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THE IMPACTS OF THREAT AND EMOTIONS ON INDIGENOUS MOBILIZATION: AN INVESTIGATION OF ASSUMPTIONS IN SOCIAL MOVEMENT THEORY

by

MARSHALL JEFFRIES

Under the Direction of Dr. Griff Tester

ABSTRACT

After its abandonment in the 1980s, threat has re-emerged as an area of theoretical importance in understanding social movement mobilization (Jasper 1998). This case study examines the role of threat in mobilizing members of a movement to empower the Occaneechi Band of the Saponi Nation (a small tribal community in NC). The study explores threats and the emotions that make them up, while also investigating the relevance of other prominent assumptions embedded in mobilization theories. The study employed mixed methodologies including focus groups, individual interviews, and participant observation. Findings supported the idea that threats may be partially responsible for creating mobilization, but also suggest that prominent threats faced by this community complicate the ways in which threat is understood. The findings also shed light on limitations of the prominent Weber-Michels model for movement growth/decline, and highlight potential areas of interest for future research with Indigenous communities.

INDEX WORDS: Social movements, Threat, Mobilization, Collective action, Activism, Indigenous, American Indian, Formalization, Collective Identity

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MARSHALL JEFFRIES

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May 2012

DEDICATION

This thesis is dedicated to my mom for believing in me from the start. This work is also dedicated the Occaneechi Band of the Saponi Nation, those living, the Hoacianonc (the Old Ones), and those that have yet to come. Biwa Yesáh!

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CHAPTER I:

INTRODUCTION

Threat

Many recent social movement scholars have called for the reintroduction of threat in order to understand collective action mobilization (Jasper 1998, Goodwin et al. 2000, Yang 2000, Summers-Effler 2002, Van Dyke et al. 2004, Tester 2004, Goodwin & Jasper 2006, Gould 2009, Maher 2010). An often overlooked explanation for mobilization argued by scholars like Tester (2004) and Maher (2010) is that the emotions tied to threat encourage actors to participate in collective resistance in situations necessitating immediate action. Tester (2004) and Maher (2010) both examined threats wherein a failure to act immediately would have likely resulted in physical death. This study found that the threat of cultural disappearance was woven throughout participant narratives, along with the threat of facing unnecessary consequences resulting from movement participation. In this paper, I examined the emotions invoked by threat in group and individual narratives of activism.

Movement Decay

Another theoretical assumption intentionally investigated in this study is that put forth by the Weber-Michels Model. This model predicts that the institutional formalization of a social movement leads to the decline of the movement and a mainstreaming of its tactics (Zald & Ash 1966). Though the original thesis of the Weber-Michels Model is dated, it continues to be cited as an important premise of social movement theory (McAdam 1996). The OBSN movement deepens our understanding of the limitations for the application of this model. According to group accounts, growth was experienced in participation and tactical diversification after the movement achieved state recognition, becoming a formalized Social Movement Organization (SMO). However, the specific nature of this growth contradicts traditional models for radical political action, as the State was no longer a direct target after 2002. Movement tactics became centered on creating internal change to strengthen the community from

within. According to proponents of the Weber-Michels model, this would signal the decay in the tactical effectiveness of the movement organization (Staggenborg 1988); however, members of the community understand the movement to have become more radical after the goals turned inward.

Background on the Movement

The Occaneechi Band of the Saponi Nation is a small American Indian community in North Carolina. In 1984, a small group of concerned Yesáh[1]/Occaneechi people from Pleasant Grove/Little Texas (the home of the Occaneechi people since the 1780's) banded together to form the Eno-Occaneechi Indian Association in response to rapid disappearance of public American Indian consciousness and culture within the community, and absolute neglect by the State (OBSN 2012). The Eno-Occaneechi Indian Association was not the first attempt to empower an Indigenous identity in the community; however, it was the first documented attempt to organize the community since 1934. By all accounts, the Indigenous population in the area was largely assimilated on the surface and many members of the community did not publicly identify as American Indian. A few reasons for this are possible racist repercussions, specific laws regulating racial identity, and a growing disconnection from Occaneechi history.

Through work with historians and archaeologists, the Eno-Occaneechi Indian Association changed its name to the Occaneechi Band of the Saponi Nation to better match the history of the tribe. Under this new name, the organization petitioned the state for tribal recognition in 1990. Tribal recognition was granted through a NC Supreme Court decision in 2002, making the OBSN the eighth and smallest state-recognized American Indian tribe in North Carolina (OBSN 2012). At this time, the focus of movement's tactics shifted away from targeting legislation and State structures toward creating educational initiatives for Occaneechi people and neighboring communities. The goals of these new

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[1] Yesáh is the traditional name of the Occaneechi people, meaning "the people" in the Tutelo-Saponi language

tactics involved educating and empowering the community itself as well as the larger non-Indian community about the history and culture of the tribe, countering the pervasive assimilationist drive of colonialism and the erasure of Indigenous peoples in the region. The tribe also sought to acquire communal land and restore tradition and language.

Like other movements focused on empowering collective identities, respondents expressed that the primary goal of the movement is to empower a collective identity for its members, the Yesáh people, and increase the resources available to the community. This goal has most often manifested in historical and cultural education initiatives aimed at creating solidarity, meaning, and purpose within the movement. By creating and strengthening a collective Occaneechi identity, the movement hopes to build a stronger front to interrupt whitewashing and erasure of Indigenous peoples from the social landscape of the region. In this paper, I discuss the complex relationship between mobilization, threat, and tactical change in this movement. In combination with spirituality and collectivity, threat not only creates participation in the community, but is also used as a recruitment strategy by movement leadership. I will also argue that this movement differs from most within mainstream social movement literature because each mobilizing factor (i.e. threat, opportunity, resources) is mediated by spirituality. Friedman and McAdam (1992), Klandermans (1992), Tarrow (1992), Taylor and Whittier (1992), and Polletta and Jasper (2001), all demonstrate that a core set of collective beliefs are central to the social construction of a movement, and understanding how identity is created and functions within movement communities is essential to understanding all mobilization and recruitment processes. Literature on collective identity, as Polletta and Jasper (2001) pointed out, is also bereft of non-Western representation, and is therefore also missing a spiritual component and conflates culture with movement ideology alone. With that said, employing collective identity scholarship proved to be necessary to understand collective responses to and interpretations of the threat of cultural disappearance even though this was not anticipated in the original theoretical framework.

Research Questions

1. Do threats faced by the community lead to an increase in participation? How, specifically, did threats impact mobilization?

2. Did formalization (becoming a state-recognized tribe) impact the level of community participation in the movement?

CHAPTER II:

THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

Scholarship on Threat

For several decades after the 1970s, it was generally accepted within social movement literature that the decision to mobilize was based more on economic and political cost-benefit analyses; emotions were not a part of this equation (Jasper, 1998). Before the flight from emotions, Tilly (1978) referred to group threat as "an invasion, an economic crisis, a major attempt by landlords, the state, or someone else to deprive them of resources" (206). He credited both opportunity and threat for creating mobilization but argued that a certain amount of threat was essential (Tilly 1978). On threat and opportunity (and the relationship between the two) he wrote "the more of either, the more collective action" (Tilly 1978, 135). He explained that threat is more important in creating mobilization because actors are more likely to mobilize around perceived losses than gains (Tilly 1978). This view is not necessarily in opposition with rational choice theory (the premise of cost-benefit and opportunity-based theories). Instead, Tilly (1978) argued that emotions tied to threat should be inserted as a part of one's rational decision to participate. In this study, I sought to understand the types of threats present in the Occaneechi community, and to understand their potential impacts on mobilization.

Further identifying what constitutes threat, Van Dyke et al. (2004) add that threat can occur as a result of any major social change and the uncertainties that change produces. It is true that not all threats are equal, and some threats are certainly more immediate than others. While some involve an economic or political loss, others may invoke an imminent or certain death (Tilly 1978, Tester 2004, & Maher 2010). Beyond posing a mere challenge to a group's resources, Tester (2004) and Maher (2010) explored threats involving the prospect of imminent death without intervention. In Tester's (2004) study, for instance, the threat of death from HIV combined with government neglect created a sense of urgency that made mobilization essential to the physical life and well-being of a community perishing from the illness.

While related, threat and emotions are theoretically distinct. Threats are manifested in emotional responses to perceived loss, depravation, or risk (Tilly 1978, Jasper 1998). Jasper (1998) explained that the primary emotions relevant to mobilization were "frustration, anger, alienation, and anomie" (397-8). Jasper (1998) and Yang (2000) pointed out that emotions need not necessarily be negative emotions. Yang (2000) mentioned feelings of compassion, pride, and love as possible reactions to perceived loss and threat (Yang 2000). Jasper (1998) did not argue that emotions are separate from rationality; instead, like Tilly (1978), he understood that emotions mediate and impact rational decisions. Thoits (1989), a prominent theorist on the sociology of emotions, asserted that emotions should be understood as not only causal, but as mediators and outcomes of human behavior as well. All of the emotions understood to be relevant to threat were examined in order to understand how they might have impact group mobilization in the OBSN.

At the time that Jasper (1988) urged researchers to reintroduce the sociology of emotions into social movement theory, cultural paradigms for understanding collective action dominated. These theories, according to him, focused on the actions of social movement participants from the lenses of "identity, injustice frames, cognitive liberation, and others" (Jasper 1998, 398). For Jasper, the division between choice and emotion involved the erroneous assumption that emotions are immediately irrational, and the favoring of cognitive rational choices over emotional ones. He explained that emotions are inextricably tied to rational decisions to participate (Jasper 1998). However, Tilly (1978) argued that it takes a delicate combination of opportunity and threat to create mobilization, and Jasper (1998) reminds researchers that decisions to mobilize are both cognitive and emotional. Because opportunity and threat are both central to mobilization, opportunities created by a changing political environment evidenced by the abolition of many race laws affecting American Indians and the achievement of state-recognition for the OBSN, were explored in combination with threat.

Interrogating the explicit connection between threat, emotions, and mobilization, Tester (2004) found threat to be a primary determinant of the decision to mobilize AIDS activists in the early 80s, most

importantly people personally affected by HIV/AIDS. Investigating respondent's reasons for mobilizing, he found that the political opportunities that impacted the ability to mobilize for these activists were mainly the result of gains made by activists within the gay and AIDS-affected community itself. Because the political opportunity created by state-recognition was a result of OBSN activism, Tester's (2004) study could provide a useful framework for understanding the context of this opportunity.

Building on the work of Tilly (1978), Tester (2004) found that the threat of imminent death was a primary motivation for these activists' involvement, and while opportunity was important, threat seemed to be more central to action. Like Tester (2004), Maher (2010) also explicitly studied threat and mobilization. His study investigated effects of the threat of imminent death in mobilizing WWII concentration camp prisoners in rebellious action against Nazi forces (Maher, 2010). Using secondary data from death camp records, he examined resistance and collective action from the perspective of calculated level of perceived threat and lethality within these prison-camp environments (Maher 2010). He argued that when the threat of death was imminent, groups in the camps would most often resist (Maher 2010). He explained that in order to act, groups must perceive the threat of inaction to be worse than the threat of potential consequences (Maher 2010). Indeed, this process is a rational one. However, emotions such as fear and anger are deeply embedded in this cognitive process (Jasper 1998). Maher (2010) stated, "Future analyses may find that identifying perceptions of threat is helpful for explaining broader contentious processes, such as transitions from individual to collective resistance" (Maher 2010, 269). These two studies demonstrate that not all threats are equal, and that perceived outcomes must be devastating enough to tip the scales over the risk required to mobilize. This could prove useful in understanding how some threats may lead to collective action while others may not.

The work of Tester (2004) and Maher (2010) remind us that there are several types of threats. As Tilly (1978) noted, there is the threat of invasion, economic crisis, or attempts by powerful parties to deprive a group of resources. OBSN narratives pointed to other types of threat, namely the threat of cultural disappearance and the threat of racist repercussions that could result from participation in the

movement or publicly identifying as Occaneechi. In this study, the threat of cultural disappearance involves fear of becoming culturally indistinguishable from mainstream society by losing touch with history, culture, language, etc. This type of erasure has been a goal of the State for centuries, and assimilationist and genocidal policies were created to increase the speed in which this process would occur. This threat of disappearance is not unrelated to Tilly's (1978) invasion or depravation of resources, but it also cannot be encapsulated by those concepts. Unlike a direct challenge to a groups resources or an invasion of a territory, this threat involves a much more subtle and abstract attack. The colonialist mentality becomes so engrained that the opposition becomes difficult to define as well; in other words, the State is not the only group responsible for reinforcing cultural assimilation. The threat of racist repercussions is similar to the balance of threat of death versus threat of failing to successfully resist in concentration camps that Maher (2010) studied, only with less immediate and lethal consequences.

Movement Decay and the Weber-Michels Model

As commonplace in Social Movement literature as the flight from emotion is the assumption put forth by the Weber-Michels Model that SMO formalization leads to decline (Zald & Ash 1966). Zald and Ash (1966) explained that a social movement organization is the result of the institutionalization of a social movement through the establishment of an economic base with a bureaucratic structure that serves to maintain the movement (Zald & Ash 1966). This institutionalization took place in the OBSN movement when state-recognition was achieved for the tribe, and an elected tribal council became the container for the movement. According to these theorists explanation of the dominant Weber-Michels model, the institutional creation of an SMO basically ensures that the movement will decline, become less diverse, and less radical in their tactical approaches. Zald and Ash (1966), in particular, were interested in the relationship between the professionalization process, "goal transformation," and negative impacts on membership and tactics (Zald and Ash 1966, 327). This study investigated goal transformation that took place after 2002, and differences in tactical approaches that resulted from this transformation.

Attempting to challenge the Weber-Michels model, Zald and Ash (1966) explored the necessary conditions under which SMO growth, decline, diversification, and mainstreaming occurs, and created a list of 15 propositions for the goal transformation and tactical shifts of SMOs (Zald & Ash 1966). Several components embedded in their propositions are relevant to this case study, but offer conflicting predictions about the OBSN movement. Their propositions suggest, according to some conditions, that the OBSN movement would be insulated from pressures to transform goals, and other propositions suggest they would become more conservative after formalization. Goal transformation was almost always viewed as detrimental (Zald & Ash 1966). Their work defends the significance of the Weber-Michels model in most cases.

While Zald and Ash (1966) alluded to many conditions that could result from formalization, professionalization itself was not always clearly positive or detrimental. However, as lead proponents of the once dominant resource mobilization model, McCarthy and Zald (1977) made the argument that formalization was essential for management of resources and maintenance of membership. Zald and Ash (1966) also pointed to this necessity in terms of a movement's longevity. Within McCarthy and Zald's (1977) resource mobilization model, however, the success of an SMO would depend on its ability to gain access to stable financial resources because sustained resources create security and stability. The OBSN has functioned on very little funding and continues to rely mostly on volunteer labor and indigenous resources. This poses a potential challenge to this assumption because the movement usually persists when resources become scarce or disappear. It is here that I look toward threat for potential answers in understanding how and why it might be the case that mobilization still occurs when resources and opportunity decrease because many mainstream models wherein mobilization is largely determined by access to resources or fractures in the political system that create opportunities for structural change (McCarthy & Zald 1977, McAdam 1996).

Staggenborg (1998) echoed some of McCarthy and Zald's (1977) key propositions. She studied the formalization of pro-choice movements. She argued that contrary to models put forth by resource

mobilization theory, when an organization develops formal structures to professionalize the movement, the result is de-radicalization of the tactics and dampening of participation (Staggenborg 1988). She explores the consequences of formalization in pro-choice movements and provides reasons to explain why these movements experienced decline after formalization (Staggenborg 1988). She concluded that formal movement leaders are not innovative in tactics because of the need to be professional, and SMO activities become trapped within the means allowed by the larger institutions of power (Staggenborg 1988). She further suggested that professional movement leaders are not as likely to invoke grievances in order to mobilize (Staggenborg 1988). In other words, because activism becomes confined by institutional means, protest and insurgency are diminished, eventually leading to a decrease in participation. However, she does argue that formalization increases the lifespan of a movement, but makes it less effective as a result (Staggenborg 1988). Implicit in her argument is the understanding that the radical nature of a movement is understood in terms of its protest and insurgency against state power structures. In other words, in order to be radical, the state must be the primary target. The OBSN complicates this assumption.

CHAPTER III:

METHODOLOGY

Talking Circles and Culturally-Informed Data Collection

As my primary method of collecting data, I employed semi-structured focus groups (talking circles). Though barely spoken, the Tutelo-Saponi language (the traditional language of the Occaneechi and their Yesáh relatives), is the embodiment of the traditional worldview and culture of the Yesáh people. This language does not distinguish between "I" and "we." Jervis et al. (2006) referred to the work of memory in Native communities as collective or cultural memory. Wilson (2008) also explained that Indigenous communities function as collective groups. Group dialogues are best suited to interpret the individual and collective decisions to participate in the OBSN movement by capturing the collective nature of the culture of the movement. Because of the cultural emphasis on collective memories, individual interview narratives are much less useful. Two individual semi-structured interviews were also used, one because of difficulties in scheduling, and the other because of the decision to include a tenured activist and veteran member of the movement.

These interviews were supplemented with ethnographic fieldnotes and participant observation. This allowed me to identify the emotions identified by Jasper (1998) and Yang (2000) to be related to threat without the participants necessarily having to state each emotion. This method was useful in understanding emotional expression, from joy and pride, to anger or grief (observations were common throughout each interview). Participant observation took place before, during, and after each interview. For example, I sat with John Blackfeather Jeffries, his wife Lynette, and their house guests discussing the movement for over an hour before we relocated to do his interview. After that particular interview, I also remained there with him to have tea and we continued to discuss his life's work. When and if relevant details were discussed, they were noted in the fieldnotes. Much caution was used to avoid allowing any sensitive or potentially harmful details written in the fieldnotes while cameras were not recording from

appearing in the final document; however, such details were used in the analysis process to contextualize and clarify interview data whenever appropriate or necessary. As an additional safeguard, participants were also made aware that I was taking notes during this time.

The use of talking circles was important because cultural accountability was an intentional aspect of the research design. As informed by tribal tradition, members of this community already engage in group dialogue using talking circles when addressing issues within the community. Health Circle, youth group, and various other committee meetings within the tribe use variations of this traditional style of communication. In respect of equality, meeting tables are round and all participants face one another. At many events where youth are involved, the talking circles consist of two concentric rings with the youth in the centermost ring, encircled by their elders. These circles speak and respond to one another, creating a multi-generational mutual learning and sharing environment that encourages active listening.

Wilson (2008) referred to talking circles themselves as Indigenous methodologies that incorporate "relational accountability" (39). Similarly, referring to his work with Alaskan Natives, Picou (2000) describes talking circles as a "culturally sensitive mitigation strategy" that can be incorporated into sociological practice (77). Talking circles can function as culturally accountable forms of focus groups. This is important because as Wilkinson (1999) reminds researchers, traditional methodologies (in the academic sense) have "poorly served" "underrepresented social groups" (283), so this culturally sensitive mitigation is vitally important.

I personally facilitated the interviews using video and audio equipment to record the sessions, which I then transcribed after the collection. There were 8 focus groups and 2 individual interviews. No individual was interviewed twice. The use of video recording was essential to this study for two reasons. First, accurately transcribing group interviews with audio files alone is difficult at best. However, to aid the speed of transcription, I used audio recordings which are easier to navigate during the transcription process (Angrosino 2007). Second, because the study of emotions was an intentional aspect of the

research design, it was important to capture more than just audio. Body language and facial gestures are important for analysis of emotion in qualitative research (Angrosino 2007). All but one of these circles included 3 persons including the facilitator. One of the talking circles had 5 participants including the facilitator. The study design involved larger talking circles but because all movement participants were volunteers, and most of the respondents expressed frustration with the current economic situation, navigating work schedules was difficult (one youth even stated that he had been working 60 hours per week). Morgan (1996) suggests that 4 to 6 sessions are a sufficient amount, and that more is unnecessary because the data is generally saturated after this amount of focus groups. I began to notice saturation at the fifth of 10 total interviews.

Because emotions were an important part of this study, I made an attempt to observe and record instances where emotion was discussed or invoked. Yang (2000) discussed the importance of examining visible emotion invoked during conversations held with movement participants. He wrote, "Emotions may be observed in various forms-muscle movements, gestures, tones of speech, narratives of emotions, and many others" (558). Because of this, I used recommendations for participant observation with the use of ethnographic fieldnotes made by Spradley (1980), Weiss (1994), Angrosino (2007), and Barbour (2007), supplemented with guides for the coding and analysis of emotional data by Saldaña (2009). Spradley (1980) may be dated, but his work is referenced by Angrosino (2007) as relevant and central to the use of participant observation. Articulated and observed emotions were coded accordingly, especially those that Jasper (1998) and Yang (2000) found to be relevant in the study of threat and mobilization.

The Sample

Twenty respondents were interviewed in this study. The median age of these participants was 44 years old, with the youngest at 18 years old, and the eldest at 72 years old. College-aged individuals make up the bulk of most social movements, and the tenure of this movement's participants contrasts with mainstream movements because of the degree to which elders are valued within Occaneechi culture

(Muller & Opp 1986, Polletta 1999, Yang 2000). Average interview time was 61 minutes, with the shortest at 40 minutes and the longest at 75 minutes. Five of the 20 respondents were current tribal leadership. Exactly half of the respondents were tribal elders, and 4 were youth (18-25). Participants were recruited by word of mouth and advertisement on the tribal email list-serve, website, facebook, and twitter. All respondents were enrolled tribal members. Participant observation and fieldnotes extended beyond the recorded interview time. I sat with one interviewee discussing the movement for nearly 2 hours before recording began. There was often a lot to be said by the interviewees after the recordings had ended as well. This was not unexpected since members of this community are passionate about their work with the tribe. For these activists, work with the tribe is a central part of their lives and identities, and having formally discussed their own participation often sparked a lot of ideas about the present and future of the movement.

Analysis and Presentation of Data

The data was coded according to the theoretically relevant themes and major themes presented in the data. These primary themes were threat and emotion, growth and decline, and activism. I used the existing literature on the theoretically significant topics as a framework to identify relevant responses in the data. Before this coding process began, fieldnotes were examined for themes noted during data collection. Before collection had begun I had made notes about threat, identity, activism, and the importance of spirituality. I investigated timing of and reasons for participation, and the evolving role of identities (individual and collective). As Friedman and McAdam (1992), Klandermans (1992), Tarrow (1992), Taylor and Whittier (1992), and Polletta and Jasper (2001) would've expected, there was an identifiable collective identity culture and framework to understand and contextualize political participation within this community of activists. Spiritual beliefs connected to this particular activist identity seemed to determine the impacts of perceptions of threats on emotions and actions.

I intentionally asked questions of the leadership cohort related to framing and recruitment as informed by the literature on the topic. I did not intentionally ask questions related to emotions or threat in either group, so as to not lead my respondents. However, I did encourage elaboration if and when the topic emerged. Non-verbal and ethnographic data was coded according to Saldaña's (2009) work with "emotion coding" and "dramaturgical coding" (86-9, 102-5). Dramaturgical coding and concepts and clarifications from the fieldnotes were added to each transcript accordingly using brackets. For instance, if a respondent shed tears when talking about a certain topic, this would be noted on the transcript. Numerous emotions were presented by Jasper (1998) and Yang (2000) for their relevance to threat; this was used to clarify the ways that threat manifested in the community. Coded data was then compared to existing literature on threat and formalization. The findings differed from existing theories in new and interesting ways.

CHAPTER IV:

FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

The OBSN case study provided evidence supporting the importance of threat in creating mobilization, while also shedding light on the complicated and nuanced nature of threat. The immediacy and lethality of threats, which Maher (2010) found to be the distinguishing factor between action and inaction, was mediated by identity and spirituality in interesting and previously unexplored ways. It also showed how threats might not only serve to encourage mobilization, but also act oppositely depending on the nature of the threat and the identities of those perceiving the threat. Though unanticipated in the original research design, I found that collective identity models were useful in understanding this observation. Building on the work of Friedman and McAdam (1992), in particular, I used collective identity to interpret how mobilization is constructed in reaction to threat, and to understand the collective value placed on political action in this context. Investigation of the relevance of the Weber-Michels model also led to interesting findings on the theoretical definitions of radical political action and movement growth. While the results were somewhat inconclusive on the specific impacts of threat or formalization as understood in the existing literature, they highlighted areas where the prominent theories fail in reach and relevancy for Indigenous communities. These areas include the need to include spirituality into the assessment for understanding mobilization, and expansions of our definitions of activism and radical protest.

Threat and OBSN Participation

Threats and their corresponding emotions played a vital role in the narratives of the OBSN movement participants. The findings revealed that threats and emotions influenced mobilization for interviewees, while simultaneously acting as barriers to participation for other members of the community

(namely those not involved in movement activity). While only OBSN activists[2] were interviewed, many of those interviewed talked about their own personal transitions from inactivity to action and their initial incorporation into the movement. These activists explained that cultural and community integration, and a consciousness of Occaneechi identity, often determines the difference between inaction and necessary action. On Occaneechi people that deny their Native ancestry and fail to participate, Patricia Martin Mebane explained, "They're ignorant and they don't have the knowledge, and I was at that point at one time, and all you have to do is to get educated." Vivette Jeffries-Logan, councilwoman, founding member of the Health Circle, and traditional fire carrier for the Yesáh people said, "I have met people, and, they come to me and say I know who I am but I don't feel like I know enough to stand up and say who I am." As Friedman and McAdam (1992), Klandermans (1992), Tarrow (1992), Taylor and Whittier (1992), and Polletta and Jasper (2001) explain, this integration involves acceptance of the collective identity defined by participation in the movement.

References to the threat of cultural disappearance were prevalent for movement participants. For example, Barbara Martin Lipscomb discussed the importance of educating the youth: "It's never too early for them to learn that there is another heritage that the United States is slowly burying, and I don't want that to ever happen…I don't want us to be covered up at all!" But even this threat manifested itself in interesting and unexpected ways. I had expected for the threat of cultural disappearance to operate in a similar way to the threats of sudden death in the case studies by Tester (2004) and Maher (2010), whereby it would create a lethal environment requiring immediate action. While many of my interviewees explained that they got involved with the OBSN because of perceived loss and fear of future loss like the one implied by Lipscomb (as Tilly (1978) would have expected), the consequences of inaction were

[2] Here activists are understood to be those involved in organizing and carrying out OBSN activities. Respondents consistently explained to me that identifying as Occaneechi alone is an act of political resistance, but only organizers and those involved with movement activities were interviewed.

mediated by the cultural and spiritual belief that the Creator and the ancestors would intervene, and that the tribe would survive regardless of the actions and decisions of individuals.

The findings suggest that tribal activists consider it their responsibility to confront this possibility of facing further cultural loss sooner rather than later, and that this threat is great enough to necessitate action in most cases (especially for those integrated into the collective "we" within the movement culture). However, participants found comfort in the spiritual understanding that survival is not an option, it is in the blood. When asked what would happen if he and others did nothing to stop the cultural loss, 72 year-old tribal elder John Blackfeather Jeffries explained:

> "Same thing that happened to us when my daddy and my granddaddy and my great granddaddy couldn't do this stuff, its gon' die out. But, its gon' come back…it's just like a boil, you can take it out [points to his leg], but if, if the blood is in there, you gon' get another boil sometime."

This sentiment of blood memory[3] was echoed by many of the participants in the study. Activists explained that one of the most significant barriers for the OBSN in terms of sustaining continuous movement activity was the economy. Financial resources are structural and favor resource mobilization and political opportunity models, but it is clear in the participant narratives that other factors are at work because it was explained many times that while the movement may slow, it always finds a way to persist in the face of this seemingly unceasing economic deprivation. Despite the fact that the tribe is suffering economically and has little financial leverage, Rose Clay Watlington and Wanda Whitmore-Penner (both tribal elders) explained that the current struggle is small in comparison to what the tribe has already overcome, and that the community will survive no matter what happens financially. This historical understanding is part of the shared knowledge within the collective culture of the movement, and meaning is created from this understanding. Friedman and McAdam (1992) would likely explain that resilience

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[3] Based on Indigenous belief popularized by Native author Scott Momaday that the memories of historical trauma and survival are located in the blood, and passed down through the blood across generations (Strong & Winkle 1996, Struthers & Lowe 2003).

and survival are part of the collective identity of an OBSN activist, helping me to understand why both threat and collective identity are responsible for the movement's persistence.

To identify the emotions that manifested in order to make up the threat of cultural disappearance, it took a combination of the work of Jasper (1998) as well as that provided by Yang (2000). Frustration, anger, alienation, and anomie were all present in the way that this perceived loss manifested (Jasper 1998). Activists mentioned race laws, governmental neglect, and damages inflicted by Christianity and assimilation. These emotions were powerful instruments of mobilization in participant narratives. Most of the participants in the study spent time explaining the hostile legislative and institutional environment that American Indians have found themselves in both in the past and in the present. Stories were shared about harmful effects of colorism, racial ascription, forced racial assignment, and governmental neglect (to name a few).

Equally powerful and pervasive were the emotions of compassion, pride, and love (Jasper 1998, Yang 2000). All of the respondents explained that pride and love for their culture and history was a motivation for their own action. When asked what it means to be Occaneechi, respondents explained how proud they are to be a part of a strong people and to be a survivor of genocide (once again, part of the collective identity of OBSN activists). Among the activists interviewed, love for the Yesáh people is mentioned as a reason for action time and time again, along with compassion and love for those that have not yet gotten involved with the movement. When asked about his motivation for participation with the OBSN, 19 year-old Samuel Whitmore explained:

> "I think it's a sense of pride, I mean it's, we're the ones that survived as we're still left…I mean we have to, we have to carry on the legacy of you know, ancestors who came before and that fought for their land, and that this was their home…you know and if we don't carry on our traditions or keep doing that, you know, I feel like that my duty if I don't do anything else…it's my duty to tell people that I'm Native American, cause that lets them know that we're not all dead."

These sentiments demonstrate how pride is an important emotion in understanding this specific threat. Respondents do not consider action a choice, which is also common in other literature on threat (Tester

2004, Maher 2010). The assurance that the ancestors will intervene if need be is intertwined with the spiritual belief that one's path is decided by the Creator. Pride and cultural awareness, for OBSN activists, is directly linked to a sense of responsibility. As clearly demonstrated in Samuel Whitmore's interview, this responsibility is created in reaction to the threat of disappearance, and is combined with a sense of spiritual duty to honor one's ancestors that is engrained in collective understandings of the movement.

It is difficult to understand the role of these emotions in inactive community members since this study involved only members that were a part of the movement in an organizing and volunteering capacity. Respondents did often suggest, however, that in order to avoid accepting the spiritual responsibility, some inactive members of the community live in denial about their cultural and historical selves. Tarrow (1992) would likely even consider inactive Occaneechi people as part of the movement, and explain that the collective meaning of this responsibility is constructed in reaction to the internal conflict. No matter what the origin, spiritual responsibility is a part of the identities of Occaneechi organizers. Even without crediting the internal conflict perspective, the value placed on integration and ideology lines up nicely with collective identity theorists such as Klandermans (1992), Taylor and Whittier (1992), Friedman and McAdam (1992), and Polletta and Jasper (1998) because the inactive tribal members are operating outside of the collective identity frame constructed by movement leaders and membership.

Also, considering the literature on threat and the work of Maher (2010), the difference between action and inaction applies to this scenario. Just as he explained that risk of inaction must tip the scale over the cost of action, in this situation, cultural disappearance might come at a lower cost for those less integrated in the cultural community (because they might perceive the losses to be lower). That is, for those Occaneechi people who have less understanding of what it is that is being challenged culturally and politically, the perceived loss may not be high enough to necessitate action, or may not be present at all in

some cases. This potential lack of understanding can be understood considering the context of race laws and forced assimilation, which the identity of the movement is created in opposition to (Tarrow 1992).

Political opportunity is interwoven with this particular threat because many activists recognized that having achieved state tribal recognition strategically placed the tribe in a position to enact change in response to the threat of cultural disappearance. Most agree that the stamp of approval and validation of the state's Supreme Court allowed the tribe more opportunities for representation, and political action. These opportunities took the form of the seat on the Commission of Indian Affairs, insertion into history textbooks in the state, the ability to amend birth certificates, the right to carry a tribal card, opportunities for scholarship for the youth, and more. This political opportunity, however, can be understood much like that in Tester's (2004) findings, where he explained that political opportunities that made way for federal AIDS funding and government intervention came about largely because of the activism of the same gay men that protested their grievances. In this particular case study, the opportunities that came in the form of state-recognition were achieved as a result of the OBSN movement itself (rather than an opportunity from the outside that created reactive mobilization). John Blackfeather Jeffries reminded that he and the small group of activists fought the state for 18 years in order to achieve state recognition.

Discussing impacts of state recognition on movement participants actually led me into the other major threat that I found to be pervasive in the community, which is the threat of racist repercussions associated with tribal involvement and visibility. While the threat of cultural disappearance caused many of the active tribal members to mobilize, according to my respondents, some inactive Occaneechi people (not engaged in movement activities) fear publicly associating with the OBSN or openly identifying as Occaneechi due to possible racist repercussions. For some, as explained earlier, a lack of cultural integration may have caused the perceived costs of activism to be higher than the risk. However, according to my respondents, not all inactive Occaneechi people were culturally unaware. A large part

each interview was taken up by expressions of frustration and anger toward the many that continue to hide in fear after state recognition made it legally possible to come out of the "Indian closet[4]." I found this frustration and anger to be mixed with deep compassion and understanding, as most of the older activists that I interviewed either experienced similar fears and inhibitions earlier in life, or had a parent or grandparent that felt it necessary to hide in plain sight[5]. Jeffries-Logan articulated this well:

> "[the] work that I do is about racial justice and dismantling racism, and that helped me, with some of the anger I had, directed at, omm, specifically my grandfather, for not telling me who I was, and then once I understood the history of race and racism in this country, understanding that what his parents instilled in him was simply a tool of survival. So being able to just forgive him and understand that, the threat, the fear that omm, Papa Bart and Momma Kate lived under was very real, and realizing that everyone has their own path, and that, when it comes to accepting who you are, it's not for me to determine."

The fears related to participation, as Jeffries-Logan demonstrated, are not unfounded, and are deeply engrained in the recent historical memories of members of the community.

These anticipated racist repercussions ranged from fears of violence and assault, to less overt fears of being misunderstood or being seen as a race traitor. Expired race laws that created mandatory racial categorization according to white/black binaries are still devastating communities like Pleasant Grove. Occaneechi people were forced to be legally identified as either white or black arguably until 2002. Some of those same emotions that Jasper (1998) believed to be important to mobilization simultaneously served as barriers to action when it comes to this particular threat. Here, threat was found to act both as a reason for mobilization as well as a deterrent to collective action. For activists interviewed, the threat of cultural disappearance had to be perceived as higher than the risk of racist repercussion in order for them to mobilize. It appears that for a majority of those interviewed, it required time, cultural, and historical education for them to understand that the risk of loss outweighed potential

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[4] It was called this by Tammy Hayes-Hill, former tribal councilwoman.

[5] The narrative of hiding in plain sight is common in the community as well as other American Indian communities in the southeast, and involves keeping Occaneechi identities and ways of life inside the home in order to survive and to avoid racist repercussions (Merrell 1984).

personal repercussions; that is, integration into the collective culture of the movement carries implications for the interpretation of the lethality of inaction.

Interviews with leaders did suggest that not only was the mobilizing potential of the threat of cultural disappearance recognized, but that it was also used strategically in order to recruit new participants. Tribal Chairman Tony Hayes, and most of the council members that were interviewed, recognized the importance of framing movement activities as educational opportunities. This is important because educational opportunities have potential to increase perceived threats to the culture (therefore increasing mobilization), while decreasing inhibitions created by misconceptions and fears about real and imagined repercussions that could result from action. Jeffries-Logan specifically connected this threat to recruitment; she explained that when approaching hesitant members of the community, activists and leaders should explicitly convey that the purpose is larger than individual concerns, and that it is important to explain to members of the community that they owe this to their ancestors. This implication of responsibility was not unlike the excerpt from the Samuel Whitmore interview. Jeffries-Logan went on to explain the patience and compassion that should be used, but it is clear in her statement that instilling a sense of spiritual responsibility to those that came before is the glue that holds together not only the movement but the culture in the face of disappearance and assimilation.

Understanding threat in the OBSN movement involves looking deeper into the relationship between cultural integration and perceptions of potential loss. Additionally, it involves understanding how the threat of racist repercussions acts as a deterrent to action rather than a mobilizing force in most cases (similar to Maher's (2010) findings in the camps where group resistance did not take place). This is interesting because this study, like Maher's (2010), highlights the complicated nature of threat, and demonstrates the nuances of its impacts of group mobilization. Considering this, the movement would benefit from strategically creating activity to integrate less active members of the community into cultural activities, and create education initiatives aimed at breaking down misconceptions about racist threats and the possible repercussions of engaging in action. In addition to providing further evidence for the

complicated ways that threats can be interpreted, this study revealed interesting ways that threat and collective identity theories might be combined.

Growth after Recognition

According to the Weber-Michels model, the OBSN would have been expected to decrease in participation after state recognition was achieved and the tribe elected an official tribal council. Zald and Ash (1966) and Staggenborg (1988) explained that such institutionalization is essential to the longevity of a movement, but that it comes with the consequence of the decrease in participation and de-radicalization of tactics. Statements made by OBSN activists suggest that recognition created a sense of validation in the community, causing the movement to grow in number. On recognition, Calvetta Watlington stated:

> " it validated me somehow to finally know that, you know how I felt about my culture, but that other people finally were like, ok, they really are, you know, native, even though clearly we knew the entire time but just that, that stamp of approval, from other people, from, you know, the state government and from other tribes."

Similarly, Rose Clay Watlington explained how the decision gave her a sense of pride; "I don't wanna say validate, omm but its-, me, it's just me, you know, being Occaneechi just makes me prouder of being me." While this growth has been fairly gradual, it was clear according to movement leaders that recognition marked a period of growth in involvement. This is partially due to the fact that an Occaneechi identity became a legal option for the first time in decades. The tribal roll (people that are legally recognized as Occaneechi) is at its highest ever according to Chairman Hayes and Vice Chairman Sharn Jeffries. While not all enrolled members are active in movement activities, the number of those involved grew alongside the growth in the rolls according to Hayes and Jeffries. However, recent economic pressures have caused the movement to experience dips in movement participation, but most agree that 2002 marked a time of growth for the movement.

To understand the change in tactics after formalization, it is important to analyze the findings of the study both from the perspective of mainstream social movement theory, and also that of the Occaneechi people themselves. If the assessment of tactical change relied solely on theoretical

understanding of what it means to be radical, then the prediction of the Weber-Michels Model would appear to be actualized in some instances. This is because the primary target of OBSN tactics shifted away from the State in 2002[6], and the goals were largely transformed from creating change in state and macro structures to creating internal change within the community (micro-level). It was this type of goal transformation that marked the decay of a movement and its tactics for Zald and Ash (1966).

Building on their work, Staggenborg (1988) defined radical tactics in terms of their use of protest and insurgency directed at the State. The transformation of tactics away from direct resistance to State policies, then, might be understood as a signal for tactical decay and de-radicalization according to Staggenborg's (1988) proposition. For OBSN activities after state-recognition, the only substantial interaction with the state of North Carolina, or with the federal government, came in the form of funding and grant monies. These grants require adherence to protocols, which Staggenborg (1988) also saw as a means for mainstreaming and dampening of political effectiveness. Interestingly, movement participants asserted that it was no longer necessary to act in political opposition to the state after recognition was achieved because the true priorities of the community reside elsewhere. They also expressed the sentiment that the movement became more radical after the goal transformation took place. Rachel Clay Richmond, a tribal elder, former councilwoman, and member of the tribal Health Circle, said the following about participation after recognition: "I've seen that grow and you know then, you know got bigger and bigger, but then at the same time, we changed course because of the vision of having our own land again." She went on to explain that her eventual goal is for the tribe to become completely self-sustaining with its own separate infrastructure, a goal echoed by many.

Perhaps one of the most interesting findings from the interviews with OBSN participants is that this shift away from the State is seen as the beginning of the truly radical and revolutionary work, rather

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[6] With the exception of the goals and directives of some activists interviewed that were aimed at transformation in public school systems.

than a decay or de-radicalization. That is, protest and insurgency, or battles with the state courts, were not understood to be necessarily radical in addressing the needs or grievances of this community. The battle with the state supreme court is largely seen as a distraction from the real goal of making change in the Occaneechi community and the larger society. Richmond recalled her own witnessing of the growth of the movement and the excitement and pride that she felt for that growth. She recalled the goal transformation toward owning communal property and restoring tradition in the community through cultural education. Richmond and others explained that political struggle with the state is not what matters for the community. It is through disengagement with the state that the small community can focus on building its own infrastructure and solidarity as a tribe. In other words, the goal of changing State structures was seen as a matter of necessity in order to arrive at the meaningful work.

While Staggenborg (1988) and others may understand protest of state structures as radical, the internal focus of decolonization of identities and empowerment of a culture silenced by the state is radical for members of this movement. In her narrative, Jeffries-Logan explained why the State was a necessary target in the beginning, and why the shift from the state is essential:

> "The whole recognition process, knowing the history of the whole recognition process…blood quantum and all of that, and what drives that…because I've, you know I am who I am regardless of what the white man's court says, and then on the flip side, to be able to say, you know when I stand up and introduce myself and say that, you know I'm a member of one of the 8 state rec-, I'm an enrolled member of one of the 8 state recognized tribes, there's validity behind that. I carry confliction, I'm conflicted about the whole thing, the whole reason behind that process, and knowing that, yeah, we did get recognition even though the recognition process in North Carolina was designed so that no one would ever, no Indigenous nation would ever get recognition."

Here she points out that the recognition process is one that is designed to be a barrier or distraction to the empowerment of tribal peoples within the state. This process that is designed to be impossible took nearly two decades to overcome, absorbing nearly all of the energy of the movement. Elder and veteran member Wanda Whitmore-Penner explained that after the recognition process was over, the tribe could finally focus on its own people. When she was asked to name the most successful activities of the movement, Jeffries-Logan named initiatives that sought to educate the community about the Occaneechi

people, and activities intended to foster re-membering[7] in the community. The collective purchasing of land and the tactical change toward internal and external educational initiatives are mentioned by all as proud and revolutionary accomplishments of the movement, and these were all made possible after the legislative efforts had ended, Richmond explained.

Rather than presenting a direct challenge to the Weber-Michels model itself, this case study calls into question our understanding of what a radical social movement is, and whether this understanding should be applicable to all communities. By understanding that the political system itself was created as a barrier to indigenous and other oppressed communities, one can understand how disengaging with the state can be radical for communities like the OBSN. As Jeffries-Logan explained, state structures are created as barriers to the empowerment of indigenous peoples. Her father, John Blackfeather Jeffries, had explained that it took nearly 18 years of exhaustive efforts to achieve recognition, and for those 18 years, the energy of the movement was focused away from making change in the community itself. Goals currently held by both leadership and general membership in the movement involve creation of a sustainable tribal economy, increasing educational opportunities for tribal members and local non-Indians, as well as the re-membering of tribal tradition and language. If the radical nature of a movement's tactics is defined by the degree to which they defy and resist political structures of domination, then attempting to grow a localized Indigenous economy without directly engaging the political structures of the State is truly revolutionary because these State structures are created to inhibit such growth.

There is further evidence that the movement remains radical despite most theoretical assumptions. The collective identity of the movement, whereby participants define their own activisms,

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[7] Re-membering is similar to learning, but involves the cultural understanding that traditional knowledge is carried in the blood of Yesáh people, and it has to be re-membered rather than learned. Colonization, from this lens, was that act of forcing people to forget, rather than creating permanent loss. To re-member is to decolonize. (Strong and Winkle 1996).

is one where grassroots and community work are valued over traditional[8] political action. Staggenborg (1988) argued that as a marker of decline after formalization, SMO leaders would be less likely to call upon grievances to mobilize its membership, but interviews with OBSN leadership suggests that priorities in tribal events are centered on healing from grievances created by colonization and direct attempts to erase Indigenous peoples and histories from the State. Chairman Hayes plans to use events designed to confront head-on prevalent grievances in the community and build solidarity and common purpose within the Occaneechi community at large, possibly beginning at community churches. The assumption that a movement can even afford a shift away from grievances may be privileged standpoint that does not consider the situation that Indigenous and other oppressed communities find themselves in.

Cultural Blind Spots in Mainstream Theories

This study sought to further our understanding of the role of threats on mobilization, and the growth/decline of the OBSN movement. While evidence was found to shed light on these two areas, respondents struggled with many of the questions, and the theoretical framework employed fell short despite my attempt to compensate by incorporating cultural accountability into the research design. Indigenous social movements, especially local tribal movements, have rarely, if ever, been a part of mainstream social movement theory. This research is important for that reason. Because theoretical limitations manifested in a few specific ways, researchers can now prepare to carry out research with indigenous activists more competently in the future.

One of the most obvious ways that the theoretical framework employed in the study proved to be culturally biased is the fact that threat and its relevant emotions are understood to be part of a rational decision to mobilize where spirituality is not included. For the activists in the Occaneechi community, the movement is deeply spiritual. The reactive mobilization created by the threat of cultural

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[8] Traditional, in a theoretical sense, not to be confused with traditional in regards to the culture of the Occaneechi people.

disappearance involves a spiritual and cultural responsibility to honor ancestors. The decision to mobilize is not seen as a decision so much as a homecoming and acceptance of that responsibility. This means that spirituality is a part of the collective identity of the movement, but as Friedman and McAdam (1992) explained, non-Western perspectives are missing from much of this work. Chairman Hayes clearly stated that to be Occaneechi, or to be an Indian, is to be an activist:

> "I think Indians naturally are activists, I don't think that we can help ourselves, because we grew up, sort of fighting the good fight, and as we mature and as we, you know become more and more entrenched in the community, we continue to see things that don't change and we continue to fight those things, so I think that we're activists by nature."

Many expressed similar sentiments. From the narratives of these participants, it became obvious that all members of the community that openly identify as Occaneechi in their daily lives are understood to be activists.

Some were more engaged in making change than others, but activism itself was considered to be an act of self-acceptance rather than an intentional decision to engage the State, or even organize within the movement. Theories explaining mobilization as a calculated decision requiring a necessary amount of threat and/or opportunity do not consider that which seems to be the biggest pull factor toward engaging in the movement, ancestral responsibility. This responsibility was undoubtedly connected to the threat of cultural disappearance, but adds an interesting nuance to what was basically understood to be an adaptation of the cost-benefit rational analysis, wherein emotions are part of the cognitive equation. Rather than relying on Jasper's (1998) injustice or liberation frame alone, a new frame emerges. This frame is centered on the cultural and spiritual belief that the path that one walks in their life must honor those that came before, and those that will come after. Threat is a part of this assessment, but is not conclusively causal by itself.

Considering the impacts of spirit on mobilization also helps us to understand why the movement is considered by local activists to have become more radical after the state ceased to be the primary target. This is because healing the community from historical trauma and re-membering tradition is understood

to be the work of true importance and liberation. Onondaga Chief Leon Shenandoah said, "In our ways, spiritual consciousness is the highest form of politics" (1985). Because of the way that political action and mobilization is understood as part of one's spiritual path, participants in the study struggled greatly with questions related to their decisions to become part of the movement, and identifying their own personal priorities. Movement participation could not be named as a priority for most; for example, councilwoman and health circle member Keshia Enoch explained that working with the tribe is who she is, not what she does:

> "It's not that it's a priority and I have to put it on a to-do list and put it at the top of my to-do list, this is, this is who I am and how I choose to live my life, it's not an option, I mean, it's like breathing, you're gonna do it."

Most credit their ancestors and the Creator for leading them to the work, and understand that the decision to engage was not theirs to make.

Engaging in resistance with the OBSN is talked about as a part of fully recognizing one's humanity as an Occaneechi person, rather than an individual assessment where threats and/or benefits were weighed. To a certain degree, as demonstrated in the discussion, the feeling of belonging to the Occaneechi community comes with a certain level of consciousness of the threat of cultural disappearance wherein the cost of inaction becomes realized. Therefore, culturally identifying as Occaneechi comes with a certain level of unavoidable threat. There seems to be an understanding held by most activists that I interviewed that when dealing with those that are inactive due to fear of repercussions, patience should be applied and that Creator would guide them on their paths toward engagement and cultural responsibility when the time was right. The literature that exists on threat is void of any potential spiritual influence on mobilization.

It would likely be useful for future researchers investigating threat in Indigenous collective action to incorporate the work of scholars doing research on historical trauma in Indigenous communities. Whitbeck et al. (2004) created an adaptation of the historical loss scale used to understand lasting impacts of trauma in descendants of Jewish holocaust survivors that he used to understand how modern American

Indians carry the trauma of their ancestors as part of their identities and daily decisions. Duran and Duran (1995) also explained how American Indians lives, identities, and decisions are deeply affected by the "soul wound" of historical trauma (194). Locating this psychic wound and understanding how it creates mobilization, in concert with past and current threats, opportunities, etc., will likely prove to be more useful in accurately understanding the decision to participate in an Indigenous social movement like the OBSN.

The data presented another promising area of expansion and growth for the research on Indigenous social movements as well. All but two of the respondents self-identified as activists. The two that did not identify as activists were youth that explained that they were training to be activists, and that they had a lot to learn from their elders before they felt comfortable assuming this identity. When further probed, the interesting finding was the definition of activism held by members of the community. Taking it even further than Chairman Hayes, these activists expanded the definition by explaining that activism starts within the immediate family unit. OBSN participants will name their attempts to educate their family and carry on their culture within their own immediate families as political action. This was not the only shape that their activisms took, but this understanding of political action takes the personal as political to the most intimate of all social locations, the family unit. Imagining the impacts of colonialist practices on Indigenous communities, one begins to be able conceptualize how opposition to the assimilationist drive (in whatever form that opposition may manifest) is, in fact, deeply political.

Finally, the use of talking circles was highly effective and useful to understand collective action in this community. In need of refinement, however, are the interview guides and theoretical framework employed to understand mobilization in this movement (and perhaps in other indigenous movements). Careful thought should be given to areas where mainstream theories will be useful in their application to Indigenous collective action, and if they are, a stronger emphasis should be placed on how spirit and blood memory might be included with threat as a central mobilizing factor. Also, collective identity theories should be an intentional part of the theoretical framework and research design.

CHAPTER V:

CONCLUSIONS

The results of this case study pointed to areas where mainstream social movement theories fail to be inclusive of indigenous activisms. It was clear that threats did serve as one of the reasons for mobilization; however they also served as inhibitors in some instances. Cultural consciousness, collective identity, and spirituality greatly shaped how reactive mobilization is created and maintained within the Occaneechi community. This study demonstrates the complicated nature of threats, and how Indigenous and cultural communities may differ from the mainstream body of literature on impacts of threat as well as collective identities on mobilization. The study illuminated the fact that Indigenous social movements cannot be fully understood using a theoretical framework where spirituality is not present. Similarly, the study did not clearly demonstrate the overall effectiveness of the Weber-Michels prediction model because political action is understood differently in this community than in mainstream movements. While similar to some of the feminist models of political action, the spiritual connection to politics engrained in this movement is theoretically important. Further research should be done to understand how definitions of political action and activism might exclude Indigenous collective action.

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