blocked, extreme frustration and anger will ensue.

At the point that the most difficult legitimate strategy fails, the bond between the cognitive map and the expectation of reward, which has been weakening after every failure, will break. The amount of ‘unlearning’ that takes place is directly related to members’ perception of why the most difficult channel failed. If they attribute failure to their own effort, the ensuing frustration and anger will be turned inward resulting in depression and guilt. Depending on personality variables this will result in either a repeating of the channel or escape behavior. If members attribute failure to an illegitimate blocking of the channel, the cognitive map will be discarded and an insightful (as opposed to trial and error) search for an alternative map will commence. If members attribute failure to random factors (i.e. it is temporarily blocked or they almost won), they will engage in a search for a new map, and employ a combination of legitimate and new strategies at a level of less aggressiveness than if they had perceived that the channel had been illegitimately blocked. Repeated failures attributed to perceived illegitimacy, however, will result in an abandonment of the cognitive map.

The search for a new map will begin by a focus on relevant precedents with precedents that have been directly experienced by members receiving the most attention. Because new channels that are discovered by this search are not part of the regime norms, persons outside the movement will regard these strategies as either illegitimate or at best extra-legitimate. Efforts to find relevant precedents will focus primarily on the similarity of the earlier situation with the current one, and whether the precedent succeeded or failed. In addition to this rational assess-
ment, however, it would be expected that the frustration and anger engendered by the 'shock' that the legitimate strategies failed, will give members a predisposition to focus on aggressive channels (Berkowitz, 1962; Gurr, 1970). The power of this predisposition will depend on the level of anger, the clarity with which successful non-aggressive precedents appear, the personality of members, and the influence of persons who are operating on alternative cognitive maps which are non-aggressive.

Since movement learning is a function of the individual learning of members, it can be expected that individuals will learn at different rates. Atypically socialized members will be willing to skip legitimate channels in the early stages and appear to be 'fast' learners. In the later stages, however, they will be less prone to aggressive strategies and appear to be 'slow' learners. Since learning is a function of direct experience, the inclusion of new recruits, who must be taught, adds to the appearance of divergent learning rates within the movement. Nevertheless, it would be possible to pinpoint 'movement' learning by examining shifts in the frequency with which alternative strategies are actually employed.

The search for precedents raises one final problem for movement behavior. Because the movement may contain individuals who have operated on conflicting alternative cognitive maps from the beginning, these individuals will now openly compete with each other to get their particular set of precedents adopted by the newly radicalized members. Because these new radicals will also conduct independent searches and will be more predisposed toward aggressive strategies, the amount of debate and disagreement within the movement will increase. If in addition the search for precedents embodies new cognitive maps that bring in new goals as well as new channels, the probability of factionalization of the movement increases.

The above model provides a number of testable propositions that can be used to assess its adequacy. However, since a systematic test is beyond the scope of the present analysis, the remainder of this paper will simply try to demonstrate the plausibility of model by applying it to the American anti-Vietnam war movement.

3. An Application of the Model to the American Anti-Vietnam War Movement

3.1 The Birth of the Movement

According to the model, movements are spawned by critical issues, and tend to persist throughout the life of the issue (since members are not prepared to accept defeat). The anti-war movement conforms to both of these expectations. The issue that gave rise to the movement, the Vietnam War, was clearly a critical issue in that it was highly salient and had moral overtones. Individuals opposed to the war began to organize early in 1965, and as public awareness of the issue increased so did participation in the movement, reaching a highpoint in 1972. Nevertheless, members of the movement persisted in their activities down through the defeat of the Thieu regime in 1975.

Contrary to early accusations by the government, the model would predict that the composition of the movement would consist primarily of typically socialized Americans, who accepted the dominant cognitive map of the system, and not just leftists. Existing evidence on anti-war protesters shows that they come primarily from politically involved, liberal, middle and upper middle class families (Keniston, 1968: 110; Flacks, 1967; Peterson, 1966; Converse and Schuman, 1970; and Mueller, 1973). Separate research shows that such families inculcate their children with the dominant values of the American system (Weissberg, 1973: Ch. 3). This is not to deny that leftists, operating on Marxist or pacifist cognitive maps, were not present, but simply to maintain that they were a minority (Keniston, 1968: 110).

3.2 The Principle of Least Effort: Testing Regime Norms

Since the movement is composed primarily of individuals who operate on the dominant
cognitive map, it would be expected that the movement would adopt the three legitimate strategies, provided by that map, in order of their least difficulty. Only if these strategies were not available or failed to produce the expected results would members of the movement entertain the possibility of employing 'non-legitimate' strategies.

The first major strategy the movement employs is rational argument. This was the easiest of the legitimate strategies, particularly since in 1965 the war was neither unpopular nor highly salient to the public at large. The strategy tends to dominate movement activity in the first half of 1965. The objective of this strategy is to try to change the opinion of the decision-maker (in this case the Johnson administration). The method is to use reason. The emphasis is placed on showing the discrepancy between the policy and moral values (see Stone, 1964, 1965; Morse, 1965; Kahin, 1965; Fall and Raskin, 1965), but pragmatic analysis of the national interests are also offered (Morgen-thau, 1965). The assumption of this strategy is that the policy is a mistake and if one rationally points out the error the policy will be corrected. This assumption is seen as valid because members believe that the President and government are guided by moral principles, stand for peace and justice, and will not promulgate policies in conflict with these principles. The tactics are to write books and articles, give speeches, and hold teach-ins and debates.

The use of this strategy begins in late 1964, after the Gulf of Tonkin incident when a number of articles appear questioning the wisdom and moral implications of American intervention in Vietnam. With the systematic bombing of North Vietnam in February 1965, the first teach-in is held in March at the University of Michigan. Within two months numerous teach-ins are held, culminating with a national teach-in in May in Washington, D.C. (Teodori, 1969: 479). The administration responds to the use of this channel by defending itself. A State Department ‘truth squad’ tours the campuses to participate in the teach-ins, and numerous self-appointed defenders debate the war critics.

The failure of the channel to produce change in policy or at least doubt within the administration leads a number of activists to conclude that the policy is not an error, but the deliberate decision of immoral men. Others, however, need more time, simply to understand the issue. Ultimately they reach the same conclusion through a continual exposure to the arguments throughout 1965, and because of the administration reponse of escalating rather than re-evaluating its policy. Eventually a consensus emerges within the movement that those who support the war are ‘either immoral or ignorant.’ No other position is possible. As a result teach-ins tend to become more one-sided (there is no need to include the other side since they will not be convinced) and subside. They remain as a tool, but primarily to gather new recruits rather than to change policy.

With the growing realization that the administration is not to be convinced by rational argument, the movement abandons the first channel as a failure, and the teach-in is criticized as a tool for bringing about a change in policy (see Gilbert, 1965). Never again does the movement place much effort in trying to rationally convince the administration that the policy should be changed because it is immoral. The first expectation about how to change policy has suffered a quick and enduring decrement. Because members are convinced that they have employed the channel competently (i.e. their argument is sound) the law of effect works with devastating force and convinces them that their first expectation about how to change policy was an illusion.

The second strategy the movement employs is to try to demonstrate the unpopularity of the war. Since they cannot change the opinion of the decision-maker they try to change public opinion in the hope that this will lead the decision-maker to change the policy. The method is to build a mass movement. The assumption is that the de-
cision-maker, being responsive to the popular will, will not pursue an unpopular policy. Hence if you demonstrate to the decision-maker that the war is unpopular the decision-maker will end it. The tactics are to continue the first strategy, but this time with the target as the public and significant policy influencers such as interest groups and Congressmen. The effort is first focused on campus by trying to convince students and getting the student government, newspaper, and other groups to ‘come out’ against the war. From there the effort quickly spreads to off-campus groups and media. Petitions, letter writing, peaceful street demonstrations, referenda, interest group positions, and editorials are all employed to demonstrate to the decision-maker that the war is unpopular and hence should be ended. Related to this strategy is the use of moral witness, the commission of dramatic acts to demonstrate the immorality of the war to the public.

This strategy begins in the middle of 1965 and is the main strategy in 1966 and part of 1967. The SDS march on Washington in April 1965 is followed by larger marches, with a wider base of political support, throughout the next two years (Teodori, 1969: 480-481). Numerous petitions are signed and letters sent to Washington. Efforts to place the war on referenda in local and state elections are tried in a number of areas near major campuses. Efforts to get state legislature to come out against the war are initiated. Moral witnesses against the war are also prevalent. In the summer of 1965 the first draft cards are burnt, which prompts Congress to pass an anti-draft card burning law. This in turn spurs several pacifists in Boston to burn their cards. In November 1965 Norman Morrison, a Quaker, immolates himself in front of the Pentagon to protest against the war (Teodori, 1969: 480). In the summer of 1966 three soldiers at Fort Hood, Texas, refuse orders related to the conduct of the war.

This second strategy has a relatively long life within the movement. The main reason for this is that the Johnson administration responds to the strategy with the argument that the demonstrators have not shown that they represent the majority of the American people. The polls in 1965 and 1966 give credence to this argument. In addition, the movement’s sense of the public’s support for the war and their early lack of confidence that they have competently employed the channel, delay the impact of the law of effect. By 1967, however, most members of the movement are convinced that they represent a majority or at least a plurality view. The evidence for this stems primarily from their own observation of the growth of the movement. Therefore in 1967 this strategy tends to be replaced by two others. However, after the election of Nixon in 1968 there is a brief and partial return to this strategy with the October 15th (1969) Moratorium on the War. The second use of the strategy is prompted by the feeling that Nixon, being a different individual, may be responsive to the popular will. Nixon’s response of ‘a silent majority’ is greeted with contempt and the strategy is not employed again. The one time repeat of the strategy is clearly a product of the law of effect.

As it becomes clear that the decision-maker will not ‘listen to reason’ or respond to the popular will, the movement realizes it must force the decision-maker to end the war. The third legitimate strategy that is employed by the movement is the use of political institutions to force the decision-maker. Since the dominant cognitive map includes such channels, these become the focus in late 1967 and through the middle of 1968. The method is to vote the decision-maker out of office, employ the courts to challenge the legality of the war and draft, and get Congress to end the war. Two assumptions are made by this strategy: first, the system is democratic and will respond to attempts to bring about change, and second, politicians are basically ambitious and will not sacrifice their careers to continue an unpopular policy. The tactics are to run peace candidates to get an anti-war majority in Congress, to oust LBJ, to use the use the first and second
strategies as a way to build and demonstrate electoral power, to try to get state legislatures to pass laws against the war and/or draft, and to employ the courts to declare the war and draft illegal.

The first use of this strategy occurs in the 1966 Congressional elections. The use of the strategy at this date, however, does not give rise to high expectations that it will work, primarily because the movement does not have sufficient resources to marshal a national effort, and it is felt that, since this is a foreign policy issue, the Presidential election provides a less difficult and more relevant tactic. Nevertheless, since this channel is only open at certain periods, a number of local efforts appear at this time.

After the election of 1966, efforts to employ this channel focus on the state legislatures and the courts to outlaw the war. In Massachusetts an effort to outlaw the draft is successful but is later overturned by the Supreme Court. Direct efforts to get the Supreme Court to outlaw the war and/or draft, because there has been no formal declaration of war, fail. These efforts, however, do not lead to a rejection of the dominant cognitive map because they are not viewed as the primary tactic of the strategy. The Presidential election of 1968 becomes the test case for the strategy.

In the middle of 1967 a number of efforts begin, to ensure that effective use will be made of the last and most difficult legitimate channel. In 1967, Vietnam Summer, the most ambitious national project to build off-campus opposition to the war, is launched. Some of the radicals that have been employing the non-legitimate ‘fourth’ strategy are suspicious of the project as a potential co-optation of the movement into a Kennedy campaign. The leadership of the project denies, in a fairly successful attempt to maintain unity, that electoral politics is the intent of the project. Nevertheless in retrospect it is clear that the project is useful for building support for any ‘peace candidacy’. In the fall of 1967 the effort to work within the Democratic party and create a third party takes shape with the formation of the Conference for New Politics and the Peace and Freedom party. In December, Eugene McCarthy announces his candidacy for President. The victories of McCarthy, the withdrawal of Johnson, and the victories of Robert Kennedy raise expectations that this channel will bring success, and convinces the movement that a majority of Americans are indeed opposed to the war. Until the August Democratic convention the efforts of the anti-war movement are focused on this final legitimate strategy.

The use of the above three legitimate strategies lends credence to the model, and in particular to the principle of least effort. What remains to be explained, is how this movement, employing traditional legitimate channels, became radicalized.

3.3 The Law of Effect: Radicalization of the Movement

According to the model, radicalization can only occur when all legitimate channels have been tested, and this view is supported by the behavior of the anti-war movement. When it becomes evident at the Democratic convention that the final legitimate channel will fail, the law of effect which has been weakening the belief of members in the dominant cognitive map after each failure, now brings about a complete rejection of the cognitive map. Extreme frustration and anger ensue. The frustration and anger are extreme because members feel Johnson has illegitimately blocked the final channel by getting Humphrey the nomination, and thereby insuring that no ‘real’ election will take place on Vietnam. The movement therefore adopts in the streets of Chicago, a highly aggressive fourth strategy, which has been partially employed by a few members in 1967.

The objective of the fourth strategy is to use non-electoral force to get the decision-maker to end the war. It attempts to show the decision-maker that the price of fighting the war will be the breakdown of order at home. Its method is to use non-violent guer-
rilla warfare to prevent the conduct of business as usual (particularly business connected with the war effort). The assumption is that the decision-maker will not pursue a policy that will lead to the destruction of his most important values: law, order and domestic tranquility. Therefore, if you are able to deny the decision-maker this value, you will be in a position to punish him for inappropriate behavior and offer a tacit bargain: disruption will cease if the war is ended.\textsuperscript{22} The tactics are massive, persistent, dramatic and diverse disruptions of social order. These include civil disobedience and not turning yourself in, sit-ins, large and frequent demonstrations, boycotts of businesses and classes, anti-ROTC campaigns, demonstrations against military research and recruitment, demonstrations against military industries and their recruitment on campus, draft board sit-ins, draft resistance recruitment, aid and encouragement to 'deserters' and those that refuse to go to Vietnam, strikes and general strikes, persistent picketing and heckling of the decision-maker and his representatives, stopping troop trains, and bomb threats: in short the constant disruption of anything connected with the war effort.

The realization that force must be employed comes in mid-1967 after the failure of the first two legitimate strategies. Some radicals, especially those who have had prior experience with critical issues and those that have operated on an alternative cognitive map that embodies this fourth strategy (e.g. radical pacifists and Trotskyites), initiate within the movement a search for precedents to find the appropriate channel to force the decision-maker. Many in the movement do not accept this search because the third legitimate strategy that permits force has not been employed. The radicals, however, are not prepared to wait for the 1968 election and/or reject the third strategy because they operate on an alternative map (e.g. the Trotskyites). The immediate presence of the draft, and the frustration generated by the intransigence of Johnson, also encourages some members of the movement to adopt the fourth strategy before the 1968 election. After August 1968 most members adopt the fourth strategy with even more aggressiveness because of the belief that the third strategy has been illegitimately blocked (in the sense of providing a real choice) by the Democratic party and Johnson.

3.4 The Search for Precedents: Toward A New Ideology

The precedents which received the most attention are, as the model predicted, those which have been directly experienced by members. Those consist of the civil-rights movement and the protests against the university. Both these movements employed the first two strategies to try to gain their goal and failed. The third strategy, however, was not available to them and hence they needed to develop new ones. For example, the civil-rights movement had little voting power, and could not rely on Southern legislatures to end desegregation. Hence it turned to direct action in the form of boycotts, civil disobedience, and sit-ins. The student power movement could not use the third strategy because the university did not operate on a democratic system and therefore turned to sit-ins, strikes, and disruption as tactics. These lessons were systematically studied and applied to the anti-war movement in an ‘insightful’ (as opposed to trial and error) manner.\textsuperscript{23}

As with the adoption of the previous strategies there was no conscious adoption of the strategy, but rather a development of the strategy out of actions already taken. The first tactic employed widely in this strategy was disruption of the Selective Service System. Earlier the burning of draft cards and the refusal of the Fort Hood Three to obey orders were acts of moral witness. But since more people (especially students) were now faced with the prospect of induction and were willing to engage in acts of moral witness, the possibility existed that sufficient
numbers could be marshalled to disrupt the Selective Service System. The act remained the same, but the presence of so many now changed the intent. 24 The first sit-ins at draft boards occurred in May 1966, but were not very widespread. In the fall of 1966 the first ‘We Won’t Go’ statements were circulated. 25 By 1967 the draft resistance movement became a major section of the anti-war movement.

Draft resistance was not the only aggressive form of protest employed in the fourth strategy. Other forms included a higher level of aggressiveness in demonstrations (e.g. the March on the Pentagon in October 1967), disruption of military and war-related business recruitment on campus (especially DOW Chemical), sit-ins against the university on Vietnam related issues, strikes when the police were brought in, heckling of representatives of the government, and an increasing number of confrontations with the police.

Because most of the movement devoted its energies to electoral politics in 1968, and there was a fear within the movement that too much disruption would hurt the electoral effort, the fourth strategy was put into abeyance in the first half of 1968. The failure of electoral strategy brings about the adoption of the fourth strategy by the entire movement. Starting with the Chicago riots, Humphrey takes the brunt of the strategy with constant and persistent demonstrations and heckling. 26

With the election of Nixon there was some feeling that an attempt should be made to repeat the second channel. There was much opposition to this in the movement, but a compromise was worked out in terms of a national moratorium. The October 15th moratorium combined both the fourth and second strategies at the same time. While it demonstrated the unpopularity of the war it was also intended to bring people out of work and hence by implication was a trial general strike. While the demonstration was very large it did not really halt business. After it failed to end the war, large demonstrations no longer took on their early tone of peaceful demonstrations of the popular will. Now they were employed to disrupt order, and more importantly to punish the decision-maker for specific acts such as the Cambodia incursion and the Christmas bombing. 27

The search for precedents, however, also brings with it a new goal: the creation of socialism. Many of the young radicals, who were deeply involved in the movement, had discarded other aspects of the dominant cognitive map in addition to the map’s legitimate channels. 28 At this point the movement begins to degenerate into various factions, as predicted by the model, with the great middle remaining leaderless. The Progressive Labor party (a Maoist group) emphasizes the worker-student alliance as the only revolutionary tactic and condemns the fourth strategy as counter-revolutionary. The Trotskyites accept the fourth strategy, but see the need for more work with the proletariat. The Revolutionary Youth Movement sees youth as a class and emphasizes the need for more radical action. This group, led by Mark Rudd (of the Columbia Revolt) and Bernadine Dohrn (of the national office of S.D.S.), walk out of the national S.D.S. 1969 convention when it becomes evident that Progressive Labor will win. Thereafter none of the factions has much influence over the anti-war movement as a whole. Most of the movement proceeds on the basis of the fourth strategy without any effective national coordination. In the 1972 election the remnants of the anti-war movement once again turn to electoral politics, primarily because it is an open available channel.

Meanwhile the Revolutionary Youth Movement faction is convinced that in order for the fourth strategy to work it will have to be more radical (aggressive). They form the Weathermen underground which attempts to end the war by destruction of property. A number of bombings down through 1975 are employed to punish the government and large corporations for their policy of imperialism. 29 Although the
Weathermen tactics are more aggressive and clearly more illegal than the public tactics employed in the fourth strategy, they do not constitute a new strategy. They accept the goal, method, and assumptions of the fourth strategy, but introduce a tactic which raises the costs both to participants and to the decision-maker. For this reason a number of the movement’s members who operate on the alternative maps of Marxism and pacifism condemn the fourth strategy. For traditional Marxists, who belong to a centralized party, the fourth strategy appears too adventurous, and hence endangers the building of a truly proletarian revolutionary movement. For traditional pacifists the fourth strategy is much too aggressive. This condemnation is significant in that it supports the proposition that suggests that members who accepted the dominant cognitive map would be more angered by the failure of legitimate channels and hence more predisposed to aggressive strategies. The background of the known members of the Weathermen suggests that they were individuals who had earlier accepted the dominant cognitive map (Sale, 1973: Ch. 24).30

Nevertheless, the creation of a clandestine group that sought to punish the decision-maker and large corporations by bombing is clearly a transitional stage to the most obvious final remaining strategy, the use of violence. This fifth strategy was never employed, however, most likely because the war ended.31 In addition, most members did not view violence as a channel that would lead to their goal, and believed that the pursuit of the fourth strategy at either a moderate or aggressive level would eventually force either the decision-maker or Congress to end the war.

CONCLUSION

The above review of the anti-war movement clearly demonstrates that a learning model is able to fill in the gap between movement formation and movement strife. The application has shown that learning theory can be employed to generate plausible explanations of not only why movements adopt certain strategies, but why they adopt strategies in the order they do. In addition the model is able to explain the appearance of ‘fast’ and ‘slow’ learners. How generalizable the model is to other nations, and whether its propositions can survive systematic testing, remain questions for further research. If this analysis helps stimulate and guide such research it will have served its purpose.

NOTES

1. These points will be elaborated below.

2. Unless otherwise noted, the discussion of stimulus-response theories relies on Raser (1965).

3. This point is elaborated below.

4. The discussion of Tolman relies on Hilgard and Bower (1966: Ch. 7).

5. For empirical evidence on the principle of least effort see Deutsch and Clarkson (1959), Ritchie (1948), Tolman and Honzik (1930) and Zipf (1949). For a mathematical formulation of Tolman’s theory see MacCorquodale and Meehl (1959).

6. The empirical evidence suggests that most middle class children are socialized into the dominant political myth, but that certain disadvantaged or subcultural groups are not (see Jaros et al., 1968 and Weissberg, 1974, Ch. 3).

7. Most divergence usually occurs between the family and the school, and it is possible to interpret many of the recent disputes on schools in this vein. For example, the controversies on textbooks in the West Virginia schools (1974), sex education, school prayers, and Black control of local schools are all attempts by families to prevent divergent cultural and religious socialization.

8. The major critical issues in the U.S. have been slavery, ‘populism,’ and the Great Depression.

9. This last qualification means that if certain channels (such as elections) are only open at certain times, their short term availability will attract attention to them when they are open.

10. For an analysis of the characteristics of critical issues see Sundquist (1973: Ch. 3 & 13).

11. A movement can be defined as a set of individuals who do not belong to a single organization, but are bound together by a common goal and intermittently communicate and identify with
each other. A movement lacks institutional stability in that it does not know who its members are, and no single organization can speak authoritatively for it.

12. A movement might be born radical if members had directly experience an earlier critical issue, and had failed to change policy by employing legitimate channels.

13. Only legitimate strategies will be considered even if some illegitimate ones are 'easier' to employ. This is because only legitimate strategies appear on the cognitive maps.

14. The growing salience of the issue from 1965 on is indicated by a number of polls (Harris, 1973: Ch. 4 & 5; Rosenberg et al., 1970). The fact that participation also grew after 1965 should be self-evident to anyone familiar with recent American history.

15. The State Department was bombed in 1975 to protest continued U.S. aid to the Thieu regime.

16. The model makes this prediction because it assumes that in a fairly homogenous and cohesive society (as the U.S.) most members experience typical socialization, and an issue salient to the entire community will tend to generate movements composed primarily of individuals who accept the dominant map. Conversely, issues that are salient only to a parochial subsection of the population are more apt to generate movements composed primarily of individuals who employ an alternative cognitive map.

17. The composition of the movement is important in explaining the different rates of learning in the movement and the predilection to aggressive behavior. Typically socialized members would appear to be 'slow' learners in the early stages and 'fast' learners in the later stages. Also since they would be more 'shocked' and 'angered' by the failure of legitimate channels they would tend to be more prone to aggressive behavior than either Marxists or pacifists.

18. Keniston (1968) and Flacks (1967) both point out that it is primarily the moralistic-legalistic discrepancy that provides the guiding force among young members of the movement.

19. Persons who occupy positions of political power and come to an anti-war position at a later date do not learn the above lesson and hence employ the first channel again. For example, Fulbright and other Senators who later oppose the war try to rationally persuade Administration of their error by holding open hearings.

20. The polls do not seem to have had much impact on the perceptions of the movement. Like may active in public life they tend to select and emphasize polls that support their position (in this case the polls that show most Americans disapprove the President's handling of the war (Harris, 1973)).

21. The use of the fourth strategy in 1967 is discussed below.

22. In Wilson's (1973) terms the fourth strategy is one type of protest activity. Wilson argues that protest is employed when individuals lack resources with which to bargain.

23. An examination of New Left Notes, the official newspaper of S.D.D., will indicate that the question of tactics was systematically debated within the movement with reference to both these precedents.

24. Lynd (1967) is one of many who consciously argue for a change in intent.

25. Documentation for statements of fact about the draft resistance movement can be found in Teodori (1969: 480-81, 297-318).

26. It seems clear from election returns that if Humphrey had been an anti-war candidate he would have received enough additional votes to have won the election. In this sense the anti-war movement succeeded in punishing the Democratic party.

27. Disruption of order tended to be higher than reported in the media. For example, throughout the fall of 1971 Boston's major universities were effectively closed because of daily bomb threats.

28. Both Adelson (1972) and Teodori (1969) interpret the history of the New Left as a process of moving from youthful idealism to the acceptance of various forms of Marxism.

29. For example, the 1975 bombing of the U.S. State Department was claimed by the Weathermen.

30. Members of the Weathermen seem to have learned their new behavior from the precedent of trying to organize street gangs in Chicago. Mark Rudd and others found that the street gangs respected them and adopted an anti-imperialist position after the SDS people beat up gang members (Speech by Mark Rudd at Boston University, 1968).

31. It was often charged that the fourth strategy and particularly the Weathermen were 'violent.' This position is not accepted here because violence is defined narrowly as the attempt to bring about change by killing people. If violence is defined broadly to include destruction of property (as conservatives do) or injustice (as leftists do with the concept of structural violence) then the concept tends to become a synonym for political
evil. The Weathermen strategy was clearly aimed at the destruction of property and not individuals. Since there is a sufficient distinction between blowing up a building and deliberately killing people (cf. the I.R.A.), the Weathermen are not treated as ‘violent.’ On the problems of defining violence see Walter (1969).

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SUMMARY
This paper is concerned with how individuals and groups become radicalized. While there has been considerable research on why individuals join radical groups and why different groups and individuals engage in violence there has been little attention devoted to why groups adopt non-violent strategies and the relationship between these non-violent strategies and violence.

This paper employs insights derived from learning theory to explain and predict what strategies will be adopted by radical groups and in what sequence they will be adopted given various environmental conditions. A formal model of radical social movements is presented and applied in detail to the American Anti-Vietnam War Movement. The case study lends considerable credence to numerous propositions in the model.