

**Immigration and social movement activism in the United States and France:
A comparative perspective**

by

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The purpose of this essay is to explore the dynamics of social movements, and better understand why some populations succeed when others fail. This topic was motivated by travels across the United States and Europe. In these journeys, minority groups and their unequal treatment by society were a constant feature, yet unique to specific regions. Why haven't these groups assembled, participated in social activism, and achieved national equality?

After four months of residing France, followed by in depth research on social movements, a hypothesis has evolved. Discrimination of social groups is rooted in a nations' political, social, and economic history. Citizens of the United States highly value their democratic principles, including basic civil and political rights. These two principles have nurtured a country in which many organizations actively promote human interest through social activism. When a specific group of immigrant workers in the South experienced social and political pressure as migrant workers, they took advantage of American culture. By collaborating with national organizations including student and religious groups, the small coalition's social movement for basic human rights overcame one of the largest restaurant chains in the world.

However, the immigrant community in France has a larger impediment to overcome in order to achieve equality. Due to a lack of assimilation and acknowledgement of a problem within immigrant communities on behalf of the French government, racial bias is deeply ingrained in French culture. Thus, France needs a movement based on race in order to work toward social equality.

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I understand that my thesis will become part of the collection of Oregon State University. My signature below authorizes release of my thesis to any reader upon request. I also affirm that the work represented in this thesis is my own work.

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Introduction

Across the world, immigrant populations are a disempowered group. In the United States for example, the majority of immigrants enter with limited education and employable skills. This results in numerous social, political, and economic forces working against the assimilation and success of immigrants in their new country of residence.

What exactly are the forces immigrants face as they cross borders? And why have fighting these forces resulted in successes in some countries but still failures in others? The answer lies in the history and culture of each respective nation. Who is entering? And what point in time culturally, politically, and economically are they entering the host country? How has the migrant group been historically perceived and treated by the host nation? What ideas have been institutionalized that work against the immigrants' efforts of forming a new and better life abroad? The following text will try to understand why some migrant movements in the United States have succeeded, yet France has yet to witness the rise of a strong migrant force.

In France and in the United States, history has generated prejudices against outside groups, leaving modern immigrants to deal with societal discrimination based on physical appearances and historical precedence. As government institutions answer to their constituents, bills and laws are often passed in favor of the narrow-minded polity of that period. Thus, politics absorbs societal discrimination. In order to rise up as a viable social movement, immigrant groups are forced to work within their new, respective cultures. As a result, immigrant workers face a new environment that further complicates their chances of integration.

Entering the 21st century, some immigrant communities have managed to successfully form movements overcoming financial, political, and social obstacles in search of equality in their new nations. Working within the United States has proven a more hospitable environment for those looking to achieve fundamental needs equal with the rest of the nation. This is explained by the foundation on which the country has, compared to France, recently been founded. The founding fathers instilled in the United States the value of basic human rights, as well as the many political processes to protect what Americans value. Together, these values have fostered hundreds of interest groups and organizations empathetic to humans living in distress. In Immokalee Florida, the Coalition of Immokalee Workers (CIW) incorporated intelligent social movement tactics with these fundamental American values. Their efforts resulted in a victory in 2005 against the largest fast-food chain in America. CIW remains a powerful force within the community, and an icon for emerging social movements.

In contrast, immigrant movements fighting discrimination in France face a different state of affairs. Embedded in their political and social culture is a color-blind assimilation process that has failed to address the growing violence and turmoil suppressing immigrant communities. Only recently in 2005 has a national organization, the Representative Council of Black Organizations (CRAN), managed to emerge and represent racial groups that the French government does not officially recognize. By mobilizing resources like the United States, CRAN is calling upon the French government to recognize the discrimination problem troubling society in order to work on a solution. The following section will explain how CIW began and gained momentum as a successful migrant movement in Florida.

CIW and Immigration in the U.S.

The town of Immokalee sits in a rich agricultural region in Southwest Florida. Spurred by inhumane living and working conditions, in 1993 a small group of workers first gathered in a community church with an interest in improving their community and lives. The Coalition of Immokalee Workers was born (CIW).

Since 1993, CIW has successfully expanded and grown, overcoming the difficulty of a continuously migrating membership, on top of problems with group unity, in order to maintain a functioning coalition. This is evident in their nearly 2,500 members of temporary and long-term residency in Immokalee as of 2006. Many citizens migrate, leaving only 10-15% of the coalition's staff to remain employed at CIW on a permanent basis. The majority of CIW's union originates from Mexico (50%), with the remaining portion from Guatemala (30%), Haiti (10%), and other nationalities (mostly African-American) 10% (CIW).

Today, their membership card represents the powerful organization into which CIW has transpired. With a desire for improvement in their daily lives, in 2001, CIW officially challenged Taco Bell because for their national market power and control over producers in the U.S. The fast food chain is owned by YUM! brand foods, the world's largest restaurant company in terms of system restaurants with more than 34,000 over 100 countries, including chains such as KFC, Taco Bell, Pizza Hut and A&W (YUM!). In April of 2001, CIW demanded Taco Bell use their influence as a major buyer to put pressure on their tomato suppliers to improve pay, field conditions, and living situations provided by the employer. Their primary technique involved promoting a national boycott of the fast-food chain in the name of human rights. By taking advantage of

available resources and networks, in four years their campaign succeeded over Taco Bell restaurants. YUM! officials promised to promote and enforce higher pay and better working conditions for their workers.

CIW's success against a corporation that generated more than \$9 billion in revenues in 1995 is a monumental statement of the strength of small movements such as CIW (YUM!). Their success attests to the potential empowerment possible for immigrants and agricultural workers in the United States.

What explains CIW's amazing success against such a powerful force? The humble organization faced not only a multi-billion dollar business, but an American political climate that was anything but friendly to immigrants at the time. In fact, political and social forces across the U.S. have made strong, anti-immigrant statements that have only increased in recent years.

Organizing has proven especially difficult for CIW as a migrant community. The group faces a fluid membership that could potentially weaken any progress the coalition had made, for workers regularly migrate according to the demands of the growing season. To overcome a continually shifting membership, CIW leaders foster unity and strength, focusing on spreading their knowledge and motivation to every member (CIW). Since group success relies on individual members, each person plays a vital role in reaching their goals.

CIW members' legal status also threatened their support and ability to fight against employers. Illegal workers are especially vulnerable to exploitation by employers because technically they are not protected by labor laws and are constantly facing the risk of deportation. By threatening unemployment or reporting individuals to immigration

authorities, employers held considerable power over their migrant employees in Immokalee. Maintaining a supportive foundation year round for CIW also proved challenging, since most migrant workers reside in Immokalee temporarily, migrating with the seasons.

Further sources of strong anti-immigrant sentiment stem from minutemen groups that have formed along the US-Mexico border, taking protection of the U.S. from immigrants into their own hands (Bahadur). As recently as February 2006, the city of Farmers Branch passed an act outlawing landlords renting to illegal immigrants in Texas, as well as proclaiming English the city's official language (Garay).

On a national scale during the same year that CIW accomplished their victory, many anti-immigrant bills were debated in the legislature. For example, one law proposed would have allowed state and local police officers to enforce federal immigration laws (State of Emergency). Further bills increasing fences along the border, limiting visas to immigrants, and enforcing tough penalties on illegal-alien, such as H.R. 4437 in 2005 often passed in one house and died in the other (U.S. Senate). In summary, the immigrant community in the United States faced a strong anti-immigrant environment countering efforts toward a social movement.

Social Movements Theory Applied to CIW

An explanation for CIW's victory is best understood using modern social movement theory. By exploring different theories on social movement, one may come to a plausible, in depth explanations for the rise and succession of migrant uprisings such as CIW. In its basic form, as professors of Political Science Sarah L. Henderson and Alana S. Jeydel describe, a social movement is "A group of people with a common interest who

work together either to change a policy of government and/or to change how society perceives something” (44). Social movements emerge for three reasons, explained by the psychological model, the political process/political opportunity model, and the resource mobilization model (Henderson and Jeydel 44).

Psychological Model

The emergence of CIW as a social movement can be explained by understanding the psychological model, stating movements stem from societies’ reactions to a large disturbance in everyday life (Henderson and Jeydel 44). As a result, movements will form based on societies’ psychological reactions to disruptions in order to return life to a relatively normal state. Incidents at the root of the psychological model include famines, war, or economic depressions (44). For example, many workers’ movements erupted as the great economic depression spread worldwide in the early twentieth century. More applicable to CIW’s cases study is a look at a theory within the psychological model clarifying why workers specifically in Immokalee rose up in protest. The relative deprivation theory “pertains to disadvantaged groups responding to groups that are more advantaged” (Taylor 120). From the point of view of workers in Immokalee, people across the United States were enjoying better lifestyles that they were equally entitled to.

The psychological explanation for CIW’s emergence highlights workers’ deprivation in Immokalee and across the United States. In 2001, three out of five agricultural workers in the United States were living in poverty (Brabant, BBC). Further, migrant agricultural workers across the country held little opportunity to better their situation because of social and political forces giving more power to their employer. Without being monitored, no force could stop employers exploiting their workers.

Respected news agencies such as British Broadcasting Company (BBC) and National Geographic conducted investigations in Immokalee's agricultural community before the success of CIW. The agencies discovered frequent physical and mental abuse of workers, as well as financial manipulation.

Migrant laborers experienced work and living conditions well below poverty level in Immokalee, Florida. However, despite the stifling lifestyle, migrant workers were kept from speaking up on their poor conditions due to many factors. Laborers were kept by force because they were unable to pay off smuggling fees due to high living costs and low wages (Scher-Zagier). Many workers in Immokalee incurred this debt before coming into the United States. Many migrants who enter the United States, including in Immokalee, are already in debt upon arrival to a smuggler assisting individuals into the country. Aside from smuggling fees, many accounts report recruiters offering workers cocaine before luring them to isolated camps (CIW). Laborers then struggle in repaying their smuggling debt, a drug addiction, as well as earn enough money for everyday necessities such as food and shelter. As long as an individual owes money, that person is obliged to continue working until their debt is repaid.

CIW members were experiencing especially impoverished living conditions and wages. In Florida, for example, laborers earn the same fare, forty-cents per bucket, as workers in 1980, making it twice as hard as twenty years ago to earn the minimum wage. In a good month, workers report to each make less than \$1,000 (Lush). At the end of the week, little is left to send home to live on.

Besides low wages, living conditions were especially meager for CIW members, often hazardous to one's health. Workers usually live together in trailer parks and pay an

over-priced fee (Worldservice, BBC). Tamara Lush, a reporter from the second largest newspaper in Florida, the St. Petersburg Times, investigated the substandard living situations in the labor camps. Lush observed travel trailers and concrete dorm housing furnished with van seats as couches, and noticed some did not even contain a toilet. On top of the meager conditions, Lush also witnessed black mold in some of the trailers. As many as 12-men lived in such conditions that, in particular to Lush's visit, rented for \$350-per week (Lush). In the case of illness, the only health care available was over-the-counter drugs afforded after paying living expenses, if any remained. Laura Germino, who works for CIW, shared similar reports in an interview with BBC. "You pick all day long, as much as you can for 40 cents a bucket...and then you get home and have to wait in line for the burners, wait in line to eat, wait in line for a shower, and then you sleep in this hot tin box"(Germino).

Yet another report by Alan Scher-Zagier of the Boston Globe, again uncovered inhumane conditions during his investigation of Florida's agricultural business. Before CIW's victory in 2004, his investigation revealed forced labor and armed guards stationed among laborers in the field. They frequently beat workers, according to a field worker with whom Scher-Zagier spoke. This particular laborer was able to be interviewed because she eventually managed to escape the slave-like conditions. Laborers faced verbal as well as physical abuse in the fields. Through NPR interviews and Immokalee members' testimony, physical and mental abuse has come to light, and reportedly is in retaliation for such blameless acts as needing to use the restroom or wanting a lunch or water break. In addition, the overseer simply demands faster/harder work from their laborers (Zwerdling and CIW).

Laborers in Immokalee experienced inhumane working and living conditions common among agricultural workers across the United States. However, this particular community found strength together. Weekly meetings soon formed with a simple purpose, and the success of CIW against Taco Bell steadily followed.

The relative deprivation theory explains migrants' desire to improve their conditions in Immokalee; Members of CIW were first motivated to join together in 1993 after recognizing a better lifestyle lived by the rest of America. However, this theory does not explain their success. Simply beginning a movement does not automatically result in its victory. Can the second model, the political process/political opportunity model help others understand how they accomplished so much?

Political Opportunity Model

The political opportunity model applied to CIW explains their successful establishment as a social movement. They accomplished this partly by relying on a favorable political environment, as well as leaders and resources within the political structure (Henderson and Jeydel 44). In a broad sense, the model encompasses "the general structure of political institutions, formal and informal procedures of governing, and the configuration of power in the broad sense of the nature and power of political parties and interest groups" (Duyvendak). Therefore, this model suggests that social movements must not only work within the political structure, but special efforts must be made to counter procedures and powers that work against one's cause.

Compared to other world government systems, the American democratic system inadvertently fosters a relatively large amount of strong interest groups backed by powerful financial resources that play a large role in supporting movements in the

political process/political opportunity model. This unfortunately creates an unfair advantage for social movements with little funds, or no connections to key government officials affecting legislation. However, the political process/political opportunity model is able to bring miraculous results for the fortunate groups who succeed in collaborating with these large, powerful networks (Henderson and Jeydel 44). In the case of CIW's success, certain political allies may have advanced their cause. Congress-men and women, including California's Barbara Lee, Dennis J. Kucinich of Ohio, and finally John Lewis of Georgia have all claimed to be official supporters of CIW as their success grew (Coalition).

Despite these political allies, no major legislation offered support to workers in Immokalee. In fact, CIW likely experienced more political processes working against their cause than in their favor. Consider this example involving many key players in Florida's agricultural business. In 2005, the same year of CIW's victory over Taco Bell, a new coalition involving several prominent figures in Florida formed, including the Florida Fruit & Vegetable Association, or the FFVA (Zeitlin). Unfortunately, FFVA's board committee has recently fallen under harsh scrutiny after a crewleader hired by one of FFVA's member was sentenced to 30 years in prison for keeping his workers in what federal prosecutors called "a form of servitude"(Zeitlin). Not only does this example undermine much of what FFVA stands for, but demonstrates the complicated nature and difficulty helping to improve the nature of agricultural workers' rights. This specific prosecution was the second major sentencing based on slave-like conditions. However, because this particular case, as well as the first major punishments penalizing crew-leaders came after CIW's emergence and campaign began, one may safely infer that

politics within the state of Florida have been condoning such unethical behavior for an unknown amount of time now. In this case, the same institution supposedly helping immigrant communities' were actually part of the problem.

Fortunately for CIW, one opportunity considered both political and social, has been embedded in American culture since the 18th century, a code valuing human rights. First decreed in the Bill of Rights in 1776, the notion states “ that all man are created equal, that they are endowed by their Creator with certain unalienable Rights, that among these are Life, Liberty and the Pursuit of Happiness” (Hamilton 528). What the founding fathers considered basic human rights in 1776 are part of a strong a legacy carried on by Americans today. CIW used Americans' sympathy for those seeking basic human rights to their advantage. In 2001, the organization declared their struggle not only against Taco Bell, but a quest for human rights agricultural workers in an Anti-slavery campaign (CIW). This allows the majority of Americans to identify with their struggle. By choosing a campaign that targets slavery and human rights, the issue may be viewed as dealing with basic civil rights issues, rather than a highly controversial one such as immigration. However, aside from a common belief, the Political Opportunity Model cannot fully explain the success of Immokalee's coalition.

Without CIW's help, the violations occurring on Johns' farm would not have been discovered. There is clearly another force in effect that worked to CIW's advantage for which the psychological model and political process/political opportunity model do not account. Fortunately, the resource mobilization model offers a logical explanation as to how CIW rose to triumph over Taco Bell.

Resource Mobilization Model

The resource mobilization model explains that movements would not commence nor be successful without the aid of certain political, social, and economical components already in place (Henderson and Jeydel 47). Depending on movements' base or stance, empathetic networks may be built in order to promote their cause by collaborating with groups of similar goals. This collaboration often provides endless networking opportunities. For example, the American Baptist Church is a network already connected to many political and economical resources nation-wide. Growing social movements would find this organization extremely beneficial for their resources and networks already established across America. Corporations also play a large role behind resource mobilization, often providing leadership and valuable resources for smaller groups (Henderson et al 47.) Needless to say, when the larger and more powerful allies are speedily pulled together for a particular social movement, its success is more likely to evolve.

Important concepts of every social movement such as leadership, purpose, and tactics also played a vital role in CIW's success. These must first be understood in order to comprehend their fundamental role as the resource mobilization model is applied CIW's accomplishment.

The emergence and success of social movements rest heavily upon its leadership. In the interest of their members, organizers should understand different theories and tactics behind successful movements in order to discover the precise combination that produces motivated members and positive results (Klandermans et al. 520). History has made it clear that if one is successful as a leader, his or her movement is more likely to succeed. Great leaders, such as César Chávez, are often dynamic speakers who relate

with their supporters. He exemplified a thriving leader who devoted much of his life to a cause, and consistently set an example by stepping up first at a march or leading a fast in protest.

Another important concept is the importance of tactics exercised by each social movement. One such tactic vital to any movement involves framing one's position. This tactic allows leaders to shape how society, media, and politics all look at the idea, allowing for certain interpretations and ruling others (McAdam et al. 2005). Strikes, protests, boycotts of products and services, marches, petitioning, advertisements, rallies, and demonstrations are more common tactics used by social movements. They further involve consideration of location, culture, and resources available. Movements must consider who they want to reach out to, how many, and if these people are everyday citizens or powerful political stakeholders (Klandermans et al. 520). Tactics thus play an important role in determining the likelihood of one's success. Writing to the president of the United States is less likely to see results than reaching out to neighbors or community leaders. Depending on the cause, each tactic or a combination of different ones will produce varying results.

Finally, defining a purpose for any movement is vital in determining who the actors and key players will be, as well as who this new collective action will be fighting against. Most importantly, purpose ties together all of a movement's actors with a shared identity, adding to its strength and longevity (Klandermans et al. 520). This is extremely important for social movements because they are comprised of so many components, from single individuals, to national and even international institutions. The purpose thus enables individuals to feel as though they are one with the largest of organizations,

forming a single, compatible movement (Diani et al.). The purpose must be defined in such a way that it is narrow enough to direct action for the same clear purpose nationwide, but broad enough to gather the greatest number of supporters. Charitable organizations helping ill or helpless children are excellent examples of movements with successful purposes. Because so many elements determining the success of a movement stem from its purpose, it must be clearly and carefully stated with each aspect in mind.

Together, the resource mobilization theory and key aspects of social movements all account for CIW's great deal of momentum and power used to defeat Taco Bell. After forming into a coalition, skilled leadership and purpose worked together in developing a strong foundation for a capable, motivated organization in Immokalee.

CIW employed a unique combination of outreach and worker-to-worker counseling in order to foster a strong leadership base in Immokalee (Coalition). Because most of the members (roughly 80-85%) are not permanent, the center educates every member to be a leader in order to promote teamwork, community action, and improvement of individuals' lives. This empowers a shifting demographic to continually pursue CIW quests. According to CIW, the most effective weapon against forced labor is "an aware worker community engaged in the defense of its own labor rights" (Coalition).

For a small organization, CIW required clever tactics in order to rise above the power of such a large corporation. The group framed their position so America focused onto the loss of human rights and the continuation of the practice of human slavery. Onlookers thus felt sympathy for the exploited group. The beginning of their campaign also focused on local protests, strikes, demonstrations, as well as community outreach.

Locally, workers demonstrated in Taco Bell restaurants and exercised work stoppages (Coalition).

As their campaign progressed, tactics such as hunger strikes and protest marches were taken to the YUM! and Taco Bell headquarters. Major events included a 10-day hunger strike outside of Taco Bell headquarters, with the support of more than 75 students and farmworkers fasting for a 10-day period in 2003. According to the Coalition, this strike “was one of the largest hunger strikes in US labor history, galvanizing the support of national religious, labor, and student organizations and thousands of individuals” (Coalition). Cross country tours took place in 2004 and 2005, and featured protests in Louisville, KY, and Irvine, CA.

Another aspect of social movements involves the purpose of an organization. Originally, CIW’s objective worked together to better their community and lives. This broad goal was improved in 2001 to a campaign fighting for human rights for agricultural workers, as well as an end to a new-age slave labor workers were being subject to (Coalition). This new identity vastly expanded an empathetic base of support. In terms of identity, the new purpose acted as a tactic in order to attract leaders and citizens all across the United States fighting for human rights as well.

Creating a common identity is an essential step for many social movements, and played a vital role in CIW’s campaign as well. By the end of their campaign, different groups and individuals found themselves linked to CIW’s cause by common values, interests, or similar historical backgrounds (Porta, 113). One prominent aspect of their identity involves their ethnic roots. About 90% claim to be of Latin American descent (Coalition). In addition to CIW members, the Latin American community across the U.S.

provides further support because of their shared identity. The ASPIRA Association, Hispanic Association of Colleges and Universities (HACU), National Council of La Raza (NCLR), and SER – Jobs for Progress National, are just a few associations working to better the lives of residents in the United States with Latin American roots.

CIW also identifies as an agricultural community. According to their website, the majority are seasonal workers, traveling up and down the East Coast following ripe crops (Coalition). This affiliation not only involves them with agricultural workers nationwide, but also with Union members, as their goals seek to one day have the ability to form unions.

With the concept of shared identity in mind, CIW's fight can be connected to the labor movement's struggle to unionize throughout history and the world. In their situation, Immokalee residents had little power to put a stop to the slave labor and abuse at the risk of losing their only source of income. Today, American students are told of similar situations as they learn about early industrialism and the victorious campaigns by workers for their basic right to gather and eventually unionize in hopes of some job security and fair treatment. At the time of the industrial revolution and even today, labor issues involve a degree of human rights, aiming to satisfy what Americans consider our basic right to life, liberty and happiness. CIW's quest to end slave labor involves a similar desire to have the ability to unionize.

A large majority of Americans are able to identify with CIW's struggle for basic rights. Students, agricultural workers, Latin Americans, as well as the many others who fought for the right to unionize and sympathize with the right for human rights are a few who understand. The push for human rights and ability to identify as one collective

group resulted in a common ground for two of their largest allies in their fight; student activist groups and support from American church networks.

With a shared identity and strong leadership, CIW incorporated highly effective tactics in their local community protesting Taco Bell's connection to modern day slavery and human rights abuse. Both opportunistic tactics however were not the most important aspects to their fight. An explanation lies in the final social movement theory.

The overwhelming momentum and success that CIW experienced can be traced through new networks and resources they acquired as their campaign grew, a model reflecting what Professors Henderson and Jeydel refer to as the recourse mobilization theory. In CIW's case, the media, student, and religious networks served as powerful allies in spreading their message and furthering their cause.

Before the community earned international attention, CIW first proved themselves as an outstanding, capable social movement breaking important barriers. Immokalee's community first took advantage of community networking and citizens' ability to perform their own inquiries into laborers' situations. After two years of investigation by escaped workers and CIW members, the coalition reached out to the Department of Justice in 1997 regarding two particular agricultural employers within Immokalee. After CIW led D.O.J. officials to the culprits, the federal officials found the crew-leaders had held over 400 men and women in debt bondage and harsh conditions in Florida and South Carolina (Zagier). The workers, mostly indigenous Mexicans and Guatemalans, were forced to work 10-12 hour days, 6 days per week, for as little as \$20 per week, under the constant watch of armed guards. Those who attempted escape were assaulted, pistol-

whipped, and even shot. The guilty men were sentenced to 15 years each in federal prison for slavery, extortion, and firearms charges (Zagier).

As of April of 2001, their combined tactical efforts using local leadership, hunger strikes, sit-ins, boycotts, marches, and even dangerous under-cover investigating by workers resulted in the discovery and prosecution of several employers for organizing slavery, as well as a slight pay raise in a few regional farms (Coalition). Their action and accomplishments led CIW to their first major network, the media. Extensive attention from news organizations such as National Public Radio (NPR), The Cable News Network (CNN), National Geographic, and The New York Times, as well as numerous Associated Press reports and local news agencies across the U.S. began spreading CIW's name and purpose. Even across the Atlantic, London's British Broadcasting Company included the Immokalee workers in their report on the labor incidence of trafficking in nations around the world, such as France, the U.K, and North America.

The media attention largely assisted in bringing CIW's cause to the awareness of their second large network, that of student activists across the nation. As Daniel Zwerdling of NPR noted, "students across the country had already been protesting sweatshops overseas. The Taco Bell boycott gave them a human rights issue right here at home." Provoking students further involved Taco Bell's press release entitled 'The New Age of Hedonism,' offending youth aged 18-24. It claimed the group to be self indulgent, demanding, and that "they have become addicted to constant stimulation and actually feel bored unless their insatiable demand for novelty is being satisfied" (Zwerdling). The press release provoked students to strike against Taco Bell not only for human rights, but to also prove they cared for more than self-satisfaction and indulgences

(Zwerdling). Throughout the campaign it is estimated that students in as many as 300 colleges and universities and more than 50 high schools participated in the boycott. Also, students helped either close or block the chain's restaurants on 22 campuses such as the University of Chicago, UCLA, Duke, and universities in Texas (Smith). Like workers in Immokalee, students staged sit-ins, as well as boycotted local Taco Bells on and off campus (Zwerdling).

The Coalition of Immokalee Workers formed their third major network with Americans attending Church, thanks in a large part to their campaign for human rights. In 2002, the Presbyterian Church USA, who had not supported a protest since 1979, teamed up across the nation with The National Council of Churches, which represents 45 million Christians and the United Methodist Church among others, to support the Immokalee workers' fight against Taco Bell (Zwerdling). Religious groups helped discuss and organize further support for CIW's campaign with financial and social contributions.

One example of the Church's influence took place near YUM! brand world headquarters. In Louisville, Kentucky, Reverend Cindy Weber triggered bad publicity for against YUM! in local press (Zwerdling). Shortly following the incident, the multi-billion dollar corporation extended a check to the Reverend for \$527 for her church's food drive. It had been the first time YUM! had ever extended financial support to Webber's group. Feeling hypocritical by accepting any money from a company she had been protesting, Webber promptly passed the entire amount on to CIW to aid in their campaign (Zwerdling).

As the media, church, and student activist resources gained momentum for CIW's human rights campaign, a domino effect ensued, accumulating more and more resources and networks. CIW's pressure against Taco Bell had become a strong national cause that attracted additional allies from labor organization networks, grass-roots human rights campaigns, and powerful national figures all within three years. The combined efforts of these vast networks and powerful resources spurred on the momentum and support against slave labor.

For example, the American Federation of Labor and Congress for Industrial Organizations (AFL-CIO) served as an extremely strong resource for Immokalee, reaching union sympathizers across the nation (WIDES-MUNOZ). Charlie Sheen and Tom Morello, former guitarist for Rage Against the Machine have also acted as spokesmen promoting CIW's cause (Coalition). Former US President, Nobel Laureate, and founder of the Carter Center for Peace, Jimmy Carter, has joined and worked closely with CIW in their anti-slavery campaigns (Coalition). The National Immigration and Law Center in Oakland and the Lawyers Committee for Civil Rights in San Francisco are among the many partner agencies advocating for CIW nation-wide.

By March of 2005, pressure on Taco Bell from students, churches, and many other networks across the country had never been greater. On the fifth of the same month, as the coalition organized one of their largest strikes outside of YUM! headquarters, company executives agreed to meet the demands of CIW. The company promised to work with CIW in order to improve wages and working conditions for Florida tomato pickers. Emil Brolick, Taco Bell president, recognized that "Florida tomato workers do not enjoy the same rights and conditions as employees in other

industries, and there is a need for reform,” and added that although his corporation is not able to change the entire industry, they would be willing to take a leadership role and set a new standard for social responsibility for agricultural workers (YUM!).

Worldwide recognition added even more respect and esteem to CIW’s campaign. In 2003, three CIW members received international commendations, boosting the group’s economic and social support. The Robert F. Kennedy Human Rights award was presented in November of 2003 to Romeo Ramirez, Lucas Benitez, and Julia Gabriel, all volunteers with CIW who played vital roles in their campaign for human rights in the United States.

The Robert F. Kennedy Human Rights is an award that has never before been bestowed upon an American individual or organization. Historically, the grant is awarded to people from locations such as Haiti or Liberia, where human rights violations occur more often. Ramirez, a native Guatemalan, never expected to become a federal informant one day for the United States government. However, his testimony and work with CIW helped put away three illegal agricultural employers abusing their workers. Benitez, a co-founder of CIW, serves as a leader in CIW (Lush). Gabriel was once a slave that CIW fought so hard to free. She finally escaped and helped bring down the employer guilty of her enslavement among many other workers (Scher-Zagier). Each member was awarded \$30,000 to be used towards the Coalition of Immokalee Worker’s fight against Taco Bell.

The agreement with Yum Brands won't change the fact that workers often fail to receive the same legal rights and benefits granted to other U.S. laborers. Unfortunately,

the agreement will affect only a few thousand pickers around Immokalee, out of almost 2 million fieldworkers across the country.

However, small, important changes have transpired that give hope for a more worldwide change. The company is helping enforce a new penny-per-pound increase to nearly 1,000 workers who harvest tomatoes for their suppliers. That marks about a 75 percent increase over the usual rate of 1.3 cents per pound (Smith). Les Smith, of the *Orlando Sentinel*, one of Southwest Florida's largest newspapers, best sums up the most important change resulting from YUM!'s agreement, by explaining that "more importantly, the fast-food chain's parent company agreed to lead an industrywide effort to provide greater protections for migrant workers, who are excluded from many of the legal rights and benefits given other laborers in the U.S." (Smith). One of the previously poorest groups in the nation now has strong networks and resources helping continue their legacy for agricultural workers. "The real significance of this agreement lies in the promise it holds for much greater change in the future," said coalition co-founder Lucas Benitez in comments posted on the organization's Web site.

After exploring an immigrant movement in the United States, France provides an interesting contrast. In France, immigration has proven a contentious issue for decades, but they have failed to generate similar movements because of political and social restraints embedded in French culture. The following section will attempt to explain the opposing forces and issues facing the migrant community in France.

Introduction to French History and Culture

Waves of violence, burning vehicles, and attacks on government officials overtook Paris and its suburbs at the end of 2005. What was the underlying cause and

final spark that provoked such violence? The answer can be attributed to a number of factors dealing with an anti-discrimination movement that has been slowly accumulating momentum in France for decades. What triggered the sudden outburst of violence however, was the electrification of two teens in a poor suburb largely populated by North African immigrants and their French-born descendants.

For years, Arab and black African communities in France have endured discrimination based on their ethnicity. Small steps are now being taken toward improvement. Protests, rallies, and more recently, public councils representing smaller minority groups have formed in the fight against discrimination. Through new-found resources, minority groups are making way to overcome institutionalized and societal discrimination in France.

By understanding the latest trend of French immigration, one may better comprehend where contemporary segregation originates. Then, by applying the different models of social movements, the psychological model, the resource mobilization model, and the political process/political opportunity model, France's absence of a forceful migrant social movement is explained.

The most recent influx of immigrants in France occurred from 1954-1973. French society recognizes this post-WWII time period as the 'Trente Glorieuses' (Thirty Glorious Years), in which the country led Europe in economic growth (PBS). The peace and success following WWII made possible friendly cooperation between France and its then colony Algeria. This resulted in the transportation of thousands of Algerian citizens north to fill France's growing need of industrial workers (Gamory). Other sources behind the increase in immigrants into France include liberation after the war and

decolonialization of African colonies (Hamilton). Since the 1950s, the majority of African migrants entering France originate from either Morocco, Algeria, Tunisia, Libya, the Western Sahara, or West Africa. Collectively, the region is known as the 'Maghreb,' and its descendants 'Maghrebians' (Afro-Asiatic languages). It is estimated that immigrants made up three percent of France's population 2005, and are in their third generation since the 1950s (Gamory). The majority are French-born children of Maghrebian immigrants are known as 'Beurs' (Bryant). Descendants may carry similar cultural and physical attributes as their immigrant grandparents so that to the white-majority in France, the third-generation appears as recent immigrants. Similar appearance and progressive cultural inequality has produced a troubled generation of Arab and black Africans in France.

Over the past three decades, France has perpetuated an unfriendly climate against immigration. Recent political debate has intensified legislative acts and measures targeting immigrants, resulting in an extremely unfriendly political environment. The Pasqua Laws of 1993 put in place regulations restricting the amount and type of immigrants entering France (Hamilton). Families separated by borders were forced to wait longer for reunification. Foreign graduates could no longer accept French employment. The police obtained an increase in power in order to deport foreigners, and the opportunity to appeal asylum rejections were terminated (Hamilton).

Jean-Marie Le Pen, founder and leaders of the National Front, used the strong anti-immigrant sentiment in the 1990's to build support and maintain momentum for the anti-immigrant legislation. In 2002, Le Pen won 16.86% of France's vote during the presidential primaries. Later in 2005, when France geared up to vote for or against the

European Union Constitution, issues such as immigration and border security were at the center of much debate. Ultimately, France's final vote was a rejection of the European Constitution.

A good deal of French discussion preceding voting day resembled a xenophobic citizenry wanting to close their borders in order to protect their culture and lifestyle (Gamory). For example, in order to dissuade non-French speaking cultures from arranged marriages, new laws were proposed in 2005 that would increase the legal age for marriage to 18 for both sexes in France. Previous law allowed women as young as 15 to marry with parental signature (Gamory). These strong anti-immigrant actions present in French politics attests to the resilience of anti-immigrant sentiment still active within the political system.

Social Movement Theory Applied to France

The psychological model highlights a reaction to racial discrimination in Arab and black African descendants. In this minority group, experiencing bias on an everyday basis results in a growing social movement. Though historically, no government office has been able to make it official, racial prejudice prevents the group from leading normal jobs or residing in average residences like the majority of French citizens (Gamory). The suburban riots were just one such incident of action motivated by racial discrimination. Instead of the psychological model, the growing movement for equality in France is better understood by examining the resource mobilization model and political opportunities model.

The resource mobilization model sheds some light on the growth of an anti-discrimination movement in France. As previously mentioned, the model suggests

movements cannot commence nor be successful without the aid of certain political, social, and economic components already in place. To an extent, some ties have furthered movements already in France, such as Unions and communities working together. For Arab and black African descendent however, only recently has a national association gained strength. Formed in late 2005, the Representative Council of Black Organizations (CRAN) is the only national black lobbying organization in France (Sachs). Its formation resulted from the immediacy, momentum, and a high public profile that took pace after the 2005 riots in suburbs populated largely by the families of African and Arab immigrants (Sachs). Similar to the Coalition of Immokalee Workers in Florida, CRAN took its inspiration from an American resource, the NAACP, whom CRAN is using to duplicate as an ideal organization. Also similar to CIW, as one of CRAN's leaders reported, "The group has also issued regular calls for protests - against a television host who insulted Africans, against the way one French dictionary defines colonialism and against laws prohibiting the collection of racial and ethnic statistics" (Sachs). In August of 2006, CRAN invited Edgar Chase III, a black business professor at Dillard University in New Orleans, to speak about the role of education in achieving racial equality. The meeting reportedly turned into a strategizing session with ideas such as, "We should be boycotting companies that don't hire enough blacks. In the U.S., big companies felt it was in their interest commercially to not be racist" (Sachs). Since its creation, CRAN diligently continues to mobilize resources and grassroots network across the country through the more than 130 local black civic associations that already make up its membership.

On the whole, the anti-discrimination movement in France suffers not from a lack of resources or motivation, but of political structure and cultural resistance inhibiting progress. This is best explained by the political opportunity model.

Why Has France Not Produced A Social Movement?

Jan Willem Duyvendak, Professor of Sociology at the University of Amsterdam and director of the Verwey-Jonker Institute of Social Science Research in Utrecht suggests the reason for France's lagging social movement, rests in the political opportunities model. The many entities in France working to overcome discrimination must also formulate their strategies not only with reference to France's political opportunity structure "but also with regard to the specific mix of repression, facilitations, and chances of operating successfully within that structure," (Duyvendak). However, in France's case, many political processes have been used inadvertently, as well as intentionally, against immigrants. Beginning in the 1970s in France, factors such as limited jobs, a disconnected polity, and the shift in political leadership with an anti-immigrant agenda, have together created a hostile political environment within the French government structure and processes that immigrants must overcome to fight discrimination.

The end of the glorious years left French society turning against incoming immigrants. Due to an economic crisis in 1974 and the entrance of large amounts of women into the labor force, competition for jobs skyrocketed. In 1999, unemployment in France rose to 11% (CIA). More recently in 2005, The *Ouest de France* newspaper serving Angers and Segré conducted a survey two weeks before the French people voted on whether or not to approve a European constitution referendum. In response to the

paper's question asking participants their greatest fear for France, unemployment came up as constituents' greatest fear for 37% of those surveyed. The security of France surface as second most common fear at 30% of those questioned (Ouest 22 of April). The competition for jobs has led to a shift in social attitude toward immigrants who were viewed as taking jobs that belonged to the French (Hamilton).

It can be argued that the French government's inadequate attention for assimilation is partially responsible for a socially divided people. Written into French society is a colorblind code for assimilation that has failed to successfully incorporate the thousands of immigrants into French culture, leading to an uninformed, divided society (Sachs). 'La laïcité,' or secularity, took root in French institutions through a 1905 law that separates the church and state. As written, "The Republic (France) does not recognize, neither pay nor subsidize worship" (Commision de reflexion). This drive for secularism has come to cultivate a disregard for diversity within government systems and inhibit any measurements of society that may prove discrimination. Census-takers and other government statisticians are legally prohibited from compiling figures based on religion or race, nor may they collect information about heritage beyond asking for the birthplace of a person's parents (Sachs). As a result, the nation is unaware of the number of immigrants in their borders. Without knowing who needs what type of assistance to assimilate, how may groups be integrated? A measure of immigrants' status relative to the majority is important, yet difficult to determine (Bryant). There is some evidence of discrimination from the government agency handling complaints in France though. The organization reports that 40 percent of their cases involved discrimination on the basis of race or national origin (Sachs). The government, particularly in the past few years,

acknowledges that there is discrimination in the job market and a lack of diversity in media and other institutions (Sachs).

Housing situations in the suburbs inadvertently hinder efforts of cultural integration, and are also a result of government planning. 'Banlieus' are usually less wealthy, isolated housing developments outside of major French cities (Gamory). They also tend to act as points of concentrated immigrant communities. In their defense, the government planned banlieus provide some social resources for movements to join together by directing citizens in one district. However, banlieus have come to be associated in France with violence and unemployment (Gamory). Their out-of-the-way location often results in 'communautorisme,' living in a closed community with strict rules (Gamory). They are also associated with religious issues in France.

Communautorism groups live more by their traditional societal rules. A recent phenomena resulting from communautorism involves the third generation of Arab and black African descendents returning to strict traditional customs that require women to wear a head veil. In 2004 for the first time, the French government made an exception to its strict secular regulations and paid for private tutoring of women who refused to take their veils off in public school (Gamory). Thus, building excluded communities has had an effect on minorities for recognition of cultural differences. However, only three women were helped in an extremely drawn-out, controversial French case. In comparison to three percent of the French population, communautorism fostered by government housing has on the whole isolated targets of discrimination. Without government assimilation programs, the regions further inhibit integration in France.

Another point countering anti-discrimination movements is a political climate accustomed to frequent strikes. Concentrated in the spring months every year, different strikes involving varying protesting groups from students to bus drivers erupt throughout the country (Gamory). For example, Pentecost, the seventh Sunday after Easter in 2005, found the French strikes in full swing. State workers including bus drivers, teachers and even students, filled the streets or remained absent from work in protest of their assorted goals. Specifically in 2005, 22% of state employed teachers and 1,500 citizens in eight of the larger cities participated in the strike (Ouest, May 18th). Strikes taking place throughout the year are included in television news and newspapers as they occur. One may imagine an atmosphere rich in social activism in France could cultivate more experienced and successful social movements. It may be argued however, that in the case of France, habitually being exposed and practicing strikes have decreased their values as an effective tool for public protest and influence.

The growing movement against discrimination in France has a long road yet to travel. Laws regarding immigration restrictions have only increased after the nation fell into an economic crisis. However, without successful assimilation incorporated in government processes and powers, immigrants and their families will continue to be viewed as non-citizens. Treated this way, the immigrant community will continuously be motivated to fight for a life as a normal French citizen.

Conclusion

Much can be learned from the migrant movements in both France and United States. Examining CIW's case in Florida reveals the importance of networking and communities in forming and continuing a social movement. The Immokalee workers

succeeded in a large part due to the shared national value of basic human rights. Also, without larger, established organizations aiding the small group, CIW's campaign would not have gained momentum so rapidly and successfully.

After examining CIW's success, a look into France's lack of a movement reveals the importance of comprehending a nation's culture. Their political, social, and economic history have dramatically influenced modern society. Will the country be able to come to terms with their situation, that they have cultivated a hostile political and social environment that suppresses efforts to balance equality for millions of human lives? Discrimination is only recently being officially recognized, but as recognition is becoming possible, so is a solution and the formation of a movement to support the fight against racial bias.

Hope for France not only lies in the growing support of CRAN and its networks, but politics as well. *The New York Times* reporter Elaine Sciolino has uncovered a promising new phenomenon in France's 2007 campaign for president, commenting that "for the first time in French presidential electoral politics, the vote of the alienated and disadvantaged ethnic Arab and black African citizens may be a factor" (Sciolino). With future cooperation from political resources, networking, and examples from across the Atlantic in Florida, France may bear witness to its own migrant social movement very soon.

These examples of overcoming forceful inhumane treatment may even motivate other regions. Understanding social movements can better empower similarly oppressed immigrant communities to use CIW's and France's struggle as inspiration for a transformation within their own populations in other parts of the globe.

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Acronyms and vocabulary

A.F.L.-C.I.O.: American Federation of Labor-Congress of Industrial Organization

banlieus: Isolated housing developments outside of major French cities that tend to be made up of concentrated immigrant communities

B.B.C.: British Broadcasting Company

beur: French-born children of immigrants originating from northern Africa

C.I.W.: Coalition of Immokalee Workers

C.N.N.: Cable News Network

Communautorisme: A body of people living in a closed community under shared, fixed rules

C.R.A.N.: The Representative Council of Black Organizations in France

F.F.V.A.: Florida Fruit & Vegetable Association

HACU: Hispanic Association of Colleges and Universities

immigrant communities: Concentrated populations of people made up of immigrants and/or their descendents

laïcité: Secularity, and the French principle separating the church and state

maghrehb: Regional name for the nations of north Africa, with descendants being known as Maghrebians

N.A.A.C.P.: National Association for the Advancement of Colored People

N.C.L.R.: National Council of La Raza

N.P.R.: National Public Radio

political opportunity model: A social movement succeeding by working with the general structure of political institutions, formal, and informal procedures of governing, and the configuration of power in the broad sense of the nature and power of political parties and interest groups

psychological model: A social movements succeeding from societies reaction to a large disturbance in everyday life

resource mobilization theory: suggests movements would not commence nor be successful without the aid of certain political, social, and economic components already in place

social movement: A group of people with a common interest who work together either to change a policy of government and/or to change how society perceives something

Trente Glorieuses: Period of French society post-WWII in which the country led Europe in economic growth