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A New Organizational Paradigm? Comparing the Organization and Resources of Historical and Contemporary Social Movements in Denmark, 1960–2020

Abstract

This article discusses the connective paradigm proposed by Lance Bennett and Alexandra Segerberg: Connective action is less dependent on organizations, mobilizing instead through interpersonal networks facilitated by social media. The power of new connective media is so strong that it eclipses the importance of more traditional resources, such as money and organizational capacity. We find the notion of connective action to be fruitful, but also warn against the fallacy of exaggerated newness. To pursue this argument, this article offers a historically grounded comparison of "old" and "new" activists that allows us to assess how the role played by organizing and the implementation of resources has changed over the last 60 years, and in particular, how Bennett and Segerberg's notion of connective action stands up to historical evidence. It builds on a unique set of 30 in-depth interviews with activists on the left in Denmark from the 1960s to today. We discuss our findings via four themes: flat organizational structures; the importance of (new) media; individual vs. collective activism; and the power of physical spaces. Our analysis suggests that while there are indeed notable differences across activist generations, one must be careful not to over-interpret them.

Keywords: *social movements, activism, connective action, left-wing activists, anti-Vietnam war movement, anti-apartheid movement, environmental movement, new media, organization, resources.*

In Denmark, the period from the 1870s onwards has been labelled "the age of voluntary associations."[1] During this period, peasants, workers, women, and many other groups organized in order to advocate for political influence. To some extent, these

1 Margaretha Balle-Petersen, "Foreningstiden," *Arv og eje* (1976): 43–78.

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energies "from below" were gradually channelled into the parliamentary and corporatist system that developed in Denmark from the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, just as many of their demands were at least partly accommodated by the expanding welfare state.[2] Through their principled handling of political conflicts and the representation of special interests, social movements became engines for the expansion of democracy and societal change.[3] In the last 60 years, this relative political stability has been challenged by momentous changes in how people engage politically. Around 1960, the number of political party members in Denmark peaked at approximately 13 percent of the population, or close to 600,000 members;[4] today, there are only approximately 125,000 members of political parties elected to the national parliament, corresponding to just over 2 percent of the population. With obvious national variations, this pattern is recognizable across most of the Western world. Nonetheless, this sharp decline in party membership should not be taken as an expression of declining political engagement, but rather as a diversification in forms of participation in advanced democracies. Over the past 60 years, both in Denmark[5] and internationally,[6] citizens have become increasingly engaged in political activism. These trends do not necessarily reflect a decline of the established political system; rather, the expansion of political activism is indicative of a *broadening* of democratic participation. As such, it denotes an understanding of democracy that not only foregrounds constitutions, parliaments, and voting, but also the constant and active participation of the citizenry in politics.[7]

Despite a significant body of work on political activism by sociologists and political scientists, a certain deficit remains when it comes to historically grounded comparisons of how the forms and goals of political activism have changed over the last 60 years. In recent decades much has been said about the novelty of social media, net-

2 Jørn Henrik Petersen, Klaus Petersen and Niels Finn Christiansen, eds., *Dansk Velfærdshistorie* (Odense: Syddansk Universitetsforlag, 2010–2014).

3 Peter Gundelach, *Sociale bevægelser og samfundsændringer: Nye sociale grupperinger og deres organisationsformer ved overgangen til ændrede samfundstyper* (Aarhus: Politica, 1988), 183.

4 Lars Bille, "Den Danske Partimodels Forfald?," in *Partiernes Medlemmer, Magtudredningen*, edited by Lars Bille and Jørgen Elklit (Aarhus: Universitetsforlag, 2003), 9.

5 Gundelach, *Sociale bevægelser og samfundsændringer*; Flemming Mikkelsen, ed., *Protest og Oprør: Kollektive Aktioner i Danmark 1700–1985* (Aarhus: Modtryk, 1986); Flemming Mikkelsen, Knut Kjeldstadli and Stefan Nyzell, eds., *Popular Struggle and Democracy in Scandinavia, 1700-Present* (London: Palgrave, 2018); Henrik Kaare Nielsen, *Demokrati i Bevægelse* (Aarhus: Universitetsforlag, 1991); Søren Hein Rasmussen, *Sære Alliancer. Politiske Bevægelser i Efterkrigstidens Danmark* (Odense: Universitetsforlag, 1997).

6 Ulrich Beck, "Subpolitics," *Organization & Environment* 10, no. 1 (1997): 52–65; David S. Meyer and Sidney Tarrow, *The Social Movement Society* (Lanham: Rowman & Littlefield, 1998).

7 Jürgen Habermas, *Between Facts and Norms* (Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 1996).

worked mobilization, leaderless structures among others. In particular, Bennett and Segerberg[8] have proposed a paradigmatic shift from "collective action" (driven mainly by formal organizations) towards what they call "connective action." Connective action, they argue, is less dependent on organizations, but mobilizes through interpersonal networks facilitated by social media and personalized action frames. With the ability of new communication technologies to connect people with speed and ease, the need for formal organization and organizational resources is no longer as prominent as in the past and is, in fact, viewed with increasing suspicion by contemporary activists. The power of new connective media is so strong that it eclipses the importance of more traditional resources such as money and organizational capacity.

Within this framework, Bennett and Segerberg point to a new theoretical direction for the modern study of political activism, initially established as a field during the 1970s and 1980s. Path-breaking studies by McCarthy and Zald, Tilly, and McAdam gave prominence to "organization" and "resources,"[9] wherein the aggregation of resources and building of efficient organizations was key to the growth, success, and survival of political activism. Activism and protest did not simply occur where grievances were strongest, but where existing resources and organizational capacity could be mobilized to give voice to those grievances. In these analyses, the main mobilizing unit was the formal, professionalized social movement organization, with a relatively clear structure and defined roles and goals. Condensing this line of thought, Edwards and McCarthy[10] point out how organizations mobilize, aggregate, and depend on at least five types of resources: one, material resources (financial and physical capital, including money, buildings, communication tools, means of transportation, office supplies); two, human resources (volunteers and access to expertise and experience); three, social-organizational resources (existing social networks like family, friends, colleagues, neighbours); four, moral resources (legitimacy and solidary/sympathetic popular support); and five, cultural resources (knowledge about different protest repertoires, cultural codes, symbols and frames; production of special literature, films, music, home pages and the like). The relationship between resources and organizations is dialectical: social movement organizations emerge where resources are conducive and facilita-

8 W. Lance Bennett and Alexandra Segerberg, "The Logic of Connective Action: Digital Media and the Personalization of Contentious Politics," *Information, Communication & Society* 15, no. 5 (2012), 739–68.

9 John D. McCarthy and Mayer N. Zald, "Resource Mobilization and Social Movements: A Partial Theory," *American Journal of Sociology* 82 (1977), 1212–41; Doug McAdam, *Political Process and the Development of Black Insurgency, 1930–1970* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1982); Charles Tilly: *From Mobilization to Revolution* (Reading, MA: Addison-Wesley, 1982).

10 Bob Edwards and John D. McCarthy, "Resources and Social Movement Mobilization," in *The Blackwell Companion to Social Movements*, edited by David A. Snow, Sarah A. Soule and Hanspeter Kriesi (Malden, MA: Blackwell Publishing, 2004), 116–52.

tive, but their survival and growth strongly depend on the ability to attract and utilize new flows of resources.

Bennett and Segerberg couch their reformulation of the connective action paradigm in a broader sociological reading. The affordances of new media are amplified, as it were, by a sociological trend towards increasing individualization.[11] From a political activism perspective, the individualization thesis suggests that participation is more fluid and informal, with individuals connecting with "projects" and "campaigns" rather than formal organizations. It is the combined effect of technological change and wider transformations of political identity and participation patterns that nurtures the connective action paradigm. This is essentially a historical argument that depicts a process from one condition to a new and paradigmatically different one. While Bennett and Segerberg's analyses provide rich accounts of new protest phenomena such as Occupy Wall Street in the United States and Los Indignados in Spain, their contrasting of these mobilizations with those of the past is less clear and systematic. Without such an emphasis there is a very real risk of committing the fallacy of exaggerated newness.

Within social movement studies, this concern is not new. During the 1970s and 1980s, scholars such as Alain Touraine, Alberto Melucci and Jürgen Habermas pointed to the emergence of so-called *new* social movements, which in their view deviated from "old" social movements (most notably labour and workers' movements) in their emphasis on non-material issues such as identity, lifestyle, and values. This claim to newness was problematized in a number of works, perhaps most notably through Craig Calhoun's[12] insistence that many of the traits highlighted as "new" could in fact also be identified in the social movements of the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. Expanding Calhoun's critique to the present situation, this paper offers a historically grounded comparison of "old" and "new" activists that allows us to assess how the roles of organizing and resources have changed over the last 60 years, and in particular, how Bennett and Segerberg's notion of connective action stands up against historical evidence. It builds on a unique set of 30 in-depth interviews with activists on the left in Denmark. Our findings suggest that while there are indeed notable differences across activist generations, one must be careful not to over-interpret them.

11 Anthony Giddens, *Modernity and Self-Identity: Self and Society in the Late Modern Age* (Cambridge: Polity Press, 1991).

12 Craig Calhoun, "'New Social Movements" of the Early Nineteenth Century,' *Social Science History* 17, no. 3 (1993): 385–427. See also: Stefan Berger, "The Internationalism of Social Movements: An Introduction," *Moving the Social* 55 (2016), 7.

Background and Motivation

The research reported in this paper is anchored in the *Protest!* project. *Protest!* is a three-year (2018–2020) funded collaboration between the Workers Museum in Copenhagen and the Department of Political Science at Aarhus University. The goal of the funding (provided by the Velux Foundation) is to stimulate a research-based exchange between the otherwise often separated knowledge domains of museums and universities. Through research, exhibition and teaching programmes, the project examines change, continuity, and variation in political activism on the political left in Denmark in the period from 1960–2020. The present paper is the first research outcome of the project, which concluded with a large-scale exhibition at the Workers Museum in 2021–2022. Parts of the interview material presented in the paper were also included in the exhibition.[13]

We understand political activism as forms of participation that uses channels and methods other than the more formal and conventional forms of political engagement, such as voting, lobbying or interest group participation. Activism is a highly varied phenomenon that ranges from low-cost and low-risk actions such as "liking" a political Facebook page, over voluntary grassroots work, happenings and demonstrations, to high-cost and high-risk actions such as blockades, vandalism and sabotage. Political activism is typically motivated by an analysis that the established political system, or even the democratic form of government, is unwilling or unable to address the most pressing political and social issues.[14] The interviewees of this project are highly diverse in terms of motivations, ideologies and methods, but all share the notion that established political elites and institutions are insufficient to foster necessary social, cultural and political change.

The project focuses on political activism on the left. We have a broad conception of this category, but generally understand left-wing political activists as individuals who possess one or more of the following traits: advocate a high degree of economic redistribution in society; have a predominantly positive attitude towards immigration and the multicultural community; advocate for environmental protection, peace and demilitarization; and believe in rehabilitation rather than punishment in law enforcement.[15] This choice of focus was partly motivated by the great dynamism and variation in the forms of political activism on the left and by the fact that, historically speaking,

13 The second output is Jesper Jørgensen, "Solidaritet med andre 'andre'. Livshistoriske veje ind i politisk aktivisme på den danske venstrefløj, 1960–1990," *temp* 12, no. 23 (2021): 128–148.

14 Lasse Lindekilde and Thomas Olesen, *Politisk Protest, aktivisme og sociale bevægelser* (Copenhagen: Hans Reitzel Forlag, 2015).

15 Ole Borre, "Old and New Politics in Denmark," *Scandinavian Political Studies* 18, no. 3 (1995): 187–205.

political activism as a form of political engagement has been favoured primarily by the left. It also reflects that the Workers Museum, where the project is anchored, has the history of the socialist labour movement as its purview.

Method and Material

The empirical material consists of 30 interviews in total. Fifteen of these were conducted with activists who were active during the period from the 1960s to the 1990s. The remaining 15 interviews were conducted with activists who are currently engaged in a variety of activities on the political left. This unique combination of historical and contemporary interview material puts us in a position to address the questions about newness and continuity that we raised in the introduction.

The historical part of the analysis focuses on activists from the anti-Vietnam War movement and the anti-apartheid movement as well as from the environmental movement. The Vietnam movement is generally perceived as the key movement that formed the "new left" in opposition to the "old left" and its more traditional forms of democratic participation through political parties and trade unions. The anti-apartheid movement is interesting in this context because it extends from the early 1960s to the end of the Cold War. It is also a perspective case because it is comparable to the Vietnam movement on several parameters, although, in a Danish context, it has hitherto only been dealt with indirectly through the histories of other actors and not as a primary object of historical research.

Both movements encompassed several different kinds of actors and considerable internal political variation. They were characterized by being Danish versions of international protest movements, and by succeeding in getting the "single case" on the political agenda and ultimately seeing it taken on by the established political system, in this case social democratic governments. Along the way, both movements experimented with new frames, media usage and modes of action that successfully mobilized people and attracted public attention, just as parts of them evolved in a radical direction which included use of political violence. Finally, the activities of both movements left traces in the form of archives and journals in the Workers Museum's archive and library collections, e. g. from the anti-imperialistic and anti-racist organization Demos, which have not previously been available for research.

The environmental movement was included in the study from both a historical and a present perspective. Whereas during the Cold War it was the peace and solidarity movements that attracted many young people, climate activism is perhaps the most popular scene for today's young activists. This is reflected in the fact that in the contemporary sample, five of the interviewees are related to the climate and environmental movements. For the historic sample we included activists from NOAH (Friends of

the Earth Denmark) and *Organisationen til Oplysning om Atomkraft* (the Organization for Information on Nuclear Power, OOA).

Apart from climate and environmental activists, the contemporary sample has considerable variation, with interviewees engaged in issues such as solidarity, social justice, feminism, LGBT rights, immigration, unionism, and welfare. The sample does pretend to be representative of the very diverse contemporary activism landscape in Denmark. Because a major ambition of the paper to assess the scope and utility of the connective action paradigm, we opted to achieve a relatively high degree of diversity in terms of activist methods and issues. This allows us to consider whether potential patterns in organization and resources are not simply patterns among certain types of activists and activist methods and ideologies. Appendices 1 and 2 present an overview of the historical and contemporary samples, respectively.

The interviews were conducted from a semi-structured interview guide, which allowed the flexibility to capture more comprehensive remembrances, while at the same time ensuring a strong theoretical foundation.[16] The interview guide's questions were divided into a number of sections: the activists' personal motivations and histories; the working practices of their organizations; their conceptions of democracy and potential for change; their view on legitimate and illegitimate action forms; the resources they consider important; their communication strategies; and their conceptions of success and impact. These themes reflect the three main pillars of social movement theory: resources and organization; political opportunities; and framing.[17] Given our emphasis on resources and organization in this paper, we primarily report on interviewees' reflections on these issues—both as informants to their own personal motives, beliefs and attitudes, but also as informed representatives of a relevant protest organization.[18] While we accept that interview data on political opportunities and framing would also be fruitful in an examination of differences and similarities in activism across time, our ambition to assess the theoretical and analytical precision of the connective action paradigm dictates a focus on the issues that speak most directly to this framework, i. e. resources and organization. Emphasis was placed on conducting interviews in settings that were familiar to the activists. In the contemporary sample we strove to conduct interviews in the activist's milieu, i. e. at places where they organize their activism. All interviewees were asked whether they would allow their interviews to be used in the Workers Museum exhibition (see above) and to be available in the museum's archives. All except one agreed. Interviews lasted between one and two hours. The interview material was subsequently transcribed.

16 Steinar Kvale and Svend Brinkmann, *Interview: Introduktion til et håndværk* (Copenhagen: Hans Reitzels Forlag, 2009).

17 Lindekilde and Olesen, *Politisk Protest*.

18 Donatella della Porta, "In-Depth Interviews," in *Methodological Practices in Social Movement Research*, edited by Donatella della Porta (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2014), 228–9.

Activist Organization and Resources from the 1960s to the 1980s

The logic of collective action corresponds well with the stories told by the "historical" activists. In general, they were concerned about the history of *their* organizations and what these organizations did or did not do; how *they* were different from members of other organizations and why; how they sometimes made organizational changes to reach their political goals. Notably, the interviewees very easily forgot their own "I" in their narratives and told instead about the *collective* actions and their often resource-intensive efforts to mobilize.

Organization

De Danske Vietnamkomiteer (the Danish Vietnam Committees, DDV) is regarded as one of the most significant representatives of the protest activity in the Danish Vietnam movement. The Danish historian Søren Hein Rasmussen has emphasized that it was DDV that "created the dynamic of the movement; first of all, it was from here that the spectacular activities were carried out which, for better or worse, put the Vietnamese movement in the public spotlight."[19] In number, the organized members of DDV were no more than a few hundred, yet they managed to gather thousands of participants for demonstrations.

Organizationally, DDV is an exemplary case of an organization that was dynamic and constantly evolving. As the name indicates, DDV was originally a coalition of Vietnam committees. The first committees emerged in 1966 as primarily local committees in Copenhagen. Historian Karen Steller Bjerregaard has assumed that the committees were formed "from below" and that, unlike the party organizations, the committees created new local spaces for "practical solidarity work" and "activation," often from private homes.[20] The first assumption is debatable, and an opposite explanation has also been given; namely, that the Vietnamese committees were the result of a top-down decision from the Communist Party of Denmark (DKP) and rooted in the international rivalry between the Soviet Union and China.[21]

19 Rasmussen, *Sære Alliancer*, 61.

20 Karen Steller Bjerregaard, ""Et Undertrykt Folk Har Altid Ret": Solidaritet med den 3. Verden i 1960'ernes og 1970'ernes Danmark" (PhD Thesis, Roskilde University, 2010), 314.

21 Chris Holmsted Larsen, *Tiden Arbejder for Os: DKP og Vietnamkrigen 1963–1973* (Copenhagen: Multivers 2007), 90–1.

Troels Toftkær, who was also a founding member of *Militærnægterforeningen* (the Conscientious Objector Association) and a member of *Socialistisk Folkeparti* (the Socialist People's Party, SF, established by an ousted DKP chairman in 1959), recalls the formation of the Vanløse Vietnam Committee with slightly mixed feelings, because on the one hand it consisted of a varied group of socialists, communists and pacifist social liberals, but on the other hand, it didn't felt like a "real" grassroots initiative that had spontaneously grown up from below: "afterwards, of course, I've been thinking about […] I thought of that at the time, too; somebody is pulling the strings, right? It's no coincidence that these people come and go, and they fit the roles they do. And there was clearly a communist network that was activated in this situation. And they stood up faithfully every time. And because they had that network and they had that way of approaching things, they came to play a much bigger role than the SFs, for example, because they didn't just come when you were playing the trumpet." Toftkær, however, confirms that the meetings in the first years took place in private homes, partly at his home, and partly at a high-ranking communist's home.[22]

Another activist who was also involved in the early Vietnam movement in another part of the city was communist party member Tove Jensen. She and her husband formed the Amager Vietnam Committee. She acknowledges that: "in this activism, the political parties thus […] the communist party, play a role, they would like the committees to grow at a certain time." Concerning the first few years, she says that the couple's apartment was the committee's domicile, and that they were eight to ten core activists and fifty to sixty sympathizers. There were many communists, but also SFs and a few social democrats, both young people and old veterans from the World War II resistance movement. The activists were members of the committee but did not pay membership fees.[23]

In 1967, seven Copenhagen local committees merged into the Greater Copenhagen Vietnam Committees, and in 1968 they joined forces with other committees from other parts of the country on an anti-imperialist basis and formed DDV. The gathering manifested at the same time as a split of the Vietnam movement into a moderate and a radical wing. In DDV, there was subsequently a rapid movement towards a more centrally controlled organization. According to the November 1970 statutes, the organization now called itself a cadre organization and introduced a membership fee. The leadership's motivation for these changes was to prevent the organization from being "a playground for periodically active individualists." DDV thereby formally gained some common features with a communist party based on the Marxist-Le-

22 Interview with Troels Toftkær, 4 June 2019.
23 Interview with Tove Jensen, 23 April 2019.

ninist principle of democratic centralism.[24] In reality the organization was racked by factional battles.[25]

At the other end of the organizational spectrum were organizations such as *De Studerendes Vietnam Aktion* (the Students' Vietnam Action, DSVA), which cooperated with DDV. DSVA released a series of informative booklets about the war and had its heyday in May 1970 following the shooting of four students at Kent State University in Ohio, when it initiated a demonstration with approximately 10,000 participants who marched from the University of Copenhagen to the US embassy.[26]

Morten Thing, co-founder of DSVA, remembers the organization as very loosely organized: "The Students' Vietnam Action was something we had copied from the US, where the idea was to hold a demonstration once a month, and then the demonstrations should spread and grow larger. In English they called them Moratorium, that is, they had given the state a moratorium and eventually we would suffocate them in these giant demonstrations, but that did not happen […] but it led to the creation of a group at the university which very much resembled the groups [committees] in the Vietnam movement, but there was not really any leadership. There was a group of activists and several of them I lived in commune with, in the commune Bellevue, and that was like the people who met up, they did what needed to be done, and they decided what it was going to be like." To be an activist outside of an organization did not seem to be an alternative. Activism was something you practiced together with other people in an organization. Over time, your organization may have changed in a direction you did not like, and you opted out, or the organization vanished because people were more attracted to other causes handled by other organizations.

A cause that had originally been overshadowed by the Vietnam War in the latter half of the 1960s was the fight against the apartheid regime in South Africa. Yet after the Soweto uprising in 1976, the campaign gained momentum and in 1978 *Landskomiteen Sydafrika-Aktion* (the National Committee South Africa Action, LSA) was founded. Here, however, according to one of our interviewees, Morten Nielsen, the organizational form ended up inhibiting the cause. In 1985 he was as a Communist Youth member instrumental in establishing *Sydafrikakomiteen i København* (the South Africa Committee of Copenhagen, SAKK), which for the next four to five years, as a local branch of LSA, organized a large number of high-profile activities that put the fight against the apartheid system on the media agenda and made it a popular cause.

24 "Organisatorisk grundlag for DDV" (November 1970) and "Koordinerings-udvalgets beretning til landsmødet d. 3–4/4–71," Box 4–5, Demos' archive, Workers Museum & Labour Movement's Library and Archive (ABA).

25 Johs. Nordentoft and Søren Hein Rasmussen: *Kampagnen mod Atomvåben og Vietnambevægelsen 1960–1972* (Odense: Universitetsforlag, 1991), 138.

26 Ibid.: 108, 111–2.

But in the years up to 1985, according to Morten Nielsen, LSA did not manage to mobilize the activist youth: "So my quick analysis on that was that the South African Action Committee was a dead herring […] they had very little drive. There was a board that exercised its power through board meetings, not through activities outside […] One [reason] was that young people in the '80s had changed radically compared to the young people they [the board] knew, who were more faithful to authorities."

Morten Nielsen also recounts how two-thirds of the participants in the founding meeting of SAKK were young people, and he emphasizes the fact that they immediately changed the articles of association so that the executive committee "did not have decisive power over the organization. It had a weekly Thursday meeting. So, we simply changed the structure on the spot, to have an executive committee that was responsible for the finances, but not responsible for the execution of the activities. It was the people who showed up who were responsible for the action."[27] Whether the youth of the 1980s was radically less faithful to the authorities than for instance the young Vietnam activists of the late 1960s is debatable. What is perhaps more notable are the striking similarities in the stories of Morten Thing and Morten Nielsen about how well activism thrived in their flat organizations, where the activists made things happen because they desired to, and not because it was a decision of the organization's leadership.

Resources

But desire (and organization) do not do the whole of the work. Political activism on the left has historically been funded from many kinds of sources. Apart from foreign state contributions to some of the organizations during the Cold War,[28] Søren Hein Rasmussen estimates that the financial support for the protest movements in the 1970–80s was distributed as follows: 30 percent from the trade union movement, 30 percent from individual contributions, 20 percent from public institutions, 10 percent from private foundations and 10 percent from sale of propaganda materials.[29] The resources of the trade unions were not evenly distributed among the various political activist groups. The revolutionary left was clearly disadvantaged in this regard, but they found other ways to finance their activities.

27 Interview with Morten Nielsen, 1 August 2019.

28 Søren Hein Rasmussen, *Danmark under den Kolde Krig: Den Sikkerhedspolitiske Situation 1945–1991, vol. 2: 1963–1978* (Copenhagen: Omslag, 2005), 344–52. See also: Rasmus Mariager and Regin Schmidt, *PET's Overvågning af Protestbevægelser 1945–1989, PET-kommissionens Beretning*, vol. 10 (Copenhagen: Rasmus Mariager, 2009), 129.

29 Rasmussen, *Sære Alliancer*, 277–8.

An interesting case is the private Lise and Niels Munk Plum Foundation. The assets of the foundation were based on Lise Munk Plum's inheritance from her father's companies in the stone wool and gas concrete industry. The foundation was established in 1967 and has supported a myriad of "extra-parliamentary" initiatives on the Danish left through to the present day. Several of our interviewees support the assessment that the Plum Foundation played a significant role. Litten Hansen, who was secretary of the foundation from its first years until 1971, states: "The Plum Foundation played a huge role. I don't remember how many millions have gone through the Plum Foundation. It was a lot […] That was all that was going on in this country [on the new left] We did not support political parties, we never did. It was movements."[30] Ingrid Hind, who succeeded Litten Hansen as secretary, has the same perception: "applications for funding came in from all sorts of groups, activist groups. So there I really got the sense of everything that existed for people who wanted to make society better […] I really think that it meant a lot, like, to many."[31]

The accounts of the foundation show that during its first decade it distributed over one million Danish kroner. It provided steady support to the Vietnam movement and many other smaller anti-imperialist projects. Each of the grants was in general minor (between one and ten thousand kroner), [32] but for smaller activist initiatives that could make a significant difference. The main activity of the foundation during the 1960–70s was financing the three-story building 14 Dronningensgade in Copenhagen, which hosted the political journal *Politisk Revy*, *Det venstreorienterede Tidsskriftscenter* (The Left-Wing Journal Centre), and campaign organizations: *Kampagnen mod Atomkraft* (The Campaign against Nuclear Power), The Danish Bertrand Russell Council, The Black Panther Solidarity Committee and *Rødstrømperne* (the Redstockings), just to name a few.

Politisk Revy in the 1960–70s was the main new left journal. It was independent of any specific political group or party, but like its financiers the editorial group shared political agendas with SF and from 1968 the splinter group *Venstresocialisterne* (the Left Socialists, VS) and the radical part of the Vietnam movement. Unlike most other left-wing journals, its funding (and larger sales) made it possible to hire professional technicians and editors and pay journalists and photographers. And as Morten Thing, coeditor from 1969, reminds us, printed media was the only accessible mass media for protesters. It was a traditional and expensive but still potent tool to challenge the rules and norms of society and to create an alternative public.[33]

30 Interview with Litten Hansen, 28 May 2019.

31 Interview with Ingrid Hind, 15 August 2019.

32 Lise og Niels Munk Plums Fond's archive, Rigsarkivet, Box 6.

33 Interview with Morten Thing, 9 April 2019; Steen Bille Larsen, *I Venstrefløjens Øje: Mit Liv som Fuldtidsaktivist i 60'erne* (Copenhagen: Politisk Revy, 2018), 147, 238.

In general, however, most activists remember insufficient funds. Even in cases where it was possible for substantial revenues from book and record sales, organizations usually ended up with deficits. The publishing and record company of the DDV, Demos, managed to deliver music to the Danish youth rebellion with several popular record releases by well-known Danish artists. A leading member of Demos, the aforementioned Tove Jensen, recalls: "There are a number of artists who are inspired to express themselves, either in song or music or in words and theatre, which in itself is one of the very large resources that Demos then—but also in the Vietnam movement […] rested on. So, we have an alternative publishing business […] no profits are ever earned. On the contrary, we ended up with a big deficit in '79."[34] Actually, Demos' revenue from the sale of records, books, posters etc. exceeded the support of the Plum Foundation by far. In 1975 the company had a turnover of three million kroner (of which one million was from record sales), but notably only a total surplus of 12,000 kroner.[35]

One of the few organizations that managed to sustain itself well from its own revenue was OOA. Its financial backing did not come from the unions because both the social democrats and the communists were sceptical of the anti-nuclear power cause.[36] Instead great parts of its income came from the sale of the world-renowned badge "Nuclear Power? No thanks!" with its smiling sun logo. The organization successfully set up its own guarantee fund, to which about 10,000 people paid continuous deposits.[37] The woman behind the badge, Anne Lund, an economist, recalls that they earned so much from the solar badge that, through the World Information Service on Energy in Amsterdam, they were able to support the anti-nuclear power movement in other West European countries: "Yes, we did. Lots. There was a lot of money, and the movement made a lot of money on the solar badge sales, and it also helped boost more sales, because people knew the money they paid went to the movements."[38] The local branch of the OOA in Aarhus also made money from a yearly music festival. Jesper Carlsen, musician and employed organizational secretary in the early 1980s, recalls: "we did a rock festival in Aarhus, and it was simply, it was really something that turned [the tide]. We became very good at it. I think there were three or four of them where we made so much money, and that was great; it was something that gave attention, but it was there we made the money to make a countrywide, household-distributed campaign newspaper where we really could get to grips with the viewpoints."[39] In his own words, Jesper Carlsen hereby articulates the logic of collective action that

34 Interview with Tove Jensen, 23 April 2019.
35 "Regnskab 1975," Demos' archive, ABA, Box 48.
36 Rasmussen, *Sære Alliancer*, 137, 142.
37 Interview with Jesper Carlsen, 22 October 2019.
38 Interview with Anne Lund, 22 October 2019.
39 Interview with Jesper Carlsen, 22 October 2019.

organization and resources were essential elements in successful protest activities. No one put on a rock festival by themselves, and nobody distributed a free newspaper nationwide without substantial financial backing—at least not before the Internet became the new mass media platform.

Organization and Resources in Contemporary Activism

There are obviously many relevant ways to identify key themes in the organization and resources of contemporary activism. The main selection criterion here is a focus on themes that allow us to assess the scope and limitations of the "connective action" thesis set out in the paper's introduction. The following three themes attempt to facilitate such a discussion: (a) individual activism; (b) the organizing capacity of new media; and (c) the continued importance of physical meetings.

Individual Activism

Several of the interviewees may be described as individual activists, either in the sense that they do not formally belong to established organizations or display only fleeting and ad hoc associations with existing organizations. Emma Holten, a feminist activist motivated by personal experiences with revenge porn, primarily uses talks and lectures, especially for younger audiences, as her activist tool. Since her focus is on changing norms of sexism in society and empowering young women, she sees an important activist role in facilitating debate and self-reflection. What makes this strategy activist, in her view, is that she sees her interventions as not simply informational, but as a means to "make people change their minds."[40] Miss Privileze also works in the area of gender roles, but from an LGBT, queer and drag perspective. Through performances and talks, she tries to move existing norms towards a broader acceptance of diversity in sexual and gender roles. Reflecting their individual forms of activism, both Holten and Miss Privileze have professional websites or Facebook pages that advertise their goals through a clearly activist vocabulary.

While these are examples of individual and independent activism, the interviews also demonstrate how this individualism is organizationally embedded in various ways. Holten, for example, describes how her way into activism took place through the magazine *Friktion*, which she helped set up and is still involved in. *Friktion* focuses on feminist and queer issues from a clearly activist and critical perspective. Miss Privileze works part-time for the NGO *Sex & Samfund* (Sex & Society). While not fi-

40 Interview with Emma Holten, 21 August 2019.

nancially dependent on these organizational settings, they nonetheless provide various forms of support, such as material resources (e. g. facilities and rooms provided by *Sex & Samfund*, which is a staffed, professional NGO) and cultural and social resources (personal networks and knowledge produced in the context of *Friktion*).

The potential to work as an individual activist is facilitated by new media in several ways. Websites and presence on social media and blogs generate a high degree of visibility that makes it relatively easier to conduct activism without the backing of an organization. This is so because visibility can be converted into different types of resources. In the cases of Holten and Miss Privileze, they offer talks and performances for a fee. This access to material resources decreases the need to tap into the resources of an organization. This logic, although in a very different way, is also prominent in the interview with Aymeric Daval-Rasmussen, an activist in the Aarhus branch of Extinction Rebellion. Daval-Rasmussen has temporarily abandoned a promising academic career to focus full-time on climate activism. While he is a member of Extinction Rebellion, this organization has limited resources. In order to be able to pay for basic expenses, Daval-Rasmussen started a blog with the telling title *Akademisk selvmord* (Academic suicide), from where he crowdfunds. On the blog, he recounts how he now lives "without a safety net, because I think it is the right thing to do. My goal is to collect a modest amount of money […] so that I can spend all my time on the rebellion in the coming months […] if you can spare a fiver or a tenner […] you are welcome to click the 'donate' button."[41]

The ability to acquire visibility through the multiple channels of the contemporary public sphere enables a new range of activist identities and roles compared to what was possible in the pre-social media era. Networked visibility can also be used to attract human resources. Miss Privileze, for example, recounts how she draws on Instagram friends to set up happenings and acquire know-how about media communication: "Sometimes I send them an idea about how I want to do an interview or a happening. They are helping me set up a media stunt this Wednesday at a home for the retired where we want to do drag and talk about gender, then and now."[42]

These collaborations are clearly of an ad hoc nature, emerging and dissolving around specific events. It is interesting to note, however, that the social media visibility of Holten and Miss Privileze is shaped in interaction with old media. Holten has become a prominent activist voice in feminism through a string of appearances on talk shows and news broadcasts in traditional media. Miss Privileze took part in the Denmark's Got Talent television show with a highly activist performance that provided her with new degrees of visibility that are likely to amplify the flow of resources into her activism in the coming years. Since independent activism without

41 http://www.akademisk-selvmord.dk, viewed 26 March 2020.

42 Interview with Miss Privileze, 2 October 2019.

strong organizational backing requires some level of resources to persist, these activist forms, as exemplified by both Holten and Miss Privileze, often seem to tap into the entertainment and experience economies of contemporary societies. We speculate that such individual-based, performative activism will become increasingly prevalent in the coming years, perhaps creating more fluid boundaries between political activism and other social, cultural, and political roles.

The Organizing Capacity of New Media

In 2018 and 2019, a heated debate raged in Denmark about limited time and resources in kindergartens and day care institutions. Following documentaries on Danish television that uncovered serious problems in the day care system, the left-wing party SF proposed new legislation to address the problems. When the proposal met resistance from both liberal parties as well as from social democrats, it caused widespread indignation and criticism from citizens and, in particular, parents. These debates unfolded primarily on the Facebook page of Jacob Mark, a prominent SF politician. According to interviewee Marie Blønd, the indignation led to several calls for protest. Blønd recounts how she responded to one of these calls, writing: "'I have a month and a half left of my maternity leave. Let's do it!' And then it exploded. The group was set up on 12 March [2019] and twenty-five days later 31,000 had joined."[43] The Facebook mobilization was very quickly converted into major physical mobilizations: "And there we were, behind Christiansborg [the Danish parliament], but also in fifty-five cities all over Denmark. So, it became a historic demonstration."[44] An estimated 50,000 people participated in the protests all over the country, which is an unusually high number of protesters in a Danish context.

Blønd's account is a powerful testament to the ability of social media to connect individual grievances and generate mobilizing potential within a very short span of time and largely without organizational backing. It is telling that Blønd portrays herself as a more or less accidental activist. Her move from being a concerned parent to becoming a key organizer of the initiative *#Hvor er der en voksen*? (#Where is there an adult?) not only happened abruptly but also without prior experience in activist work. The path from concerned individual to engaged activist is potentially very short, not least thanks to the way new media enable the connection with other aggrieved individuals outside an organizational context.

Despite the clearly social media-driven character of the protests, the network of concerned parents quickly started to interact with established organizations in the

43 Interview with Marie Blønd and Karen Lumholt, 2 October 2019.
44 Ibid.

field of family politics, most notably *Familiepolitisk Netværk* (Family Political Network). The interview with Blønd was conducted together with Karen Lumholt from *Familiepolitisk Netværk* in order to assess these connections. According to Blønd, the group of concerned parents quickly realized that this organization was an important "resource […] because there was an upcoming parliamentary election [in June 2019] and we simply did not have the resources to know the position of all the political parties […] and this was also why we said to Karen, the second time we demonstrated […] 'Should we not add your logo to ours?'"[45] While the group of concerned and demonstrating parents retained their independence, they thus actively tapped into resources and know-how embedded in existing organizations in Danish civil society. Interestingly, what started out as a loosely connected group with the sole intention of mobilizing a demonstration has now itself crystallized into an organizational platform, *#Hvor er der en voksen*? The platform has a professional website that provides various knowledge and practical resources for citizens who want to become active in the area of family politics and, in particular, conditions in the Danish day care system.

New media do not only help organize large-scale protests around highly salient political issues such as the ones discussed above. Annbritt Jørgensen describes herself as an "everyday activist." Jørgensen is a co-founder of *Skraldecafeen* (the Dumpster Diving Café), which focuses on food waste and actively engages in dumpster diving (collecting thrown-out food from supermarkets) in order to make it accessible to people in need and with limited resources. The initiative grew out of a few individuals who wanted to connect dumpster divers and people in need of food: "There are lots of help groups on Facebook, and when we saw a request for help in one of these groups, we posted it in our own coordination group, tagging the dumpster diver that was closest by, thus creating a connection between the dumpster diver and the needy person."[46] Since it is associated with considerable stigma to both collect and receive thrown-out food and because individuals engaged in such activities are limited in number and often geographically scattered, Facebook provides a connection tool that is able to turn the otherwise individual nature of dumpster diving into a collective, grassroots-driven effort. For Annbritt Jørgensen, this work has a decidedly political character as it addresses food waste and overconsumption, as well as issues of social inequality.

In the cases of *Skraldecafeen* and *#Hvor er der en voksen*? social media, and most notably Facebook, were used as mobilization tools. Social media, however, also serves to organize much of the internal decision-making efforts in the newer, youth-driven movements. Describing how organization in Fridays for Future Copenhagen takes place, 14-year-old activist Selma de Montgomery Nørgaard demonstrates how she and her fellow activists use the application Discord. Discord was originally developed

45 Ibid.

46 Interview with Annbritt Jørgensen, 27 November 2019.

for the gaming community but is now widely used by young activists as a platform for internal debates and organization among activists.[47] Discord enables conversation and text and image sharing without a hierarchic structure. Its affordances in this way correspond well with the general suspicion of centralized and hierarchic organization that characterizes the new youth-driven climate movements. Selma de Montgomery Nørgaard thus declares that the way she and other activists organize internally is not only a practical choice, but one that is value-driven and intended to practice the kind of inclusive decision-making they would like to see in society and politics in general (in the social movements literature this philosophy is typically termed "prefigurative politics" or "free spaces").[48]

The Continued Importance of the Physical Meeting

Diving more deeply into the interview with Selma de Montgomery Nørgaard, it quickly becomes evident that the prominence of social media in the process of internal organization is not a substitute for the physical meeting. To the contrary, she repeatedly emphasizes how a core goal of the Fridays for Future activists is the creation of an activist "community" and that such a community can only be established through physical meetings. Sarah Hellebek from *Den Grønne Studenterbevægelse* (The Green Students Movement) similarly underlines the need for physical meetings to connect and shape all the activities that take place in online forums. Physically meeting requires material resources in the form of spaces. Fridays for Future make use of spaces provided by the Geological Museum in Copenhagen and *Den Grønne Studenterbevægelse* have access to meeting facilities in The Students' House in Copenhagen (this space was also used by Harald Brønd and his fellow activists in the organization of the People's Climate Marches in Copenhagen in 2018 and 2019).

While a significant part of the organizing in many of the new activist efforts around climate happens online, it thus also draws strongly on an existing network of activist or activist-friendly physical spaces scattered around the Copenhagen area. This activist infrastructure also consists of various educational facilities. Both Sarah Hellebek and Nanna Clifforth (see below) are or have been involved in a course called *Verden brænder* (The World is Burning) offered at the Danish folk high school Krogerup. The course has a clearly activist dimension and focuses on contemporary political issues. Having existed for several years, it has been a starting point for many Danish activists

47 See also: Interview with Sarah Hellebek, 30 April 2019.

48 Francesca Polletta, "'Free Spaces' in Collective Action," *Theory and Society* 28, no. 1 (1999), 1–38. See also the interview with Daval-Rasmussen from Extinction Rebellion above for an account of a more or less complete lifestyle transformation in order to live out one's values in practice.

on the left. In Copenhagen, *Det frie gymnasim* (The Free High School) is known for its politicized educational environment. In recent years, the issue of climate has been addressed through several student strikes and in a collective decision to ban air travel as part of school activities.

The importance of the physical meeting is not only prominent in relation to internal decision-making processes, but also in the interaction with potential supporters and constituencies. Nanna Clifforth from the Danish environmental organization NOAH describes how she and her organization devote significant time and energy to building relationships with local citizens engaged in environmentally related protests and organizing: "To me, it is much more important to organize ten people than to mobilize a thousand, because in the long run that changes a lot more."[49] Clifforth is involved in local protests against shale gas and large-scale industrial pig farms, trying to organize locals with little protest experience: "and then I spend a year and a half meeting with them on a continuous basis, three hours at a time […] so that you can build trust, and then suddenly after a year they say 'I think this is political,' and then you go 'Yes,' but it takes maybe a year to get there."[50]

In general, Clifforth advocates a return to the local organizing and basis groups that characterized earlier environmental movements in the 1970s and 1980s. The emphasis on the physical meeting is also strongly reflected in the way the environmental and climate movement organizes today. The most notable example is probably the so-called Klima Camp in Rheinland, which has been held every year since 2010 in one of the world's largest coal mining areas. While the camps have been the basis of a number of significant protests, Clifforth emphasizes the importance of the camp itself: "there is often a lot of focus on actions, but to have a climate camp leading up to that where there are workshops, where you cook together, where you can return to, that is very educational." The philosophy behind the camp reflects the notion of prefigurative politics mentioned above. The Klima Camp website thus explains how the camp is a place to "live alternatives together: anti-authoritarian self-organization, our own energy supply, compost toilets, music and much more!"[51]

49 Interview with Nanna Clifforth, 30 April 2019.

50 Ibid.

51 https://www.klimacamp-im-rheinland.de/en/about, viewed 26 March 2020.

Discussion

The following discussion is organized around four themes that allow us to analytically interpret the interviews reported above and assess the newness claims of Bennett and Segerberg's theory of connective action: (1) flat organizational structures; (2) the importance of (new) media; (3) individual vs. collective activism; and (4) the power of physical spaces.

Flat organizational structures

Bennet and Segerberg's claim that the new digital media and the personalization of contentious politics is altering protest organization from a formal and centralized form to more flat and leaderless structures seems to neglect the continuity of ideals regarding flat structures that we have observed. When the young activist Selma de Montgomery Nørgaard highlights the flat and inclusive organization of Fridays for Future Copenhagen, where centralized and hierarchic organization principles are considered to be a main problem of society and politics in general, she echoes the past. These exact ideals of participatory or grassroots democracy where freedom, equality and fraternity could flourish in a non-hierarchical forum were important characteristics of the new left protest movements of the 1960s.[52]

In our historical cases we have seen a wide spectrum of practiced "flatness," from an organization like DSVA with no formal organizational structures to a dynamic example like DDV that transformed itself from a cluster of communist party-dominated local Vietnam committees to an anti-imperialistic cadre organization with a collective leadership dominated by a handful of ex-DKPs. Another example was OOA, which explicitly defined itself as a "flat" organization. In an OOA 10th anniversary publication it says: "In OOA, leadership is not elected at all—it's the people who show up, the activists, who make the decisions."[53] But above the basic activist layer there was *Ledelsessekretariatet* (the Leadership Secretariat) in Copenhagen and later also a regional secretariat in Aarhus where important decisions of the non-membership organization were made. Historically the "flatness" of left-wing activist organizations has been blurred and some significant organizations have had similarities to traditional, hierarchically constructed political organizations such as parties and unions. Nevertheless, it is important to stress that even though non-hierarchical forms of organiza-

52 Gerd-Rainer Horn, *The Spirit of '68: Rebellion in Western Europe and North America, 1956–1976* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2007), 195.

53 OOA – Ti År i Bevægelse, Copenhagen 1984, 60.

tion may be characteristic of today's new technology-driven connective action, we see this tendency from the 1960s onwards.

The Importance of (New) Media

There is little doubt that new media have significantly transformed the way activists organize. In the contemporary sample, several respondents point out how new media make communication and mobilization faster, easier and cheaper. In the interview with Marie Blønd, for example, it was evident that the very fast and powerful mobilizations around children and day care were made possible through Twitter and Facebook. Other respondents pointed out how new media are not simply efficient mobilization tools, but that they also shape internal organizational structures and decision-making processes. This was perhaps most notable in the interviews with contemporary climate activists such as Sarah Hellebek and Selma de Montgomery, who use the application Discord to organize and communicate internally among activists. These observations in many ways seem to confirm Bennet and Segerberg's observations about a historical move from collective to connective action.

As discussed in the historical section, communication and mobilization on the left during the 1960s, 1970s and 1980s centred on printed publications. This entailed various limitations: first, printed media were naturally subject to a certain publication cycle for physical editions that appeared with varying frequency; second, they required a significant amount of resources to be run and maintained. The first limitation made them less efficient as mobilization tools, at least in relation to more spontaneous mobilization forms. Under such conditions, established organizations naturally become prime mobilizers because they possessed the most direct relationship with activists. As recounted by Marie Blønd, new media made it possible for their initiative to mobilize tens of thousands of activists in a very short time and largely without organizational intermediaries. The second limitation meant that communication and publication required some backing from organizations with resources. *Politisk Revy,* for example, received its resources from the Plum Foundation, which in turn tied it ideologically to the foundation and the parties associated with the foundation, SF and VS. Today's new media and communication platforms, in contrast, can be used at no or very little cost and, as a result, without needing to tap into the resource pools commanded by established organizations.

Collective vs. Individual Activism

The importance of individual activism in the contemporary sample also seems to denote a real and significant historical difference. There are two aspects of individualism worth noting: first, an increasing number of contemporary activists seem to work individually or with only loose organizational affiliations (such as Emma Holten and Miss Privileze), and, second, those who are part of organizations appear to often have rather flexible and shifting affiliations. The latter observation also points to the fact that today's organizational structures are sometimes of an ad hoc character and emerge in response to concrete initiatives and crises: the rapidly mobilized network of dissatisfied parents, *#Hvor er der en voksen*? (#Where is there an adult?), is a case in point here.

In the historical sample there are suggestions that individual activism was not really considered a legitimate option. The focus on strong cadre-like organizations, which partly reflected the central role of communism on the Danish left during the 1960s and 1970s, clearly prioritized the collective over the individual. This probably started changing in the 1980s with the waning of communism and the emergence of a new generation that, as Morten Nielsen noted in the analysis, was perhaps less faithful to authority.

The new place for individual activism today reflects a wider sociological drive towards individualization, but also, as we discussed in the analysis, the opportunities offered by new media with regard to both financing and communicating individual activism. Financial and resource dependence on organizations has decreased, while at the same time contemporary activist identities are less tied up with organizational affiliation and loyalty. The point we want to make is obviously not that activists today are *predominantly* individual: in fact, as the contemporary sample demonstrates, the majority of the interviewees still locate their activism within organizational contexts, and even the ones who do not are not entirely free-standing actors. These qualifications notwithstanding, there is little doubt that the relationship between the individual activist and organizations has fundamentally changed over the last four decades.

The Power of Physical Spaces

Ever since the rise of the socialist labour movement, the left has been fighting for dominance over physical spaces in society, especially in the big cities. The premises of the Workers Museum in Copenhagen were originally built by the labour movement in 1879 in order to have a place of its own. The New Left continued and further developed these traditions of conquering space, and the latest hallmark of political activism has been the occupations of public squares and streets. For our historical activists it was essential to have spaces for organizing collective action. As mentioned, 14 Dron-

ningensgade in Copenhagen, owned by the Plum Foundation, was one such place. Another was 37 Grønnegade, where DDV and their publishing and record company Demos was housed. These gathering places were epicentres of left-wing activism. Tove Jensen remembers: "We were a centre for many different [groups], and I think the experiences from the Vietnam movement concerning being active on many fronts and using many different means [of action] became a knowledge that trickled into many other groups."[54] Likewise, we have seen that physical meeting places like museums, student houses, folk high schools and camps are important for today's activists. Ultimately, it seems that the rise of social media and the continuation of physical space as a central element of political activism highlight the complexity of the connective turn in protest movements. It even seems reasonable to argue, as does social scientist Alice Mattoni, that new technology has made protest space a hybrid of both a physical and a virtual world—forging new organizational challenges to be studied.[55]

Conclusion

We began with the ambition to discuss the connective paradigm proposed by Bennett and Segerberg. We have done so by comparing insights from two sets of interviews (30 in total) with Danish activists: the first of these were conducted with those who had been active mainly before the 1990s, and the other with contemporary activists. Our comparison focused on the role of resources and organization across these periods. In particular we looked at four themes: flat organizational structures; the importance of (new) media; individual vs. collective activism; and the power of physical spaces. Overall, it seems reasonable to conclude that activism has indeed entered a new phase of connective action. This is perhaps most visible in the way new media technologies are changing the dynamics of organizing and making established organizations and their resources less vital and decisive for mobilization.

We also found reasons not to exaggerate the claim of newness, however. First, the proliferation of flat and leaderless structures is not a historically new phenomenon but was also considered important and valuable by many organizations and mobilizations during the 1960s, 1970s and 1980s. Second, while individual activism seems more common and feasible in today's media environment, individual activists are still connected (if perhaps more loosely) with existing organizations and embedded in activist networks. Third, even though new media provide new opportunities for mobilization

54 Interview with Tove Jensen, 23 April 2019.

55 Alice Mattoni, "I Post, You Rally, She Tweets… And We All Occupy: The Challenges of Hybrid Spatiality in the Occupy Wall Street Mobilizations," in *Social Media Materialities and Protest: Critical Reflections*, edited by Mette Mortensen, Christina Neumayer and Thomas Poell (London: Routledge, 2018), 26.

that decrease the need for physical co-presence, the physical meeting is by no means passé in the way contemporary activists think and engage: in fact, many specifically value the physical meeting, both for practical and identity reasons.

Future research, in other words, must seek to set the sometimes-exaggerated claims of newness that emerge from observations of new media technologies against historical experiences. We believe, like Craig Calhoun,[56] that further historically informed research along these lines will provide a much firmer and needed grasp of the balance between change and continuity in political activism, especially in modern times when the landscape of activism seems to be constantly shifting. At the same time, we are aware that depending on relative few selective examples from a rather small sample sets its limitations on the conclusions and the degree of generalizability we can propose. Rather, our interviews offer examples of more widely observed trends and, very importantly, qualitative windows to a complex reality. To exceed the limitations and improve the generalization potential of this kind of study further and larger studies need to be done, in Denmark and beyond. This could be achieved by expanding the sample size or more tightly controlling the selection of interviewees along a set of pre-determined characteristics (such as methods of activism, ideology, issues) in order to achieve greater degrees of comparability across individual cases. As such, the findings of the paper have an explorative nature seeking to motivate and provide directions for future research.

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56 Calhoun, "New Social Movements."

Appendices

Appendix 1: Historical sample

Name (year of birth)	Date of interview	Location	Main organizational affiliation
Morten Thing (1945)	9 April 2019	Private home, Copenhagen	De Studerendes Vietnam Aktion
Wilfred Gluud (1947)	16 April 2019	Café, Copenhagen	Frederiksberg Vietnamkomité
Tove Jensen (1944)	23 April 2019	Demos, Copenhagen	Demos/De Danske Vietnamkomiteer
Irene Nørlund (1951)	7 May 2019	Private home, Copenhagen	Indokinakomiteerne
Villo Sigurdsson (1944)	14 May 2019	Private home, Frederiksberg	Venstresocialisterne
Litten Hansen (1944)	28 May 2019	Private home, Vanløse	Den danske Anti-apartheid Komite
Troels Toftkær (1941)	4 June 2019	Private home, Copenhagen	Socialistisk Folkeparti
Steen Christensen (1946)	30 July 2019	Private home, Hvidovre	Socialdemokratiet
Morten Nielsen (1961)	1 August 2019	Global Aktion's office, Copenhagen	Sydafrikakomiteen i København
René Karpantschof (1965)	15 August 2019	Workers Museum, Copenhagen	BZ (squatting movement)
Gorm Gunnarsen (1962)	26 August 2019	Workers Museum, Copenhagen	Landskomiteen Sydafrika-Aktion
Lisa Lauesen (1952)	29 August 2019	Workers Museum, Copenhagen	Tøj til Afrika/Kommunistisk Arbejdskreds
Ingrid Hind (1928)	15 September 2019	Private home, Bagsværd	NOAH (environmental organization)
Anne Lund (1953)	21–22 October 2019	Private home, Brabrand/Workers Museum, Copenhagen (via telephone)	Organisationen til Oplysning om Atomkraft Aarhus
Jesper Carlsen (1954)	22 October 2019	Holiday home, Jerup/Workers Museum, Copenhagen (via telephone)	Organisationen til Oplysning om Atomkraft Aarhus

Appendix 2: Contemporary sample

Name	**Date of interview**	**Location**	**Main organization affiliation**
Morten Bisgaard	9 April 2019	Ibis main office, Copenhagen	Ibis (solidarity and development organization)
Harald Brønd	9 April 2019	Studenterhuset (The students' house), Copenhagen	Folkets klimamarch (The People's Climate March)
Nanna Clifforth	30 April 2019	NOAH's main office, Copenhagen	NOAH (environmental organization)
Sara Hellebek	30 April 2019	Studenterhuset (The students' house), Copenhagen	Den Grønne Studenterbevægelse (The Green Students' Movement)
Jan Hoby	13 June 2019	The Workers Museum, Copenhagen	LFS (National association of social pedagogues – union)
Close the Camps (anonymous)	7 August 2019	Café, Copenhagen	Close the Camps (refugee solidarity)
Andreas Grarup	7 August 2019	Café, Copenhagen	Mellemfolkeligt samvirke (solidarity and development organization)
Emma Holten	21 August 2019	Café, Copenhagen	Independent
Pelle Dragsted	27 August 2019	Private home, Copenhagen	Public debater and writer, former MP for Enhedslisten (The Red-Green Alliance)
Elsebeth Fredriksen	3 September 2019	Gellerup Museum, Aarhus	Almen modstand (protest against demolition of so-called ghetto areas in Denmark)
Miss Privileze	2 October 2019	Studenterhuset (The students' house), Copenhagen	Independent
Marie Blønd and Karen Lumholt	2 October 2019	Karen Lumholt's office, Copenhagen	#Hvor er der en voksen? (Where is there an adult?) and Familiepolitisk Netværk (Family political network)
Aymeric Daval-Markussen	1 November 2019	Author's (Olesen) office at Aarhus University, Aarhus	Extinction Rebellion
Ann Britt Jørgensen	27 November 2019	Skraldecafeen's office, Aarhus	Skraldecafeen (The Dumpster Diving Café)
Selma de Montgomery	31 January 2020	Studenterhuset (The students' house), Copenhagen	Fridays for Future