



A WOMAN'S
PLACE
IS IN THE
RESISTANCE

On The Front Lines

**Women as Actors of Change in Progressive and
Conservative Movements**

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Abstract

This thesis focuses on the role of women in contemporary grassroots populist movements in the United States. In particular, it focuses on two case studies: the New Progressive Movement and the Tea Party Movement. Grounded in social movement theory, I show that in 2016 the New Progressive Movement came into being after Bernie Sanders' presidential campaign. This social movement is juxtaposed to the Tea Party Movement. In both of these populist grassroots movements, women play an important role. However, when comparing the role of women on a national level it becomes clear that women in the New Progressive Movement more often fulfill a leadership role than women in the Tea Party Movement. This thesis answers the question of how the nature of the Tea Party Movement and the New Progressive Movement explains the difference in the role of women. A comparison of the organizational structure, ideology, and populist rhetoric reveals that this is the consequence of ideological differences and the progressive/regressive dichotomy in populist rhetoric. Women in the Tea Party Movement adhere to stricter gender roles that are not compatible with national-level leadership positions, due to ideology and regressive populist rhetoric. Women in the New Progressive Movement are encouraged to take on national-level leadership positions due to ideology based on equality and progressive populist rhetoric.

Keywords: grassroots populist movements, Tea Party Movement, New Progressive Movement, female leadership, grassroots organizing, Brand New Congress, Justice Democrats, Sunrise Movement

List of Abbreviations

ACA: Affordable Care Act

AfP: American for Prosperity

AOC: Alexandria Ocasio-Cortez

BNC: Brand New Congress

DP: Democratic Party

DSA: Democratic Socialists of America

FEC: Federal Election Committee

GND: Green New Deal

GOP: Grand Old Party

JBS: John Birch Society

JD: Justice Democrats

NPM: New Progressive Movement

NSM: New Social Movement

OR: Our Revolution

PAC: Political Action Committee

RP: Republican Party

SMO: Social Movement Organization

TP: Tea Party

TPE: Tea Party Express

TPM: Tea Party Movement

TPP: Tea Party Patriots

WUNC: Worthy, Unity, Numbers and Commitment

*Come senators, congressmen, please heed the call
Don't stand in the doorway, don't block up the hall
For he that gets hurt, will be he who has stalled
The battle outside ragin'
Will soon shake your windows and rattle your walls
For the times they are a-changin'*

- Bob Dylan, The Times They Are A Changin

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Introduction

The only constant in life is change. Throughout history, there have been social movements that either tried to make change happen or halt change in the societies in which they occurred. Not all have been successful, but they tried, nonetheless. In the United States alone, there have been several important and influential social movements, such as the suffragist movement, the civil rights movement, the gay liberation movement, and the anti-war movement. More recently, in the 21st century, grassroots social movements like the Black Lives Matter, the Occupy Movement, and the Tea Party Movement have been leaving their imprints on US society, with various degrees of success.

In the last four years, a new grassroots movement has taken a more definite shape, namely the New Progressive Movement (NPM), for which 2015/2016 presidential campaign of Bernie Sanders was a formative moment. In 2015, Sanders officially announced his candidacy for the Democratic presidential nomination, running a campaign financed mostly by individual donations and eschewing corporate PAC and Super PAC money. Sanders' platform included a tax raise for the rich, a federal minimum wage, universal health care, tuition-free public universities, comprehensive immigration reform, and justice reform.¹ Calling himself a democratic-socialist, a dirty word in American politics, Sanders' presidential campaign challenged the Democratic Party to move to the left, especially on economic issues. While he did not win the nomination, the Vermont Senator and his ideas became popular with a lot of young people and ignited a grassroots movement that has been trying to push the Democratic Party to the left. Energized by the Bernie Campaign, citizens all over the United States continued to push for progressive change and started to organize in new ways. Former staffers of the Sanders Campaign transferred the social movement style of campaigning to new organizations that had progressive ideals at their foundation. Among these organizations and political action committees were Brand New Congress, Justice Democrats, and Our Revolution, social movement organizations (SMOs) that play an essential part in the New Progressive Movement. The New Progressive Movement aims to bring progressive change to US

¹ Andrew Prokop, "Bernie Sanders 2016: a primer," *VOX*, October 12, 2016, <https://www.vox.com/2015/7/28/18093566/bernie-sanders-issues-policies>.

society by electing Progressive politicians to the US Congress and enacting progressive legislation.²

I use the name ‘New Progressive Movement’, to indicate the progressive aims of the movement while distinguishing it from the Progressive Movement of the 1920s. The New Progressive Movement fits in a longer history of movements acting for progressive change. In his book *American Dreamers*, Michael Kazin chronicles how the left changed the United States. Kazin starts at the beginning of the nineteenth century with the abolitionist movements, then moves on to suffragism, trade union movements, populism, socialism, communism, and finally the New Left, concluding with a fragmented 21st century left, represented by lonely figures such as Noam Chomsky, Michael Moore, and Naomi Klein. Essentially, all the movements that Kazin discusses were striving towards an egalitarian utopia, which they never really reached. Yet, these movements, while not fully succeeding on their own terms, made lasting contributions to American society. Kazin sketches a portrait of a left that, “since the 1970s, has made a sharp and clever critique of the existing order” but has not been able to construct another leftist political movement.³ That is, until the New Progressive Movement, which is a leftist political movement that fits at the end of Kazin’s chronicled history.

One reason for Michael Kazin to write his book *American Dreamers* was to lament the fact that the Left is often written off as a lost cause.⁴ Jim Newton of the LA Times contends that it is conventional wisdom that the history of the American left is one of failure.⁵ Kazin argues that “since the New Left died, progressives have engaged in limited if worthy, campaigns; a few have

² “Brand New Congress,” Brand New Congress, accessed September 23, 2020, <https://brandnewcongress.org/>; “Let’s Elect the Next generation,” Justice Democrats, accessed September 23, 2020, <https://justicedemocrats.com/>; Sammy Kayes, “Principle of a Modern Progressive Movement,” *The Progressive Times*, January 23, 2017, <https://medium.com/tptimes/principles-of-a-modern-progressive-movement-a2c3f9e5d25a>; Li Zhou, “Alexandria Ocasio-Cortez’s DNC speech emphasized the need for systemic change,” *VOX*, August 19, 2020, <https://www.vox.com/2020/8/19/21372253/alexandria-ocasio-cortez-democratic-national-convention>; Michael Sainato, “How Progressives Are Changing America’s South,” *The Progressive*, December 6, 2018, <https://progressive.org/dispatches/how-progressives-are-changing-americas-south-181206/>.

³ Michael Kazin, *American Dreamers* (New York: Vintage Books, 2011), xix.

⁴ Kazin, *American Dreamers*, xviii.

⁵ Jim Newton, “Book Review: American Dreamers by Michael Kazin,” *Los Angeles Times*, September 25, 2011, <https://www.latimes.com/books/la-xpm-2011-sep-25-la-ca-michael-kazin-20110925-story.html>.

become experts at crafting legislation to nudge the country closer to a kind of socialist-democratic order.”⁶ Writing in 2011, Kazin does not yet identify another movement taking shape on the left. Flash forward to 2016, when the loss of Bernie Sanders in the presidential primaries caused a shift in progressive politics and inspired a budding New Progressive Movement, which is trying to pull the Democratic Party to the left. The increasing support for progressive ideas and progressive change has not gone unnoticed by media outlets such as The Atlantic, the New York Times, Politico, and Reuters, who have started to use the terms ‘movement’ and ‘progressive movement’ when describing this rallying around progressive ideas. However, there is a lack of academic attention.

While Kazin might have had trouble identifying a 21st century social movement on the left, one of the most high-profile and influential US grassroots movements in the 21st century came from the right: the Tea Party Movement (TPM). For many Americans, the 2008 presidential election of Barack Obama signaled a turning point in American politics, especially concerning race relations.⁷ As the left celebrated the Obama presidency, the right feared for the future of their country. The national tide seemed to be running against the Republican Party, with not only the presidential office being Democratic but also democratic majorities in the House and Senate. Additionally, Obama being the first black president, was a reason for many on the right to question his American-ness, and many of his economic (and social) stances were considered too liberal by the right and thus un-American. Republican hostility against Obama hardened in the first months of his presidency and in February of 2009, CNBC commentator Rick Santelli, reporting from the floor of the Chicago Mercantile Exchange, cried for “Tea Party” resistance to the Obama Administration’s mortgage-assistance-measures. This rallying cry was heard by many and all over the US groups began to organize around “Tea Party” symbolism. One recurring theme in all these groups was the need to “take our country back”. Williamson and Skocpol, writers of *The Tea Party and the Remaking of Republican Conservatism*, argue that the Tea Party attracted people who

⁶ Kazin, *American Dreamers*, 277.

⁷ Frank Newport, “Americans See Obama Election as Race Relations Milestone,” *Gallup*, November 7, 2009, <https://news.gallup.com/poll/111817/americans-see-obama-election-race-relations-milestone.aspx>.

anguish about losing the nation they love, a fear that was spurred on by “a new president of diverse heritage, [who] promised to transform America.”⁸ Although the initial Tea Party protests on February 27th drew small crowds across the country, after Fox News took up the rallying cry in March and April, the Tax Day protests in 2009 drew hundreds of thousands of protestors.⁹

Comparing the New Progressive Movement to the Tea Party Movement, there are surprisingly many similarities. Essentially, the NPM and the TPM are both grassroots movements, using the same organizational principles, and are engaged in electoral and party politics. Additionally, women seem to have taken on leadership roles¹⁰ within both the NPM and the TPM. Historically, women and people of color, in general, have played major roles in the success of grassroots activism in the United States.¹¹ During the Civil Rights Movement of the 1950s and 1960s, women were leading grassroots organizers, like Fannie Lou Hamer, Ella Baker, Septima Clark, and Diane Nash. On the right, women like Phyllis Schlafly played a major role in organizing grassroots support for the STOP ERA campaign.

Within the New Progressive Movement, women are especially important as leaders on both grassroots level and in Congress. In her book *The Firsts*, Jennifer Steinhauer chronicles the first year of a new group of women coming into the 116th Congress. These women were diverse in background, age, professional experience, and ideology but were all swept into office on an enormous wave of grassroots support. Several of these women were candidates supported by progressive grassroots organizations and PACs, part of the New Progressive Movement, among them Alexandria Ocasio-Cortez, Ayanna Pressley, Ilhan Omar, and Rashida Tlaib. They have been dubbed ‘The Squad’, by the media.

The Tea Party Movement fits within the longer populist mobilization of post-1960s US conservatism but compared to previous conservative movements, the TPM provided unprecedented

⁸ Theda Skocpol and Vanessa Williamson, *The Tea Party and the Remaking of Republican Conservatism* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2016), 7.

⁹ Skocpol and Williamson, 8.

¹⁰ Leadership roles include heading a local or national organization, organizing meetings or collective actions, and being a political candidate at either local, state, or national level.

¹¹ B. Ann Bettencourt, “Grassroots Organizations: Recurrent Themes and Research Approaches,” *Journal of Social Issues* 52, no.1 (1996): 210.

opportunities for women to become involved. In her book *Tea Party Women: mama grizzlies, grassroots leaders, and the changing face of the American Right*, Melissa Deckman examines the role of women in the TPM. The combination of the fluid structure of the TPM, social media, and the lack of opportunities in the Republican Party made the TPM especially attractive for conservative women to partake in politics. According to Deckman, these women adopted specific gendered rhetoric to defend their very conservative political positions, which she dubs the ‘motherhood frames’. Deckman identifies three different motherhood themes used by Tea Party women: (1) the kitchen table frame, which emphasizes women as managers of household finances, (2) the generational theft frame, which posits women as protectors of their children’s future, and (3) the limited government frame, which posits women as the protectors of their families against big government. Through these frames, Tea Party (TP) women and other prominent conservative women, such as Sarah Palin, hoped to rebrand conservatism and ultimately change women’s attitudes about public policies. Skocpol and Williamson also found that women are dominating the organizing efforts. While women’s involvement in grassroots organizing on the Christian Right is nothing new, the TPM took it to new levels.

Yet, the gender gap that persists between the Democratic Party and the Republican Party, regarding the number of women active on the highest political stage, also seems to be present when comparing the Tea Party Movement and the New Progressive Movement. How can two movements based on the same organizing principles of grassroots organizing, have different roles for women? While the role of women in the TPM has been researched, most notably by Melissa Deckman in her book *Tea Party Women: Mama Grizzlies, Grassroots Leaders, and the Changing Face of the American Right*, no comparison has been made to the role of women in the New Progressive Movement. In this thesis, I will look at both movements and compare and contrast them in different areas and see how the differences between these movements account for the difference in the roles of women. The research question is as follows: To what extent are the Tea Party Movement and the New Progressive Movement populist grassroots movements and how does the nature of both movements explain the difference in the role that women play in both movements? In this question, nature refers to possible populist rhetoric, the organizational structure, and the ideology. To answer

this question, several sub questions must be answered: What is the New Progressive Movement and is it a populist movement? What is the Tea Party Movement and is it a populist movement? What is the role of women in the New Progressive Movement and the Tea Party Movement, and how does their populist nature influence the role of women in the movements? On top of giving an academic account of the New Progressive Movement, this thesis will also provide critical insight in the role of women and to what extent the nature of a social movement affects the role that women play in that particular movement. Additionally, this thesis will also add a new comparison between contemporary leftwing and rightwing grassroots movements to the historiography.

An important concept in answering the research question is populism. In this thesis, I use populism as a political mode of rhetoric and not an ideology, following the argument Michal Kazin makes in his book *The Populist Persuasion*. Populism calls upon “the people” to stand up against “the elite”, which changes from time to time but has included corporate America, government bureaucracy, and cultural elites. A key aspect of populism is reverence for historical documents, such as the US constitution, and using historical heroes to convey images, such as Thomas Jefferson or Abraham Lincoln.¹²

Before addressing the role of women in both movements, it is crucial to define the New Progressive Movement. The best place to start is social movement theory, which provides a framework to examine the New Progressive Movement. In chapter 1, several scholars will be discussed to give a definition of a social movement that is as inclusive as possible. In chapter 2, this definition will be used to identify and define the New Progressive Movement.

An extensive body of literature exists on the Tea Party Movement. The history of the movement, its grassroots nature, and its beliefs are described by, among others, Theda Skocpol and Vanessa Williamson in *The Tea Party and the Remaking of Republican Conservatism* (2016), Christopher Parker and Matt Barreto in *Change They Can't Believe in: The Tea Party and Reactionary Politics in America* (2013), Lawrence Rosenthal and Christine Trost in *Steep: The Precipitous Rise of the Tea Party* (2012), and William Westermeyer in *Back to America: Political*

¹² Michael Kazin, *The Populist Persuasion: An American History*, (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 2017), 17.

Culture, and the Tea Party Movement (2019). These works are used to paint a picture of the TPM, its members and their beliefs, as well as the grassroots nature of the movement. To further explore the role of women in the Tea Party Movement I will use the influential and groundbreaking book *Tea Party Women: Mama Grizzlies, Grassroots Leaders, and the Changing Face of the American Right*, by Melissa Deckman. In this book, she explores the role of women in creating and leading the Tea Party movement. According to Deckman, the fluid structure of the movement provided women with unprecedented opportunities to engage in conservative activism, something that was lacking in the Republican Party. This book is the most important book on the role of women in the Tea Party and a key point of reference for many other authors on this topic. Deckman uses her extensive collection of interviews with Tea Party women to provide an important behind-the-scenes look at the women behind the Tea Party Movement.

With regards to the role of women in the New Progressive Movement, I rely on Jennifer Steinhauer's book *The Firsts: The Inside Story of the Women Reshaping Congress* (2020), in which she chronicles the first year of freshman Congresswomen, several of whom are part of the New Progressive Movement. Besides this book, I will also use survey results. In September and October of 2020, I sent out a survey to New Progressive Movement participants who are part of the social movement organizations Brand New Congress (BNC), Sunrise Movement, Our Revolution (OR), Justice Democrats (JD), and Democratic Socialists of America (DSA). This survey had 37 respondents, 17 men, 19 women, and one person who identified as non-binary/female. Questions revolved around perspectives on the New Progressive Movement, activism as movement participants, issues the movement is facing, feminism, and the role of women in the New Progressive Movement.

Thus, the TPM will be analyzed primarily through the books mentioned above, social movement organization websites, and news articles. The New Progressive Movement will be analyzed by using social movement theory, as described in chapter 1, and through news articles, social movement organization websites, and campaign speeches by progressive candidates for Congress. An essential part of this thesis is the survey, which was filled out by volunteers of several

social movement organizations, including Brand New Congress, Sunrise Movement, and Our Revolution. The filled out surveys are included in the appendix.

Chapter 1 begins with an analysis of key literature on social movement theory. Social movement scholars do not concur on what exactly constitutes a social movement, but there are certain characteristics that scholars argue are pertinent to a definition of as a social movement. These characteristics are compared and combined to provide a definition of a social movement that will be used in chapter 2 as a framework to define the New Progressive Movement. Chapter 2 will place the NPM in a longer historical context of movements organizing on the left, beginning with the ‘old’ Progressive Movement. Subsequently, I will explain what the NPM constitutes by using social movement theory, as well as the survey results. After examining whether the NPM is a populist movement, its influence on the Democratic Party will be discussed. Chapter 3 will look at the Tea Party Movement, placing it in a historical perspective and answer the question of whether the movement is grassroots or Astroturf. The ideas and beliefs of movement participants are examined, followed by the use of populist rhetoric in the movement and an examination of the influence of the Tea Party Movement on the Republican Party. Finally, chapter 4 compares the roles of Tea Party women and New Progressive women, focusing on the use of populist and gendered rhetoric and how this affects women differently in both movements.

I don't think that civic engagement and activism can be too much. I believe that change happens in the streets and it happens with everyday people organizing en masse. because no one politician is the answer. No one president is the answer. YOU are the answer. Mass movements are the answer. Millions of people are the answer. – Alexandria Ocasio-Cortez

Chapter 1 Social Movement Theory

Social movements are difficult to define. They are neither a political party nor an interest group, both of which are “stable political entities that have regular access to political power and political elites.”¹³ Nor are social movements a fleeting trend, unorganized and without specific goals. Social movements are somewhere in between these two ends of a spectrum. To define a social movement, I will start by analyzing different definitions of a social movement as argued by key social movement scholars. Subsequently, their ideas are combined into an inclusive definition of a social movement, which will be used in the rest of this thesis. Finally, I will briefly discuss social movement organizations.

1.1 Defining a Social Movement

Writing in the *Blackwell Companion to Social Movements*, David Snow et al., argue that what constitutes a social movement is based on three or more of the following axes: “collective or joint action; change-oriented goals or claims; some extra- or non-institutional collective action; some degree of organization; and some degree of temporal continuity.”¹⁴ The first axis is collective action, which, at its most basic level, consists of “any goal-directed activity engaged in jointly by two or more individuals.”¹⁵ It thus entails the pursuit of a common goal by people working together, who also believe that by working together, they will get closer to achieving their goal. However, not all collective action is part of a social movement because collective action in social movements is coordinated and planned and typically involves articulating grievances and claims.¹⁶ Not only do social movements overlap with some forms of collective action, but there is also, to a certain extent, an overlap with interest groups. Often equated with social movements, interest groups are a set of collective actors acutely different from social movements. Snow et al. identify three differences between interest groups and social movements. First, “interest groups are generally

¹³ Jonathan Christiansen, “Four Stages of Social Movements,” *EBSCO Research Starters* (2009): 2.

¹⁴ David A. Snow, Sarah A. Soule, Hanspeter Kriesi, and Holly J. McCammon, “Introduction: Mapping and Opening up the Terrain,” in *The Wiley Blackwell Companion to Social Movements*, ed. David A. Snow, Sarah A. Soule, Hanspeter Kriesi, and Holly J. McCammon (New Jersey: Blackwell Publishing, 2019), 5.

¹⁵ Snow et al., 5.

¹⁶ Snow et al., 6.

defined in relation to the government or polity”¹⁷, whereas the interests of social movements go beyond these institutional spheres. Second, interest groups are usually regarded as legitimate actors within the political arena, whereas social movements are regarded as outsiders and lack the same degree of access to political authorities.¹⁸ Third, social movements, operating primarily outside of institutions, pursue their common goals through the use of non-institutional means, for example, marches and sit-ins.¹⁹ Interest groups, on the other hand, pursue their goals through institutionalized means, such as lobbying and campaign contributions.²⁰

The main purpose of any social movement is seeking or halting change. The extent to which social movements seek or halt change has, according to Snow et al., been defined either too narrowly or too broadly. Too narrow is the belief that the targets of change are only situated within the political sphere, too broad is the belief that targets of change exist in a society or group.²¹ Snow et al. contend that social movements have to be considered as “challengers to, or defenders of, existing *institutional authority* [...] or patterns of *cultural authority*. Some social movements, such as the Black Lives Matter Movement, challenge authorities on both “levels”.²²

The last axis of conceptualization of social movements concerns the degree of temporal continuity of social movements. It makes sense that social movements require some degree of temporal continuity or some measure of “sustained, organized activity”.²³ Without persistent collective action, it becomes exponentially harder for social movements to make progress in reaching their goals.²⁴ Essentially, Snow et al. conceptualize social movements as follows: “collectivities acting with some degree of organization and continuity outside of institutional or organizational channels for the purpose of challenging or defending extant authority, whether it is

¹⁷ Snow et al., 6.

¹⁸ Snow et al., 7.

¹⁹ Snow et al., 7.

²⁰ Snow et al., 6.

²¹ Snow et al., 7.

²² Italics in the original source, Snow et al., 7.

²³ Snow et al., 9.

²⁴ Snow et al., 9.

institutionally or culturally based, in the group, organization, society, culture, or world order of which they are a part.”²⁵

In their book *People, Power, Change: Movements of Social Transformation*, Gerlach and Hine define a movement as “a group of people who are organized for, ideologically motivated by, and committed to a purpose which implements some form of personal or social change; who are actively engaged in the recruitment of others; and whose influence is spreading in opposition to the established order within which it originated.”²⁶ Movements are mechanisms of change, either radical or developmental change. Gerlach and Hine identify five key factors which must be present in order for a collectivity to become a true movement. These factors are: (1) a segmented, usually polycephalous (many-headed), cellular organization, (2) face-to-face recruitment, (3) personal commitment, (4) an ideology which codifies values and goals, and (5) real or perceived opposition from the society at large.²⁷

The first key factor is a decentralized, segmented cellular organization. According to Gerlach and Hine, the organization or infrastructure of social movements is the least understood aspect of social movements. Often, organizations are imagined as units with hierarchical structures and clear-cut leadership models. Social movements, especially grassroots movements, do not adhere to this typical hierarchical leadership models and structures. If there is no typical organization or leader, a single charismatic leader or small elite is assumed, by outsiders, to be controlling the social movement.²⁸ According to Gerlach and Hine, a social movement is an organization characterized by decentralization, segmentation, and reticulation.²⁹ Decentralization signifies the fact that social movements do not have a leadership hierarchy. There can be leadership figures in a movement, but there is no one leader who calls the shots. And, since there is no leader, there is no central authority who determines who is and who is not a member of the movement.

²⁵ Snow et al., 10.

²⁶ Luther P. Gerlach and Virginia H. Hine, *People, Power, Change: Movements of Social Transformation*. (New York: Bobbs-Merrill, 1970), xvi

²⁷ Gerlach and Hine, xvii.

²⁸ Gerlach and Hine, 33.

²⁹ Gerlach and Hine, 34.

A segmented organization means that an organization is composed of “a great variety of localized groups or cells which are essentially independent, but which can combine to form larger configurations or divide to form smaller units.”³⁰ So segmented organizations are made up of local groups that operate independently but can work together as a movement working toward a larger goal. Great examples of this are local SNCC chapters in the Civil Rights Movement that worked together with SCLC leadership on certain occasions.

The second key factor is face-to-face recruitment. Gerlach and Hine identify this as a key factor because “it is clear that the original decision [of a participant] to join required some contact with the movement.”³¹ This contact can be established through personal relations, so having a neighbor or family member introducing you to a movement, but also through the influence of a charismatic leadership figure.

The third key factor is personal commitment, which means that a person has to believe in the goals and beliefs of the movement. On top of that, they must be committed to participating in the social organization of the movement.³² A committed participant of a social movement adheres to the ideology of the movement, which is the fourth key factor.³³ According to Gerlach and Hine, a social movement has an ideology which categorizes values and goals. It creates a message that members can spread.

The last key factor is real or perceived opposition from society at large. Social movements are mechanisms for social change, which means that conflict with the established order is unavoidable. As Gerlach and Hine argue, “without opposition from the established order, there would be no risk, no bridge-burning, and hence no commitment required for participation.”³⁴ So, opposition provides the risk needed for genuine commitment. However, this opposition has to be perceived and thus does not actually have to exist. As long as participants of the social movement perceive some form of opposition, it is an effective means of maintaining movement strength.

³⁰ Gerlach and Hine, 41.

³¹ Gerlach and Hine, 79.

³² Gerlach and Hine, 99.

³³ Gerlach and Hine, 159.

³⁴ Gerlach and Hine, 183.

According to Charles Tilly, writing in *Social Movements, 1768-2018*, social movements are a distinctive form of contentious politics, meaning that social movements are always in conflict with someone else's goals and interests.³⁵ So the goals of a social movement are always in conflict with someone else's goals and interests. A social movement is a synthesis of three elements: social movement campaign, social movement repertoire, and WUNC displays, which stands for Worthiness, Unity, Numbers, and Commitment. According to Tilly, a social movement campaign is a "sustained, organized public effort making collective claims on target authorities."³⁶ A campaign goes further than a single petition or one mass protest; it extends beyond a single event or action, even though social movements do often include petitions or mass protests.³⁷ Petitions and mass protests are two examples of social movement repertoire, which also includes combinations of other forms of political actions, such as the "creation of special-purpose associations and coalitions, public meetings, solemn processions, vigils, rallies, demonstrations, petition drives, statements to and in public media, and pamphleteering."³⁸ An important pillar of social movement repertoire are the WUNC displays. According to Tilly, WUNC displays can take the form of "statements, slogans, and labels that imply worthiness, unity, numbers, and commitment"³⁹, for example, 'We Are The 99%' slogan of the Occupy Movement. It is this combination of political actions from a repertoire and WUNC displays that creates the distinctiveness of social movements.⁴⁰ WUNC displays also back identity claims of social movements, which assert "that 'we' – the claimants – constitute a unified force to be reckoned with."⁴¹ So, in Tilly's world, a social movement is a sustained, organized, collective action against the establishment through different forms of protests by a group of people who share an ideology and identity claims.

³⁵ Charles Tilly, Ernesto Castaneda, and Lesley J. Wood, *Social Movements 1768-2018*, (New York: Routledge, 2020), 6. PDF.

³⁶ Tilly, Castaneda, and Wood, 6.

³⁷ Tilly, Castaneda, and Wood, 6.

³⁸ Tilly, Castaneda, and Wood, 6.

³⁹ Tilly, Castaneda, and Wood, 7.

⁴⁰ Tilly, Castaneda, and Wood, 7.

⁴¹ Tilly, Castaneda, and Wood, 15.

In his book, *Power in Movement*, Sidney Tarrow builds upon Tilly's argument of contentious politics. According to Tarrow, contentious politics occur when "ordinary people – often in alliance with more influential citizens and with changes in public mood – join forces in confrontation with elites, authorities, and opponents."⁴² Through these contentious means, ordinary people try to wield power over and against national states or opponents. Ordinary people often lack resources on their own, but contention is triggered when political opportunities appear and can eventually lead to a social movement when these actors are "backed by well-structured social networks."⁴³ Not all forms of contentious politics lead to or are social movements. In Tarrow's world, social movements are the "sequence of contentious politics based on underlying social networks, on resonant collective action frames, and on the capacity to maintain sustained challenges against powerful opponents."⁴⁴

Social movements, according to Tarrow, have several tenets. The base of all social movements lies with contentious collective action, such as protests, riots, strike waves, rebellions, and even revolutions.⁴⁵ Collective action can take many forms, from brief to sustained and from institutionalized to disruptive. Collective actions are not contentious in and by itself and occur regularly within institutions. However, when used by ordinary people who "lack access to representative institutions, who act in the name of new or unaccepted claims, and who behave in ways that fundamentally challenge others or authorities"⁴⁶, collective actions become contentious. The wave of protests against COVID-19 regulations is an example of contentious collective actions. Contentious collective action lies at the base of social movements because it is the main and often only way most ordinary people can state their claims against more powerful opponents or states.⁴⁷

⁴² Sidney G. Tarrow, *Power in Movement: Social Movements and Contentious Politics*, (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2012), 6.

⁴³ Tarrow, 6.

⁴⁴ Tarrow, 7.

⁴⁵ Tarrow, 7.

⁴⁶ Tarrow, 7.

⁴⁷ Tarrow, 7.

A social movement is more than just contentious collective actions. Tarrow argues that “in the formation of a social movement, more than a “pull” toward particular forms of collective action and targets is needed; the “push” of solidarity and collective identity is also required.”⁴⁸ To create this push, social movements “build organizations, elaborate ideologies, and socialize and mobilize constituencies.”⁴⁹ Simultaneously, members or participants of a social movement take part in the construction of a collective identity. This collective identity is structured around a common interest, which in turn will create social solidarity. Engaging in contentious politics takes time and can pose risks, so people need a good reason to do so. A common purpose creates social solidarity, because people are working together towards the same goal, and bind people emotionally to the goals of a social movement. Yet, all of this, contentious action, collective identity, and social solidarity, must be sustained. As Tarrow argues,

“it is only by sustaining collective action against antagonists that a contentious episode becomes a social movement. Common purposes, collective identities, and identifiable challenges help movements to do this; but unless they can maintain their challenge, movements will evaporate into the kind of individualistic resentment [...], will harden into intellectual or religious sects, or their members will defect from activism into isolation.”⁵⁰

Thus, without sustained interactions, a social movement will fade away or might never even come to fruition. Essentially, Tarrow defines a social movement as “collective challenges, based on common purposes and social solidarities, in sustained interaction with elites, opponents, and authorities.”⁵¹

In their book *Social Movements: An Introduction*, Donatella Della Porta and Mario Diani identify four characteristic aspects of collective movements: informal interaction networks, shared beliefs and solidarity, collective action focusing on conflicts, and use of protests.⁵² Movements can

⁴⁸ Tarrow, 266.

⁴⁹ Tarrow, 8.

⁵⁰ Tarrow, 12.

⁵¹ Tarrow, 9.

⁵² Donatella Della Porta and Marco Diani, *Social Movements: An Introduction* (Oxford: Blackwell Publishers, 1999), 14.

be characterized as informal interaction networks between multiple individuals, groups and/or organizations.⁵³ Whether or not formal organizations are included in this informal interaction network depends on shifting circumstances, which accounts for the fluid nature of social movements. Informal interaction networks are important in the circulation of information, expertise, and material resources, which are all essential resources for collective action. While individual participation forms the center of social movements, individuals alone do not form a movement. Networks set the stage for the elaboration of specific worldviews, which contribute to “the existing of a vocabulary and an opening of ideas and actions.”⁵⁴ This, in turn, contributes to turning a loose band of individuals into a collective with shared beliefs and shared solidarity.

Collective movements are orientated towards reaching a certain goal, meaning that people in said movement have a common goal. Consequently, this common goal or shared set of beliefs provides people within a social movement with a sense of belonging, creating a new collective identity.⁵⁵ Social movement actors that share a collective identity are “engaged in political and/or cultural conflict, meant to promote or oppose social change at either the systemic or non-systemic level.”⁵⁶ This conflict is not necessarily a violent one but represents the conflicting interests of actors who want to control the same stake. Through collective action that focuses on that conflict, social movements try to defend or advocate for their stake.

One of the ways to do so, and according to Della Porta and Diani an essential characteristic of a social movement, is the use of protest. Notable in earlier social movements, like the anti-war movement and the civil rights movement, as well as current social movements such as the Black Lives Matter movement and the immigration movement, protests have become part of the social movement repertoire of collective action. However, as mentioned before, a single protest does not make a movement. As Della Porta and Diani argue, “in order to be able to speak of a social movement it is necessary that single episodes are perceived as components of a longer-lasting

⁵³ Della Porta and Diani, 14.

⁵⁴ Della Porta and Diani, 14.

⁵⁵ Della Porta and Diani, 14.

⁵⁶ Della Porta and Diani, 15.

action, rather than discrete events; and that those who are engaged feel linked by ties of solitary and of ideal communion with protagonists of other analogous mobilizations.”⁵⁷ It is thus a multitude of actions, among which protests, that social movement participants take part in, that create a collective identity and eventually a social movement. So, for Della Porta and Diani, social movements are “informal networks, based on shared beliefs and solidarity, which mobilize about conflictual issues, through the frequent use of various forms of protests.”⁵⁸

Even though these are all different perspectives, there is a certain overlap in how these scholars define social movements. All scholars discussed in this chapter, except for Gerlach and Hine, specifically mention collective action as a defining feature of social movements. Tilly, Tarrow, and Della Porta and Diani highlight the contentious nature of these collective actions, whereas Snow et al. argue that collective action in social movements involves the articulation of claims and grievances. These are compatible with contentious collective action.

Another important tenet of social movements is temporal continuity of or sustaining collective action. This feature is mentioned by Snow et al., Tarrow, Tilly, and Della Porta and Diani. As mentioned before, one protest does not make a movement, but it is the sustained collective actions that together form a social movement. The importance of temporal continuity is partly based on the fact that it helps to create a collective identity and shared beliefs. All scholars discussed in this chapter argue for the importance of shared beliefs between social movement participants, which goes hand in hand with a shared ideology. Apart from a shared ideology and shared beliefs, social movement participants also have a common purpose and a common ‘enemy’. All scholars agreed that social movements are seeking or halting change and that ‘the establishment’ is on the receiving end of sustained collective action. The establishment can mean anything from the elite to the authorities.

Finally, when it comes to the organizational structure, Gerlach and Hine highlight decentralized and segmented nature, whereas Della Porta and Diani point to the informal

⁵⁷ Della Porta and Diani, 19.

⁵⁸ Della Porta and Diani, 16.

networking structure. These two characteristics are not mutually exclusive, since informal networking structures are interactions between a multitude of individuals, groups, and organizations, which can be decentralized and segmented.

With the help of all of these overlapping characteristics, I define a social movement as follows: a social movement is an informal and decentralized network of people that share an ideology and beliefs, who organize for the common purpose of seeking or halting change, whether culturally or politically, and challenge the establishment, through sustained contentious collective action.

1.2 Social Movement Organization

An important entity within social movements are Social Movement Organizations (SMO), which are formal organizations that are part of a social movement or align with a social movement. SMOs and social movements are by no means the same: “movements are interactive campaigns, not organizations. SMOs sometimes outlast campaigns, and campaigns almost always involve multiple organizations, shifting coalitions, and unnamed informal networks.”⁵⁹ Tarrow distinguishes between “social movements as formal organizations, the organization of collective action, and social movements as connective structures or networks.”⁶⁰ Della Porta and Diana agree, saying that “the difference between social movements and other organizations does not consist primarily of differences in organizational characteristics or patterns of behavior but of the fact that social movements are not organizations, not even of a peculiar kind.”⁶¹ Social movements are networks of interaction which may or may not include formal organizations. SMOs on their own are not the same as social movements, but SMOs are crucial movement tools to mobilize collective action, bringing with them networks of allies and communication, participants, and money. Della Porta and Diani define SMOs as “rational organizations capable of gathering resources from their

⁵⁹ Tilly, Castaneda, and Wood, *Social Movements 1768-2018*, 51.

⁶⁰ Tarrow, *Power in Movement: Social Movements and Contentious Politics*, 123.

⁶¹ Della Porta and Diani, *Social Movements: An Introduction* 16.

surrounding environment and allocating them with the aim of bringing about political transformation.”⁶²

Compared to social movements, SMOs are more formalized, for example, with the introduction of formal membership, fixed procedures, and formal leadership and staff. Formal leadership and paid staffers are also an indication of professionalization, another characteristic of SMOs.⁶³ SMOs are not a new phenomenon but have been present in previous social movements. The Civil Rights Movement is a great example. The social movement itself had no official leaders, even though men like Martin Luther King and Stokely Carmichael were seen as spokespersons, and several SMOs were active in the movement. One of these was the Student Non-Violent Coordinating Committee (SNCC). SNCC was a grassroots organization that organized sit-ins and protests. Another SMO active in the CRM was the NAACP, which had a more hierarchical organizational structure than SNCC had. Both SMOs were active in the CRM but represented a different constituency of participants, who all fell under the Civil Right Movement. SMOs are also part of contemporary social movements, which will become clear in the next chapters.

1.3 Conclusion

This chapter has demonstrated how key social movement scholars define a social movement. There is an overlap in the different definitions these scholars give, which I combined in the definition of a social movement used in this thesis: a social movement is an informal and decentralized network of people that share an ideology and beliefs, who organize for the common purpose of seeking or halting change, whether culturally or politically, and challenge the establishment, through sustained contentious collective action. In the next chapter, I will use this definition of a social movement to argue for the existence of a New Progressive Movement. Within this movement, social movement organizations play an important role in creating a collective identity, a common goal, and sustaining collective action.

⁶² Della Porta and Diani, 139.

⁶³ Della Porta and Diani, 143.

Remember this in the darkest moments, when the work doesn't seem worth it, and change seems just out of reach: out of our willingness to push through comes a tremendous power... use it –

Stacey Abrams

“I am no longer accepting the things I cannot change. I am changing the things I cannot accept.”

— Angela Y. Davis

Chapter 2 The New Progressive Movement

Due to the COVID-19 crisis, the Democratic National Convention of 2020 was unable to take place as an in-person live gathering and thus went online. During the DNC, Congressional freshman Alexandria Ocasio-Cortez (AOC) was given a 60-second timeslot to second the nomination of Senator Bernie Sanders for president of the United States. This was a symbolic nomination since the convention rules require a roll call and nomination for every candidate that passes the delegate threshold. Even though she only had 60 seconds, AOC not only endorsed Senator Sanders, but she used that time to express her support for a mass people's movement working to make the United States, and the world, a more just place, based on progressive ideals:

“Good evening, *bienvenidos*, and thank you to everyone here today endeavoring towards a better, more just future for our country and our world. In fidelity and gratitude to a mass people's movement working to establish 21st century social, economic, and human rights, including guaranteed health care, higher education, living wages, and labor rights for all people in the United States; a movement striving to recognize and repair the wounds of racial injustice, colonization, misogyny, and homophobia, and to propose and build reimagined systems of immigration and foreign policy that turn away from the violence and xenophobia of our past; a movement that realizes the unsustainable brutality of an economy that rewards explosive inequalities of wealth for the few at the expense of long-term stability for the many, and who organized a historic, grassroots campaign to reclaim our democracy. In a time when millions of people in the United States are looking for deep systemic solutions to our crises of mass evictions, unemployment, and lack of health care, and *espíritu del pueblo* and out of a love for all people, I hereby second the nomination of Senator Bernard Sanders of Vermont for president of the United States of America.”⁶⁴

The mass people's movement that AOC is talking about is what I call the New Progressive Movement (NPM). In this chapter, I will show the existence of the New Progressive Movement

⁶⁴ Li Zhou, “Alexandria Ocasio-Cortez's DNC speech emphasized the need for systemic change,” *VOX*, August 19, 2020, <https://www.vox.com/2020/8/19/21372253/alexandria-ocasio-cortez-democratic-national-convention>.

and what this movement exactly constitutes. First, I will discuss the term progressivism, followed by a historical overview of other progressive movements, starting at the Progressive Movement of the 1920s. I will then use Social Movement Theory to define the New Progressive Movement, and look at how populism is featured in the movement. This is followed by central issues in the movement, the influence of the New Progressive Movement on the Democratic Party, and finally a discussion on the social movement organizations that play an important role in the movement.

At its core, progressivism is grounded in the idea of progress, “moving beyond the status quo to more equal and just social conditions consistent with original American democratic principles such as freedom, equality, and the common good.”⁶⁵ Progressivism has its foundations in grassroots activism, from the labor movement to women’s suffrage, environmentalism, civil rights, and gay rights.⁶⁶ Central to all these movements, and progressivism in general, is the belief that people do not have to wait for change to come from the top-down but that the people themselves can be a catalyst for change from the bottom-up, through grassroots activism.⁶⁷ These movements also advance the core values of progressivism: “freedom in its fullest sense; a commitment to the common good; pragmatic reform; human equality; social justice; democracy; and cooperation and interdependence.”⁶⁸ These values are also intrinsic to the New Progressive Movement.

2.1 The ‘Old’ Progressive Movement

The original Progressive Movement emerged between 1890 and 1920 “as a response to a multitude of problems associated with the industrialization of the U.S. economy.”⁶⁹ The devastation of the Civil War was followed by major economic growth at the end of the 19th century. However, this second industrial revolution did not translate into social and economic progress for everyone. On

⁶⁵ John Halpin and Conor P. Williams, “The Progressive Intellectual Tradition in America,” *Progressive Tradition Series*, Center for American Progress, April 2010, 1.

⁶⁶ John Halpin and Martha Cook, “Social Movements and Progressivism,” *Progressive Tradition Series*, Center for American Progress, April 2010, 1.

⁶⁷ Halpin and Cook, 1.

⁶⁸ Halpin and Cook, 3.

⁶⁹ Halpin and Williams, 1.

the contrary, the gap between the rich and the poor widened. According to Ruy Teixeira and John Halpin, writing for the Center for American Progress, dissatisfaction with American society was concentrated in three general areas: “the evils of bigness, the evils of corruption, and the evils of injustice.”⁷⁰ The solution, according to progressives, was to “break up and regulate bigness, reform government and elections to root out corruption, and utilize expertise and direct this reformed government toward the goal of social justice.”⁷¹ Progressives believed that stronger government action was needed to give real meaning to the Preamble of the U.S. constitution, which promotes general welfare and the expansion of posterity to all of ‘we the people’. Formal legal freedom in and of itself was not enough to ensure general welfare and prosperity. Progressives busied themselves with two major developments in American politics, namely political and economic reforms, to take on the problems caused by the industrialization of the U.S. economy, such as “frequent economic depressions, political corruption, rising poverty, low wages, poor working conditions, tenement living, child labor, lack of collective bargaining power, unsafe consumer products, and the misuse of natural resources.”⁷² David Berman argues that among the central themes of the Progressive Movement were “the need to purify and democratize the governmental system through political and structural reforms, the need to rein in the political and economic power of giant corporations, and, more broadly, the need to bring to power an energetic and positive government that would serve the interests of the many rather than a privileged few.”⁷³ In other words, special interest groups and big corporations had corrupted the government and taken away power from the people, which caused social and economic injustice. The reforms proposed by progressives would harness the power of big corporations to limit corruption, as well as “distributing economic benefits more widely and shifting more of the tax burden to the wealthy through personal income, inheritance, and corporate taxes.”⁷⁴ In the eyes of progressives, reforms

⁷⁰ Ruy Teixeira and Halpin, “The Progressive Tradition in American Politics,” *Progressive Tradition Series*, Center for American Progress, April 2010, 4.

⁷¹ Teixeira and Halpin, 5.

⁷² Halpin and Williams, 1.

⁷³ David R. Berman, *Governors and the Progressive Movement*, (Louisville: University Press of Colorado, 2019), 3.

⁷⁴ Berman, 4.

also meant “more spending on such matters as public education, roads, health protection, and to help out those who needed help, even though this meant departing from the norm of individualism, increasing the functions of government, and raising taxes.”⁷⁵ Berman adds that “on the labor front it involved hour and wage regulations, factory and mine inspection, worker’s compensation, and ending injunctions against organizing unions.”⁷⁶ The overarching theme of all of these reforms is that public policy must be designed to serve the common good.

There was a dark side to the Progressive Movement, however. For progressives to cultivate a new democratic order that would be receptive to the Progressive agenda, citizens needed to share “aims, beliefs, aspirations, knowledge – a common understanding – like-mindedness.”⁷⁷ Thus, a constituency needed to be created. Progressives not only supported a wide variety of policy tools – such as economic justice, civic education initiatives, and public health – but also focused on restrictions to limit the citizenry. The latter translates into support for Jim Crow restrictions, discriminating against African Americans, effectively making them second class citizens, as well as support for eugenics based enterprises. This included “immigration restriction, coerced sterilization, and reproduction encouragement among the ‘right stock’ of Americans.”⁷⁸ Intrinsically racist, eugenics was considered a policy tool useful for building the Progressive political community, which in the eyes of the Progressive Movement was white protestant middle-class.⁷⁹

Reform activity of the Progressive Movement started on the local level, where grassroots activism was especially strong, but soon reforms were pushed through on the state level and federal level. During the Progressive Era, four constitutional amendments were added: the Sixteenth Amendment providing a national income tax, the Seventeenth Amendment establishing direct elections of Senators, the Eighteenth Amendment imposing prohibition, and the Nineteenth

⁷⁵ Berman, 3.

⁷⁶ Berman, 4.

⁷⁷ Nicole Mellow, “The Democratic Fit: Party Reform and the Eugenics Tool,” in *The Progressives’ Century: Political Reform, Constitutional Government, and the Modern American State*, ed. Stephen Skowronek, Stephen M. Engel and Bruce Ackerman (London: Yale University Press, 2016), 199.

⁷⁸ Mellow, 200.

⁷⁹ Mellow, 200.

Amendment constitutionalizing women's suffrage.⁸⁰ By 1920, the Progressives had experienced numerous successes on a number of fronts. This all amounted to a national spirit of optimism, but this quickly withered in the face of economic problems following the end of World War I.⁸¹ The Progressive Movement "found itself adrift and, in remarkably short order, removed from national power."⁸² Yet the end of the Progressive Movement did not mean the end of progressive influence in American Politics. Franklin Delano Roosevelt's New Deal was heavily influenced by progressive ideas and reforms. While this was mostly focused on economic equality by the time Lyndon B. Johnson became president, progressives started to push for racial equality aided by the increasing support for the Civil Rights Movement, which advocated tirelessly for African American civil rights. Other progressive reforms enacted during the Johnson administration included the creation of Medicare, environmental acts such as the Clean Water Restoration Act and the Wilderness Act, and consumer protection acts such as the Motor Vehicle Safety Act and the Child Safety Act.⁸³

After 1965, however, progressivism seemed to retreat from American politics and by 1968, the conservatives were in ascendance, a situation that continued several decades.⁸⁴ During the 1960s, several social movements advocated for change in US society, among others the environmental movement, the civil rights movement, and the feminist movement. Many white working-class voters reacted poorly to these movements and the progressive demands were increasingly seen as radical. The Republican Party, responding to the emerging 'culture wars', typecast the progressives (and consequently the Democrats), as being supportive of "acid, amnesty, and abortion."⁸⁵ Consequently, the white working-class reacted and moved from the Democratic party to the Republican Party, stripping progressives from a large part of their constituency and

⁸⁰ Roger M. Smith, "The Progressive Seedbed: Claims of American Political Community in the Twentieth and Twenty-First Centuries," in *The Progressives' Century: Political Reform, Constitutional Government, and the Modern American State*, ed. Stephen Skowronek, Stephen M. Engel and Bruce Ackerman (London: Yale University Press, 2016), 266.

⁸¹ Teixeira and Halpin, "The Progressive Tradition in American Politics," 12.

⁸² Teixeira and Halpin, "The Progressive Tradition in American Politics," 12.

⁸³ Teixeira and Halpin, "The Progressive Tradition in American Politics," 17.

⁸⁴ Teixeira and Halpin, 19.

⁸⁵ Teixeira and Halpin, 23.

thus their power. Today, however, progressivism in American politics has made a comeback, and the contemporary progressive movement is hellbent on bringing about progressive change.

The Center for American Progress traces the rise of the contemporary progressive movement back to the election of President Barack Obama in 2008. James Kloppenberg places Obama in the Progressive tradition of the 1920s movement. According to Kloppenberg, Obama's progressivism was broadly based in both the ideals of the Social Gospel and the Progressive's emphasis on political and economic reforms.⁸⁶ The latter came back in two ideas repeatedly endorsed by Obama, namely the use of a "progressive" income tax and government regulation of the economy.⁸⁷ Before his presidency, however, Obama's presidential campaign was also regarded as a progressive undertaking, by some even considered a grassroots movement.⁸⁸ In order to "become the candidate of the Democratic Party, Barack Obama fell back on the organizational tactics, the self-confidence, the ideas of self-organization, and the openness of the radical grassroots organizing in the 1960s" and when he received the nomination, continued mobilizing efforts to get out the vote were also grounded in grassroots tactics.⁸⁹ It was the bottom-up approach of self-organization and self-mobilization that eventually defeated Hillary Clinton, and consequently the Democratic Party machine, in the presidential primary.⁹⁰ The grassroots organizing tactics used during the Obama campaign came from an organizing tradition refined by grassroots leaders, especially women such as Harriet Tubman, Fannie Lou Hamer, and Ella Baker. According to Horace Campbell, the grassroots networking of the Obama campaign built a ground operation that changed the game of US politics and was able to mobilize millions of grassroots supporter to finance a major campaign of a dominant political party.⁹¹

⁸⁶ James T. Kloppenberg, "Barack Obama and the Traditions of Progressive Reform," in *The Progressives' Century: Political Reform, Constitutional Government, and the Modern American State*, ed. Stephen Skowronek, Stephen M. Engel and Bruce Ackerman (London: Yale University Press, 2016), 431.

⁸⁷ Kloppenberg, 437.

⁸⁸ Horace Campbell, *Barack Obama and 21st Century Politics: A Revolutionary Moment in the USA* (London: Pluto Press, 2010).

⁸⁹ Campbell, 89.

⁹⁰ Campbell, 93.

⁹¹ Campbell, 99.

While the mobilization efforts surrounding the Obama campaign show signs of life of a budding movement, neither the Obama campaign nor presidency was part of a budding progressive movement. Looking back on the Obama presidency, “his views were too conservative for many other heirs of the Progressive traditions.”⁹² On top of that, grassroots mobilizing efforts stopped after the elections were over. Yet, prior to this dynamic, “the possibility of a progressive grassroots form of presidential engagement had become more and more remote.”⁹³ Unknowingly, the Obama campaign had set the stage for the beginning of the New Progressive Movement, 8 years later, when Bernie Sanders decided to run for the Democratic presidential nomination.

Between the Obama presidential campaign and the Bernie Sanders presidential campaign, another influential protest movement had come into existence and faded out again, but the influence on the later New Progressive Movement cannot be underestimated. Protesting economic inequality, Occupy Wall Street started as a protest movement occupying Zuccotti Park in New York City in September 2011. At the time, a New York Times piece, written by Andrew Sorking, predicted that “Occupy would be an asterisk in the history books, if it gets a mention at all.”⁹⁴ Yet, as Osita Nwanevu of the New Republic argues, by “forging social connections and providing experience to progressive activists and organizations, Occupy successfully laid the groundwork for more targeted protest campaigns that followed on issues like housing inequality and student debt.”⁹⁵ Using popular slogans like “we are the 99%”, Occupy popularized framing and language around inequality and explains why “progressive rhetoric, and even the design of redistributive policies, came to focus so heavily on the divide between the top 1 percent and the bottom 99 percent of income earners.”⁹⁶ Redistributive economics is one of the key pillars of the NPM.

⁹² Smith, “The Progressive Seedbed: Claims of American Political Community in the Twentieth and Twenty-First Centuries,” 283.

⁹³ Campbell, 100.

⁹⁴ Andrew Sorking, “Occupy Wall Street: A Frenzy That Fizzled,” *New York Times*, Sep. 17, 2012, <https://dealbook.nytimes.com/2012/09/17/occupy-wall-street-a-frenzy-that-fizzled/>.

⁹⁵ Osita Nwanevu, “The Rise of the Permanent Protest,” *The New Republic*, Jan. 1, 2020, <https://newrepublic.com/article/155893/rise-permanent-protest-decade-from-hell>.

⁹⁶ Nwanevu, “The Rise of the Permanent Protest.”

In 2016, Bernie Sanders ran for the Democratic presidential nomination, which prompted a massive grassroots movement throughout the United States. His campaign was the biggest surprise of the race for the Democratic presidential nomination and prompted a so-called “Berniemanía,”⁹⁷ fueled by Sanders’ anti-establishment rhetoric. As Ball of *The Atlantic* argued in 2015, there is an “anti-establishment passion, left and right, in the air. People are angry all over, fed up with a system that isn’t working, [and] an elite that doesn’t listen.”⁹⁸ Sanders ran on a progressive platform that included proposals to raise the minimum wage to \$15 an hour, a federal jobs program to rebuild crumbling infrastructure, tuition-free public college, and single-payer health care and is not afraid to call out “the billionaire class.”⁹⁹ The Bernie campaign was based in grassroots organizing, and “finding no shortage of willing supporters, the campaign for the [Vermont Senator] channeled the enthusiasm of a largely self-organizing movement into massive, attention-grabbing rallies.”¹⁰⁰ These rallies drew enormous crowds, 11,000 people in Phoenix, 8,000 in Dallas, and 28,000 in Portland, and the campaign raised over \$15 million in mostly small donations.¹⁰¹ This grassroots army of volunteers and small-dollar donors mobilized by the Sanders campaign has for a large part been sustained after the loss in 2016. The Bernie Sanders campaign and all the movements that coalesced around it transformed and evolved into the New Progressive Movement. According to Kayes, this New Progressive Movement has “been another part of this long string of American ideals. But more than being a part of the past, this new progressive movement encapsulates what progressives must fight for into the future.”¹⁰² This does not mean, however, that the NPM is a Bernie Sanders Movement. The focus of the Sanders presidential campaign was mainly on economic issues and redistributive economics. While the NPM has taken these ideas and made

⁹⁷ Molly Ball, “There’s Something About Bernie,” *The Atlantic*, July 29, 2015, <https://www.theatlantic.com/politics/archive/2015/07/theres-something-about-bernie/399740/>.

⁹⁸ Ball, “There’s Something About Bernie.”

⁹⁹ Ball, “There’s Something About Bernie.”

¹⁰⁰ Ben Schreckinger, et al. “How Bernie Sanders makes his mega-rallies,” *Politico*, Aug. 19, 2015, <https://www.politico.com/story/2015/08/bernie-sanders-rallies-2016-grassroots-support-121512>.

¹⁰¹ Ball, “There’s Something About Bernie.”

¹⁰² Sammy Kayes, “Principle of a Modern Progressive Movement,” *The Progressive Times*, January 23, 2017, <https://medium.com/tptimes/principles-of-a-modern-progressive-movement-a2c3f9e5d25a>.

them their own, the movement has also incorporated other progressive principles like racial and environmental justice.

2.2 Social Movement Theory and the New Progressive Movement

As written in chapter 1, a social movement is defined in this thesis as an informal and decentralized network of people that share an ideology and beliefs, who organize for the common purpose of seeking or halting change, whether culturally or politically, and challenge the establishment through sustained contentious collective action. This definition of a social movement can also be applied to the New Progressive Movement.

2.2.1 Informal and decentralized networks

The Bernie Sanders Presidential Campaign of 2016 laid the foundation for the New Progressive Movement, which continued in the grassroots style of organizing. The campaign was a grassroots campaign, which mobilized a new cohort of young progressives and built a grassroots army of volunteers and small-dollar donors. Sanders' 2016 loss was accompanied by an upwelling of new national electoral organizations that advocated for progressive change through electoral means, such as Brand New Congress, Our Revolution, and Justice Democrats. Together, these social movement organizations advocating for progressive change and people at the grassroots make up the NPM. This is an informal network, as described by Della Porta and Diani in chapter 1, because there is no hierarchy or leadership within the movement that decides what information is circulated or who is part of the movement and who is not.

The NPM has taken over the decentralized nature of the Sanders' campaign, which did not boast official leadership. Talking about the dispersed or decentralized leadership model in the Bernie Sanders Campaign, Vermont Lieutenant Governor David Zuckerman argued "What I think Bernie's campaigns have done, and Bernie's efforts beyond the campaigns have done, is helped create the network that is far stronger than being reliant on one figurehead."¹⁰³ So, the NPM is not

¹⁰³ Edward-Isaac Dove, "Where Does Bernie Sanders's Movement Go Now?," *The Atlantic*, Apr. 9, 2020, <https://www.theatlantic.com/politics/archive/2020/04/where-does-bernie-sanderss-movement-go-now/609688/>.

The Bernie Sanders Movement, but a movement that transcends just one person. As will be shown later on, the 2020 Congressional elections actually signaled staying power for the NPM, since many Progressive House Candidates, of the slate of NPM social movement organizations, won their reelection and many more won their primaries.¹⁰⁴

2.2.2. Shared beliefs and common purpose

People in the NPM have shared beliefs and a shared ideology. Writing for the Progressive Times, Sammy Kayes lists the principles of the modern Progressive Movement. Kayes argues that a modern Progressive Movement is against corruption, against oppression, discrimination, and privatization of the public sphere, and for democracy, transparency, accountability, freedom of the press, non-violence, authenticity, integrity, and solidarity.¹⁰⁵ Many of these principles overlap with the 21st Century Bill of Rights, proclaimed by Brand New Congress. In this document, Brand New Congress address the shortcomings of the original Bill of Rights, as established by the Founding Fathers in 1791. Stated in this 21st century version are principles such as the right to life, which “must be safeguarded by a basic standard of living”, the right to equal participation in governance, which includes ending gerrymandering and the Electoral College, the right to healthcare and bodily autonomy, which says healthcare is a human right and not a privilege, the right to a healthy environment, which refers to a sustainable environment and protecting the planet, the right to housing, education, and employment, and the right to safe and sustainable public infrastructure.¹⁰⁶ This platform is also signed by BNC candidates, who run as Progressive candidates in races across the United States. Looking at the candidates’ websites, there are references to housing as a right, healthcare as a right, support for the Green New Deal (GND), and opposition to corporate PAC money and dark money in politics.¹⁰⁷

¹⁰⁴ Astead Herndon, “Progressive Victories Signal Staying Power for the Movement,” *New York Times*, Aug. 6, 2020, <https://www.nytimes.com/2020/08/05/us/politics/election-primary-results.html>.

¹⁰⁵ Kayes “Principle of a Modern Progressive Movement.”

¹⁰⁶ “A Bill of Rights for the 21st Century,” Brand New Congress, accessed October 4, 2020, <https://brandnewcongress.org/platform>.

¹⁰⁷ “A Better World is Possible,” Alexandria Ocasio Cortez, accessed September 23, 2020, <https://ocasiocortez.com>; “Paula Jean Swearengen US Senate 2020, accessed September 23, 2020, <https://paulajeane.com>; “Jon Hoadley for

In September and October of 2020, I sent out a survey to volunteers and participants of several Social Movement Organizations, including Brand New Congress, Sunrise Movement, Our Revolution, Justice Democrats, Democratic Socialists of America, and Indivisible. In this survey, I asked about their ideas on the New Progressive Movement. Their answers point to shared beliefs between these social movement participants. These beliefs included the NPM as a movement for justice, equality, and equity, healthcare, housing, a union job, and a livable climate as a (human) right, inclusivity, accessible politics for everybody, and getting money out of politics. Comparing these ideas to Sanders' presidential campaigning platform and the platforms of SMOs such as Brand New Congress and Justice Democrats, there is a clear overlap, pointing to a shared ideology and shared values.

2.2.3. Sustained contentious collective action

Sustained collective action in the NPM has taken on many different forms. When asked how they have been active for the NPM, survey respondents' answers included that they had attended a meeting, donated money, participated in canvassing, participated in a town hall, and/or participated in a protest. Only two survey respondents had participated in one activity, the others in two or more. An example was given in one follow-up interview, when the respondent said that she had participated in different protests as part of the NPM, namely a Black Lives Matter protest, a Women's March, and a march to save the USPS.¹⁰⁸

Protests like the March for our Lives, Women's March, Black Lives Matter protests, and the Climate March, all orbit around the NPM. The issues central in those marches, such as gun control, women's rights, racial justice, and climate change, are all part of the progressive agenda

Congress," Jon Hoadley, accessed September 23, 2020, <http://jonhoadley.com/>; "Kara Eastman Congress," Kara Eastman, accessed September 23, 2020, <https://www.eastmanforcongress.com/>; "Cori Bush," Cori Bush, accessed September 23, 2020, <https://coribush.org/>; "Jamaal Bowman for NY-16," Jamaal Bowman, accessed September 23, 2020, <https://www.bowmanforcongress.com/>; "Adrienne Bell for US Congress," Adrienne Bell, accessed September 23, 2020, <https://www.voteforbell.com/>; "Mike Siegel Democrat for Congress," Mike Siegel, accessed September 23, 2020, <https://siegelfortexas.org/>; "Rubando for Congress," Nick Rubando, accessed September 23, 2020, <https://nickrubando.com/>; "Rashida Rooted in Community," Rashida Tlaib, accessed September 23, 2020, <https://rashidaforcongress.com/>.

¹⁰⁸ Nicky Osborne in Conversation with the Author, October 13, 2020.

and are part of the NPM. While these marches and protests can be attributed to other movements, such as movements for gun control, the feminist movement, the Black Lives Matter movement, and a movement for climate change, these protests are undoubtedly part of the progressive agenda as well and thus part of the NPM. Members of the New Progressive Movement participate in these protests, making the protests part of the NPM's social movement repertoire.

In her book *American Resistance*, Dana Fisher traces most of the protest marches mentioned above, back to the inauguration of Donald Trump and classifies these as a reaction to his presidency. It has to be said that the NPM is partly a reaction to the Trump presidency as well, with five survey respondents saying that the reason they became active was the election of Donald Trump. So, there is a certain overlap. However, the NPM first and foremost grew from the Bernie Sanders campaign of 2016, as shown in 2.2.1.

Apart from protests, SMO's like BNC, Sunrise Movement, and JD also organize phone banking drives, petitions, get out the vote campaigns, and write postcards to keep members and volunteers active. These actions are contentious because they occur outside the realm of institutional politics as well as the government being the main target of the contentious claims being made. At the same time, the NPM, especially the SMOs, also act within the political realm and electoral politics when it supports the election of progressive candidates to Congress.

2.2.4. Interaction with opponents, authorities, and elites

The NPM is firmly engaged in electoral and party politics and no stranger to challenging the establishment. The establishment consists of authorities, elites, and opponents. For the NPM, elites and opponents in the political sphere come from both sides of the aisle. One of the goals of the NPM is to elect progressives to Congress, which means challenging Republicans and Democrats alike who do not support progressive ideas and ideals. However, interaction with political elites does not just happen through protests but also through political campaigns, petitions, or sit-ins, as the one staged by Sunrise Movement on November 13, 2018, where activists occupied Nancy Pelosi's office, an action that was joined by AOC.

Another great example of how the NPM is interacting with the political elite is through the Rhode Island Political Cooperative (RIPC). In this Political Cooperative, each candidate agrees to run on a ‘Sanders-esque’ platform and pay a certain amount of money. In exchange, the candidates get the benefit of these pooled resources to help with everything from training to staffing. What this political cooperative does is building progressive infrastructure to help progressives in their political race. The RIPC also works together with the Sunrise Movement. In the 2020 state election, RIPC had twenty candidates, fifteen of those were on the ballot in Democratic primaries. In September 2020, eight candidates ousted the incumbent, a result which truly changes the future of the state of Rhode Island. As Krystal Ball of *The Hill* states: “This is how you build a left movement from the ground up; using a little bit of money and a lot of man-power to outwork the establishment and win races where sheer shoe leather and force of will can actually make a difference.”¹⁰⁹

2.3 Populism in the New Progressive Movement

Historically, populism has been defined in a variety of ways, from focusing on charismatic leadership and grassroots mobilization, to “import substitution industrialization”, which advocates replacing foreign import products with domestic production.¹¹⁰ In this thesis, populism is defined as a political mode of rhetoric that calls upon “the people” to stand up against “the elite”. More recently, scholars have tried to explain the rise of right-wing populist parties throughout Europe and the election of Donald Trump. Two perspectives have come to the forefront, namely, the economic insecurity perspective and the cultural backlash approach. The former locates “support for populism in changing economic structures that limit economic opportunities for certain people as economies embrace globalized, neoliberal forms of production.”¹¹¹ The latter locates the support for populism in changing values, more specifically a shift away from tradition and toward

¹⁰⁹ Krystal Ball, “The Overlooked Political Revolution Which Could Transform Left Politics Forever,” *The Hill*, September 10, 2020, video, 5:28, <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=CSU8Asw-dwY>.

¹¹⁰ Biko Koenig and Lee Scaralia, “Populism, Identity Work, and Progressive Organizing in Rural America,” *New Political Science* 41, no. 4 (2019), 606.

¹¹¹ Koenig and Scaralia, 606.

progressive norms.¹¹² However, both perspectives focus on right-wing populism and do nothing to explain left-wing populism. Hawkins and Kaltwasser argue that a framework that applies to both left and right-wing populism is Ideational Populism, which defines populism as a set of ideas “bound up in a moral discourse that not only exalts popular sovereignty, but understands the political field as a cosmic struggle between ‘the people’ and ‘the elite’.”¹¹³ Cas Mudde argues that populism is “an ideology that considers society to be ultimately separated into two homogenous and antagonistic groups, ‘the pure people’ versus ‘the corrupt elite’, and which argues that politics should be an expression of the [general will] of the people.”¹¹⁴ In these definitions, populism is grounded in a struggle but offers few core concepts or policy positions, making it applicable to both the right and left.

When it comes to the leftist-populist discourse, the world is described not as “left vs right” but as “top vs bottom.”¹¹⁵ It is the ‘normal people’ versus the ‘economic elite’. Progressive populism combines populist frames, such as ‘the people’ versus ‘the elite’, with left-progressive goals, such as Medicare for All, and the Green New Deal. At the same time, Michael Kazin contends in his book *The Populist Persuasion*, that populism is more an impulse than an ideology, and it is employed as a flexible mode of persuasion.¹¹⁶

Taking this framework of progressive populism as a political mode of rhetoric, the NPM can be described as a progressive populist movement, defining the current struggle happening in the US as a struggle between ‘the people’ and ‘the corporate elite’. In a conversation with Progressive Democrats of America, Bernie Sanders seconds this by saying “I have never accepted this nonsense about red states and blue states — in every state of the country there are people who are struggling, and they are on our side. Don’t accept that division. We are the vast majority of people.”¹¹⁷ Programs such as Medicare for All and the Green New Deal are as much about health

¹¹² Koenig and Scaralia, 606.

¹¹³ Kirk A. Hawkins and Cristobal Rovira Kaltwasser “The Ideational Approach to Populism,” *Latin American Research Review* 52, no. 4 (2017), 3.

¹¹⁴ Cas Mudde, “The Populist Zeitgeist,” *Government and Opposition* 39, no. 4 (2004), 543.

¹¹⁵ Koenig and Scaralia, 605.

¹¹⁶ Michael Kazin, *The Populist Persuasion: An American History*, (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 2017), 3.

¹¹⁷ Kayes, “Principle of a Modern Progressive Movement.”

care and climate change respectively, as they are about making US society a fairer and more well-distributed place for ‘All Americans’, or ‘the people’.

This ties into another important pillar of the NPM: inclusivity. In the populist tradition, ‘the American people’ are seen as a homogenous group, facing economic inequality. However, this forgoes the realities of everyday life where different people face different challenges, such as racism, sexism, homophobia, or ableism. The current body politics “is shot through with gendered, multiethnic identities that do not translate into old categories of producer and plutocrat, the authentic community and the artificial powers-that-be.”¹¹⁸ It is this recognition of the multifaceted and diversity of ‘the people’ and the embrace of other movements, such as the Black Lives Matter Movement, that is foundational for the NPM. So, the New Progressive Movement is a progressive grassroots movement, using a progressive populist framework.

2.4 Survey Results: Conceptualizing the Movement

In September and October of 2020, I sent out a survey to volunteers of several Social Movement Organizations, including Brand New Congress, Sunrise Movement, and Our Revolution. In this survey, I asked them about their views on the New Progressive Movement. Many of the respondents were part of multiple SMOs, including Justice Democrats, Indivisible, Progressive Democrats of America, and Democratic Socialists of America. When asked if they felt part of a movement, 100% of the respondents said yes. When asked if they thought there was a New Progressive Movement, 97% said yes. The definitions people gave of this New Progressive Movement differed per person, naturally, but also had some overlap. Many respondents highlighted the movement’s quest for equality, equity, and justice for everyone. Equality concerns equal rights and equal opportunities for everyone. Essentially, equality is about ensuring that everybody has an equal opportunity to make the most of their lives regardless of, among other things, race, gender, sexuality, ability, or place of birth. One respondent defined the movement as “a multiracial, multigenerational movement informed about how class and race divisions have been used to

¹¹⁸ Kazin, *The Populist Persuasion*, 287.

weaken the mass of people and destroy our power for the financial and political gain of the few.”¹¹⁹ Another defined the NPM as “a mass realization that the current political system doesn’t serve those who aren’t rich, white, cis, and able-bodied, and the decision that it is possible and necessary to change the system so that it can work for all of us.”¹²⁰ According to these respondents, race and class inequality are two major themes in the NPM. The overlapping feeling was the need for change because the systems in place are not working. This refers to economic systems, political systems, healthcare systems, and lack of climate change action. Often mentioned is the role young people play in the NPM, as leaders and grassroots members.

Respondents perceive the NPM as a people’s movement based on empathy and compassion, or as one respondent said, “it’s a movement grounded in human dignity and rights that believes we are all worth something more than an arbitrary value assigned by your employer or insurance company. It stands in opposition to amassing great wealth and warfare and for the people and the planet.”¹²¹

The issues that were regarded as most pressing were, among others, climate change, economic inequality, racial injustice, health care, political inequality, or a combination of all of these, since several respondents highlighted the intersectionality of issues facing the United States. The best way to solve these issues, according to survey respondents varied from suggestions of taxing the rich, electing progressives, abolishing prisons, enacting a Green New Deal, implementing Medicare for All, overhauling ‘the system’, getting money out of politics, and starting a revolution. Below, I discuss three issues and solution in depth, which were mentioned by respondents as well as being featured prominently in Social Movement Organizations of the NPM.

2.4.1 Medicare for All

One of the most important issues in the New Progressive Movement, even before the COVID-19 pandemic, is health care. The current system of health insurance in the United States could be

¹¹⁹ See Survey Number 8.

¹²⁰ See Survey Number 27.

¹²¹ See Survey Number 5.

described as messy. About half of Americans receive health insurance through commercial insurance plans at their work, around 21.3% of Americans, are enrolled in Medicaid, 13.7% of Americans, about 45 million elderly people, are on Medicare, and about 6.1% of Americans, buy individual private insurance on the Affordable Care Act's market places.¹²² Enacted in March 2010, the Affordable Care Act (ACA), also known as 'Obamacare', has three primary goals, namely to make affordable health insurance available to more people by providing consumers with subsidies and thus lowering the costs, to expand the Medicaid program "to cover all adults with income below 138% of the federal poverty level"¹²³, and to support "innovative medical care delivery methods designed to lower the costs of health care generally."¹²⁴ More than 20 million people gained health coverage under the ACA, yet, in 2018, almost 30 million American citizens remained uninsured.¹²⁵ Since the beginning of the COVID-19 pandemic, nearly 27 million American lost their employer-based health insurance, some of whom are eligible for Medicaid and some for coverage under ACA, but many of them are not, according to a study by the Kaiser Family Foundation.¹²⁶ Especially in times of a global pandemic, lack of access to health care is devastating, amplifying calls for a change in the US health care system.

The most popular idea in the NPM is single-payer Medicare for All, which was part of Bernie Sanders' platform in the 2016 and 2020 Democratic Presidential Primaries. For many progressives in the NPM, healthcare is a right and not a privilege. Bernie Sanders' Medicare for All plan entails a "single-payer, national health insurance program to provide everyone in America

¹²² Dylan Scott, "The real differences between the 2020 Democrats' health care plans, explained," *VOX*, Dec. 19, 2019, <https://www.vox.com/policy-and-politics/2019/12/19/21005124/2020-presidential-candidates-health-care-democratic-debate>.

¹²³ "Affordable Care Act," Healthcare.gov, accessed October 2, 2020, <https://www.healthcare.gov/glossary/affordable-care-act/>.

¹²⁴ "Affordable Care Act," Healthcare.gov.

¹²⁵ "Chart Book: Accomplishments of Affordable Care Act," Center on Budget and Policy Priorities, accessed October 2, 2020, <https://www.cbpp.org/research/health/chart-book-accomplishments-of-affordable-care-act#:~:text=Thanks%20to%20the%20Affordable%20Care,people%20have%20gained%20health%20coverage>.

¹²⁶ Rachel Garfield, Gary Claxton, Anthony Damico, and Larry Levitt, "Eligibility for ACA Health Coverage Following Job Loss," *Kaiser Family Foundation*, May 13, 2020, <https://www.kff.org/coronavirus-covid-19/issue-brief/eligibility-for-aca-health-coverage-following-job-loss/>.

with comprehensive health care coverage, free at the point of service.”¹²⁷ Under Medicare for All, there is no place for private insurance plans, and there is no cost-sharing, meaning that everyone receives comprehensive coverage regardless of their ability to pay.¹²⁸ This is ‘single-payer’ because the government is the only entity paying for the coverage. According to Pew Research Center, 81% of Democrats and Democratic-leaning independents say that the federal government is responsible for making sure that all Americans have health coverage.¹²⁹ According to the Kaiser Family Foundation, since Senator Sanders’ 2016 presidential campaign, a slight majority of Americans, 50%, say they favor a Medicare for All plan, as opposed to 43% who oppose it.¹³⁰ The poll shows that 49% of Democrats, 33% of Independents, and 11% of Republicans strongly favor Medicare for All.¹³¹

2.4.2 The Green New Deal

Introduced to Congress in February of 2019, by Representative Alexandria Ocasio-Cortez and Senator Ed Markey, the Green New Deal (GND) is a set of principles addressing the climate change crisis. The Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) warned in 2018 that global warming of more than 1.5 °C would cause a spike in mass migration, wildfires, deadly heat stress, on top of the costs of trillions of dollars and millions of lives.¹³² These changes cannot be undone in centuries. The GND is the first step of a plan that tries to stop this future from happening. The resolution itself is only 14 pages long and it is vital to realize that it is not a bill, legislation, or a policy proposal but more an acknowledgement of what the shared understanding is of the problem and what steps are necessary to solve it.

¹²⁷ “Bernie Sanders on the Issues,” Bernie Sanders, accessed on October 2, 2020, <https://berniesanders.com/issues/>.

¹²⁸ Scott, “The real differences between the 2020 Democrats’ health care plans, explained.”

¹²⁹ Amina Dunn, “Democrats differ over best way to provide health coverage for all Americans,” *Pew Research Center*, July 26, 2019, <https://www.pewresearch.org/fact-tank/2019/07/26/democrats-differ-over-best-way-to-provide-health-coverage-for-all-americans/>.

¹³⁰ Garfield et al. “Eligibility for ACA Health Coverage Following Job Loss.”

¹³¹ Garfield et al. “Eligibility for ACA Health Coverage Following Job Loss.”

¹³² “Summary for Policymakers of IPCC Special Report on Global Warming of 1.5 °C approved by governments,” *IPCC*, October 8, 2018, <https://www.ipcc.ch/2018/10/08/summary-for-policymakers-of-ipcc-special-report-on-global-warming-of-1-5c-approved-by-governments/>.

The GND is divided into two big ideas. The first is the question of what is to be done to solve the impending climate crisis. The answer is to completely stop burning fossil fuels “as much as technologically feasible.”¹³³ This means rethinking vehicles, energy efficiency standards for building, “meeting 100 percent of the power demand in the United States through clean, renewable, and zero-emission energy sources”¹³⁴, “overhauling transportation systems”¹³⁵, and “removing gas emissions from the agricultural sector.”¹³⁶ To realize this future, the GND requires the building of many new things that power the world without fossil fuels, such as new infrastructure, wind farms, and solar panel parks. A key part of the GND is the assertion that it is too late to incrementally move away from fossil fuels. This has to happen quickly and dramatically, but this will have profound consequences for US society and the US economy. Decarbonizing means that some people will lose their jobs, their health care and even their homes. This is addressed in the second part of the GND.

The second part acknowledges that transitioning Americans away from fossil fuels is a massive and difficult task and can put the livelihood of some Americans under stress. For example, if the US decarbonizes, coal workers will lose their job and consequently their homes and health care. The second part of the GND is a set of promises and ideas for how Americans will be protected during the transition away from fossil fuels. This includes measures such as a federal jobs guarantee, training and education programs, higher wages, healthcare for workers affected by the transition, and strengthening unions.”¹³⁷ On top of that, the GND argues for “providing all people of the United States with— (i) high-quality health care; (ii) affordable, safe, and adequate housing; (iii) economic security; and (iv) clean water, clean air, healthy and affordable food, and access to nature.”¹³⁸ These are the basic elements of economic freedom that for many progressives in the US

¹³³ Recognizing the duty of the Federal Government to create a Green New Deal, H.R. 109, 116th Cong. §1 (2019), 6.

¹³⁴ Recognizing the duty of the Federal Government to create a Green New Deal, H.R. 109, 116th Cong. §1 (2019), 7.

¹³⁵ Recognizing the duty of the Federal Government to create a Green New Deal, H.R. 109, 116th Cong. §1 (2019), 9.

¹³⁶ Recognizing the duty of the Federal Government to create a Green New Deal, H.R. 109, 116th Cong. §1 (2019), 8.

¹³⁷ Recognizing the duty of the Federal Government to create a Green New Deal, H.R. 109, 116th Cong. §1 (2019), 13.

¹³⁸ Recognizing the duty of the Federal Government to create a Green New Deal, H.R. 109, 116th Cong. §1 (2019), 14.

ought to be promised and due to every citizen of the richest country in the world.¹³⁹ Yet these ideas address more than just the climate crisis, transforming the GND into a manifesto for taking on social and economic inequality in the United States as well as climate change. Ideas such as a federal jobs guarantee, public employment, and universal healthcare are progressive ideas for which progressives have been advocating, well before the GND. On top of that, these measures mentioned above are meant to keep all inequality from worsening during the transition. The GND acknowledges that affluent communities with the most political clout and wealthy corporations decide where things can and cannot be built. This means that the people with the fewest barriers are the ones who benefit the most. Consequently, groups with the most barriers, communities of color, immigrant communities, and poor people could end up even worse off in a transitioning society. Therefore, the GND argues that the American economy should be rebuilt in a way that allows opportunity to flow more fairly. The GND is as much about climate change as it is about redistributive economics.

In March 2019, Data for Progress reported a favorability rating of 59% for the Green New Deal among US voters.¹⁴⁰ This support is strongest among Millennials, but the central cleavage on this issue comes from Party affiliation. Democrats support climate action at much higher levels than Republicans, with Independents leaning closer to Democrats.¹⁴¹ An August 2019 poll by the Kaiser Family Foundation and Washington Post found that many aspects of the GND are popular but the large increase in federal spending is not, with 67% of respondents opposing the measure.¹⁴²

¹³⁹ “The Green New Deal Explained,” VOX, June 12, 2019, video, 4:37, <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=GxIDJWCbk6I>.

¹⁴⁰ Jason Ganz, “Memo: The Green New Deal Is Popular (350 Action),” Data For Progress, May 11, 2019, <https://www.dataforprogress.org/memos/the-green-new-deal-is-popular-350-action>.

¹⁴¹ Ganz, <https://www.dataforprogress.org/memos/the-green-new-deal-is-popular-350-action>.

¹⁴² Liz Hamel, Lunna Lopes, Cailey Munana, and Mollyann Brodie, “The Kaiser Family Foundation/Washington Post Climate Change Survey,” *Kaiser Family Foundation*, November 27, 2019, <https://www.kff.org/report-section/the-kaiser-family-foundation-washington-post-climate-change-survey-green-new-deal/>.

2.4.3. Super PACs

Elections cost a lot of money. In the 2016 election cycle, “the average winning Senate candidate had spent \$10.4 million”, and the average costs of winning a Senate seat rose to \$19.4 million from \$16.8 million in 2014.¹⁴³ The average winning House candidate spent less than a Senator, but still spent \$1.3 million and the average costs of winning in a House seat in 2016 was \$1.5 million.¹⁴⁴ However, not all the money spent in elections comes from the candidate’s campaign. Outside spending can come from, among others, PACs, and Super PACs.

A Political Action Committee (PAC) is a political committee that “raises or spends more than \$1,000 to influence the outcome of a federal election in a calendar year”¹⁴⁵ and thus has to register with the Federal Election Commission (FEC). A PAC can accept individual contributions of up to \$5,000 a year but cannot accept union or corporate treasury funds.¹⁴⁶ If a PAC supports multiple candidates, it may contribute up to \$5,000 per election per candidate and \$15,000 to a party committee.¹⁴⁷

A Super PAC is what the FEC refers to as an “independent expenditure-only political committee”¹⁴⁸ and meets the same threshold as regular PACs of spending more than \$1,000 to influence the outcome of an election. However, the main difference between a PAC and a Super PAC is that the latter can raise, and consequently spend, an unlimited amount of money from corporations, unions, and individuals “on political advertisement as long as they do not coordinate their spending with any candidate.”¹⁴⁹ Super PACs are a fairly recent development, coming into existence after the 2009 decision in *Citizens United v. FEC*. In this court case, the conservative nonprofit group Citizens United decided to challenge the FEC and its campaign rules after the FEC

¹⁴³ Soo Rin Kim, “The price of winning just got higher, especially in the Senate,” *OpenSecrets*, Nov. 9, 2016, <https://www.opensecrets.org/news/2016/11/the-price-of-winning-just-got-higher-especially-in-the-senate/>.

¹⁴⁴ Kim, “The price of winning just got higher, especially in the Senate.”

¹⁴⁵ “PACs, Super PAC & Dark Money Groups: What’s the Difference?,” *Campaign Legal Center*, June 20, 2018, <https://campaignlegal.org/update/pacs-super-pacs-dark-money-groups-whats-difference>.

¹⁴⁶ “PACs, Super PAC & Dark Money Groups: What’s the Difference?”.

¹⁴⁷ “PACs, Super PAC & Dark Money Groups: What’s the Difference?”.

¹⁴⁸ “PACs, Super PAC & Dark Money Groups: What’s the Difference?”.

¹⁴⁹ Mimi Murray Digby Marziani, “Money in Politics After Citizens United: Troubling Trends & Possible Solutions,” *Brennan Center for Justice*, April 19, 2012, <https://www.brennancenter.org/our-work/research-reports/money-politics-after-citizens-united-troubling-trends-possible-solutions>.

stopped the nonprofit from promoting and airing a film criticizing presidential candidate Hillary Clinton, too close to the presidential primaries.¹⁵⁰ The Supreme Court sided with Citizens United in a 5-4 majority, ruling that corporations and other outside groups can spend an unlimited amount of money on elections.¹⁵¹ Consequently, after the ruling, there was a massive increase in political spending from outside groups, “dramatically expanding the already outsized political influence of wealthy donors, corporations, and special interest groups.”¹⁵² The very wealthy got an even greater voice in American politics, with the top 100 donors to Super PACs in the 2014 election cycle, contributing almost 70 percent of total Super PAC spending.¹⁵³ The views of this donor class have gotten an “outsized impact on policy decisions” whereas the views of middle- and low-income voters are barely registered, a phenomenon exacerbated by the *Citizens United* case.¹⁵⁴ A Brennan Center report pointed out that the decision in *Citizens United*, “has helped reinforce the growing sense that [American] democracy primarily serves the interest of the wealthy few, and that democratic participation for the vast majority of citizens is of relatively little value.”¹⁵⁵ Notably, studies have shown that the outcome of *Citizens United*, increased electoral successes for the Republican Party by an average of 4 percentage points and 10 or more percentage points in several states.¹⁵⁶

Across the United States, eschewing (corporate) Super PAC and corporate-PAC money has become a progressive litmus test for candidates to show they really are a candidate for the people and are not ruled by (dark) money or corporate interests. Progressive candidates started to consciously make the choice not to take corporate-PAC or Super PAC money to emphasize two things: first, that they are putting the interests of the people first, and second, to emphasize the

¹⁵⁰ Tim Lau, “Citizens United Explained,” *Brennan Center for Justice*, December 19, 2019, <https://www.brennancenter.org/our-work/research-reports/citizens-united-explained>.

¹⁵¹ Lau, “Citizens United Explained.”

¹⁵² Lau, “Citizens United Explained.”

¹⁵³ Daniel I. Weiner, “Citizens United Five Years Later,” *Brennan Center for Justice*, January 15, (2015): 5, https://www.brennancenter.org/sites/default/files/2019-08/Report_Citizens_United_%205_%20Years_%20Later.pdf.

¹⁵⁴ Weiner, 6.

¹⁵⁵ Weiner, 1.

¹⁵⁶ Tilman Klumpp, Hugo M. Mialon and Michael A. Williams, “The Business of American Democracy: Citizens United Independent Spending, and Elections,” *Journal of Law and Economics* 59, no. 1 (2016).

importance of individual donors. As AOC says in her 2018 campaign video: “This race is about people vs money. We’ve got people; they’ve got money.”¹⁵⁷ This pledge of not taking Super PAC and corporate-PAC money harks back to earlier election campaigns “where the rejection of PAC money fueled candidates’ grassroots support,” for example the 2008 Obama presidential campaign and the 2016 Sanders presidential campaign.¹⁵⁸

Social Movement Organizations within the NPM, such as Brand New Congress and Justice Democrats, have also adopted the stance that their candidates cannot take corporate-PAC or corporate Super PAC money. Saikat Chakrabarti, co-founder of Justice Democrats, says that “not taking corporate money is a core part of the progressive message.”¹⁵⁹ According to Adam Bozzi, communications director for End Citizens United, the message that candidates send by refusing Super PAC and corporate-PAC money is that when they get to Congress, they are putting the interests of the people first.¹⁶⁰ On top of that, big money in politics makes it infinitely harder for ‘normal’ people to influence elections or run for office since few people have enough money to pay for elections. That is also where SMOs like BNC and JD come in because these are PACs that support regular working-class people in their run for office.

2.5 The New Progressive Movement and the Democratic Party

The New Progressive Movement is firmly engaged in electoral politics. While some SMOs within the movement, like Brand New Congress, are officially bipartisan, the NPM is especially putting pressure on the Democratic Party. This is visible in the Progressive candidates who run for Congress because they are running as Democratic candidates, whether the Democratic establishment is in favor of them or not. It makes sense that the NPM would seek to influence the Democratic Party instead of the Republican Party under Trump because the latter is too

¹⁵⁷ Alexandria Ocasio-Cortez, “The Courage to Change,” Alexandria Ocasio-Cortez, May 30, 2018, video, 1:16, <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=rq3QXIVR0bs>.

¹⁵⁸ Elaine Godfrey, “Why So Many Democratic Candidates Are Dissing Corporate PACs,” *The Atlantic*, Aug. 23, 2018, <https://www.theatlantic.com/politics/archive/2018/08/why-so-many-democratic-candidates-are-ditching-corporate-pacs/568267/>.

¹⁵⁹ Godfrey, *The Atlantic*.

¹⁶⁰ Godfrey, *The Atlantic*.

conservative and has not been receptive at all to progressive ideas such as Medicare for All or Climate Change legislation. Movement participants see the NPM as a people's movement, but the way it tries to exert influence in the political sphere is by running progressive candidates on a Democratic ticket. While Bernie Sanders might not have won the Democratic nomination in 2016 or 2020, the Democratic Party has been influenced by the NPM, which is especially visible in 2020 Democratic Presidential Nominee Joe Biden's platform.

Comparing Joe Biden's presidential platform to Obama's platform from 2008, it is clear that Biden's platform is well to Obama's left. But this was not only true for Biden's platform. Other 'moderate' candidates in the Democratic Presidential primaries were also to Obama's left, making it "the most progressive Democratic primary of all times", according to Roge Karma and Ezra Klein of Vox.¹⁶¹ The presidential debates showed a clear split in the Democratic Party between the "leftist lane", occupied by Bernie Sanders and Elizabeth Warren, and the "moderate lane", occupied by Joe Biden and Pete Buttigieg, among others. Whereas the former were vying for big structural change, the latter believed in incremental progress. Yet, the difference in rhetoric obscures a deeper truth, namely that all the agendas of the primary candidates were more progressive than ever. Karma and Klein argue that by standards of the Democratic Party in 2008, the moderates look like leftists¹⁶² On the topic of health care, Biden wants to "achieve at least 97 percent health care coverage via a public option open to everyone."¹⁶³

Biden focuses on expanding Medicare, whereas Obama focused rhetorically on access to private insurance. There is a consensus between Democratic presidential candidates around insurance expansion built atop public coverage. On the topic of climate change, Biden wants to invest between \$1.5 and \$2 trillion in federal funding to push the US toward 100 percent clean energy and hit net-zero emission by 2050. Obama, on the other hand, wanted to invest \$150 billion in research, funded by passing the cap-and-trade bill, and reduce emissions 80 percent by 2050. On

¹⁶¹ Roge Karma and Ezra Klein, "In 2020, Joe Biden and the 'moderates' are well to Obama's left," *VOX*, December 20, 2019, <https://www.vox.com/2019/12/20/21026212/2020-democratic-primary-joe-biden-bernie-sanders-elizabeth-warren-barack-obama>.

¹⁶² Karma and Klein, *VOX*.

¹⁶³ Karma and Klein, *VOX*.

top of that, Obama's plan called for an increase in domestic production of oil and gas in the short-term.¹⁶⁴ Concerning higher education, Biden wants to make community colleges completely tuition-free, whereas Obama wanted to make the first \$4,000 of college education completely free for most Americans, in exchange for 100 hours of public service per year.¹⁶⁵ All of these measures proposed by Biden might not seem up to Progressive 'standards' but are anything but moderate by historical standards.¹⁶⁶ Thus, there is a shift to the left in the Democratic Party that has worked its way into the platform of the Democratic presidential nominee. Or, as Peter Beinart of *The Atlantic* argues, "Biden is allowing progressive activists to push him left."¹⁶⁷ This shift to the left is multicausal, some building on the foundations of Obama, some reflect the changed realities candidates are responding to, but above all, they are reflective of the influence of the NPM on the Democratic Party.

2.6 Social Movement Organizations

There are several of Social Movement Organizations which play a significant role in the NPM, as well as in this thesis. The first one is Brand New Congress, which was founded by ex-Bernie Sanders staffers after the 2016 elections. BNC is a bipartisan organization that works to elect "regular working people to Congress who put people before party to make government more accountable and responsive to the needs of all Americans"¹⁶⁸, whether they are Democrats or Republicans. In practice, this still means that BNC overwhelmingly endorses Democratic

¹⁶⁴ Karma and Klein, *VOX*.

¹⁶⁵ Karma and Klein, *VOX*.

¹⁶⁶ Matthew Yglesias, "Progressives don't love Joe Biden, but they're learning to love his agenda," *VOX*, July 19, 2020, <https://www.vox.com/21322478/joe-biden-overton-window-bidenism>; Peter Beinart, "Biden goes Big without sounding like it," *The Atlantic*, August 3, 2020, <https://www.theatlantic.com/ideas/archive/2020/08/joe-bidens-big-bold-and-very-quiet-agenda/614878/>; Lanhee J. Chen, "Biden may seem like a centrist but his platform is Progressive," *CNN*, September 21, 2020, <https://edition.cnn.com/2020/09/21/opinions/biden-may-seem-like-centrist-but-his-platform-is-progressive-chen/index.html>.

¹⁶⁷ Beinart, *The Atlantic*, <https://www.theatlantic.com/ideas/archive/2020/08/joe-bidens-big-bold-and-very-quiet-agenda/614878/>.

¹⁶⁸ "Brand New Congress," Brand New Congress, accessed October 3, 2020, <https://brandnewcongress.org/>.

candidates, since there was only one Republican candidate endorsed in 2018.¹⁶⁹ According to the organization's website, the problem is that "the majority of Congress are detached from the needs of the people. Corporate influence and partisan politics have prevented Congress from passing legislation that addresses the issues faced by everyday Americans."¹⁷⁰ To make sure Congress truly represents the American people, especially working-class Americans, BNC calls upon its supporters to nominate people in their own communities who have proven track records of integrity and service.¹⁷¹ Brand New Congress is not an endorsement agency but brands itself as a volunteer-led organization where organizers and Congressional candidates come together to work together with the "unified goal of radically transforming Congress to work for the common good."¹⁷² Every BNC candidate signs a pledge and commits to the organization's core principles: refuse corporate PAC money and stand against moneyed interest, stand with their fellow slatemates to fight for progressive legislation, and sign onto BNC's 21st Century Bill of Rights to support progressive policies built on tenants of human rights.¹⁷³

The second organization is Justice Democrats. Just like BNC, Justice Democrats is founded by ex-Bernie Sanders staffers. Yet, unlike BNC, Justice Democrats is a partisan organization, focusing on the Democratic party only. On its website, JD states its mission: "we need a Democratic Party that fights for its voters, not big corporate donors. Our goal is to build a mission-driven caucus in Congress by electing more leaders like Alexandria Ocasio-Cortez and Jamaal Bowman, who will represent our communities in Congress and fight for bold, progressive solutions to our current crises."¹⁷⁴ The way Justice Democrats goes about this is by recruiting and supporting progressive Democrats all over the country and running primary challengers against "out-of-touch Democratic

¹⁶⁹ Cheyenne Thompson in Conversation with the author, Director of Research Brand New Congress, *Slack*, November 10, 2020.

¹⁷⁰ "Brand New Congress," Brand New Congress, accessed October 3, 2020, <https://brandnewcongress.org/>.

¹⁷¹ "Brand New Congress," Brand New Congress, accessed October 3, 2020, <https://brandnewcongress.org/>.

¹⁷² "Brand New Congress Nominations," Brand New Congress, accessed October 3, 2020, <https://brandnewcongress.org/About-Brand-New-Congress-Candidate-Nominations>.

¹⁷³ "Brand New Congress Nominations," Brand New Congress, accessed October 3, 2020, <https://brandnewcongress.org/About-Brand-New-Congress-Candidate-Nominations>.

¹⁷⁴ "Justice Democrats," Justice Democrats, accessed October 3, 2020, <https://justicedemocrats.com/>.

incumbents and organizing to hold the party accountable to our issues.”¹⁷⁵ Justice Democrats is thus especially focused on pulling the Democratic Party to the left. As a PAC, Justice Democrats uses donation money to, among other things, “hire staff who recruit and train candidates, develop communications, organizing and digital strategies to drive progressive policies and candidates forward, and support volunteer canvassers, text bankers, and phone bankers.”¹⁷⁶ JD’s platform includes support for the Green New Deal, Medicare for All, Tax the Rich, Justice Reform, and Defending Net Neutrality. There is an overlap in candidates supported by BNC and JD, as both organizations have Rashida Tlaib, AOC, Jamaal Bowman, Kara Eastman, and Cori Bush on their slate.

The third organization is the Sunrise Movement, a youth movement to stop climate change. The mission statement as stated on its website is to build an army “of young people to make climate change an urgent priority across America, end the corrupting influence of fossil fuel executives on our politics, and elect leaders who stand up for the health and wellbeing of all people.”¹⁷⁷ Sunrise Movement is a grassroots movement with hubs all over the US where activists can meet and come together. In 2018, Sunrise Movement worked to oust candidates who would accept funding from the fossil fuel industry and rallied behind candidates who were proponents of renewable energy.¹⁷⁸ After the 2018 midterms, the Sunrise Movement set its sights on the Green New Deal, which is central to the movement. Sunrise Movement is not necessarily engaged in electoral politics in the way that it recruits candidates, but it does endorse progressive candidates. Sunrise Movement’s theory of change is catalyzing a critical mass of supportive public officials who will fight for the progressive ideals through people power, meaningful action, and escalated moral protest, and build an extensive network of movements and groups united by the shared vision of a government that

¹⁷⁵ “About Justice Democrats,” Justice Democrats, accessed October 3, 2020, <https://justicedemocrats.com/about/>.

¹⁷⁶ “About Justice Democrats,” Justice Democrats, accessed October 3, 2020, <https://justicedemocrats.com/about/>.

¹⁷⁷ “Who We Are: About Sunrise Movement,” Sunrise Movement, accessed October 4, 2020, <https://www.sunrisemovement.org/about/?ms=AboutSunriseMovement>.

¹⁷⁸ “Who We Are: About Sunrise Movement,” Sunrise Movement, accessed October 4, 2020, <https://www.sunrisemovement.org/about/?ms=AboutSunriseMovement>.

fight for dignity and justice for all.¹⁷⁹ These groups include Brand New Congress and Justice Democrats.

The last Social Movement Organization that I will discuss is Our Revolution (OR). This organization grew directly out of Bernie Sanders' 2016 presidential campaign. Our Revolution is also the title of a book Sanders released in November 2016. The organization has a 4-point plan to fight for a progressive future: “#1) Defeat Trump by winning back working-class voters in the Midwest; #2) Elect a progressive Congress #3) Build a down-ballot bench of progressive champions and policies; and most critically, #4) Organize a powerful grassroots movement inside the halls of power and outside in the streets to win transformative change after the election.”¹⁸⁰ Progressive issues include Medicare for All, the Green New Deal, Saving the Post Office, and Cancelling Student Debt.¹⁸¹ Our Revolution is a partisan organization, focusing on transforming the Democratic Party by electing progressive champions. Just like BNC and JD, Our Revolution is engaged in electoral politics but also focuses on grassroots movement building. Candidates endorsed by OR include AOC, Jamaal Bowman, Kara Eastman, Cori Bush, and Rashida Tlaib.

2.7 Conclusion

When Bernie Sanders decided to run again for the Democratic presidential nomination in 2020, he used the same slogan as in 2016: Not Me. Us. This slogan seems to perfectly encapsulate the budding New Progressive Movement that grew from his first presidential campaign. The NPM is a social movement, in which social movement organizations come together with grassroots structured groups of people who advocate for progressive change in the United States. They pursue progressive goals of equality and justice through supporting progressive legislation. The NPM is also firmly engaged in electoral politics and several SMOs in the movement have a candidate slate that boasts progressive candidates running for Congress.

¹⁷⁹ “Who We Are: About Sunrise Movement,” Sunrise Movement, accessed October 4, 2020, <https://www.sunrisemovement.org/about/?ms=AboutSunriseMovement>.

¹⁸⁰ “Our Revolution: Organize to Win,” Our Revolution, accessed October 4, 2020, <https://ourrevolution.com/>.

¹⁸¹ “Our Issues,” Our Revolution, accessed October 4, 2020, <https://ourrevolution.com/services/>.

The NPM can be placed in a long history of progressive movements in the United States, from the Progressive Movement, to the Civil Rights Movement, and the Occupy Movement. As these previous movements, the NPM engages in sustained contentious collective action, such as petitions, mass protests, canvassing, and phone banking, to challenge the establishment, which includes the Democratic, Republican, and economic establishment. Even though Bernie Sanders did not receive the presidential nomination in 2016 or 2020, progressive values have been influencing the Democratic Party, with the help of the NPM. The Democratic Party is shifting leftwards, and the New Progressive Movement is pushing the hardest. Another social movement did something similar to the Republican Party but in the other direction. The Tea Party Movement might be the most prominent social movement of the early 2010s, which will be discussed in chapter 3.

As an organizer I start from where the world is, as it is, not as I would like it to be. That we accept the world as it is does not in any sense weaken our desire to change it into what we believe it should be – it is necessary to begin where the world is if we are going to change it to what we think it should be. – Saul Alinsky, Rules for Radicals.

Chapter 3 The Tea Party Movement

Whereas the New Progressive Movement works hard to push the Democratic Party to the left, another movement had been pushing the Republican Party to the right since the election of Barack Obama: The Tea Party Movement. This social movement is one of the most successful social movements in the United States of the 21st century. In this chapter, I will discuss the Tea Party Movement and show why this social movement has been so influential. First, I will show the Tea Party's place in a longer historical perspective of conservative grassroots movements, followed by a discussion of the grassroots nature of the movement. I will then move on to the main concerns and beliefs of the social movement participants, followed by the role of populist rhetoric in the Tea Party, and finally a discussion of the influence of the Tea Party Movement on the Republican Party.

In the spring of 2009, the Tea Party Movement (TPM), emerged on the American political scene, out of a unique economic and political moment, marked by both the aftermath of the economic crisis of 2008 and the election of Barack Obama as the first African American president. Most accounts of the beginning of the TPM trace the origins to CNBC anchor Rick Santelli's rant on the floor of the Chicago Mercantile Exchange on February 19, 2009.¹⁸² Santelli ranted passionately about the Homeowners Affordability and Stability Plan, "which was designed to provide relief to mortgage holders" and was signed into law by President Obama.¹⁸³ Santelli was outraged because, according to him, this policy would promote bad behavior by "subsidiz[ing] the losers' mortgages."¹⁸⁴ He continued, "President Obama, are you listening? [...] It's time for another tea party. What we are doing in this country will make Thomas Jefferson and Benjamin Franklin roll over in their graves."¹⁸⁵ In the days and weeks following Santelli's rant, Freedom Works, a

¹⁸² Lawrence Rosenthal and Christine Trost, *Steep*, (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2012). ; Theda Skocpol and Vanessa Williamson, *The Tea Party and the Remaking of Republican Conservatism*, (New York: Oxford University Press, 2016).; Melissa Deckman, *Tea Party Women: Mama Grizzlies, Grassroots Leaders, and the Changing Face of the American right*, (New York: New York University Press, 2016).; Christopher R. Parker and Matt A. Barreto, *Change They Can't Believe In*, (New Jersey: Princeton University Press, 2013).

¹⁸³ Lawrence Rosenthal and Christine Trost, "Introduction: The Rise of the Tea Party," in *Steep*, ed. Lawrence Rosenthal and Christine Trost, (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2012), 10.

¹⁸⁴ "Santelli's epic rant on the FED, easy money & markets," CNBC, July 14, 2014, <https://www.cnbc.com/video/2014/07/14/santellis-epic-rant-on-the-fed-easy-money-markets.html>.

¹⁸⁵ "Santelli's epic rant on the FED, easy money & markets," CNBC.

conservative advocacy group based in Washington DC, announced the launch of a nation-wide Tea Party Tour. Yet, even before Santelli's cry, local activists had channeled their anger into organizing anti-government protests.¹⁸⁶ As Rosenthal and Trost contend, hundreds of TEA (Taxed Enough Already) Party rallies across the country drew anywhere from a handful to thousands of participants.¹⁸⁷ By mid-April 2009, in addition to local grassroots organizations, at least six Tea Party factions could be discerned on a national level, and all of these groups, local and national, set their "sights on mobilizing conservative Americans around a new object of fury – the health care overhaul proposed by the Obama administration."¹⁸⁸ Health care protests eventually culminated in the "Taxpayer March on Washington", which took place on September 12, 2009. As tens of thousands of protesters converged on the steps of the Capitol, the TPM began to resemble a full-fledged social movement.

3.1 Historical perspective

The TPM can be placed in a long history of right-wing and conservative movements, mobilized in response to what is perceived as a threatening change. Parker and Barreto begin with the Ku Klux Klan of the 1920s, which was the largest of three incarnations of the Klan. According to the KKK, true American values were threatened by black people, Jews, women, and Catholics. In this worldview, nativism became intertwined with economic competition, meaning that non-whites, which included Jews and Catholics, were seen as threatening the economic position of the white man. Like other right-wing movements, the KKK was mobilized by conflicts in which fundamental values were at stake, in this case, the notion that Americans were white Anglo-Saxon protestants.¹⁸⁹ Some thirty years later, the John Birch Society (JBS) also resisted what they perceived as a threatening change. The movement "sought to liberate America from the slavery of trade unions, labor regulations, minimum wages, the Social Security Act, and other instruments of "collectivism"

¹⁸⁶ Rosenthal and Trost, 10.

¹⁸⁷ Rosenthal and Trost, 11.

¹⁸⁸ Rosenthal and Trost, 11.

¹⁸⁹ Parker and Barreto, 23.

and “socialist tyranny.”¹⁹⁰ Many of these things were lauded as progressive achievements twenty years earlier. The JBS was a right-wing grassroots movement with over 100,000 members who were dedicated activists and their grassroots support on a national scale was sufficient to help secure the presidential nomination of Barry Goldwater in 1964.¹⁹¹ Part of the success of JBS was the mobilization of women, one of whom was Phyllis Schlafly. Conservatives like Schlafly tapped into anxieties of middle-class Americans over a range of social issues, such as the ERA and abortion, by organizing grassroots movements in churches and local communities.¹⁹² Traditions and influences that were at work in previous right-wing and conservative movements were also at work within the TPM to some extent. This includes Christian conservatism, fears of moral decline, nativism, and xenophobia, which was expressed in birtherism surrounding Obama, and fears about immigration and Islam. A salient detail is that the father of the Koch Brothers, who fund Americans for Prosperity, was a founding member of the JBS.

3.2 Grassroots or Astroturf?

From early on, the TPM has been critiqued as not actually being a grassroots movement but resembling Astroturf. Astroturf is a brand of artificial grass, used on football fields or outdoor areas. The implication of defining the TPM as Astroturf was that the movement “was heavily funded and organized by existing institutions and not grassroots.”¹⁹³ However, the TPM is more complex, or as Schradie argues, “the grass got a lot of fertilizer but had its own organic roots.”¹⁹⁴ In their book *The Tea Party and the Remaking of Republican Conservatism*, Skocpol and Williamson estimate that there were about 200,000 U.S. adults who were grassroots participants in

¹⁹⁰ Charles Postel, “The Tea Party in Historical Perspective: A Conservative Response to a Crisis of Political Economy,” in *Steep*, ed. Lawrence Rosenthal and Christine Trost, (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2012), 30.

¹⁹¹ Postel, 30.

¹⁹² Donald T. Chritchlow, *Phyllis Schlafly and Grassroots Conservatism: A Woman’s Crusade*, (New Jersey: Princeton University Press, 2008), 15.

¹⁹³ Jen Schradie, *The Revolution That Wasn’t: How Digital Activism Favors Conservatism*, (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2019), 194.

¹⁹⁴ Schradie, 194.

Tea Parties across the US.¹⁹⁵ Their research included over 800 grassroots Tea Party groups across the 50 states. In the early days of the movement, the TPM was a loosely interrelated network of activism of local Tea Partiers and “grassroots enthusiasm was encouraged by the sense that people could get their own act together.”¹⁹⁶ Yet, even in the beginning, these grassroots groups benefited from conservative media attention and national organizations trying to stoke grassroots activism.¹⁹⁷ So, arguing that the TPM is purely a grassroots movement is not correct. The TPM in its entirety “includes media hosts and wealthy political action committees, plus national advocacy groups and self-proclaimed spokespersons – elites that wield many millions of dollars in political contributions and appear all over the media claiming to speak for grassroots activists who certainly have not elected them, and to whom they are not accountable.”¹⁹⁸ The TPM is thus a network of elite and grassroots actors.

Highly ideological right-wing billionaires have been trying to push the Republican Party further to the right for decades and have succeeded to some extent. When the TPM came along, these billionaires saw their chance and took it. The current situation in the United States is that “wealth and income have become so amazingly unequal [...] that a few hundred billionaire families gave the means to push their own worldview in civil and political affairs.”¹⁹⁹ This goes for the Gates family on the left, but also the families and associated institutions named Olin, Scaife, Coors, and Koch on the far-right. Especially the latter has been highly influential regarding the TPM.

Two advocacy groups have been instrumental in furthering grassroots connections and helping grassroots activists in organizing protests and rallies: FreedomWorks and Americans for Prosperity (AfP). Staffers and volunteers of both social movement organizations appeared at Tea Party rallies, regularly paid to transport protestors across the country, and helped to build extensive state networks of Tea Partiers and Tea Party groups.²⁰⁰ Both groups are funded heavily by the Koch

¹⁹⁵ Skocpol and Williamson, *The Tea Party and the Remaking of Republican Conservatism*, 22.

¹⁹⁶ Skocpol and Williamson, 120.

¹⁹⁷ Skocpol and Williamson, 120.

¹⁹⁸ Skocpol and Williamson, 11.

¹⁹⁹ Skocpol and Williamson, 102.

²⁰⁰ Skocpol and Williamson, 105.

brothers and AfP is still under direct leadership from the Koch brothers. Through these advocacy groups, ultra-free market policies could be pushed through, and give the impression that the agenda of billionaires like the Koch brothers enjoyed mass-support at the grassroots level. On top of that, goals pursued by individual grassroots Tea Party groups were influenced by their existing affiliations with advocacy groups such as FreedomWorks and AfP.

Apart from FreedomWorks and AfP, the TPM has given rise to many PACs, most notably the Tea Party Express (TPE). As a PAC, the TPE raises and spends money on political campaigns of candidates supported by the TPM who mount primary challenges against Democrats and moderate GOP incumbents.²⁰¹ Beyond electoral activities, the TPE has also financed “bus tours that roam the country to synchronize with other Tea Party events and whip up grassroots enthusiasm among conservative voters.”²⁰² These advocacy groups and PACs had the ability to facilitate mobilization. It is the combination of these PACs, advocacy groups, and billionaires that helped the grassroots element of the TPM to flourish.

William Westermeyer agrees with Skocpol and Williamson’s notion that the TPM consists of elite and grassroots actors. In his book *Back to America*, Westermeyer describes the TPM as a movement consisting of three sets of political actors: national-level Tea Party organizations, which includes their billionaire sponsors such as the Koch brothers, conservative broadcast media, and local grassroots activist groups.²⁰³ Soon after the Santelli episode on CNBC, conservative media began to coalesce around what had become Tea Party themes. By simply repetitively covering the emerging movement, Fox News and conservative talk radio began to cultivate a movement. They supplied the emerging movement with a constant stream of relevant materials and images.²⁰⁴ Fox News even created a website specifically for news and coverage on the TPM. The almost constant screen time of the TPM helped cultivate a shared identity among Tea Partiers, by showing symbols,

²⁰¹ Skocpol and Williamson, 107.

²⁰² Skocpol and Williamson, 107.

²⁰³ William Westermeyer, *Back to America: Political Culture, and the Tea Party Movement*, (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 2019), 3.

²⁰⁴ Westermeyer, 26.

narratives and emotional displays focused on similar grievances.²⁰⁵ Conservative media were not simply reporting on the TPM, but actively helping to organize the movement. The same goes for national-level TP organizations. In agreeance with Skocpol and Williamson, Westermeyer identifies national-level conservative organizations, some supported by billionaires like the Koch brothers, that organized protests and adapted their outreach to the emergent grassroots movement.²⁰⁶ These elite advocacy groups and PACs were an important part of the TPM network, linking local grassroots groups.

These local TP groups were spontaneous and autonomous and had no formal links to the national-level groups.²⁰⁷ The grassroots groups were vital in the emerging TPM because they created “spaces where the nationally circulating symbolic themes of the Tea Party gained expression in local political activities.”²⁰⁸ It was the place where everyday citizens became activists and performed, produced, and materialized practices and activities understood through the political lens of the TPM. It was this convergence of local grassroots activism with conservative media and national-level organizations, that gave rise to the TPM. Thus, the TPM was not simply a grassroots movement or an Astroturf movement, but it was a complex network of elite and grassroots actors.

3.3 Concerns and Beliefs

According to Parker and Barreto, the TPM was a reaction based on “anxiety [Tea Partiers] feel as they perceive the America they know, the country they love, slipping away, threatened by the rapidly changing face of what they believe to be the “real” America: a heterosexual, Christian, middle-class (mostly) male, white country.”²⁰⁹ In its essence, the TPM revolved around the idea that the ‘true’ America is decaying. In this sense, the TPM can be described as a reactionary movement. There are several concerns and beliefs central to the TPM.

²⁰⁵ Westermeyer, 28.

²⁰⁶ Westermeyer, 3.

²⁰⁷ Westermeyer, 4.

²⁰⁸ Westermeyer, 6.

²⁰⁹ Parker and Barreto, *Change They Can't Believe In*, 3.

Across all grassroots Tea Party groups, there was reverence for the U.S. Constitution as the foundational document of the US. The TPM wanted to restore the US government to the constitutional principles as articulated by the Founding Fathers.²¹⁰ The US constitution is such an important document in the eyes of Tea Partiers that it was often invoked and used to justify stands on particular issues, for example, state rights and gun rights. Yet, Tea Partiers had the tendency to revere certain articles that benefit their larger ideology and ignoring others. Tea Partiers have, for example, also argued for the abridgement of the First Amendment for Muslim-Americans.²¹¹ But, in general, the TPM argued for strict adherence to a literal interpretation of the U.S. Constitution.²¹²

Because the TPM consisted of both actors at a grassroots level and national level, ideas do not always align. While professional ultra-free market advocates, like Dick Armey, might advocate for privatizing social security, this idea was not favored at the grassroots level. At the grassroots, Tea Partiers wanted the government not to interfere with business and were in favor of a free-market. This is consistent with the position of being in favor of small government. However, at the same time, virtually all wanted the government to police immigrants. And in the case of social conservatives, they wanted the government to enforce traditional norms and values, such as the idea that marriage is between a man and a woman and an anti-abortion policy.²¹³ In general, the rage against ‘big government’ was directed at the federal branch of government and seen as a violation of states’ rights. Despite relatively simplistic rhetoric, the approach of Tea Partiers to the federal government is quite complex, summed up by the slogan “Keep the Government Out of My Medicare.”²¹⁴ This slogan is, of course, illogical since Medicare is funded through government spending. Both Social Security and Medicare go against the conservative ideology espoused by the TPM, which calls for the dismantling of these government programs. Still, at the same time, many Tea Partiers at the grassroots were recipients of these programs and benefited from these programs. As Postel explains,

²¹⁰ Skocpol and Williamson, *The Tea Party and the Remaking of Republican Conservatism*, 48.

²¹¹ Skocpol and Williamson, 50.

²¹² Westermeyer, *Back to America*, 1.

²¹³ Skocpol and Williamson, 56.

²¹⁴ Postel, “The Tea Party in Historical Perspective: A Conservative Response to a Crisis of Political Economy,” 38.

“because Social Security and Medicare violate conservative ideology, activists within the Tea Party call for dismantling these government programs. And this demand has made it into the Republican state platforms in Texas and elsewhere. But older Americans, who also happen to make up an essential Tea Party constituency, tend to support Social Security and Medicare. Therefore, politically, the defense of these government programs has been a key element in Tea Party mobilization.”²¹⁵

What this essentially boils down to is the idea of workers versus freeloaders. Tea Partiers who benefit from government programs such as Social Security and Medicare feel that they are ‘deserving’ of these benefits because they worked for it and are productive citizens. The ‘others’ that profit from government public spending programs were seen as undeserving and ‘moochers’.²¹⁶ As Skocpol and Williamson found, “even though most Tea Party supporters are more comfortably situated than the bulk of other Americans, they feel put upon by the governmental process – and see themselves as losing out to others profiting unfairly from government spending.”²¹⁷ These others were usually identified as poor people, (illegal) immigrants, young people, and people of color. Public spending programs proposed by the Obama administration faced a lot of opposition for these reasons, especially the Affordable Care Act. This act promised generous new public subsidies to make health insurance more affordable for lower- and lower-middle-class Americans, which meant new fees on health care businesses and slightly increased taxes on wealthy Medicare recipients and high-income earners. Consequently, a fair share of Tea Partiers, who were older and relatively economically comfortable white Americans, were part of the group who would have to pay slightly more so than other, in their eyes undeserving, people could reap the benefits.²¹⁸ In their eyes, freeloaders would benefit from their hard work.

This frame of deserving versus undeserving also is featured in another central concern for Tea Partiers, namely “burdensome illegal immigrants.”²¹⁹ Illegal immigrants were often portrayed

²¹⁵ Postel, 38.

²¹⁶ Skocpol and Williamson, *The Tea Party and the Remaking of Republican Conservatism*, 66.

²¹⁷ Skocpol and Williamson, 66.

²¹⁸ Skocpol and Williamson, 68.

²¹⁹ Skocpol and Williamson, 71.

as the ultimate freeloaders, mooching off public spending programs. Tea Partiers were worried that immigrants “were given rights that [Americans] had to earn”, were coming in and have “the benefits of taxes, and the money spent on them puts a burden on the state, which makes [Americans] have to pay more.”²²⁰ The facts are, however, that unauthorized immigrants are excluded from many public spending and federal assistance programs, even though most unauthorized immigrants do pay taxes. In addition to illegal immigrants, young people are also prominently featured when it comes to the ‘undeserving’ frame, pointing to larger generational tensions.

Nowhere else were TPM fears more aptly symbolized than in the Obama Presidency. While over two-thirds of Americans thought the inauguration of Obama was the dawning of a new and better America, especially concerning race relations, many conservatives found the prospects of this new era unsettling (Newport, Gallup Poll). To them, Obama represented the changing face of America. Many Tea Partiers saw Obama as a foreigner, a notion exacerbated by ‘birtherism’, as a Muslim, a Socialist, a Communist or even a Nazi.²²¹ In general, Tea Partiers thought of Obama as un-American. Obama was portrayed as dangerous and as representing a new dawn in American society, something many of the older and white demographic of the TPM were afraid of. According to Parker and Barreto, 91% of Tea Partiers had negative emotions about President Obama.²²² Tea Partiers also connected the Obama administration with other concerns. As Skocpol and Williamson show, when asked about the president, “Tea Party members connected Obama and his administration and political allies directly with those deemed undeserving – not just African Americans but also with illegal immigrants.”²²³ Moreover, it was widely believed that Obama intended to grant amnesty to all illegal immigrants to create a new bloc of electoral support.²²⁴

Certain moral and social issues presented significant challenges to the cohesion of the TPM. Within the movement, two major groups can be discerned: Christian conservatives and libertarians. The former was disproportionately made up of white evangelical protestants. A Pew study found

²²⁰ Skocpol and Williamson, 72.

²²¹ Skocpol and Williamson, 78.

²²² Parker and Barreto, *Change They Can't Believe In*, 54.

²²³ Skocpol and Williamson, 79.

²²⁴ Skocpol and Williamson, 79.

that “most people who agree with the religious right also support the Tea Party. But support for the Tea Party is not synonymous with support for the religious right.”²²⁵ According to the same study, roughly 42% of those who agree with the TPM also agree with the conservative Christian movement, while 11% disagree and 46% have no opinion or not heard of it.²²⁶ Libertarians, on the other hand, tended to be less religious and more focused on the limited role of government. As noted by Skocpol and Williamson, only 18% of libertarian Tea Partiers attend religious services regularly, compared to 52% of Christian conservative Tea Partiers.²²⁷ There are quite a few Tea Partiers who are fairly secular libertarians who want the government to stay out of the bedroom and other aspects of people’s personal life. Libertarians and Christian conservatives have diametrically opposing views on subjects from abortion to gay marriage and drug laws. Whereas Christian conservatives oppose abortion and gay marriage from a religious conviction, libertarians often feel that the government should not interfere with this aspect of people’s lives.

3.4 Populism

As argued in the previous chapter, populism can be defined as a mode of political rhetoric that identifies a struggle between the people versus the elite and argues that politics should express the will of the people. Two explanations for support of right-wing populism have previously been given, namely the fear of changing values and a change in economic structures that limit economic opportunities for specific groups of people.

In reviewing the frames and narratives of the TPM, it becomes clear that the Tea Party marked the return of populist narratives and rhetoric, as used by previous incarnations of American right-wing populist movements, such as the John Birch Society. According to Michael Kazin, populism has been employed by many different parties, people, and movements throughout US history, and the TPM can be placed in this longer narrative. In his book *The Populist Persuasion*,

²²⁵ “The Tea Party and Religion,” Pew Research Center, February 23, 2011, <https://www.pewforum.org/2011/02/23/tea-party-and-religion/>.

²²⁶ “The Tea Party and Religion,” Pew Research Center, February 23, 2011, <https://www.pewforum.org/2011/02/23/tea-party-and-religion/>.

²²⁷ Skocpol and Williamson, *The Tea Party and the Remaking of Republican Conservatism*, 36.

Kazin talks about the populist theme of producerism, which makes a distinction between those who produce and those who do not. Kazin uses cases from the nineteenth century to show how producerism was used to construct enemies of those who were seen as not producing anything.²²⁸ These people were not necessarily workers and farmers but also the petty bourgeoisie, so there was no strict adherence to class categories. This is comparable to the way the Tea Party made a distinction between those who are ‘deserving’ and those who are ‘undeserving’ of government programs.

The TPM used populist rhetoric. As Chip Berlet argues, in an effort to mobilize support for the TPM, the movement had largely adopted fear-based frames and narratives “in which liberal and left ideological opponents are demonized and scapegoated as consciously or unconsciously destroying the America of liberty and freedom.”²²⁹ One way populist rhetoric was used was in expressing resentment toward elites. Yet, Tea Partiers pick and choose who they do and do not like. As Berlet contends, they might denounce experts, such as scientists, who claim that human activity is responsible for climate change but embrace climate change skeptics. At the same time, they denounced academic elites but were backed by think tanks such as the Heritage Foundation and the Cato Institute.²³⁰ In other words, Tea Partiers resented elites “with whom they disagree, and liked elites with whom they agree and who sustained their cause.”²³¹

Another way in which right-wing populist rhetoric figured in the TPM is in the reverence of the U.S. Constitution. Tea Party supporters saw the U.S. Constitution as a clear-cut document that was readily applicable to modern political issues. They advocated for a literal interpretation of this document. This belief that a foundational written document is immediately accessible and obviously clear, and “that they can be understood by each person without the aid of experts or

²²⁸ Kazin, *The Populist Persuasion*, 13.

²²⁹ Chip Berlet, “Reframing Populist Resentments in the Tea Party Movement,” in *Steep*, ed. by Lawrence Rosenthal and Christine Trost, (Berkeley: University of California, 2012), 48.

²³⁰ Berlet, 34.

²³¹ Berlet, 35.

intermediaries is a long-standing conviction in populist movements.”²³² In the eyes of Tea Partiers, the U.S. Constitution is a sacred text.

3.5 The Tea Party Movement and the Republican party

While the TPM might have stressed its independence from the Republican Party, it has been clear that within the party system, Tea Partiers felt most aligned with the GOP. Abramowitz shows that in 2010, 86% of Tea Party supporters identified as Republican or Republican-leaning.²³³ Ever since the beginning of the TPM, one primary goal of the movement was to influence electoral politics and pushing the GOP further to the right, so it would better align with the TPM ideology. For the GOP, the TPM cuts both ways: its resources and enthusiasm fuel the GOP but at the same time the TPM is not a booster organization for just any Republican. They backed candidates who aligned with their ideology, even against Republican incumbents, to spur the GOP further to the right and essentially align the party with “a label that principally appeals to older, very conservative voters.”²³⁴ In essence, Republicans who, when in office, compromise with Democrats are the main ‘enemy’, together with general Democrats.

This leveraging of GOP candidates happened on several levels. There were the grassroots actors, who attended town hall meetings and appointed themselves as unofficial watchdogs to keep Republican officials ‘honest’. At the same time, ultra-free market advocates operated in the name of the TPM and pressed for policies that could actually hinder GOP strategies to build popular majorities because they were unpopular with the public. On top of that, ideological advocates “leveraging the Tea Party may go further than the grassroots – for example toward calling for legislation eliminating Medicare or privatizing Social Security.”²³⁵ These measures were unpopular with the grassroots supporters of the TPM. Skocpol and Williamson contend that the ideological advocates and billionaire-backed advocacy groups did not give priority to grassroots concerns, but

²³² Skocpol and Williamson, *The Tea Party and the Remaking of Republican Conservatism*, 51.

²³³ Alan I. Abramowitz, “Grand Old Tea Party: Partisan Polarization and the Rise of the Tea Party Movement,” in *Steep*, ed. by Lawrence Rosenthal and Christine Trost, (Berkeley: University of California, 2012), 203.

²³⁴ Skocpol and Williamson, *The Tea Party and the Remaking of Republican Conservatism*, 156.

²³⁵ Skocpol and Williamson, 157.

instead aimed to make the GOP into a disciplined, uncompromising machine devoted to ultra-free-market goals.²³⁶

The impact of the TPM on electoral politics has been significant. Comparing the 111th Congress of Obama's first two years in office to the 112th Congress, there is a clear ideological shift. Not only did the Republicans win by a landslide, but the Republicans who stayed in office from the 111th to the 112th Congress were also all "more conservative, mostly much more conservative, than the Democrats" and the newly elected Republicans were even further to the right than their GOP predecessors.²³⁷ This also meant that many moderate Republicans left office and, consequently, compromising became harder.

The push of the GOP further to the right and the loss of Republican moderates also meant a further polarized political landscape. Not only did Tea Partiers "consider themselves to be the true, patriotic Americans", they also believed that Republican lawmakers that were elected were "hired to do pretty much exactly what Tea Partiers themselves say should be done."²³⁸ This absolutist stance on politics did not sit well with GOP business allies when GOP Congressional leaders succumbed to TPM demands and threatened to let the US go into default over budget negotiations with Democrats. This, of course, threatened the economic recovery of 2011 and GOP business allies called for procedural compromise.²³⁹

The forces unleashed by the TPM have remade the Republican Party and left traces still visible in today's GOP. At the grassroots, anti-immigrant fears were the driving force of grassroots Tea Party activism and continue to mobilize conservative voters. At the top, "many of the ultra-free-market professional advocates and funders who jumped on the Tea Party bandwagon so eagerly a few years ago now dictate much of the Republican Party's agenda."²⁴⁰ Skocpol and Williamson warned for a hollowing of Republican Party institutions by these extra-party elites, who now hold more power over the GOP than before. At the same time, the GOP is in danger of losing moderate

²³⁶ Skocpol and Williamson, 157.

²³⁷ Skocpol and Williamson, 170.

²³⁸ Skocpol and Williamson, 183.

²³⁹ Skocpol and Williamson, 186.

²⁴⁰ Skocpol and Williamson, 207.

voters, who are mostly in favor of measures to which the ultra-wealthy controlling the GOP are against, such as minimum wage increases or education spending. While the GOP was already moving to the right, the TPM sped up this process. These fissures in American political culture, while not opened by the TPM, were definitely exacerbated by the movement, and arguably continued to be exploited by Donald Trump in his successful 2016 presidential campaign.

3.6 Conclusion

As a social movement, the TPM was a network of elite and grassroots actors, who shared beliefs and ideas. Through sustained collective action, the TPM tried to halt any change they were afraid the Obama presidency would bring. Even in the Tea Party there were fissures between the elite and people at the grassroots, as well as social conservatives and fiscal conservatives, in what the most important issues were for the movement. In general, Tea Partiers advocated for smaller government, stricter immigration policies, government programs, such as social security, only for the people who are ‘deserving’, and a free-market economy.

At first glance, comparing the TPM with the New Progressive Movement, as discussed in chapter 2, might seem strange as both movements seem so completely different. The goals and futures for which both movements organize are like night and day. Yet, similarities can be found in the organizational structure, the use of populist rhetoric, and engagement in electoral politics. Another striking similarity, not discussed in this chapter, is the role that women play in both movements, which will be discussed in chapter 4.

Never doubt that a small group of thoughtful, committed, citizens can change the world.

Indeed, it is the only thing that ever has – Margaret Mead

For one of us to make it, hundreds of us have to try – Alexandria Ocasio-Cortez

Chapter 4 Same Structures, Different Roles?

Historically speaking, mixed-gender social movements have reproduced systems of gender inequality present in society. Consequently, women in social movements were passed for leadership roles and were not seen as an integral part of these movements. Women in the American New Left, for example, only gained status if their husbands or boyfriends were leaders. During the Freedom Summer, women were only recruited according to gendered criteria, meaning that they were assigned jobs according to their gender roles, which in turn led to differences in the participation between men and women in civil rights mobilization.²⁴¹ In the New York Tenants movement, “women were restricted to the grassroots organizing activities, while men did the high-level negotiating.”²⁴² In the Civil Rights Movement, black men held the leadership positions and were formal spokespersons for the movement, such as MLK, Malcolm X, and Fred Hampton.

Women participated in the Civil Rights Movement as grassroots leaders, or “bridge leaders”, a term coined by Belinda Robnett. Barred from occupying formal leadership positions, women turned to the important tasks of distributing flyers, raising funds, and increasing awareness of events and boycotts.²⁴³ As bridge leaders, women connected local community organizations, where their power was greatest, to national civil rights organizations, where their power was limited. These bridge leaders were an integral part of the civil rights movement, organizing and sustaining activism on a local level, which essentially kept the movement alive. Women like Ella Baker, Fannie Lou Hamer, and Diane Nash were instrumental in the civil rights struggle. However, as they were not recognized as leaders in their own right, their role, and the role of women in general in the civil rights movement, has been inaccurately portrayed as relatively non-instrumental. As gendered hierarchical structures where men occupied all the positions of power prevailed in social movements, women found spaces in which they had the freedom to organize

²⁴¹ Heather McKee Hurwitz and Alison Dahl Crossley, “Gender and Social Movements,” in *The Wiley Blackwell Companion to Social Movements*, ed. David A. Snow, Sarah A. Soule, Hanspeter Kriesi, and Holly J. McCammon, (New Jersey: Blackwell Publishing, 2019), 541.

²⁴² Susan Stall and Randy Stoecker, “Community Organizing or Organizing Community? Gender and the Crafts of Empowerment,” *Gender and Society* 12, no. 6 (1998): 730.

²⁴³ Erin Hitchcock, “Unsung Heroes: The Rhetorical Power of African-American Women in the Civil Rights Movement,” *Ex Post Facto* 24, (2015): 204.

and occupy leadership roles, often through grassroots and community organizing. These forms of organizing are about motivating and including people who normally are left out of the political process through exclusion along the structural axes of gender, race, and social class. B. Ann Bettencourt argues that oppressed people have played and continue to play important parts in spearheading grassroots change.²⁴⁴ The unstructured nature of grassroots organizing tends to create new opportunities for women and other minority groups, both as leaders and as mass participants. As this chapter will demonstrate, this is also true for women in contemporary grassroots movements, such as the NPM and the Tea Party Movement.

In this chapter, I will look at the role of women in the New Progressive Movement and the Tea Party Movement and make a comparison between the two. I will start with Tea Party women; who they are, why they choose to become active in the TPM, and look at the history of women in conservative grassroots movements. This is followed by a discussion of the gendered rhetoric used by TP women. In the second part of this chapter, I will look at women in the New Progressive Movement, the intersectional nature of the NPM, and women who are taking the lead in the NPM. This is followed by a discussion on gender and feminism in the NPM based on my survey results, and subsequently a discussion of populist rhetoric and feminism in the NPM. In the third and final part, I will compare the role of women in the New Progressive Movement and the Tea Party Movement.

4.1 The Tea Party Movement and women

Since the 1980s, one political framework often used to explain American politics has been the gender gap, in which the Democratic Party generally enjoys more widespread support under women voters than the Republican Party. While this gender gap has ebbed and flowed in different elections, Pew Research data shows more American women voted for Democratic candidates than American men, at least since 1980.²⁴⁵ Pew Research Center survey data going back more than two

²⁴⁴ B. Ann Bettencourt, "Grassroots Organizations: Recurrent Themes and Research Approaches," *Journal of Social Issues* 52, no. 1 (1996): 210.

²⁴⁵ Richa Chaturvedi, "A closer look at the gender gap in presidential voting," *Pew Research Center*, July 28, 2016, <https://www.pewresearch.org/fact-tank/2016/07/28/a-closer-look-at-the-gender-gap-in-presidential-voting/>.

decades found that this gender gap in partisan affiliation has been growing, from 9 percentage points in 1994 to 12 percentage points in 2017.²⁴⁶ Challenging this perception of the gender gap is the emergence of women as leaders within the TPM. As shown in the previous chapter, the TPM was a non-monolithic entity in which the conservative grassroots component and national organizations, such as Americans for Prosperity and Tea Party Patriots, were bound together by their advocacy for limited government and reverence for the US Constitution. What is special about the TPM, however, is that relatively much of its leadership came from women, and not just at the grassroots level. Women were community leaders at the local level in grassroots Tea Party groups but were also making their mark as leaders at national level organizations and in politics.

In 2012, roughly one in ten American women from the age of 18 described themselves as member of the TPM.²⁴⁷ While most of these women also described themselves as Republicans, at 80 percent, just 22 percent of Republican women considered themselves part of the TPM.²⁴⁸ Compared to other American women, TP women were less racially diverse, reported higher incomes, and were more likely to list being full-time homemakers.²⁴⁹ When it comes to religion, TP women awarded more importance to religion, saying it is very important in their life, and were also more theologically conservative than other American women, including other Republican women.²⁵⁰ TP women, in general, were more conservative than other American women, holding the most conservative position on gay marriage and the DREAM Act, as well as reporting the most opposition to raising taxes, government programs, and abortion.²⁵¹ However, this is not to say that TP women were a homogenous group of women.

²⁴⁶ “Wide Gender Gap, Growing Educational Divide in Voters’ Party Identification,” *Pew Research Center*, March 20, 2018, <https://www.pewresearch.org/politics/2018/03/20/wide-gender-gap-growing-educational-divide-in-voters-party-identification/>.

²⁴⁷ Melissa Deckman, *Tea Party Women: Mama Grizzlies, Grassroots Leaders, and the Changing Face of the American right*, (New York: New York University Press, 2016), 73.

²⁴⁸ Melissa Deckman, “Of Mama Grizzlies and Politics: Women and the Tea Party,” in *Steep*, ed. Lawrence Rosenthal and Christine Trost (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2012), 170; Deckman, *Tea Party Women*, 75.

²⁴⁹ Deckman, 76.

²⁵⁰ Deckman, 76.

²⁵¹ Deckman, 79.

On the contrary, there was a clear split in the TP women constituency, with on the one hand libertarian women, and on the other social conservative women. The difference between these two is that libertarians, or *laissez-faire* conservatives, focus mainly on economic issues and small government and place the individual at the center of society. In the libertarian view, there is no such thing as women's issues, for example, because it rejects the notion that there is a substantial difference between men and women.²⁵² Individual freedom is the most important thing. Social conservative women in the TPM focused more on conservative social and fiscal issues as being good for the family. While these social conservative women were often more religious, conflating social conservative TP women with Christian conservative women is simply incorrect. Christian conservative women are involved in politics because of social and religious issues, whereas social conservative TP women prioritized fiscal concerns.²⁵³

4.1.2 Gender Distribution

Within the TPM, women were active on all levels, grassroots, state, and national. In July 2010, Minnesota Congresswoman Michele Bachmann founded the Tea Party Caucus in the US House of Representatives. At its height, in 2011, the caucus had 60 members and the caucus' website, last updated at the beginning of 2013, shows 59 Representatives as members, 5 of which were women, which is about 8.4%.²⁵⁴ In January 2013, the caucus was back to 48 members.²⁵⁵ As of 2015, the TP caucus seemed to have been disbanded and supplanted by a newer group of insurgents: the Freedom Caucus.²⁵⁶ An informal Tea Party Caucus was also formed in the Senate in 2011, which

²⁵² Rebecca Klatch, *Women of the New Right* (Philadelphia: Temple University Press, 1987), 152.

²⁵³ Deckman, 27.

²⁵⁴ "Membership," Tea Party Caucus, accessed November 4, 2020, <https://web.archive.org/web/20121212040121/https://teapartycaucus-bachmann.house.gov/membership>; David Weigel, "The Tea Party Caucus is Dead and That's OK," *Slate*, March 20, 2013, <https://slate.com/news-and-politics/2013/03/tea-party-caucus-is-dead-but-other-tea-party-groups-will-form-anew.html>.

²⁵⁵ "Membership," Tea Party Caucus, accessed November 4, 2020, <https://web.archive.org/web/20121212040121/https://teapartycaucus-bachmann.house.gov/membership>

²⁵⁶ Jordan M. Ragusa and Anthony Gaspar, "Where's the Tea Party? An Examination of the Tea Party's Voting Behavior in the House of Representatives," *Political Research Quarterly* 69, no. 2, (2016), 370.

had 12 members, none of whom were women.²⁵⁷ While 2010 might have been a good year for TP women, they still seemed to have trouble, however, with breaking into the Republican Party, even as TP candidates, arguing the GOP was still a “good old boys’ club”.²⁵⁸ In 2015, research by Political Parity showed that Democratic women still outnumbered Republican women in state legislatures and Congress three to one.²⁵⁹ According to Malliga Och, this was also a consequence of the Republican Party not prioritizing recruiting women, and even openly opposing identity politics.²⁶⁰ Furthermore, H. Abbie Erler found in 2016 that “Democratic women lawmakers are more likely to run, and win, higher levels of office than Republican women.”²⁶¹ While the TPM might have caused a small influx in women candidates, Catherine Wineinger argues that the ideological shift the TPM has caused in the GOP actually further limits the voices of women in the GOP.²⁶²

The most famous face of the TPM was Sarah Palin, who warned political leaders in Washington to be wary of “moms who are rising up” in the TPM to fight against big government.²⁶³ In that same speech, Palin compared mothers to mama grizzlies, saying that “you no doubt don’t want to mess with moms who are rising up. There in Alaska I always think of the mama grizzly bears that rise up on their hind legs when somebody’s coming to attack their cubs, to do something

²⁵⁷ “Senate Tea Party Caucus Brings Conservatives Together to Defund Obamacare,” Tea Party Express, accessed November 4, 2020, <http://teapartyexpress.org/6911/senate-tea-party-caucus-brings-conservatives-together-to-defund-obamacare>.

²⁵⁸ Deckman, *Tea Party Women*, 46.

²⁵⁹ “Clearing the Primary hurdles: Republican Women and the GOP Gender Gap,” Political Parity, accessed November 4, 2020, <https://www.politicalparity.org/research/primary-hurdles/>.

²⁶⁰ Malliga Och, “The Grand Old Party of 2016: No Longer a Party of Old White Men?” in *The Right Women: Republican Party Activists, Candidates, and Legislators*, ed. by Shauna L. Shames and Malliga Och (Westport: Praeger Publishers, 2018), 7.

²⁶¹ H. Abbie Erler, “Moving Up or Getting Out: The Career Patterns of Republican Women State Legislators,” in *The Right Women: Republican Party Activists, Candidates, and Legislators*, ed. by Shauna L. Shames and Malliga Och (Westport: Praeger Publishers, 2018), 188.

²⁶² Catherine Wineinger, “Gendering Republican Party Culture,” in *The Right Women: Republican Party Activists, Candidates, and Legislators*, ed. by Shauna L. Shames and Malliga Och (Westport: Praeger Publishers, 2018), 37.

²⁶³ “Former Gov. Sarah Palin (R-AK) Susan B. Anthony List’s “Celebration of Life” Breakfast Ronald Reagan Building and International Trade Center Washington, DC May 14, 2010,” *Democracy in Action*, accessed November 4, 2020, <http://www.p2012.org/photos10/palin051410spt.html>.

adverse toward their cubs. No, the mama grizzlies, they rear up and, you know if you thought pit bulls were tough well you don't want to mess with the mama grizzlies.”²⁶⁴

Some of the most well-known Tea Party organizations were led by women, such as Tea Party Patriots (TPP), arguably the most popular TP organization. TPP was founded by Mark Meckler, Amy Kremer, and Jenny Beth Martin. The latter was also the public face of the organization. In 2011, the TPP claimed to have more than three thousand grassroots affiliates in the US, with membership in the “tens of millions.”²⁶⁵ Another example is Freedom Works. This organization predates the TPM by five years but was still part of the movement. In 2014, five out of six national coordinators were women.²⁶⁶

There are several reasons why women were a majority of the state and national level TP organizers and leaders, even though there were more men than women who support the Tea Party.²⁶⁷ First, the decentralized structure of the TPM provided unprecedented opportunities for women to engage in conservative activism. Melissa Deckman argues that the organizational structure of the TPM can be compared to a starfish, in the way that the movement derived its power from “being modeled on a starfish, which can survive if one of its parts is severed.”²⁶⁸ This decentralized and dispersed nature of the TPM allowed a broader range of highly motivated people to become active in the movement and the political process. The dispersed nature meant activists had the freedom to start their own chapters and organizations and become involved in the TPM without anyone telling them they have to adhere to certain rules or standards.

Second, many conservative women flocked to the TPM as a result of the lack of opportunities for women within the establishment. Deckman describes how many TP women she interviewed pointed to the “difficulty breaking into what they often describe as the GOP's ‘old

²⁶⁴ “Former Gov. Sarah Palin (R-AK) Susan B. Anthony List’s “Celebration of Life” Breakfast Ronald Reagan Building and International Trade Center Washington, DC May 14, 2010,” *Democracy in Action*, accessed November 4, 2020, <http://www.p2012.org/photos10/palin051410spt.html>.

²⁶⁵ Deckman, *Tea Party Women*, 35.

²⁶⁶ Deckman, 31.

²⁶⁷ Holloway Sparks, “Mama Grizzlies and Guardians of the Republic: The Democratic and Intersectional Politics of Anger in the Tea Party Movement,” *New Political Science* 37, no.1 (2014): 13.

²⁶⁸ Deckman, 8.

boys' network,' and in a few cases they describe outright sexist treatment at the hands of the party insiders when they have tried to become active within the party.”²⁶⁹ On top of that, the bureaucratic nature of the GOP also made it more difficult for women to break into leadership roles within the party. Studies that examine recruitment and gatekeeping behavior in political parties find that the GOP is less adept at recruiting women than the Democratic Party, partly because the Republican leadership, most of whom are men, believe that women within the Republican Party are less conservative than men. The polarization in the American political system resulted in the GOP shifting to the right, squeezing out moderates and hindering the ability of women to wield influence in the GOP, whether they actually are less conservative or not, making the TPM a viable alternative for conservative women. The TPM thus served as an alternative to the GOP for women who wanted to get involved in conservative activism and politics.

A key reason the TPM provided women with unprecedented opportunities is the role of social media within the movement. The open-source nature of the TPM provided women with unprecedented networking opportunities and allowed them to bypass the more bureaucratic conservative organizations, especially the GOP. Influential TP groups, such as Smart Girl Politics and As A Mom, were started by women who used social media from their home to connect with likeminded conservatives. As Carrie Lukas of the Independent Women's Forum stated in an interview with Melissa Deckman, “the stay-at-home mom is on Facebook, sharing pictures of her kids. She can easily be informed online, and then start sharing things, and building a network, and finding like-minded people, then organize a rally once every two months. Our politics, because of new technology, has really paved the way so that it is much easier for people to have a voice, in particular women.”²⁷⁰ Besides this, many women activists in the TPM also believed that women were more adept at using social media than men, which is an advantage considering the role social media plays in the movement.²⁷¹ Through social media platforms, such as Facebook, TP participants could start their own TP group or join one, find like-minded people, organize meetings

²⁶⁹ Deckman, 11.

²⁷⁰ Deckman, 12.

²⁷¹ Deckman, 32.

or protests, and wield influence in general. TP organizations and TP adjacent groups, such as *Tea Party Patriots* and *As A Mom... A Sisterhood of Mommy Patriots*, also reached out to their members and garnered a following on social media, spreading the TP message.

4.2 History of women in conservative causes

The role of women in the TPM can be placed in a longer history of conservative women, who used their “status of mothers and defenders of the family to justify their political activism in a variety of conservative causes throughout American history.”²⁷² Deana Rohlinger, writing on conservative and right-wing women’s movements in America, identifies two frames used to mobilize women on the Right: the maternalism frame and the gender essentialism frame. The former draws on notions that “domestic values and life are morally superior and are associated with duties of motherhood,” the latter reinforces the notion that “women and men have different roles to play in the world” based on their gender.²⁷³ As has been demonstrated when discussing the NPM, the Progressive Era boosted many progressive reforms. Part of this Progressive Era was women’s suffrage. Yet, after the US had won WWI, anti-communist fears flared, and women’s political activism in the progressive movement and feminism more broadly were identified by conservatives as the primary avenues through which communism could take root in the US. Using the maternalism frame, anti-suffragists women argued that the vote “would overburden women, who were already busy with their families.”²⁷⁴ Giving women the vote and promoting women suffrage represented threats to the nuclear family and “would degrade [women’s] role as mothers and lead to a marked decline in family life and, potentially, the moral destruction of motherhood.”²⁷⁵ Moreover, progressive reforms hailed by suffragettes would “aid and abet feminist and socialist alike in their effort to nationalize the family by having government usurp parental roles.”²⁷⁶

²⁷² Deckman, 98.

²⁷³ Deana A. Rohlinger, “Mobilizing the Faithful: Conservative and Right-Wing Women’s Movements in America,” in *The Oxford Handbook of U.S. Women’s Social Movement Activism*, ed. by Holly J. McCammon, Verta Taylor, Jo Reger, and Rachel L. Einwohner, (New York: Oxford University Press, 2017), 6.

²⁷⁴ Rohlinger, “Mobilizing the Faithful,” 6.

²⁷⁵ Rohlinger, 7.

²⁷⁶ Deckman, 105.

Conservative women still perceived this threat after the Second World War, in which American women had left the domestic sphere in large numbers, and the image of female domesticity had become the norm once again. Conservative women remained active in the anti-communist cause, which conflated feminism and women's suffrage with communism.

The frames were also used by the STOP-ERA campaign, in particular Phyllis Schlafly, to mobilize women against the passage of the Equal Rights Amendment. Groups like Eagle Forum and Concerned Women for America argued that gender parity, one of the goals of ERA, "would upset gender roles, destroy traditional family values, and force women in dangerous situations such as combat."²⁷⁷ These ideas found enough female support to defeat the passage of the ERA.

As feminists on the left started to organize and mobilize to place feminist issues on the political agenda in the 1960s and 1970s, conservative women on the right became politically active and opposed almost everything feminists on the left stood for. I say almost, because there was a critical division among women on the Right, which is also visible among TP women today, namely between social conservatives and *laissez-faire* conservatives. While the former was above all concerned with social issues and saw feminism as a threat, the latter shared part of the feminist vision and was primarily concerned with issues related to economy and defense.²⁷⁸

In her book *Women of the New Right*, Rebecca Klatch argues that social conservatives, unlike *laissez-faire* conservatives, actively used motherhood frames in their appeals because they measured the world in terms of religious values and the nuclear family was considered the sacred unit of society.²⁷⁹ Women such as Phyllis Schlafly argued that conservative women had to become active in politics because of their identities as mothers to "defend the traditional family as designed by God" and the natural order.²⁸⁰ Even though *laissez-faire* conservative women shared a common hostility toward communism and big government with social conservative women, the notion of women as natural mothers and defenders of the family are antithetical to their belief in

²⁷⁷ Rohlinger, 7.

²⁷⁸ Klatch, 4.

²⁷⁹ Rebecca Klatch, *Women of the New Right* (Philadelphia: Temple University Press, 1987), 4.

²⁸⁰ Deckman, 115.

individualism and thus refused to use maternalism and gender essentialism frames. So, while social conservatives decried and lamented the move away from ‘traditional values’ and the downfall of society because of issues such as ERA, abortion, and homosexuality, *laissez-faire* conservatives were mainly concerned with the protection of the free market, welfare cutbacks, and tax reductions.²⁸¹ The TPM hailed many of these issues as well, both social and economic. As will become clear below, Tea Party women’s advocacy can be viewed as an extension of this brand of conservative women’s activism, using similar motherhood and gender frames, and even extending it further to economic policy.

4.3 The Use of Gendered Rhetoric in the Tea Party Movement

Women in the TPM used gendered rhetoric to promote conservative policies. One of the ways these women did this was by using what Deckman calls the “motherhood frame”. Within this frame, Deckman identifies three different themes: the kitchen table theme, the generational theft theme, and the limited government as family protection theme. These themes and the larger motherhood frame were used by TP women at all levels to explain their motivation to become active for the TPM as well as to encourage other women to become active in the TPM from their role as mothers.

4.3.1 Kitchen Table Conservatives

In the Kitchen Table Conservatives frame, women are encouraged to become TP activists from their role as managers of their household finances. Women often balance their family’s household budgets, and TP women argued that mothers “are needed to relay that ability to elected officials in Washington who seem incapable of balancing the federal government’s books.”²⁸² This is directly related to the TPM fixation on reducing government spending and minimizing the national debt. Jenny Beth Martin, co-founder of the Tea Party Patriots, for example, claimed that “when it comes to their own personal family checkbook, women are the ones who pay such close attention to it [and] we are saying we want the government to do the same thing.”²⁸³ This family budget theme

²⁸¹ Klatch, 5.

²⁸² Deckman, 118.

²⁸³ Deckman, 118.

was also on display in political campaigns and speeches by political figures such as US Senate candidate Jamie Radtke, who was a leading figure in Virginia's TP. She called for a "2 Percent Solution" to balance the federal budget and made the comparison with her family's grocery budget.²⁸⁴ Not only did local women TP activists feel that their roles as mother and their skills of managing a household had given them the capacity to handle political organizing at both the grassroots and state level but it also likely made them more responsive to the TP messages of a smaller, fiscally responsible American government.

4.3.2. Generational Theft

Another theme used by TP women is the generational theft theme, which posits that women, and especially mothers, become active in the TPM and politics in general to save their children's future from the large national debt burden that threatens that future.²⁸⁵ In an interview with Melissa Deckman, a TP woman explained, "I don't want this for them; I don't want this massive debt. I don't want them to just know a socialist kind of government. It is not the America I grew up with and it is a scarier place, a less free place, and I don't want that for my children."²⁸⁶ Again, this theme is deeply connected to the fixation of the TPM on the national debt and an overbearing government.

4.3.3 Limited Government as Family Protection

The main role of mothers in the eyes of the TP women is to protect the family. A federal government that is too large usurps the role of the family and is thus a danger to the family entity. This idea was also popular with earlier incarnations of conservative women activists, who fiercely opposed the growth of the welfare state during both the Progressive Era and the Red Scare.²⁸⁷ This idea is based on a narrow and conservative reading of the Constitution, which states that "the federal government's powers should be limited to what was prescribed in the Constitution at the

²⁸⁴ Deckman, 119.

²⁸⁵ Deckman, 121.

²⁸⁶ Deckman, 123.

²⁸⁷ Klatch, 108.

time it was ratified.”²⁸⁸ This is connected to the larger TPM, which had a special reverence for the Constitution and believed it should be interpreted literally. The main example of government overreach, which threatens the family unit, is the Affordable Care Act or Obamacare, which usurps the role of the family according to TP women activists. They believed that women are restricted in their ability to make health care decisions for their family because of Obamacare. Additionally, social welfare and government entitlement spending are believed to have created a culture of dependency among the poor and encouraged family disintegration.²⁸⁹ Or, as Tara Kozub writes in *Smart Girl Nation*, a TP aligned magazine focused on conservative women, “dependence on government + a spirit of entitlement = slavery. Dependence on God + a spirit of self-reliance = Freedom.”²⁹⁰

Yet, these motherhood frames were not just a way for TP women to rationalize their involvement in right-wing politics. Women’s anger is often viewed as “irrational and shrill,”²⁹¹ by larger society and by using this motherhood rhetoric, TP women legitimized their anger and their tough ‘masculine’ behavior in the political sphere. The best example of this is Sarah Palin arguing that conservative TP women are like ‘Mama Grizzlies’, naturalizing “maternal anger and even defensive violence on behalf of children.”²⁹² As recognized in social movement theory, the use of the motherhood frame to frame issues and grievances was not only to build support for the TPM but also to give other activists in the TPM a sense of a shared and common identity. Women can connect with each other through their roles as mothers.

Herein also lies a complication for TPM women, as this frame reduces women to their role as mothers. This could potentially alienate “many potentially like-minded women, whether they are young and single and not yet thinking about having children, older yet choosing to remain childless, or not capable of having children.”²⁹³ On top of that, the reliance on the motherhood

²⁸⁸ Deckman, 123.

²⁸⁹ Deckman, 125.

²⁹⁰ Tara Kozub, “Why This Mom is Riding Shotgun with Paul Revere and Mary Washington,” *Smart Girl Nation* (blog), April 10, 2011.

²⁹¹ Sparks, “Mama Grizzlies and Guardians of the Republic,” 19.

²⁹² Sparks, 19.

²⁹³ Deckman, 126.

frame promoted a stereotypical idea of what a conservative woman activist should look like. The split between social conservative women and libertarian-minded women also comes into play here. The use of the motherhood frame runs counter to the underlying philosophy of libertarian women, who embrace individualism. Making group appeals to women as mothers does not fit with this philosophy. Yet, as Deckman argues, if the TPM can stay focused on the message of fiscal responsibility and small government, these fissures between social conservatives and libertarians did not have to be a problem.²⁹⁴

Apart from the motherhood frame, gender rhetoric was used to make claims against big government and government programs. TP women argued that big government sees women as victims and that social welfare programs promote a sexist culture of women's dependence on the government. In the eyes of TP women, big government circumscribed women as autonomous actors. So, instead of helpful, social welfare policies were seen as harmful to women. According to TP women, the best way to further women's equality was through free-market policies, which would close the wage gap, raise wages, and lessen income inequality for both men and women.²⁹⁵

4.4 Women and the New Progressive Movement

Discussing the role of women in the NPM is another story. While research has been done on the role of women in the TPM, most notably by Melissa Deckman in her book *Tea Party Women*, little research has been done on the role of women in the NPM. In her book *American Resistance*, Dana Fisher chronicles what she dubs the "American Resistance", a movement of people working individually and together through organizations to challenge the Trump administrations and its policies.²⁹⁶ Fisher looks at who participated in the different Marches on Washington, the Women's March 2017, March for Science, People's Climate March, March for Racial Justice, Women's March 2018, March For Our Lives, and Families Belong Together, which are an important part of Resistance activism, and finds that the majority of these participants were highly educated white

²⁹⁴ Deckman, 131.

²⁹⁵ Deckman, 134.

²⁹⁶ Dana Fisher, *American Resistance*, (New York: Columbia University Press, 2019), 5.

women who are about forty years old.²⁹⁷ While the Resistance is a reactionary movement to the Trump presidency, the movement itself overlaps a great deal with the New Progressive Movement. According to Fisher, the Resistance “represents a merging of movements working together”, including Black Lives Matter, Occupy Wall Street, and climate change movements, among others.²⁹⁸ While fighting against Trump, the Resistance is simultaneously pushing for progressive change on many levels. The NPM, however, is, in essence, a movement focused on equality and bringing about progressive change in US society, focusing not just on Trump but also on other Republicans and Democrats alike who stand in the way of progressive change. Both movements are a combination of different strains of progressive activism on issues, including race, class, gender, sexual orientation, and dark money. For this paper, I argue that the Resistance is part of the NPM.

An important part of the NPM is intersectionality. First coined by Kimberlé Crenshaw in 1989, intersectionality is used to describe how race, gender, class, and other systems of oppression overlap. In her 1991 article “Mapping the Margins,” Crenshaw discusses how women of color experience multidimensional oppression and discrimination on the basis of gender, race, and sometimes class.²⁹⁹ Black women are both black and women, but as black women, they face specific forms of discrimination that black men or white women might not. In 1984, bell hooks published her book *Feminist Theory: From Margin to Center*, in which she critiques the feminist discourse of her time. Hooks argued that white feminists were writing on sex-based oppression while deliberately neglecting the plight of other non-white and underprivileged women. In her book, hooks proposes a new definition of feminism that includes ending other forms of oppression besides sexist oppression. This form of feminism is now called intersectional feminism, in which forms, and systems of oppression are inseparably connected to each other.

²⁹⁷ Fisher, 42.

²⁹⁸ Fisher, 6.

²⁹⁹ Kimberlé Crenshaw, “Mapping the Margins: Intersectionality, Identity Politics, and Violence Against Women of Color,” *Stanford Law Review* 43, no. 6 (1991).

According to Melissa Deckman, liberal feminists today are united by several key issues. First, liberal feminists continue to work to eliminate gender-based discrimination from the workplace, which is still prevalent today. Second, liberal feminists are also standing against discrimination against women of color, LGBTQ women and other LGBTQ individuals. This is intersectional feminism since it recognizes the interplay of different systems of oppression. Third, liberal feminists fight against sexual harassment in various settings and seek an end to violence against women through federal legislation, such as the Violence against Women Act.³⁰⁰ Fourth, liberal women are fighting for women's reproductive rights, which includes access to birth control, emergency contraception, and abortion for women of all income levels.³⁰¹ The fifth and final issue is fighting for economic justice, aside from equal pay concerns. This means support of social welfare programs that protect women from ending up in poverty. Overall, these issues are part of intersectional feminism, which recognizes that fighting just for women is not enough, since black women face different challenges than white women, and trans- and other LGBTQ women are subject to different discrimination than cisgender and straight women. Many of the concerns mentioned above align with the progressive cause of eradicating economic inequality through federal programs such as Medicare for All and advocating for equality in general. The importance of intersectionality in the NPM provides opportunities for women, people of color, and queer people to become involved.

Looking at the national level, women of color play an important role in leading the NPM. One of the ways in which the NPM hopes to affect social change is through electoral means, such as the midterm elections, which in 2018 were successful for the budding NPM. Progressive women, most of them women of color, claimed electoral victories, most notably AOC. This can be compared to the TPM, which was also invested in electoral politics and wanted to elect TP candidates to Congress. However, as we will see later on in this chapter, the number of women candidates was larger for the NPM than for the TPM.

³⁰⁰ Deckman, 181.

³⁰¹ Deckman, 182.

The election of AOC as Representative of New York's 14th district was the biggest upset of the 2018 election cycle. In her book *The Firsts*, Jennifer Steinhauer calls AOC “the OG of insurgent vanquishers.”³⁰² In late June of 2018, AOC beat ten-term incumbent Joe Crowley in the Democratic primary in New York. The fact that Crowley, one of the most powerful and senior Democrats in Congress, was beaten by a twenty-eight-year-old self-described democratic socialist with no previous experience in government was baffling to many. AOC was born in a working-class Puerto Rican family in the Bronx, attended Boston University, and went on to become a community activist while simultaneously working as a bartender to support her family. Her brother sent her name to Brand New Congress, which was soliciting recommendations from the public, and in February of 2018, she was running for Congress. Steinhauer contributes AOC's victory to a “magical mélange of intense Kennedy-like personal dynamism, social- and digital-media savvy, and a singularly policy-focused campaign message that resonated with voters.”³⁰³ Like all candidates supported by BNC and Justice Democrats, AOC ran on a progressive platform. As noted in *The Nation*, “Conservative media figures savage her as ‘a Marxist [and] communist running for election [as] a Democrat’ (Rush Limbaugh), ‘downright scary’ (Sean Hannity), and ‘petrifying’ (Meghan McCain).”³⁰⁴ Some members of her own Democratic Party were not too enthusiastic either, fearing that AOC and the likes were pulling the Democratic Party to the far left. Yet, this did nothing to stop AOC's rise to stardom. AOC is not only popular in her district but is speaking to working-class people all over the US. Her election and subsequent stardom “has provoked feverish pontificating about whether Democrats might finally abandon the centrism favored by a circle of elite campaign donors and strategists, who imagine that America is so divided that it can no longer be stitched up into a great coalition in the tradition of Franklin Roosevelt's New Deal or even Obama's ‘Yes We Can’.”³⁰⁵

³⁰² Jennifer Steinhauer, *The Firsts: The Inside Story of the Women Reshaping Congress* (Chapel Hill: Algonquin Books of Chapel Hill, 2020), 55.

³⁰³ Steinhauer, 98.

³⁰⁴ John Nichols, “The AOC Effect,” *Nation*, September 17, 2018, 24.

³⁰⁵ Nichols, 24.

AOC's story was later part of the documentary *Knock Down the House*, which also chronicles several other female progressives who ran an underdog electoral campaign, such as Amy Vilela and Paula Jean Swearengin. The latter is also a BNC candidate, like AOC, and while she lost her primary in 2018 to Joe Manchin, Swearengin won her primary in 2020 and is challenging Republican Senator Moore-Capito on November 3, 2020. Swearengin, like AOC, is running on a progressive platform of universal healthcare, labor rights, and economic diversity. As a candidate of BNC, she has signed the organization's 21st century Bill of Rights. She is also endorsed by Bernie Sanders.

Also featured in the documentary is Cori Bush, again a BNC candidate. Bush, too, ran in 2018 on a progressive platform, including universal healthcare and racial justice. Just as Swearengin, Bush lost her 2018 primary to an incumbent, William Lacy Clay, but ran again in 2020 and won. Clay, a ten-term incumbent, was part of a powerful political dynasty that had represented the St. Louis area for more than 50 years. The upset of the veteran congressman by a progressive activist sent tremors through the Democratic Establishment, according to the New York Times.³⁰⁶ She is facing Republican Anthony Rogers on November 3, 2020.

Another important win in the 2020 election cycle for the NPM was Rashida Tlaib's re-election in Michigan's 13th district. In the 2018 cycle, she was on Justice Democrats' slate and ran a tight race. Yet, during the 2020 cycle, this time backed by BNC as well, Tlaib won by a comfortable margin, a sign that progressive grassroots candidates have staying power and are not just one-off wins.³⁰⁷ There is a movement backing them.

While AOC was the only BNC candidate to win in 2018, she was not the only progressive to win an election in 2018. According to data from FiveThirtyEight, 2018 was a good year to be a woman in a Democratic primary, with women having won 65 percent (90 of 138) of Democratic primaries. Of these women, at least four, including AOC, can be considered leaders of the NPM and Progressive cause: Ilhan Omar (MN-5), Ayanna Pressley (MA-7), and Rashida Tlaib (MI-

³⁰⁶ Astead Herndon, "Progressive Victories Signal Staying Power for the Movement," *New York Times*, Aug. 6, 2020, <https://www.nytimes.com/2020/08/05/us/politics/election-primary-results.html>.

³⁰⁷ Herndon.

13).³⁰⁸ Together with AOC, these women have been dubbed “The Squad”. All these women have been supported by PACs from the NPM, including BNC, Justice Democrats, and Sunrise Movement, and were Democratic Freshmen to the 116th US Congress, signaling for many the influence of the NPM on the Democratic Party.

Looking at the 2020 BNC slate, there are many women and people of color listed as candidates. One of Brand New Congress’ primary goals for the 2022 election cycle is to diversify the slate even more, focusing on getting more women of color on the slate.³⁰⁹ BNC’s mission, as stated on its website, is to elect a brand new congress “that works for and truly represents all Americans. That means electing more women, more people of color, and more LGBTQ folks.”³¹⁰ The 2020 slate was made up of 42 candidates, 24 of those were women. Of those 42, ten candidates won their primaries, including six women. The 2020 slate of Justice Democrats included twelve women, nine of whom won their primaries and Our Revolution endorsed 173 women up and down the ballot, in local, state, and congressional races throughout the United States. There is also a Progressive caucus in Congress, which consists of 97 declared progressives of the 116th Congress, 44 of whom are women.³¹¹

4.5 New Progressive Movement Survey Results

Women also play an important role at the grassroots level and in social movement organizations, such as BNC, Sunrise Movement, and Our Revolution. In September and October of 2020, I sent out a survey to people in NPM SMO’s, including BNC, Sunrise Movement, and Our Revolution, asking them about their involvement in the NPM, their perspective on the movement, feminism,

³⁰⁸ Meredith Conroy, Mai Nguyen and Nathaniel Rakich, “We Researched Hundreds of Races. Here’s Who Democrats Are Nominating,” *Fivethirtyeight*, August 10, 2018, <https://fivethirtyeight.com/features/democrats-primaries-candidates-demographics/>.

³⁰⁹ Cheyenne Thompson in Conversation with the author, Director of Research Brand New Congress, *Slack*, October 30, 2020.

³¹⁰ “Brand New Congress Nominations,” Brand New Congress, accessed on October 27, 2020, <https://brandnewcongress.org/About-Brand-New-Congress-Candidate-Nominations>.

³¹¹ “Caucus Members,” Progressive House, accessed November 3, 2020, <https://progressives.house.gov/caucus-members/>.

and gender. While some findings have been shared in chapter 2, respondents had many insightful perspectives on the role of feminism and gender in the NPM.

There was a consensus among respondents that women play an important role in the NPM. One social media volunteer stated:

“I believe this movement would not be possible without being built upon movements that have continued for years, built on the backs of POC, women, and queer people, especially trans women of color. The New Progressive Movement is to see, recognize, and realize the value that each person (and natural object) has in the present and the future. We recognize that people deserve to not only care for others, but also to be cared for and valued to pursue peace, passion, and joy. The BNC’s new Bill of Rights is a good take on this. This movement feels like it relies more on personal relationships and emotional literacy than previous movements, partly enabled by social media”.³¹²

Others argued that “Supporting women’s rights and empowering women to run for political office is a huge part of the movement,” and that while “there are still not a lot of non-binary or Trans folks involved in the movement (public figures), there is an insurgence of women running for office and not being afraid to challenge strong men rivals or incumbents”.³¹³ Essentially, the NPM is “about making sure everybody has a seat at the table, including women”.³¹⁴

In much of the argumentation, however, respondents were quick to point out that gender equality is just one of many facets of the NPM. The main goal of the NPM is to achieve a more equal and just society, which includes gender equality but also racial and economic equality. Seven respondents emphasized the intersectional nature of the NPM. As one Sunrise volunteer argued, “Intersectionality is the understanding that all social justice causes intersect and interact, and so every movement should help uplift other movements and fight for other causes when they are able — you can see this in Sunrise’s active support of the Movement for Black Lives. [...] I chose Sunrise, because of the pressing-ness of climate change, but also because their values aligned with

³¹² See Survey Number 11.

³¹³ See Survey Numbers 16 and 3.

³¹⁴ See Survey Number 29.

intersectionality and I knew with them, I could fight for everybody.”³¹⁵ Another Sunrise volunteer said, “I think that intersectionality is a big part of the New Progressive Movement and gender inequality is something that is still a problem and does still need to be addressed as we move forward. Gender plays a role in gaining power.”³¹⁶

A BNC volunteer pointed out that the NPM focuses on the “marginalization of all groups, so gender plays no more of an important role than any other.”³¹⁷ The problems that the NPM was fighting against are also intersectional in nature and “by guaranteeing everyone’s rights to having their needs met (healthcare, housing, a well-paying union job), this will help women (and anyone) who experience poverty at higher levels.”³¹⁸ In this argument, economic issues are also considered women’s issues, which underlines the intersectionality and multidimensionality of the NPM. At its core, the NPM is a movement fighting for equality, which includes gender equality, but rewards more attention to racial and economic equality. Because of the progressive nature of the movement, women play an important role, a fact that is greatly appreciated by volunteers of the NPM.

On the question of whether women in the NPM had more opportunities than in the Democratic establishment, people were somewhat divided. While 69 percent agreed, 14 percent did not, and 17 percent agreed somewhat. Some pointed to the “stars of the movement”, referencing AOC, Ayanna Pressley, Ilhan Omar, and Rashida Tlaib, and how some women were seeing for the first time “people like them being threats, in a good way.”³¹⁹ The large number of women in government was also something that many attributed to the NPM and within the local groups, “many of the leaders are women.”³²⁰ As one person pointed out, the NPM “is intentionally intersectional and feminist and in fact, prioritizes women rather than just keeping one in as a token.”³²¹ This is also visible in the number of female leaders in the Sunrise Movement, as one respondent explains, where “I have seen more female leadership in Sunrise than I have in the

³¹⁵ See Survey Number 30.

³¹⁶ See Survey Number 33.

³¹⁷ See Survey Number 12.

³¹⁸ See Survey Number 23.

³¹⁹ See Survey Number 23.

³²⁰ See Survey Number 22.

³²¹ See Survey Number 26.

establishment—in fact, I have noticed that Sunrise members lean much more heavily to the female side of the gender spectrum, especially with younger members. I also see much more non-binary and non-cis representation, which I have not seen in the established political community.”³²² Another person pointed out that “women of color are progressive and that is reflective on the slate of BNC and sunrise candidates.”³²³ The reason that women are perceived to have more opportunities than in the establishment is that the NPM “recognizes the role that women must play in dismantling and rebuilding if we are to create a better system,” as well as the fact that “the establishment was literally built by cis men for cis men, only offering meaningful opportunities for other genders in response to movements led by people of those genders. The forces that founded the establishment are the same ones that constructed the currently dominant gender system.”³²⁴ On top of that, some respondents argued that “there’s a better understanding in the progressive movement that women don’t need to ‘lean in’, meaning act like a man. In fact, there’s a bit more understanding that men should ‘lean in’ and work to understand women and follow the lead of women.”³²⁵ In other words, the NPM does not “make women alter their appearance or change themselves to fit a ‘man’s image’.”³²⁶ In the NPM, they are allowed and accepted as their unapologetic selves” which makes it more attractive for women to become part of the movement.

At the same time, “women face gender biases even in the left,” as one respondent pointed out.³²⁷ Another said that “the movement can provide as many opportunities as are available to all human beings but if the establishment refuses to allow these elected women to sit at the proverbial table then once again the establishment still stands in the way of any type of progression and equality. In the event that other congress members won’t discuss it out of fear, there’s a perception of equality; it’s not real nor valid.”³²⁸ Some rightfully pointed out that there are many women in the Democratic establishment. Not only is there a gender gap when it comes to female voters, with

³²² See Survey Number 30.

³²³ See Survey Number 18.

³²⁴ See Survey Numbers 8 and 24.

³²⁵ See Survey Number 8.

³²⁶ See Survey Number 3.

³²⁷ See Survey Number 35.

³²⁸ See Survey Number 13.

women favoring Democrats 59% to 40% in the 2018 midterm elections, the Democratic Party also has had more women in Congress than the Republican Party since the beginning of the 1950s.³²⁹

2018 was also a record year for women, as the greatest number of women in history were elected to Congress. In that year, 102 women served in the House of Representative and 25 women in the Senate. A third of those women (35), won their House of Representative seats for the first time.³³⁰ Of those 102 women in the House, more than 80% is part of the Democratic Party.³³¹ Yet, being a Democratic woman does not mean you are a Progressive or are part of the NPM, think of Nancy Pelosi, Dianne Feinstein, Abigail Spanberger, and Amy Klobuchar.

4.6 Populist Rhetoric and Feminism

As discussed in chapter 2, the NPM uses a progressive populist framework as a political strategy. Akwugo Emejulu argues in her article “Can ‘the people’ be feminist?”, that in order for populist claim-making to be effective, activists “must discursively construct and reinforce adversarial identities and relations between ‘us’ and ‘them’.”³³² According to Emejulu, populist rhetoric is not compatible with feminist justice claims, which seek to transform hegemonic gender roles, end sexist oppression, and encourage women to organize as women. Since generalized appeals of populist to “the people” do not “appear to recognize differences and inequalities among and between individuals and groups due to race, ethnicity, gender and class”, feminist claims may be difficult to be incorporated.³³³ This homogenization of the people, silences feminist claims in two ways, according to Emejulu. First, women’s interests and experiences are systemically marginalized. Second, feminism is seen as a special interest set on dividing the people.³³⁴ Thus, she argues that there is no place for feminism in movements using populist rhetoric.

³²⁹ Alec Tyson, “The 2018 midterm vote: divisions by race, gender, education,” November 8, 2018, <https://www.pewresearch.org/fact-tank/2018/11/08/the-2018-midterm-vote-divisions-by-race-gender-education/>.

³³⁰ Drew Desilver, “A record number of women will be serving in the new Congress,” December 18, 2018, <https://www.pewresearch.org/fact-tank/2018/12/18/record-number-women-in-congress/>.

³³¹ Desilver, “A record number of women will be serving in the new Congress.”

³³² Akwugo Emejulu, “Can the people be feminist? Analysing the fate of feminist justice claims in populist grassroots movements in the United States,” *Interface* 2, no. 3 (2011): 123.

³³³ Emejulu, 129.

³³⁴ Emejulu, 135.

Looking at the NPM, movement participants and survey respondents do not seem to agree. When asked, 97 percent of survey respondents considered themselves feminists. This question was posed to both men and women. When asked how they defined feminism most answers related to the full equality between men and women and an equal playing field. One respondent said that feminism was

“The fundamental belief that women are equal to men in all areas of life, and that historically women have been subjugated and oppressed, and all efforts should be made to eradicate the patriarchy. Further, that historically, BIPOC women have been excluded from leadership positions in both feminist and racial justice movements and thus must be included in an intersectional feminist approach. This includes LGBT women as well.”³³⁵

This form of feminism is intersectional. Another respondent said, “Feminism to me is about supporting and uplifting all people regardless of gender or lack thereof and addressing where we have fallen short in taking care of various genders. A lot of it is changing the narrative, from increased diversity to a million other things.[...] Feminism isn’t radical, and it isn’t putting women over all others — feminism is fighting for all people.”³³⁶

At the same time, when asked if the NPM can be considered a feminist movement, respondents were somewhat divided. 75 percent answered yes but others were not entirely sure. To a certain extent, respondents were hesitant to qualify the NPM as a feminist movement, emphasizing that the NPM is an intersectional movement. An intersectional movement includes feminism but is not exclusive to feminism. So, feminism is just one of several important pillars to the NPM. As one respondent argued, the NPM is a feminist movement “as much as it is a movement that addresses ableism, racism, heterosexism, classism, etc. Because it’s a movement that seeks equity, it seeks to serve all marginalized groups, including women.”³³⁷ Someone else argued that “While the ‘New Progressive Movement’ is not solely a feminist movement it does include elements of feminism because of the focus on equality for all sexes and genders. Because women

³³⁵ See Survey Number 6.

³³⁶ See Survey Number 30.

³³⁷ See Survey Number 12.

are still a very marginalized part of politics, the political process and the governmental system.”³³⁸ Yet, another respondent said, “I wouldn’t say that the New Progressive Movement is a feminist one. There is great feminist support within, but I wouldn’t say that is the main dynamic. I also don’t believe gender is relatively important. Especially because progressives push for equality and as we all know, equality shares every gender and affiliation.”³³⁹ It is clear that there is no real consensus but what we can conclude from this is that gender and feminism are not seen as the defining characteristics of the NPM. Above all, movement participants characterize the NPM as a movement focused on equality and, while expressing support for gender equality, they placed it squarely next to economic equality, racial equality, and social equality. Yet, in contrast to what Emejulu claims, progressive populist rhetoric is compatible with feminist identities to a certain extent, and movement participants have no problem with characterizing the NPM as a feminist movement with the side note that feminism is not the defining or most important characteristic of the NPM.

4.7 Comparing Left and Right

Comparing the role of women in these two movements is interesting because both movements are similar regarding organizational structure. Both are grassroots movements that include SMOs, try to make change happen through electoral means, and influence the direction of one of the two major political parties. In both the TPM and the NPM, the grassroots structure at the bottom provides opportunities for women to get involved and assume leadership positions. In both movements, women found more opportunities than in the establishment, for example, through social media. However, the GOP is more hostile toward women than the Democratic Party is. In the eyes of Republicans, women are perceived as too moderate, making it hard to break into the ‘old boys club’. In contrast, New Progressive women find it hard to break into the establishment not because of how they are perceived based on their gender but because their ideas are considered “too far to the left” by the establishment. There are several other differences when it comes to the role of women in the TPM and the NPM.

³³⁸ See Survey Number 13.

³³⁹ See Survey Number 7.

First, women in the TPM use very different rhetoric than women in the NPM to defend policies and justify their activism. Tea Party women have found space in the TPM to organize as women, but especially as mothers. The motherhood frames, as identified by Deckman, are used to make sense of women activism within the TPM. At the same time, by using these motherhood frames, traditional moral values and gender roles are enforced. Rather than generating feminist identities or justice claims, TP women adhere to a constrained gender performance, in which a woman is still relegated to her traditional and conservative role as caretaker. Deckman shows that TP women reject the liberal feminist movement and that for many TP women, the feminist label is too conflated with abortion rights and the rejection of women's traditional gender roles.³⁴⁰ A notable exception is Sarah Palin, who considers herself a feminist, but her strand of feminism is traced back to the ideas promoted by the early women's movement, steeped in the Enlightenment principles of individual justice.³⁴¹

Women in the NPM embrace the feminist label and argue that intersectional feminism is an important part of the NPM. New Progressive women feel that there is freedom in the NPM to step away from traditional gender roles and are encouraged to lead and lean into their authentic selves. Rather than using motherhood frames, women in the NPM, emphasize their role as citizens and as being a part of "the people". Comparing Sarah Palin with AOC, the difference could not be greater. Sarah Palin says it is her duty as a 'Mamma Grizzly' to protect her cubs and justifies her activism as a woman from her role as a mother, while AOC argues it is her working-class background that makes her part of "the people". For example, the moment it was clear that AOC had defeated Crowley, she was interviewed, and she argued that her victory showed that "working-class people want a clear champion."³⁴² On top of that, in her campaign video from 2018, AOC emphasizes her roots as an "educator, an organizer, a working-class New Yorker."³⁴³

³⁴⁰ Deckman, 208

³⁴¹ Deckman, 20.

³⁴² "Alexandria Ocasio-Cortez wins against Joe Crowley in Democrat congressional primary," Guardian News, June 27, 2018, video, 00:53, <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ltOA3eJbrHw>.

³⁴³ Alexandria Ocasio-Cortez, "The Courage to Change," Alexandria Ocasio-Cortez, May 30, 2018, video, 00:26, <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=rq3QXIVR0bs>.

Second, looking at the number of women at the national level, the NPM boasts more women candidates than the TPM did. At the grassroots level, participation and leadership from women in both movements is relatively similar. In terms of motivating women to become active, the TPM might even have had a more significant impact than the NPM because, in comparison, the TPM had more ground to gain, since the GOP was more limiting for women on the Right than the Democratic Party was for women on the Left. Yet, at the national level, it has become abundantly clear that more women are taking on leadership positions in the NPM than in the TPM. For example, the Tea Party Caucus included five women in 2012 which was a high point for the movement, compared to 44 women in the Progressive Caucus, with the NPM only in its early stages. On the left, women, especially women of color have risen to the forefront. 2018 has been called the year of the woman because of the high numbers of female politicians being elected, 125 women, and at least eight of those are considered NPM leaders, with four women coming from the slate of BNC and Justice Democrats.³⁴⁴ The most notable examples are the women who form ‘The Squad’. Apart from being women of color, these women also have diverse class backgrounds, which is even rarer than female politicians are. The goal of SMOs like BNC and JD is to elect progressives, but especially progressive candidates who represent regular working people. The 2020 cycle boasts many more progressive female candidates who come from different racial and class backgrounds.

While the TPM boosted women candidates and participation in comparison with the GOP, the number of women still lagged behind the Democratic Party. Two of the most popular TP women at the national level were Sarah Palin and Michelle Bachmann. The latter was also the chair of the Tea Party Caucus in Congress, which, at its height in 2011, had 60 members. Important to acknowledge is the fact that the women who were taking on leadership roles at a national level were almost always white middle-class protestant women. Besides lacking women politicians, the TPM had pulled the Republican Party to the right, consequently ousting many moderate

³⁴⁴ Leslie Shapiro, Youjin Shin, Ann Gerhart, Kayla Epstein and Monica Ulmanu, “125 Women won their elections,” first published November 6, 2018, https://www.washingtonpost.com/graphics/2018/politics/women-congress-governor/?noredirect=on&utm_term=.0f83e54ccb69.

Republicans from office, many of whom were women. Within the TPM, there seemed to be a discrepancy between the number of women at the grassroots and in the SMOs and the number of women eventually going into politics. Aside from a gender gap between the Republican Party and the Democratic Party, there also seems to be a gender gap between electoral social movements on the right and on the left.

“It’s time for ordinary people to do extraordinary things. Let’s raise some hell and take our lives back.” -Paula Jean Swearengin

Conclusion

“Women like me are not supposed to run for Congress”.³⁴⁵ That is how Alexandria Ocasio-Cortez began her 2018 campaign video, in her run for representative of New York’s 14th district. A mere 6 months later, Ocasio-Cortez gave her victory speech after winning the Congressional election. In her speech, she thanked every organizer, small-dollar donor, every working parent and dreamer who helped make this movement happen, because “that is exactly what this is. Not a campaign or an election day but a movement. A larger movement for social, economic, and racial justice in the United States of America.”³⁴⁶ Talking about the day she won the democratic nomination, consequently unseating a ten-year incumbent, Ocasio-Cortez said, “I think about the excitement that was unleashed on that day, not just in our community, not just a sense of hope, not just a sense and realization that we can organize to enact change, not that it just got unleashed here, but it got unleashed across the nation and to our down-ballot candidates this September.”³⁴⁷ This movement sweeping across the United States is the New Progressive Movement.

By defining a social movement as an informal and decentralized network of people that share an ideology and beliefs, who organize for the common purpose of seeking or halting change, whether culturally or politically, and challenge the establishment through sustained contentious collective action, I was able to make the idea of a New Progressive Movement more concrete. The NPM is an informal and decentralized network of grassroots actors and social movement organizations, whose foundation was laid by the 2016 Bernie Sander Presidential Campaign and can be placed in a longer history of leftwing activism, including the gay liberation movement and the Occupy movement. The movement organizes and advocates for progressive change, which includes ideas such as a Green New Deal and Medicare for All and is based on the idea of equality, meaning equal rights and equal opportunities regardless of race, gender, sexuality, ability, or place of birth. Through contentious actions, such as protests and petitions, as well as through electoral

³⁴⁵ Alexandria Ocasio-Cortez, “The Courage to Change,” Alexandria Ocasio-Cortez, May 30, 2018, video, 00:02, <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=rq3QXIVR0bs>.

³⁴⁶ “Watch Alexandria Ocasio-Cortez speak after winning Congressional Election,” CNBC Television, November 6, 2018, video 00:33, <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=q72EgmmS67I>.

³⁴⁷ “Watch Alexandria Ocasio-Cortez speak after winning Congressional Election,” CNBC Television, November 6, 2018, video, 3:23, <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=q72EgmmS67I>.

means, the movement is challenging the establishment, which includes the political establishment and the economic elite, or the 1%.

At first glance, as a grassroots movement on the left, the New Progressive Movement had surprisingly many similarities to the Tea Party Movement on the right. The TPM was a grassroots social movement as well, which used contentious collective action to challenge the political elite, but as opposed to the NPM, the Tea Party Movement sought to halt change. In both movements, women also seem to play an important role, which is not surprising given the grassroots nature of both movements, an organizational form that provides women with many opportunities. Yet, when comparing the role of women, this thesis exposed two important differences. First, TP women use gendered rhetoric, such as motherhood frames, that enforce traditional moral values and gender roles. Consequently, women in the TPM adhere to a constrained gender performance, in which a woman is still relegated to her traditional and conservative role as caretaker. Contrarily, women in the NPM embrace the feminist label and feel as they have the freedom in the NPM to step away from traditional gender roles. They are encouraged to lead and lean into their authentic selves, without subscribing to motherhood frames. Instead, women emphasize their roles as citizens. This difference also comes back in the second important difference, namely in the number of women at the Congressional level. The NPM has more women candidates for Congress than the TPM ever did. At the grassroots level, participation and leadership are relatively similar, but at the Congressional level, the NPM has more women, especially women of color, running for Congress and winning their Congressional elections. This is also due to the first difference mentioned above. TP women adhere to stricter gender roles, which are compatible with grassroots activism but not so much with national-level leadership positions, such as being a candidate for Congress.

I started writing this thesis with the intent to answer the research question: to what extent are the Tea Party Movement and the New Progressive Movement populist grassroots movements and how does the nature of both movements explain the difference in the role of women in both movements? Nature in this research question refers to the organizational structure, the ideology, and the populist rhetoric.

The organizational structure in both movements can be considered as an informal network of grassroots participants and local and national organizations. From early on the TPM has been critiqued as not being a grassroots movement, but being an Astroturf movement, the implication being that the movement was heavily funded and organized by existing institutions. It is true that the TPM is more complicated than just being a grassroots movement because of the influence of conservative media and national organizations. Yet, at the same time, the grassroots component of the TPM has been instrumental in moving the movement to the national podium. The grassroots component of the NPM can be traced back to the Bernie Sanders presidential campaign of 2016, which laid the foundation for grassroots participation. The grassroots component in both the TPM and the NPM provide more opportunities for women than the establishment does because it is easier for women to get involved. In grassroots organizations, the fluid-structure and decentralized nature impose fewer restrictions, prevents gatekeeping, and thus provides more freedom for women to get involved in the way they feel is best, both on the left and right.

The ideology in the TPM is based in conservative thinking but there are two clear strains of conservatism present in the movement. This split is also visible in TP women. The first strain of conservatism is *laissez-faire* or free-market conservatism. Laissez-faire conservatives focus on individual freedom and are in favor of small government. The second strain of conservatism is social conservatism, which is often conflated with Christian conservatism. Social conservatives want the government to enforce traditional norms and values, such as the idea that marriage is between a man and a woman, and anti-abortion policies. This strain of conservatism also enforces more traditional gender roles, as opposed to free-market conservatism, which focuses on individualism and thus argues that there are no real differences between men and women, which negates traditional gender roles.

The ideology of the NPM is based on equality and equity. As the survey answers showed, NPM participants believe that economic, social, and racial justice and equality is of the utmost importance and that the systems of oppression, which are all connected, must be dismantled. This clears the road for women to take the lead and forgoes adherence to strict gender roles. Moreover, the NPM mostly organizes on the left and is more based in the democratic electorate, which has

been more open to women taking charge than the right has been. So, whereas ideology for social conservative TP women includes adherence to traditional gender roles, the ideology in the NPM does not, which explains the difference in the role women play.

The final part of ‘nature’ is the use of populist rhetoric. Both movements use populist rhetoric and can be considered populist when using Michael Kazin’s definition of populism as a political mode of rhetoric. The NPM uses progressive populist rhetoric, which defines the current struggle taking place in the US as a struggle between ‘the people’ and ‘the corporate elite’. While normally populism does not leave room for feminist identities because of its focus on ‘the people’ as a homogenous group fighting toward the same goal, progressive populism of the NPM recognizes the diversity of the people. Feminist identities are present in the NPM, but they are seen as part of the intersectionality of the movement. Feminism is equally important in the movement as other issues such as racial and economic justice. There is space for women to embrace their feminist identities and not feel restricted by gender roles in the New Progressive Movement.

The TPM uses regressive populist rhetoric. In this rhetoric, TP women have found space to organize as women, but they legitimize their activism through a narrow conception of women. The dominant image of women in regressive populism is as mothers, which is a key identity for social conservatives through which to defend traditional moral values. It is this constrained performance of gender that narrows the conception of women and ultimately hinders women’s rise to leadership on the congressional level.

To conclude, the organizational structure does not explain the difference in the role of women because these are comparable for both movements. The grassroots way of organizing is favorable for women in both movements. Ideology seems to partly explain the difference because a large number of TP women enforce traditional gender roles by using motherhood frames and portraying women primarily as mothers, narrowing the role women can play. While this does not go for libertarian women in the TPM, they are a minority within the TPM. For the NPM, the ideology is based on equality and ultimately turns away from traditional gender roles. Social movement organizations are actively trying to recruit women in leadership roles on both a grassroots and congressional level. Lastly, the populist nature of the movements also partly

explains the difference. Progressive populism in the NPM focuses on ‘the people’ but still leaves room for feminism and the feminist identities of women. Regressive populism of TPM leaves only space for specific type of feminism, namely one that pushes traditional gender roles and is thus restrictive for women.

In this thesis, I have laid the groundwork for further research into the New Progressive Movement. To my knowledge, this is the first academic writing on the NPM as a social movement, which means that there is a lot of ground still to cover. Further research must focus on the role of race in the New Progressive Movement, especially since some leaders, like Bernie Sanders, have been criticized for not paying enough attention to racial injustice and instead focusing on economic injustice. The influence of the New Progressive Movement on the Democratic Party could also be investigated further, especially in the future, when it will be more apparent how much impact the NPM has had. The movement is still in its early stages, so it is too early to come to a definitive conclusion. Lastly, the scope of this thesis is limited due to time constraints. Research on the role of women in the NPM, and grassroots populist movements more general, has primarily been done through a survey sent to social movement volunteers but further research into the role of women should include a broader data pool, as well as grassroots groups that are not social movement organizations. Additionally, the answers that respondents gave to survey questions were insightful and provided new perspectives on how NPM participants see themselves, the NPM, and their ideas on feminism. At the same time, it is important to acknowledge that the data pool consisted of 37 respondents, and more research is needed to make more generalized claims.

In 2018, after winning the election for NY’s 14th district, Alexandria Ocasio-Cortez spoke of a movement for social, economic, and racial justice that unleashed a sense of excitement throughout the United States and a feeling that is possible to enact change. In 2020, AOC ran for re-election, saying in her 2020 campaigning clip that “people are coming together in this unprecedented movement to build a better future and a better world.”³⁴⁸ She won her re-election

³⁴⁸ Alexandria Ocasio-Cortez, “A Better World is Possible,” Alexandria Ocasio-Cortez, June 18, 2020, video, 00:54, <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Actg7ojU17U>.

campaign, as did the rest of 'The Squad'. AOC might have said that women like her are not supposed to run for Congress, yet she did, and she won. Women might not be a politically monolithic group, but they are taking charge and taking the lead, both on the left and the right, in trying to get the United States where they think it should be.

Appendix

Respondent Number 1

Gender Identity	Female
What is your political affiliation?	Democrat
Which organization(s) are you officially affiliated with? e.g. staff position, volunteer role in the leadership of the organization	Brand New Congress
Which organization(s) are you otherwise involved in? e.g. volunteer, donate, or otherwise support	Mattapoisett Democratic Committee
How long have you been politically active?	Since college
At what age did you first become politically active?	20
Why did you decide to become politically active?	-
What is your role in the organization(s) in which you are active?	Director of Candidate engagement
Check all that apply: in your work with the organization(s) have you:	Attended a meeting, donated money, participated in a lobbying event, participated in canvassing, signed a petition, participated in a protest, led meetings, led departments
Do you feel that you are part of a movement?	Yes
How would you describe this movement in 15 words or less?	To ensure social justice and equality of all persons regardless of caste, class or race.
Do you think there is a New Progressive Movement?	Yes
How would you define this New Progressive Movement?	All persons should be treated equally, all persons should have the right to a similar standard and quality of life
Do you feel that you are part of this New Progressive Movement	Yes

Check all that apply: as part of the New Progressive Movement have you:	Attended a meeting, donated money, participated in a lobbying event, participated in canvassing, participated in a town hall, participated in a voter registration drive, participated in a protest
What does Progressive mean to you?	Moving towards a vision described above
What are the three most important issues facing the US today?	Climate change, economic injustice, social injustice
What is the best way to solve these issues?	Electing progressive people to the US congress
Do you consider yourself a feminist?	Yes
How would you define feminism?	Equal Rights for women
Do you think the New Progressive Movement is a feminist movement?	Yes
Does gender play an important role in the New Progressive Movement?	Yes
Please explain	If the idea of a progressive movement is to treat all people equally, then woman must be treated equally as well as men
Do you feel the movement provides women with more opportunities than the establishment	No
Please explain	It could provide more opportunities if it was successful
Do you have any other thoughts you would like to share?	I would like to follow up with you on a few of these questions

Respondent Number 2

Gender Identity	Male
What is your political affiliation?	Democrat
Which organization(s) are you officially affiliated with?	Brand New Congress

e.g. staff position, volunteer role in the leadership of the organization	
Which organization(s) are you otherwise involved in? e.g. volunteer, donate, or otherwise support	-
How long have you been politically active?	Around 2016-2017 time (basically early in Trump's term)
At what age did you first become politically active?	19-20
Why did you decide to become politically active?	The amount of misinformation I saw in politics and how poorly each side understood the other side. It seemed like people were just getting more and more polarized against each other because they blindly believed misinformation about the other side.
What is your role in the organization(s) in which you are active?	Research Coordinator
Check all that apply: in your work with the organization(s) have you:	Attended a meeting
Do you feel that you are part of a movement?	Yes
How would you describe this movement in 15 words or less?	Baby steps towards getting real progressives in the Democratic party instead of Corporate Democrats.
Do you think there is a New Progressive Movement?	Yes
How would you define this New Progressive Movement?	Progressive candidates are slowly beating corporate Democrats as they're realizing that Corporate Democrats don't get anything done.
Do you feel that you are part of this New Progressive Movement	Yes

Check all that apply: as part of the New Progressive Movement have you:	-
What does Progressive mean to you?	Progressive means progress to me. It also means tax rates for the rich that ensure the Federal Government has money for programs to help lower and middle class individuals.
What are the three most important issues facing the US today?	Climate change, political system, education (this is part of education but misinformation)
What is the best way to solve these issues?	Improve education so people understand how the political system works, understand the importance of climate change, and understand how to navigate online sources to avoid misinformation.
Do you consider yourself a feminist?	Yes
How would you define feminism?	Wanting equality for women
Do you think the New Progressive Movement is a feminist movement?	I'm not sure. don't know enough about it
Does gender play an important role in the New Progressive Movement?	No
Please explain	I'm not sure I know what the previous question is asking. I don't think gender should be important in terms of who joins the New Progressive Movement or in terms of what the New Progressive Movement aims to achieve.
Do you feel the movement provides women with more opportunities than the establishment	Somewhat

Please explain	I don't know enough about the New Progressives Movement to answer the previous question.
Do you have any other thoughts you would like to share?	

Respondent Number 3

Gender Identity	Non-binary/female
What is your political affiliation?	Democratic Socialist
Which organization(s) are you officially affiliated with? e.g. staff position, volunteer role in the leadership of the organization	Brand New Congress, Sunrise Movement
Which organization(s) are you otherwise involved in? e.g. volunteer, donate, or otherwise support	Brand New Congress
How long have you been politically active?	8 years
At what age did you first become politically active?	14
Why did you decide to become politically active?	My family was suffering and I wanted to understand why we couldn't get help
What is your role in the organization(s) in which you are active?	Director of Research
Check all that apply: in your work with the organization(s) have you:	Attended a meeting, donated money, participated in canvassing, signed a petition, led meetings, led departments
Do you feel that you are part of a movement?	Yes
How would you describe this movement in 15 words or less?	A passionate collective fighting for the basic rights and social justice of all beings.
Do you think there is a New Progressive Movement?	Yes

How would you define this New Progressive Movement?	A movement that calls out the establishment and isn't afraid to reject PAC donations and stand up against lobbyists.
Do you feel that you are part of this New Progressive Movement	Yes
Check all that apply: as part of the New Progressive Movement have you:	Donated money, participated in a lobbying event, participated in canvassing
What does Progressive mean to you?	Progressive means never backing down from corruption and public manipulation. It's finding policies that benefit the public good in an equitable fashion. It's bringing every voter to the table.
What are the three most important issues facing the US today?	Climate Change, Health care, racial injustice
What is the best way to solve these issues?	By electing public officials who will fight for these issues and donating or volunteering with organizations that are supporting or fighting these issues.
Do you consider yourself a feminist?	Yes
How would you define feminism?	Feminism bring everyone to the table but makes sure that women and women of color receive equitable treatment and access without harming other populations.

Do you think the New Progressive Movement is a feminist movement?	Yes
Does gender play an important role in the New Progressive Movement?	Somewhat
Please explain	There are still not a lot of non-binary or Trans folks involved in the movement (public figures), but there is an resurgence of women running for office and not being afraid to challenge strong men rivals or incumbents
Do you feel the movement provides women with more opportunities than the establishment	Yes
Please explain	They don't make women alter their appearance or change themselves to fit a "man's image". In the progressive movement, they are allowed and accepted as their unapologetic selves.
Do you have any other thoughts you would like to share?	-

Respondent Number 4

Gender Identity	Male
What is your political affiliation?	Green Party, Independent, Democratic Socialist
Which organization(s) are you officially affiliated with? e.g. staff position, volunteer role in the leadership of the organization	The Progressive Guide
Which organization(s) are you otherwise involved in? e.g. volunteer, donate, or otherwise support	Brand New Congress, Our Revolution, Sunrise Movement, Democratic Socialist of America
How long have you been politically active?	2 years

At what age did you first become politically active?	15
Why did you decide to become politically active?	The state of the world and the crises we're in
What is your role in the organization(s) in which you are active?	Graphist (BNC), founder (The progressive Guide)
Check all that apply: in your work with the organization(s) have you:	Attended a meeting, signed a petition, participated in a protest, graphism
Do you feel that you are part of a movement?	Yes
How would you describe this movement in 15 words or less?	It's a revolution of the people
Do you think there is a New Progressive Movement?	Yes
How would you define this New Progressive Movement?	People tired of the parties duopoly and of our elected leaders' inaction. We just want change, healthcare and a future.
Do you feel that you are part of this New Progressive Movement	Yes
Check all that apply: as part of the New Progressive Movement have you:	-
What does Progressive mean to you?	Fighting for the People and the future
What are the three most important issues facing the US today?	Climate Change, Health Care, Political system
What is the best way to solve these issues?	Elect Progressive leaders and fight for better politics
Do you consider yourself a feminist?	Yes
How would you define feminism?	Believing that women are not less important than men, that they deserve the same rights.
Do you think the New Progressive Movement is a feminist movement?	Yes
Does gender play an important role in the New Progressive Movement?	Somewhat

Please explain	Women have a role in the NPM that is bigger and in regular politics, but obviously it's never enough
Do you feel the movement provides women with more opportunities than the establishment	Yes
Please explain	We fight for regular people to be elected, in contrary to the establishment which supports corporate candidates and therefore, more men. Also, we support Progressive policies, and M4A, the GND, UBI and all of that would empower women more than the current system.
Do you have any other thoughts you would like to share?	Not mentioned but I'm French and 17, so even if I'm technically involved in US politics, I'm not sure I can count in your study ;)

Respondent Number 5

Gender Identity	Male
What is your political affiliation?	Independent, democratic socialist
Which organization(s) are you officially affiliated with? e.g. staff position, volunteer role in the leadership of the organization	Brand New Congress
Which organization(s) are you otherwise involved in? e.g. volunteer, donate, or otherwise support	Justice Democrats, Sunrise Movement, Our Revolution
How long have you been politically active?	Five Years

At what age did you first become politically active?	-
Why did you decide to become politically active?	Bernie Sanders 2015-2016 presidential campaign inspired me to become more active.
What is your role in the organization(s) in which you are active?	Deputy Volunteer Mobilization Director
Check all that apply: in your work with the organization(s) have you:	Attended a meeting, donated money, participated in canvassing, led meetings, led departments
Do you feel that you are part of a movement?	Yes
How would you describe this movement in 15 words or less?	It's a movement for human dignity and basic rights, but also to prevent the worst effects of man-made climate change.
Do you think there is a New Progressive Movement?	Yes
How would you define this New Progressive Movement?	It's a movement grounded in human dignity and rights that believes we are all worth something more than an arbitrary value assigned by your employer or insurance company. It stands in opposition to amassing great wealth and warfare and for the people and the planet.
Do you feel that you are part of this New Progressive Movement	Yes
Check all that apply: as part of the New Progressive Movement have you:	Attended a meeting, donated money, participated in a lobbying event, participated in canvassing participated in a protest
What does Progressive mean to you?	Moving our society forward, making progress on the issues of human dignity.

What are the three most important issues facing the US today?	Climate change, health care, political system
What is the best way to solve these issues?	Green New Deal, Medicare for All or British style National Health and removing the money from politics.
Do you consider yourself a feminist?	Yes
How would you define feminism?	The idea that women are entitled to exactly the same rights, pay and opportunities as men.
Do you think the New Progressive Movement is a feminist movement?	Yes
Does gender play an important role in the New Progressive Movement?	Yes
Please explain	I think the typically disenfranchised of our society would benefit the most from the Progressive policies due to the wage / power imbalance.
Do you feel the movement provides women with more opportunities than the establishment	Yes
Please explain	Yes, the progressive movement isn't beholden to corporations and isn't virtue signaling. Most of what passes for "the left" in the U.S. is pro-corporate propaganda. We can't run a commercial or put a woman in charge of a company but still pay starvation wages or keep people slaves due to their inability to afford healthcare or in so much debt they have no choices.
Do you have any other thoughts you would like to share?	Either we'll get through this together and in a spirit of solidarity or we won't get through it.

Respondent Number 6

Gender Identity	Cis Man, He/Him
What is your political affiliation?	Democratic Socialist
Which organization(s) are you officially affiliated with? e.g. staff position, volunteer role in the leadership of the organization	Brand New Congress, Democratic Socialists of America, Industrial Workers of the World
Which organization(s) are you otherwise involved in? e.g. volunteer, donate, or otherwise support	Brand New Congress, Movement for a People's Party, Run for Something, Kappa Alpha psi Fraternity, Inc.
How long have you been politically active?	15 years
At what age did you first become politically active?	Junior year of high school
Why did you decide to become politically active?	I've always been fascinated by politics- it's hard to explain what exactly it is that draws me in and keeps me in, but I've always loved politics. My parents say it's when Ross Perrot appeared on Sesame Street as a parrot when I was young that first got me into politics. As I got older, and my current drive is a deep desire to improve lives across the board and particularly make corrections to a terribly unjust system that is oppressive by design
What is your role in the organization(s) in which you are active?	BNC- volunteer, Run for Something- volunteer, Louisiana for Personal Freedoms- Deputy Field Director, DSA- member, IWW-- organizer, KAΨ- member and election activities organizer
Check all that apply: in your work with the organization(s) have you:	Attended a meeting, donated money, participated in canvassing, participated in a

	voter registration drive, signed a petition, participated in a protests, led departments
Do you feel that you are part of a movement?	Yes
How would you describe this movement in 15 words or less?	Dismantle and rebuild oppressive systems through agitation, education, and organization.
Do you think there is a New Progressive Movement?	Yes
How would you define this New Progressive Movement?	Broad coalition deliberately attempting to make politics accessible to all by ensuring that historically marginalized groups not only have a seat at the table, but are running the table when possible. The Progressive Movement lives in the same spirit as the revolutions of the late 1700s; an admission and acknowledgement that the system that exists now does not seek benefit for the greatest good, and since the system is oppressive by design, there must be a deliberate attempt to dismantle and rebuild.
Do you feel that you are part of this New Progressive Movement	Yes
Check all that apply: as part of the New Progressive Movement have you:	Attended a meeting, donated money, participated in canvassing, participated in a town hall, participated in a voter registration drive, participated in a protest
What does Progressive mean to you?	Progressing beyond capitalism and into a system that truly works for all.
What are the three most important issues facing the US today?	Climate change, racial injustice, education

What is the best way to solve these issues?	Dismantle and rebuild. We need politicians and elected leaders who are willing to confront these issues head on- even if that means political ruin. Having the courage to do what is right, despite the political prospects.
Do you consider yourself a feminist?	Yes
How would you define feminism?	The fundamental belief that women are equal to men in all areas of life, and that historically women have been subjugated and oppressed, and all efforts should be made to eradicate the patriarchy. Further, that historically, BIPOC women have been excluded from leadership positions in both feminist and racial justice movements and thus must be included in an intersectional feminist approach. This includes LGBT women as well
Do you think the New Progressive Movement is a feminist movement?	Yes
Does gender play an important role in the New Progressive Movement?	Yes
Please explain	It has to- capitalism is patriarchal. Feminism must be at the center of progress
Do you feel the movement provides women with more opportunities than the establishment	Yes
Please explain	The movement recognizes the role that women must play in dismantling and rebuilding if we are to create a better system.
Do you have any other thoughts you would like to share?	

Respondent Number 7

Gender Identity	Male
What is your political affiliation?	Independent
Which organization(s) are you officially affiliated with? e.g. staff position, volunteer role in the leadership of the organization	Brand New Congress
Which organization(s) are you otherwise involved in? e.g. volunteer, donate, or otherwise support	Brand New Congress
How long have you been politically active?	13
At what age did you first become politically active?	18
Why did you decide to become politically active?	To make change, people deserve to have people who will fight for them and their best interest. I noticed that was not happening and I wanted to stand up for what I believed in.
What is your role in the organization(s) in which you are active?	Volunteer
Check all that apply: in your work with the organization(s) have you:	Attended a meeting, participated in canvassing, participated in a protest
Do you feel that you are part of a movement?	Yes
How would you describe this movement in 15 words or less?	Breathtaking and inspiring, people are standing up and finally getting the platforms they deserve.
Do you think there is a New Progressive Movement?	Yes
How would you define this New Progressive Movement?	Progressives are finally being heard. They aren't just being heard, but they are gaining popularity and momentum.

Do you feel that you are part of this New Progressive Movement	Yes
Check all that apply: as part of the New Progressive Movement have you:	Attended a meeting, participated in a protest
What does Progressive mean to you?	Progressive means wanting to actually make changes. This means bettering our people . Here in the United States, we suffer from the effects of a corrupt two party system. Their only intent is to keep us within the same limitations and counter each other. Progressives will break through that routine and finally allow the country to grow in a more positive and powerful way.
What are the three most important issues facing the US today?	Economic injustice, racial injustice, education
What is the best way to solve these issues?	Restructuring these systems. If the U.S focused on educating our people, we could bridge majority of the gaps and problems. I can speak for hours on policies and methods that can increase productivity and results. In short, really headlining education for me would be a great resolution to majority of the problems.
Do you consider yourself a feminist?	Yes
How would you define feminism?	Feminism to me is the ideology that women are powerful. For many years all around the world, women have been treated as lesser people. When I think of feminism, I don't think of radical

	<p>behavior. I think of successful women, single woman homeowners. Woman business owners, and women in high positions of power. Any woman that deviated from the prior norms and proved that she knows her worth and was able to prove those that believe otherwise wrong.</p>
Do you think the New Progressive Movement is a feminist movement?	No
Does gender play an important role in the New Progressive Movement?	No
Please explain	<p>I wouldn't say that the New Progressive Movement is a feminist one. There is great feminist support within, but I wouldn't say that is the main dynamic. I also don't believe gender is relatively important. Especially because progressives push for equality and as we all know, equality shares every gender and affiliation. As progressives, all genders are welcome to join the movement.</p>
Do you feel the movement provides women with more opportunities than the establishment	Yes
Please explain	<p>Women already have established their rights. However, I think this movement allows them to keep pushing and prying until they receive a n equal playing field. Until they</p>

	benefit from the establishment the same way that everyone else has.
Do you have any other thoughts you would like to share?	My Goal is to run for Congress in NY-4. My promise is to stand up and be the most vocal congressman out there. The one that will stand up against corruption and call it out when I see it. Hold people accountable for their policies and question their intents.

Respondent Number 8

Gender Identity	Female
What is your political affiliation?	Democrat
Which organization(s) are you officially affiliated with? e.g. staff position, volunteer role in the leadership of the organization	-
Which organization(s) are you otherwise involved in? e.g. volunteer, donate, or otherwise support	Brand New Congress, Justice Democrats, Our Revolution, Sunrise Movement, Democratic Socialists of America, indivisible, NC Democratic Party including Progressive Caucus, People for Democratic Party Reform, Progressive Democrats of America
How long have you been politically active?	4 years plus more
At what age did you first become politically active?	43 but minimal at that time
Why did you decide to become politically active?	Iraq war 2003
What is your role in the organization(s) in which you are active?	Volunteer for voter outreach, primarily canvassing and texting, small dollar donations

Check all that apply: in your work with the organization(s) have you:	Attended a meeting, donated money, participated in a lobbying event, participated in canvassing, participated in a town hall participated in a voter registration drive, signed a petition
Do you feel that you are part of a movement?	Yes
How would you describe this movement in 15 words or less?	Progressive working class people organizing to end inequality and save the planet
Do you think there is a New Progressive Movement?	Yes
How would you define this New Progressive Movement?	A multiracial, multigenerational movement informed about how class and race divisions have been used to weaken the mass of people and destroy our power for the financial and political gain of the few.
Do you feel that you are part of this New Progressive Movement	Yes
Check all that apply: as part of the New Progressive Movement have you:	Attended a meeting, donated money, participated in a lobbying event, participated in canvassing, participated in town hall, participated in a protest
What does Progressive mean to you?	Having a class analysis as the basis for understanding power, using power to create opportunity for people while saving the planet from destruction.
What are the three most important issues facing the US today?	Climate Change, economic inequality, political system
What is the best way to solve these issues?	A movement that uses class analysis and an inside/outside strategy to

	achieve positive change. The outside strategy is everything outside of government. The new progressives understand that labor organizing is crucial to gaining and consolidating our power.
Do you consider yourself a feminist?	Yes
How would you define feminism?	Fully developing women's potentials to be who they can, should, and want to be in their personal and public lives. An equal playing field.
Do you think the New Progressive Movement is a feminist movement?	Yes
Does gender play an important role in the New Progressive Movement?	Somewhat
Please explain	Women play a huge role in many leadership positions. Women are highly respected, including women of all ages, classes, and educational levels. But overall I see it as beyond feminism.
Do you feel the movement provides women with more opportunities than the establishment	Yes
Please explain	I think there's a better understanding in the progressive movement that women don't need to "lean in", meaning act like a man. In fact, there's a bit more understanding that men should "lean

	in” and work to understand women and follow the lead of women.
Do you have any other thoughts you would like to share?	I agree with your premise 100%. Bernie kickstarted a new wave of organizing. He helped me to understand that if an analysis of the problem and the path to solution does not include a class analysis, then it’s deficient and doesn’t provide a route forward. New progressives are developing an understanding of class that is well grounded in egalitarianism and respect for all people across race, gender, gender identity and other factors that help make people who they are.

Respondent Number 9

Gender Identity	Female
What is your political affiliation?	Unaffiliated
Which organization(s) are you officially affiliated with? e.g. staff position, volunteer role in the leadership of the organization	Brand New Congress
Which organization(s) are you otherwise involved in? e.g. volunteer, donate, or otherwise support	Justice Democrats
How long have you been politically active?	A few months
At what age did you first become politically active?	29
Why did you decide to become politically active?	I wanted to get Trump and his cronies out of office

What is your role in the organization(s) in which you are active?	Research volunteer
Check all that apply: in your work with the organization(s) have you:	Attended a meeting, donated money, signed a petition, researched women of color candidates for next election
Do you feel that you are part of a movement?	Yes
How would you describe this movement in 15 words or less?	Community-drive politics that improves the standard of living for everyone
Do you think there is a New Progressive Movement?	Yes
How would you define this New Progressive Movement?	Grassroots and community-based solutions to systemic problems in government
Do you feel that you are part of this New Progressive Movement	Yes
Check all that apply: as part of the New Progressive Movement have you:	Donated money, participated in protest
What does Progressive mean to you?	Caring more about the needs of people living in your community then about political and economic power
What are the three most important issues facing the US today?	Climate change, economic inequality, racial injustice
What is the best way to solve these issues?	Building new, inclusive communities based on mutual trust and respect with a focus on environmental stewardship
Do you consider yourself a feminist?	Yes
How would you define feminism?	Recognizing and addressing the systemic inequalities in place that harm people because of their gender
Do you think the New Progressive Movement is a feminist movement?	I think more can be done to bring intersectional feminism into the New Progressive Movements

Does gender play an important role in the New Progressive Movement?	Yes
Please explain	While AOC is a notable exception, many of the progressive leaders are old, white men, who have specific biases and privilege when creating policy. The New Progressive Movement needs more working class men and women of color and genderqueer folx to be involved in policy and decision making at a high level.
Do you feel the movement provides women with more opportunities than the establishment	Yes
Please explain	The squad is entirely made up of progressive women. I can't think of another group of famous, formidable women in politics from either side of the aisle except for RBG, Sonia Sotomayor, Sandra Day O'Connor, and Elena Kagan.
Do you have any other thoughts you would like to share?	

Respondent Number 10

Gender Identity	Male
What is your political affiliation?	Marxist
Which organization(s) are you officially affiliated with? e.g. staff position, volunteer role in the leadership of the organization	Brand New Congress

Which organization(s) are you otherwise involved in? e.g. volunteer, donate, or otherwise support	-
How long have you been politically active?	7 months
At what age did you first become politically active?	16
Why did you decide to become politically active?	I started reading theory and decided to help out Bernie Sanders even though I don't support him anymore.
What is your role in the organization(s) in which you are active?	Volunteer
Check all that apply: in your work with the organization(s) have you:	Attended a meeting, participated in town hall
Do you feel that you are part of a movement?	Yes
How would you describe this movement in 15 words or less?	A movement to elect genuine working class people.
Do you think there is a New Progressive Movement?	No
How would you define this New Progressive Movement?	-
Do you feel that you are part of this New Progressive Movement	No
Check all that apply: as part of the New Progressive Movement have you:	-
What does Progressive mean to you?	Caring about the struggles that people face every day.
What are the three most important issues facing the US today?	Health care, political system, voting system
What is the best way to solve these issues?	At the moment, electing progressives. In the future, revolution
Do you consider yourself a feminist?	Yes
How would you define feminism?	Equal rights

Do you think the New Progressive Movement is a feminist movement?	Yes
Does gender play an important role in the New Progressive Movement?	No
Please explain	I don't really look at gender as playing a part in any movement.
Do you feel the movement provides women with more opportunities than the establishment	No
Please explain	No because I believe there are many women in the establishment
Do you have any other thoughts you would like to share?	

Respondent Number 11

Gender Identity	Femme
What is your political affiliation?	Democrat, Democratic Socialist
Which organization(s) are you officially affiliated with? e.g. staff position, volunteer role in the leadership of the organization	-
Which organization(s) are you otherwise involved in? e.g. volunteer, donate, or otherwise support	Brand New Congress, Justice Democrats, Sunrise Movement, Indivisible
How long have you been politically active?	8 years
At what age did you first become politically active?	16ish
Why did you decide to become politically active?	Short answer is that through my experiences, I knew how much a role gov played in people's ability to not just thrive, but live, and growing up as a Christian pastor's kid, I understood that we have a responsibility to advocate

	<p>with love for one another. Long answer is that I was aware of issues before 16, but then I lived in another country and was rejected due to visa issues. We were homeless for about 6 months. I understood the gravity of the situation PLUS the privilege we experienced because we were white, though half my family was not American citizens, at the time. Soon after, Trayvon Martin was murdered, and though I had a learning curve, it was a quick one. Then Trump. It was devastating. I kept thinking, what am I going to do during these 4 years to resist, I need to be involved. Then the travel ban came, rejecting refugees, and THAT felt personal, due to aforementioned experiences. There was no turning back. My brief experiences steeped in privilege informed my understanding of the gravity of others' situations, and my responsibility to advocate especially knowing no one advocated for me, except my white privilege. Politics is human, and I can't bear to lose sight of that.</p>
What is your role in the organization(s) in which you are active?	Social media
Check all that apply: in your work with the organization(s) have you:	Attended a meeting, donated money, participated in canvassing, participated in a town hall, signed a petition, participation in a protest
Do you feel that you are part of a movement?	Yes

How would you describe this movement in 15 words or less?	Politics means the affairs of the people. How do we articulate and embody our intention more fully, and care for our communities with greater love, intention, and respect? In short: The human in me sees and recognizes the value in you (human or earth).
Do you think there is a New Progressive Movement?	Yes
How would you define this New Progressive Movement?	I believe this movement would not be possible without being built upon movements that have continued for years, built on the backs of POC, women, and queer people especially trans women of color. The New Progressive Movement is to see, recognize, and realize the value that each person (and natural object) has in the present and the future. We recognize that people deserve to not only care for others, but also to be cared for and valued in order to pursue peace, passion, and joy. The BNC's new Bill of Rights is a good take on this. This movement feels like it relies more on personal relationships and emotional literacy than previous movements, partly enabled by social media.
Do you feel that you are part of this New Progressive Movement	Yes

Check all that apply: as part of the New Progressive Movement have you:	Attended a meeting, donated money, participated in canvassing, participated in town hall, participated in a protest
What does Progressive mean to you?	Forward to increased care and consideration for all living beings around us. It means moving with intention.
What are the three most important issues facing the US today?	Climate change, economic inequality, racial injustice
What is the best way to solve these issues?	Increase democracy, first by eradicating voter suppression, to enable and create a government made of real working people, rather than old career politicians who do not actually represent constituents. Also, tax the rich and adopt the Green New Deal.
Do you consider yourself a feminist?	Yes
How would you define feminism?	The pursuit of personhood for all genders, especially those not receiving equal or equitable treatment.
Do you think the New Progressive Movement is a feminist movement?	Yes
Does gender play an important role in the New Progressive Movement?	Somewhat
Please explain	Gender is one facet of the New Progressive Movement, both empowering people of all genders to take leadership, while fighting for the rights for all genders.

Do you feel the movement provides women with more opportunities than the establishment	Yes
Please explain	It is a brand new thing to me to see so many women in the government. It's absolutely incredible. I have met more queer people in these movements than anywhere as well, and that is so exciting and loving. Is it perfect? No. But onward we go.
Do you have any other thoughts you would like to share?	SO many facets to this. No matter what happens in November, I am holding onto the incredible movements we made in 2018. Also, progressive is relative... we are all constantly adapting and evolving, and that is good and okay. I hope we never stop changing. Finally, it's spiritual. This really is a spiritual practice of intention, emotional and physical literacy, and constant learning. It is exciting, even if exhausting.

Respondent Number 12

Gender Identity	Female
What is your political affiliation?	Independent
Which organization(s) are you officially affiliated with? e.g. staff position, volunteer role in the leadership of the organization	Brand New Congress, Our Revolution, Sunrise Movement, Democratic Socialist of America
Which organization(s) are you otherwise involved in?	Brand New Congress, Sunrise Movement, Democratic Socialists of America

e.g. volunteer, donate, or otherwise support	
How long have you been politically active?	12 years
At what age did you first become politically active?	29
Why did you decide to become politically active?	I was irate when Obama put a Monsanto administrator in charge of food choices .
What is your role in the organization(s) in which you are active?	Volunteer — texting (front and back end), research, data entry
Check all that apply: in your work with the organization(s) have you:	Attended a meeting, donated money, participated in a lobbying event, participated in canvassing, signed a petition, participated in a protest
Do you feel that you are part of a movement?	Yes
How would you describe this movement in 15 words or less?	Hoping for politicians who serve their constituents instead of corporate interests.
Do you think there is a New Progressive Movement?	Yes
How would you define this New Progressive Movement?	A movement that wants equity, to address the climate crisis and stop the endless wars, and to hold politicians accountable for their choices while in office, universal healthcare, and policies that protect and serve the people instead of corporate interests.
Do you feel that you are part of this New Progressive Movement	Yes
Check all that apply: as part of the New Progressive Movement have you:	Attended a meeting, donated money, participated in lobbying event, participated in canvassing, participated in town hall
What does Progressive mean to you?	Legislation that protects people, seeks to reduce/eliminate the margins, the wealth gap, etc.

What are the three most important issues facing the US today?	Climate change, health care, economic inequality
What is the best way to solve these issues?	Get money out of politics, primary candidates who don't support policies that address them (GND, universal healthcare, living wage to start).
Do you consider yourself a feminist?	Yes
How would you define feminism?	Seeks equity for all genders, acknowledges equality in skill, etc.
Do you think the New Progressive Movement is a feminist movement?	Sure, as much as it is a movement that addresses ableism, racism, heterosexism, classism, etc. Because it's a movement that seeks equity, it seeks to serve all marginalized groups, including women.
Does gender play an important role in the New Progressive Movement?	No
Please explain	It's the marginalization of all groups, so gender plays no more of an important role than any other.
Do you feel the movement provides women with more opportunities than the establishment	No
Please explain	I don't think so, but I've never worked in the establishment (nor would I want to in the interest of full disclosure). From my perspective it seems the establishment is happy to

	give people roles/a voice if their views align with establishment views.
Do you have any other thoughts you would like to share?	Thank you for doing your work. As far as the following question, definitely, via email.

Respondent Number 13

Gender Identity	Female
What is your political affiliation?	Republican
Which organization(s) are you officially affiliated with? e.g. staff position, volunteer role in the leadership of the organization	Brand New Congress
Which organization(s) are you otherwise involved in? e.g. volunteer, donate, or otherwise support	Brand New Congress, American Youth Literacy Foundation, Personal reform projects including an "Educate to Legislate" Initiative to assist lawmakers/legislators and constitutional officers have the fact based, researched data and information necessary to amend laws and legislate accordingly. Letter writing campaigns on police reform, family law reform and criminal justice system reform.
How long have you been politically active?	25 years
At what age did you first become politically active?	16
Why did you decide to become politically active?	As a child my father was an abusive alcoholic who physically and emotionally abused to my mother in their 13 year marriage. From age 7 I wanted to eliminate this type of behavior from my life and society because it was extremely

	<p>painful. By 12 years old my siblings and mother had stayed at a domestic violence shelter for 3 months at a time (the limit) twice. As an adult some of my diagnosed disorders include PTSD, Generalized Anxiety Disorder and Panic Disorder. Prior to self-awareness I had wanted to write and become a journalist but by age 7 I saw lawyers and judges as people who were sought out to solve problems in our lives and as a result I had set my sights on becoming a lawyer and then a judge. In 2020 I am not a lawyer nor am I a judge, but I have unfortunately seen many sides of injustice. I spend my time writing letters and meeting with Congress members, city council members and scholars to bring attention to the areas of law and legal system that are unfair, unjust, and unclear. I will be starting a master's degree program at the University of Florida in January 2021 in Mass Comm: Global Strategic Communication to refine and add to existing skills and areas of expertise so that I can continue work in reform.</p>
What is your role in the organization(s) in which you are active?	Community Outreach, Mobilization, Donor Calls, Call Script Writing, Team Support
Check all that apply: in your work with the organization(s) have you:	Attended a meeting, donated money, participated in a lobbying event, participated in canvassing, participated in a townhall,

	participated in a voter registration drive, signed a petition, led meetings, call scripts, team support, mentoring, led departments
Do you feel that you are part of a movement?	Yes
How would you describe this movement in 15 words or less?	This is a collective of people who care about helping people progress.
Do you think there is a New Progressive Movement?	Yes
How would you define this New Progressive Movement?	I define this “New Progressive Movement” as a byproduct of the frustration of those who supported the Bernie Sander’s presidential campaign of 2016. These are people under the age of 55 who vote, pay taxes, own businesses and are just as much an important part of society and its everyday functions as the less than 1% of the population holding all of society’s wealth and power. In some places this movement is working because the population is perhaps younger and ready for the type of change this progressive movement is asking for with environmental justice and system reform. In areas where there is still a lot of resistance to change there appears to be a correlation with the age of the population and voters.
Do you feel that you are part of this New Progressive Movement	Yes
Check all that apply: as part of the New Progressive Movement have you:	Attended a meeting, participated in a lobbying event, participated in a campaign, participated in town hall, participated in voter registration

	drive, participated in protest, helped write call scripts
What does Progressive mean to you?	<p>“Progressive” means having forward movement in stages, like its actual definition. In terms of today’s progressive movements, it’s having the push from society’s population under the age of 55 to move forward from the death grip that the elderly/elders have on the world with old world ideals and laws. In tribal environments many of the elders remove themselves from positions of power once they reach a certain level of respect, age or status amongst the tribe thus making them a symbol of wisdom over a leader and decision maker. In western cultures we have sadly relied on elders and the elderly long beyond their actual progressive capabilities in government which ultimately is now hurting the lower and middle classes as technology exponentially moves society into progressive ideals and values.</p>
What are the three most important issues facing the US today?	Economic inequality. Racial injustice, political system
What is the best way to solve these issues?	<p>First by not narrowing down important issues to a top “three”, five, ten or one hundred because ALL of these listed issues and more are interconnected, related and should be solved by addressing a bigger picture as a nation, maybe even drawing on global</p>

	<p>solutions. We need to think big and act locally. There are actual states within these United States that are so far behind in terms of progression of any kind. For instance, states like Florida, Arkansas, Mississippi. Kentucky, Tennessee and many other states in the “south” or the “deep south” restrict the rights of minorities and women to this day as though it were pre-1920. There is generational hatred that is bred into families, the legal system, the government and more. In order to beat generational poverty and generational illiteracy we need to address the most vulnerable parts of the communities by improving access to resources and education for a start. The best way to resolve these issues is with many minds and many movements.</p>
Do you consider yourself a feminist?	Yes
How would you define feminism?	I define it as, “the advocacy of women’s rights on the basis of the equality of the sexes.”
Do you think the New Progressive Movement is a feminist movement?	No
Does gender play an important role in the New Progressive Movement?	Somewhat
Please explain	While the “New Progressive Movement” is not solely a feminist movement it does include elements of feminism because of the focus on equality for all sexes and

	<p>genders. Because women are still a very marginalized part of politics, the political process and the governmental system. Just as in 2020 we are still in the gross position of proclaiming “the first Black...” so are we still proclaiming, “the first female/woman....” It’s clear that the ruling power is wealthy, white male. If this were not the norm then we would have established these declarations as a society decades ago.</p>
Do you feel the movement provides women with more opportunities than the establishment	Somewhat
Please explain	<p>The movement can provide as many opportunities as are available to all human beings but if the establishment refuses to allow these elected women to sit at the proverbial table then once again the establishment still stands in the way of any type of progression and equality. In the event that other congress members won’t discuss it out of fear, there’s a perception of equality; it’s not real nor valid. For example, AOC is a BNC candidate and now two time elected member of Congress in New York. She has sponsored and/or co-sponsored as many as 500 bills during her term of service however she receives little support from cohorts for these bills and in this session has been called, “a</p>

	f&%king bitch” by Christian affiliated Florida Congressman Ted Yoho.
Do you have any other thoughts you would like to share?	

Respondent Number 14

Gender Identity	Female
What is your political affiliation?	Democratic
Which organization(s) are you officially affiliated with? e.g. staff position, volunteer role in the leadership of the organization	Brand New Congress
Which organization(s) are you otherwise involved in? e.g. volunteer, donate, or otherwise support	Brand New Congress
How long have you been politically active?	Off and on for 8 or 9 years
At what age did you first become politically active?	25
Why did you decide to become politically active?	Because becoming a mother made me start to pay attention to the world, I was bringing my kids into.
What is your role in the organization(s) in which you are active?	Volunteer
Check all that apply: in your work with the organization(s) have you:	Donated money, signed a petition
Do you feel that you are part of a movement?	Yes
How would you describe this movement in 15 words or less?	A revolution for advancement in inclusivity and respect for everyone
Do you think there is a New Progressive Movement?	Yes
How would you define this New Progressive Movement?	As a push to bring equality and justice for everyone, and not just a chosen few. A call to expand rights and

	privileges to every American instead of just to people of a certain race or color.
Do you feel that you are part of this New Progressive Movement	Yes
Check all that apply: as part of the New Progressive Movement have you:	Donated money
What does Progressive mean to you?	Looking forward to and working toward a world that everyone can thrive in.
What are the three most important issues facing the US today?	Economic inequality, racial injustice, political system
What is the best way to solve these issues?	A whole new system set in place of old ones that were established a long time ago.
Do you consider yourself a feminist?	Yes
How would you define feminism?	Being fully attuned to the fact of inequality for women.
Do you think the New Progressive Movement is a feminist movement?	Yes
Does gender play an important role in the New Progressive Movement?	No
Please explain	
Do you feel the movement provides women with more opportunities than the establishment	Yes
Please explain	-
Do you have any other thoughts you would like to share?	-

Respondent Number 15

Gender Identity	Female/she/her
What is your political affiliation?	Independent, Democratic Socialist
Which organization(s) are you officially affiliated with?	-

e.g. staff position, volunteer role in the leadership of the organization	
Which organization(s) are you otherwise involved in? e.g. volunteer, donate, or otherwise support	Brand New Congress, Democratic Socialists of America
How long have you been politically active?	I mean, I ran for president (1997) in 8th grade and won for my elementary school, but really 2012
At what age did you first become politically active?	Superficially 26, really 32
Why did you decide to become politically active?	I had seen too much. I knew info was being presented to me as fiction in order to sway my opinion (which it did for a long time). I didn't want my children growing up not wanting to help people or thinking they couldn't because "certain people" couldn't be helped.
What is your role in the organization(s) in which you are active?	
Check all that apply: in your work with the organization(s) have you:	Attended a meeting, donated money, participated in a lobbying event, participated in canvassing, participated in a town hall, participated in a voter registration drive, signed a petition, participated in protest, led meetings, grassroots events
Do you feel that you are part of a movement?	Yes
How would you describe this movement in 15 words or less?	Together, we have the power to help people. It's NOT impossible to change lives now
Do you think there is a New Progressive Movement?	Yes
How would you define this New Progressive Movement?	Transparency and awareness meet empathy and compassion

Do you feel that you are part of this New Progressive Movement	Yes
Check all that apply: as part of the New Progressive Movement have you:	Attended a meeting, donated money, participated in a lobbying event, participated in canvassing, participated in a town hall, participated in voter registration drive, participated in a protest, part of a community group empowering youth and re-empowering seniors
What does Progressive mean to you?	Moving forward, leaving the “old way” traditional ways and means behind
What are the three most important issues facing the US today?	Climate change, economic inequality, racial injustice
What is the best way to solve these issues?	Empower, provide, support and amplify the voices of our marginalized communities with emphasis on our inner city youth
Do you consider yourself a feminist?	Yes
How would you define feminism?	Knowing we came from a place of inequality and using that power, knowledge, and inherent strength to do what females and those who identify as do best. Carry the burden of those who are at a disadvantage, underrepresented and who do not yet know how to use their voice, and using our experiences of having been there before to lift them, carry them, and support them until they too can join our fight for equality of all people
Do you think the New Progressive Movement is a feminist movement?	Yes
Does gender play an important role in the New Progressive Movement?	Yes
Please explain	I think women, those who identify as, and those who support strong females will be responsible for the necessary

	<p>changes. I think instinctively and fundamentally women are quick to carry the burden and want to fix things because and make sure everyone is ok, not matter how tired they are or how hard it is. Of course, I am being bias and stereotypical maybe to a fault. But an example is the birth of my first child. I was in labor hours upon hours of painful labor yet after my daughter was born, my instinct was not about me. All I wanted to do was hold her, comfort her, feed her and make sure she was ok. And I know, I am not alone.</p>
Do you feel the movement provides women with more opportunities than the establishment	Yes
Please explain	<p>Absolutely YES!!! Women are seeing, some for the first time, people that look like them being threats, in a good way. Alexandria, Ilhan, Rashida, Cori, Ayanna, and even Kamala are making white men nervous. (BTW none of these names were auto corrected or spell checked and I love that!!!) This makes it seem doable. We all need that role model, that person that looks like us, or reminds us of us, to know it's possible. I'm a 37 year old women and my heroes are women my age or younger. I would say the first and most important step in</p>

	opportunity is the belief that it is possible.
Do you have any other thoughts you would like to share?	Please share your findings. I am so intrigued!!!

Respondent Number 16

Gender Identity	Female
What is your political affiliation?	Democrat, Democratic Socialist
Which organization(s) are you officially affiliated with? e.g. staff position, volunteer role in the leadership of the organization	Brand New Congress
Which organization(s) are you otherwise involved in? e.g. volunteer, donate, or otherwise support	Justice Democrats, Sunrise Movement
How long have you been politically active?	About 5 years
At what age did you first become politically active?	16
Why did you decide to become politically active?	My dad is politically active, so it is something I was introduced to at a young age. Although I was interested in politics, I didn't become truly active until about a year before the 2016 election. At that point, I felt like it was a duty I had. Even if many GOP/Trump policies don't affect me directly, I care about the wellbeing of everyone in this country and I can't even imagine sitting back and watching the American democracy we've worked so hard to build be destroyed.
What is your role in the organization(s) in which you are active?	I am a volunteer at Brand New Congress

Check all that apply: in your work with the organization(s) have you:	phone banked, text banked, also became a comms fellow for one of the campaigns that Brand New Congress endorsed
Do you feel that you are part of a movement?	Yes
How would you describe this movement in 15 words or less?	All rights are human rights, regardless of race, gender, or social status
Do you think there is a New Progressive Movement?	Yes
How would you define this New Progressive Movement?	The new progressive movement calls for massive social and political reform across the country that aims to represent the best interests of ordinary Americans.
Do you feel that you are part of this New Progressive Movement	Yes
Check all that apply: as part of the New Progressive Movement have you:	Attended a meeting, donated money, participated in canvassing, participated in a protest
What does Progressive mean to you?	favoring vast social change and liberal ideas
What are the three most important issues facing the US today?	Climate change, economic inequality, voting system
What is the best way to solve these issues?	Through federal legislation – cannot be left up to the states
Do you consider yourself a feminist?	Yes
How would you define feminism?	Men and women being considered equal in all ways of life
Do you think the New Progressive Movement is a feminist movement?	Yes
Does gender play an important role in the New Progressive Movement?	Yes
Please explain	Supporting women's rights and empowering women to run for

	political office is a huge part of the movement
Do you feel the movement provides women with more opportunities than the establishment	Somewhat
Please explain	I'm honestly not sure, but I think it's likely
Do you have any other thoughts you would like to share?	no

Respondent Number 17

Gender Identity	Cis man
What is your political affiliation?	Democratic, Democratic Socialist
Which organization(s) are you officially affiliated with? e.g. staff position, volunteer role in the leadership of the organization	-
Which organization(s) are you otherwise involved in? e.g. volunteer, donate, or otherwise support	Brand New Congress, Justice Democrats
How long have you been politically active?	A Bernie supporter since 2016, but not active in terms of volunteering/donating until 2020
At what age did you first become politically active?	39
Why did you decide to become politically active?	The injustices of 2020 made me realize I can't sit on the sidelines any longer
What is your role in the organization(s) in which you are active?	Phone banking volunteer and donating
Check all that apply: in your work with the organization(s) have you:	Attended meeting, donated money, participated in a town hall, signed a petition
Do you feel that you are part of a movement?	Yes
How would you describe this movement in 15 words or less?	Working towards a more just world.
Do you think there is a New Progressive Movement?	Yes

How would you define this New Progressive Movement?	-
Do you feel that you are part of this New Progressive Movement	Yes
Check all that apply: as part of the New Progressive Movement have you:	Attended a meeting, donated money, participated in a town hall
What does Progressive mean to you?	Implementing actual policy that helps people, the environment, etc.
What are the three most important issues facing the US today?	Health care, economic inequality, political system
What is the best way to solve these issues?	Implement Medicare for All, then Green New Deal.
Do you consider yourself a feminist?	Yes
How would you define feminism?	The advocacy of women's rights on the basis of the equality of the sexes.
Do you think the New Progressive Movement is a feminist movement?	Yes
Does gender play an important role in the New Progressive Movement?	Yes
Please explain	We need more women in leadership roles.
Do you feel the movement provides women with more opportunities than the establishment	Yes
Please explain	The movement consists of progressive minds
Do you have any other thoughts you would like to share?	

Respondent Number 18

Gender Identity	Male
What is your political affiliation?	Democrat, Green Party, Independent, democratic socialist
Which organization(s) are you officially affiliated with?	Brand New Congress, Sunrise Movement

e.g. staff position, volunteer role in the leadership of the organization	
Which organization(s) are you otherwise involved in? e.g. volunteer, donate, or otherwise support	Justice Democrats, Democratic Socialists of America
How long have you been politically active?	1,5 years
At what age did you first become politically active?	18
Why did you decide to become politically active?	I wanted to help stop climate change
What is your role in the organization(s) in which you are active?	FTBRW and Wide Awake Mentor in Sunrise and S4BNC social media creator
Check all that apply: in your work with the organization(s) have you:	Participated in canvassing, participated in a voter registration drive, signed a petition, led departments
Do you feel that you are part of a movement?	Yes
How would you describe this movement in 15 words or less?	Ya, in Sunrise and BNC, I see my impact in Social Media and in the phonebanks I run with Sunrise
Do you think there is a New Progressive Movement?	Yes
How would you define this New Progressive Movement?	The aftermath of power from the 2016 and 2020 Bernie Sanders runs
Do you feel that you are part of this New Progressive Movement	Yes
Check all that apply: as part of the New Progressive Movement have you:	Attended a meeting, donated money, participated in canvassing, participated in a town hall, participated in voter registration drive
What does Progressive mean to you?	Someone who believes in advancing issues that help the majority of people
What are the three most important issues facing the US today?	Climate Change, racial injustice, voting system
What is the best way to solve these issues?	passing important legislation

Do you consider yourself a feminist?	Yes
How would you define feminism?	women should gain equal rights and treatment as their male counterparts
Do you think the New Progressive Movement is a feminist movement?	Yes
Does gender play an important role in the New Progressive Movement?	Yes
Please explain	if we elect woman of color that is we can involve gender into this and
Do you feel the movement provides women with more opportunities than the establishment	Yes
Please explain	women of color are progressive and that is reflective on the slate of BNC and sunrise candidates
Do you have any other thoughts you would like to share?	I would love to follow up and discuss this

Respondent Number 19

Gender Identity	She/her
What is your political affiliation?	Democratic socialist
Which organization(s) are you officially affiliated with? e.g. staff position, volunteer role in the leadership of the organization	Brand New Congress, Justice Democrats, Our Revolution, Sunrise Movement, Democratic Socialist
Which organization(s) are you otherwise involved in? e.g. volunteer, donate, or otherwise support	-
How long have you been politically active?	11 months
At what age did you first become politically active?	24
Why did you decide to become politically active?	I was voting, it wasn't working
What is your role in the organization(s) in which you are active?	volunteer for all except hub coordinator for local sunrise hub

Check all that apply: in your work with the organization(s) have you:	Attended a meeting, donated money, participated in canvassing, signed a petition, participated in a protest
Do you feel that you are part of a movement?	Yes
How would you describe this movement in 15 words or less?	a revolution
Do you think there is a New Progressive Movement?	Yes
How would you define this New Progressive Movement?	A revolution
Do you feel that you are part of this New Progressive Movement	Yes
Check all that apply: as part of the New Progressive Movement have you:	Attended a meeting, donated money, participated in a lobbying event, participated in canvassing, participated in a town hall, participated in a voter registration drive, participated in a protest
What does Progressive mean to you?	liberating the most oppressed
What are the three most important issues facing the US today?	Climate change, health care, economic inequality, racial injustice, political system, education, foreign policy, voting system, all of the above I cannot decide
What is the best way to solve these issues?	giving a voice to the most oppressed and making the active effort to engage them in a participatory process
Do you consider yourself a feminist?	Yes
How would you define feminism?	Liberating the most oppressed
Do you think the New Progressive Movement is a feminist movement?	Yes
Does gender play an important role in the New Progressive Movement?	Yes
Please explain	women are consistently spoken over and not given an equal seat at the table

Do you feel the movement provides women with more opportunities than the establishment	Yes
Please explain	care more about policy that benefit all women instead of identity politic
Do you have any other thoughts you would like to share?	nooooo

Respondent Number 20

Gender Identity	Cis Female
What is your political affiliation?	Democratic
Which organization(s) are you officially affiliated with? e.g. staff position, volunteer role in the leadership of the organization	Sunrise Movement
Which organization(s) are you otherwise involved in? e.g. volunteer, donate, or otherwise support	Justice Democrats, Our Revolution
How long have you been politically active?	4 years
At what age did you first become politically active?	14
Why did you decide to become politically active?	I realized that political literacy meant the ability to change things I wanted to in my world.
What is your role in the organization(s) in which you are active?	I'm an employee of the Democratic Party and I do digital outreach for them. I also am a data co lead and political co lead in my sunrise hub.
Check all that apply: in your work with the organization(s) have you:	Attended a meeting, donated money, participated in a lobbying event, participated in canvassing, participated in voter registration drive, signed a petition, led meetings, led departments

Do you feel that you are part of a movement?	Yes
How would you describe this movement in 15 words or less?	I movement to do what is necessary to survive and thrive on this planet
Do you think there is a New Progressive Movement?	Yes
How would you define this New Progressive Movement?	Young people are becoming more interested in politics and realizing that while grassroots movements are important, we need the support of government from a higher level in order to enact the really radical change that we need.
Do you feel that you are part of this New Progressive Movement	Yes
Check all that apply: as part of the New Progressive Movement have you:	Attended a meeting, donated money, participated in a protests
What does Progressive mean to you?	It means fighting for the inevitable to happen as soon as we can make it.
What are the three most important issues facing the US today?	Climate change, economic inequality, racial injustice
What is the best way to solve these issues?	With large, radical changes that take into account the intersectionality of these issues.
Do you consider yourself a feminist?	Yes
How would you define feminism?	The fight to re-define what a woman is and her role in the world
Do you think the New Progressive Movement is a feminist movement?	Yes
Does gender play an important role in the New Progressive Movement?	Somewhat
Please explain	Gender is somewhat important because a lot of us are fighting against gender inequality. At the same time, the new

	progressive movement is all about fighting for people who are different than you. So unlike traditional feminism in which women fight for women's rights, the new progressive movement has people of all genders fighting for women's rights.
Do you feel the movement provides women with more opportunities than the establishment	No
Please explain	think the Democratic Party is also pretty good about promoting feminist issues.
Do you have any other thoughts you would like to share?	

Respondent Number 21

Gender Identity	He/him
What is your political affiliation?	Democratic Socialist
Which organization(s) are you officially affiliated with? e.g. staff position, volunteer role in the leadership of the organization	Sunrise Movement
Which organization(s) are you otherwise involved in? e.g. volunteer, donate, or otherwise support	Justice Democrats, Our Revolution, Sunrise Movement, Democratic Socialists of America
How long have you been politically active?	Hard to define but I'm 33 and was active at 18. This last ~18 months got super into Bernie (\$ and calls), joined Sunrise NYC hub in June.
At what age did you first become politically active?	High school ('05). Idk maybe 18-20 for "active" participation

Why did you decide to become politically active?	Because politics are just why society/life is the way it is
What is your role in the organization(s) in which you are active?	Political endorsements team and direct action coordinator
Check all that apply: in your work with the organization(s) have you:	Attended a meeting, donated money, participated in canvassing, signed a petition, participated in protest
Do you feel that you are part of a movement?	Yes
How would you describe this movement in 15 words or less?	Multi-leveled actions to transform this crumbling American empire into a people-centric life affirming civilization
Do you think there is a New Progressive Movement?	Yes
How would you define this New Progressive Movement?	I think it starts with the Occupy Wall Street protests in 2010? Might be 2011. Bernie 2016 and especially 2020 = Occupy the White House. "Not me, Us" defines it. This 3 minute video says it best by far https://youtu.be/d9b0T4hwguY
Do you feel that you are part of this New Progressive Movement	Yes
Check all that apply: as part of the New Progressive Movement have you:	Attended a meeting, donated money, participated in canvassing, participated in a voter registration drive, participated in a protest, I am an organizer in BLM protests in NYC and am determined to connect that with

	Sunrise/DSA electoral goals. Cornel West energy
What does Progressive mean to you?	Justice: economic racial climate demilitarizing; empowerment of the common many as invaluable human beings. Tax the rich, hard. Defund the pentagon and abolish this carceral police state. Green New Deal immediately or climate apocalypse.
What are the three most important issues facing the US today?	Climate change, health care, economic inequality, every one of those example of racial injustice too
What is the best way to solve these issues?	Make organizing and actions accessible and improve the messaging to invite participation by everyone. Multiracial coalition is the only way. Tax the rich green new deal defund the pentagon. Seriously.
Do you consider yourself a feminist?	Yes
How would you define feminism?	I have never had to do this so maybe I'm not a good one yet but I believe womxn leadership is the future and should be the past and present, and 'equality' per the law' is not enough and inequities must be addressed as well. I'm a HS science teacher and try to highlight womxn scientists both purely as successes but also past examples of their groundbreaking work being ignored or stolen to show activism and speaking up is forever necessary

Do you think the New Progressive Movement is a feminist movement?	Yes
Does gender play an important role in the New Progressive Movement?	Somewhat
Please explain	Acknowledging what gender is and what it isn't means a lot for unlearning and rebuilding a better society
Do you feel the movement provides women with more opportunities than the establishment	Yes
Please explain	Better future. Internal politics occur for sure and we must look and examine our own potentially sexist and racist ways to be better people and organizers and build the better world without them
Do you have any other thoughts you would like to share?	This should address racism and prompt respondents to explain their view of America's systemic racism as a historical —> current reality

Respondent Number 22

Gender Identity	Cis Male
What is your political affiliation?	Anarchist Communist
Which organization(s) are you officially affiliated with? e.g. staff position, volunteer role in the leadership of the organization	Sunrise Movement
Which organization(s) are you otherwise involved in? e.g. volunteer, donate, or otherwise support	Our Revolution, Democratic Socialists of America, Kern Mutual Aid

How long have you been politically active?	4 months
At what age did you first become politically active?	At age of 9 or 10 I knew America was an imperial capitalist caste society. I didn't actively engage till the George Floyd Insurrections.
Why did you decide to become politically active?	Take power
What is your role in the organization(s) in which you are active?	Hub Coordinator/Actions Team - Sunrise Kern, Treasurer/Volunteer- Kern Mutual Aid
Check all that apply: in your work with the organization(s) have you:	Attended a meeting, donate money, participated in a town hall, participated in a voter registration drive, signed a petition, participated in a protest, led meetings, led departments, build community
Do you feel that you are part of a movement?	Yes
How would you describe this movement in 15 words or less?	A radical, top-down restructure of class, economies, race, culture, and society. Everything is in constant motion.
Do you think there is a New Progressive Movement?	Yes
How would you define this New Progressive Movement?	The politics of and for the youth. A vanguard movement.
Do you feel that you are part of this New Progressive Movement	Yes
Check all that apply: as part of the New Progressive Movement have you:	Attended a meeting, donated money, participated in a lobbying event, participated in a voter registration drive, participated in a protest
What does Progressive mean to you?	Center of Left. A European Right Winger. A lib.
What are the three most important issues facing the US today?	Climate change, economic inequality, racial injustice

What is the best way to solve these issues?	Strict government ban on non-renewable energy. Overhaul of our diets. Government provided jobs. Free healthcare. Free training and college. Raise the minimum wage and create a maximum wage. Tax the fuck out of the rich by closing loopholes. Go through a global pandemic and a great depression like era and learn to love one another
Do you consider yourself a feminist?	Yes
How would you define feminism?	Being a humanist. You can't say you love everyone if you're not a feminist. Equality in the truest sense.
Do you think the New Progressive Movement is a feminist movement?	Yes
Does gender play an important role in the New Progressive Movement?	Yes
Please explain	Identity politics just play a large part in American liberal politics. The New Progressive Movement that you speak of is still pretty fascist.
Do you feel the movement provides women with more opportunities than the establishment	Yes
Please explain	Many of the leaders in the local movement are women
Do you have any other thoughts you would like to share?	I feel like that as a Sunrider I'm the furthest left. While the New Progressive Movement would help push the USA further left, it's pretty bourgeois.

Respondent Number 23

Gender Identity	Woman
What is your political affiliation?	Democratic Socialist
Which organization(s) are you officially affiliated with? e.g. staff position, volunteer role in the leadership of the organization	-
Which organization(s) are you otherwise involved in? e.g. volunteer, donate, or otherwise support	Sunrise movement
How long have you been politically active?	5 years
At what age did you first become politically active?	18
Why did you decide to become politically active?	Bernie sanders running in 2016 and starting college where people around me were
What is your role in the organization(s) in which you are active?	I'm the hub coordinator for sunrise UMass Boston and the video lead for sunrise Boston hub
Check all that apply: in your work with the organization(s) have you:	Attended a meeting, donated money, participated in a lobbying event, participated in canvassing, participated in a town hall, signed a petition, participated in protest, led meetings
Do you feel that you are part of a movement?	Yes
How would you describe this movement in 15 words or less?	Young people fighting to stop climate change and create millions of good jobs
Do you think there is a New Progressive Movement?	Yes
How would you define this New Progressive Movement?	A coalition of people fighting for the rights of everyone to have healthcare, housing, a union job, and a livable climate.

Do you feel that you are part of this New Progressive Movement	Yes
Check all that apply: as part of the New Progressive Movement have you:	Attended a meeting, donated money participated in a lobbying event, participated in canvassing, participated in a town hall, participated in a protest
What does Progressive mean to you?	Fighting for human rights (housing, food, clean air, clean water) for everyone. Believing that in a world with so much wealth, everyone's needs should be met.
What are the three most important issues facing the US today?	Climate change, economic inequality, racial injustice
What is the best way to solve these issues?	Tax the rich, Medicare for all, green new deal, federal jobs guarantee for good union jobs, quality public housing available for anyone who needs it
Do you consider yourself a feminist?	Yes
How would you define feminism?	Need to elevate the voices and rights of women
Do you think the New Progressive Movement is a feminist movement?	Yes
Does gender play an important role in the New Progressive Movement?	Yes
Please explain	By guaranteeing everyone's rights to having their needs met (healthcare, housing, a well-paying union job), this will help women (and anyone) who experience poverty at higher levels and help them have the freedom get out of abusive relationships

Do you feel the movement provides women with more opportunities than the establishment	Yes
Please explain	Many stars of the movement are women (AOC, Ayanna, Tlaib). And the policies provide everyday women to have more choices if they are stuck in a relationship or job where they are mistreated because they won't need to worry about their needs for healthcare or housing not being met
Do you have any other thoughts you would like to share?	

Respondent Number 24

Gender Identity	Cis Man to my knowledge
What is your political affiliation?	Democrat, Democratic Socialist, Many Others
Which organization(s) are you officially affiliated with? e.g. staff position, volunteer role in the leadership of the organization	Sunrise Movement
Which organization(s) are you otherwise involved in? e.g. volunteer, donate, or otherwise support	Justice Democrats, Democratic Socialists of America, many others
How long have you been politically active?	A few years
At what age did you first become politically active?	18
Why did you decide to become politically active?	My life depends on it
What is your role in the organization(s) in which you are active?	Many roles
Check all that apply: in your work with the organization(s) have you:	Attended a meeting, donated money, participated in a lobbying event, participated

	in canvassing, participated in a town hall, participated in a voter registration drive, signed a petition, led meetings, many activities
Do you feel that you are part of a movement?	Yes
How would you describe this movement in 15 words or less?	the only hope we have left of surviving
Do you think there is a New Progressive Movement?	Yes
How would you define this New Progressive Movement?	It is most accurately described not as a “New Progressive Movement”, but rather as a broad set of movements all with closely aligned goals and strategies, some of which have been around for decades and others for less than a year but most somewhere in between, all at various stages of merging into a unified movement that is greater than the sum of its predecessor movements. Key periods in the most recent phases of this process, within the past decade, include the original Occupy Wall Street uprisings of 2011-2012, the original uprisings for Black Lives in 2012-2015, the Bernie Sanders campaigns of 2015-2016 and 2019-2020, the immediate response to the installation of our current fascist dictator in 2016-2017, the midterm campaigns (especially those of the Squad and the candidates who managed to win this year on their second try) of 2017-2018, the impeachment-and-removal efforts of 2018-2019, the

	blossoming of the youth climate movement in 2017-2019, and the current uprisings in response to the COVID-19 pandemic and associated economic crises and in defense of Black lives, alongside countless electoral insurgencies.
Do you feel that you are part of this New Progressive Movement	Yes
Check all that apply: as part of the New Progressive Movement have you:	Attended a meeting, donated money, participated in a lobbying event, participated in canvassing, participated in a town hall, participated in a voter registration drive, participated in a protest, many other activities
What does Progressive mean to you?	Basically whatever it means to the targets of my messaging, which can include many completely divergent definitions; it is far from the most useful term to use in organizing, partially for that reason.
What are the three most important issues facing the US today?	These are all the same issue. In reality, the US itself is quite obviously the main issue we face.
What is the best way to solve these issues?	A mass movement representing the vast majority of the people, extremely diverse in all ways, combining countless existing movements into something much greater, organizing to build power from the ground up, taking full advantage of all available trigger events (and even creating some of its own) in order to start

	<p>and sustain moments of the whirlwind that are unprecedented in scale and scope, rising up, rapidly growing, creating massive disruption while exhibiting truly impressive sacrifice, toppling and shifting core pillars of support on a daily basis, demanding changes that seem completely reasonable to the general public but are not quite what we need and are completely unacceptable to those who currently wield the power to stop them, escalating those demands as we build more power, running campaigns of escalating direct action, seamlessly integrating them with other tactics such as electoral campaigns and inside-outside policy work, building toward mass noncooperation, pulling it off at an opportune moment, overthrowing every currently dominant system in our society, in the meantime designing and implementing entirely new systems through collective processes that center our most oppressed and marginalized voices and produce results that are fundamentally different from anything currently allowed to exist on more than the smallest scale or anywhere other than the furthest fringes of our society, continuing this struggle for months or even years until our enemies are sufficiently marginalized, starting the process of rebuilding and repair very</p>
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	early on in the escalation and continuing it for decades as we work to fully implement these new systems while thwarting any efforts to stop us or implement anything that does not align with this, constantly working very intentionally to improve and build upon this agenda, bringing up new generations that do not know any world other than the one we establish for them, etc.
Do you consider yourself a feminist?	Yes
How would you define feminism?	A broad set of principles around valuing feminine people, feminine systems, feminine work, feminine etc. and feminizing our society
Do you think the New Progressive Movement is a feminist movement?	at its core yes, although there may be peripheral components of it that are less than feminist
Does gender play an important role in the New Progressive Movement?	Yes
Please explain	Our movements recognize complexity, including that of gender, weaving it into all the work we do, valuing each of several of the genders for its unique capabilities and characteristics while going out of our way to reduce/prevent/mitigate/heal gender-related harm.

Do you feel the movement provides women with more opportunities than the establishment	Yes
Please explain	The establishment was literally built by cis men for cis men, only offering meaningful opportunities for other genders in response to movements led by people of those genders. The forces that founded the establishment are the same ones that constructed the currently dominant gender system. Many of our movements have multiple genders, including women, represented among their founders and still have values and systems constructed by and thus reflecting those founders.
Do you have any other thoughts you would like to share?	-

Respondent Number 25

Gender Identity	Male
What is your political affiliation?	Democrat, Independ
Which organization(s) are you officially affiliated with? e.g. staff position, volunteer role in the leadership of the organization	Sunrise Movement
Which organization(s) are you otherwise involved in? e.g. volunteer, donate, or otherwise support	Sunrise Movement, Citizens Climate Lobby
How long have you been politically active?	2 years
At what age did you first become politically active?	18

Why did you decide to become politically active?	I heard about the IPCC SR1.5 Report my first year in college. Although the timelines were concerning to me they also gave me hope in that we can save a lot at 1.5C vs 2C, and that limiting warming to 1.5C was possible. I also heard about Sunrise Movement around the same time and saw how successful they were and signed up on their email list, and from there I went to a few local hub actions and eventually helped start a hub at my university.
What is your role in the organization(s) in which you are active?	Recruitment, social media
Check all that apply: in your work with the organization(s) have you:	Attended a meeting, donated money, participated in a lobbying event, participated in a canvassing event, signed a petition, participated in a protest, led meetings, Participated in phone banking for our hub's endorsed candidate
Do you feel that you are part of a movement?	Yes
How would you describe this movement in 15 words or less?	A movement to stop climate change and create millions of good jobs in the process
Do you think there is a New Progressive Movement?	Yes
How would you define this New Progressive Movement?	Not really sure, as I'm relatively new to the movement and my Sunrise hub is just starting. But I think Sunrise Movement at least is trying to build a coalition of other movements due to the intersectionality of climate change with other issues and movements. So

	something like: a new movement of groups combining from the labor movement, racial and economic equality groups, and environmental groups, working to rebuild society to one that protects and works for everyone and future generations.
Do you feel that you are part of this New Progressive Movement	Yes
Check all that apply: as part of the New Progressive Movement have you:	Attended a meeting, donated money, participated in canvassing, participated in a protest, Participated in phone banking for our hub's endorsed candidate
What does Progressive mean to you?	Not really sure, perhaps an ideology of a society that works for all people: working to ensure everyone and future generations have affordable healthcare, opportunity for social mobility, a clean environment
What are the three most important issues facing the US today?	Climate change, health care, economic inequality
What is the best way to solve these issues?	A Green New Deal -- transitioning the US to clean, renewable energy while ensuring people are protected in the transition.
Do you consider yourself a feminist?	No
How would you define feminism?	Fighting for women's rights and equality
Do you think the New Progressive Movement is a feminist movement?	Not sure but could be
Does gender play an important role in the New Progressive Movement?	Somewhat
Please explain	For one, Project Drawdown, which lists top global climate change

	<p>solutions, has educating girls and family planning among its top five solutions due to ability for education to curb population growth.</p> <p>Additionally, educating girls can empower them to address and face impacts of climate change.</p> <p>Increasingly, we have seen some of the most forceful proponents of Green New Deal policies being women--for example, Alexandria Ocasio-Cortez and Naomi Klein.</p> <p>The Green New Deal resolution introduced in US Congress cites the “gender earnings gap” when discussing income inequality.</p>
Do you feel the movement provides women with more opportunities than the establishment	Somewhat
Please explain	<p>Not sure. My being a male and young college student, I am not able to really compare if I had my opportunities. In terms of LGBTQ+, however, I feel there is increased understanding, at least among Sunrise Movement. For example, members are encouraged to introduce themselves with their preferred pronouns, and are also</p>

	encouraged to identify this on forms, webinar registrations, training applications.
Do you have any other thoughts you would like to share?	

Respondent Number 26

Gender Identity	Male
What is your political affiliation?	Democrat
Which organization(s) are you officially affiliated with? e.g. staff position, volunteer role in the leadership of the organization	Sunrise Movement
Which organization(s) are you otherwise involved in? e.g. volunteer, donate, or otherwise support	-
How long have you been politically active?	2 years
At what age did you first become politically active?	18
Why did you decide to become politically active?	Civic duty, climate change
What is your role in the organization(s) in which you are active?	Electoral Team Leader
Check all that apply: in your work with the organization(s) have you:	Attended a meeting, donated money, participated in a lobbying event, participated in canvassing, participated in a town hall, signed a petition, participated in a protest, led meetings, led departments
Do you feel that you are part of a movement?	Yes
How would you describe this movement in 15 words or less?	A movement to create a just, equitable, and inhabitable planet
Do you think there is a New Progressive Movement?	Yes

How would you define this New Progressive Movement?	Response to the Reagan era running its course, people are fed up with market fundamentalism, extractivism, and economic inequity
Do you feel that you are part of this New Progressive Movement	Yes
Check all that apply: as part of the New Progressive Movement have you:	Attended a meeting, donated money, participated in a lobbying event, participated in a town hall, participated in a protest
What does Progressive mean to you?	Believes in equity, humanitarianism, and attacking the root of systems of oppression
What are the three most important issues facing the US today?	Climate change, economic inequality, racial injustice
What is the best way to solve these issues?	There's no 1 solution, it requires a holistic approach at individual, community, and government levels.
Do you consider yourself a feminist?	Yes
How would you define feminism?	An ideology that fights for gender equity and works to undo the damaging systems of patriarchy
Do you think the New Progressive Movement is a feminist movement?	Yes
Does gender play an important role in the New Progressive Movement?	Yes
Please explain	There is a large effort to lift up female voices since they have so long been oppressed and so many of our problems come from the patriarchy

Do you feel the movement provides women with more opportunities than the establishment	Yes
Please explain	Luckily this bleeds into the establishment in some ways, but this movement is intentionally intersectional and feminist and in fact prioritizes women rather than just keeping one in as a token
Do you have any other thoughts you would like to share?	

Respondent Number 27

Gender Identity	Female
What is your political affiliation?	Democratic Socialists
Which organization(s) are you officially affiliated with? e.g. staff position, volunteer role in the leadership of the organization	Sunrise Movement
Which organization(s) are you otherwise involved in? e.g. volunteer, donate, or otherwise support	Sunrise Movement
How long have you been politically active?	1 year
At what age did you first become politically active?	18
Why did you decide to become politically active?	A climate change seminar class in college opened my eyes to how dire the climate situation is, while studying SNCC and the 1960s civil rights movement in another class inspired me to join a youth movement. I heard about Sunrise through a news story and decided to join
What is your role in the organization(s) in which you are active?	I am our hub's delegate, meaning I provide coaching, connect Sunrisers across hubs, and run trainings.

Check all that apply: in your work with the organization(s) have you:	Attend a meeting, donated money, participated in canvassing, participated in a town hall, signed a petition, participated in a protest, led meetings
Do you feel that you are part of a movement?	Yes
How would you describe this movement in 15 words or less?	youth activists for climate justice and a Green New Deal
Do you think there is a New Progressive Movement?	Yes
How would you define this New Progressive Movement?	a mass realization that current political system doesn't serve those who aren't rich, white, cis, and able-bodied, and the decision that it is possible and necessary to change the system so that it can work for all of us
Do you feel that you are part of this New Progressive Movement	Yes
Check all that apply: as part of the New Progressive Movement have you:	Attended a meeting, donated money, participated in canvassing, participated in a town hall, participated in a protest
What does Progressive mean to you?	It's just the word we assign to people, politicians, and policies that seek justice and favor the working class.
What are the three most important issues facing the US today?	Climate change, economic inequality, racial injustice
What is the best way to solve these issues?	Policy wise: the Green New Deal is an extremely solid start. But to get policy like that, we need a mass movement demanding it, with sustained involvement and clear goals. So I think getting more people involved in

	fighting for themselves, their families, and people they don't know is the real trick.
Do you consider yourself a feminist?	Yes
How would you define feminism?	Belief in gender equality and recognition that sexism is deeply ingrained in our society.
Do you think the New Progressive Movement is a feminist movement?	Yes
Does gender play an important role in the New Progressive Movement?	Somewhat
Please explain	I think it's important to recognize sexism as an issue and encourage women and nonbinary people to step into more leadership and action, but I also like to think progressives have moved past the "girl boss" culture that celebrates powerful women just for being powerful, even if they are not using their power for good
Do you feel the movement provides women with more opportunities than the establishment	Yes
Please explain	The establishment was created by men, and women had to fight for a place in it (a nonbinary people are still fighting for recognition in it). The movement was formed with gender equality as a core tenant. However, that does not mean there's no patriarchal tendencies in the movement.

Do you have any other thoughts you would like to share?	For me, gender issues do not come up a lot in my movement work. Though we are certainly open to talking about sexism, and it does come up occasionally, race and class issues come up a lot more in fighting for climate justice.
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Respondent Number 28

Gender Identity	Female/woman (she/her)
What is your political affiliation?	I don't like to affiliate myself officially with an entire party, but I would identify closest as Democratic-Socialist!
Which organization(s) are you officially affiliated with? e.g. staff position, volunteer role in the leadership of the organization	Sunrise Movement
Which organization(s) are you otherwise involved in? e.g. volunteer, donate, or otherwise support	Our Revolution, Democratic Socialists of America
How long have you been politically active?	9 months
At what age did you first become politically active?	17
Why did you decide to become politically active?	I decided to become politically active because I felt passionate about climate justice and realized the urgency and severity of the issue, especially after learning more about it in my AP Environmental Science class. This inspired me to take action. :)

What is your role in the organization(s) in which you are active?	Hub coordinator (founder & leader of a chapter, or hub, of the Sunrise Movement)
Check all that apply: in your work with the organization(s) have you:	Attended a meeting, participated in canvassing, participated in a town hall, signed a petition, participated in a protest, led meetings, led departments
Do you feel that you are part of a movement?	Yes
How would you describe this movement in 15 words or less?	People power; strong; deep-rooted; transformative; kind
Do you think there is a New Progressive Movement?	Yes
How would you define this New Progressive Movement?	-
Do you feel that you are part of this New Progressive Movement	Yes
Check all that apply: as part of the New Progressive Movement have you:	Attended a meeting,
What does Progressive mean to you?	-
What are the three most important issues facing the US today?	Climate change, economic inequality, racial justice
What is the best way to solve these issues?	-
Do you consider yourself a feminist?	Yes
How would you define feminism?	-
Do you think the New Progressive Movement is a feminist movement?	Yes
Does gender play an important role in the New Progressive Movement?	Yes
Please explain	-
Do you feel the movement provides women with more opportunities than the establishment	Yes
Please explain	-
Do you have any other thoughts you would like to share?	

Respondent Number 29

Gender Identity	Male
What is your political affiliation?	Democrat
Which organization(s) are you officially affiliated with? e.g. staff position, volunteer role in the leadership of the organization	Sunrise Movement
Which organization(s) are you otherwise involved in? e.g. volunteer, donate, or otherwise support	-
How long have you been politically active?	About 3 years
At what age did you first become politically active?	12
Why did you decide to become politically active?	Trump became a threat to our democracy.
What is your role in the organization(s) in which you are active?	I help send texts, and help new people join.
Check all that apply: in your work with the organization(s) have you:	Donated money, signed a petition,
Do you feel that you are part of a movement?	Yes
How would you describe this movement in 15 words or less?	Big Structural Change
Do you think there is a New Progressive Movement?	Yes
How would you define this New Progressive Movement?	A grassroots led movement
Do you feel that you are part of this New Progressive Movement	Yes
Check all that apply: as part of the New Progressive Movement have you:	Attended a meeting, donated money, participated in canvassing, participated in voter registration drive,
What does Progressive mean to you?	Changing the way we function for the better.
What are the three most important issues facing the US today?	Climate change, health care, economic inequality
What is the best way to solve these issues?	Electing leaders who will fight for these issues.

Do you consider yourself a feminist?	Yes
How would you define feminism?	Getting rid of gender roles.
Do you think the New Progressive Movement is a feminist movement?	Yes
Does gender play an important role in the New Progressive Movement?	Yes
Please explain	The progressive movement is about making sure everybody has a seat at the table, including women who are left out.
Do you feel the movement provides women with more opportunities than the establishment	Yes
Please explain	Women have different experiences
Do you have any other thoughts you would like to share?	-

Respondent Number 30

Gender Identity	Cis female
What is your political affiliation?	Democratic socialist
Which organization(s) are you officially affiliated with? e.g. staff position, volunteer role in the leadership of the organization	Sunrise Movement
Which organization(s) are you otherwise involved in? e.g. volunteer, donate, or otherwise support	-
How long have you been politically active?	6 months
At what age did you first become politically active?	14
Why did you decide to become politically active?	I was tired of adults telling me that everything was going to be fine, and I

	<p>was scared of not doing anything.</p> <p>Some friends convinced me to try out Sunrise School, and the rest is history!</p> <p>We started our own hub at our high school and it's been an incredible learning experience.</p>
What is your role in the organization(s) in which you are active?	<p>Technically, I'm the Action Lead, but our hub is small so really I'll do anything that needs doing. Me and two other members are the core leadership team, & we push most projects along and keep the hub running.</p>
Check all that apply: in your work with the organization(s) have you:	<p>Attended a meeting, participated in a town hall, signed a petition, participation in a protest, led meetings, postcard & phone banking, endorsements</p>
Do you feel that you are part of a movement?	<p>Yes</p>
How would you describe this movement in 15 words or less?	<p>Youth-led movement to combat the climate crisis and societal inequalities.</p>
Do you think there is a New Progressive Movement?	<p>Yes</p>
How would you define this New Progressive Movement?	<p>Youth in our country have been told for so long that our voices don't matter, but with progressive politicians like Bernie Sanders or AOC, we have found motivation and a voice for ourselves to determine where we want our country to stand. We are young and tired and angry and hopeful, and we're finally being listened to.</p>

Do you feel that you are part of this New Progressive Movement	Yes
Check all that apply: as part of the New Progressive Movement have you:	Attended a meeting, participated in a lobbying event, participated in a town hall, participated in a protest, phone banking, postcard banking, etc.
What does Progressive mean to you?	Progressive means common sense, to me. Our world is dying right now, people are dying, and the establishment is ignoring cries for help. Progressives have empathy and critical thinking, enough to question the center and understand that we need to act.
What are the three most important issues facing the US today?	Climate change, racial injustice, voting system
What is the best way to solve these issues?	The first step is to get a president in office and a Democratic majority in the senate who will at the very least not take away our rights. From there, we have to pressure politicians to make tangible change happen (a large part of this is electing progressive candidates). We need a Green New Deal and policy that looks forward and takes everyone into account, and we need big change.
Do you consider yourself a feminist?	Yes
How would you define feminism?	Feminism to me is about supporting and uplifting all people regardless of gender or lack thereof, and addressing where we have fallen short in taking care of

	<p>various genders. A lot of it is changing the narrative, from increased diversity to a million other things. I could talk about this forever (and I have) but some examples would be tackling rape culture at its source rather than blaming women, increased representation and active support of non-cisgendered individuals, and providing men with the space to explore their mental health. Feminism isn't radical and it isn't putting women over all others — feminism is fighting for all people.</p>
Do you think the New Progressive Movement is a feminist movement?	Yes
Does gender play an important role in the New Progressive Movement?	Yes
Please explain	<p>Intersectionality is a huge part of the New Progressive Movement. Sunrise is climate-oriented, but a huge part of climate change is understanding how it disproportionately effects women. Outside of that, too, Sunrise and other movements like it always address gender identity. You are asked to share your pronouns if you are comfortable, and Sunrise leadership was one of the first instances I had seen of non-cisgendered/non-binary people in positions of power, which I think is crucial. Still, gender isn't its main focus — it's kind of like a constant steady narrative of support in the background</p>
Do you feel the movement provides women with more opportunities than the establishment	Yes

Please explain	I have seen more female leadership in Sunrise than I have in the establishment— in fact, I have noticed that Sunrise members lean much more heavily to the female side of the gender spectrum, especially with younger members. I also see much more non-binary and non-cis representation, which I have not seen in the established political community.
Do you have any other thoughts you would like to share?	I want to talk a bit more about intersectionality. Intersectionality is the understanding that all social justice causes intersect and interact, and so every movement should help uplift other movements and fight for other causes when they are able — you can see this in Sunrise’s active support of the Movement for Black Lives. This is an important concept to me because learning about it made me feel comfortable to join one specific movement — before, I was torn because there were so many causes deserving of support. But I chose Sunrise, because of the pressing-ness of climate change, but also because their values aligned with intersectionality and I knew with them, I could fight for everybody.

Respondent Number 31

Gender Identity	Cis woman
What is your political affiliation?	Democrat
Which organization(s) are you officially affiliated with? e.g. staff position, volunteer role in the leadership of the organization	Sunrise Movement
Which organization(s) are you otherwise involved in? e.g. volunteer, donate, or otherwise support	Sunrise Movement
How long have you been politically active?	Since 2017
At what age did you first become politically active?	13
Why did you decide to become politically active?	I was scared of what I saw happening in the world and wanted to change it. Especially Gun Violence at the beginning
What is your role in the organization(s) in which you are active?	Hub coordinator, trainer, politics, other stuff sometimes
Check all that apply: in your work with the organization(s) have you:	Attended a meeting, donated money, participated in canvassing, participated in town hall, signed a petition, participated in a protest, led meeting, led trainings and townhalls, protests
Do you feel that you are part of a movement?	Yes
How would you describe this movement in 15 words or less?	Youth movement working for a just transition and future for all
Do you think there is a New Progressive Movement?	Yes
How would you define this New Progressive Movement?	Youth led, tired of the status quo that hurts people and the incremental was that people have tried to create solutions to the problems we face.
Do you feel that you are part of this New Progressive Movement	Yes

Check all that apply: as part of the New Progressive Movement have you:	Attended a meeting, donated money, participated in canvassing, participated in a town hall, participated in a protest
What does Progressive mean to you?	Fighting for a rapid, extensive change to create a future that helps everyone, not just the top 1%.
What are the three most important issues facing the US today?	Climate change, economic inequality, racial injustice
What is the best way to solve these issues?	A Green New Deal created on a widespread coalition and alignment of progressive orgs.
Do you consider yourself a feminist?	Yes
How would you define feminism?	A movement working to create equality for all women, femmes, and no-binary people
Do you think the New Progressive Movement is a feminist movement?	Yes
Does gender play an important role in the New Progressive Movement?	Somewhat
Please explain	Some of its most prominent leaders are female, but it also sometimes seems to be less talked about than other inequalities.
Do you feel the movement provides women with more opportunities than the establishment	Somewhat
Please explain	It has lot of women leaders, but so does the establishment.
Do you have any other thoughts you would like to share?	

Respondent Number 32

Gender Identity	Woman
What is your political affiliation?	Democratic Socialist

Which organization(s) are you officially affiliated with? e.g. staff position, volunteer role in the leadership of the organization	Sunrise Movement
Which organization(s) are you otherwise involved in? e.g. volunteer, donate, or otherwise support	Sunrise Movement
How long have you been politically active?	I've been interested in politics for 6 years now (since I was 12). But officially, for 2 years now.
At what age did you first become politically active?	12 or 15 (unofficially, officially)
Why did you decide to become politically active?	I didn't have all the rights I deserved (gay marriage) and from seeing things in the news: I wanted to help.
What is your role in the organization(s) in which you are active?	Communications team lead
Check all that apply: in your work with the organization(s) have you:	Attended a meeting, participated in a lobbying event, sign a petition, participated in a protest, led meetings
Do you feel that you are part of a movement?	Yes
How would you describe this movement in 15 words or less?	-
Do you think there is a New Progressive Movement?	Yes
How would you define this New Progressive Movement?	-
Do you feel that you are part of this New Progressive Movement	Yes
Check all that apply: as part of the New Progressive Movement have you:	Attended a meeting, donated money, participated in canvassing, participated in protest
What does Progressive mean to you?	-
What are the three most important issues facing the US today?	Climate change, voting system,
What is the best way to solve these issues?	-

Do you consider yourself a feminist?	Yes
How would you define feminism?	-
Do you think the New Progressive Movement is a feminist movement?	Yes
Does gender play an important role in the New Progressive Movement?	Somewhat
Please explain	-
Do you feel the movement provides women with more opportunities than the establishment	Somewhat
Please explain	-
Do you have any other thoughts you would like to share?	

Respondent Number 33

Gender Identity	Cis female
What is your political affiliation?	Democrat, I'm not 18 so officially nothing
Which organization(s) are you officially affiliated with? e.g. staff position, volunteer role in the leadership of the organization	Sunrise movement
Which organization(s) are you otherwise involved in? e.g. volunteer, donate, or otherwise support	-
How long have you been politically active?	-
At what age did you first become politically active?	15 (this year)
Why did you decide to become politically active?	the political climate needs young progressive people to speak up and advocate for the future we're gonna have to live.
What is your role in the organization(s) in which you are active?	volunteer (hub coordinator of my high school's hub, comms team of SunriseBA)

Check all that apply: in your work with the organization(s) have you:	Attended a meeting, participated in canvassing, signed a petition, participated in a protest, led meetings
Do you feel that you are part of a movement?	Yes
How would you describe this movement in 15 words or less?	Young people using their voices to save our planet and bring justice.
Do you think there is a New Progressive Movement?	Yes
How would you define this New Progressive Movement?	Pushing for political and social justice through moral protest and callouts
Do you feel that you are part of this New Progressive Movement	Yes
Check all that apply: as part of the New Progressive Movement have you:	Participated in a protest
What does Progressive mean to you?	progressive means bringing new ideas and perspectives to a topic in an overall attempt to move forward
What are the three most important issues facing the US today?	Climate change, economic inequality, racial injustice
What is the best way to solve these issues?	I don't know. Taxing the rich and reallocating property taxes to support lower income communities (helps with economic inequality and one aspect of racial injustice). Reforming/defunding the police institution to better educate and protect the communities they serve. Creating green cities and no longer investing in oil and gas companies.
Do you consider yourself a feminist?	Yes
How would you define feminism?	supporting ALL womxn
Do you think the New Progressive Movement is a feminist movement?	Yes

Does gender play an important role in the New Progressive Movement?	Somewhat
Please explain	I think that intersectionality is a big part of the New Progressive Movement and gender inequality is something that is still a problem and does still need to be addressed as we move forward. Gender plays a role in gaining power - it's much easier for a cis person (and a cis male even more so) to move up to political ladder.
Do you feel the movement provides women with more opportunities than the establishment	-
Please explain	-
Do you have any other thoughts you would like to share?	-

Respondent Number 34

Gender Identity	Female/woman
What is your political affiliation?	Democrat, Democratic Socialist
Which organization(s) are you officially affiliated with? e.g. staff position, volunteer role in the leadership of the organization	Sunrise Movement
Which organization(s) are you otherwise involved in? e.g. volunteer, donate, or otherwise support	Justice Democrats
How long have you been politically active?	6 years
At what age did you first become politically active?	17
Why did you decide to become politically active?	Big election coming up (2016) and a possible fossil fuel import ban in my

	city. I wanted to get fossil fuels out and transition our city to renewables!
What is your role in the organization(s) in which you are active?	Internal trainings captain, trainer
Check all that apply: in your work with the organization(s) have you:	Attended a meeting, donated money, participated in a lobbying event, participated in canvassing, participated in a voter registration drive, signed a petition, participated in a protest, led meetings, led departments
Do you feel that you are part of a movement?	Yes
How would you describe this movement in 15 words or less?	a young cross-class, multiracial movement fighting for a livable future
Do you think there is a New Progressive Movement?	Yes
How would you define this New Progressive Movement?	Rooted in shared values of caring for each other and uplifting the most vulnerable by uprooting the status quo
Do you feel that you are part of this New Progressive Movement	Yes
Check all that apply: as part of the New Progressive Movement have you:	Donated money
What does Progressive mean to you?	pushing for equity and justice
What are the three most important issues facing the US today?	Climate change, economic inequality, racial justice
What is the best way to solve these issues?	Green New Deal, Community care/aid, prison abolition, and progressive candidates in office
Do you consider yourself a feminist?	Yes
How would you define feminism?	Equality of all gender
Do you think the New Progressive Movement is a feminist movement?	Yes
Does gender play an important role in the New Progressive Movement?	Yes

Please explain	Without equal pay, then values of equality and justice are not being put to action
Do you feel the movement provides women with more opportunities than the establishment	Yes
Please explain	-
Do you have any other thoughts you would like to share?	-

Respondent Number 35

Gender Identity	He
What is your political affiliation?	Democrat, Democratic Socialist
Which organization(s) are you officially affiliated with? e.g. staff position, volunteer role in the leadership of the organization	Our Revolution
Which organization(s) are you otherwise involved in? e.g. volunteer, donate, or otherwise support	Brand New Congress, Justice Democrats, Sunrise Movement, democratic Socialists of America, Indivisible, Progressive Democrats of America
How long have you been politically active?	50+ years
At what age did you first become politically active?	23
Why did you decide to become politically active?	The American civil rights movement and the anti-Vietnam movement
What is your role in the organization(s) in which you are active?	affiliate chair, communications team editor, new member recruitment, anti-racism working group
Check all that apply: in your work with the organization(s) have you:	Attended a meeting, donated money, participated in a lobbying event, participated in canvassing, participated in a town hall, participated in a voter registration drive, signed a petition, participated in a protest, led meetings
Do you feel that you are part of a movement?	Yes

How would you describe this movement in 15 words or less?	Grassroots participatory democracy revolution
Do you think there is a New Progressive Movement?	Yes
How would you define this New Progressive Movement?	still consolidating. much depends on the 11/3 election
Do you feel that you are part of this New Progressive Movement	Yes
Check all that apply: as part of the New Progressive Movement have you:	Attended a meeting, donated money, participated in a lobbying event, participated in canvassing, participated in a town hall participated in a voter registration drive, participated in a protest
What does Progressive mean to you?	equality of opportunity, redistribution of wealth, participatory democracy, climate crisis activism
What are the three most important issues facing the US today?	Climate change, economic inequality, racial injustice, political system
What is the best way to solve these issues?	organizing to win thru the ballot box
Do you consider yourself a feminist?	Yes
How would you define feminism?	advocating for equal rights for women and girls
Do you think the New Progressive Movement is a feminist movement?	it includes respected feminist leadership
Does gender play an important role in the New Progressive Movement?	Somewhat
Please explain	oh you know. ;-)
Do you feel the movement provides women with more opportunities than the establishment	No
Please explain	women face gender biases even in the left
Do you have any other thoughts you would like to share?	

Respondent Number 36

Gender Identity	Male
What is your political affiliation?	Democrat
Which organization(s) are you officially affiliated with? e.g. staff position, volunteer role in the leadership of the organization	Our Revolution
Which organization(s) are you otherwise involved in? e.g. volunteer, donate, or otherwise support	-
How long have you been politically active?	75 years
At what age did you first become politically active?	10
Why did you decide to become politically active?	Family tradition
What is your role in the organization(s) in which you are active?	Middle leadership
Check all that apply: in your work with the organization(s) have you:	Attended a meeting, donated money, participated in canvassing, participated in a townhall, participated in a voter registration drive, signed a petition, participated in a protest, led meetings
Do you feel that you are part of a movement?	Yes
How would you describe this movement in 15 words or less?	Anti-corporate politics. Pro-working class, anti-white supremacy, profeminist. Personally, socialist, but not organizationally at this time
Do you think there is a New Progressive Movement?	Yes
How would you define this New Progressive Movement?	Similar to my own politics but the socialist thread is a small part of the whole. The movement is committed to mobilizations but

	only a minority is committed to organization.
Do you feel that you are part of this New Progressive Movement	Yes
Check all that apply: as part of the New Progressive Movement have you:	Attended a meeting, donated money, participated in canvassing, participated in a town hall, participated in voter registration drive, participated in a protest
What does Progressive mean to you?	Anti-domination by corporate and professional-managerial class. Also anti-white supremacist and other forms of social oppression
What are the three most important issues facing the US today?	Climate Change, economic inequality, racial injustice
What is the best way to solve these issues?	Political organization; electoral politics,
Do you consider yourself a feminist?	Yes
How would you define feminism?	(I am pro-feminist). Opposed to male-domination and sexism. I think recognition of intersectionalism is key.
Do you think the New Progressive Movement is a feminist movement?	No
Does gender play an important role in the New Progressive Movement?	Yes
Please explain	Male-domination persists.
Do you feel the movement provides women with more opportunities than the establishment	Yes
Please explain	-
Do you have any other thoughts you would like to share?	-

Respondent Number 37

Gender Identity	Male
What is your political affiliation?	Democrat
Which organization(s) are you officially affiliated with? e.g. staff position, volunteer role in the leadership of the organization	Brand New Congress
Which organization(s) are you otherwise involved in? e.g. volunteer, donate, or otherwise support	-
How long have you been politically active?	1 year as volunteer
At what age did you first become politically active?	26
Why did you decide to become politically active?	I chose to become politically active (beyond voting) as a volunteer because I wanted to contribute more to election process. I believe that the U.S. government is very behind in terms of establishing progressive programs and values, and we appear to have a unique window to promote these agendas. I also felt a much greater sense of urgency following the 2016 election
What is your role in the organization(s) in which you are active?	Deputy Research Director
Check all that apply: in your work with the organization(s) have you:	Attended a meeting, led meetings, conducted research
Do you feel that you are part of a movement?	Yes
How would you describe this movement in 15 words or less?	The promotion of compassionate and research-based policies that benefit all Americans.
Do you think there is a New Progressive Movement?	Yes
How would you define this New Progressive Movement?	I believe the modern progressive movement is focused on socialist-leaning policies that aim to promote equality and quality of life. The current wave is still led by veteran politicians but appears to

	be bolstered by a wave of young supporters.
Do you feel that you are part of this New Progressive Movement	Yes
Check all that apply: as part of the New Progressive Movement have you:	Attended a meeting, conducted research
What does Progressive mean to you?	To me, progressive means establishing programs and policies that ensure a basic quality of life for everyone.
What are the three most important issues facing the US today?	Climate change, health care, economic inequality
What is the best way to solve these issues?	We need to elect politicians that acknowledge these issues and are willing to respond with research-backed policies. There are countries throughout the developed world that perform much better in these areas and we need to follow their examples (i.e. renewable energy, single-payer healthcare, minimum wage, etc.)
Do you consider yourself a feminist?	Yes
How would you define feminism?	The promotion of equal rights and opportunities for women.
Do you think the New Progressive Movement is a feminist movement?	Yes
Does gender play an important role in the New Progressive Movement?	Yes
Please explain	I believe feminism is definitely a notable part of the progressive

	movement, as the overall movement promotes equal rights and opportunity across all domains. The movement also prioritizes proper representation.
Do you feel the movement provides women with more opportunities than the establishment	Somewhat
Please explain	It's unclear if the movement is thwarting gender discrimination across the board, but the progressive movement does appear to value the representation of all groups.
Do you have any other thoughts you would like to share?	-

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