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Why David Sometimes Wins: Leadership, Organization, and Strategy in the California Farm Worker Movement, By Marshall Ganz, New York: Oxford University Press, 2009, 368 pp., ISBN 978-0-19-516201-1.

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recherche particulière. Cela va des dispositifs de diagnostics socioéconomiques aux interventions politiques locales des acteurs sur les enjeux du travail et de l'emploi, en passant par des nouvelles formes de contestations dont l'actualité sociale récente fournit de nombreux exemples. Une structuration plus importante du cadre d'analyse des entrevues pourrait permettre de mettre en évidence la dimension cognitive recherchée et faire ressortir les modes de réflexivité des acteurs dans la construction de l'action collective.

Enfin, sur le plan juridique et législatif, il s'agirait de discuter des formes possibles de propriété collective du travail hors du lien d'entreprise, alors que de nombreuses recherches mettent l'accent sur le renouveau des métiers comme forme de socialisation du contenu du travail ou sur les sites de production et d'intégration des activités économiques comme niveau pertinent de l'action syndicale (dans le secteur du commerce par exemple). La négociation sociale territorialisée (p. 264) peut ainsi servir à étendre les droits collectifs des personnes dans les milieux de travail dès lors que les enjeux sociaux qui y sont attachés ont été documentés et objectivés par la production de connaissances collectives.

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Why David Sometimes Wins: Leadership, Organization, and Strategy in the California Farm Worker Movement

By Marshall Ganz, New York: Oxford University Press, 2009, 368 pp., ISBN 978-0-19-516201-1.

Precarious employment and California agribusiness have a long and checkered history together. Despite the efforts of the state's labour movement over the first half of the twentieth century to improve the working conditions of farm workers, successes were few and far between. In the 1960's, Cesar Chavez and the United Farm Workers (UFW) succeeded where many others had failed. At Chavez's side in this fight for union recognition, or La Causa as it was known, was Marshall Ganz. As an author, Ganz draws on his experience as an insider to provide an insightful account of how grassroots organizing can better the odds of achieving its objectives.

The author begins with a straightforward research question to frame his analysis: what were the essential elements of the UFW's success? This first chapter then turns to an overview of the analytical framework Ganz has built to respond to his question. He argues that turning opportunity into the desired outcome was dependant upon three key processes: the motivation of the union leadership to actually address the concerns of those they purported to represent; the breadth of access to diverse sources of information and resources and finally; organizational flexibility that adapts to change and learns from its mistakes. According to the author, the degree to which these behaviours, or strategic capacity are present in a social movement is positively related to the achievement of its objectives. To support this hypothesis, Ganz compares the actions of the UFW with those of its rival unions.

In the next two chapters, the author explains how the UFW succeeded at representing itself as the only long-term solution to the plight of farm workers. In the first half of the twentieth century, radical elements within the labour movement were among the few to try to organize farm labour. Recalcitrant employers often countered by allowing the mainstream labour movement to organize packing and canning workers. Meanwhile, legislative exceptionalism that impeded the majority of farm workers from forming unions, alongside State support of the Bracero programme of temporary labour from Mexico, tended to strengthen the employer's hand. In the 1950's, a nascent organization, which would become the UFW, focused on specifically improving the lives of a labour force composed, by this time, mostly of recent immigrants. This narrative of events serves as the cornerstone of the author's argument that the UFW's growth was due in part to its ability to remain single-mindedly accountable to farm workers.

In chapters four, five and six, Ganz fleshes out his strategic capacity theory, linking the UFW's accountability advantage to the strength of its weak ties and its organizational flexibility. A window of opportunity opened with the end of the Bracero programme. Faced with limited financial resources, the UFW used fieldworkers as union organizers, some of whom became part of the leadership

team. This maintained lines of communication with the base and legitimated union objectives among existing and potential membership. In likening his cause to that of contemporary civil rights and anti poverty movements, Chavez also reached out to city dwellers. Civil disobedience, high profile marches and consumer boycotts became on-the-job training for participation in a social movement that had to constantly adapt to serve an increasingly heterogeneous constituency. The volunteer social activists that were attracted to La Causa allowed the UFW to avoid being beholden to any financial benefactor, a necessary condition for organizational flexibility. At the same time, the UFW gained access to a broad cross section of individuals with a wealth of ideas to contribute.

David's victories versus Goliath turned out to be bittersweet. Strategic strikes, often at harvest time, were used to extract wage agreements, field by field. But employers preferred doing business with the Hoffa tainted Teamsters. As a result, the UFW entered into a mutually beneficial alliance with the AFL-CIO that preserved the former's independence. Eventually, the UFW had the entire table grape industry under contract and ultimately, won state specific legislation that accorded farm workers the right to union protection. Ganz then makes use of his strategic capacity theory to explain the decline in the fortunes of the UFW as a social movement. Accountability to the leader and not the membership became paramount. Commiserations among a restricted circle of insiders could not provide the access to a broad base of informational resources that the innovative approach required. As a result, the organizational flexibility of the union began to resemble political sclerosis.

Ganz's analysis makes full use of a research perspective that maintains economic behaviour is heavily influenced by the social network to which an individual belongs. In turn, being a member in good standing in the network usually requires compliance with its norms of behaviour. Still, it is the actions of individuals that are key to the success of the network. Hence, access to novel sources of information provides different ideas on how to achieve objectives, which are then adapted to mesh with the network's norms.

In this case, the UFW adapted its behaviour to take better advantage of its independence and organizational flexibility. Yet, by assuming the profile of a civil rights movement, the UFW set a standard for economic behaviour that they themselves were unable to maintain. Ultimately, the UFW seems to have evolved into the very labour organization they had hoped to distance themselves from.

Yes, as seen in Ganz's recent work with the Obama election campaign, collective action can realistically aim to overcome injustice. But, people tend to belong to several networks at once. As is often the case with temporary immigration, social ties develop which lead to permanent residency and a desire to share in the American dream. As we saw, requisite norms of behaviour evolved within the UFW over time because it also wanted to placate a broader political constituency. In interacting with elements outside the network, the UFW proved unable to maintain a firewall against behaviours that undermined its strategic capacity. So, did the UFW become a different version of the same network, or a completely different network? Those who wish to emulate Ganz's approach to organizing would benefit from an analysis that takes account of acceptable and unacceptable behaviour, politically speaking, across multiple networks.

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L'argent noir des syndicats

Par Roger Lenglet, Jean-Luc Touly et Christophe Mongermont, Paris : Fayard, 2008, 297 p., ISBN 978-2-213-63282-7.

Voilà un ouvrage très franco-français, dépourvu de toute ambition scientifique, qui s'inscrit dans le sillage du scandale récent (2008) sur les versements de fonds qui auraient transité d'une organisation patronale (Union des industries et des métiers de la métallurgie) vers des organisations syndicales représentatives et cela au plus haut niveau. Pour qui suit l'actualité syndicale hexagonale, la question du financement des syndicats français n'est pas nouvelle. Comment en effet les syndicats français peuvent-ils survivre de façon indépendante sur le plan financier dans un contexte de taux de syndicalisation anémique (sous la barre des 10 %), alors que les organisations