



2021

A Synthetic Theory of Political Sociology: Bringing Social Networks and Power Dependence to Power Resources Theory in City Politics

Thomas E. Janoski
University of Kentucky, tjanos@uky.edu

Adam Jonas
University of Kentucky

Follow this and additional works at: https://uknowledge.uky.edu/sociology_reports



Part of the [Sociology Commons](#)

[Right click to open a feedback form in a new tab to let us know how this document benefits you.](#)

Repository Citation

Janoski, Thomas E. and Jonas, Adam, "A Synthetic Theory of Political Sociology: Bringing Social Networks and Power Dependence to Power Resources Theory in City Politics" (2021). *Sociology White Papers*. 5.

https://uknowledge.uky.edu/sociology_reports/5

This White Paper is brought to you for free and open access by the Sociology at UKnowledge. It has been accepted for inclusion in Sociology White Papers by an authorized administrator of UKnowledge. For more information, please contact UKnowledge@lsv.uky.edu.

**A SYNTHETIC THEORY OF POLITICAL SOCIOLOGY:
BRINGING SOCIAL NETWORKS AND POWER DEPENDENCE TO POWER
RESOURCES THEORY IN CITY POLITICS**

Thomas Janoski and Adam Jonas
Sociology Department
University of Kentucky
1525 Patterson Office Tower,
Lexington, KY 40506-0027
E-mail: tjanos@email.uky.edu and abjonas@uky.edu

*For presentation at the
ASA Annual Convention, Las Vegas, Nevada
August 20, 2011*

ABSTRACT

It is well established that power is connected to networks, yet structural theories of power in network analysis fail to satisfy political sociologists. Centrality is generally put forward as a measure of power, but this is not enough for political sociology. This article puts forward a theory of power that brings power resources and power dependency theory to the study of social networks concerning political coalitions in an urban polity. Within this theory of power resources, we embed power theories based on dependence (exchange theories) with power being based on the inverse of the expected value of alternative courses of action, and social network analysis focused on networks of powerful actors with significant power resources. The use of social networks depends on the formation of coalitions of powerful individuals and groups who then engage in political bargaining with other coalitions who want a different outcome. This synthetic theory is illustrated with two examples of economic development and political conflict in a moderately sized city.

Although power is one of sociology's favorite concepts in explaining class, race and gender differences, it proves to be a slippery concept (Roscigno, 2011). Often the proof that one group has more power than another is demonstrated by the use of power in producing a particular outcome. For instance, one corporation had the power to buy a city block and destroy all the historic buildings upon it, or during the Reagan administration the numerical majority of Republicans were able to force their will on the Democrats by passing stringent budget measures and tax cuts. Other uses of power in political sociology tend to view it as a capitalist constant so that the results are somewhat inevitable. Both of these approaches leave a heavy *post hoc ergo propter hoc* taste in the political sociologist's mouth. And bringing power to social networks has been a difficult affair with centrality being an attractive but at the same time somewhat frustrating concept – necessary but agonizingly insufficient because centrality lacks content. Some post-modern conceptions of power even see it in a circular structure that leaves an evanescent wisp that is difficult to track down (Dyberg, 1997). While we do not argue against these approaches, we focus more on the mechanisms of power in an a priori way that could predict power both before it is used and as a variable in different contexts and circumstances.

Consequently, this paper will provide a synthesis of three theories of power – power resources, power dependency, and network centrality theories – to conceptualize a synthetic approach to power in a political setting. It will then analyze two case studies of economic and political development in a city context between business, the government, the media and grass roots social movements. We will try to show a more complex view of power that provides what some previous theories have lacked. This is a measure of power with beliefs about the future and assessments of current material forces embedded in a relational structure of networks that can explain major outcomes in city politics.

Theories of Power and Politics

Four theories of power have been important in looking at competing groups in cities: elite theory, power resources theory, power dependence theory, and network power theories.

1—Elite studies of Power in the US began with Floyd Hunter's (1953) elite theory applied to the city of Atlanta using a reputational approach to the "real" holders of power rather than those in obvious official positions. His structural-functional approach mapped the hierarchies and interconnected webs of business, political and religious elites. The study promoted a large scale examination of elite social networks. C. Wright Mills' book *The Power Elite* claimed a new perspective on systems of power in the US. He identified three power groups – political, economic and military – that formed a shifting coalition of power wielding elites and institutions that ruled the US. Mills saw this group being created by rationalization in all advanced industrial societies. The mechanisms of power are concentrated in the hands of a limited but corrupt group, but Mills was not a great gatherer of evidence. In the 1969 Ralph Miliband put forth a theory of elite power based on networks of elite power holders in the UK. His network approach, not unlike Hunter's work, was excoriated by Nicos Poulantzas who indicated that its naïve positivism of social networks held no meaningful explanation of power in advanced industrialized societies. Miliband attempted to defend his position (1972), but the largely theoretical and rather non-empirical neo-Marxist work of Poulantzas ruled the day (1973, 1978). Capital in the last instance had more power than mere social networks. Network studies continued to be done, especially of corporate board membership, but these studies were much less ambitious than the original elite theorists. Domhoff's early work (1967) was quite popular

but was much criticized in the 1980s, and since then he (1998, 2010) has increased its rigor using social networks and decreased some of the scope of his claims. By and large, we find elite theory to be on the right track but too vague about the mechanisms of power.

2–Power Resources Theory. Power resources theory emerged from studies of the welfare state most often with a quasi-Marxist focus (Korpi 1982, 1985; Berg and Janoski, 2005). It focuses on who has more a priori resources than others and hence more power in determining a later event. Mary Rogers (1974) distinguished between infra-resources that allow one entry into the use of a resource, and instrumental resources that are the actual exercise of power. For instance, she mentions that knowing a large number of people can lead to your subsequently gaining access to and then persuading a particularly powerful person (with power resources) to act in your behalf. This leads to an insight that social networks may be infra-resources but not the actual instrumental resource itself. She also indicates that both of these types of resources are embedded within social systems. However, the practice of power resources theory has not picked up on Rogers lead into social networks. Most studies using power resources measure the political power of left parties (seats, executive and cabinets) or the strength of unions in leading to welfare state, economic, and immigration policies (Korpi 1982, 1985; Shalev 1983, 1992; Huber and Stephens, 2001; Janoski, 2010). Other studies focus on money collected by each political party in an election cycle, and some look at the profits of capitalist businesses. The only focus that comes close to social networks concerns the coalition formation process that takes place after an election, and these studies measure the distribution of cabinet seats in the final coalition (Esping-Andersen 1985; Baldwin 1990; Hicks 2000; van Kersbergen 1996). But on the whole, social networks and valued alternatives as resources tend to be ignored.

3-Power Dependency Theory. Exchange theory has little to say directly about political sociology; however, it is rich in concepts of power that can be applied to political conflict. If one looks beyond the micro-interactionist framework, exchange theory provides a clear theory of political power being based on dependence. The basic elements of power are laid out by Richard Emerson who died at an untimely and early age. The most political statement of exchange theory power in a directly conflictual situation comes from Samuel Bacharach and Edward Lawler (1980, 1981; see also Molm, 1985). The A has more power than B when B is more dependent. This can be expressed as $1/(\text{sum of the valued alternatives of B})$ being greater than $1/(\text{sum of the valued alternatives of A})$. The first term is higher and A is more powerful when B has fewer alternatives than A.

$$(1) \text{Power}_a = 1 / \sum \text{Alt}_{b1} * V_{b1} \dots \text{Alt}_{bn} * V_n$$

(i.e., fewer alternatives for B means more power for A,
more alternatives for B mean less power for A.)

$$(2) \text{Power}_b = 1 / \sum \text{Alt}_{a1} * V_{a1} \dots \text{Alt}_{an} * V_n$$

$$(3) \text{Net power of A over B} = \text{Power}_a / \text{Power}_b \\ = [\sum \text{Alt}_{a1} * V_{a1} \dots \text{Alt}_{an} * V_n] / [\sum \text{Alt}_{b1} * V_{b1} \dots \text{Alt}_{bn} * V_n]$$

When the net power of A is greater than 1, A has more power, and when net power of A is less than 1, B has more power. This approach to power can be measured by searching out the alternatives that A and B might have and taking their expected values (the subjective probability of occurrence times the value of that occurrence). In terms of power resources theory, power would be based on having greater net expected values of more numerous and valuable

alternatives. This can be transferred to group bargaining with labor and management (as done by Bacharach and Lawler), or political conflict in a community (as we do here). Refinements to this strategy can be seen in the more recent exchange literature (Schaefer, 2009; Thye, 2000), but again, they are oriented toward micro-interaction and not group politics. Social exchange theory has little to say about social networks, though some of it has extended into generalized exchange among more than two people. However, it is a very short step to say that many more and valued alternatives could be gained from information and contacts generated by larger social networks.

4–Power in Social Networks: Scott Feld (1981) finds some previous approaches to social networks have to be “atheoretical” or “self-contained,” and as a result, have not connected to the larger context of business, government, and other interest groups. For instance, measuring the individual centrality of individuals within a given network might tell who in a network is likely to have more power, but that “self-contained network” information is not useful to most political sociology studies. Larger coalitions, as described by Logan and Molotch (1987, 2007) shows how place entrepreneurs and government officials can form important coalitions. Holistic networks, sometimes represented by coalitions, are much better than egocentric networks, whether they are for individuals or political groups. If extensive network information is available, one can use this broader type of network structure such as eigenvector centrality (EVC) to measure the importance of a group node in a coalition network (Bonacich 1972). EVC attempts to discover powerful actors by examining what actors are the most connected to other well-connected actors. But this type of detailed network information is not always available.

This is relevant to power especially in organizational settings because oftentimes power lies with individuals who have access to other members in the network, but may not connected to everyone themselves (as in simple degree centrality). To better illustrate this consider the chief

executive officer of a large corporation. Centrality measures other than EVC may not identify the CEO as 'central' because he or she might only speak to 6 top level managers. However, eigenvector would capture that the CEO, despite their degree centrality of only 6 was the most 'central' actor because of the connections of his or her top level managers that take into consideration their more numerous connections.

In measuring EVC, relative scores are assigned to all nodes in the network based on the principle that connections to high-scoring nodes contribute more to the score of the node in question than equal connections to low-scoring nodes. For example, college football team evaluators compute a "ratings percentage index" (RPI) of each team based on their past networks of 10 or so opponents in a season. The RPI consists of a percentage of a team's wins and losses record, a percentage of this team's opponents' average winning percentage, and even a percentage of the team's opponent's opponent's winning percentage. The last two items constitute the team's "strength of schedule" irrespective of how well the team does (i.e., they could have tough schedule whether they win or lose all their games).

In political contests, groups in coalitions have rough equivalents of RPI measures. Although they do not have clear schedules of games, they do have conflicts where two types of resources are important:

- (1) financial power resources in terms of money and credit, and
- (2) networks of people that will produce voters inclined to vote one way or another and for some to actually participate in the political process.

As a result of the differences in group resources based on money and votes embedded in social networks, those with the greater resources most often play a primary leadership or causal role in determining the direction of politics and the ultimate results of various political bargaining

152346

processes. In policy debates and legislative action to pass actual laws, a metric between money and people is hard to determine. But clearly some interest groups are more powerful than others—namely, business groups control much larger pools of monetary resources, political parties and leaders have some control over voters, and neighborhood social networks allow various deals to be made with grass roots groups and these other parties.

Synthesizing Three Theories

In putting this theory together, the different epistemological standings of these last three theories need to be taken into account in two ways. [“]First, power resources theory [”] is somewhat oriented toward the past or present. In a legislature, it is often measured by political party power, which was determined in the most recent but still ‘past’ election. [“]Second, with power dependency theory, [”] the calculation of the number of alternatives and their values is a somewhat counterfactual endeavor that largely occurs in the future. One can have an alternative that he/she may or may not take advantage of with differing probabilities of success in obtaining different amounts of value. One can also bluff concerning the realism of these alternatives. Thus, the basis of power dependency is in the future, though not totally speculative. While “counterfactuality” is not precise, it does signal what may happen in the future (most often near future) rather than a post-power result. And people act on the basis of their expectations or predicted estimates.

Bourdieau
Mann
Jessep.
PWT
PDT

In this paper we take examples of political competition in a moderately sized city. While politics are nominally non-partisan, there exist clear liberal and conservative blocks. We operationalize political competition first through power resources theory, and then using exchange theory with subjective probability estimations of outcomes. In figure 1, the principal competitors for political power to accept a particular policy are capital, local grass roots groups,

and local government with the possibility that the public sphere could be activated by the media (i.e., local and national business or capital as B_1 and B_n , local and national state government as S_1 and S_n , local and national grass roots groups as GR_1 and GR_n , and local and national media as M_1 and M_n).

***** Figure 1 about here *****

Each local actor is potentially connected to a national actor that is not directly involved in local policy debate ($B_1 \rightarrow B_n$, $S_1 \rightarrow S_n$, $GR_1 \rightarrow GR_n$, and $M_1 \rightarrow M_n$), and whether the national actors become involved can be an important mobilization issue (e.g., see the immigration debates in Arizona that involve the federal government's lack of enforcement). Each local actor is connected to various power resources of money, people (votes), and publics (public opinion and social networks) depending on their choice of policy alternatives.

The comparative alternatives and values from exchange theory are added in Figure 2, as are the comparative resources in people and money from power resources theory.

***** Figure 2 about here *****

This makes the diagram much more complicated, but it also clearly shows that the resources and alternatives are quite imbalanced. Clearly, local actors have fewer alternatives than national actors, but among each local and national set, business has the most alternatives followed by political actors. Local grass roots and status groups have the fewest alternatives since they have the fewest monetary connections. However, they do have high potential people and public connections. On the basis of resources that can be initially mobilized, business should get its way.

③ SNP

However, each group is not assuredly unified or even capable of being unified. Each group is challenged by the building of coalitions among themselves. This is how ^{Third} social networks

need to be assessed for business, grassroots, state and public sphere. Social networks enter into the political bargaining process in three ways: (1) through the generation of valued alternatives, (2) through the formation and maintenance of coalitions, and (3) the public sphere needs to be brought on board or kept out of the fray.

The first process is the generation and promotion of valued alternatives. Although some alternatives are easily apparent (i.e., the old and tired ones of doing nothing or doing what has been done many times before with weak results), good alternatives with high value are not easily found. Alternatives must be recognized and packaged as being relevant to a group's experiences. Feld's focus theory is important here in bringing numbers of people together to emphasize a possible solution or strategy. The point of focus theory is that a social network needs a number of foci (see also the cognitive literature on 'anchors' and social movement literature on 'framing'), and for a political network to thrive this focus must be discovered, it must be sold to the network, and to continue on, it needs to work reasonably well (Feld, 1981: 1019-20). Feld does not provide any political examples, but he does characterize this creation of alternatives or foci as loosely connected clusters that resonate within a larger context that then finds them useful. As these foci are used and are extended over time, the clusters become a bit more tightly connected and their creators or adopters gain centrality. However, it is important to note that the focus leaders did not start out with centrality as they thrived in loosely connected networks. (1)

The second process of social networks is at a more aggregate level. It concerns how the social networks sort out the many different types of foci within their loosely connected views in an organization, and then how organizations sort out their commonalities and differences in establishing coalitions among themselves to gain a particular policy or political outcome. Alternatives made for some clusters may not fit well with other clusters so they need to be (2)

translated, resonances enhanced, and bridges made (Feld, 1981: 1022-24). This too requires creative energy in bringing about a larger focus or vision that binds different clusters in an organization, and different groups in a coalition.

The **third process** involves the media and public opinion. The media are usually pro- (3) business but they can turn against various projects. Business has public relations departments to manage this, but various social movement cause can create news and highlight various injustices involved. How the media and public opinion are managed can be critical to the outcomes.

Two political controversies and two somewhat counterfactual conflicts are mapped out in Figure 3, which allows us to examine both existing and hegemonic coalitions in Lexington, Kentucky, a city of 250,000 people.

***** Figure 3 about here *****

In **item a**, a counterfactual pattern of coalitions is mapped out concerning the building of a large mall in North Lexington, which is strongly recognized as horse farm country. This coalition would bring national business and media together (B_n and M_n), but it would be massively opposed by local elites especially from the horse industry, not to mention grass roots groups (B_l , S_n , S_l , M_l). This coalition would be easily and quickly defeated if it were proposed. On the other hand, in **item c**, the proposal to build a large shopping center in south Lexington near Interstate I-75 was passed and quickly built without much trouble (i.e., the 300 acre Hamburg Pavilion). This coalition brought both levels of capital, both levels of government, and general media support to the table (B_n , B_l , S_n , S_l , M_n , M_l) and grass roots groups never really mobilized to oppose it (GR_n and GR_l). The two issues actually debated come under two different political administrations: Mayor Teresa Isaacs' liberal and Mayor James Newberry's business-oriented administrations. The two issues covered are the city taking over the private water supply

corporation by eminent domain, and the building of a major hotel and shops covering a whole city block entailing the condemnation of a large number of businesses. **Item b** diagrams the city/county's plan to condemn and then buy the private water company, and **item d** shows the Centre Pointe controversy over destroying a city block and building a skyscraper hotel. These two cases represent difficult coalition formation issues, which are the focus of this paper.

Three principles are important for coalition formation. **First**, larger coalitions generally prevail over smaller coalitions. ^{and more powerful.} **Second**, the local actors who can mobilize their larger state and national counterparts will have more power. **Third**, the coalitions must be weighted by their power resources which are measured by the number of alternatives with a high probability of occurring and with a high value. Thus, it is critical to know if business at the local and state/national levels, government at both levels, and the grass roots at both levels (labor, gender, or ethnic areas) can be mobilized for a cause and how they form coalitions with powerful others. The **fourth** aspect of social networks is that the message can be spread throughout the public sphere, or the public sphere can be neutralized so that the issue is barely covered. This coalition size is not enough and power resources must be included. _{- opinion leaders.}

The next level of putting it together involves **connecting the coalitions to social networks** that connect to the power resources that each group controls. Each actor (i.e., B_1 , B_n , S_1 , S_n etc.) is not monolithic but consists of social networks converging (or not converging) on various alternatives with different values of outcomes. The actual process of coalition formation then requires both coalition size and their power resources. Social networks are intimately intertwined with the ability to create alternatives with high probabilities of occurring that will produce high values or resources. Thus, the networks are involved within possible bargaining actors (B_n) and between them (B_n and S_n) and their many or few alternatives. Local

power brokers have been shown to be networked through series of board memberships, board memberships, and affiliations with clubs, charitable organizations, or other social foci (Hunter 1953, Domhoff 1978). These ties are not constantly mobilized by actors who seek to alter policy but they present a range of alternatives that more powerful actors can use. It also leads to more multiplex relations of local policy discussion that can make their actions flexible depending on changing circumstances. Grassroots level groups may be able to mobilize a fairly large number of people, but they have much more trouble developing alternatives with high value.

Nonetheless, actors who are highly central to these social networks play a key role in coalition formation for two primary reasons: (1) actors with greater degree centrality and network size are connected more people who can reach more organizations, and (2) Bonacich's measure of centrality has been shown to be accurate at predicting power usage in experimental exchange networks (Borgatti and Everett 2006). Individuals who possess such power might do so by successfully coercing others to join their coalition. But again, the second factor of value, whether money or people, flows from the greater accumulation of valued alternatives.

The following case studies with more complex coalitions combine these two forms of power resources through dependency and network centrality in coalitions. We make some assumptions to **score the coalitions**: (a) business has twice as many resources as the state or media, (b) local institutions are twice as strong as national groups in determining a local issue, (c) the state and media are twice as strong as the grass roots. A simple scoring scheme will be as follows: $B_n=2$, $B_l=4$, $S_n=1$, $S_l=2$, $M_n=1$, $M_l=2$, $GR_n=0.5$, and $GR_l=1$. The total score is 13.5, which means that a winning coalition needs 7 or more to win. Since unified business scores a 6, they only need a small amount to reach 7. If business is split, then a larger coalition of the other groups is possible. These assumptions are somewhat arbitrary in this case, but they would be

derived from the balance of alternatives times values in determining available resources, and they generally reflect relative inequalities between these groups. The winning coalitions in two case studies along with two hegemonically determined case studies will be calculated from these scores, and they are listed at the bottom each section a, b, c and d in figure 3.¹ Cases a and c are hegemonically overdetermined, and cases b and d are discussed below.

Two Case Studies

Case 1 – Buying the Water Company. Just a few days after 9/11 RWE-AG (a German based multi-national utility company (*Rhenisch-Westfälischen Elektrizitätswerks Aktiengesellschaft*) bought American Water Works Inc. After RWE-AG bought Thames Water of the UK, it was the third largest water firm in the world. Ownership of the water company being in the city's best interest was one of the most central issues to the 2002 Mayoral race in Lexington. The non-partisan race for mayor of Lexington was between local politician and housing advocate Teresa Isaac and Attorney Scott Crosbie. Isaac refused money from an official political party and narrowly defeated Crosbie who accepted a \$150,000 in-kind donation from the State Republican party and \$1,000 Kentucky-America's president. Isaac would spend much of her next 4 years trying to exercise eminent domain over the water company. As a critic of Crosbie said in a local newspaper article, "This election is a referendum to show whether Lexington is a relatively liberal college town or a religious and conservative suburban community" (Cheves et al. 2002). The debate of the water company was also a polarizing factor in the debate. The water company issue played the significant role in the election probably because of public hostility toward German ownership of the water company (Cheves et al. 2002).

¹ These estimates are a shortcut for this article. Actual estimations of resource power would require listing alternatives and probabilities, and then summing up the expected values.

This idea to buy the private water company came from Chattanooga, Tennessee who attempted but failed to buy their water company. With xenophobia running high after 9/11, the debate was pushed forward by liberals who detested a huge conglomerate with a spotty environmental record. Many people feared a foreign company having control of Lexington's water supply. Two years later in January of 2003, American Water Works shareholders, the PSC and federal regulators approved the German buyout of the American company.

Isaac would face a tough four year term as Lexington's mayor. The battle over the water company quickly became framed as a debate between "big government" practicing eminent domain vs. private business. Local groups with some assistance from national environmental organizations, such as Green Corps a non-profit organization offering internships and training in environmental activism, attempted to aid in the mobilization of Lexington residents for local ownership. Meanwhile RWE-AG spent large amounts of capital to change public relations with its firm and fund opposition to the city's bid. The Republicans fought a public vote on the matter because eminent domain was an ideological threat to free enterprise. Eventually the Kentucky Supreme Court blocked a public vote in November of 2005.

Two items related to our theory are important. **First**, the local business elite shifted from supporting public ownership to being split by a coalition of well-resourced business leaders who were in favor of stopping public ownership. Reporter Andy Mead (2006) said that the supporters of local ownership were older, Lexington elites, but those against city control were the residents of newer neighborhoods. The older elites had little contact with the newcomers in South Lexington, and they could not persuade the growing 'new money' south side that was much more pro-business. The newcomers opposed condemnation by "big government." One prominent representative against city ownership was the Vice-mayor Mike Scanlon, who as a constant and

highly vocal opponent of most of Isaac's proposals. He owned a restaurant franchise and even proposed privatizing the city/county waste management system. While his influence is not enough to say that the local state was split, but it is symbolic of how the local business community became fractured. This gradual shift of power in Lexington from "old money" to "new money" split the business community on the issue.

Second, the RWE-AG was a peculiar private firm with limited alternatives because the water company could not threaten the city by saying that it would move to another location and the Fayette county would lose jobs and taxes. The water company was tied to its customers and could not leave the area without losing its *raison d'être* for existence – selling water to the local residents (see Molotch and Logan, 2007, on utilities). Consequently, its alternatives were severely limited.

A petition overruled the court decision preventing a vote, and the buyout of the water company was put on the ballot for general elections of 2006. The result was an overwhelming "no" to local ownership. This was largely credited to the Water Company and its supporters framing of the debate and resources in sustaining a long battle over the issue versus the city. Many supporters had also tired of the issue being dragged out for five years, and these former supporters were disillusioned. The issue had dominated Isaac's term and her other missteps led to declining local support. Thus, the battle became costly to the city budget and to Isaac's political support. She was a vulnerable opponent for the 2006 mayoral race. Running on a pro-business platform opposed to the water company buyout, Jim Newberry won the election by the largest margin since Lexington had a city-county merger in 1980.

In terms of our network coalition model in figure 3, the proposal to buy the water company initially had a lot of coalition support ($S_1 + B_1 + GR_n + GR_1 + M_1$) from the city

government, grass roots groups, and the media. In our scoring system, it had $2+4+1+0.5+2$ or 8.5, which is a winning coalition given the resource weights. It was opposed by national business interests and ideological tenor of the Bush Administration ($B_n + G_n + M_n$ with a score of 4). But business became split and as the debate became more acrimonious, the local media tired of the issue and became negative. This shifted the power of the coalitions in the opposite direction. The pro-purchase coalition ($S_l + B_{la} + GR_n + GR_l$) dropped to a score of 5.5 and the anti-purchase coalition ($B_n + G_n + M_n + M_l$) rose to 8. The split in local business divided their score to 2 for the pro-purchase and 2 for the anti-purchase groups. The scoring results in a defeated with $5.5 < 8$ with local business being split. This example shows how the local networks of the state and grass-roots could opposed corporate interests of a weakened private corporation with few alternatives (i.e., you can't threaten to leave your water customers). In a less pro-business national context (e.g., under the early President Obama's administration instead of President Bush's), this effort may have succeeded.

Case 2 – Developing Centre Pointe. In March, 2008 a new development project was launched Lexington to build a \$250 million Centre Pointe Project. It was to be a 40-story building in the heart of Lexington's downtown. This building would house a four-star hotel, luxury condominiums, and retail stores. Construction required destruction of a block of buildings dating back to 1826 called Morton's Row. The Webb Company was the developer for this project and they came from a wealthy Kentucky family that has a very public and checkered past with the city of Lexington. Two past dealings had received wide coverage and shaped the Webb's image to many residents of Lexington: the defunct Kentucky Central Life Insurance Company and the Festival Market. The first project went bankrupt, and the second project never

turned a profit despite using a 2.1 million dollar loan from the city, which the Webbs were able to escape.

This Centre Pointe project was contrary to a two-year long \$500,000 "Downtown Master Plan" developed by the Downtown Development Authority. The eventual plan for "revitalization" for Lexington's downtown called for more residential housing, limits on building height, two-way (instead of one-way streets), development that would 'connect' the University of Kentucky basketball arena with downtown, and also making the area more pedestrian and cyclist friendly. The plan was well-received by many local developers and neighborhood groups alike. Local real-estate developers stood to make large profits off of city supported development in the downtown area. Neighborhoods close to the downtown area stood to gain from higher property values and use values associated with having 'vital' downtown. This also solidified a plan to "build Lexington up not out" a mantra that was converted into bumper stickers and highly defended by the wealthy horse farmers outside of metro Lexington. The Webb's claimed that since the city council had failed to enact the entire plan, it was not binding and could therefore be ignored. Critics on the city council called the plan a failure because the developers were able to ignore it, especially in planning Centre Pointe.

Coalitions formed amongst organizations and individuals to oppose and to support the new project. Business organizations such as Lexington's Chamber of Commerce (B1) tended to support the Webb's. The Mayor (S1) ^{Newberry} was one of the most vocal supporters of Centre Pointe and staked a lot of his public opinion on the debate. Many actually felt that the decision to build was largely a closed process between the Webbs and the Mayor. Fueling this was a blogger's posting that the Webbs and their business partners donated about \$13,000 into Newberry's mayoral

campaign. The city council while not unanimous tended to follow the Mayor's lead. But how did the other local groups coalesce on this issue?

In Lexington many social groups exist among horse farmers and other groups that are against urban expansion and "the destruction of bluegrass forever" (a popular bumper sticker). These preservation groups come in the form of organizations with many elite members from the community who can make sizeable financial donations and sit on the boards of directors of non-profits and some banks. They often hold fundraisers that garner support from others, especially financial donations and promises of political support. However, these preservation groups had two problems.

First, the "Bluegrass Forever" environmental group was not threatened by a downtown project and they were largely silent on the debate. These groups also have many overlaps with the Chamber of Commerce and other prestigious charitable boards to which many of Lexington's business community belong. These organizations frame many of their goals in environmental terms, but the destruction of a city block and extensive new construction was hardly a green undertaking, even with an environmental building certification. But unlike the water company issue, Bluegrass Forever remained on the side lines during the debate because the issue did not directly affect them. The preferred targeting rural expansion rather than urban infill.

Second, there were other problems with coalition building with the two other environmental preservation groups – the Bluegrass Trust and Preserve Lexington. The block scheduled for demolition included "The Dame," which was the most popular live music venue for college students in the city. Young students joined Preserve Lexington rather than the Bluegrass Trust, which consisted mainly of long-time Lexington residents who were not interested in a late-night rock and punk music venue. Further, student housing needs in the city

often threatened the Bluegrass Trust's interest in preserving quiet neighborhoods. In other words, loud music and rowdy parties did not mix with preserving quiet and charming neighborhoods.

With Bluegrass Forever on the sidelines, Preserve Lexington and Bluegrass Trust both opposed the construction of Centre Point but in very different ways. Preserve Lexington engaged in direct action and protest events like "Block Aid." Eventually, they sued and delayed the build. Preserve Lexington wrote letters to the paper but avoided other action. The two groups collaborated little. With the eventual destruction of the block, the building of new bars, the relocation of some of the old ones in the revitalization of the distillery district, interest waned. And at the end of the school year with student leaving for home, Preserve Lexington halted their direct action and the Bluegrass Forever simply wrote letters to the editor.

In terms of our model in figure 3, the numbers of coalition partners were the same as the previous model. The "yes coalition" on Centre Point ($B_n+B_l+S_n+S_l+M_l$) with a score of 10 was clearly greater than the "no coalition" ($GR_n+GR_l+M_n$) with a score of 3.5. Not only were the more powerful coalition members were in the yes camp rather, but the opposition coalition was consisted only of grass roots groups possibly bolstered by national media (see Figure 2, part c). Business was united rather than split, and so was the larger government (i.e., Senators) though national government was not very much involved. Further, the alternatives of business were much greater than with the Water Company. Centre Point would create many jobs, and the Webbs could have easily taken their money and gone to any of a thousand locations throughout the country. That they picked Lexington in the first place was due to their 'loyalty' to the area (plus the pull that they may also have locally). Thus, when business and government are united and on the same side, grass roots groups will have a difficult time.

Conclusion

In many ways, theory is like a flashlight in the dark. It can be used to shine light into areas that are not often observed. The model proposed in this paper shines this light in three different directions to measure power:

1—According to **social network theory**, this synthetic theory focuses on the social networks of actors and how these social networks lead to more or less eigenvector centrality, which can be measured at 2nd and 3rd order connections (like a football strength of schedule measure). But this centrality then needs to lead to the measurement of resources in terms of more or fewer valued-alternatives and networked coalitions. A further challenge of this method is to find the strengths or weaknesses of 2nd and 3rd order network connections.

2—According to **power dependency theory**, this synthetic theory focuses on specific alternatives and their attached resources and indicates that power resources come from these alternatives. But subjective probabilities about alternatives are shaped, hidden or accentuated by considerable framing, persuasion and even chicanery. A further challenge of this method is actually calculating alternatives, probabilities and summing expected values.

3—According to **power resources and coalition theory**, this synthetic theory puts these networks and alternatives into a measurement scheme for coalitions to observe how local coalitions win or lose political issues due to their accumulation or lack of power. We did not go as far as to estimate all the alternatives and the probabilities that are associated with them, but the theory points toward further specification of these elements of a more detailed theory of power.

This synthetic approach avoids the view that business always wins with an overly structuralist and deterministic approach (as item a in Figure 3 was avoided), but at the same time, it indicates that business has a distinct advantage rooted in power resources and dependency. Mobilization of these resources requires **social networks** which are **both a resource and a pathway** for resources to travel through. By better understanding how ties develop between individuals and subsequently organizations that seek to influence political processes it serves to better understand the development and maintenance of power within these networks.

By synthesizing social networks into the broader discussion of power into sociology we hope to enrich the discourse and provide promising avenues for the future examination of power. Power is a subject that is critical in both social network analysis and political sociology yet both fields tend to run parallel to one another. With the theory proposed in this paper we hope to merge some of these discussions. This is important because many sociologists criticize social network analysis as atheoretical. This criticism at times is warranted, yet for sociologist to dismiss such powerful analysis altogether is “throwing the baby out with the bathwater”.

But this theory can be developed further. While we have provided some aspects changing coalitions, especially with the Water Company case, it is clear that power relations develop through a process where resources can decay or grow, and alternatives may appear or disappear. Putting the development of political power into this process approach will continue the effort to go beyond mere structural differences in resources. Also the tactical interaction in framing and presenting issues and alternatives is a major tactical and possibly strategic issue.

Finally, one can conceive of a contingency theory such that power resources theory may be stronger when ideas are stable and parties can gain more representatives through their voters. On the other hand, power dependency theory may be stronger where new alternatives are

available that can convert opponents into supporters (not usually representatives, but certainly voters who may switch parties or sides). And social networks may be stronger in predicting power if 2nd and 3rd order nodes prove to be central in their networks (e.g., a comparison of Obama and Clinton's campaign organizational networks using the strength of schedule example). While we are proposing a theoretical synthesis rather than a contingency theory, the possibility that facets of this theory have different strengths or weaknesses given new contexts is enticing.

REFERENCES

- Bacharach, Samuel and Edward Lawler. 1980. *Power and Politics in Organizations*. SF: Jossey-Bass.
- _____. 1981. *Power, Tactics and Outcomes*. SF: Jossey-Bass.
- Berg, Axel van den and Thomas Janoski. 2005. Conflict theories of political sociology, pp. 72-95 in Thomas Janoski, Robert Alford, Alexander Hicks and Mildred Schwartz (eds.). *The Handbook of Political Sociology*. NY: Cambridge University Press.
- Bonacich, Philip. 1972. Factoring and weighting approaches to status scores and clique identification. *Journal of Mathematical Sociology* 2:113-120.
- _____. 1987. Power and Centrality: A family of measures. *American Journal of Sociology* 92:1170-1182.
- Bonacich, Philip, and G. William Domhoff. 1981. Latent classes and group membership. *Social Networks*, 3:175-196.
- Borgatti, Stephen P. & Everett, Martin G. 2005. A Graph-theoretic perspective on centrality. *Social Networks*, 28(4):466-484.
- Caplow, Theodore. 1956. A theory of coalitions in the triad. *American Sociological Review*. 21:489-93.
- _____. 1956. A further development of a theory of coalitions in the triad. *American Journal of Sociology*. 64:488-93.
- Bottomore, Tom. 1993. *Elites and Society, 2nd Edition*. London: Routledge.
- Cheves, John, Lauea Yuen, and Nicole Morgan. 2002. Isaac beats Crosbie to become next mayor of Lexington. *Lexington Herald-Leader*.
- Chertkoff, Jerome. 1966. The effects of probability of future success on coalition formation. *Journal of Experimental Social Psychology*. 2:265-77.
- Domhoff, William. 1967. *Who Rules America?* Englewood Cliffs, NJ: Prentice-Hall.
- _____. 1978. *Who Really Rules? New Haven and community power re-examined*. New Brunswick, NJ: Transaction Books.
- _____. 1983. *Who Rules America Now?* Englewood Cliffs, NJ: Prentice Hall.
- _____. 1990. *The Power Elite and the State*. Hawthorne, NY: Aldine de Gruyter.
- _____. 1998. *Who Rules America? Power and Politics in the Year 2000, 3rd Edition*. Mountain View, CA: Mayfield.
- _____. 2010. *Who Rules America? Challenges to Corporate and Class Domination, 6th Edition*. NY: Wiley.
- Dyberg, Torben Bech. 1997. *The Circular Structure of Power*. London: Verso.
- Emerson, Richard M. 1962. Power-dependence relations. *American Sociological Review*. 27:32-41.
- _____. 1976. Social exchange theory. *Annual Review of Sociology*. 2:335-62.
- Feld, Scott. 1981. The focused organization of social ties. *American Journal of Sociology*. 86(5):1015-1035.
- Higley, John and Michael Burton. 2006. *Elite Foundations of Liberal Democracy*. Lanham, MD: Rowman and Littlefield.
- Huber, Evelyne and John D. Stephens. 2001. *Development and Crisis of the Welfare State: Parties and Policies in Global Markets*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.
- Hunter, Floyd. 1953. *Community Power Structure: A Study of Decision Makers*. Chapel Hill, NC: University of North Carolina Press.
- Janoski, Thomas. 2010. *The Ironies of Citizenship*. NY: Cambridge University Press.

- Jordan, Jim. 2005. Dudley Webb to pay \$1 million to settle KY Central Debts. *Lexington Herald-Leader*
- Knoke, David. 1990. *Political Networks*. NY: Cambridge.
- Knoke, David, Franz Urban Pappi, Jeffrey Broadbent, and Yutaka Tsujinaka. 1996. *Comparing Policy Networks*. NY: Cambridge.
- Korpi, Walter. 1982. *The Democratic Class Struggle*. Boston: Routledge&Kegan Paul.
- _____. 1985. Power resources approach vs. action and conflict: On causal and intentional explanations in the Study of Power. *Sociological Theory*. 3(12):31-45.
- Lexington Herald-Leader Staff. 2002. The Webbs and Kentucky Central Time Line. *Lexington Herald-Leader*
- Logan, John and Harvey Molotch. 1987. *Urban Fortunes*. Berkeley: University of California Press
- _____. 2007. *Urban Fortunes, Revised Edition*. Berkeley: University of California Press.
- Mead, Andy. 2006. Water issue rode changing tide – Ballot delay, storm helped ‘No’ view prevail. *Lexington Herald-Leader*.
- Miliband, Ralph. 1969. *The State in Capitalist Society*. NY: Basic Books.
- _____. 1972. Reply to Nicos Poulantzas pp. 253-62 in R. Blackburn (ed.) *Ideology and Social Science*. London: Fontana.
- Mills, C. Wright (1956) *The Power Elite*. NY: Oxford University Press.
- _____. 1963. *Power, Politics and People*. NY: Oxford University Press.
- Molm, Linda. 1985. Linking power structure and power use pp. 101-29 in Karen Cook (ed.) *Social Exchange Theory*. Newbury Park, CA: Sage.
- Poulantzas, Nicos. 1973. *Political Power and Social Classes*. London: New Left Books.
- _____. 1978. *State Power Socialism*. London: New Left Books.
- Rogers, Mary F. 1974. Instrumental and infra-resources: The bases of power. *American Journal of Sociology*. 79:1418-33.
- Roscigno, Vincent J. 2011. “Power, revisited. Presidential address given in April 2011 at the Southern Sociological Society annual meeting. To appear in *Social Forces*.
- Schaefer, David R. 2009. Resource variation and the development of cohesion in exchange networks. *American Sociological Review*. 74:551-572.
- Schwartz, Michael (ed.) 1987. *The Structure of Power in America: The Corporate Elite as a Ruling Class*. New York: Holmes & Meier.
- Thye, Shane R. 2000. A status value theory of power in exchange relations. *American Sociological Review*. 65(3):407-423.
- Tsebelis, George. 2007. Coalition theory: A veto players approach. Paper presented at APSA Annual Meeting, Chicago, IL (<http://www.scribd.com/doc/30449141/Coalition-Theory-a-Veto-Players-Approach> (accessed 6/13/2011)).
- Wagar, Kit. 1991. Webb says he can’t pay Festival Market loan, Baesler says city won’t defer payments. *Lexington Herald-Leader*.

Figure 1: Local and National Groups Involved in a Local Issue

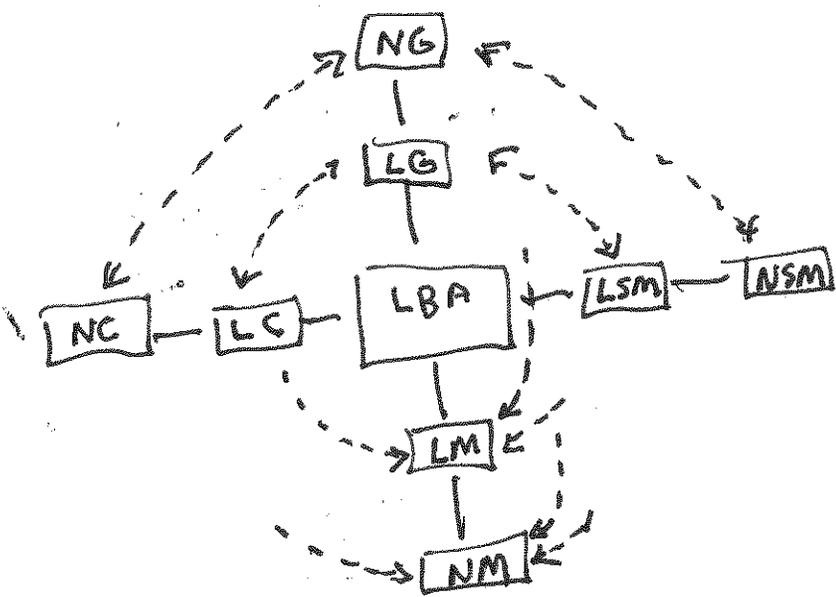
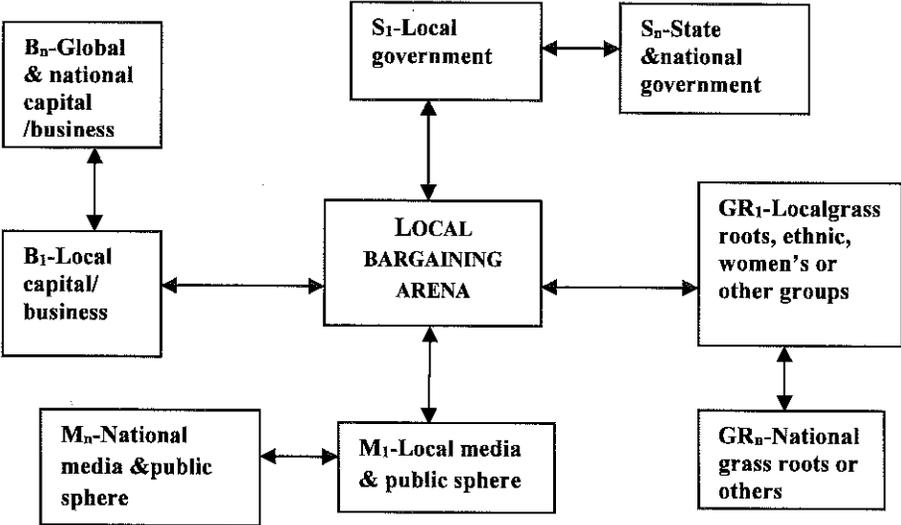
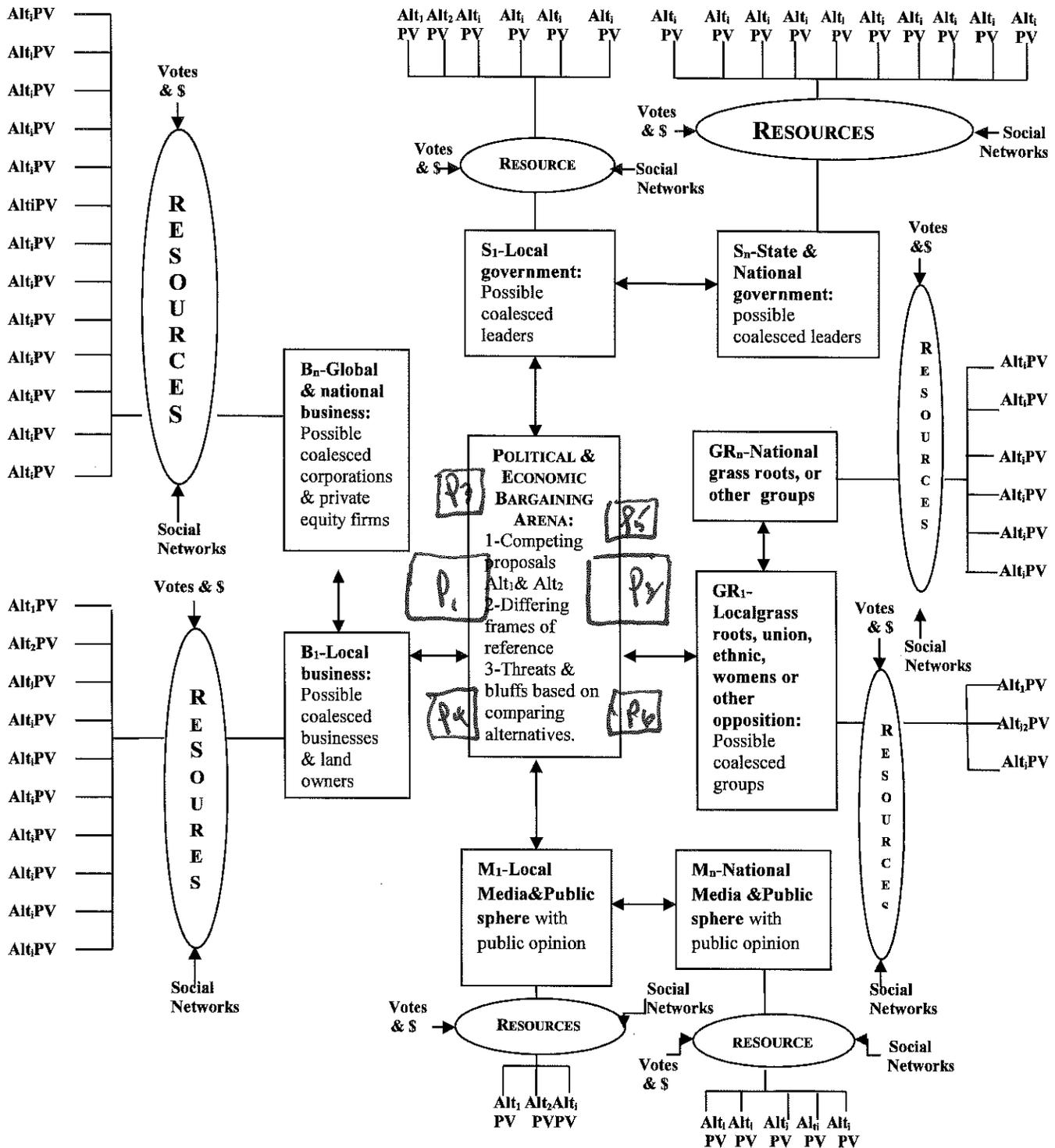


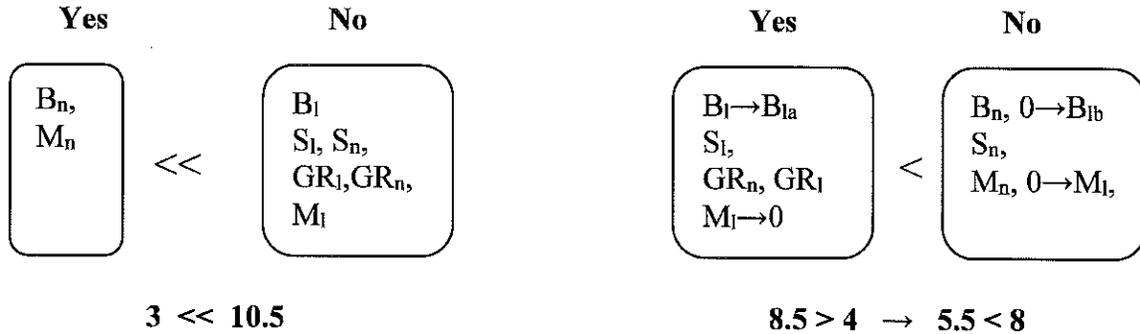
Figure 2: Power Resources and Social Network Theory of Political Interaction on a Local Issue



Abbreviations: Alt_i=alternatives i through 99; P=Probability of success of alternative; V =the estimated value of that alternative; PV=expected value of the alternative (probability times value); \$=monetary or ownership resources; Pop=population or public opinion potential that can be mobilized as a resource.

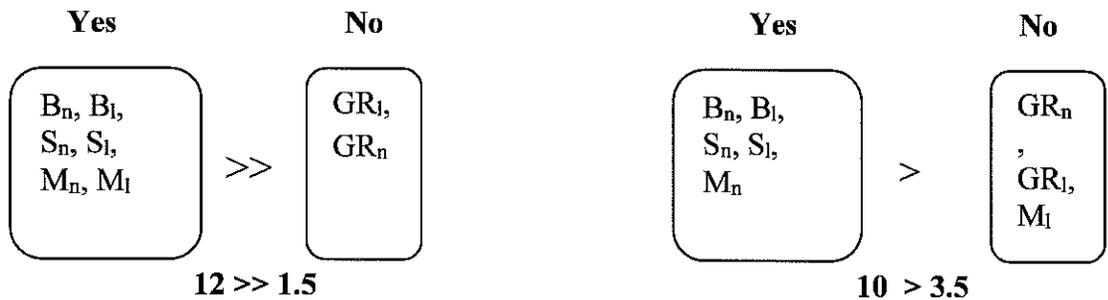
Figure 3: Coalitions and Networks of Political Actors

> or < means one coalition wins behaviorally over the other,
 >> or << means one coalition wins hegemonically over another.



a. Hegemonically defeated (never proposed):
 Local business would join large coalition against national business in building large Mall in in horse country (North of Lexington in horse farm area).

Before local B split After local B split
b. Contested: Proposed & nearly passed
 Effort of the local government to condemn and buy the privately owned *Water Company* comes close to passing but fails with early local capital support (which then splits: B_{1a}, B_{1b}) and media support (which switches sides).



c. Hegemonically passed (no opposition)
 Local and national business builds a large mall in a greenfield location not in horse country near I-75 called Hamburg Pavilion.

d. Little contest: Proposed and passed.
 Effort of business to build the *Centre Pointe* hotel complex in downtown and condemn historic buildings.

- B_l = Local business in the horse and other industries (score=4)
 With a split: B_{1a}=horse industry=2, and B_{1b}=South Lexington nouveau riche=2.
- B_n = Big business capital of developers and bankers (score=2)
- S_l = Local city-county government (score=2)
- S_n = State and national government (score=1)
- GR_l = Local grass roots social movements (score=1)
- GR_n = State and national grass roots environmental groups (score=0.5)
- M_l = Local media of newspapers and TV (score=2)
- M_n = National and state of Kentucky media (score=1)