

**A MOVEMENT ANALYSIS OF THE IDAHO CITIZENS ALLIANCE**

**by**

**Jeremy M. Maxand  
Department of Sociology  
Boise State University**

**February 2001**

\*Direct all correspondence to Jeremy M. Maxand, Department of Sociology, Boise State University, Boise, ID 83725

## **INTRODUCTION**

Idaho is considered one of the most politically conservative states in the Union. Consequently, the recent attempts to introduce legislation, such as the 1994 anti-gay initiative, Proposition One, and the 1996 Child Protection Act, are far from unexpected, if not outright anticipated. However, the rise of conservative political organizations, such as the movement this research examines, the Idaho Citizens Alliance (ICA), reveal more than one group's public policy agenda. The ICA, both in its ideology as well as its movement style, is indicative of 1) a shift in the marginalized political power of the Religious Right after WWII to the center stage during the 1980's Reagan era, 2) a political agenda that voices a concern for the perceived destruction of tradition (i.e. values), and 3) a shift from national political campaigns, such as Pat Robertson's Moral Majority, intended to change public policy to local, "grassroots" social movements characteristic of identity politics. The Idaho Citizens Alliance is a conservative, religious movement organization that has formed on the state and local levels with the intent of changing public policy.

## **CONCEPTUALIZATION**

In her work Roads to Dominion: Right-Wing Movements and Political Power in the United States, Sara Diamond traces the history of the Religious Right from the 1940's to the present. Diamond's research has demonstrated how conservative, political organizations have attempted, and in many instances succeeded, in obtaining control of the political apparatus in the United States. A central theme of the Religious Right has been the threat to "Traditional Family Values." The threat to the traditional values and the family has most noticeably been attributed to the Women's Movement and the introduction of the Equal Rights Amendment (ERA) of the 1960's and 1970's, which the Religious Right had successfully participated in impeding (Diamond, 1995). Women, however, were not the sole target of the Religious Right's attempt to preserve traditional family values. "Opposition to civil rights for homosexuals," Diamond (1995) writes, "was the most visceral of the 'pro-family' issues" (p.171). Not until the late

1980's and 1990's, however,

would the Christian Right make the prevention and reversal of gay rights initiatives a center-piece of its activist program. By then, the Christian Right had become organizationally decentralized and locally focused. It was at the local and state level that gay rights organizations were somewhat successful in instituting civil rights protections, and it was at that level that the anti-gay counter-movement responded to concrete legal measures (p. 171).

As Kristin Esterberg and Jeffrey Longhofer (forthcoming) write, “The flowering of a queer social presence in the 1970's and 1980's, combined with what traditionalists perceived as the breakdown of the family, signaled to some religious conservatives that the end times were upon us. In these activists' eyes, the gains of the women's movement and the gay and lesbian rights movement were a clear sign of the need for action” (p. 3). It is precisely this “need for action” that influenced the shift in the use of political power from the national level to the local, more “grassroots” level, something which is characteristic of modern social movements, such as the ICA. Moreover, this tactical shift is also characteristic of what Diamond refers to as the *state interaction* approach, wherein movement organizations, such as the ICA react to the actions of adversaries, in this case, the gay and lesbian community. The ICA, then, is one of many movement organizations that have begun to organize on the state and local level (a reaction to the homosexual communities political success) in an attempt to preserve, through public policy, the traditional family values which they not only fear are endangered, but are directly related to a plethora of other social ills.

The Religious Right cannot, however, be thrown to the wayside as another extremist or fundamental group. Their actions and agenda lend credible insight into the changes that are indicative of the modern world. Their concerns regarding “tradition” are legitimate, even if their direction to resist traditional change is questionable. What, then, is the relationship between tradition and modernity? In his essay Living In a Post-Traditional Society, Anthony Giddens (1994) claims that “Modernity destroys tradition” (p. 91). What Giddens is essentially arguing is that with the advent of science and technology (i.e. Enlightenment), the world has been

transformed from a mixture of isolated, traditional enclaves to a global community wherein the actions of the individual have global consequences and the behaviors of the individual are influenced by phenomena that take place on the other side of the world. Influences such as these have two possible effects on tradition. “Traditions may be discursively articulated and defended - in other words, justified as having value in a universe of plural competing values.” Or, Giddens (1994) observes, “...tradition becomes fundamentalism” (p. 100).

What becomes immediately evident concerning the Religious Right is their reaction to tradition’s struggle for legitimacy. Giddens (1994) draws attention to gender issues as one example:

Take as another instance the case of gender as tradition. Up to and well beyond the threshold of modernity, gender differences were deeply enshrined in tradition and resonant with congealed power. The very absence of women from the public domain suppressed any possibility that masculinity and femininity could be opened out to discursive scrutiny. Today, however, as a result of profound structural changes, combined with the struggles of feminist movements over many decades, divisions between men and women, up to and including the most intimate connections between gender, sexuality and self-identity, are publicly placed in question (p. 106).

If we substitute gender with homosexuality, we see a power struggle between the Religious Right and the gay and lesbian community concerning issues of morality. This struggle has predominately taken place within the public sphere through political debate. With regard to the ICA, this political debate, or “discourse,” appears in legislation and initiatives, such as Proposition One and the Child Protection Act. The struggle to maintain tradition is most clearly taking place on a local level through the employment of the political process of discourse.

As eluded to previously, the political process that the Religious Right is using to influence public policy has also experienced its own detraditionalization - a shift from the national to the local level. Ulrich Beck, in his essay The Reinvention of Politics, argues that the modern world is characterized not so much by the Classical notion of politics (i.e. the governmental political apparatus), but rather through the actions of the individual. Beck refers to

politics on the individual level as “sub-political.” As Beck (1994) observes, “*Sub-politics* is distinguished from ‘politics’ first, in that, agents *outside* the political or corporatist system are allowed to appear on the state of social design...and second, in that not only social and collective agents but individuals as well compete with the latter and each other for the emerging shaping power of the political” (p. 22). The state becomes the mediator, or in Beck’s words, the “round table,” between competing groups or individuals. The political, then, is acted out on a local or state scene wherein citizen action groups, such as the ICA, attempt to gain control of political power and change public policy. William J. Bennett, in his essay The De-Valuing of America: The Fight for Our Culture and Our Children, made this point fairly clear when he said:

Reclaiming our institutions is less a political opportunity than a civic obligation. It involves hard work. But it is work of immense importance. At the end of the day, *somebody’s* values will prevail (ICA News, Oct. 1995, p. 3).

## **METHODOLOGY**

“The increasingly sophisticated organizing of the Religious Right, and the strength of its grassroots organizing networks, pose enormous challenges to those who seek a unified progressive movement,” Esterberg and Longhofer argue (forthcoming, p.18). To counter the Right’s rapid development and increasing political strength, oppositional research needs to be collected. Providing activists with information regarding their opposition allows for adequate strategizing and action on a short, as well as long term, basis. However, the strategies for the short range are far different than those for the long range. The Don’t Sign On/No On One Coalition collected research concerning both. They compiled a variety of publications and documents with the intent of not only creating immediate opposition to the ICA’s initiatives, but also to create a solid information base from which they can plan for the future.

It is this oppositional research which I used, primarily, to frame the ICA as a social movement. The ICA’s opposition, the Don’t Sign On/No On One Coalition, provided me with a great deal of ICA information which they had collected. This included clipped newspaper articles, newsletters distributed by the ICA and other pro-ICA organizations, such as the Idaho

Family Forum. They provided me with a copy of the ICA debate manual, letters from the ICA Chair, Kelly Walton, to his constituency, a survey conducted by a private research firm for the No On One Coalition, the ICA's Statement of Principles and background information on the Religious Right's chief anti-gay researcher and Chairman of the Family Research Institute in Washington, D.C., Dr. Paul Cameron.

I obtained the ICA leadership manual from BSU Sociology Professor Robert Corbin. A discourse analysis of the ICA's rhetoric was provided to me by BSU Sociology Professor Dr. Michael Blain who worked with the author, Joseph DeAngelis, a Sociology student at the time. BSU Professor Dr. Stephanie Witt provided me with the chapter of a book which she and Suzanne McCorkle (Social Science and Public Affairs Interim Dean) edited. The article contained pre- and post-election interviews with both Kelly Walton and the Decline To Sign/No On One Coalition Chair Brian Berquest for the 1994 election year.

I interviewed the Don't Sign On/No On One Coalition Chair Brian Berquest, who provided me with a detailed history of both the ICA and his own organization. I received similar information in an interview with Javier Smith, another Don't Sign On/No On One Coalition member.

The Idaho Secretary of State provided me with the 1994 Voter's Handbook and expenditure and revenue information for the ICA.

## **HISTORICAL DEVELOPMENT**

The roots of the ICA can be traced back to the political unrest in Oregon during the mid 1980's. The Republican senator Bob Packwood was considered a dissenter by his congressional colleagues as a result of his moderate to liberal views concerning women's issues, specifically, on abortion. In 1981 and 1982, Packwood led senate opposition to the recriminalization of abortion. Consequently, national anti-abortion leaders promised to punish Packwood during the next election campaign (Lunch, 1995).

Religious conservatives recruited Joe Lutz, an energetic Baptist Minister, to run in opposition to Packwood. Lutz and his campaign staff (including the soon to be OCA chair, Lon

Mabon) created the Oregon Citizens Alliance. This new political body was an attempt to strengthen both Lutz's campaign, as well as the Christian Right in Oregon (Lunch, 1995).

The Oregon Citizens Alliance, however, had a much larger agenda than simply getting a minister elected to office. "The Oregon Citizens Alliance arose in the late 1980's with the specific mission of fighting gay civil rights" (Diamond, 1995, p. 297).

Leading the OCA, Mabon reacted to an executive order made by Oregon's Democratic Governor, Neil Goldschmidt, which prohibited the discrimination in state government of individuals based on their sexual orientation. The OCA responded with an initiative directed at overturning the Governor's order, claiming that the law provided "special rights" to homosexuals. "Asked what he meant by special rights, Mabon claimed that homosexuals have a 'political agenda,' including establishment of 'minority status,' which he as a Christian was bound to oppose" (Lunch, 1995, p. 232). The initiative passed with 53% of the vote. However, the statute that resulted from the vote was considered unconstitutional in 1993 by the state supreme court.

Regardless of the OCA's failure to eliminate sexual orientation protection in state employment and its failed Measure 9 in 1992 which was a far reaching ballot initiative to prohibit "sexual orientation" protection in state and local government, the OCA demonstrated its political clout and ability to mobilize a constituency that could influence election outcomes. Moreover, Mabon and his anti-gay agenda sparked the "special rights" and "homosexual agenda" discourse that would be used by the ICA in January of 1993.

As an OCA staff member, Kelly Walton gained the organizational and campaign skills necessary to begin Idaho's own citizen alliance. Walton stated:

When I moved back to Idaho in 1990, I had just experienced four years of political activity where I had gone to college in Oregon in the Portland area. I had become very involved in a grassroots organization over there, so I developed some skills in it" (Pitman, Forthcoming, p. 128).

After months of lobbying by friends and family, and as the result of a concern that the direction

of Idaho's public policy was moving to the left, Walton announced the formation of the Idaho Citizens Alliance at the Capital steps on January 13, 1993.

Using the same "special rights" discourse developed by Mabon, the ICA created the "Stop Special Rights Committee" which was essentially a political action committee (PAC) targeting the homosexual community's so called "agenda." Through the referendum process, Walton attempted and succeeded in placing the ICA's Proposition One on the ballot for the 1994 election.

Proposition One attempted to accomplish several things: 1) prohibit special rights based on homosexual behavior, 2) prohibit homosexuals from engaging in same-sex marriages, 3) restrain any public school from endorsing homosexual behavior as a healthy or acceptable life-style, 4) prohibit the state from using funds in any manner that expresses approval of homosexuality, and 5) that no agency of the state shall forbid the consideration of private sexual behaviors as non-job factors (Proposed Title 67, Chapter 80, Idaho Code, 1994). The goal of the ICA in proposing this initiative was to, "...prevent homosexuals from attaining special legal privileges." As well as, "...prevent[ing] the behavior being taught as normal and healthy to [the] kids in primary and secondary education" (Pitman, Forthcoming, p. 130).

Don't Sign On/No On One Coalition member Javier Smith contends that the ICA used the anti-gay proposition as a "wedge-issue." From a movement organizational perspective, for the ICA to be perceived as possessing political power and viability, it needed a definite win that would create a solid constituency and demonstrate to the public that it was able to influence public policy. However, as Brian Berquest pointed out, the ICA has an entire social agenda, such as the economy, environment and education, not just the anti-gay agenda. And as Walton maintained when asked what other movement might he have picked up to demonstrate if not the anti-gay movement, "Other issues that really concern me are education. We are looking at that for the next election" (Pitman, Forthcoming, p. 129).

In order to be placed on the ballot for the 1994 election, the ICA was required to collect approximately 23,000 signatures through the petition process. The ICA was able to collect

approximately 50,000 and of those, 27,000 were valid. With 4,000 signatures to spare, the ICA's anti-gay initiative was ready to be voted on.

The ICA engaged in an aggressive petition campaign which led to their success in placing Proposition One on the ballot. However, as Brian Berquest observed, after the initial petition process, the ICA failed to continue with an aggressive election campaign. This created an opportunity for the ICA's adversaries, the No On One Coalition, to disseminate their message concerning the initiative. As a result of the ICA's opposition being politically mobilized, coupled with the fact that the ICA was no longer engaging in aggressive campaigning, Proposition One lost 49.3% to 50.7% of the vote, approximately 3,000 votes short of winning.

Shortly after the narrow defeat of Proposition One, the ICA announced that it was going to make a second attempt at placing an initiative, similar to the first, on the ballot for the 1996 election cycle. Titled the "Family and Child Protection Act," the ICA's new initiative experienced two changes from their first. "It drops a provision saying a state employee's private sexual behavior wouldn't be a job consideration unless the behavior disrupted the workplace" (Idaho Statesman, 24 June 1995). The Family Child Protection Act also deleted a provision saying that public libraries must keep separate from minors any literature that addresses homosexuality.

Regardless of the changes, the new initiative would still have similar effects as the first in that it: 1) prohibits minority status solely based on homosexual behavior, 2) prohibits any special rights or privileges, such as hiring preferences, solely based on homosexual behavior, 3) prohibits the use of state tax dollars to endorse, encourage or advocate homosexuality, 4) prohibits the sanctioning, authorizing or teaching of homosexuality in public schools; any discussion of homosexuality may only occur on an age-appropriate basis as defined by the local school board, and 5) prohibit homosexuals from engaging in same-sex marriages (Proposed Title 67, Chapter 80, Idaho Code, 1996).

Unlike Proposition One, the Family and Child Protection Act did not receive enough signatures to be placed on the ballot. The ICA was only able to collect approximately 6,000

signatures of the 41,335 needed for the November 1996 election.

## **ICA OPPOSITION**

Created in 1990 as a social support organization for the gay and lesbian community, Your Family, Friends and Neighbors (YFFN) provided educational programs, as well as creating the Gay Pride March in June of 1990. In response to the anticipated formation of the ICA, YFFN spawned Idaho For Human Dignity in February of 1992. This new political organization was a vehicle for working within the larger community. During this same time (March of 1992), another political organization, Idaho For Human Rights, was created and to a large degree, was comprised of progressive activists. As Brian Berquest maintained, Idaho Voices for Human Rights was too focused on social change when what was needed immediately was a political win. In August of 1992, Idaho for Human Dignity and Idaho Voices for Human Rights merged and created the Don't Sign On Political Action Committee. Don't Sign On's staff consisted of individuals from the gay and lesbian community (1/3), persons of faith or religious leaders (1/3), and political activists (1/3). The primary goal of Don't Sign On was to stop Proposition One from making it on the ballot.

Once Proposition One had gathered enough signatures and was officially on the 1994 ballot, Don't Sign On became the No On One Coalition, a political organization created to counter the campaign activity of the ICA during the post-petition campaign.

After the ICA's failure in passing Proposition One and after their announcement of the Family and Child Protection Act, the No On One Coalition made one more transformation. Decline to Sign was the 1995/1996 anti-ICA coalition that was successful in keeping the ICA's new initiative from collecting enough signatures to be placed on the ballot. As of November 1996, the Decline to Sign has been officially converted to Idaho for Basic Rights, which is another political organization whose goal is to resist any future proposed anti-gay legislation.

## **THEORETICAL ANALYSIS**

Social movements, and "sub-politics" in general as argued by Beck (1994), are an influential force in the modern world. As Diamond (1995) observes, "Christian Right leaders

constructed several grassroots organizations, each with different purposes” (p. 243). A theoretical model that allows for a complete understanding of the form and dynamics of social movements, such as the ICA, is necessary in order to interpret historical events, as well as anticipate future changes, changes which in the modern world have a direct impact on our immediate surroundings, and as Giddens argues (1994), have far reaching effects around the world. For the activist, a thorough understanding of how social movements develop is an essential tool for changing the world around us.

In his book Power In Movement, Sidney Tarrow outlines the historical development of the modern social movement, paralleling it with the rise of the nation-state. Tarrow also provides a theoretical model in which we can frame modern social movements and better understand exactly how they operate. Tarrow (1994) argues that movements, “...are better defined as *collective challenges by people with common purposes and solidarity in sustained interaction with elites, opponents and authorities*” (p.3). These forms of collective action, Tarrow argues, requires several things: political opportunity, mobilizing structures, collective action and the framing of a message. It is the intent of this analysis to demonstrate, using Tarrow’s social movement framework, how the ICA is characteristic of the modern movement organization. More specifically, how the ICA is 1) indicative of the strategic political power shift of the Religious Right from the margin to the center during the 1980’s, 2) demonstrating concern for the perceived destruction of the traditional family and values, and 3) indicative of the strategic shift from national to local politics in an attempt to change public policy.

*Political Opportunity Structure.* By political opportunity, Tarrow is referring to, “...dimensions of the political environment that provide incentives for people to undertake collective action by affecting their expectations for success or failure” (1995, p. 85). Changes in the political opportunity structure may be the result of a variety of social, political or economic changes on a local or a global level. Political opportunity theorists place great emphasis on a groups ability to mobilize external resources as a factor influencing the rise in opportunity for collective action.

Tarrow expands on what he considers the four most salient changes in the opportunity structure, of which I will use one: unstable alignments. Unstable alignments, created by social, political or economic change, has the ability to create instability in political relationships. As Tarrow maintains, “The changing fortunes of governmental and opposition parties, especially when they are based on new coalitions, create uncertainty among supporters, encourage challengers to try to exercise marginal power and may induce elites to compete for support from outside the polity” (1995, p. 87).

I will argue that two significant changes took place in the State of Idaho which created a political opportunity for the ICA: The creation of the Gay Pride March by YFFN and the unrest created as a result of lesbian speakers making a presentation in a Meridian High School classroom.

Your Family Friends and Neighbors (YFFN), formed in 1990 as a social support group for the gay and lesbian community, provided not only education, but also created the Gay Pride March. The march took place (as it still does today) in downtown Boise and is usually well documented by the media. The march had the effect of not only bringing the gay community together in a form of celebration, but it also provided the anti-gay community with the opportunity to create the perception of an anti-traditional family values mob attempting to rise-up as a political power. As the march persisted through the next several years, the level of hate and potential violence toward the event escalated. During the event, scores of protesters with picket signs and blow horns line the city streets with words of anger and distrust. The march, then, became a sign of the potential threat to the family which the ICA utilized in their campaigns.

The second political opportunity arose when in 1992, three lesbians arrived at a Meridian High School government class to make presentations and answer questions (a fundamental preacher was to present the following day). In response, the teacher in question was suspended and two lengthy school board meetings with nearly 1,000 members of the community arrived, half in protest and half in support of the teachers actions. As a result, the ICA targeted the Idaho Education Association (IEA) as a leftist institution trying to dismantle the American family. In a

November 1996 letter from Kelly Walton to his constituency titled “Liberals Slip and Let Their True Colors Show!,” the ICA demonstrates their use of the IEA as a justification for their initiatives. “As I contemplated this startling admission of the political left’s design for public education [referring to the National Education Association’s (NEA) support for a celebration of a Lesbian and Gay History Month], an equally startling conclusion hit me: THE FOUR ICA FAMILY VALUE INITIATIVES ATTACK THE ABOVE PROBLEM IN A WAY NO SINGLE EFFORT COULD DO!”

It appears fairly clear that high-profile events, such as the march and lesbian speakers in the school system, provided the ICA with a political opportunity to disrupt, in a sense, the preexisting alignments within the community. The extremism of the ICA forced many to choose sides with regard to the educational system and the issue of homosexuality. Framing these events as a threat to the family allowed the ICA to demonstrate, in a more tangible way, the active participation of the gay and lesbian community in the lives of not only those watching the march, but also of the children who were exposed to the speakers in Meridian.

*Mobilizing Structures.* A second element of social movements is what Tarrow refers to as mobilizing structures. There are three different aspects of movement organizations: formal organization, the organization of collective action and the actual mobilizing structures (Tarrow, 1995). Individually and in combination, these three aspects greatly influence the form and direction of modern social movements, such as the ICA.

By far the most dominant meaning of the term movement organization is what is referred to as a formal organization. This has been defined as, “...a complex, or formal, organization that identifies its goals with the preferences of a social movement or countermovement and attempts to implement those goals” (Tarrow, 1995, p.135). When examining the ICA, we see that it does in fact identify its goals with a social movement, the anti-gay movement by the Christian Right which is supportive of the fight to preserve traditional family values. Evidence of the traditional family values movement is most clearly seen in ICA newsletters and other publications from organizations such as the Christian Coalition, the Idaho Family Forum, the Family Research

Council and Focus on the Family. They repeatedly raise the issue of the homosexual agenda and cultural degeneracy.

The second aspect of movement organizations is the organization of collective action. This Tarrow (1994) argues, "...is the form by which confrontation with antagonists are carried out" (p. 135). These forms of collective action are either controlled by the formal organization or are completely autonomous from them.

The third aspect of movement organizations are the mobilizing structures, "...that link leaders with the organization of collective action - center with periphery - permitting movement coordination and allowing movements to persist over time" (Tarrow, 1995, p.136).

The ICA, as a formal organization, is modeled after the military in that it functions as a rigid hierarchy. The ICA Leadership Manual outlines their philosophy, goals and organizational structure. It contends that the ICA, "...is fashioned after a military model because we are at war with the forces of evil in our culture" (p. 4). Differentiating between times of tranquility and times of war, the ICA arguing for the latter, "...[we] must have a commander who is trusted by those who serve under him and who has the authority to make the difficult on-the-spot choices needed to win" (ICA Leadership Manual, p. 4).

The ICA's structure exists to facilitate leadership on a state, regional, county and local level. State leadership consists of a chairman, vice-chairman and nine departmental directors, including coalition, business, communications, education, finance, legal, membership, political and research. Together, these nine departmental directors make-up the executive staff. Regional coordinators, appointed by the vice-chair, are essentially responsible for supervising the activities of county chapters, recruiting and training assistants and assisting in the building of the counties command structure and grassroots network. Leadership on the county level is conducted by county directors who are elected by the members of the county chapter, an elected deputy director and nine appointed departmental directors (consistent with the state executive staff).

Consistent with the shift observed by Diamond and Beck, the ICA, and other religious movement organizations, are aware of the effectiveness of grassroots organizing. The ICA

Leadership Manual states quite clearly that the, “ICA’s most effective political work is carried out through its grassroots network in each county. This network is the heart of the organization” (p.11). The ICA divides each county (of which there are 44) into what are called political areas. These areas are then divided into 8-12 political precincts. Area captains supervise political areas and are responsible for recruiting, training and motivating precinct captains. They are also responsible for recruiting and training an assistant area captain.

Directly below the precinct captain is the neighborhood captain. This individual holds the position closest to the citizenry and is responsible for presiding over approximately 40 homes in their neighborhood. Their responsibilities include door-to-door tabloid and literature delivery, yard sign placement and hosting neighborhood house meetings. County political area church contacts work directly beneath the county coalition director and preside over churches in a county political area. The church contacts are, “...responsible for motivating and encouraging their church contacts, passing on phone messages, distributing campaign literature and material to church contacts and keeping the church contact informed” (ICA Leadership Manual, p. 13).

Tarrow (1994) argues that an effective organization is one which, “...[is] based on autonomous and interdependent social networks linked by loosely coordinated mobilizing structure” (p. 136). The ICA appears to be more rigid than what Tarrow suggests. A military style hierarchy is characteristic of the ICA’s mobilizing structure, linking the center, or state leadership, with the regional, county, precinct and neighborhood leaders. This ensures an efficient line of communication for both information and action. However, it appears that the most significant form of autonomy and social networking is found only in the church contacts.

*Collective Action.* Acting collectively is an effective means of changing the world around us. It may be as non-violent as a public demonstration or it may take the form of a physically dangerous incident in which many are killed. Tarrow (1994) argues that, “The power of collective action results from three possible characteristics - challenge, uncertainty and solidarity” (p. 3). The first characteristic, challenge, is the ability of a group to challenge authorities, opposition or elites. Through the referendum process, the ICA was essentially

challenging the gay and lesbian community. The challenge became a race for signatures, and finally, a battle over the most influential political campaign.

Uncertainty refers to a group's ability to create concern with regard to the length, degree and breadth of collective action. For instance, the ICA created uncertainty when it purposefully waited to turn in all of the signatures for the Proposition One initiative. This tactic created a certain level of uncertainty with the opposition or the Don't Sign On campaign. Uncertainty can also be created if an organization's perceived potential for collective action escalates. The ICA has essentially created a level of uncertainty by stating that their third attempt at anti-gay legislation will appear in the form of a bill, rather than an initiative. If in fact this is true, the ICA will have taken the political game out of the public sphere (in comparison to the referendum process) and placed it into the chambers of Congress. Uncertainty also creates a fear that a movement will spread to other constituencies. As Tarrow (1994) points out, "...it is not antiabortion protesters but 'Christians' who oppose abortion; not workers who are hit by layoffs at a particular factory but 'the working class' that goes out on strike; not those who suffer from a visible environmental hazard, but 'the interests of the planet' that suffer from pollution" (p. 102). The ICA uses this same tactic in their rhetoric to create the illusion of a wide constituency base throughout the state. Rather than talking specifically about those individuals who support their movement, the ICA speaks in terms of all Idaho families.

Solidarity, the third characteristic, is also necessary for a successful outcome. Maintaining cohesion within a movement organization will ensure that the movement's message is distributed and the ability to mobilize individuals for collective action exists. Movements that are unable to create a sense of solidarity among its members will eventually fail in meeting their goals.

When we speak of collective action, we are not only referring to the necessary characteristics which influence the success of a movement, but we are also referring to what Tarrow calls the modular repertoire of collective action. The modular repertoire is somewhat of a tool chest for movement organizations. They are the tactical or strategic actions, such as the

barricade or demonstration, which movement organizations employ to challenge the authorities, opposition or elites.

The ICA employed a variety of tactics during their 1994 and 1996 political campaigns. Because the ICA was working within the referendum process, the most essential, at least initially, form of collective action was the petition. In order for Proposition One and the Family and Child Protection Act to even be voted on by the public, it had to first collect enough signatures during the initial petition process. The petition process included door-to-door campaigning, asking for signatures at state fairs and sending petitions to those who requested them from ICA newsletters.

In addition to the petition, the ICA used the press conference, direct mail and television and radio ads. However, as Brian Berquest noted, "...my off-the-cuff glance at the Citizen's Alliance would be that they didn't do a lot of the long-term planning; and when they got past the signature gathering, it was kind of like, 'Oh my gosh, we have to do a campaign now'" (Pitman, forthcoming, p.144). As a result of the ICA's inability to mobilize actors in a more campaign oriented form of collective action, the No On One Coalition dominated the political arena with anti-ICA propaganda and eventually were victorious in defeating both Proposition One and The Family and Child Protection Act.

*Framing Collective Action.* The mobilization of social movements includes not only collective action, but also what Tarrow refers to as symbolic mobilization. A movement's message or "agenda" must be mobilized and brought to the public's eye, just as the petition or demonstration does, to legitimate their actions. The meaning within this message, however, exists not within a vacuum, but rather is constructed through interaction with authorities, elites, and with regard to the ICA, through interaction with their opposition, the gay and lesbian community. The "agenda" or discourse becomes a power strategy wherein one group, through the employment of language, attempts to change their environment in opposition to another group.

Movements often frame their collective action in terms of warfare. As Blain (1994)

observes, "...the tradition of social movements is genealogically derived from the Western practice of warfare" (p. 807). Moreover, the terminology that is employed in the sociological analysis of social movements, such as tactics, mobilization and strategy, are derived from military terminology. Movements not only frame their collective action in terms of a "battle" or "war," they must also construct themselves as, "...ethical agents *and* strategic power subjects" (Blain, 1994, p. 806). This requires the creation of a melodrama wherein one group of actors, the heroes, are in a power struggle with another group of actors, the villains. Blain (1994) argues that, "A rhetoric of movement motives must function to differentiate the field of action into heroic, moral protagonists locked into battle with villainous antagonists" (p. 806). For a movement to be successful, it must do two things:

- 1) *Constitute a field of knowledge* - argue the truth of a problem, an injustice or a danger in a convincing way, including a knowledge of the subjects and objects of struggle.
- 2) *Constitute an ethics* - argue the solutions in an activating way, including the vilification of opponents as malevolent power subjects and heroization of activists as moral agents and power subjects. This knowledge-ethic is "tactical in the sense that it is designed to arouse moral outrage at opponents' actions and practices, and to goad the outraged into action (Blain, 1994, p. 808).

Blain draws on the work of Kenneth Burke's victimage rhetoric in understanding the dynamics of the social movement. Burke is essentially arguing that a movement must both vilify opponents, such as scapegoating, and activate opposition to those opponents.

The movement melodrama is accomplished in two distinct instances. The first involves the vilification of the enemy and the victimization of potential activists. The villains are framed as though they are in a position of power, dominating or oppressing the potential activists in some way. Once this scene has been played out and symbolically mobilized so as to motivate activism, the social movement then inverts the power relationship between the villains and the victims. During the second scene of the movement melodrama, the victims become the "heroes" and take back the position of power in the relationship with the villains. Moreover, the villains

are reframed as “enemies” and serve as the target for activism.

Research conducted by Joseph De Angelis (1995) demonstrates how Burke’s victimage ritual was constructed and employed through language by the ICA with the intent of passing Proposition One, and in 1996, the Child and Family Protection Act. De Angelis identifies four different discourse clusters that the ICA used to vilify the gay and lesbian community. These included political, social, religious and biomedical clusters (De Angelis, 1995, p. 10). The political cluster targeted the homosexual community’s attempt to gain “special rights” and “minority status.” These in themselves being potential avenues in which the gay and lesbian community could get the “upper hand” over the heterosexual community, essentially creating a power imbalance. The social cluster identified the gay and lesbian lifestyle as something which they did not want promoted to their children. The religious cluster framed homosexuality as an act of sin, something that goes against the word of God, and is immoral and Un Christian. The last cluster, biomedical, argues that gays and lesbians are unhealthy, destructive, abnormal, unnatural, pedophiles, promiscuous and directly related to the spread of the disease AIDS.

It is also important to understand that the ICA not only vilified the gay and lesbian community with what De Angelis refers to as clusters, they also created the perception that homosexuality was a direct threat to the families and children of America. This is a recurrent theme in all of the ICA campaign literature and creates a victim image of those the ICA was attempting to mobilize.

It becomes apparent, then, that the ICA, in symbolically mobilizing their movement, attempted to create a victim/villain dichotomy with the intent of emotionally mobilizing individuals, out of fear, to change public policy through the exercising of political power.

## **CONCLUSION**

In conclusion, the Idaho Citizens Alliance, as well as the Oregon Citizens Alliance, demonstrates quite clearly through their 1994 and 1996 attempts at exercising political power that the Religious Right has changed their political strategy from the national level (i.e. Moral Majority) to the local, more “grassroots” avenue for policy change. Moreover, political

struggles, as outlined by Blain (1994), frame their collective action within the victim/villain dichotomy in an attempt to mobilize activists for a particular cause, such as the anti-gay ICA legislation. Understanding social movement dynamics, and more generally the changes that Giddens and Beck (1994) argue are indicative of the modern world, are important for predicting the future of our society, as well as opposing potential oppression.

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