Everything but the Funnel Cake:
Creative Protest and the University of Puerto Rico Student Occupation of 2010

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To my grandmother, Virginia Ann, and my mother, Leslie

and

To mi camarada, Jorell Meléndez-Badillo

and

To the student activists of the University of Puerto Rico in the summer of 2010

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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

In 2006, the island of Puerto Rico was experiencing a severe economic crisis, evident by its record levels of public debt, its highest rate of unemployment, and a government that struggled week to week to make payroll—basically, an island on the verge of bankruptcy.[1] When young Republican Luis Fortuño, member of *Partido Nuevo Progresista (PNP)* (or, New Progressive Party), roughly the equivalent of the Republican Party in the states, ran for Governor in 2008, he declared he would balance the budget by making cuts to a bloated government, creating a strong business environment to attract foreign investment, and encouraging new job growth in the private sector. Or put more simply, Fortuño ran on a platform of austerity. However, given the economic crisis, the people of Puerto Rico elected him as their Governor by a wide margin.

Shortly after taking office, Fortuño addressed the island of Puerto Rico and proposed the passage of *Ley 7* (Law 7), which would declare a fiscal emergency on the island and allow his administration to make drastic cuts to the budget, particularly public expenditures. In this address, he stated, "the government is too big and spends too much. Simply, the government has to be minimized."[2] Within six days of this proposition, *Ley 7* was passed.

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[1] See Juan Gonzalez's interview with Luis Davila Colon, leading political commentator and analyst in Puerto Rico, http://www.democracynow.org/2006/5/2/puerto_rico_imposes_partial_government_shutdown.

[2] Associated Press. "Puerto Rico Gov.: 30,000 Workers Could be Fired Amid Crisis." *NY Daily News*. Retrieved from http://www.nydailynews.com/latino/puerto-rico-gov-30-000-workers-fired-crisis-article-1.369458.

Fortuño's attack on the public university system came in the form of a $100 billion dollar budget cut, nearly 25% of its operating budget. In reaction, the Board of Trustees of the university system—whom were politically aligned with Governor Fortuño by political party—implemented Certification 98, their plan to accommodate for the deficit left by *Ley 7*. This included: the elimination of tuition waivers for students, such as athletes, artists, and honor students, a tuition increase, and implementation of a new student fee. Or in other words, the students would pay for the deficit, while also increasingly making public education less accessible to people on the island.

This announcement prompted the students to call for a student assembly, where they voted by majority to go on strike. They would begin with a 48-hour strike; however, if the administration refused to negotiate during this time, they would engage in an indefinite strike.[3] Which is exactly what happened.

Huelga 2010

In the early morning hours of April 21, 2010, student activists at the University of Puerto Rico—Rio Piedras locked the six iron transportation gates surrounding the university in protest of budget cuts aimed at the university. What initially began as a 48-hour shutdown at the Rio Piedras campus became a 62-day occupation of 10 out of the 11 campuses of the island-wide university system, with no end in sight. The occupation finally ended when student activists were able to force the administration to the negotiation table. Students were able to negotiate their primary goal for this phase of the strike—the maintenance of the tuition waivers; however, many

[3] During my first summer in the field, I learned there were several different words to describe protests on the island. *Paro* is used to describe a one- or two-day stoppage or strike; in contrast to *huelga*, which refers to an indefinite strike or struggle. In addition, activists described protest events, such as *piquetes*, *manifestacions*, and *marchas*, which were single events that took place in the broader *paro* and *huelga*. These protest events generally ranged from two-hour protests at a specific location, such as at the police station, or full day marches from one location to the next that generally shuts down major interstates.

of the other suggestions made by the Board would be dealt with in future phases of the student movement. The protest, sometimes referred to as *Huelga 2010*, was the first and only victory in the long history of student protest at the University of Puerto Rico (Brusi-Gil de Lamadrid 2011; Stanchich 2010). The victory of the UPR students was well documented in media sources, as evidenced by a screenshot from website *UPResunPais.com* (see Figure 1) and photographic images of their full day celebration at the convention center in Ponce (see Figure 2).

Figure 1. Screenshot from *UPResunPais.com* of the "Historical Victory" at the UPR.

Figure 2. Photo of Students' Celebration in Ponce on June 23, 2010. Photo Courtesy of https://occupyca.wordpress.com/2010/06/22/upr-strike-negotiations-ratified/.

During my on-site fieldwork in San Juan over the summer of 2010, many student activists were quick to speculate about how *Huelga 2010* was different from past student protests at the university, often citing these differences as what explained their unprecedented victory. One student activist spoke about how important it was that these protests were *different* than the past.

> We had a lot of support, given the fact it was a different strike for different reasons. It made it a bigger movement. It was more diverse. And so you get more stuff happening. You gain attention, because people see something different and they want to see more.

While there are multiple ways to compare *Huelga 2010* to past protests on the island and at the university, there were generally two major distinctions made by student activists and supporters—namely, the presence of protest art, culture, and creativity and the diversity of student activists.

Art and Culture in Huelga 2010

This first distinction regarding the presence of protest art, culture, and creativity referred to a number of different aspects of the protest. Some spoke about the presence of artistic displays and expressions in the occupation, while others spoke about the creativity in their style of occupying the campus, ranging from their creation of urban gardens to the inclusion of public lectures by faculty and union members to workshops on how to create protest art. Still others focused on the symbolic dimensions of the occupation, such as the creation of names for the different camps and subsequently, their logos and accouterments. These dynamics of the occupation were also recognized in national press, such as the assertion by Saskia Sassen, Professor at Columbia University, in *The Huffington Post*,

> Students in Iran, in Greece, in Puerto Rico—all have shown a noticeable endurance to fight on for weeks against governments which are threatening their basic rights. Even more important, in this struggle they are not only protesting but developing the elements for alternative politics and social settings. The Puerto Rican students who have occupied the campus of the Universidad de Puerto Rico for weeks, surrounded by armed forces, are doing urban agriculture, collective cooking, environmentally sustainable practices, art, music… in brief, they are striving to build the elements of a *different* (my emphasis) society (2010).

During one of my first interviews on the island, a student interrupted and inquired as to my interest, particularly as a student coming from the United States. As I described my research on art and culture in protest, he quipped, "In the 2005 strike, there was no art and it was a very boring strike." And while, his assertion was partially true, others confirmed there was a significant difference in not only the presence of art in occupation, but also in styles of art. In this way, there seemed to be *more* art utilized in the protest, such as banners and songs; but also, more innovative forms of art that weren't present in past protests on the island, such as street theater performances and more Do-It-Yourself (DIY) art. For example, a street performer and

faculty member described the innovative forms of performance art that played a role in the protest.

> I think one of the performances you have, simply the fact that this is virtually unheard of in Puerto Rican society, the semi-nude young women painting their bodies. It's an almost, not a first, but almost a first in our society. It was so extraordinary, such a strong visual impact that this kind of body painting, it makes such a strong impact. There's been some other demonstrations and acts, but the students that appear in the streets right outside of the university gates with body paint…it is something very different, very, well, all of this is exceptionally important to making a real lasting legacy of the strike.

This statement evokes a sense of something more than just the presence of art and culture in the movement, but rather a focus on innovation and creativity, which is particularly important as the occupation became known as, "the creative occupation."

"The creative occupation," which includes artistic and cultural dynamics of the occupation, also includes other components, such as protest style in terms of organization and tactics. Another student, describing the differences stated,

> We could make pickets and marches and just march and walk around in front of the Office of Trustees or we can do a sit-in in front of the gate and that is a traditional message being sent…it helps us to have a more *creative* way to express the message because if you keep doing the traditional manifestations, you will end up with 2005.

Or, in other words, student activists sought to do things *differently* from before. Instead of shutting down the campus from the outside, students chose to occupy the campus from inside. They incorporated cultural events into their day-to-day occupation, as well as in more traditional protest events.

Overall, it was this type of artistic, innovative, and symbolic work that students referenced when referring to "the creative occupation" at the University of Puerto Rico. The denotation of the occupation as "the creative occupation" is important for a couple of reasons. First, it was often described as one of the biggest explanations for their unprecedented success. Secondly, it is interesting that students distinguished this occupation as "creative," particularly

on an island in which protest in general is often described as having a "carnival atmosphere." A faculty member describes the atmosphere of political events on the island,

> Most political events in Puerto Rico, if you don't have music, food, and drink it is not a good idea. It is one sort of side note that Puerto Rico has a very high turnout rate for elections, much higher than the US. It is like 60 or 70% voting turnout. People do go out. And part of it is I think this carnival atmosphere. It is the caravans, the speeches, the music, and all this entertainment. All of this is sort of a way of taking people away, getting hem away from their houses and getting them participating in public life in massive support for whatever cause is going on. I think that kind of atmosphere is certainly part of the reason people do go out and participate.

Therefore, the branding of this occupation as particularly creative requires additional analysis to explore how and why this protest was *more* creative, as well as what outcomes creativity may have had on the student occupation.

Diversity in Huelga 2010

Another distinguishing characteristic of the 62-day occupation was the amount of diversity among student activists. A student journalist remarked, "On the strike of 2010, you could see that it was different from other strikes, because there were *a lot* (my emphasis) different people doing manifestations for the very time." An obstacle to protest in the past, both at the university and on the island, has been political fragmentation. In the past, protest at the university was mostly associated with youth socialist organizations, or what some referred to as "the radicals." In fact, it was so commonly accepted that protest at the university was organized and carried out by the left-leaning students that one student referred to past protest as being "held hostage" by the radicals. A faculty member remarks about how this diversity was different from the past.

> The idea of the movement in the past was that it was led by radicals, socialists, pro-independence. But here, [in 2010], it was broader. They made an effort to appeal to different sectors of the student body, not just pro-independence. And I think they were successful in doing that.

It is too simplistic to describe the political cleavages within the student body as simply between the radicals (or, often in this case, the socialist students) and the others. Other political divisions that cut through this distinction are the major political parties on the island, such as: *Partido Nuevo Progresista (*New Progressive Party), *Partido Popular Democratico* (Popular Democratic Party), and *Partido Independentista Puertorriqueno* (Puerto Rican Independence Party); as well as a number of smaller political parties, including *Partido del Pueblo Trabajador* (Working People's Party) and *Partido Puertorriquenos por Puerto Rico* (Puerto Ricans for Puerto Rico Party). Even among what is considered the "Left" on the island, there are contentious disagreements about issues of independence and statehood for the island. Therefore, political ideologies create interesting configurations and tensions between various potential activists in ways that present an obstacle for broad mobilization, not only at the university, but also on the island generally. More specifically, it was quite rare, if it happened at all, for students from what are considered more conservative ideologies, such as those associated with the *Partido Nuevo Progresista* or statehoooders, to be involved with protests at the university. Theefore, the presence of students across the various academic disciplines and political ideologies marked a significant difference from the past.

Not only was the occupation able to mobilize students from diverse groups to hold a 48-hour occupation, they were able to organize themselves to take over the university *and* continue to live together for 62-days, maintaining a sense of solidarity until they were able to force the administration to negotiate. Thus, this dissertation seeks to explore the relationship between these two distinguishing features of *Huelga* 2010—creativity in protest and diversity among student activist groups. In particular, is there something about creativity in protest that works to manage diversity within a movement?

My Study

Through the case of the University of Puerto Rico 62-day occupation, I explore how student activists understand creativity in protest, but also how creative action influences movement diversity. I explore the relationship between creative protest and movement diversity through the use of a qualitative case study, including participant observation, in-depth interviews, and analysis of movement documentation, such as newsletters, memorandums, news, photographs, videos, and social media.

Most scholarly research focuses on two major outcomes of the use of creative activism—that of, communication and visibility for a movement (Adams 2002; Chaffee 1993; Eyerman and Jamison 1998; Morrison and Isaac 2012; Reed 2005; Roy 2010; Taylor, Rupp, and Gamson 2004) and producing emotional resonance (De Sario 2007; Eyerman and Jamison 1998; Halfmann and Young 2010; Jasper 1997; Jordan 2002; Reed 2005; Roy 2010; Shepard 2011). However, my research develops a third important outcome—one centered on how creative activism may also be utilized to manage high levels of diversity and difference in social movements. Although consensus within a movement is "at best tenuous" (Benford 1993: 678), few scholars have focused on the management of these conflicts. Or, in other words, how can activists maintain high levels of difference and diversity without the movement fragmenting or breaking apart? One of the ways in which a movement can *manage* movement diversity is by relying on a networked organizational style—a style that revolves around the creation of a broad umbrella movement in which diverse groups can unify while still preserving their own identities and approaches to protest (Juris 2008). Another way in which diverse activists can be drawn together in consensus without absolute agreement is through the creation of cultural anchors, or a thinly coherent framework of culture (Cohen 1985; Ghaziani and Baldassarri 2011). Cultural

anchors illicit broad consensus among involved actors, yet they are general enough to accommodate debate and dissent without paralyzing action. Scholars have yet to explore the ways in which artistic and creative expressions may be utilized to enhance differentiation within movements without the expected negative consequences.

Based on the existing literature, I expect that creative protest actions play an important role in shaping social movements, particularly in respect to issues of unity and difference. There is evidence that artistic and cultural expressions provide an opportunity for movement activists to not only communicate to others the image of an unified movement, but also to produce an emotional sense of unity amongst members. However, there is little research that explores these expressions in connection with diversity within a movement and infighting. My dissertation adds new knowledge to the study of social movements because others have not yet examined the influence of creative efforts on movement diversity and infighting.

My key findings are that creativity in protest works to *manage* movement diversity by enabling activists to *both* unify and differentiate within the movement. Or in other words, artistic and creative expressions, such as performance art and symbolic identities, act as a *cultural glue* that not only helps to maintain solidarity among highly differentiated activists groups, but also allows them to demonstrate their differences. My research reveals several underlying mechanisms in the influence of creative activism on movement pluralism—namely, creative activism brings diverse groups together, allows for differential expressions and participation, can diffuse tensions that arise between diverse activists, and directly highlights the importance of differentiation within movements. Consistent with existing literature, I find that creative activism can bring together large groups of people from diverse ideologies in a demonstration of solidarity. For example, student activists held a musical concert on the occupied campus that

brought together not only student activists, but also community supporters across the political spectrum. In contrast to most existing literature, I find that rather than utilizing creative expressions to bring together activists under one unified identity, these expressions allow for activists to highlight their differences. For example, students expressed their different approaches to protest through the creative expressions of their camp identities by way of camp names and a variety of cultural events. The various cultural events allowed students to pick and choose how they participated in the movement, thus highlighting their differences rather than diminishing these differences for unity and movement solidarity. In addition, artistic and creative expressions helped to diffuse tensions that may arise between the different groups—those that typically would lead to fragmentation or dissolution. Lastly, creative activism also directly expressed appreciation for the value of diversity within the movement. For example, *Amor de Barricada*, a radio soap opera, used humor to poke fun at the ideological differences between the six campsites, which helped to not only diffuse tensions, but also directly demonstrate the value of diversity and difference within the movement.

Overview of Chapters

My dissertation proceeds as follows. First, I discuss the theoretical foundations for my research. I define key concepts and review the relevant theoretical and empirical literature. Specifically, I engage scholarship in the areas of creativity in protest, including research on artistic and cultural expressions, and diversity in protest. After reviewing the relevant literature, I next turn to a discussion of my methodology. I outline the qualitative case study that informs my research, as well as the data sources, data collection strategies, and analytic techniques employed.

Next, I set the stage for the 62-day student occupation. First, I focus on the broader political and economic climate on the island that led to the budget cuts at the university, such as the election of Governor Luis Fortuño and the passage of Law 7. I explore the university environment, highlighting political divisions that marred past student protests and the passage of Certification 98, which intended to accommodate the university deficit. Lastly, I describe in detail the happenings on the morning of April 21st, as students arrived to campus and proceeded to lock the iconic gates at the University of Puerto Rico.

In the next chapter, I examine the symbolic world of the six differentiated camp identities of the occupation. I examine how the naming of camps and the development of symbolic content, such as t-shirts and logos, express the identity of each camp. I provide evidence of how the cultural expressions developed by camp enables students to demonstrate their difference, while still belonging to a camp, as well as the broader occupation. For example, the differentiated camp names, such as Camp Sparta and Camp Beverly Hills, communicated how the camps allowed for different ideologies and tactics. Therefore, in some sense, activists could participate with the camp, which mostly closely identified with their own preferences.

Next, I examine how artistic expressions used during the occupation enabled both a sense of unity and differentiation among activists. For example, the singing of traditional plenas during marches at the university allowed students to feel part of something larger, or in a sense, unified as one collective. However, on the other hand, the multiplicity of artistic expressions, as well as the emphasis on do-it-yourself art (or, artistic expressions being produced by all participants, rather than just formal artists), enabled high levels of differentiation. Students could pick and choose which cultural events in which to participate, as well as had a significant amount of freedom in creating the artistic expressions of the movement.

These two components—artistic expressions and the cultural work of the six camps—dovetail in the example of *Amor de Barricada*, a radio soap opera that humorously depicted the internal dynamics of the movement. The main plotline of the show was a Romeo and Juliet love story, in which two students from different camps of the occupation carry on a tense love affair. In this way, this artistic expression allows the students to highlight, and even laugh, at their differences, but also to diffuse existing and ongoing tensions through the use of humor.

Before proceeding to my conclusion, I summarize the events that took place in the aftermath of the 62-day occupation. I explore the events that followed the negotiations with the administration in June of 2010, as well as what is commonly referred to as the more violent second save of the student movement. Bookmarking the 62-day creative occupation in between the past protests at the university and the second wave enables an exploration of this specific case of protest at the University of Puerto Rico, in light of its specific characteristics.

Based on the empirical evidence presented, I conclude that the 62-day occupation through the use of creative protest actions maintained two sides or faces of the occupation—that of unity and differentiation. In my conclusion, I review the key findings of my dissertation, as well as discuss the major theoretical and empirical contributions of the project. Lastly, I conclude by discussing the broader implications of my research and suggestions for future research at the nexus of culture and social movements.

CHAPTER II

THEORETICAL BACKGROUND

Introduction

In this chapter, I provide theoretical context for my dissertation and illuminate the scholarly importance of my inquiry. Movement scholars have examined creative activities in social movements, as well as have examined movement diversity and infighting, but at this juncture we do not know how and whether creative protest can help manage diversity, difference, and infighting. This chapter proceeds as follows: I first address the theoretical underpinnings of my dissertation—namely, creativity in protest and movement diversity. More specifically, I examine how scholars have conceptualized the idea of creativity in protest, including relevant literature to these definitions, such as literatures on artistic and cultural expressions in protest. I also focus on how scholars have demonstrated the outcomes of creativity on social movements. Next, I examine the literature on movement diversity and infighting, specifically focusing on which factors influence movement difference. Drawing on these bodies of literature, I lay out my research questions, and conceptualization of major terms, regarding the influence of creative protest on movement diversity that will be examined in the empirical chapters to follow.

Creative Protest

The concept of creativity is not easily defined in the sociological literature. More specifically, in the social movements literature, there is even less conceptualization of exactly what it means to use creativity in protest. Scholars have utilized several different terms in reference to creativity in protest, such as "creative resistance" (Jordan _____), "creative activism" (De Sario 2007), "artfulness" (Jasper 2005), and "playfulness" (Shepard 2011). While

there are several different ways in which scholars refer to creativity, there are ways in which these definitions "hang together." Or in other words, there are similar components in all of these definitions that are useful for examining my case.

Definitions of Creativity in Protest

One of the first scholars to examine the use of "creative resistance" is John Jordan and his work on the London-based activist group, *Reclaim the Streets* (RTS). In his piece, "The Art of Necessity: The Subversive Imagination of Anti-Road Protest and *Reclaim the Streets*," Jordan examines how a collapse of the divisions between art, politics, and everyday life represent a "turning point in creative resistance" that introduces "creativity, imagination, play and pleasure into the world of protest" (347). He describes the tactics of RTS as blending "party with protest" (Jordan ____). He describes the creative techniques at work in the street parties, which included music, wild costumes, color, and revelry—in a sense, like a carnival. However, he also describes the undercover dynamics of the street parties, in that their location was often kept secret until the last moment, a tactic he suggests is derived from rave culture. Broadly, Jordan uses the modifier of creative to describe the use artistic performances *and* unexpected tactics as derived from a subculture.

James Jasper (2005) also outlines the concept of a "creative moment" within social movement in *The Art of Moral Protest: Culture, Biography, and Creativity.* According to Jasper, "creative moments" are moments in which culture meets "artfulness"—or in other words, shared understandings become actively constructed in innovative ways. For Jasper, these creative moments take on the form of new sensibilities and framings within the movement and even, tactical innovations.

> Even when we cannot articulate all our cultural meanings and rules, our actions implicitly depend upon them. We are so deeply embedded in cultural traditions that, even as we

> transform and attack them, we cannot escape them…We are *artful* in accepting, playing upon, bending, or rejecting cultural rules, much as Beethoven absorbed, embodied, and exploded the rules for string quarters. Culture is only one dimension of life that humans are capable of changing: we also invent new technologies, accumulate or redistribute money, change laws and political systems, even reconfigure individual feelings and loyalties. This *artful creativity* (my emphasis)—sociologists refer to it as agency—is present in all social life, not just protest. But since it is the raison d'etre of protest movements, it is especially salient there (2005:11).

Or, in other words, Jasper defines the "creative moment" in protest as relying upon innovation in cultural dynamics. In his book, he describes the contrast between standard styles of moral protest with creative variations. For example, he describes the "kiss-in's" performed by LGBT activist groups, such as ACT UP (AIDS Coalition to Unleash Power), a "barf-in" held by animal rights activists protesting animal testing by cosmetic companies, and even, how one environmental group sent out checks for two cents with the idea of attraction supporters and encouraging them to also put in their two cents regarding the cause (Jasper 2005). In this way, Jasper contrasts these creative styles of protest with more standard styles, such as large public rallies and marches or mainstream lobbying and electioneering.

On the other hand, Beppe De Sario (2007) defines "creative activism" as an activism, which uses "theatre, cinema, music and stunts to effect political change, deploying visual tools and images extensively (Mattoni and Doerr 2007)" (Gill and Pratt 2008: 10). De Sario focuses mostly on the use of art within protest actions, particularly more performative art, that at times he refers to as 'tactical frivolity' (2007: 87). Specifically, De Sario examines the case of a global anti-neoliberal activist network, *Precari su Marte*, in Italy and the ways in which they incorporate creative activism to mobilize around the issue of precarity.

Most recently, Benjamin Shepard's (2011) book, *Play, Creativity, and Social Movements: If I Can't Dance, It's Not My Revolution* explores how both play and creativity operate in protest events ranging from ACT UP to More Gardens! More Times Up! While

Shepard does not specifically define what he means by "creativity" in protest, he hints at this through his descriptions of how play operates in protest. He describes "play" as involving experimentation, the unexpected, and innovation. In most of his examples he provides, he tends to focus on the infusion of art and cultural dynamics in protest actions. For example, he describes how antiwar protesters, in 2003, performed the hokey pokey amidst riots and red alerts in New York City during the largest antiwar protest. Another more specific example, which constitutes a chapter in his book, is the creative and playful work of the Lower East Side Collective (LESC) in New York, a group that held protests from 1997 to 1999 in regards to the rights of community gardens. He draws on an example from LESC's distributed propaganda to describe the inclusion of creativity and play in protest actions,

> We do demos. We do street theatre and art. We do direct actions and civil disobedience. We do tabling and education forums. We do phone and fax jams. We do pestering. We do parties. We do picnics. We—with healthy skepticism—do electoral campaigns. We do whatever works (Shephard 2011: 84).

While these scholars do not always conceptualize "creative activism" in the same precise ways, there are two major dimensions that are present in all definitions—that of, artistic and cultural expressions and the notion of innovation. In order to get a better fix on these components of creative activism, it is necessary to explore scholarly findings on the outcomes of creative activism (Adams 2002; Chaffee 1993; De Sario 2007; Eyerman and Jamison 1998; Halfmann and Young 2010; Jasper 2005; Jordan 2002, _____; Morrison and Isaac 2012; Reed 2005; Roy 2010; Shepard 2011; Taylor, Rupp, and Gamson 1998).

Outcomes of Creative Activism

Existing literature demonstrates there are two broad outcomes regarding the use of creative activism within social movements—namely, communication and visibility (Adams 2002; Chaffee 1993; Eyerman and Jamison 1998; Morrison and Isaac 2012; Reed 2005; Roy

2010; Taylor, Rupp, and Gamson 2004) and emotional resonance (De Sario 2007; Eyerman and Jamison 1998; Halfmann and Young 2010; Jasper 1997; Jordan 2002; Reed 2005; Roy 2010; Shepard 2011). First, I will address the ways in which creative activism may produce communication and visibility of the movement. Broadly, activists may use artistic and cultural expressions to communicate to their potential constituents, the general public, and the media, particularly in repressive contexts. Second, I will address how creative activism accomplishes emotional work, which scholars have demonstrated is increasingly an important dynamic of movements.

Communication and Visibility

Artistic and cultural expressions are one of the ways movements can communicate or make visible their message to others. Political cartoons, visual flyers, graffiti, and protest songs are all examples of ways activists in the past have communicated their message to others (Adams 2002; Chaffee 1993; McCaughan 2007; Morrison and Isaac 2012; Reed 2005; Roscigno and Danaher 2004; Taylor, Rupp and Gamson 2004). Depending on the medium and broader structural factors, art and culture has the potential to reach different groups of people than more traditional means of political communication, such as news stories or political meetings. For instance, we might suspect that a five-page text-based information sheet outlining the goals of a group of activists would be accessible to a different group of people than a 30-second flashy video posted to YouTube. It should be noted that one form should not necessarily be deemed more successful than the other, but rather, they have the potential to reach different audiences (Rohlinger and Brown 2013). Existing research has examined the ways in which activists use art and cultural productions to communicate with potential constituents, the media and public, and internally among other activists.

Due to barriers of communication with some populations, such as those in repressive environments or those lacking access to information, artistic forms of communication may be the only option for getting information to potential constituents. One example is found in the use of political cartoons by the Industrial Workers of the World (IWW) in the early part of the 20th century (Morrison and Isaac 2012). The Wobblies found political cartoons—heavy on visual images and containing simply written messages—were successful at informing workers about labor issues, given their constituency's varying levels of literacy (Morrison and Isaac 2012). For instance, in a cartoon published in the June 3, 1909 edition of the *Industrial Worker*, a newspaper printed by the Industrial Workers of the World (IWW), the cartoon visually contrasted the lifestyle of the workingman against that of the boss or employer. As shown, very few written words are used while still portraying a significant grievance of the IWW. Similarly, labor organizers during the southern textile strikes in the United States from 1920 to 1934 found that labor songs were an effective way to communicate with textile laborers (Roscigno and Danaher 2004). In this case, activists faced an obstacle in communicating with potential activists, as workers were located in geographically isolated rural towns with little union organization (Roscigno and Danaher 2004). Activists found that songs could be used in conjunction with radio technology to circulate information to dispersed laborers throughout the rural south (Roscigno and Danaher 2004). In both cases, artistic expressions enabled activists to communicate information to the potential constituents.

In some cases, government repression prohibits political communication, making it practically impossible for activists to communicate with others. For these activists, gaining visibility among the public and popular media may be more important than communicating directly with constituents. During the repressive regime of Pinochet in Chile, female political

prisoners living in shantytowns were mostly concealed. However, artistic workshops held by *Vicaria de la Solidaridad*, a religious organization, allowed women to construct arpilleras, detailed hand-sewn textile appliques, which illustrated their daily experiences in the shantytowns (Adams 2002). For example, one particular arpillera depicts the story of Carmen Gloria Quintana and Rodrigo Rojas, two teens that were taken by government patrol, tortured and set on fire. The arpillera depicts the scene, as well as the horror of onlookers. Not all arpilleras depicted tragic scenes, as some showed children playing games or women doing the laundry. Initially, the arpilleras escaped the attention of revolutionary guards, whom saw the hand-sewn appliques as simply the handicrafts of women; however, once they were recognized as being anti-government they were made illegal. Visibility came as the *Vicaria* began to sell the arpilleras to foreigners, who carried the messages around the world. The arpilleras served to enhance mobilization of popular global support, particularly outside of Chile.

Another way activists can increase visibility among the general public and media is through dramatic performances. Given the public nature of performances, performances have the ability to gather together observers in one space, creating a spectacle for on-lookers and the media; however, increasingly, these performances take place not only on the ground, but also virtually as they become disseminated online. The performances of drag queens and kings illuminate issues associated with the LGBT (lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgender) movements, as demonstrated in the work of Verta Taylor and colleagues (Taylor et al. 2004). Drag performances display gay life for generally mainstream audiences, provoking more general questions about the articulation of gendered and sexed categories (Taylor et al. 2004). More recently, the visibility of the world of drag has made its way to mainstream with the televised drag performances of the popular reality television show, *RuPaul's Drag Race*. Throughout these

performances, both on-stage and back-stage, the audience is exposed to issues impacting the LGBT movement broadly, such as issues of coming out, familial support, and HIV/AIDS. The visibility of these issues, packaged in performances of drag, may lend to an enhanced mobilization for other LGBT protest events by allies of the community.

Not all performances take on this formal dynamic, but rather, there is a long history of street performances or guerilla theater (Elam 2001). Popular in the United States in the 1960s, in the form of the Bread and Puppet Theater and the Theatre of the Oppressed, street theater and performances were elaborated to promote social and political change (Elam 2001). While groups from the 1960s street theater scene have remained active to some extent, contemporary street theater combines this type of politically charged performance with flash mob formations and new media technology. During the Battle of Seattle in 1999, creative performances flooded the streets as dancing Santas, fire-eaters, clowns, and drag queens performed and protested globalization (Reed 2005). As an outsider, it may be difficult to draw conclusions about the movement's specific grievances based on these performances; however, it was a spectacle. It was a spectacle that captured the attention of outside observers and the mainstream media that helped to nuance the visibility of a protest that, at the time, had been primarily framed as violent (Reed 2005; Shepard 2011).

Lastly, art may be the language in which activists can communicate their sense of unity, such as their identity or grievances (Adams 2002; Chaffee 1993; Eyerman and Jamison 1998; Reed 205; Roy 2010; Taylor, Rupp, and Gamson 2004). In this sense, movement activists use art, such as music, fashion, or images, to convey to others a unified front—or, one mighty voice. For example, the music of the labor movement, fashion among members of the Black Panther Party or the use of the upside down pink triangle by ACT UP demonstrated unity of members to

others, such as potential constituents, their targets, and the media (Eyerman 1998; Gould 2009; Reed 2005). Performing the movement's unity is important, particularly in terms of how others perceive the movement. As demonstrated in the Occupy movement, the largest critique of the movement by outsiders was the lack of unity within the movement. Journalists question, "Who are they?" and "What do they want?" It seemed unclear, which is often falsely attributed to their lack of measurable outcomes. However, the notion of unity or solidarity is not only about conveying this image to others or outsiders, but also related to emotional work produced internally—a sense of solidarity and unity among movement activists, which will be discussed below.

Emotional Work

Scholars have demonstrated that emotions are powerful and persuasive motivators of collective action (Aminzade and McAdam 2002; De Sario 2007; Goodwin, Jasper and Polletta 2001; Jasper 1997, 2001; Jordan 2002; Shepard 2011). Emotions, such as shame, guilt, and pride, provoke feelings of moral responsibility; whereas, other emotions, such as compassion and empathy, may provoke feelings of familiarity (Goodwin et al. 2001; Jasper 2011). It is argued that these feelings translate into feelings of responsibility, which then in turn, become protest actions. One of the ways that emotions can be made visible to potential constituents in a movement is through the artistic and cultural expressions of a movement (Goodwin et al. 2001; Jasper 1997). More specifically, the existing scholarship demonstrates how these expressions can produce emotions, such as: a sense of hope and joy (De Sario 2007; Eyerman and Jamison 1998; Jordan 2002; Reed 2005; Roy 2010; Shepard 2011), a sense of disgust or outrage (Halfmann and Young 2010; Jasper 1997), and a sense of unity (Eyerman and Jamison 1995; Reed 2005; Roy 2010).

A majority of the research on art, emotions, and social movements has focused on the role played by music in protest (Eyerman and Jamison 1988; Roy 2010); often to the extent that other art forms are omitted from research (Roy 2010). Music has a communicative power; however, one of the most powerful roles of music is its emotive capability (DeNora 1999, 2000; Roy 2010). *We Shall Overcome*, an hour-long documentary tells the story of how a gospel song, originating in southern African American churches, became the unofficial anthem of the Civil Rights Movement, recorded by popular musical artists at the time Joan Baez and Pete Seeger and also recited by Martin Luther King, Jr. in his final sermon before assassination (Rankin 1992). In the documentary, Bishop Desmond Tutu states that the song "touched a responsive chord in the human breast…[the song's message] is something we long for with every fiber of every being" (Rankin 1992: 11). Often when we think of art and emotions in social movements, this is the image that comes to mind—that of the role of music in the Civil Rights Movement.

Sense of Hope

A complicated example of the use of emotional work took place in the case of AIDS activist organization, ACT UP (AIDS Coalition to Unleash Power). The direct action advocacy group, formed in the late 1980s, sought to bring awareness to the disease at a time when the government refused to acknowledge the disease as a public health issue. In the face of extraordinary loss, activists were faced with the difficulty of managing the emotions of activists, while also using emotions to motivate individuals to participate in the protest actions of the group (Gould 2009). In Gould's *Moving Politics: Emotion and ACT UP's Fight Against AIDS*, the author provides countless examples of the ways in which the group was tasked with reconfiguring grief and shame into pride and confidence. She writes,

> One might suppose that ACT UP was able to sustain itself because direct-action AIDs activists appreciate an emotional imperative: to generate support for their street activism,

> they had to challenge how lesbians and gay men understood and felt about the epidemic; they thus consciously set out to do so, and their strategic efforts to mobilize anger and suppress feelings not amenable to ACT UP's form of activism were successful (Gould 2009: 221).

ACT UP utilized various art forms in an effort to perform this emotional work, such as the performance of political funerals (Gould 2009). Political funerals, which used the actual ashes of people lost to the epidemic, married performative representations of death, such as mock tombstones and fake coffins, with an actual funeral procession honoring the life of a loss loved one (Gould 2009). In a leaflet distributed for the first of its political funerals, activists prominently expressed "Bring your grief and rage about AIDS to a political funeral." These events, among the dozens of other ACT UP actions, used performance art as a means to translate grief into a more actionable emotions, that of rage. Throughout the history of the organization, activists also used art to translate anger into expressions of humor and joy. The emotional work accomplished by ACT UP was important to mobilization and media coverage, particularly for a group of activists dealing with issues of invisibility and feelings of guilt and shame.

A burgeoning literature explores the emotional resonance of joy as a means of mobilization (Ehrenreich 2006: Reed 2005; Tucker 2010; Shepard 2011). Much of this research focuses on how a creative and carnival-like atmosphere may produce emotions of joy and excitement. For example, T.V. Reed's (2004) research on the Battle of Seattle demonstrates how multiple performances in the street create an atmosphere of fun, playfulness, and excitement. He quotes from a handbook for the Direct Action Network, illuminating the ways in which art can create an atmosphere of joy that draws individuals to participate in the movement.

> Taking to the streets with giant puppet theater, dance, graffiti, art, music, poetry and the spontaneous eruption of joy breaks through the numbing isolation…We must strike to use all our skills in harmony to create an enduring symphony of resistance. The cacophony against capital will be deafening when nine days of large-scale theater preparations

> culminate in the largest festival of resistance the world has ever seen. We will make revolution *irresistible* (my emphasis) (Reed 2005: 255).

In this way, art has the potential to create a protest environment of joyfulness, which becomes irresistible to not only activists, but also observers and the media. Similarly, the work of Shepard (2011) and Tucker (2010), places the concept of aesthetic playfulness at the center of protest actions, demonstrating the ways in which creative activity can produce joyful emotions making protest seem more desirable—and in some cases, more likely to receive media coverage. In this way, artistic interventions produce emotions that may contribute to creating a dynamic and exciting protest atmosphere leading to enhanced mobilization and media visibility.

Sense of Disgust

Other scholars have explored the role of photography and video in producing strong, often visceral, emotional responses (Halfmann and Young 2010; Jasper 1997). For example, Halfmann and Young (2010) illuminate how in the anti-abortion movement, the "grotesque" was deployed in photography to evoke strong emotions of disgust. When people are confronted with grotesque imagery, such as the photographs of aborted fetuses and the now famous anti-abortion video, *The Silent Scream*, they experience emotions of disgust and repulsion. These feelings can produce a reaction of "this cannot be" or a moral commitment; which, in turn, trigger a reaction of "this must not be," provoking social action (Halfmann and Young 2010; Jasper 1997). Similar tactics have also been utilized in animal rights campaigns, as demonstrated in the work of James Jasper (1997). These moral triggers through art provoke both the recruitment and mobilization of potential constituents, but also media coverage (Jasper 1997).

Sense of Unity

Similarly, scholars have demonstrated how artistic and cultural expressions provide participants with a sense of unity (Eyerman and Jamison 1995; Reed 2005; Roy 2010). For

example, in the case of the Civil Rights Movement, the song *We Shall Overcome* had the power to provoke emotions of pride and confidence, as activists gathered together and sang together, "We shall all be free." Civil Rights activists often write about signing the song, feeling as if anything was possible. Bruce Hartford, a Civil Rights activist, recounts,

> We were singing…Somehow I can't explain it, through the singing and the sense of solidarity we made a kind of psychological barrier between us and the mob. Somehow we made such a wall of strength that they couldn't physically push through it to hit us with their sticks. It wasn't visual, but you could almost see our singing and our unity pushing them back (as quoted in Reed 2005: 25).

This confidence and strength inevitably would lead others to join the ranks of the Civil Rights Movement.

Lastly, De Sario claims that creative activism acts as cultural translation device that allows for people from different backgrounds to come together in protest (2007). More specifically, De Sario (2007) states that creative practices formulate,

> …and emotional setting for the activism in which people from different backgrounds could all come together in a relaxed situation and meet individual activists, different groups, men and women, people in insecure jobs and others in guaranteed jobs…basing the relationship between different people on mobile, flexible dimensions, such as "affinity" and on logocentric languages, such as street music, dance, the carnival procession and the parody of religious ritual (31).

Therefore, creative activism creates an environment in which diverse activists came together, unified, in protest actions, such as De Sario's case study on precarity in Italy. More specifically, De Sario describes how creative activism produces an emotional setting—or "fusion of common emotions" (31) that provides an opportunity for people to come together, even if they previously did not know one another. Or in other words, these common emotional experiences produced through creative activism produces a sense of mutual trust that enables activists to come together.

In the literature, most of the existing literature focuses on the ways in which artistic and cultural expressions enable activists to communicate a sense of unity to others or to produce the emotional resonance of unity among activists. Or, in other words, most of this research has focused on the sense of a unified identity, often at the expense of recognizing the ways in which some movements may utilize artistic and cultural expressions to enhance a sense of diversity or differentiation within the movement. In the case of the University of Puerto Rico, I found that both high levels of differentiation, or movement diversity, existed alongside artistic and cultural expressions. Thus, this suggested to me there might be an unaccounted relationship between these expressions and the issue of unity and difference within a movement. Now, I turn to the literature on diversity within social movements, exploring explanations for what factors work to manage movement difference, as well as quell infighting.

Movement Diversity and Infighting

Diversity *within* social movement organizations is not often discussed in the social movement literature; however, a number of scholars have explored conflict *between* social movement organizations (Balser 1997; Barkan 1986; Benford and Snow 1992; Benford 1993; Bernstein 1997; Brown-Saracino and Ghaziani 2008, 2009; Epstein 1998; Gamson 1995; Robnett 2003; Shriver and Adams 2013; Taylor and Rupp 1993; Valocchi 1999). These scholars expose how inter-organizational conflict, such as differences over policies and tactics, can have detrimental consequences for movements. Specifically, scholars have demonstrated how these conflicts may result in a weakening of the movement by resulting in organizational decline (Benford and Snow 1992), deflecting time and energy from the broader goal (Benford 1993), creating more competition over resources (Van Dyke 2003), and generally making it difficult to work together (Barkan 1986).

One of the most well known examples of the destructive power of inter-organizational conflict is the rift between the Student Nonviolent Coordinating Committee (SNCC) and the Southern Christian Leadership Conference (SCLC) during the Southern Civil Rights Movement in the 1960s (Barkan 1986; Gitlin 2003; McAdam 1988). Tactical differences between the two groups caused a rift that ultimately led to a competition for resources and subsequently, a weakening of the movement (Barkan 1986). While scholars have explored how diverse organizations come into conflict when seeking to form broad coalitions for a social movement, there is far less scholarly research that explores conflict *within* a social movement.

Social movements and protests are rarely unified affairs (Zald and McCarthy 1980), but rather composed of diverse individuals and groups with differing opinions regarding the objectives, identity, strategies and tactics of the movement (Benford 1993). "Consensus within and among a movement's organizations regarding such interpretive matters is at best tenuous and more often than not absent" (Benford 1993: 678). However, few scholars focus on intra-movement conflict, particularly since most movement activists and scholars are concerned with the ways in which movements work to build consensus across different ideologies and approaches to protest (Ghaziani and Baldassarri 2011; Juris 2008; McCammon, Bergner, and Arch 2015). Just in the same way that inter-organizational conflict can diminish movement success, the same holds true for intra-movement conflict. Intra-movement contestations, or what is commonly referred to as "infighting" can lead to organizational decline, demobilization, factionalism, and potential dissolution of the movement or organization (Balser 1997; Bernstein 1997; Brown-Saracino and Ghaziani 2008, 2009; Epstein 1998; Gamson 1995; McCammon, Bergner, and Arch 2015; Taylor and Rupp 1993; Valocchi 1999).

At the same time, there are liabilities for adopting an overly exclusive formulation of identity or movement frames (Polletta and Jasper 2001). For example, movement activists are torn between asserting a clear identity and a fluid one (Gamson 1995; Epstein 1987; Seidner 1995; Phelan 1989; Fuss 1989; Polletta and Jasper 2001). A majority of the social movement literature focuses more attention on how to unify a movement through its frames, tactics, and identity. In this way, little scholarship focuses on how to *manage* movement diversity—or in other words, how movement activists might think about allowing high levels of movement diversity without what scholars have suggested are interminable consequences of high levels of diversity among protesters.

Management of Movement Diversity

Two scholars have written about mechanisms that may be utilized to enable diversity and differentiation within movements, namely, Jeffrey S. Juris and Amin Ghaziani. Both scholars help to answer the question of how activists can maintain high levels of diversity and difference among participants within the movement without resulting in factionalism, fragmentation, or dissolution.

In *Networking Futures: The Movements Against Corporate Globalization* by Jeffrey S. Juris, the author examines the decentralized and segmented organizational style of anti-globalization protests in the 2000s (2008). More specifically, Juris explores the anti-corporate globalization movements based in Barcelona in the 2000s, focusing his attention on understanding the processes in which diverse movements are united in opposition to corporate globalization. In his ethnography, Juris finds that a confluence between organizational forms and network technologies has produced a "networked" logic of protest, which allows for diverse activists with differing ideologies and preferences for tactics to work together. "Rather than a

single, unified movement, anti-corporate globalization activism involves a congeries of overlapping networks, each with its own particular history, political vision, and organization forms" (Juris 2008: 58). This organizational form is based on a more flexible, decentralized networks, in opposition to older organization forms that relied upon hierarchical forms.

By utilizing this organizational style, activists were able to *manage* diverse activist groups and movement organizations, "overcoming many of the political and geographic obstacles that stymied mass movements in the past" (Juris 2008: 60). In a sense, it was not necessary for all activists participating in anti-globalization protests to "buy" into the same tactics or identities. But rather, they could participate in the protest in a way that reflected their divergent political logics. For example, Juris examines the protests at the World Bank and IMF fall meetings in September 2000 in Prague. He describes how the protest march was divided into color-coded zones providing a space for diverse kinds of political expressions. "While some tactics emphasized violent rejection of the current order, others prefigured utopian alternatives" (Juris 2008: 131). For example, there was the "Blue March," which provided a space for radical youths associated with anarchist networks; the "Yellow March" involved those interested in conducting a more nonviolent confrontation of crossing a bridge; and still others participated in the "Pink and Silver March" that focused on more artistic and cultural expressions, such as occupying the street with dancing to a British-based samba band (Juris 2008: 131-139). Juris demonstrates throughout his ethnographic data how this organizational style is one way in which activists may manage diversity within broad social actions constituted of multiplicity in terms of activist identities, ideologies, and tactical preferences.

Another way to address issues of internal diversity is through the use of what Amin Ghaziani and Delia Baldassarri (2011) refer to as "cultural anchors." Cultural anchors can be any

number of cultural items, including both material (e.g., colors, logos, mascots) and nonmaterial (e.g., beliefs, values) culture that draw activists together in consensus without absolute agreement (Ghaziani and Baldassarri 2011). For example, in the case of the LGBT marches on Washington in the 1990s and 2000s, there were significant issues of infighting internally between different factions of those fighting for LGBT rights. Ghaziani and Baldassarri examined how cultural anchors; in this case, that of community building and equality were consistent across four different marches. They argue, "the anchoring function of the community building-equality axis reveals a thinly coherent public form that is general yet generative" (196). Or, in other words, the cultural anchor connects activists together in a way that is broad enough as to not diminish dissenting opinions, but rather allow for a loose connection to the anchor. By relying upon a thinly coherent framework of culture, activists are able to enhance diversity within the movement, rather than seek to eliminate these differences.

Overall, a majority of the existing literature on social movements focuses on the ways in which activists come together as a unified whole; however, movements are rarely unified events. While the literature is scant, there is some scholarly evidence illuminating how to enable high levels of internal differentiation among activists in productive and generative ways without fragmentation and dissolution of the movements.

Research Questions and Contributions

There is a lack of research that explores how activists manage diversity and difference in contemporary social movements. These movements tend to struggle with how to ensure that diverse activist voices are represented within the movement, while also ensuring that these multiple voices do not produce tensions that may ultimately lead to fragmentation or dissolution of the movement. Furthermore, there is a lack of research about how activists can work to *enable*

high levels of differentiation within movements. While Juris's work suggests that a networked organizational style works to manage internal diversity, Ghaziani's research on cultural anchor continues to focus on the idea of unity and broad consensus. What is lacking in the research is how cultural expressions may be utilized to *enhance* difference within the movement.

Based on the existing literature, this dissertation seeks to answer the following question—why and how did creative expressions play an integral role in the occupation, to the extent that it was later distinguished as the creative occupation? Furthermore, I explore the relationship between artistic and creative expressions with movement diversity. In what ways do these expressions work to manage movement diversity?

I focus on two dimensions of the creative expressions present in the occupation—artistic expressions and differentiated cultural identities. These two dimensions demonstrate how cultural expressions act as glue in the movement to both enable difference and ease potential tensions between the groups. More specifically, I ask the following questions. One, how do the cultural expressions around the camp identities manage movement diversity? Two, how does art in the world of the occupation manage movement diversity?

I theorize several underlying mechanisms in the influence of creative activism on movement diversity—namely, creative activism brings diverse groups of activists together; allows for differential expressions and participation, can diffuse tensions that may arise between activists with different approaches to protest, and directly highlights the importance of differentiation within movements.

CHAPTER III

METHODOLOGY AND DATA

Introduction

This dissertation is based on a qualitative case study that incorporates multiple data sources to answer my primary research question. I began by exploring my preliminary data collection, which led to my initial research questions. Next, I define my methodological approach, as well as the advantages to utilizing a case study approach in for my research. Next, I present my data sources, specifically three data sources—participant observation, in-depth interviews, and movement documentation. Lastly, I discuss my analytical methods.

Preliminary Data Collection

I first became interested in conducting research on the island of Puerto Rico after attending the *Claridad* Festival in March 2009. The festival, held annually since 1974 by the Spanish-language weekly newspaper, *Claridad*, has become recognized as one of the most important musical and cultural events on the island, particularly for those associated with the Pro-Independence Movement and Puerto Rican Socialist Party.

As I walked around the festival in March 2009, I noticed how seamlessly politics was woven into the artistic and cultural dynamics of the festival. Next to brightly colored merry-go-round was a book vendor selling any number of socialist texts written in Spanish and English. Next to a food vendor selling *Medalla* beers for $1 and a variety of Puerto Rican street food, such as *bacalaito* and *empanadillas*, was a tent distributing information about political prisoners

in the U.S. who were associated with the Nationalist and Independence Movements on this island—most prominently, Oscar López Rivera.[4]

The main events of the festival were the two musical concerts that take place on two different stages simultaneously throughout the evening. The main stage featured well-known Puerto Rican artists, such as: *El Gran Combo* and *Hector Giovanni y su Orquesta*. On the second stage, located on the other side of the *Hiram Bithorn Stadium*, smaller, more independent bands performed, such as *Los Ninos Estelares* and *Anti Sociales*. These bands, while ranging in genre, seemed to convey a political message. During the performance by *Los Ninos Estelares*, one of the musicians wore a t-shirt that read, "9/11 was an inside job." At the time I had little understanding of their lyrics and the context; however, I was able to read from the performance the ways in which they offered commentary about *Norteamericano*, while throwing a fist in the air. These actions and lyrics in the context of a festival in support of independence from the United States communicated the critical stance these musicians were taking about the longstanding colonial relationship of the island to the mainland.

On October 15, 2009, my primary informant on the island, Jorell,[5] sent me a text informing me about a General Strike taking place that day. Due to the massive layoffs by Fortuño and Law 7, unions on the island gathered with broad reaching support to protest and shut

[4] Oscar López Rivera, is a Puerto Rican independence activist, who has been in jail for 32 years. He was convicted in 1981 on federal charges of conspiracy—conspiring to oppose U.S. authority over Puerto Rico by force. For more information, see recent interview on Democracy Now at http://www.democracynow.org/2013/5/31/oscar_lpez_rivera_after_32_years.

[5] Jorell Melendez, at the time of my research, was a graduate student in History. He was my first contact in the field and became my primary informant, connecting me with many of the initial participants in the field. In addition, Melendez became a sounding board for my initial ideas about the occupation.

down the economy on the island.[6] Through social media links, I was able to watch along with the strike. For example, the SEIU (*Service Employees International Union*) broadcast on their website via *Claridad* the strike.[7] Overall, it was reported that 150,000 people took to the streets, shutting down the major highways and interstates of San Juan. Figures 3, 4, and 5 are images of the General Strike on October 15, 2009.

Figure 3. Photo of General Strike in San Juan, Puerto Rico on October 15, 2009.
Photo Credit: Ricardo Figueroa

[6] Unions on the island were inclined to come together to protest after the passage of Law 7. There was widespread anger, which brought together both conservative, liberal, and independent unions on the island. For more information, see: http://socialistworker.org/2009/10/15/general-strike-hits-puerto-rico and http://www.seiu.org/2009/10/the-greatest-public-demonstration-in-puerto-rican-history.php.

[7] In addition to hosting a live stream of the event, SEIU also distributed a press release about the protest, as seen on the following website: http://www.seiu.org/2009/10/hundreds-of-thousands-of-puerto-rican-workers-faith-leaders-students-and-citizens-to-unite-in-hato-r.php.

Figure 4. Photo of General Strike in San Juan, Puerto Rico on October 15, 2009.
Photo Credit: Ricardo Figueroa

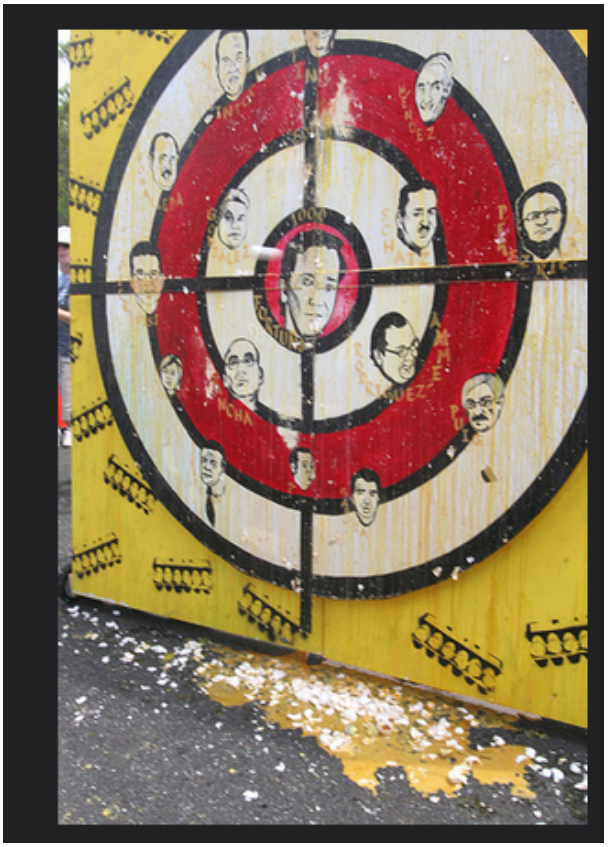

Figure 5. Photo of General Strike in San Juan, Puerto Rico on October 15, 2009.
Photo Credit: Ricardo Figueroa

Figures 4 and 5 are examples of how art and humor were intertwined in the General Strike. In Figure 5, there is a target featuring Governor Fortuño in the center of the target with other Puerto Rican government officials in the concentric circles. Protestors were provided with eggs to throw at the target. The artistic expression was a response to a situation that took place during Governor Fortuño's press conference in Fajardo, Puerto Rico. During his discussion of job creation, a union member—who would be directly impacted by layoffs—hurled an egg at the governor while referring to him as a hypocrite for discussing job creations while also reducing approximately 30,000 jobs in the public sector.[8]

On April 21, 2010, the first day of the 48-hour strike that would turn into the 62-day *huelga*, I received a message through Facebook from Jorell informing me students had occupied the university. During the next 48-hours, I messaged with my informants, Jorell and Carlos,[9] both of whom provided me with links to photographs and videos of the strike. From the beginning, I was able to follow along with the unfolding events by following the Facebook feeds of both Jorell and Carlos, but also, I began to follow other media sources in which they were sharing information, such as *IndymediaPR* and *Claridad*. One of the first videos of the 48-hour strike (or, *paro*) I observed was created by Noelia Gonzalez Casiano, a photographer and filmmaker on the island. The video captured various aspects of the 48-hour strike—such as, information about the strike (see Figure 6), the mundane moments of the strike, (see Figure 7) interviews with various student activists (see Figure 8), and artistic and cultural performances (see Figures 9 and 10).

[8] Video of the event can be found at https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=dHm40q9XFbU.

[9] Carlos Irizarry was a local filmmaker on the island. He attended the University of Puerto Rico and was earning his degree in Communications. I met him during one of my preliminary trips to the island.

Figure 6. Opening Sequence of *La Lucha Univeritaria en Puerto Rico—Paro de 48 Horas desde dentro de la UPR* (translates: The University of Puerto Rico Fight—From the Inside of the 48 Hour Strike of the UPR). Screenshot reads, "Students occupy the University in the early morning of April 21, 2010." Video Credit: Noelia Gonzalez Casiano (https://vimeo.com/11221665)

Figure 7. Screenshot from *La Lucha Univeritaria en Puerto Rico—Paro de 48 Horas desde dentro de la UPR* (translates: The University of Puerto Rico Fight—From the Inside of the 48 Hour Strike of the UPR). Video Credit: Noelia Gonzalez Casiano (https://vimeo.com/11221665)

Figure 8. Screenshot from *La Lucha Univeritaria en Puerto Rico—Paro de 48 Horas desde dentro de la UPR* (translates: The University of Puerto Rico Fight—From the Inside of the 48 Hour Strike of the UPR). Screenshot reads: "Student of Sagrado Corazon (a nearby private university in San Juan) and future graduate student of Communications in the UPR." Video Credit: Noelia Gonzalez Casiano (https://vimeo.com/11221665)

Figure 9. Screenshot from *La Lucha Univeritaria en Puerto Rico—Paro de 48 Horas desde dentro de la UPR* (translates: The University of Puerto Rico Fight—From the Inside of the 48 Hour Strike of the UPR). Video Credit: Noelia Gonzalez Casiano (https://vimeo.com/11221665)

Figure 10. Screenshot from *La Lucha Univeritaria en Puerto Rico—Paro de 48 Horas desde dentro de la UPR* (translates: The University of Puerto Rico Fight—From the Inside of the 48 Hour Strike of the UPR). Video Credit: Noelia Gonzalez Casiano (https://vimeo.com/11221665)

During my preliminary data collection, I began to focus on two major aspects of the 62-day occupation—the presence of creative expressions and the diversity of movement activists. I sought to address the ways in which creative expressions were present in the student occupation at the UPR, as well as what influence these expressions may have on the diversity and difference of mobilization within the movement. In order to explore these interconnections between these two defining characteristics of the student occupation, I employed a qualitative case study utilizing participation observation, in-depth interviews, and an analysis of movement documentation.

Qualitative Case Study

A case study is defined as an "indepth, multifaceted investigation, using qualitative research methods, of a single social phenomenon" (Orum, Feagin, and Sjoberg 1991: 2). It is a

methodological approach that strives for richness and depth and relies upon the use of multiple data sources to construct the social world of a single case (Orum, Feagin, and Sjoberg 1991).

> The research who uses the case study typically seeks to grasp the nature of social action as it has been experienced by people themselves. He or she has chosen the case study to get at the human understandings that underlie the action he or she portrays. The narrative form is precisely adapted to communicating these meanings and understanding—the "lived" experience—as experienced by people (Orum, Feagin, and Sjoberg 1991: 21)

A case study may incorporate several types of data collection—including field research, participant observation, in-depth interviews, and life histories.

There are four advantages to a case study approach. For one, case studies permit "the grounding of observations and concepts about social action and social structures in natural settings studied at close hand" (Orum, Feagin, and Sjoberg 1991: 6). Or in other words, by allowing for the researcher to observe and record people engaged in real-life activities, they are able to develop a solid empirical basis for concepts of interest (Orum, Feagin, and Sjoberg 1991). Two, case studies provide information from multiple sources and over a period of time, which allows the researcher to construct a more holistic and complex understanding of the social networks, social actions, and social meanings of the phenomenon (Orum, Feagin, and Sjoberg 1991). Third, case studies enable the research to take into account dimensions of time and history in order to make connections to broader patterns in the social world (Orum, Feagin, and Sjoberg 1991). Lastly, this approach encourages theoretical innovation and generalization (Orum, Feagin, and Sjoberg 1991). Generally, this research begins with a rudimentary model of both a formative theory and a research model (Schensul, Schensul and LeCompte 1998). As further investigation of the case continues, research seeks to flesh out the connections between the variables of interest as well as to contextualize the findings in a way that produces testable theories

(Schensul, Schensul, and LeCompte 1998). While a case study approach is common in the literature on social movements,

> …theorists could benefit from a greater sensitivity to the historical and cultural processes through which some of their main analytical categories are constructed, as well as a more genuine appreciation of the lives experience of movement participants and nonparticipants, something that is accessible primarily through ethnography, oral narratives, or document history (Edelman 2001: 309).

In addition, case studies may open a window on dynamics of the movement that are not immediately apparent to researchers—such as informal networks, smaller protest activities, ideological differences, and internal tensions of the movement (Edelman 2001).

Given the loose conceptualization of my major object of interest—creative protest—in the existing literature, I found it necessary to utilize the case study approach to inductively explore this concept as defined by the participants of the occupation. This approach allowed me to utilize thick description of the primary event in my research—the 62-day occupation. Thick description of an event is a methodology in which the researcher symbolically unpacks one specific event to reveal deep and normally submerged aspects of social organization (Geertz 1972). Or put more simply, it communicates something about society that is reflected in the details of the event—in Geertz's case, the details of the Balinese cockfight illuminated status hierarchies in Balinese as well as the management of local cleavages (Geertz 1972). However, it isn't that the event itself reinforces status hierarchy, but rather provides an opportunity for the researcher to observe the ways in which individuals are sorted into hierarchical ranks, both in Balinese culture, but also more generally (Geertz 1972). Therefore, the event itself becomes a story they tell themselves about themselves (Geertz 1972). In the case of the occupation, a thick description of the 62-day occupation allowed me to explore submerged aspects of the social organization of both the occupation, as well as politics on the island of Puerto Rico.

Participant Observation

There are four major purposes to observation in sociological research. One, observation is central to identifying cultural patterns (Schensul, Schensul, and Lecompte 1998). Or, in other words, observation provides the researcher with an opportunity to observe the relationship of interest and identify key patterns. Two, observation enables researchers to identify key historical events. An understanding of key events may be very important during the in-depth interviewing phase, as will be discussed later. Three, observation may be necessary to endorse the presence of the researcher in the community (Schensul, Schensul, and Lecompte 1998). This may be more or less important based on the relationship of the researcher to the community of interest. Lastly, observation enables researchers to witness firsthand the relationships of interest. This in turn will help the researcher to triangulate the data collected through in-depth interviews.

My observations of the 62-day occupation took place from April 21, 2010—the first day of the 48-hour shut down at the Rio Piedras campus—until March 11, 2011—the day described by student activists as the end of the second phase of the student movement. I observed both virtual and on-site events associated with the occupation. At the outset, my initial observations were of virtual events. Or in other words, I was able to observe protest events associated with the 62-day occupation virtually, primarily through photographs and videos posted on various social media sites. Ideally, I would have been present at the creation of the occupation and for its duration; however, this was not possible. Instead, I followed the occupation and its events from afar, relying upon movement documentation posted to social media. While incomplete, these initial observations through social media—particularly, *Facebook*, *Vimeo*, *Flickr*, and *YouTube*, became important elements of the case study. Not did my observations of virtual events work to form my initial impressions and frame my dissertation research; it also became an object of study

and analysis—particularly when taken into account with other forms of data collection and analysis, namely, on-site observation, in-depth interviews, and movement documentation.

Virtual Events

Due to my inability to be present during the 62-day occupation, I initially came to know the occupation through social media. For example, on the first day of the 48-hour occupation, I was able to read news articles and minute-to-minute updates on the occupation as it was unfolding (see Figure 11). As demonstrated in the screenshot of my Facebook post on April 21, 2010, there were multiple sources of information about the student occupation—such as, news articles, but also minute-to-minute updates from a prominent news source on the island. In addition, there were also consistent updates from *Dialogo Digital*, the online university newspaper—such as a flickr album entitled "*Paro de 48 horas en la UPR*" (see Figures 12 and 13). The album captures through photographs the happenings of the 48-hour occupation, including clashes with the police, *plenas* (or, meetings of the action committees), and artistic performances.

Figure 11. Screenshot of my Facebook account on the first day of the 48-hour stoppage.

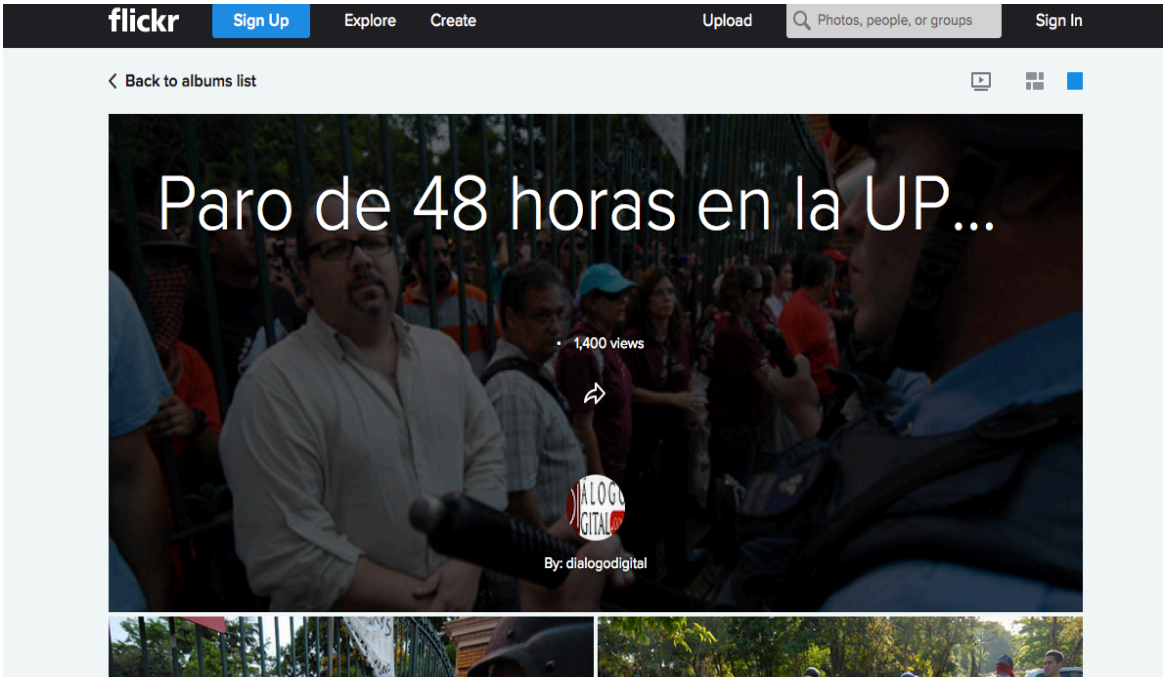

Figure 12. Screenshot of *Dialogo Digital* flickr album "*Paro de 48 horas en la UPR*." (https://www.flickr.com/photos/dialogodigital/sets/72157623784978931/).

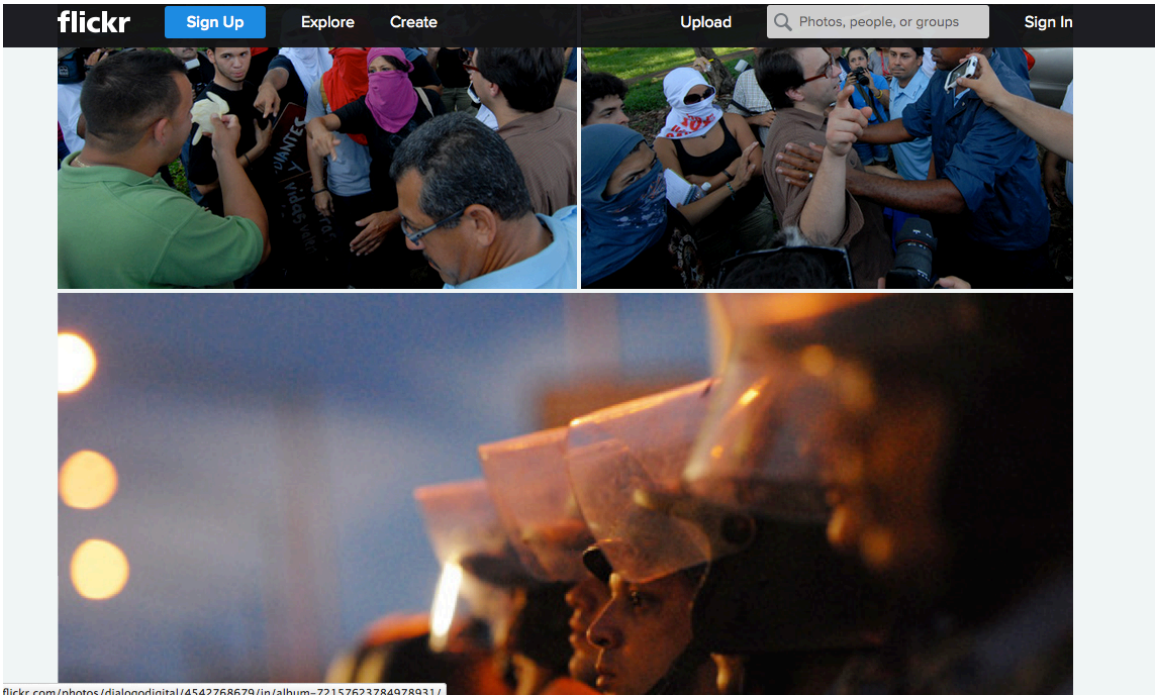

Figure 13. Screenshot of *Dialogo Digital* flickr album "*Paro de 48 horas en la UPR*." (https://www.flickr.com/photos/dialogodigital/sets/72157623784978931/).

During this initial stage of data collection, I was able to follow the occupation by monitoring a few key websites—such as the personal Facebook pages of my two key informants, Jorell and Carlos, as well as the Facebook pages of news sources on the island and those associated with the six action-committees on the island.

Therefore, my selection of virtual events to observe was based on those events that received the most attention and coverage, as these were the events that came across my Facebook feed. It is important to note that the mediated nature—or, the fact that the events I observed were the more popular ones which garnered media attention—may have had some initial effect on my interest in exploring the more artistic, cultural, and spectacular aspects of the occupation.

Although my selection of virtual events to observe were not random nor inclusive of every protest event or the mundane day-to-day events of the occupation, the protest events that I was able to observe were representative of the key events in the history of the student movement according to student activists, as detailed in Appendix A. In Table 1, I list the five key events I observed virtually with sample links to major video coverage of these events.

The key events associated with the 62-day occupation include the General Strike, which was not solely composed of students, but yet is seen as helping to provide visibility to the issues related to the passage of *Ley 7*; the 48-hour *paro* at the beginning of the occupation; daily videos of the 62-day *huelga*; the large music concert, *Que Vivan Las Estudiantes*, held to show support for the students from popular musicians on the island; two unplanned protest happenings which produced high levels of visibility for the student occupation—that of, administrative restrictions for food and water being available to the students (and the response by the surrounding community) (https://vimeo.com/11809484) and the violence at the Sheraton.

Table 1. Observations of Virtual Events			
Date	**Event**	**Article/Video Title**	Web Links
October 15, 2009	National Strike of Law 7	"October 15 General Strike"	https://www.flickr.com/photos/seiu/sets/72157622466070291/
		"An Insider's View of Puerto Rico's General Strike"	https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=LLpYqjkoQjk
		"Puerto Rico Protest"	https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Gy7VgPzB1AE
		"Paro Nacional 15 de Octubre de 2009, San Juan, Puerto Rico, USA"	https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=JvzZx4u_Bkw
April 21-June 22, 2010	Huelga of 2010	"Paro de 48 horas en la UPRRP Abril 2010"	https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=dYG3vSClCOg
		"Huelga Mix- Huelga UPR-RP-2010"	https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=wxosV5DZCWY
		"Manifestacion de Jardin Botanico" May 4, 2010	https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=t1SXe17pIOc&list=PL06218DEB38B3F159
		"1 Universidad: 1 Pueblo"	https://vimeo.com/11865527
		"2 Horas en la Huelga de la UPR"	https://vimeo.com/11767255
		"No Estan Solos"	https://vimeo.com/11808120
		"Puerto Rico: The University of Puerto Rico Seen Through Online Video"	http://mrzine.monthlyreview.org/2010/rsv220510.html
		Daily Videos by Nuevo Jacho (Listed Below)	
		"Entrevista a Giovanni Roberto, April 23, 2010"	https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=vrhXGldaDlM
		"7mo dia Huelga UPR, April 27, 2010"	https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=3yorQnwbWow
		"8vo dia Huelga UPR, April 28, 2010"	https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=DykZUUde8dU
		"10mo dia Huelga UPR, April 30, 2010"	https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=9wahy_d9trY
		"12do dia Huelga UPR, May 2, 2010"	https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=zEOqOoVz7WE
		"13er dia Huelga UPR, May 3, 2010"	https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=tb3GwrRE6rY
		"14to dia Huelga UPR, May 4, 2010"	https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=jNpmZWp_CjE
		"16to dia Huelga UPR, May 6, 2010"	https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=cbe3zXGtpuU
		"18vo dia Huelga UPR, May 8, 2010"	https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=k2e8ZUdR-4A
		"21er dia Huelga UPR, May 11, 2010"	https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=hM0Pg6Z0Tbg
		"22do dia Huelga UPR, May 12, 2010"	https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Zd0W_F-_CgI
		"24to dia Huelga UPR, May 14, 2010"	https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=IHDPASNaKE8
		"29no dia Huelga UPR, May 19, 2010"	https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=R2EVlJ9I1go
		"30mo dia Huelga UPR, May 20, 2010"	https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=QAIgLO43EnU
		"32do dia Huelga UPR, May 22, 2010"	https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=bs21BQ_CMzE
		"33er dia Huelga UPR, May 23, 2010"	https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=GYB-tQjRyEc
		"34to dia Huelga UPR, May 24, 2010"	https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=vG-FB_cH0So
		"35to dia Huelga UPR, May 25, 2010"	https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=UQaS8Y1TOIQ
		"Ocupacion a Presidencia UPR, June 17, 2010"	https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Bpx0w6amX-E
April 28, 2010	Que Vivan Los Estudiantes	"Concierto Que Vivan los Estudiantes!- Huelga UPR"	https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=aDqek3FYrEk
		"Calle 13 en la Universidad de Puerto Rico-Que Vivan Los Estudiantes"	https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=wVj0TiAOJGo
May 14, 2010	Food and Water Restrictions	"Policia arresta padre que llevaba comida a hijo en porton UPR-RP"	https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=lNSek6Tof4E
		"Comida de perro el huelga de UPR-- SuperXclusivo"	https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=0S70CYgTb7c
May 20, 2010	Event at Sheraton	"Motin Policia de Puerto Rico Hotel Sheraton"	https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=1RV8nzlyOFA

While most events were planned in advance, the food and water restrictions and Sheraton protest were unplanned moments that demonstrated the importance of not only smart phone technology, but also new modes of information dissemination. For example, the Sheraton incident was a protest in which the students decided to occupy the Sheraton Hotel lobby due to the fact Governor Fortuño was holding a pricy fundraiser in the hotel that day. The students felt Governor Fortuño's $5,000 dollar a plate fundraiser was inappropriate given the budget cuts to public expenditures on the island. As the students occupied the lobby of the Sheraton, police quickly responded with brute force by tasing several students. Given the fact that so many students and supporters are armed with a pocket-sized camera and video camera and access to the Internet, witnesses to the violence were able to get video of the violent actions in the lobby of the hotel. Within a few moments, a video of the brutality was posted on Facebook and Twitter. News of the incident not only rapidly circulated among social media, but also was picked up by major news outlets on the island.

In this sense, student activists were very aware of the need to both create protest events that would be deemed newsworthy or flashy protest events that would be play out well on any media coverage, but they also recognized how their own coverage of the protest events, particularly the unplanned and violent events, could in turn get picked up by the popular news media on the island.

Out of the major events of the student occupation, I was able to observe a majority with two exceptions—the protest of the Board of Trustees at the *Jardin de Botanica* on May 8, 2010 and the protest at the "Gold Mile" in Hato Rey on June 3, 2010.[10] These two events were smaller protest events that took place *during* the student occupation. In that, a select a group of students

[10] This area of Hato Rey in San Juan is called "The Gold Mile," based on its centrality for the major banking centers on this two to three block stretch.

from within the occupation participated in these events, while others remained on campus in the campsites. While it could be argued there is something different about smaller *piquetes*, which would mean my virtual observations were not representative of all types of protest associated with the student occupation, I would be able to observe many smaller *piquetes* during my fieldwork.

Overall, my observations of virtual events allowed me to learn about the occupation, particularly key events that would be necessary to inform my interviews; but also to begin formulating my ideas about the use of art within the occupation. I was able to use my knowledge of these events to shape my interview questions, but perhaps, more importantly to develop confident and rapport with my interviewees.[11] However, the data I garnered from observations of virtual events was also important on its own accord. The 62-day occupation took place in a protest environment in which media plays a key role. It is not only media, but new media technology, such as smartphones and social media, which changes the media landscape for activists. Similar to Todd Gitlin's book, *The Whole World is Watching: Mass Media in the Making and Unmaking of the New Left* (2003), activists were faced with the task of navigating a media landscape in which they must be concerned with the visibility of the movement. In Gitlin's book (2003), he details how protesters in the 1960s were tasked with navigating a televised media environment, often shaping their own protest tactics with this in mind. With this in mind, it is important to take into account how the media environment shapes contemporary protest. With a 24-hour news cycle, activists are increasingly faced with an increasingly competitive environment for media coverage. In addition, traditional media coverage also competes with both independent news media and social media for attention. Therefore, it is

[11] Due to my outsider status, it was incredibly important to develop a broad understanding of the major events associated with the student occupation.

without a doubt that activists are aware of the need to create media savvy protest events—or, in this case, spectacular and colorful events which will get the attention of all types of media. In this way, my observation of virtual events provided an import into the types of events that received attention by the news media, but also supporters on the island. Although I was not tracking coverage of the protest by all individuals on the island, I was able to see which types of events, and the ways in which these events were covered, for lack of better words, became the most popular and circulated on social media. Given my interests in the use of art and culture protest, it was necessary to consider these factors as influencing the presentation of the 62-day occupation by student activists. While my dissertation does not focus specifically on this aspect of the occupation, it is ultimately a mediating factor that should be considered in the future.

On-Site Observations

My on-site, participant observations took place over the course of 14 weeks in the field between June 2010 and March 2011. Based on my research interests, I sought to observe a variety of types of protest events and cultural events. Broadly, I define protest events as any event in which student activists actively issued a call—regardless of means—to protest against any number of targets, such as the government, Governor Fortuño, the university administration, or the Board of Trustees. Protest events could range from smaller one to two-hour *piquetes* to the occupation of an academic building for 24-hours to a five-hour national march. Cultural events were defined as artistic or performance-based events held by the students in reference to the student movements. For example, *Vivan Las Estudiantes* was a musical concert held within the occupied campus to demonstrate solidarity with the student movement. In order to define whether or not an event was deemed a "key" event in the student occupation, I relied upon the attention ascribed to the event by student activists, both on-the-ground and on social media.

In order to get a sense for the major protest and cultural events associated with the UPR student movement of 2010-2011, I have created a timeline of the major events of the 62-day occupation and the second wave of the student movement, as detailed in Appendix A. In assessing the types of protest events that took place over the course of the movement, I found there to be six major types of protest events, namely: marches, *piquetes*, occupations, incidents, walkouts, and cultural events/celebrations.

Not all of the protest events I attended were directed at issues facing the UPR student movement; however, I only attended events in which student activists were present. For instance, I attended an anniversary celebration of *Grito de Lares* in Lares, Puerto Rico.[12] I also observed a protest that took place in the small town of Barceleoneta in Boca, Puerto Rico, which included a strong student activist contingent. For example, the protest in Barceleoneta was in response to the actions of the government, particularly a Mayor who had been slowly pushing residents off their coastal properties in a myriad of shady ways, such as offering them much smaller payments for their homes or threatening eviction based on centuries old land owning laws. I attended the *piquete* in Barceleoneta with several student activists and traveled around with a reporter from *Radio Huelga*, the student activists' radio station, visiting families who had been displaced or had been approached by the government to sell their property.

In addition, in order to learn more about the role of art and culture on the island, I also attended major cultural events, such as the funeral of Ricardo Alegria and visited several artists' studios in Santurce, a neighborhood increasingly renowned for its influx of local artists.

[12] *Grito de Lares*, is also often referred to as the Lares Rebellion, which was the first major revolt against Spanish rule on the island of Puerto Rico by a group called *Comité Revolucionario de Puerto Rico*. The revolt began in the town of Lares; however, as it spread to nearby towns, such as San Sebastian, Mayaguez, and Ponce—the insurgents were met by the Puerto Rican militia. In the aftermath, the revolt was touted as a success by securing additional freedoms from Spanish rule. Since the 1920s, *Grito de Lares* became recognized as an annual celebration and historic site by the Institute of Puerto Rican Culture.

A majority of the events I observed were directly related to issues facing the UPR students, such as the June 22, 2010 protest at *La Fortaleza* (the Governor's home in Old San Juan). This protest took place on the afternoon of the same day in which an agreement had been reached between the UPR student activists and the administration. After a celebration took place in the convention center at Ponce, students gathered to protest the Governor's decision to add two new members to the university system's board of trustees. Similarly, I also attended other protest events to protest financial and legal sanctions, such as fines and expulsion from the university, that were placed on recognized student leaders, such as Adriana Mulero Claudio and Giovanni Roberto Caez. A complete list of the dates, locations, and observations hours are listed below in Table 2.

Table 2. Participant Observation Sites and Events		
June 22, 2010	Protest at La Fortaleza and Escuela de Plastica Artes	4 hours
June 26, 2010	Protest at Jardin Botanica at UPR	3 hours
June 30, 2010	Protest at El Capitolio	1 hour
July 2, 2010	Protest at Police Station Against Police Violence at El Capitolio	4 hours
July 7, 2010	Protest at Escuela de Plastica Artes	2 hours
July 10, 2010	Tour of Santurce's Art District	1 hour
July 14, 2010	Piquete at The Tower at UPR	2 hours
July 18, 2010	National March Against Police Brutality	5 hours
July 22, 2010	Piquete at The Tower at UPR about Student Sanctions	2 hours
July 28, 2010	Piquete and Visit in Barceleoneta	3 hours
September 22, 2010	24-Hour Occupation of Humanities Campus	1 hour
September 23, 2010	Anniversary of Grito de Lares	2 hours
March 11, 2010	International Day of Solidarity March at UPR	2 hours
March 12, 2010	Reading of 100 Years of Solitude	2 hours
July 15, 2011	Funeral of Ricardo Alegria in Old San Juan	1 hour

The collection of observational data served three purposes in my data collection and analysis process. First, the observations helped to become familiar with the settings, happenings, style of protest, and activists of the demonstrations. While I observed the protest and cultural

events, I was able to make notes about the ways in which art and culture were being used in the occupation. However, perhaps more importantly, I was able to develop a strong understanding of the history of this particular student protest, as well as "get to know" the prominent players in the student protest. This knowledge played an extremely important role in my on-site observations, as well as my interview data. By developing a keen understanding of the immediate history of the movement and being able to recognize different individuals, I was able to demonstrate my investment in the movement, particularly as an outsider.

Secondly, my observations at on-site events helped to familiarize student activists with my presence at the protests. Being an outsider, particularly a white, non-Hispanic female graduate student from the states, it was important for me to spend a significant amount of time in the field—at protest events—to be seen by activists involved in the events. These observations were crucial in making connections to student leaders, activists, and artists in the movement. For example, at one of the first protest events I attended, I was able to make a connection with a faculty member at the UPR who also happens to be a high-ranking representative of the teacher's union on the island. This connection allowed me to garner contact with additional individuals who were less involved with the visible aspects of the occupation.

Lastly, I was able to gather firsthand observations of the kinds of artistic and creative expressions present at the different protest events, as well as how individuals interacted with these expressions. These observations allowed me to document the creative expressions—such as protest songs or performance art—that were present at different types of protest events, such as smaller *piquetes* or island-wide marches. For example, I came to understand how certain artistic expressions, such as musical chants or *plenas*, were the only form of art or culture present at smaller manifestations, such as one to two-hour *piquetes.* In addition, I was able to collect

information on the primary artistic performances that took place, which provided me with an understanding that became very useful in my interviews. For instance, observing the performance of the artistic group, *Sembrando Concencia*, allowed me to talk with student activists about their style of performance with a more sophisticated understanding.

In the aftermath of the 62-day occupation and my first six weeks in the field, I was able to continue following the major key events of the movement, particularly those events that took place in the second wave of the movement, roughly from September 2010 to March 2011 (see Appendix A). For instance, most of the violent confrontations between student activists and the police took place in the second wave. I was able to document these events, mostly to speculate about the differences that distinguished the first creative wave from the second violent wave. While this was not the major focus of my dissertation, it was necessary to think about what made the creative occupation so different, as described by participants, from other protests on the island.

In-Depth Interviews

The main purpose of interviewing in ethnographic research is to explore undefined domains in the conceptual model, identify new domains, and to obtain orienting information about the context and history of the study (Schensul, Schensul, and Lecompte 1998).

> In observation, we try to capture important aspects of what we see in concrete detail. At first, we may not be sure of what we are seeing because we cannot attribute local meaning to it…In interviewing, we use a similar sequence but with the added advantage of being able to capture in participants' own words what they see, believe, and report doing with respect to a specific topic… (Schensul, Schensul, and LeCompte 1998: 147).

Generally, interviews may began as exploratory and unstructured, where researchers seek to expand knowledge about little known areas in order to formulate hypotheses, as well as to identify key informants and cultural experts (Schensul, Schensul, and LeCompte 1998).

However, once the key domains and informants have been identified, interviews turn to a more explanatory and structured approach, as the interviewer asks questions that seek to explore specific factors at the variable level and to clarify the central relationships (Schensul, Schensul, and LeCompte 1998).

I conducted 25 in-depth interviews during the summers of 2010 and 2011 with student supporters, activists and leaders, faculty, and artists (see Table 3). Specifically, I interviewed five faculty members (two of whom were performers associated with the movement), six student activists (with at least one student from each of the six camp sites that constituted the occupation), three student leaders, one student council member, one student supporter and journalist (who did participate in the occupation, but rather reported on the event), two student DJs that helped form *Radio Huelga*, one employee of *Radio Universidad* (the public university radio station on campus), one photojournalist for the university-run publication *Dialogo Digital*, and four artists from the San Juan community. All of my interviews were conducted in the Rio Piedras campus of the University of Puerto Rico and surrounding neighborhood in San Juan, Puerto Rico.

The interviews ranged from 38 minutes to 3 hours and 30 minutes. I conducted all interviews myself, thus eliminating any effects that might result from multiple interviewers. Additionally, I handled all questions and concerns that arose during the course of the interviews including clarifications and the purpose of my research.

Recruitment to the Study and Selection of Interviewees

Once I entered the field, I was able to make contact with a few key informants, namely, Jorell Melendez, a graduate student and activist, Rafael Bernabe, a faculty member at the UPR and prominent member of the *Federacion de Maestros de Puerto Rico* (FMPR), the island's

Table 3. In-Depth Interviews

Interviewer #	University and Discipline	Occupation/Role in Protes	Interview Year	Length of Interview
1	Escuela de Plastica Artes/ Sculpture	Artist	2010	2 hours 27 minutes
2	Escuela de Plastic Artes/ Visual Arts	Artist	2010	43 minutes
3	Escuela de Plastic Artes/ Street Performance	Artist	2010	51 minutes
4	UPR/ History	Faculty	2010	1 hour 37 minutes
5	UPR/ Radio Universidad	Radio DJ	2010	3 hours 5 minutes
6	N/A	Community Artist	2010	1 hour 5 minutes
7	UPR/Theater	Faculty	2010	1 hour 2 minutes
8	UPR/Administration	Faculty	2010	52 minutes
9	UPR/Sociology	Faculty	2010	1 hour 11 minutes
10	UPR/Humanities	Student/Leader	2010	2 hours 12 minutes
11	UPR/Humanities and Radio Huelga	Student/Radio DJ	2010	2 hours 7 minutes
12	UPR/ Social Sciences	Student	2010	2 hours 10 minutes
13	UPR/ Law School	Student/Leader	2010	1 hour 40 minutes
14	UPR/ Natural Sciences	Student	2010	1 hour 13 minutes
15	N/A	Community Artist	2010	2 hours 33 minutes
16	UPR/English	Faculty	2011	2 hours 36 minutes
17	UPR/Humanities	Student/Leader	2011	1 hour 56 minutes
18	UPR/Radio Huelga	Student/Radio DJ	2011	1 hour 46 minutes
19	UPR/ Dialogo Digital	Photojournalist	2011	38 minutes
20	UPR/Student Council	Student/Leader	2011	2 hours 40 minutes
21	UPR/English	Journalist	2011	1 hour 32 minutes
22	UPR/Education	Student/Leader	2011	2 hours
23	UPR/Education	Student	2011	2 hours
24	UPR/Theater	Student/Artist	2011	3 hours 30 minutes
25	UPR/Fine Arts	Student	2011	2 hours 47 minutes

largest labor union and the representation for teachers on the island, and Giovanni Roberto, one of the most recognized student leaders of the student occupation. It was through my connections with these three individuals that connected me to a majority of my participants. In addition, my association with these key informants was demonstrative of my trustworthiness among student activists.

> Despite the fact that representation is not the purpose of in-depth exploratory interviews, when selecting key informants, ethnographers should take into consideration any major factors, such as ethnicity, class, or age, that might have significant bearing on the perspective of the respondent. This ensures breath on the perspective of the respondents (Schensul, Schensul, and LeCompte 1998: 125).

In order to ensure a breadth of interviewees, I initially identified three categories of individuals associated with the movement and my interest in artistic expressions and protest—namely, artists, activists, and observers/outsiders of the movement (specifically, faculty members and

members of the media). I allowed my participants to self-define whether or not they identified as an artist, activist, or observer of the movement.

In terms of artists, I was interested in interviewing various artists on the island, regardless of whether or not they were involved in the student occupation. For activists, I required all activists to be individuals that actively participated in the student occupation. More specifically, as I came to learn about the six different camps of the occupation, I sought to interview at least one student from each of the six campsites—Humanities, Social Sciences, Education, Fine Arts/Architecture, Law School, and Natural Sciences, including both those recognized as student leaders and other occupiers. I also included students, at least initially, that were participating in other student occupations, such as students from *Escuela de Plasticas Artes*, whom were also experiencing budget cuts. In terms of observers of the movements, I sought to include individuals who had the opportunity to observe the movements, such as faculty members, student council members, journalists, and photographers.

I selected to interview individuals from these three categories, based on my interest in the use of art and culture in the protest. Similarly, once I recognized the high levels of differentiation within the movement, I chose to ensure that I had representation from all six campsites to ensure I interviewed individuals from the various political ideologies and academic disciplines. For example, artists were able to talk about how they see their own work, as well as how their work may be used to manage difference and diversity. Student activists could discuss how they saw art operating within the movement, but also describing the diversity within the movement, including the tensions between groups and how they remained together united for 62-days.

Potential bias may exist in my sample given that a majority of my participants were highly involved participants, which may skew their perspectives on the ways in which creative

expressions were incorporated into the movement, as well as outcomes. However, on the other hand, due to my interest in explaining these creative expressions requires interviewing activists engaged in organizing and attending many of the protest actions, as well as those who remained engaged in the movement throughout its entirety.

There may also be potential selection bias in that I did not interview all individuals associated with the student occupation. For instance, I chose purposefully not to interview individuals from the administration or police. One of the reasons for not selecting from this category is the potential to develop a sense of mistrust among student activists, who may have perceived my interactions with the administration and/or police to be a conflict of interest or potentially dangerous for their own movement. In addition, given my interest in the ways in which movement activists were able to use artistic and cultural expressions to manage diversity, I focused primarily on individuals inside the movement.

Interview Guide

During the interviews, participants were asked to provide a history of the movement—from their specific perspective (either as a leader, camper, faculty member, or artist), to recount the presence of artistic and cultural expressions that took place, to describe the internal dynamics of the occupation, as well as to explain why cultural expressions played such an important role in the 62-day occupation.

At the outset of the fieldwork, I began with two distinct interview guides (see Appendix B and C)—one for activists and one for artists. Although there was considerable overlap in the questions, they were framed to specifically address their perspective on art and politics on the island. For instance, questions for activists focused on the following questions:

- Tell me about your personal history with social movements and activism on the island. What was your first involvement? What has been your role in the UPR student occupation?

- Describe the role of art in protest on the island, generally. What do you think the role of art should be in activism? What work does art do for protest?

However, in my interviews with artists, I focused more on their experiences with art and activism. For instance, I asked them the following questions:

- Tell me about your personal history of art in protest. Do you consider your art to be political and how so? What has been your role as an artist in the UPR student occupation?

- What do you think art can do for politics?

In my early interviews, I was able to marshal a better understanding of how art and politics are conceptualized broadly on the island. In addition, I came to understand the history of art and protest on the island, which allowed me to distinguish between the differences of past protest and my specific case.

As I learned about the different camp cultural identities that unfolded during the 62-day occupation, I shifted my focus more specifically to creative expressions within the movement. As I came to focus my interviews on student activists within the movement, I asked participants to address the following questions:

- Describe the student movement at the UPR. How did it begin? What are/were the goals of the movement? What coalitions or organizations were involved in the two-month strike? What are the major events of the strike?

- Tell me about the various campsites set up at the gates. What departments/colleges were present? How were they similar or different from one another? Can you describe the following for each camp—their ideologies, cultural events, and artistic expressions?

- What is the role of artists in the student movement at UPR? More generally, how do you think about the role of artists in activism?

- Can you describe the different types of art that were prevalent in the student occupation? What was one that really resonated for you, and why? Were there any types of art missing from the occupation?

- What do you think art, culture, and this type of symbolic expression can do for protest movements? Are there positives? Negatives?

While each interview had a set of guiding questions, the interviews also took a flexible approach, where I asked students to address issues that may be more or less pertinent given their experience in the protest. For instance, when I interviewed a member of the student council, we spent more time focused on organizational issues and negotiations with the administration; however, when I interviewed a photojournalist for the UPR, we spent more time talking about the visual framing of the movement and social media.

Movement Documentation

I also utilized data from primary sources, such as popular news sources (both on the island and in the United States), monthly newsletters from the three primary socialist groups that were highly represented within the movement, and social media postings from the six action-committees. This movement documentation was used to supplement my findings from observational and interview data. Given the ethnographic approach of my research, I did not create a database of news articles and newsletters, but rather chose to use this documentation to build a better understanding of the movement historically and as it unfolded.

The news media I utilized in this research were derived from four major daily newspapers—*El Nuevo Dia*, *El Vocero*, *Primera Hora*, and *Puerto Rico Daily Sun*; and two weekly newspapers—*Claridad* and *Caribbean Business Journal*. In addition to news media sources on the island, there was also brief news coverage of the occupation in the United States in news sources such as, *New York Times*, *Democracy Now!*, and the *Huffington Post*.

I also analyzed the monthly newsletters from socialist political groups on the island, whom played an important role in the initial building of the movement infrastructure. Specifically, these newsletters included *Bandera Roja*, the monthly 8-page newsletter issued by *Movimiento Socialista de los Trabajadores (MST)* and *Union de Juventudes Socialistas (UJS)*; and *Socialismo Internacional,* the quarterly newsletter for *Organizacion Socialista Internacional (OSI)*; and *Rumbo Alterno*, the monthly newsletter for *Movimiento al Socialismo (MAS)*.

Analytic Strategy

A qualitative case study requires an analytical process including both inductive and deductive analysis. In the preliminary stages of data collection, researchers engage in a process of questioning, getting answers, asking for more refined questions, and looking for examples in their data that allow for clarification of the orienting questions (LeCompte and Schensul 1999).

In my case, I was interested in the relationship between art and protest; therefore, during my recursive analysis, I focused on making jottings about what I observed at protest events during the student occupations (or, inscriptions). Later, I wrote thick descriptions of the protest events I observed, as I began to organize my notes and observations by major themes. Increasingly, as my time in the field progressed, I was able to focus my field notes, as well as to begin developing a formative theoretical model—such as, the relationship between artistic and cultural expressions on movement diversity.

In this sense, I utilized a bottom-up inductive coding process. This process involves exploring the collected data in order to find items (or, themes of interest), patterns (such as, the ways in which these themes fit together), and structures (or, larger patterns that build an overall cultural theory) (LeCompte and Schensul 1999). "…the inductive process begins to produce items in the form of those events, behaviors, statements, or activities that stand out because they

occur often; are crucial to other items; are rare and influential; or are totally absent, despite the researcher's expectations" (LeCompte and Schensul 1999: 69).

As the interviews were completed, I transcribed the digital files into text documents. Based on my observations and initial interviews, I began to focus on themes of art, culture, and movement diversity within the occupation. Specifically, I focused on the sections of the interviews in which interviewees discussed the ways artistic, cultural, and creative expressions were used within the occupation. In addition, I focused on themes related to issues of camp identities and movement diversity.

Throughout the process of transcribing my interviews, I also noticed patterns in the data that connected the themes of art and culture with movement diversity. Therefore, I revisited my coded data to explore how these two factors are related to one another. I was able to find these patterns not only through declaration by interviewees, but also by examples of co-occurrences in my data.

> Patterns can emerge as the study progresses, becoming more and more elaborated throughout its life. New subcomponents of the patterns can emerge at any time during the study, and these can be added to guide further data collection and analysis. The major domains or cultural components of interest in the emerging patterns then become the initial categories for organizing and coding (LeCompte and Schensul 1999: 105).

At this time, my analytic strategy became more deductive as I turned to explore specifically the theoretical formulation that artistic and cultural expressions were utilized to manage diversity within the student occupation. As I continued to pull apart my field notes, interviews, and movement documentation, I was able to explore how this relationship unfolded in two primary ways—one, the artistic expressions of the occupation; and two, the cultural identities of camps during the occupation.

More specifically, I utilized an open coding system for my observational and interview data. Open coding creates tentative labels for chunks of data that was not based on theory, but rather helps to establish properties of the code (Given 2008). I began by coding my data for two major themes as related to my independent variable: art and culture. When coding for art, I included a number of subthemes—such as various forms of art (e.g., visual art, music, *plenas*, concerts, poetry, literature, dance, performance art) and the names of specific artistic performers that participated in the student occupation (e.g., *Amor de Barricada*, *Papel Machete*, *Pasayos de Policia*). When coding for culture, I focused on cultural expressions as related to the campsites of the occupation. For instance, I looked for evidence of the ways in which the six campsites differentiated themselves culturally—such as, the naming system, logos, and t-shirts. As I explored the ways in which art and culture were used within the movement, I found that many participants spoke about the ways in which these expressions were utilized to manage movement diversity. Then, I revisited my data with an axial coding system—using additional codes, such as diversity, to establish connections between the major themes of art, culture, and diversity. When coding for diversity in my data, I looked for instances when participants described diversity, difference, camp ideologies, and ideological tensions within the movement.

Lastly, movement documentation was used to help triangulate my findings from both my observations and interview data. For example, I was able to verify information gathered in my interview data through media coverage on the island, such as claims about the history or unprecedented victory of the movement. In addition, I was able to use this data to verify the ways in which the movement unfolded. For example, in the documentation leading up to the occupation, I was able to explore how student leaders and activists groups discussed ways to shape the occupation, particularly the inclusion of art and culture. These documents provided key

insight into the decision-making processes regarding the organization of the movement. Lastly, the movement documentation allowed me to cull together photographic evidence of artistic and creative activism, which may not have been documented by student activists as the movement unfolded.

Conclusion

This dissertation employs a qualitative case study based on three data sources—specifically, observation, in-depth interviews, and movement documentation—to explore and explain the relationship between creative protest and movement diversity in the student occupation of the University of Puerto Rico in 2010. It was necessary to utilize the case study approach, given my inability to be in the field during the 62-day occupation. Therefore, I was able to reconstitute the case through qualitative means. In addition, this approach allowed me to explore the nature of creative protest and its dimensions, but also the ways in which activists within the movement talked about the influence of creative protest on the movement. This approach allowed me to inductively understand the dimensions of creative protest, without assuming the components a priori. In addition, I was able to construct ideas about the relationship between creative protest and movement diversity through the voices of student activists.

The goal of this research is to create an understanding of the relationship between variables of interest with the intention of creating a local theory of culture—setting the stage for others to empirically test these relationships. In the case of my research, I found evidence of a relationship between creative protest and movement diversity. While case study research does not speak to the representativeness of findings, I am able to speak to the distinction between the first wave of the student movement, or the creative occupation, and the second wave of the

student movement, which was marred with fragmentation. In this way, the second wave of the student movement lacked characteristics of creative protest, as well as featured high levels of fragmentation among the student activists. The increasing fragmentation during the second wave reached a zeitgeist when a small group of radical students chose to protest the chancellor of the university, which resulted in a violent incident where students attacked the chancellor. The attack was mitigated by the dissent between the diverse groups, particularly in terms of tactics; however, demonstrated the ways in which the students were not working together as they had during the creative occupation. There may be several explanations for why the students had fragmented in the second wave; however, the purpose of my research was not to compare, but rather to explore the relationship between creative protest and movement diversity during the creative occupation.

CHAPTER IV

LEADING UP TO THE OCCUPATION

"A week before the student takeover, the interim chancellor Ana H. Guadalupe, said, "There is no way there is going to be a student takeover. The university will remain open." And we said, (laughter)..."Well, we will see." – Humanities Student

Around 3:30am on the morning of April 21, 2010, dozens of security guards of the University of Puerto Rico (UPR) arrived at the main gate of the Rio Piedras campus in anticipation of a student takeover. News had circulated from student organizations to news media to the administration of the university that students would shutdown the university starting on April 21st with a 48-hour occupation of the campus to try to force negotiations with the administration. If negotiations did not take place, during the 48 hours, the students claimed they would remain on the campus indefinitely. As a show of force, the administration responded they would do whatever it takes to prevent a student takeover and that the campus would remain open. On that morning, security guards were prepared for a potential confrontation with students as they were ordered by the administration to keep the main gate from being locked.

Thirty minutes later and there was no sight of the students. The security guards were confused. It was well known that student takeovers at the UPR always began at 4:00am with students locking the main gate of the university, before proceeding to secure the rest of the transportation gates. However, there were there no students at the gate. They continued to wait. Perhaps the students decided to call off the 48-hour shut down? At around 5:00am, the guards noticed small numbers of students arriving to campus, as they entered the six different transportation gates and parked their cars. To the guards, this morning looked no different than any other morning on campus, as students arrived, walked to their buildings, and congregated in

the open areas. It appeared to be any normal day at the University of Puerto Rico-Rio Piedras (UPR-RP) campus.

At 5:00am, approximately 75 students casually parked their cars on campus and walked towards the academic buildings. What the guards had yet to notice was that the students were gathering in two large groups near the Humanities building and the Social Sciences building (see Figure 14). At precisely 5:30am, the two large groups quietly divided into five smaller groups that had been assigned to one of the five secondary transportation gates located at the sides and back of the campus. The one exception was the main gate. The five groups walked to their assigned gates, which they closed and secured with a large chain and padlock (see Figure 15).

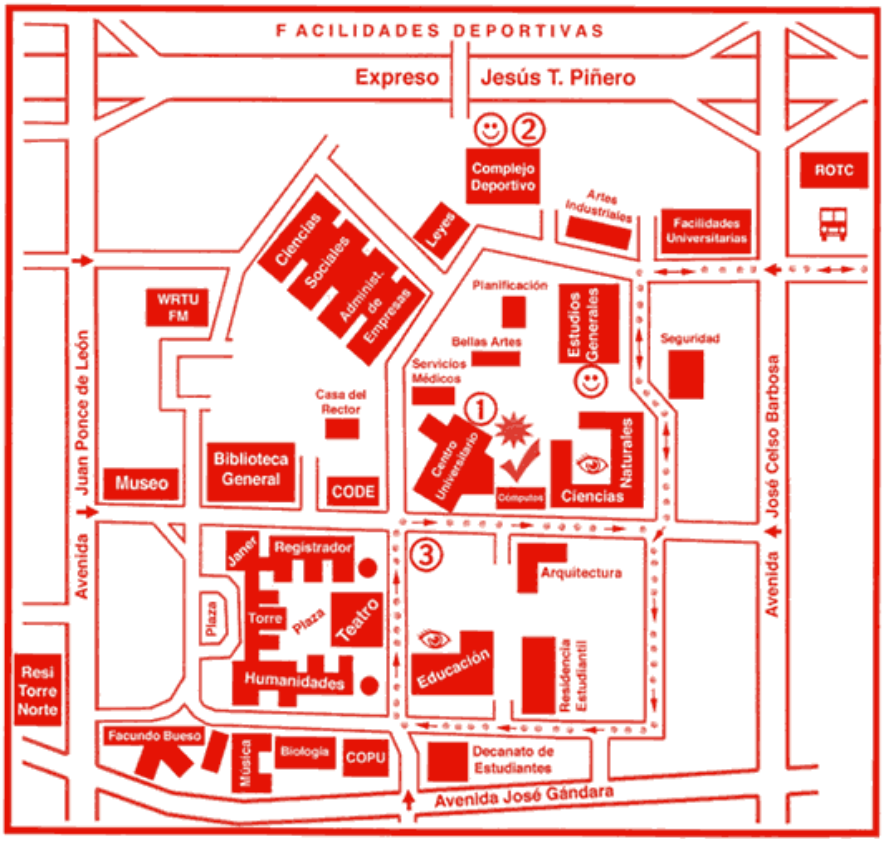

Figure 14. Campus Map of the University of Puerto Rico- Rio Piedras.

Figure 15. Locked Gate at the University of Puerto Rico- Rio Piedras Campus, April 21, 2010.
Photo Credit: Noelia Gonzalez Casiano.

Once each group had finished securing their gate, one person in each group sent a mass text message to the other groups informing them the gate was secured. Once notification was received from every group, the students departed from the gates at the sides and back of campus. From five different directions, the students walked toward the main road that runs through the center of campus. As the number of students grew larger, the guards realized that in fact the students had arrived to shutdown the university. However, by this time, it was too late to intervene, as the students had already successfully locked five of the six gates of the university.

Together, as one unified mass, the students marched, clapping their hands and singing *plenas*, to the main gate of the university. With great ceremony, they closed the main gate and placed large chains and locks around the gate to mark what would become the only successful student protest at the University of Puerto Rico.

Securing the six transportation gates of the campus marked the beginning of the 62-day occupation—and, in many ways, this action encapsulated the spirit of the student movement. Students described the choreography of that morning as the product of "very long meetings to find a way to do things a little different than before." In the week leading up to the occupation, the students gathered to decide on the logistics of that morning. Which students would be willing to lock the gates? What time should they lock the gates? Should the students divide into different groups to lock the gates or lock them as one collective? If they do divide, what order should the gates be locked in? How many students would it take to prevent a potential confrontation with the security guards, while also not ruining the element of surprise they had planned? Once the gates were locked, how should the groups communicate? And lastly, when should they lock the primary gate of the university—and more importantly, which group would be responsible for this task?

Economic Crisis on the Island

By 2006, public debt on the island had reached record levels and unemployment surged to approximately 15%, comparatively worse than any state in the U.S. That year, the government ended the fiscal year with a $2 billion dollar budget deficit. Often, they struggled with meeting payroll from week to week and it had become commonplace for government offices to shut down for weeks at a time. Business leaders, both on the island and in the United States, expressed fears about the credibility of the island as rating agencies began to downgrade the island's credit rating. Put more simply, the government of Puerto Rico was almost bankrupt. Bearing similarities to the economic crisis that would hit the United States and the rest of the world two years later, there is an important historical specificity that shaped the state of the

economy in Puerto Rico—namely, the complex relationship between the island and the United States.

While neoliberal policy didn't gain traction in the United States until the 1980s, the principles associated with this economic model were underway on the island since the start of the 20th century when the U.S. gained control over the island at the end of the Spanish-American War in 1898. Early reforms on the island, primarily the Foraker Act of 1900, opened the borders of Puerto Rico to the U.S., resulting in free trade between the two areas.[13] At the time, agriculture was the main economic sector on the island. Due to tariffs and trade restrictions imposed by the U.S., the island shifted from an economy of three crops—sugar cane, coffee, and tobacco—to a single crop, that of, sugar cane. However, given that sugar cane was produced mainly as an export, the island was highly dependent on the United States.

As the economy shifted and borders to other countries were opened to the United States, the demand for sugar cane declined and subsequently, the economy of the island suffered. In the mid-1950s, the United States stepped in to help diversify the economy by industrializing the island, a process known as "Operation Bootstrap." At first the influx of manufacturing on the island paired with tax cuts and low wages for the re-location of corporations to the island helped to boost the economy; however, a general decline in manufacturing and global competition contributed to further dependence on the United States by way of federal transfers.

Not only was the island dependent on investment from the United States, economic shifts in the United States (and globally)—such as the move to increasing privatization—would also be enacted on the island. In 1990, Governor Hernandez Colon proposed the sale of national company, the Puerto Rico Telephone Company to U.S.-owned Bell Atlantic. The privatization of

[13] Some historians on the island have claimed that Puerto Rico operated, at least in practice, as the first Free Export Processing Zone for the United States (Bernabe and Ayala 2005).

one of the largest public businesses on the island was reminiscent of the shift to neoliberal economics seen both in the United States and the United Kingdom in the 1980s, under the leadership of Ronald Reagan and Margaret Thatcher.

In 1992, the state of the economy on the island primed the way for a full embrace of neoliberal policies. From 1970 to 1990, federal transfers to the island had increased from $500 million to $6 billion. Government employment had increased from 106,000 individuals in 1972 to 222,000 in 1990. And lastly, government borrowing increased from 1.66 billion in 1970 to 12.57 billion in 1990—leading to large sums of public debt. This economic climate also led the way to the election of Pedro Rossello, a member of the conservative party on the island. Rossello envisioned no alternatives to balancing the government expenditures than gutting the public sector. Rossello's administration began to privatize the Puerto Rican economy beginning with jails, school cafeterias, shipping, public transport, health care, and even, public resources such as water and electric. He also sold off government-operated facilities, such as various hotels and convention centers. Rossello's attack on public institutions led to national protests on the island and a loss of public support, resulting in a shift in popular support to the Popular Democratic Party in 2000. However, the next eight years under the leadership of Sila Calderon and Anibal Acevedo Vila, respectively, the island pursued an economic model less focused on privatization and more on attracting foreign investment to the island, which was mostly unsuccessful due to global competition.

The bloated government, an increasing public debt, and continued loss of foreign investment—in conjunction with suspicions of corruption by Governor Acevedo Vila, led to a strong sense of public distrust on the island. Something was not working. Therefore, when the young Republican Luis Fortuño took the stage and talked about his plans for increasing jobs and

creating an attractive business environment for investment, a majority of people in Puerto Rico raised their hands in the air and shouted his slogan, "!*Cambio*!" It was time to embrace a new hopeful era of change.

Election of Governor Luis Fortuño

The election of Luis Fortuño, a member of the New Progressive Party, as Governor of the unincorporated territory of the United States in November 2008 is recognized as the first event that triggered the organization of student activists at the University of Puerto Rico. At the same time as Puerto Rico elected Governor Fortuño, citizens of the United States elected Barack Obama to President. Both elections represented a shift in the ruling party, as Puerto Rican voters supported the New Progressive Party—similar to the Republican Party in the United States—after 8 years of rule by the Popular Democratic Party on the island. In addition to representing a shift in the ruling party, both elections conveyed a sense of hope and change. Similar to Obama's slogan of "hope," Fortuño's slogan was "!*Cambio!*" (translated as, Change!). Quoted in the *New York Times* a couple of weeks after his election, he responds to his promise of change, "My message all along was that we had to pull together, that we had lost hope, our ability to dream. It is the only way to go."

A self-professed Reaganite and card-carrying member of the Republic Party, Fortuño openly embraced a neoliberal economic model of privatization and limited government control over the economy. Fortuño articulated his plan in the *New York Times* on November 28, 2008, "to streamline government processes and bring under control government expenses to be able to lower taxes." In addition, Fortuño's platform claimed that in order to balance the budget, he would make tough cuts to an already bloated government, build a strong business environment by courting foreign investment, and create new jobs in the private sector. With a victory of

220,000 votes, one of the widest margins in decades suggested that the people of Puerto Rico embraced Fortuño's tough-on-government approach to governing the island.

The Age of Austerity

Fortuño's methods for salvaging the economic status of the island looked similar to Rossello's attack on the public sector; however, one major difference was Fortuño's focus on austerity, in the form of spending cuts. On November 10, 2008, only six days after his election, Governor Fortuño announced a special council that would recommend effective policy for the fiscal and economic reconstruction of the island. The Economic and Fiscal Advisory Council of Puerto Rico's, comprised of business leaders from the private sector and headed by Richard L. Carrion, the CEO and Chairman of Popular, Inc, main goal is to submit recommendations for policy action in three areas: fiscal reconstruction, public-private partnerships, and economic sustainability, with a deadline for the first two by the end of year to be implemented in January 2009 and the last area by March 2009. In his speech on November 10th, Governor-elect Fortuño remarked, "The economy is our number one priority and we want to move promptly. We all have to work together with great determination and leave behind bitter partisanship for a common cause: the revitalization of the economy of Puerto Rico…I am gratified by the response and willingness of this diverse group of leaders to join forces for the revitalization of the economy of Puerto Rico. I am confident we will reach our goal."

Discontent at the University of Puerto Rico

Now that the New Progressive Party was in power, the students at the university expressed concerns over their anticipation of the same shift in the administration at the university. On the island there is a post-electoral tradition, particular when the government shifts from one political party to the next, where the administration at the university becomes aligned

with the new governing party. Once a governor is elected from a different political party, the administrators of the university system—including President, Chancellors, and the Board of Trustees, including its President—resign from their offices, allowing the new government to reappoint these positions at the university. Generally, administrators cite their inability to work with the opposing party in governing the university as the reason for their resignation. A faculty member at the university commented on this process, "In practice, what has been happening ever since I can remember, at least the last 20 years, is that it takes about 6 to 9 months for the new administration to change…So, in effect, every four or eight years, we are back to square one. It is a very politicized situation." Thus, with the election of Governor Fortuño several board members, including the President of the Board, resigned—providing the opportunity for Fortuño to appoint new board members, whom would appoint new board members, whom in turn, would appoint the Presidents and Chancellors for all 11 campuses of the island-wide system. In particular, this concerned students at the university because in practice it meant that Fortuño's administration would experience very few obstacles, politically, to enforcing changes directed at the university.

Beyond their generalized concern, students were also fighting against what they described as an increasing privatization of the university. In the past couple of years, students observed the privatization of the theater, the food court, and campus security. Shortly after the election, albeit unrelated, the administration announced the closing of the Social Science library on campus, due to insufficient funding. This announcement prompted students to begin actively organizing. A Humanities student, described this process,

> Basically, the student movement began in the Social Science department. Administrative officials announced the closing of the reading reserves, that's like the department library for the students. Students began to organize themselves to defend their department library. Students from other departments and colleges, like me, were inspired by their

> struggle. So, we became part of that group. We did a lot of little things, like bulletins, banners. We did murals in the building to try to appeal to other students. We were soon recognized by not only members of that department, but also members of other colleges, because we were defending the right to study.

This early organization was dedicated primarily to one task—that of defending the Social Sciences library. However, it is notable that the protest brought together students from other departments, such as the Humanities and Education. It was the first time in the history of protests at the university that a protest action was not primarily organized by the three student socialist organizations.

The Passage of Law 7

On March 3, 2009, in a half-hour televised address, Governor Luis Fortuño outlined a plan—known as Law 7—to cut a long-bloated government work force—excluding police officers and teachers—and to institute new taxes to increase revenue on the island. The plan indicated that he would cut spending by $2 billion per year and slash government payrolls by what could be more than 30,000 workers, or 10% of the government's workforce. The government is Puerto Rico's main employer, with 21% of the workforce on the island. In his address, Fortuño stated, "The government is too big and spends too much. Simply, the government has to be minimized…It's up to us to confront the bitter reality that the government is bankrupt. Imagine that in June, the government stopped paying the light bill. Or the water and phone…Simply put, I am not going to permit it." Although Fortuño did not present a timetable, he suggested that immediate action is necessary with layoffs beginning as early as July 1st, the beginning of the fiscal year. In the days that followed Fortuño's address, union representatives spoke out calling the plan gruesome and organizing a series of protests, which would take place over the course of the summer. Representatives expressed frustration that previously negotiated collective agreements would not be honored by Fortuño's administration.

Only six days later, given the lack of obstacles in the legislative branch for Fortuño's administration, the government of Puerto Rico passed Law 7 creating a state of fiscal emergency on the island on March 9, 2009. The act outlined a three-phase plan to deal with the current fiscal crisis, which focused primarily on the government payroll and ways to upgrade the island's credit rating from junk status.

While the document does not address specifically any budget cuts directed at the University of Puerto Rico system, it does state, "Our Supreme Court recognized, within the context of the fiscal crisis in the Retirement System of the University of Puerto Rico—crisis which does not come close to the magnitude of the present fiscal crisis of Puerto Rico—that "the Commonwealth should have the ability and the flexibility to make reasonable changes and amendments as necessary to further the legitimate interests" it pursues (pg. 29). Regardless of the fact that Law 7 implied that the University would be exempt from significant budget cuts, it allowed for flexibility. In July 2009, Governor Fortuño released the budget for the fiscal year, which would be the second major event that triggered the student occupation. Despite Fortuño's earlier claims about exemptions from Law 7, the university would experience a budget cut of $100 million dollars, nearly 25% of its operating budget.

The Development of Action-Committees

The announcement of the budget cut to the university propelled the student movement to grow more diverse and larger. Students from disciplines previously seen as anti-strike at the UPR such as students from the Natural Sciences and the Law School began to express grievances over the budget cuts. Over the summer, a couple hundred students were participating in study groups among the disciplines that came together to defend the Social Sciences library, specifically the Social Sciences, Humanities, and Education. However, as new students joined the movement, the

students decided to organize into "action committees" by academic discipline. One student remarked, "Suddenly, we were working together for the same issues, although we were separated by faculties. We tried to support each other and help each other." The plan was for students in each action committee—Humanities, Education, Social Sciences, Natural Sciences, the Law School, and the Fine Arts—to act as representatives, disseminating information to colleagues in their discipline. The goal was to inform as many students as possible about potential consequences of Law 7 for the university; in order to establish an educated student body before calling for a general student assembly where students could vote on whether or not to go on strike. A faculty member and union leader explained the importance of the organization style and how it differentiated this movement from prior strikes at the university,

> What made this struggle different is that from the very beginning, they decided that they wanted to construct a movement, which was structured around action committees, which were to be based in different academic colleges. Instead of the past way of organized, people said, "First, before we go to assembly, before we call any other thing, we are going to try to organize action committees in all the colleges. To create action committees in each college and to carry out activities within each college. Also to bring each issue of that college to the whole to start a network of all these action committees to begin to agitate, educate, mobilize and so on. And this went on. I think they did admirable work in preparing the ground for what come afterward.

Organizing by academic discipline allowed for previously apolitical groups to participate in the organization of the movement, wherein the past they were not typically involved. For example, many Law School students are members of the New Progressive Party and proponents of statehood. During past manifestations at the university, the Law students felt at odds with the socialist organizations and their preferences for radical actions—such as shutting down the university. However, this new form of organization enabled students to address the grievances of their specific discipline without ascribing to one particular political party or ideology. Instead

of participating as a socialist or statehooder, students participated as a member of the Natural Science action committee and so on.

Although the students could not have anticipated the tensions and conflicts that would arise from the action-committee organizational infrastructure, they were aware of the need to unite under a common theme. A student in the English department described this issue,

> At the end (of summer), we created some principle to guide our work and structure the organization. We tried to keep organized by department, but in small groups. Basically, every group in every college was an action committee. We held meetings with all of the action committees together, but then the committees divide themselves to do their own work in their own college, because every college has its own issues and they have different rhythms of works. So, they can give you information about what we are doing in Humanities, but it isn't the same in every college. Then, we unite the three existing committees, because although we are struggling for different issues in our colleges, the main thing that kept us together is the defense of public education. We tried to keep that as our theme.

In this way, student activists realized the importance of dividing the student movement into different groups based upon their academic discipline, while also creating a structure that would unite the action committees to a larger movement with more specific goals.

Government Layoffs

On September 26, 2009, Governor Fortuño held a press conference to announce the first major wave of government layoffs, stating that 16,970 government jobs would be cut. In response to the layoffs, major union leaders announced that a general strike was planned for October 15. Two days later on September 28th, students from the action-committees urged the student council to call for a student assembly with the intention of addressing how to react to the budget cuts. During the student assembly, the students addressed three main issues. One, they sought to formalize, by vote, the legitimacy of the six action committees. Two, they voted on whether or not students should go on strike. And lastly, they discussed student support of the workers in the October 15th strike.

Although the students were already informally organized into action-committees, the process of legitimizing the six committees played an important role in creating a formal durable structure that were recognized by other students not involved in the actions leading up to the assembly. The formalization was suggested in response to a heated debate over whether or not to go on strike. A student in the Humanities department recounted the process,

> Then, in that very assembly, a very important thing happened. Someone, I don't remember who, proposed the official creation of committees in every college. We were talking about a general strike and the established preconditions to go on strike. One, if everyone else goes on strike, we won't be the exception. Two, if other members of the university community, like professors or workers, go on strike, we will go on strike. Three, if the students have the capacity to go on strike by themselves, we are going to do it. In order to accomplish any of these three conditions, we proposed the creation of committees in *every* college to begin the work. And it passed. It was approved in the assembly. After that, the action committees began to work and it was a challenging process because everyone has their own issues.

The action-committees were seen as the necessary infrastructure to build the conditions for students to go on strike in the future. Students also decided to participate in the National March on October 15th, as representatives of the university as opposed to solely representatives of their socialist organizations.

Early in the process, students began to understand the difficulty in building a non-hierarchical and horizontal infrastructure. One of the student leaders explained how the action committees were not well integrated early in the process,

> At the very beginning, we were very separated from one another. An action committee is, "I'll deal with my faculty and you deal with your faculty." But we support each other's activities. We did work together for the National March. But the week before the march on October 15, the administration took the decision to close down the UPR for one week. They were afraid we were going to do another student takeover or we were going to strike, so they tried to prevent the assemblies. But we don't fear the debate, the difference. We don't fear trying to convince each other. We are in the university. There are a lot of ideas. There is a lot of debate. We like to argue with each other.

While the action committees were united under the struggle of defending a public education, they were able to maintain their difference by focusing on their own specific grievances and holding their own activities. Difference and debate were important components of building the occupation.

National March of October 15

Leading up to the National March scheduled for October 15, 2009, the primary worker's unions on the island, specifically the *AFL-CIO*, *CTW* (*Change to Win*), *SEIU*, and the *Puerto Rican Teachers Federation*, debated the proper reaction to the announcement of government layoffs. Consensus was finally reached among union leaders to begin the strike at Plaza Las Americas, the largest shopping mall in the Caribbean and second largest in all of Latin America. The shopping center was selected as the startling location for the march due to its relationship to government's corporate-oriented policies. Marcos Rodriguez Ema, an executive at the company that owns the mall, had been recently named as Fortuño's chief of staff. On the *SEIU* website, a call was released for the protest that read,

> Tomorrow, hundreds of thousands of Puerto Rican workers, faith leaders, students and citizens will unite in Hato Rey to peacefully protest the planned cuts in essential public services. Governor Fortuño has threatened to charge citizens with "terrorism" if they take part in the planned march. What: One-Day National Strike and Peaceful Protest. When: 10:00 A.M., Thursday, October 15, 2009. Who: Labor movement and civil society organizations. Where: Plaza Las Americas, Hato Rey, Puerto Rico.

Enthusiasm spread across the island for an opportunity to bring the dissenting sides of the left on the island together. Carlos Juan Irizarry wrote in the newspaper *Socialismo Internacional*,

> In the view of Puerto Rico's socialists and left-wing activists, the strike marks a renewal of mass struggle that has the potential to shake up the island's politics. Puerto Rico is at a historic moment of great suffering that also presents us with the opportunity to fight and to rise up together against the government and the oppressive system. The only way to stop [Law 7] is if we organize ourselves and show that we have power.

However, in the week and a half leading up to the march, students from the UPR would play a leading role in smaller protest actions resulting in the closing of the university by the administration. On October 3rd, university students joined the teacher's union for a march in Old San Juan. On October 9th, high school students in Canovanas held a protest that led to a violent confrontation between students and the police of Puerto Rico. As protest activities on the island picked up with the participation of UPR students, the university administration closed all 11-campuses of the university system in anticipation of a general strike from October 12th to the 16th. Giovanni Roberto, a spokesperson for the *Organizacion Socialista* (OSI) and student in the College of Education—later to become one of the recognized "leaders" of the movement, responded to the closing of the university,

> The university administration and the government are imposing censorship, and intend to prevent protests and violently attack demonstrators in order to avoid a bigger uprising in the country. It's evident that the university administration recognizes that the UPR is close to a general strike (quoted in the *Socialist Worker* newsletter).

On the morning of October 15th, the strike began at 6 a.m, as crowds started from various locations across the island to converge at the main rally site in Hato Rey and into the streets surrounding the mall, *Plaza Las Americas*. By mid-morning, people flooded the eight-lane area between the mall and *Hiram Bithorn Stadium*, stretching for a half mile and spilling over into the expressway. In anticipation of the march, *Plaza Las Americas* shut down for the day. According to reports, all mass public transportation was stopped, except for the trains. The port, docks and ferries in San Juan came to a halt, as did practically all public services across the island. The public school system closed after only 2 percent of students showed up for class, and all public universities were also closed. Reports of attendance varied, as witnesses claimed that 50,000 were in attendance and the government claimed only 15,000. Traffic in the surrounding area was halted for five hours. The area surrounding the mall was transformed into an enormous rainbow

of flags and colorful banners. By mid-afternoon, images and videos of the National March began to surface on social media.

The national march was cited in numerous posts on labor websites as the largest protest in Puerto Rican history. A description of what the *SEIU* described as "the greatest public demonstration in Puerto Rican history," stated,

> Very loud music played on enormous loudspeakers, people were chanting and dancing in the streets and a very joyful ambiance was felt everywhere. It wasn't a carnival happening in Puerto Rico though—it was the General Strike that mobilized over 150,000 workers and citizens to protest Republic Governor Luis Fortuño's massive layoffs.

Vice President of the Assembly of Puerto Rican workers Eliseo Medina stated,

> It was tremendous. I've been in the labor movement for 44 years and this was the most impressive event I've ever seen…It was one of the most diverse events that I've ever seen in a society. Lawyers, workers, students, psychologists, priests and ministers and nuns and everyday people. It was truly an amazing sight. It was pretty clear, our rejection of Governor Fortuño's policies.

In the aftermath of the march, the students at the UPR continued to meet within their action committees to discuss possible courses of action for the future, particularly as the university administration sought ways to accommodate for the deficit. In February, the action committee of Humanities held a meeting for the students in their college, which was the first event of the student movement to be posted on Facebook. Their primary goal during the meeting was to organize what they were called "*Campamento en Humanidades*" (Camp of the Humanities), which would be a 48-hour encampment. During the meeting, which was held on campus outside of the campus museum, they would discuss the activities and schedule for the encampment, their message, their propaganda, and other materials necessary to be successful. Although the number of attendees listed on Facebook is not always indicative of those in attendance, 177 students responded "Yes" they would attend and 125 students stated "Maybe."

This does indicate that at the beginning of the protest action by the students, approximately 300 students were demonstrating support, albeit through social media, for the encampment.

The *Campamento en Humanidades* was described as a "space of debate, creation, and dance." The itinerary was as follows. On February 8, 2010, the day would begin at 9am with painting of the walls surrounding the university located near the camp. This would comprise most of the activities of the day, with a showing of a documentary film at 7pm. The second day of the camp, February 9th, would begin with a street theater performance at 9am called *Noticiero Movil* (or, mobile news), where students acted out the news of the island, primarily performing the news of the UPR and the camp. At 1pm, there was a coordinated bike ride around campus and the neighborhood of Rio Piedras; and at 3pm, students could participate in musical jam session. The day would end at 7pm with an open debate, where students discussed the primary issues facing the university and how to proceed. On the final morning at 9am, "*Despedida: café y tertulia*" was on the agenda—or, "Farewell: Coffee and Salon," where conversations summarized what the students had learned in the past 48-hours. After the encampment, the students would continue to focus their efforts on education, by disseminating information about their concerns to the rest of the student body. Mostly, this meant that students in each action committee would seek to recruit additional members from their academic college to attend the regularly scheduled meetings of the action committee. The movement continued to grow slow and steady, at least until the announcement by the administration of their plan for balancing the budget—which resulted in a massive explosion of the student movement at the UPR.

Certification 98

In response to budget cuts at the University of Puerto Rico, the Board of Trustees ordered an internal audit of the university's economic situation. In a report by internal auditors, the Board

of Trustees was advised to evaluate the granting of tuition waivers to students. These tuition waivers were generally awarded to certain categories of students, such as honor students, athletes, artists, and children of university employees. However, other studies commissioned by the Board stated that other waivers, beyond the exemption categories, were also exempt from tuition. Thus, the Board concluded that 3 out of 10 students of the UPR were receiving tuition waivers, diminishing the potential tuition income by 30%. On February 20, 2010, the Board of Trustees issued Certification 98, which called for the development of a new tuition exemption policy. The new policy would eliminate tuition waivers for a majority of students.

The decision to cut tuition waivers was not the only information circulating about the impending changes taking place in the university. In addition to Certification and the elimination of tuition waivers, there had also been a discussion about increasing the price of tuition overall—already in place at the Mayaguez campus of the UPR, which raised the tuition $50.00 per semester hour; the installment of a new annual student fee, a reduction in courses, and layoffs of adjunct professors. At the time, only Certification 98 had been formalized; however, the students did not waste time in organizing in reaction to the impending changes.

On April 8th, the action-committees for the Humanities and Education held a general assembly within their respective colleges, both of which were posted events on Facebook, as well as distributed flyers and student bulletins expressing the concerns of the students. One flyer distributed by the Humanities action committee was simply black and white, with the image of an activist, in what appears to be military gear, with his hand cupped around his mouth yelling, "Budget, summer classes, tuition waivers…" Notably, the flyer was plain, which in retrospect stands in stark contrast to the type of propaganda developed by the students over the course of

the 62-day occupation. Similarly, the student bulletin, developed by the action-committee of Education, was a one-page black and white bulletin with few graphics and full of text.

In all of the propaganda disseminated about the two assemblies, a common discourse was being utilized to describe the need for attendance at the assembly was the creation of open spaces for information, questions, discussion, dialogue, and debate. Participation was framed as an important role for the island, as stated in the student bulletin from the Education action-committee, "In these critical moments for the country, there comes a great responsibility, a responsibility to defend the most important asset for any country: education." Additionally, the action-committee for Humanities highlighted the organizational style of the assembly, "…will be discussed in an inclusive, participatory, and above all, horizontal, among all those present." During the general assembly of the Humanities, the students decided to hold a 24-hour occupation of the Humanities building, beginning at 6:00am on April 12, 2010.

Ocup(arte)

The 24-hour occupation was called "Ocup(arte)"—a clever play on the words "occupation" and "art," was held by students from the action-committee of Humanities and Social Sciences. On the day before the start of the occupation, the Humanities and Social Science action-committees released their manifesto, which was circulated widely on social media and international websites. The manifesto read,

> Greetings from Puerto Rico! Letting you know on April 12 at the University of Puerto Rico, Rio Piedras, according to assembly decisions at Humanities and Social Sciences faculties, we're going to occupy!!! We will be trying to have a live stream broadcast show at 7pm. Ocup(arte): Throughout all day we will have performances, music, poetry, art, work-shops and concerts. We will occupy against funding cuts, decreases of students rights and moratorium on tuition waivers. Don't just worry, occupy! We're also in solidarity with students from Madrid that are also occupying on Monday.

The Facebook event page for Ocup(arte) described the event as "transforming the campus into a space of active and dynamic participation and collaboration."

Students also listed a schedule of cultural and educational activities that would be taking place in each department. The schedule of activities appeared on the event page on Facebook for the Social Sciences, with the following activities scheduled throughout the day: open debate of the issues, mural painting, lecture on traditional Puerto Rican music styles—*bomba* and *plena*, a documentary viewing, a discussion titled, "Who pays for the university? The contribution of the working class in higher education in Puerto Rico," a forum about the successes and failures of the 2005 student protest, and a lecture on homophobia on the most popular television show on the island, *Super Xclusivo*. The Humanities action committee held similar activities, which combined a variety of participatory artistic activities, such as painting the concrete benches and an open mic session, with lectures on the privatization of the UPR and the commodification of education and a documentary on the international student movement. Both occupations would gather together at Plaza Antonia near the Social Sciences buildings for a closing concert.

The final event for Ocup(arte) was a General Assembly scheduled on the following day, April 13, 2010. The primary item on the agenda of the assembly was to vote on whether or not the students should go on strike, which entails shutting down the university. However, the debate over whether or not the students should shut down the university was highly contentious between socialist organizations as well as students from various action committees, as described by a student in the Social Sciences department.

> In the general assembly on April 13th that was run by the student council, who have very administrative ideas, tried to end the debate and control the microphones. They even shut down the microphones in the middle of a message and did very long presentation that made everyone tired and leave. But in spite of all the manipulate, students of the OSI (one of the socialist organizations) took the microphone and said, "Well, the action committee of the Law School wants to prevent the strike and they said, "Let's not do a

> strike this semester. Let's do it next semester, if they sell the campus." So, we look at them and we say, "They are going to sell our campus, just like that. They are doing it little by little already." So, we get into that debate about under which conditions we would strike. It was a very long debate, (laughter), a very long debate. One member of the OSI said, "We can do the student takeover and we already know what's going to be the answer from the administration. So, I propose an ultimatum for the administration. If they don't respond, we strike. And that's it." And it was approved by the assembly.

In this assembly, the students voted, by majority, to go on strike beginning with an occupation and shutdown of the university for 48 hours, starting April 21, 2010. If the administration refused to negotiate within this time period, students would enact the second part of their vote, which was an indefinite strike or *huelga*, shutting down the university for "as long as necessary." It was also during this assembly that students conceptualized the spatial dynamics of the occupation. As described earlier, the students had already developed six action committees that corresponded with the six major transportation gates of the university. Thus, the students would divide the campus by the six action committees, arranging for each transportation gate to be occupied by the action committee of students most familiar with that area of campus. For example, the Law School would occupy the gate closest to their academic buildings and so forth.

In the week leading up to the occupation, the students spent much of the week in long meetings by action committee discussing the logistics of their particular camp and concerns about the occupation more generally. However, the most pressing issue at the moment was simply securing the campus on the morning of April 21st. This involved discussions about which students would feel comfortable entering the campus that morning and risk a potential confrontation with the security guards or police force. This would become a very important aspect of the distinctions between action committees—in that; the students recognized the multiplicity of the occupation. They recognized that different students might feel more or less

comfortable engaging with certain types of protest actions. Thus, this distinction of diversity while under the larger ideal of unity and solidarity guided the remainder of the occupation.

However, observing the preparation and early phases of the strike would not have led one to predict this protest action would ultimately earn the nickname, "the creative occupation." While early organization, such as the *Campamento del Humanidades* and *Ocup(arte)*, demonstrated that art would become an integrated aspect of the occupation; it was not anticipated that it would become one of the defining features of the occupation. Mostly, art was incorporated as a strategy for mobilization. For instance, in the newsletter *Alerta Roja*, from the socialist organization OSI, published in early 2010 stated that artistic performances should be included in protest for the purposes of creating a desirable atmosphere with the intention of mobilizing large numbers of students. However, the strategic inclusion of art in the occupation did not anticipate the centrality of creative expressions that would unfold as the movement endured over time, in the course of 62-days—specifically the reliance upon cultural symbols to mitigate tensions between the diverse groups of mobilized activists, as well as how artistic performances and products were utilized to manage these tensions.

CHAPTER V

FROM CAMP VIETNAM TO CAMP DISNEY: DIFFERENTIATED CAMP IDENTITIES IN THE UNIVERSITY OF PUERTO RICO STUDENT OCCUPATION OF 2010

Introduction

It is April 27, 2010, the sixth day of the occupation of the main campus at the University of Puerto Rico. Outside of the locked gates, police have created a perimeter, with blue barricades separating them from occupation supporters. Inside, several hundred students have sorted themselves into campsites based upon academic discipline, each assigned to one of the six transportation gates of the campus.

Six days into the occupation, campsites have been given nicknames that convey distinct identities. The Humanities camp is called Camp Vietnam, given the students' penchant for confrontational tactics. Conversely, the Natural Sciences camp is relatively non-confrontational and prefers a more lighthearted approach to the occupation, earning the moniker Camp Disney. The Law School contingent is perceived to enjoy elevated class privilege within the student body, a perception cemented when lawyers from San Juan provided them a sushi lunch as they were dubbed Camp Beverly Hills. A student in Camp Vietnam remarked wryly, "Sushi at an occupation?"

At the outset of the occupation, the template for how to organize the campus during the occupation was based on the formalization of six action committees—Humanities, Social Sciences, Education, the Law School, Education, and Fine Arts—and the decision for each action committee to set up camp at one of the designated major transportation gates of the campus. Initially, the development of action committees was to serve logistical needs. They were

created to provide an opportunity for students with different grievances to work together on the needs of their specific college. Organizers assumed that individuals from different academic colleges might have different approaches to protest. The designation of each action committee to a different transportation gate allowed for students with similar goals to camp with one another in the area of campus located near their academic buildings, the area of campus they knew best.

Somewhat surprisingly, the camps of each action committee developed distinct identities from one another, illuminating the internal dynamics of the movement and the multiple styles in which a student could participate in the strike. No longer did students perceive student protestors at the university to solely be associated with the major socialist organizations on the island, as has been the case in the past. Rather, the occupation, with its emphasis on choice and difference, licensed a much broader constituency to become part of the movement. In the history of the UPR protests, this would be the first time a significant number of students from the Natural Sciences and the Law School participated. These distinctive identities captured meaningful differences between each camp based on political ideology, preferences for protest actions, daily organization, age of students, social class of students, and the location of the camp. Particularly interesting is the fact that the camps of each action committee, already divided into separate locations, enabled a sense of differentiation of ideology and protest actions; however, internally, the students found it important to not only separate themselves, but also to symbolically represent their camp identity through the development of camp names. In addition to camp names, each camp also conveyed their identity aesthetically through the production of camp logos and t-shirts. Using cultural expressions to communicate these differences was important not only to encourage solidarity within each camp, but also to communicate the camp identity to those outside of the occupation. Moreover, the students of the occupation used other forms of art

to alleviate moments of conflict and disagreement between the camps, such as I will demonstrate by discussing a conflict over whether or not to build barricades at each gate.

In this chapter, I explore the multiple camp identities present during the 62-day occupation, illuminating the primary differences between the camps and the ways in which these differences were signified. Differentiated camp identities enabled both unity *and* diversity within the overall movement; however, this was not without consequence. It also creates internal tensions within the 62-day activists, as students had to find a way to encourage a broad mobilization while also living together for an indefinite time period. Thus, it was necessary for activists to find ways to negotiate and manage internal tensions, which was partially accomplished through cultural interventions.

"Like Going to War…"

Initially, I was not privy to the internal diversity present during the 62-day occupation. Observing the occupation from a distance, mostly virtually, I observed what appeared to be a unified student movement featuring diverse cultural expressions. It was also a couple of weeks in the field before anyone mentioned the different camp identities. However, once I began asking the students "Where did you camp? Were you Camp Vietnam? Camp Disney?" they would laugh while recounting the idiosyncrasies of each camp. In some ways, the internal mechanisms of the occupation were taken-for-granted; whereas, in other ways, the camp identities acted as a microcosm for the existing differences between the Social Science students and Law School students. The enthusiastic and detailed accounts made of the camps indicated that the distinctive identities were a meaningful and important dynamic in the occupation. Students would recount to me how the struggles between the camps became overly intense on some days, while other days it provided fodder for humor and laughter.

During my first couple of weeks in the field, one of my informants, Carlos, offered to walk me around campus to show me the location of different buildings so I could navigate the campus for interviews, but also to introduce me to his friends whom he thought could be potential interviewees. As we walked onto campus, he pointed out the different buildings—the History building, the Communications building, the Theater, the Business School, the Social Sciences. Carlos remarked that the different colleges were all very different in terms of how thy think, but also how they dress. He pointed out, humorously, that you can visibly see the difference very clearly when you walk through one particular building, which houses both the Social Sciences and the Business School. As we walked through the building, my informant spoke up and pointed out the differences, "Mira, this is the Business School. Can't you see? They are all dressed up formally [imitating the tightening of a tie]. They look serious. You don't really see them hanging out around the buildings." And then later, "Mira! [Shaking his head affirmatively]. Now, we are in the Social Sciences. They dress very differently. Can't you tell? I know a lot of people over here because my girlfriend is a Psychology major. They dress more casually and hang out in this open area a lot."

Later that afternoon, we walked to the theater of the UPR, a site of contention related to the increasing privatization of the university. Carlos explained to me that in the past, the theater was a popular site where students could hold performances and events. However, in recent years, the administration decided to privatize the theater selling it to an outside company, which rented out the space at a cost unaffordable for students. This meant the theater remained mostly closed, with the exception of "high-brow" events, which were rarely attended by students. However, despite the closed doors of the theater, its central location on campus made the area surrounding it a popular location to hang out and have lunch and conversation with friends.

On this particular day, dozens of college students surrounded the privatized space, the smell of marijuana wafting through the air. While sitting around the theater with a group of students, Carlos introduced me to a disheveled-looking young man named Pedro. While he spoke to the group, Carlos uttered to me quietly that he was one of the student strikers who remained on the campus for all of the 62 days, giving me a knowing look that I might want to interview this young man. I asked him, "You were here the entire 62 days?" He remarked proudly, "Yes." I asked, "So, which camp?" He smiled broadly, "Camp Vietnam. That was my camp." He continued to joke with his friends before walking away. Once out of earshot, everyone began to laugh and joke about the things he said. Carlos explained, "Mira, they are laughing because he is acting like he has that psychological issue people get after war, how do you say…?" I remarked, "Posttraumatic Stress Disorder?" He laughed and replied, "Yes, exactly. PTSD. Mira, the campus was divided into different campsites by their academic disciplines. Each camp had a different name and action. But some folks took it too far. I mean, that kid you just met, he said he forgot the original names of the buildings. He told me that when someone asked him for directions, he referred to it as the building next to Camp Sparta. And then, he also is still going by the name that was given to him in the camp." I had yet to hear about the naming rituals within the camps. Carlos elaborated, "Yes, apparently, some of the camps also gave names to each of their members. I think for purposes of anonymity." I asked, "So, what was his name?" Carlos couldn't remember, but thought it was an animal or food name. He then remarked, "Apparently, some strikers are having trouble adjusting to regular school life after the occupation. I guess you have to realize they were living inside the occupied school for about 60 days. That's two months. I guess it was like going to war."

Beyond the transformation of individual lives, the spatial organization of the entire campus was transformed. On the occupied campus, there were signs that indicated the location of the camps, such as shown in this picture of a sign hanging outside of the main library on campus that indicated the direction to the Vietnam camp and the Disney camp (Figure 16). The names on the signs are accompanied by a symbolic image of the camp. Disney, naturally, borrows the iconic outlines of Mickey Mouse. A Viet Cong fighter, symbolically aligning with the guerilla resistance of the South Vietnamese to the technologically superior US forces during the Vietnam War, conversely signaled Camp Vietnam. This reading is consistent with informant framing, elaborated through in-depth descriptions of the camps. A faculty member from the Drama department and honorary member of the street theater performance group, The Clown

Figure 16. Photo of Camp Designations.
Photo Courtesy of Indymediapr (https://www.solidarity-us.org/site/node/2896)

Police, remarked how the definition of the university changed.

> "It was interesting because when we were bringing in supplies, the students had created a new map for the university. Humanities is that way (she points to the actual Humanities building), but the Humanities camp were here (pointing to the primary gate of the university). So, when I was told, "Bring the ice to the Humanities." I went over to the building. They really changed the definition of the inside of the university."

Politics in the University

It is important to recognize the broader complexity of political ideologies on the island, which often overlap with the island's political organizations and parties. A student from the Social Sciences describes this complexity and its relationship to student protest at the university.

> There's three large, in a relative sense, socialist organizations active in the university, JUS, OSI, and MST. In the university, it is the only area where politically socialist organizations have an influence on what happens. Socialist organizations are the main ones who, independently of the action committees, did political work on the campus. The main parties don't care about the university until elections come around. In that sense, the only party that has an opportunity to do campaigning in the university is the Independence Party. The PIP has a large group of student organizations. Then there is a youth movement, which is more of an independence group outside of the Independence Party, but is not a socialist organization, more with nationalistic tendencies. It's characterized by, in my opinion, being more sympathetic to the work of the Popular Democratic Party (PDP) than socialist or other independence organizations. In the university, those groups have more influence than those parties in the rest of the country.

The complexities expressed by this student illuminate students' dissatisfaction with the larger political parties on the island—such as the *New Progressive Party* and *Popular Democratic Party*; but also, the political party which has, in the past, represented the voice of the students, the *Puerto Rico Independence Party*. It also reflects a tradition of political organizing on the island by other political ideologies, such as nationalism, socialism, and even, communism and anarchism. So, while there is some overlap between political ideologies and political parties, the myriad of political divisions produces a fragmented left on the island. During my first few weeks of fieldwork, I began to understand these complications, as one of my informants explained to me the nuances between the broader anarchist groups on the island versus a newly developed political organization consisting of anarchist libertarians.

Existing tensions between political ideologies, organizations, and parties pose an obstacle to large-scale mobilization on the island, particularly for issues concerning the left on the island. As different groups not only favor certain issues, they also may differ in their opinions for what

is deemed appropriate protest actions. Particularly, radical political groups on the island—specifically, anarchist, socialist, nationalist, and pro-Independence groups, are associated with confrontational tactics and violent protest. For example, there is evidence of these types of tactics in a popular protest chant developed by the *Pro-Independence University Federation of Puerto Rico* (*FUPI*) during the student protests of the 1970s. In the lyrics, the students make claims to the use of Molotov bombs as an appropriate act of resistance.

> If you believed that the UPR was not coming/
> If you believed that the UPR was not coming/
> The UPR s out in the street with its last detail
> and its Molotov bomb! Oooooh!
> Aaaaaah, the UPR has arrived!
> Aaaaaah, the UPR has arrived?

Throughout the long history of protest at the University of Puerto Rico, the notion of student protest on the island has been strongly associated with the radical left on the island. Up until the strike of 2010, students from one of three student-based socialist organizations on the island have been responsible for not only organizing the initial call for protest, but also constitute a majority of protestors involved in prior movements. While relatively small organizations, they are not insignificant in their role in student protest on the island.

Early conversations about how to organize the strike of 2010 were often based on experiences drawn from the student strike of 2005, which was known to be an unpopular strike. One of the student leaders and member of OSI, who had the benefit of being present for both strikes, commented on how the experiences of 2005 shaped the organization of 2010,

> Well, the action committees are a product of the political work of the socialist organizations. They were the product of the main three organizations, which had the idea of organizing committees since the last strike of 2005. We discussed organizing committees for the last couple of years. We learned how to get people, we learned how to interact with people who weren't part of the socialist organizations. Initially, we have done work around those on the left and we don't look outside of the left, which really is politically significant in Puerto Rico. When you see the amount of people in the general

> debates in society, we really don't have much say in that or influence throughout the general population.

Thus, one reason for this style of organization was to avoid polarizing political ideologies, as described by a law student, "We tried not to make it an issue about politics in general. We tried not to make it about statehood or independence. Most of the students are pro-Independence and I'm pro-statehood which was one of the differences I had to deal with in the beginning." Another reason that explains this style of organization is the plan to build confidence in the strike. A student leader describes the ways, in which committees were necessary to building mobilization,

> The problem was that we didn't have any committees before the strike. We didn't even know each other. When we went to assembly on April 6th, I spoke out against the strike. I was pro-strike, but I was saying it was too quick to go on strike that day. Rather, let's plan it. Let's get committees together. Let's do some work. At that time, only four out of 200 students that voted were in favor of the strike. So it was clear we need to build. So, we started building the committees in the strike, building the confidence through the committees.

A faculty member describes how the notion of past student protests contrasted from the strike of 2010,

> The idea of the movement in the past was that it was led by radicals, socialists, pro-independence. But here, [in 2010], it was broader. They made an effort to appeal to different sectors of the student body, not just pro-independence. And I think they were successful in doing that.

Thus, the students decided to organize themselves by academic discipline, which they referred to as action committees rather than political ideologies, organizations, and parties. In this way, student activists realized the importance of dividing the student movement into different groups based upon their academic discipline, while also creating a structure that would unite the action committees to a larger movement with more specific goals. However, tensions between the action committees would unfold over the course of the year and a half leading up to the occupation and the 62-day occupation.

These existing tensions became apparent early in the organization of the students in reaction to austerity measures directed at the public sector by Governor Luis Fortuño. Early debates unfolded as students began to engage in conversation about how to go about planning a strike against the both Law 7 and Certification 98, as evidenced by a description of *how* to go about the strike by a DJ for the campus radio station, *Radio Universidad*,

> The Humanities are on the left [saying], 'Let's do things the old way.' And the Law School [responds], "We respect that, but we have to do this different, because times are changing."…They kept talking about how to be democratic, to do it from bottom up, because in the past, people have been held hostage on how to do protest. We can't have leaders anymore."

Not only did the dialogue and debate between the different action committees produce creative approaches to student protest at the UPR, it also led to an environment of mutual respect of their differences and even, longstanding groups to try-on different political actions. A Humanities student spoke about how the strike allowed for everyone to decide on their own the appropriate action,

> We have to decide what will be our next action. And it was difficult because we are very different in our vision and everyone has their own vision of the world and specific ways to do things. And the best decision we could have was to respect each other. If you want to do a sit-in, do a sit-in. If that person wants to run, that person wants to run. If one person wants to defend, that person has a right to defend. Curiously, in respecting each other, we found we wanted to try other perspectives. Like me, for example, I don't believe in the sit-in because I have been in other protests where we have done sit-ins and we got beat up. But I decided to try it.

Organizing by academic discipline allowed for previously apolitical groups to participate in the organization of the movement, wherein the past they were not typically involved. For example, many Law School students are members of the *New Progressive Party* and proponents of statehood. During past manifestations at the university, the Law students felt at odds with the socialist organizations and their preferences for radical actions—such as shutting down the university. However, this new form of organization enabled students to address the grievances

of their specific discipline without ascribing to one particular political party or ideology. Instead of participating as a socialist or statehooder, students participated as a member of the Natural Science action committee and so on.

Early in the process, students began to understand the difficulty in building a non-hierarchical and horizontal infrastructure. One of the student leaders explained how the action committees were not well integrated early in the process,

> At the very beginning, we were very separated from one another. An action committee is, "I'll deal with my faculty and you deal with your faculty." But we support each other's activities. We did work together for the National March. We don't fear the debate, the difference. We don't fear trying to convince each other. We are in the university. There are a lot of ideas. There is a lot of debate. We like to argue with each other.

While the action committees were united under the struggle of defending a public education, they were able to maintain their difference by focusing on their own specific grievances and holding their own activities. However, it would be inaccurate to say that the creation of action committees meant that older political tensions between other political organizations and parties did not in some way shape the ongoing formation of the action committees, and subsequently, their unfolding camp identities. For instance, a student in the Law School describes the overlap between the socialist organizations and action committees,

> There is a lot of overlap in the Education, Humanities, and Social Sciences, generally. For us, there is not. I don't think anyone in our action committee is currently a member of a political group or the main political parties. Some members were part of the political groups as undergrads, which helped us a little, it helped our rep a bit to have students that were part of them. They already know each other and know who they are dealing with instead of having a bunch of people no one knows. There is a lot of overlap in other action committees, which creates, I don't know, a suspicion? You might suspect their actions a little bit more, be weary of their actions. You take into consideration the fact they are part of a political group and you think, are they making these decision based on what they think about, what they stand for when speaking for their action committee or are they speaking for their political groups? They have been working together for a longer time than the action committees. And most of the students that are in these political groups are the ones that created and organized the action committees, so they had a lot of influence in the strike. These groups did not stop existing during the strikes,

> they were just part of the action committees. So, they were present all the time and you know who they are. At times, a few decisions could tell they were going together as a group from their political organization, rather than the action committee. That was something we were able to manage.

The formation of action committees was one of the most important organizational aspects of the occupation in terms of the division of labor, but also played a vital role in the spatial organization of the occupation. The action committees served as a means to organize (and include) students from all the major colleges on campus and to grow the movement in terms of mobilization.

This particular organizational form is not novel for social movements; but rather can be found in various movements and locations over the course of history, such as the US direct action movement of the 1960s and 1970s (Epstein 1991; Juris 2008), early anarchist groups (Epstein 1991; Foster 2003), and contemporary examples, such as ACT UP in the late 1980s (Reed 2005), the Battle of Seattle in 1999 (Reed 2005), the World Social Forum in the early 2000s (Juris 2008), and most recently, the Occupy movement.

This style of organization—referred to as "action-committees" or "affinity groups"—is defined as small autonomous groups who are linked to one another through ideology, lifestyle, workplace, or friendship, with the purpose of being present for one specific protest action and generally disbanding afterwards (Day 2007; Epstein 1991; Gillham and Marx 2000; Gillham and Noakes 2007). These autonomous groups are also organized into larger coordinated clusters to ensure representativeness for each group in the broader movement (Gillham and Noakes 2008; Juris 2008; Routledge 2000). Although the movement is based on a consensus decision-making model, the specifics of the tactics of each individual affinity group would be left unreported (Gillham and Marx 2000).

This style of organization provides several benefits to movements. One benefit is increased flexibility during protest actions due to the small size of the group, making it easier to

communicate, organize, and coordinate (Routledge 2000). Another benefit is higher levels of trust among protesters, which may lead to higher risk involvement and longer time commitments (Clark and Themudo 2005). Lastly, the decentralized nature of this organizational style means a lack of visible leadership; therefore, making infiltration by the police or government more difficult (Routledge 2000).

However, there are also consequences to this organizational form. The diffuse networks require a considerable amount of communication, which may require the use of new media technology, which may make the movement more vulnerable to surveillance by government and police (Juris 2008). Also, given the autonomy of the affinity groups there is the potential for groups to engage in actions not formally approved by the larger movement; however, still attributed to the movement. For example, during one particular protest action of the AIDS activist group ACT UP at St. Patrick's Cathedral, a member of one affinity group crumbled a communion wafer onto the floor, which resulted in a huge backlash against the whole movement despite the fact that this was the action of one individual from one of the many affinity groups. For contemporary movements, this consequence may be amplified due to innovative methods of message distribution, such as new media technology. In decentralized movements, it is already difficult to control the message; however, with increased access to social media platforms such as Facebook and Twitter, it is far simpler to distribute a particular affinity groups message in a matter of seconds. Consider the ACT UP incident at St. Patrick's Cathedral. This incident took place in the late 1990s prior to the proliferation of cellphones, smart phones, and social media. Now, the potential to distribute a message or engage in an action not approved or representative of the larger movement is quite easy.

Although past and present movements have utilized a similar organizational, it was not anticipated that the action committees would transform into distinct camp identities with names, logos, t-shirts, and barricades. In other words, the work accomplished by this organizational style was not enough. Thus, the questions remain about how and why the campsites associated with each action committee went further to develop a distinct camp identity with different camp cultures that were elaborated through various cultural expressions. Furthermore, most of the existing research on the use of affinity groups in protest focuses on one-off events; therefore, this case offers interesting insight on how activists manage high levels of differentiation and a non-hierarchical organizational style over an indefinite period of time—in this case for 62 days.

The Origin Story

The most popular origin story associated with the naming of the first two camps is that a university security guard was responsible for the initial naming of Camp Vietnam and Camp Disney, as he compared his own experience of being stationed at both gates. One of the student leaders described the origin of the first two camp names,

> The names came from a policeman. He was always at the main gate, but then he was sent behind the university where there were very few police and there was no confrontation. And he said to one student, "Oh that place is like Vietnam and here is like Disney." And we began to joke about that and then other gates developed their own names.

The students found a meaningful difference in this assessment and adopted these two camp names, proudly. The other camps—Camp Beverly Hills, Camp Sparta, The Tribe, and The Middle East were named internally; however, there is not a clear story about exactly who named each camp.

Not all camps were initially pleased with their names. At first, the Law School students were not pleased with being dubbed Camp Beverly Hills by the other students, given the connotations associated with the name. However, in good humor, they decided to accept the

name, even referring to their camp as Camp Beverly Hills after the strike. Similarly, the Natural Science students also accepted their name with some trepidation as Camp Disney conveyed some negative connotations. Regardless, the camping students accepted the name, even going to the extent to designing their barricade to look like the Disney castle and marching through campus dressed as Disney characters.

Only several days into the occupation, all six campsites developed distinctive identities, derived from various characteristics of the camps—such as demographics of the students, their ideology and preferences for action, and how they organized themselves on a daily basis. Despite the origin of the naming process, students recognized the distinctions between the camps based on their names.

The Camps

Camp Vietnam

The Humanities camp was located at the primary transportation gate of the Rio Piedras campus. According to the university, the College of Humanities includes Fine Arts, Drama, Hispanic Studies, Philosophy, History, English, Foreign Languages, Literature, and Music. During the occupation, it was generally students from these departments that camped at this gate; however, there were some students from other disciplines who chose to camp at Vietnam.

While the initial naming of Camp Vietnam came from a police officer describing the chaos of the Humanities gate in direct comparison to the calm of the Natural Sciences gate, this did not illuminate the full range of connotations that derived out of this naming system. For instance, there was something about the name, "Camp Vietnam" that resonated not only with the occupants of that camp, but also with other five camps, in a way that they continued to refer to the camp by the name Vietnam over the course of 62 days. In my interviews, students

illuminated four explanations for why the Humanities camp was named Camp Vietnam—including, the chaos of the gate, the rugged day-to-day experience, preference for confrontational tactics, and the cultural reference of Vietnam.

Particularly from the outside, the Humanities camp appeared to be primary site of the occupation, as it was the primary transportation gate of the university. The recognition of this gate as the primary gate, ferried in from the existing structures, meant that this was the location where a majority of supporters and media outlets could be found.

Since this was the primary gate, a majority of the media focused their coverage on this gate, as well as there were higher numbers of both police and supporters present at this gate. Thus, the Humanities gate was the primary site of confrontation that took place between police, community supporters, and students. Early into the occupation, one of the most well known confrontations broke out between several police officers and a student's father. As it became clear that the students would occupy the university indefinitely, the government began enforcing changes they hoped would force the students out of the campus. First, they cut water and power services to the campus, which mostly went unnoticed by the broader community. That was, until the attack by the police on a student's father. Many of the students inside of the occupation had alerted to their families about the loss of water and power—or put more simply, their ability to prepare food. In response, many parents began bringing food to their children, which they passed through the iron gates. Once the administration noticed this was taking place, they decided to put pressure on the police force to prevent any exchange of goods through the gates of the campus. Thus, when this particular father arrived to deliver food to his son, the police proceeding to arrest him. However, the arrest was videotaped on a cellphone by a nearby supporter, which was then circulated through social media. The video caught the attention of the public, mostly because of

the unwarranted show of force demonstrated by the police during the arrest. These confrontations, in conjunction to the presence of media outlets, made Camp Vietnam the primary gate of the occupation.

The chaos of the main gate and the day-to-day experiences of the Humanities camp is what led to the camp being consistently referred to as Camp Vietnam. A journalist for *Radio Huelga* described what the camp looked like and how this mapped onto the name of Vietnam,

> Well, Vietnam, I think its definitely about the fact that since they were always talking about them in the press as those wild people, those insurgents who are taking the university. But Vietnam was also how they lived, since you have the strikers there and when it was raining, there was massive water and people were just smoking and trying to get by and trying to organize for the next day and just get things done.

In this way, student strikers and supporters began to draw comparisons between the occupation and the Vietnam War. The comparisons went even further, particularly making comparisons regarding the role of the United States in the Vietnam War, which was described by a student from the social sciences,

> In the Humanities, the name Vietnam was something to be proud of. You know, in the United States, Vietnam is not a good thing. It is not something that Americans want to remember, but in Puerto Rico, it has a different context and connotation to talk about Vietnam. Because during the student movement [of the 1970s], during the fight against the war in Vietnam, those that led us from Puerto Rico, weren't only against the war, they were for the Vietnamese. They identified themselves with the people of Vietnam and they were unconditionally against the United States. So, being from Vietnam, that means you fight to the end.

Similarly, the Humanities students were known for preferring more confrontational tactics. They were described by a Law Student as being "not aggressive or violent, but they challenge the structures more then we do…they are more rebel and passionate." Early in the occupation, the students discussed what they would do if the administration attempted to enter the university, as they had threatened. In the Vietnam camp, students expressed the desire to stay and fight for the university, even if this meant risking arrest or possible injury—which contrasted with other

camps, such as Beverly Hills and Disney. A student in the Humanities camp spoke about the relationship between the threats experienced by the students at the gate and their preference for more radical tactics, "Vietnam was the main gate, always facing the threat of police. We were the first to propose radical measures, because we were the ones suffering the threat." Similarly, a faculty member from the History department and leader of the teacher's union explained, "I know the gate of Humanities was called Vietnam because they were like the militant ones saying, "We aren't going to defend this sunshine hippie shit."

Camp Sparta

The Social Science camp was located near the primary transportation gate at the front of the campus. The College of Social Sciences includes Anthropology, Political Science, Economics, Geography, Psychology, Labor Relations, Sociology, and Social Work. However, given the proximity of the Social Science buildings with the Business Administration buildings, this camp was occupied by members of both colleges.

The Social Science camp earned the name Camp Sparta, as they were perceived to be the "soldiers" of the strike. They were similarly described as also challenging the structures more in comparison to the Law School and preferred more confrontational tactics. A student from Camp Sparta described the camp dynamics that led to its name,

> Sparta was from the movie *300*, if I'm not mistaken. Because it concerns itself with the struggle and they are here to fight. They will always be at the forefront of the fight and struggle. They concern themselves with talking about revolution or talking about social struggle or political struggle.

One student suggested their name was derived from the film, *300*—a movie about 300 Spartans battling against a Persian army of 300,000. A journalist for *Radio Huelga* remarked, quite disparagingly, "It was sort of an antagonistic way to say, 'Ah, we are warriors. We are prepared.' But they took it from the movie *300*. Yeah, literally, it came out of the movie *300*." It was

suggested that the students in Camp Sparta were akin to the 300 Spartans in the film battling a Persian army of 300,000—or in other words, a David and Goliath type battle.

Initially, it was difficult for me to understand the differences between Camp Vietnam and Camp Sparta, as they were often referred to as being quite similar, but yet very distinct from Camp Beverly Hills and Camp Disney. A Humanities student articulated the primary difference between Camp Vietnam and Camp Sparta, "Sparta were the soldiers of the radical measures. For example, in the Humanities, you find students who say, 'I think action is necessary, but I don't want to do it personally.' So, Sparta were more willing to do the actions beyond that." Or in other words, the Humanities students were radical in a theoretical sense; whereas, the Social Science students were radical in actions.

Camp Disney

The Natural Sciences camp was located at the back of campus. According to the university, the College of Natural Sciences includes Biology, Chemistry, Computer Science, Mathematics, and Physics. In addition, some of the students from the Business School also chose to camp with in Natural Sciences. The Natural Sciences camp became known as Camp Disney or Disneyland, based on a comment made by a police officer that was overheard by the students. The differences captured by the comment divided the campus into a front and back—Vietnam versus Disney. This cultural distinction was based on the differences in camp atmosphere, their social composition, and preference for protest actions.

Simply, the difference between the atmospheres of Vietnam versus Disney was first and foremost about the differential locations of the camp. Located at a transportation gate at the back of campus, Camp Disney was afforded an atmosphere that was calm and laidback. A student from the Business School who chose to camp with Disney described this dynamic,

> In the Natural Sciences, it was very laid back with an absence of cameras. There was always tension in the university, always the threat of police entrance. In the night, there were helicopters going around the campus. But I believe the absence of cameras and media made it a more comfortable space. We were a very intimate group. We knew each other very well.

The laidback nature of the camp was the original reason the camp earned the name Disney; however, the name became associated with other characteristics in the camp. In this sense, students utilized the connotation of Disney to negatively suggest that the Natural Sciences camp was "the happiest place on earth," a sanitized and fantastical display of protest.

The association of Camp Disney as a sanitized form of protest was also related to the perceived naïveté of the students in the camp by the Humanities and Social Sciences. They described their "naïveté" in two ways. One, they commented on their preference for non-confrontational tactics, which could be attributed to their lack of past participation in strikes at the university. A Humanities student described the camp, "Disney wanted everything to be beautiful. Yeah, we wanted everything to be beautiful too, but that can't happen. They wanted to be here, but they weren't experimental." Or in other words, the students at Disney did not want to "get their hands dirty." Mostly, this perception came from the more radical students who felt that choosing non-confrontational tactics wasn't a realistic form of protest. For instance, it was expected that students from the back of campus were less likely to engage in confrontations with the police. In addition, the lack of participation in the past from students in the Natural Sciences meant there were more students in the camp that were first-time activists, which may have also contributed to the conceptualization of the camp as naïve. However, many of the students that camped in Disney saw their naïveté as strength, in terms of not being set in their ways in the way they think about protest. For instance, a journalist who spent time in the camp said, "The Natural Sciences camp was a place where very few people were pure in their political ideologies." Or in

other words, the student was commenting on the fact that many of those camping in Camp Disney were not people who held steadfast to political beliefs, but rather agreed with the reason for the strike broadly. They did not self-identify as socialists or statehooders, but rather, as members of the Natural Science action committee concerned with defending the right to study.

While the police officer that mentioned Disneyland in reference to the difference between the Humanities and Natural Science camp may have simply been remarking on the difference in their atmospheres; however, the name was durable and long lasting. Referring to the camp as Disney by others inside the occupation was a negative connotation, particularly within the context of the occupation and within the context of Puerto Rico. Therefore, the students in the Natural Science camp had to navigate their camp identity. The choice has to be made about whether or not to allow for a negative connotation based on your own beliefs and preference for protest, or rather, to appropriate the name for your own use. A student from Camp Sparta describes the ways in which Camp Disney used their name to convey different perspective from the rest of the occupation,

> Well, they ironically embraced their name. You know, they built a castle at the campsite? And but, that camp was composed of students from Business and Natural Sciences, which are traditionally conservative faculties in the university, which contradicts with having people committed to the struggle. But these people were very committed. They think there should be another way of looking at [the strike] because of where they come from. They embrace their role. They are different.

Recognizing that each camp has different strengths, the students at Camp Disney took advantage of their difference, which they highlighted through the performance of a Disney parade around campus. A faculty member from History remarked, "But they adopted the name proudly because they told me they put on costumes like Mickey Mouse and Snow White and they came marching through all the other gates with their costumes." The rationale for the parade, as told by members of the camp, was to raise the spirits of the other camps, after some difficult days of failed

negotiations with the administration and bad weather. Camp Disney felt one thing they could contribute to the overall strike was to use their camp identity to make everyone laugh, by creating makeshift or DIY costumes and performing Disney characters. In this way, the camp was able to frame their identity in a positive way. While they may not be strongly associated with political ideologies, they were in support of the strike and innovative in terms of their approaches to protest.

Camp Beverly Hills

The Law School was also located at one of the gates at the back of the campus. The Law School earned the nickname, Camp Beverly Hills. Generally, all students, including those in Camp Beverly Hills, recognized that the students were generally from different backgrounds the rest of the students at the UPR. One of the Law students described the type of student present in the college, "We are a more professional school. We have an average age of older students. And our school is composed of different people from different backgrounds. Generally, you have a background that is more affluent financially than other students." He continues to explain how the diversity within the camp leads to more neutral political beliefs and preferences for less radical tactics.

> We come from diverse backgrounds. I'm from finance, but there are a lot of students who come from literature or music who have an art background. So, we have a diverse student body here that studies law. That might have to do with why our camp was a little bit more neutral, because we are diverse within ourselves.

Related to their older, affluent, and more conservative demographic, the Law School was also recognized as preferring to avoid confrontational tactics. Early in the strike, they stated they were proponents of nonviolent resistance; thus, if a confrontation between the police and students were to happen, they would likely not fight back as to avoid arrest or violence. "We are more aware of the consequences and try to work around them," explained a Law student, "We

challenge them by tipping under the toes of what we can and can't do. We take that into consideration when we decide on our activities." Or in other words, Law students, not surprisingly, preferred tactics that focused on social change through legal mechanisms. A preference for legal tactics might imply it is unnecessary to occupy the campus; however, the law students recognized the need for solidarity among the students in support of an occupation. Going on strike—or, put more simply, shutting down the university system was important to force the administration into negotiations. Lastly, there was the sense that the differences between the students was a strength, in that the Law students could focus on the legal aspects of the protest whereas, the Humanities students could focus on confrontational tactics and defending the main gate of the university.

The primary connotation of the camp name Beverly Hills was that of privilege. This assessment appeared strongest in the radical camps—such as Humanities and Social Sciences. For example, a student in the Humanities camp conveyed resentment at the privileged affections of the law students. "Beverly Hills was the gate where all the privilege took place. They eat caviar. They eat sushi." The incident in which the law students were having sushi for lunch became a symbolic representation of their privilege. Most camps had to rely upon members of the community, particularly among members of their field, to supply food and other resources. Those providing food and resources to Camp Beverly Hills were lawyers and members of the Bar Association. Therefore, it is not completely unexpected that lawyers may bring over leftover catering from their offices to the students. Regardless of the specifics of exactly how and why student strikers were eating sushi or caviar at their camp, it is clear this visual became representative of the social class privilege of the law students. A student from Camp Sparta spoke about these distinctions:

> It's a difference of class difference, social class difference. Because students from the Business School or Natural Sciences or the Law School usually come from different social classes and have a different outlook on society than you get in Social Sciences. They [law students] are not undergraduate students, as the rest of the movement, so they consider themselves to be above the others.

Not surprisingly, this name was not chosen by the law students but rather was given by students from other camps. Similar to Camp Disney, the law students came to accept their name, as illustrated by one of the members of Camp Beverly Hills, "We were Beverly Hills. A name not appointed by us (laughter). But we took it as our own, because we don't have a problem with it. We understand the nature of the game, the nature of different schools have different methods of action. And that's a principal thing." While Camp Disney appropriated their name in obvious ways, such as the parade of Disney characters; Camp Beverly Hills seemed to tolerate their name recognizing the need for difference.

The Tribe

The School of Education was located on the side of campus, near the Communications and Education buildings. The School of Education was constituted mostly of undergraduate and graduate students; however, some students from the nearby high school also participated in the occupation. Due to the fact that the School of Education trains students from other colleges to work as teachers (e.g., Literature, Mathematics), some students chose to align with the camp of their initial discipline. The Education camp became know as *La Triba* or The Tribe.

The camp earned this named mostly based on the strict and ritualistic style of organization in the camp. A Sociology student described the camp dynamic,

> The Education School called themselves The Tribe. I think that camp really developed a strong community. It's also really a working class struggle. Most students have to work while in school and their prospects in life are to work in the public schools. So, they face the strike in a different way.

It was the connotation of a strong clan or tribe that most students referenced when describing the characteristics of the camp. Even Miriam, who became known as a tribal chief of sorts, noted the importance for having strong organization within the camp. She claimed that due to the fact that a majority of the students were younger, she, as a graduate student, took on a role of leadership, despite an overarching goal of producing a leaderless movement.

Beyond the organization, it appeared that the more cited reason for the name of the camp was based on the strong leadership of an older female student—often referred to as "the matriarch." However, it seemed people were reluctant to talk about this dynamic. In an interview with one of the student leaders, I was introduced to one of his friends who made a joke about the Education camp. The student leader informed me that his friend was part of the Education camp, which was run by their chief named Miriam. When I inquired as to what he meant by called her the "chief" of the camp, his friend spoke up and said, "Yes, she was, well, she was very matriarchal with all the young Education students during the strike at the camp." At this point in time, they both laughed and engaged in a short conversation. After his friend from the Education camp departed, the student leader, still laughing, said to me, "I wasn't going to tell you about her." When I had the opportunity to interview Miriam, the "matriarchal chief" of The Tribe, she spoke about being referred to in this way not as a gendered notion as much as an age issue.

While it is clear that gender played an interesting dynamic in this camp, as well as the overall occupation; it is beyond the scope of my dissertation. However, the connotation of a tribe brings to mind tribes of indigenous cultures or even, the popular culture television show, *Survivor*. In this way, the name, chosen by the members of the camp in contrast to the other camps, communicates a strong sense of kinship run by a tribal chief in which the students of the camp were proud to display to others.

The Middle East

The Fine Arts camp was located on the side of campus, near the Fine Arts building and the Urban Planning building. However, the Fine Arts camp was mostly comprised of students from Architecture and Planning, rather than Fine Arts. A majority of the Fine Arts students, such as drama or music students camped with the Humanities students in Camp Vietnam. The camp was known as *Oriente Medio* or the Middle East.

The Architecture students dubbed their camp as the Middle East; however, they grappled some with the proper naming. A journalist for *Radio Huelga* explains their name, "It is Middle East. At first they wanted to be called Afghanistan, but they decided to be more broad and include the entire region." The rationale for the naming was to convey its distance from the rest of the students and occupation. As one of the Camp Vietnam students explained: "The Architecture gate was Middle East. That's a geographic thing. We joke about it because the Architecture gate had to borrow people from other colleges to remain strong."

However, there is also some evidence that the name was derived from the fact that the Fine Arts students were not as integrated into the overall decision-making of the occupation. They were rarely seen or heard from, and in some sense, seen as apolitical in their approach, by others. A Sociology student commented on this distance,

> Yes, the Middle East. It was *Bellas Artes* [Fine Arts], which are part of the Humanities faculty, but their department is far, so far from the main gate faculty that they formed their own group. It was a camp with less political participation and intervention; less political organizations were present there.

However, the political distance was not by happenstance, but rather, it was insisted on by the students in the camp from the beginning on the occupation. One of the student leaders described this dynamic,

> In the Belles Artes camp, they were a camp of people who didn't feel like they are part of other camps. Like apolitical you know and they didn't want anyone there from a political organization. And we were trying to talk with them, but they didn't want to talk about it. They actually wrote a manifest. I never saw it, but it was for participating in the meeting. They were not going to allow any member of any political organization to be part of it.

Similar to the law students, there is a question about why these students would build a camp given their predilection for apolitical organization; however, in the same way, the students knew it was necessary to present overall solidarity of the movement, representing all sectors of the student body. Thus, the Architecture students built a camp in their own way and sought to maintain distance from the existing politics on the island and of the strike.

Overall, it was this dynamic of camp difference that many students used to explain their success and only victory in the history of the UPR student strikes. The different camps distinguished mostly by their ideological approaches to protest, such as whether they preferred more radical and confrontation tactics (such as Camp Vietnam and Sparta) or not (such as Camp Disney and Beverly Hills). Other distinctions were based on demographic differences such as social class and privilege (such as Beverly Hills), organizational structure (such as The Tribe), and physical and political distance from the overall occupation (such as The Middle East). However, the overarching idea that the students encourage difference acted as a binding agent or glue that helped keep students together, working for the same general grievances and goals.

Choice of Camp

It was not only that there were different camps for students from different academic disciplines to camp, but also that students were able to *choose* which camp they participated with during the occupation. While it was rare, there were some students who chose to camp outside of their academic discipline.

One of the major reasons students stated for choosing a different camp other than their assigned academic discipline was due to what was referred to as "ideological differences" or conflicting preferences for protest action. For example, one of the student leaders, a graduate student in the Education School chose to camp with the Humanities students. When I asked him why he made this decision, he told me, "I was a founder of the Education committee when it first formed, a year before the start of the strike. But I feel that I am part of the Humanities, their aim and diversity. I feel more part of it. Education are, in some ways, more conservative too." In the context of our conversation, the student leader was referencing the different preferences for tactics. While the Education School was not well known for their tactics, they were in fact seen as less radical than Camp Vietnam and Camp Sparta. Thus, in this way, the student leader, also a member of the prominent socialist organizations of the strike found it more in line with this approach to protest to camp with those like him.

Related to ideological differences was also the fact that students chose to camp with others who had similar grievances, such as the case of the drama students. The drama department is technically part of the College of Humanities; however, the Fine Arts building was located in close proximity to a transportation gate on the side of the campus. Many of the artists, such as the drama students, decided to camp with the Humanities students instead of the Architecture students, whom occupied the Fine Arts camp.

Lastly, there were other reasons not necessarily associated with political reasons, but rather more personal preferences. A student majoring in Business Administration decided to camp with the Natural Sciences. When I inquired about his decision, he stated,

> Because, they were friends of mine. But here in Social Sciences were some members of the Business faculty camping alongside with Social Sciences. But I was in Natural Sciences, there were like good friends of mine. It was better for me. It was comfortable.

Others cited personality differences, as evidenced by the choice to camp outside of the Education School, "Yes, for me it was like, in order to work in some way, where the Humanities were, a lot of people couldn't handle the way that Miriam ran the camp. She is sweet. I feel bad about saying it. Sometimes its just personality differences." Other examples were based on the length of the weekly meetings for each action-committee, as some suggested that the long meetings that took place in the Social Sciences were enough to push them to camp with the Education School.

These high levels of differentiation, by camp, during the occupation produced an environment in which power was dispersed among the different camps. In fact, students attributed much of their success to the debate and dialogue that was produced by the opinions of diverse groups, as well as camp autonomy—as each camp was able to make decision distinct from other camps in terms of how to maintain their camp and the events in which they held at their camp. However, this level of differentiation and autonomy was not always easy to maintain. There were moments of conflict between the camps that illuminated the ways in which difference could have led to fragmentation.

The Conflict of the Barricades

One of the first conflicts that took place between the camps early into the occupation was the decision about whether or not to build barricades at each of the major gates (or in other words, at each campsite) to protect the students from the entry of the administration or police. Despite the non-confrontational policy of the university, the students expressed a daily fear of confrontation. Most of this fear was derived from the fact that Chancellor Ana H. Guadalupe had informed the public she would break up the strike no matter what it took. Whether or not this is hearsay, the students operated under this mode of thinking, which informed their decision-making processes. The decision to build barricades was not without contention. In daily campus

assemblies, a debate formed primarily between Vietnam and Sparta on one side and Beverly Hills on the other side.

The Law School preferred not to build a barricade, due to the ways in which they felt a barricade conveyed a sense of confrontation to outsiders. They felt the obtrusive and "trashy" looking barricades would convey a sense of confrontation to outsiders typically associated with socialist and independence groups on the island. Given the students' decision-making process of participatory democracy by the majority, the students at each camp and by camps voted and the majority voted that each camp should build a barricade, as one camp not building a barricade would leave the rest of the occupation vulnerable to entry. The Law School complied with the vote.

Barricades served both practical and symbolic purposes. If the students were concerned with keeping the administration and police officers out of the campus, it seems that the chain and lock, as had been used in the past, would suffice—particularly given the policy of non-confrontation. Therefore, it brings to question why students felt the need to create barricades at each gate. However, if on the other hand, students were concerned about the threats made by administration that they would do whatever is necessary to break the strike, it is clear that a majority of the barricades were not sufficient to stop, say a backhoe from removing the gates and plowing over the created barricade. So while it is somewhat easy to recognize the practical necessity of building the barricades, there is also a highly symbolic aspect of *how* each camp chose to build their own barricade.

The barricades allowed for symbolic differentiation, as each campsite was able to *design* their barricade in a way that felt appropriate to their camp identity. When the decision was made that each camp was required to build a barricade, the initial intention was not to create symbols

that distinguished each campsite, but rather simply to allow for a sense of autonomy and differentiation for each camp. A law student spoke about the difference in the broad differences in the barricades, "Since each action-committee had a different discourse, the discourse is shown and presented in the different camps, per se how they address the difference for instance with the barricades." It should also be noted that each camp was restricted to the existing materials on campus to build the barricades, such as building supplies, dumpsters, and tree prawns.

The most talked about barricade of the occupation was that of the Fine Arts/Architecture gate. A journalist with the radio station, *Radio Huelga*, describes the symbolic nature of the barricade at the Fine Arts camp, "It had the most artistic of all barricades. It wasn't logistically done. It was a symbolic gate. It was like art is literally a barricade that keeps you from entering. Some camps actually used [barricades] the way they are supposed to be used, but in the Belles Artes gate, they didn't." Similarly, a Law student commented, "It was the most interesting barricade at the School of the Arts. It wasn't really holding anything; police could have come in and just run over it, no problem whatsoever. But it was just, that they were telling the administration, you can not come in." In this sense, students recognized that the barricades fulfilled both a physical and symbol role in the occupation. The barricade was described as aesthetically pleasing and "an expression in and of itself, incorporating wood and brick and tubes and pipes" (Figure 17).

Figure 17. Photograph of the barricade at the Middle East camp (Fine Arts/Architecture). Photo Credit: Jose Alexis Narvaez Colon (https://www.flickr.com/photos/42139838@N07/4632429079).

On the other hand, Camp Vietnam and Sparta chose to build barricades that conveyed their "spirit" of radicalism and confrontation. The barricade was described by a student in the Law School, "The Sparta barricade (Figure 18) was a really strong barricade, it was kind of, well, disorganized and sort of chaotic. There were just things piled up in front of the gate and it was, you could look at it and you could feel the violence that was in the movement. The Vietnam barricade (Figure 19) was similar to Social Sciences." Both barricades utilized existing resources on campus, such as desks from classrooms, dumpsters, and other construction

Figure 18. Photograph of the barricade at Camp Sparta (Social Sciences).
Photo Credit: Javier Bosques (http://javierbosques.com/estuidantes/)

Figure 19. Photograph of the barricade at Camp Vietnam (Humanities).
Photo Courtesy of Indymediapr at (http://pr.indymedia.org/news/2010/04/42632.php)

equipment they found nearby their gate location. For both camps, they did not set out to simply convey an image of radicalism in a symbolic fashion, but rather situated in a very real threat that the administration or police may attempt to enter the camps at any given time. In other words, their barricades would create an obstacle to entry, while also conveying their preference to defend the university.

A Humanities student described the Tribe's barricade as, "…very similar to Humanities and the other ones, they had worked together, they moved stuff together. They had this trash can in front of the gate (on the inside) and they threw a lot of stuff around it." Others spoke about the connection between the name, The Tribe, and their use of bamboo and tropical prawns creating a barricade that looked as if it could have been part of the set of the show, *Survivor*. The barricade served the purpose of prohibiting entry of administration and police, while also providing a sense of privacy as the barricade kept most outsiders from seeing inside the gate (Figure 20).

Figure 20. Photograph of the barricade at The Tribe (Education). Unknown Photo Credit.

In contrast to the barricades of Vietnam, Sparta, and The Tribe, the Natural Sciences built a barricade that was less practical and more symbolic. At first, the barricade was simple. A student from the Law School described, "they made a castle out of cardboard that said Disney World on top and decorated it." However, as time passed, the camp continued to build their barricade to create additional protection at the gate. A student from the Natural Sciences described,

> In Natural Sciences, people tend to be more scientific. It was very hard to develop, but what we did was get a 100-pound star from the academic building for decoration. But we put it up on some concrete blocks. So, if the guards try to enter, they would get hit with the star. It was consciously prepared to work like that.

Given their location at the back of campus, few pictures exist of Camp Disney; however, one picture of the Disney barricade (Figure 21) shows the metal components of the decorative star that the students worked together to build their barricade.

Figure 21. Photograph of the barricade at Camp Disney (Natural Science).
Photo Credit: Javier Bosques (http://javierbosques.com/estuidantes/)

Lastly, the Law School built a very different type of barricade to signal their difference from the other camps.

> Our camp, we worked differently. We don't want to damage property. We don't spray-paint, we don't tag. We used chalk to write on the walls and all of that. That's what we did. We had this big wall and we made these drawings and we put messages on them about our everyday actions. And that's how we made the camp our own…We let people know our approach was a different approach and the barricade was just us. We hold the entrance ourselves. It was subject to a lot of criticism and joking around, but it was important that we express our action, to express our intent.

In this way, the Law School, despite feeling as if they had to build a barricade against their wishes, were able to exercise their individuality and convey their own approach to the occupation. By stating that they were the Beverly Hills barricade brings to mind the notion of civil disobedience, which was a preference for students in the Law School. However, it is also obvious that if the administration or police wanted to enter the campus, they would not be blocked by any physical objects, but would instead have to deal with physically moving human bodies creating a visual they would unlikely risk being captured on film.

Not only did this open structure enable the diversity of opinions, but it also smoothed away this tension by allowing for each group to individually demonstrate its distinct identity and approach. Later, the idea of the barricades would become a joke that conveyed information about how the camps were differentiated. Or, as a Natural Sciences student said, "The barricades represent the idiosyncrasy and the beliefs of that certain gate."

Tensions Between Camps

This diversity and difference within the occupation allowed broad participation that helped to eclipse past political divisions. The display and performance of different camp identities enabled an independence and individuality of different groups while still complying with the overall consensus of the movement, such as in the case of the barricades. However,

navigating these differences over the course of an occupation requires consistent management and negotiation.

Arguments between different activist groups can be difficult to manage, particularly for activists participating in a protest that lasts 24-hours a day extending over the course of several weeks. Occupation, as a style of protest, requires activists to remain in close quarters with one another for an elongated period of time. Daily, they deal with any number of shifting factors—such as interaction with one another, administration, and police, a 24-hour news cycle and observation by the media, and even, uncertain weather elements. Thus, the environment of an occupation creates a challenging environment that may contribute to creating a tense environment.

In the case of the UPR occupation, these tensions were heightened by the fact that students were divided into different action committees based on academic discipline. While making difficult decisions, differing opinions between the gates became a source of tension and frustration. For instance, daily assemblies within each camp and daily *plenos*, which gathered all the camps together, resulted in long discussions over even simple issues, such as where the smoking section on campus should be located. A student from the Business School described these tensions, "There was a lot of tension between the gates. We didn't look for it, but we did create a division between the various ideologies." Similarly, a journalist from *Radio Huelga* described his experiences of providing media coverage of the happenings in each camp and the hostile environment he observed,

> There was a lot of tension building up for different reasons. They were creating *Lord of the Flies* or something like that. I use that metaphor all the time when I was inside. By like the third or fourth week, I was on *Radio Huelga* and we were doing our rounds, talking to people from the committees to help programming. And we notice a lot of animosities from each camp. We were like, 'What the hell is going on here? They are becoming extremely belligerent unnecessarily.' I think it was fueled by their fears…It

> became very personal. They [the other camps] would say, 'We have to keep an eye on the Law students because they are going to betray us, sell us out.' There were other things too. Like, 'These guys are going to blow something up,' referencing the more radical camps. So there was a lot of mistrust fueled in each camp."

Fear and distrust played a role in fueling the tensions between the camps based upon ideological differences and preferences for protest actions. For instance, the assumption that the Law School would "sell out" or betray the others was the byproduct of an ideological approach to protest that favors civil disobedience and legal mechanisms rather than more confrontational tactics. And similarly, the radical approach to protest by the Humanities and Social Science camps provoked mistrust that these students might do something considered overly radical, like blow up a building. Although differentiated camp identities enabled autonomy and individuality, it also produced unintended consequences internally. In contrast to top-down protest actions that utilize a hierarchical model with strong discipline and few leaders, the non-hierarchical and consensual decision-making model used by the UPR reasserted tensions between groups in terms of *how* to protest. However, the tensions remained, particularly as students from very different perspectives lived together for the duration of 62-days, facing unknown challenges that unfolded in the landscape of the occupation.

Conclusion

As a departure from previous strikes at the University of Puerto Rico, students participating in the 2010 strike organized themselves into action committees. These action committees, organized with the intention of ensuring that the voices of different academic disciplines would be represented in the strike, quickly—and unexpectedly—developed distinctive camp identities from one another. These camp identities illuminated an interesting internal dynamic in the movement, one of diversity while maintaining a sense of solidarity with the movement as a whole. The six distinct camp identities provided the opportunity for a broader

constituency to participate in the movement than in past strikes at the university. The distinct identities of the camps captured meaningful differences between each camp based on their political ideology, preferences for protest actions, daily organization and location of the camp, and demographic differences.

However, not only did students recognize the distinctions between camps based on their camp names or their ideologies, but they also displayed and performed these differences aesthetically. The branding of each camp allowed for students to demonstrate their allegiance to certain camps, or in turn, political ideologies and preferences for protest actions. Not only were students able to demonstrate their solidarity within their specific camp, but they also were able to communicate, overall, the plethora of identities that were present within the movement to outsiders. In addition, the students utilized artistic expression to navigate moments of conflict and disagreement between the camps, as I demonstrated in the conflict of the barricades. While disagreement surrounded the decision on whether or not to barricade, the ultimate decision about *how* to construct the barricade at each camp was a decision left up to each individual camp. Thus, the constructed barricades became aesthetic representations of the ideologies of the different camps. In this way, as the students of the UPR occupation faced a conflict, they were able to use artistic expression to communicate their differences, while also easing any tensions that may have been raised during the process of negotiation in the interest of solidarity.

The conflict of the barricades represented one of the early ways in which the occupying students were able to navigate a conflict through creative expression. However, occupation, particularly over the course of 62 days, requires students to live together day after day. As the occupation unfolded, students would face additional issues to address, as well as decisions to be made about how to handle various confrontations that took place. Making these decisions with

such a diverse group of students demonstrated evidence of infighting between the groups, particularly in the ways the different camps described one another. It was clear that some camps referred to others in condescending ways. These differences were not easily solved simply through the building of different barricades, but infighting was described as a positive consequence of the movement, producing healthy debate and a true democratic ideal.

Throughout the course of the 62-days, tensions between the different camps were difficult to navigate. Maintaining a sense of solidarity amidst the different approaches by each camp was difficult and often led to frustration and resentment between the camps. Ultimately, it would be differences between student activists that led to the fragmentation and dissolution of the movement in the second wave of the movement in March 2011, as described in the chapter on the aftermath. Therefore, it was necessary for the students to find ways in which to alleviate tensions, but also to deal with occupying the university for 24-hours a day for an indefinite time period. In this way, students sought to incorporate artistic expressions to spice up the potentially boring and mundane aspects of indefinite occupation.

CHAPTER VI

OCUP(ARTE): ARTISTIC EXPRESSIONS IN THE UNIVERSITY OF PUERTO RICO STUDENT OCCUPATION OF 2010

"In the 2005 strike, there was no art and it was a very boring strike." –UPR Law Student

Unexpectedly, an art collective referred to as the *Unit of Clown Police* arrive to the main gate of the student-occupied University of Puerto Rico (UPR) at Rio Piedras. Outside of the gates, a line of police officers surround the university with bright blue barricades separating the police from the numerous supporters who arrive daily to demonstrate their solidarity with the student movement. The members of the *Unit of Clown Police* are dressed in black helmets, shirts, pants, and military boots. Some of them carry brooms; others carry plastic brightly colored water guns. But all of them are wearing a bright red clown nose. As they arrive to the university, the members of the *Unit of Clown Police* slowly approach each member of the official police force. One at a time, they place a dog bowl in front of the officers and place dog food in each bowl. The atmosphere is tense, as the "Chief" of the *Unit of Clown Police* orders the police officers to eat the food. For those observing the performance, the message is clear. In the days leading up to the performance, there had been numerous clashes between the official police force and the student protestors. After these clashes—particularly when the police force were seen as abusing their power, police officers responded they were simply following orders. *The Unit of Clown Police* performers were calling attention to the conformity and the lack of interrogation from the police force, insinuating they are no different than dogs that follow orders of their owners.

Art in the Creative Strike

On May 18, 2010, the 27th day of the occupation, a filmmaker from Villalba, Puerto Rico named Raymond O'Brien spent the day documenting the occupation at the UPR. O'Brien edited the footage into a four and a half minute video that was posted to the website Vimeo and distributed on Twitter the following morning. The video, entitled "*1 Universidad: 1 Pueblo*" was widely circulated through social media, such as Facebook and Twitter.

The emotionally moving video footage of the strike paired with the musical arcs of the Icelandic band, Sigur Ros, captures the essence of the strike. The significance of the gates and barricades to protect the occupying students and the confrontations that took place at the sites of entry and exit to the vibrant cultural work and carnival like atmosphere that infused the occupation. From vendors selling piraguas to balloon animals and costumes to representations of Governor Fortuño as Millhouse from *The Simpsons* (Figure 22) to student performances donning photographic masks of the Board of Trustees being quite literally whipped into submission by Governor Fortuño while the sleeping dead President of the Board sits at the front (Figure 23) to the dancing and drums (Figure 24) to musical concerts to flash mob-esque dramatic street performances.

Figure 22. Screenshot from *1 Universidad: 1 Pueblo*.

Figure 22. Screenshot from *1 Universidad: 1 Pueblo*.

Figure 24. Screenshot from *1 Universidad: 1 Pueblo*.

Observing the occupation from afar, I was captivated by the creative expressions that seemingly poured out from every facet of the strike, as demonstrated in O'Brien's video.[14] While students had not anticipated that the occupation would later become nicknamed, "The Creative Strike;" they were intentional about their inclusion of artists and the arts during early preparations. Mostly, art was incorporated as a strategy designed to enhance mobilization. Behind the scenes, socialist organizations spoke about how the inclusion of artistic performances during the occupation would create a desirable atmosphere that would bring more students to the occupation and protest events. Additionally, student activists wanted to include artists in the types of students present in the occupation. Lastly, student activists were aware of the need to garner media attention and in this way, they were sought to create protest events and an atmosphere that were more likely to receive coverage. However, the strategic inclusion of art in

[14] *1 Universidad: 1 Pueblo* by Raymond O'Brien can be found at http://vimeo.com/11865527.

the occupation did not anticipate the centrality of artistic expressions that would unfold as the movement endured over the course of the 62-days.

Initially, the concept of art in protest does not appear to be novel. In fact, there is a long history of art in social movements. Prior research on the role of art in protest has demonstrated the ways in which art acts as a mechanism to produce positive social movement outcomes, such as mobilization and sustained engagement. A majority of this literature demonstrates how art can be utilized to communicate and provide visibility, as well as provokes emotional work around the protest event (Adams 2002; Chaffee 1993; De Sario 2007; Eyerman and Jamison 1998; Halfmann and Young 2010; Jasper 1997; Jordan 2002; Morrison and Isaac 2012; Reed 2005; Roy 2010; Shepard 2011; Taylor, Rupp, and Gamson 2004). Additionally, this literature focuses on the ways in which art is utilized to maintain a sense of solidarity among movement activists (Eyerman and Jamison 1998; Jasper 1997; Reed 2005; Roy 2010). There is a lack of research that focuses on the ways in which artistic expressions can be utilized to demonstrate diversity within the movement, as well as works to navigate these differences.

This chapter explores the "art world" of the 62-day occupation, exploring the various different art forms that were present both inside and outside of the gates of the university. Through a rich description of the various forms of art present at the occupation—street theater and performance art, visual arts, music and radio—I demonstrate how artists and activists of the creative occupation at the university were able to produce a diverse cultural environment. Furthermore, this multiplicity demonstrated the different ways in which activists could participate, while also performing the role of easing tensions that unfolded during the 62-day strike.

Street Theatre and Performance Art

During the occupation, there were several artist collectives and groups that regularly engaged in performances, both inside and outside the gates of the university—namely, the *Los Payasos Policias*, *Papel Machete*, and *Sembrando Conciencia*. While these three do not exhaust the full list of performances that took place over the 62-days, they provide insight into the various ways street theatre was deployed within the movement.

The Unit of Clown Police

Los Payasos Policias or the Unit of Clown Police, see Figure 25, was a makeshift theater collective comprised of ex-students, current students, and the occasional faculty member. Intermittently, the collective would arrive at the gates of the university, dressed in uniforms mimicking that of the police, while donning red clown noses and carrying brooms or water guns (Figure 26). In my interviews, the Clown Police were one of the most frequently mentioned street performers. Despite the fact that most of the people I spoke with mentioned the group or their performances, it was not easy to get a fix on exactly *who* the Clown Police were; however, this was an important part of how they conceptualized their performances.

Describing the individuals who make up the Clown Police, a faculty member from the drama department explains who they are and why they were difficult to pin down,

> I think what they want to show is that they are going to intervene in political action in which their theatrics are going to have an effect but they don't want to be called upon as performers to perform for an activity. So, they want their work to be more meaningful in terms of the specific circumstances. They want to choose their sites. They don't want to trivialize or repeat their actions and become a staple, instead they want to try to make sure what they do is difficult, even for them. But yeah, I'm an honorary member (pulls out a clown nose from her bag and places it on her nose)…Many of my students, well, my older students, were in the performance. The main force is a guy named Israel Lugo who graduated in 1998. They are not going to do interviews in general, because they think that this is a very political and circumstantial action and they do not want to be perceived as a spectacle. There is also a lawyer that works with them and professors from the university that just place a red nose on and know the drill.

Figure 25. Logo for *Payasos de la Policia de Puerto Rico*.

Figure 26. Photo of *Los Payasos Policias* street performance. Photo Courtesy of *Unidad de Operaciones Tacticas de los Payasos Policias* (https://payasopolicia.wordpress.com/2010/04/)

She continues to describe the first performance of the Clown Police and one of their most well known performances.

> The first day he did this before it was a collective, he was standing by a policeman with a brook, sweeping, and miming the policeman. So, it was a very individual action and had a very estranged effect, because the policeman didn't know what to do…The Clown Police performed several times in front of the police. One of the more provocative things is when they did the dog food thing. On the third or fourth day of the strike when things were very tense and the Riot Police were posted at the gates. At one moment, they were all standing there with their gear and everything. So, this group of people came put two signs on either side of the policemen saying, "Beware of Dog." And then they had these little plates of dog food and they put a little plate in front of each police officer. It really got to them. It really made them upset.

A more frequent performance by the group entailed the "Chief" of the Clown Police screaming out ridiculous and outrageous units to the rest of the unit, at which time the unit would proceed to act out the orders. The purpose of the performance was to act out what many people in Puerto Rico—not just in the student movement—had witnessed when violent incidents occurred between the people and the official police force—that of, the contradiction of values and beliefs between the brute forces utilized by the police force and their justification of these actions. Often when the police force was criticized for their individual actions, they would recount with, "I was just following orders." These performances, given their secretive performances, would quickly rally a large crowd to watch.

Generally, the audience laughed at the performances, given the ridiculous orders that the unit would perform. However, the unit was capable of generating a reaction from the police during a specific performance—the performance involving the plates of dog food. During this performance, one police officer began to visibly cry in front of the performers, only to be removed by his supervisor and replaced by another officer. In this way, these performances not only caught the attention of the supporting spectators and students occupying the university, but

also the police force. Overall, the performance was seen as "breaking the tension" of the moment. A Law School student described the dynamics created by the Clown Police,

> They were really just smart at putting down tensions between cops and Riot Police and students in those moments of highest confrontation. You had Riot Police in front of the gates, right there, like 20 of them and you had students over here, like in the 1960s with little flowers in the hands and singing songs to the Riot Police. And so the Clown Police would come in and do their set up and do their show and you would feel a little more at ease. Not only are they criticizing the Riot Police, but also they are playing a role in putting down the tensions. I think they used irony and humor to criticize the police, but if they thought about them being an agent of alleviating the tension between the Riot Police and the students that were there and the media that was there, who were hoping for something to happen. They are genius!

Breaking the tension, or as some referred to as "the harshness of the moment" was also described by a photojournalist,

> It is basically an improvisation. They don't have a script or anything. He has more or less an idea of what he wants to say, it's not set, but its based on the interaction with people and how they interact together. It is probably one of the best-liked manifestations. It had a lot of comedy. It was used to reduce tensions.

Los Payasos Policias were widely recognized for their ability to "break the tension" of the occupation, specifically through their satirical performance that highlighted the transgressions of the official police force.

Papel Machete

Papel Machete, a pre-existing art collective named using a clever play on the words papier mâché and machete create larger than life papier mâché puppets accompanied by a drum corps and protesters carrying signs with slogans (see Figure 27). *Papel Machete* is comprised of a group of ex-students, including students from the 1995 strike, current students, and other community members. The art collective existed before the strike and was involved in other protests on the island, as well as continued to perform after the 62-day occupation not only in protests for the student movements but other protests on the island.

Figure 27. Photograph of *Papel Machete* street performance. (https://mobilizingideas.wordpress.com/2013/06/03/cantos-y-consignas-reconstructing-spaces-of-resistance/)

Papel Machete, like *Los Payasos Policia*, was one of the most well-known and frequently mentioned street theater performances of the occupation. The sheer size and sound of their performances evoked an atmosphere of carnival, as evidenced by a faculty member of the UPR, who was not an active participant in the occupation, "I remember what struck me was *Papel Machete*. These are people who are dressed up with bigger than life heads and puppets. It reminded me of the Festival of San Sebastian, which is the most popular street festival in Old San Juan."

In some ways, *Papel Machete* and their puppets became strongly associated with the strike in that was indicated in the optics of the occupation not only by those familiar with the strike, but also by the people of Puerto Rico, as the group was often featured in the media

coverage of the movement. For instance, a faculty member described how one of *Papel Machete'*s puppets became a leitmotif of the movement,

> It [the puppet of *Papel Machete*] became…well, it showed up at everything. I shouldn't say everything, but the UPR '*se no vende'* puppet, became like a leitmotif is the word I'd use. It was recognizable and visible at most events to the point where you smiled at recognition. It almost became, I guess, well, I presume there were different people behind it, but it almost took on a kind of personality of its own, I think.

While discussing the role-played by *Papel Machete* in the occupation, most students spoke about how the performance engaged their senses and kept them interested in the occupation, particularly at the outset of the occupation. One of the Law students described the groups as, "the group that play music and have these huge puppets. They put up slogans in an artistic way, in a different way. And it grabs a bunch of attention. They were an important part of the strike." Similarly, a student of economics described the first time he saw a performance by *Papel Machete* and its impact.

> In the first round, one dramatization or artistic expression that I liked was on the first day of the strike. I was at the Middle East gate and there were two people with masks of the rectora (chancellor). That was, well, it inspired me to keep me interested in the situation. I remember, it was done by *Papel Machete*. It was very cool to see *Papel Machete* and the message they were delivering. The first moment I saw them, I didn't know it was them. And I was interested. That's important. It was creative. It was different. It was important for the people to see this and to realize you don't need to become leaders. There is another way. That is important.

Papel Machete in some ways mimicked the carnival atmosphere often present in other festivals and celebrations on the island; however, it also marked a departure from prior acts of protest at the university. Additionally, the strong presence of the *Papel Machete* demonstrated different ways for activists to participate in the occupation, as opposed to solely as political actors.

Sembrando Conciencia

One of the most innovative group of artists present in the occupation were referred to as *Sembrando Conciencia* or, loosely translated to Spreading Awareness, which consists of a small

group of men and women who fully painted their mostly bare bodies with symbolic images and messages (see Figure 28). They would move through the crowd using various modern dance moves without making a sound, while carrying more explicit messages on signs. A faculty member of the UPR and performance artist described their style of performance,

> The body painting is, of course, combined with the performance, the movement dance, and to a certain degree, the written text. But the written text is principally the single work and the slow ones. So, it becomes a written text of the violence, the justice, to the privatization, to representation. It is far more interesting to do this. They are demonstrating pretty highly developed skills.

In one particular performance, the members painted their bodies to resemble trees, while carrying signs with words for reflection, dialogue, and analysis. *Sembrando Conciencia*, like *Papel Machete*, were frequently captured in media coverage, due to their colorful presentations and innovative forms. A photojournalist describes the way in which the group captured the attention of observers and journalists, "The body painting was one of the things that was something new to us here. *Sembrando Conciencia*. It captured my attention, because it had never been done here and I think it is a very different way of expressing the strike."

Figure 28. Photograph of *Sembrando Conciencia* street performance. Photo Courtesy of Charlene Jane Gonzalez (http://charlenejanes.blogspot.com/2012/02/paro-nacional-puerto-rico-18mayo2010.html)

Not only did the performance group garner public and media attention through their innovation, but they were also seen as creating a legacy for the occupation through their extraordinary acts. A faculty member and performance artist described the impact of the group,

> I think one was, well, simply the fact that this is virtually unheard of in Puerto Rican society, the young women, the semi-nude women that painted their bodies. It's an almost, not a first, but it's almost a first in our society. It was such an extraordinary, such a strong visual impact that this kind of body paint in fact, take such a strong impact. There have been some other demonstrations and acts, individual acts in other places where this has taken place, but the students appear in the streets right outside of the university gates with body paint. It is something very different, very, all of that is exceptionally important to making a real lasting legacy of the strike.

Sembrando Conciencia, in contrast to other forms of street performance, was one of the most innovative performances present during the occupation. They demonstrated new ways in which supporters of the occupation could be utilized for protest.

Other Street Theatre

Throughout the occupation, there were a variety of street performers in addition to *Los Payasos Policias*, *Papel Machete*, and *Sembrando Conciencia*. Some of these groups were collective art groups, some were students from the drama department, and still, some were simply students from the occupation who decided to engage in performative theater as a form of protest. A performance artist described the atmosphere of street performance, "Lots of masks, lots of processions, mourning, carrying caskets, mourning the death of the university. These seem to be particularly important. The whole sense of mourning was exceptionally clear." Among the variety of other street performances, the theme of mourning was particularly noted among students (see Figure 29).

Figure 29. Photograph of widow street performance. Photo Courtesy of http://jesseperu.blogspot.com/2010/10/reaching-towards-upr.html

One of the Humanities students described the emotional nature of the mourning performances,

> There was a very important presentation outside of *Jardin de Botanico*. It was a moment where the university officials did not want the student strikers to enter the building where

> the meetings were taking place. So, we worked with a team of students from dance. And basically, some students painted themselves like widows. They came with flowers and they hold them in front of the policeman and offer them a flower. They wouldn't take it obviously. But it was a very long presentation. In your face and awkward. And there were students also painted like skeletons crying. And some students carry a torch. It was very emotional. One student achieved the tear of a policeman. He was given a flower and he was beginning to feel uncomfortable. When the Lieutenant saw that the policeman was uncomfortable, he replaced him. But the Lieutenant didn't notice in time that he was uncomfortable, so he was standing there with tears in his eyes. And that was the main goal of the activity, even if you are prepared to repress us, beat us, we can touch your heart. We can touch your heart.

Overall, students illuminated the ways in which street theater encouraged potential constituents to become involved in the movement and stay engaged in the movement, which was a particular concern given the long time period of the occupation. One explanation was that street theater made the movement more dynamic and exciting. An irresistible movement not only generates excitement and a desire to participate, it also increases media coverage by providing media savvy images that capture the attention of journalists and publishers who operate on a quick media cycle. These performances were not only dynamic based on their size, like with *Papel Machete*, or colorful images, like with *Sembrando Conciencia*; but they were also innovative and constantly in flux, like the performances of *Los Payasos Policia*.

Given the duration of the occupation, many students spoke about the daily stresses of the occupation, ranging from the daily consideration of tactics and strategies to the exhaustion they felt from simply living on campus for 62 days. Not only were there daily pressures, the students expressed how tensions erupted between different camps and student leaders. Utilizing a participatory democracy approach to decision-making, at times students felt frustrated with the time it took to come to a consensual decision. Thus, a second explanation for the role played by street theater was that they were capable of easing tensions. For example, making a joke out of serious violent confrontations between police and students, the Clown Police were able to lighten

the tense mood surrounding the strike. Laugher is important when engaging in 24-hour activism, as activists become exhausted and need emotional release. In this way, street theater acted as a release valve for the emotions of the activists, supporters, and even, the police force.

Visual Arts

Posters, Banners, and Flyers

Over the course of the 62-day occupation, students created hundreds of posters that prominently hung on the iron gates surround the university (Figure 30). Within each of the six campsites, students created a space for the production of banners and posters with the appropriate tools, such as posters, markers, and paints. Posters, banners, and flyers were affixed to the iron gates displayed outward towards the police, supporters, observers, and the community. Text was creatively displayed to communicate grievances of the occupying students. Some of the protest signs were recognized as popular slogans that any number of students might paint onto a banner or poster; whereas, on the other hand, there was considerable innovation and individually designed protest signs.

Two of the most popular protest signs, which relied upon a popular slogan in the movement, read "*Perdone los inconvientes estamos construyendouna universidad publica*" which translates to "Please excuse the mess, we are constructing a public university" (Figure 31) and "*No nos dejan soñar, no los dejaramos dormir*" which translates to "If they will not let us dream, we will not let them sleep." A faculty member commented about the posters he observed hanging on the front gates of the university,

> There was one that I was really struck by, I think it was posted in front of the university gates that said, "Public Education Under Construction." Some of them were more creative and more particular. Like the cheerleaders were saying, which was also in front of the gates, "We want to participate in our cheerleading squad. The policy will not allow us to study.

Figure 30. Photograph of the front gates at the University of Puerto Rico.
Photo Courtesy of Indymediapr (http://pr.indymedia.org/news/2010/05/42834.php)

Figure 31. Protest image from the UPR occupation.

Another sign spray-painted on a large piece of fabric with black paint and affixed to the iron gates of the university read "*Un pais sin educación es un pais de esclavos*" which translates to "A country without education is a country of slaves." Even larger displays of protest signs were

also present, such as banners which hung from the iconic tower at the university, which read "*No Ley 7*" which translates to "No Law 7" referencing the specific legislation which created the budget cuts at the university and public services island-wide.

Other protest signs and posters appeared to be individually designed. For example, one student carried a sign that read, "*Yo me gradúo en Mayo, apoyo la huelga*, which translates to "I graduate in May, I support the struggle." In addition to the presence of protest signs inside the campus or hanging on the gates of the university, there are also many examples of individually designed protest signs at marches and demonstrations held in support of the students, outside the campus. One example was a handheld poster, which read "*La protesta social no es terrorismos!*" which translates to "Social protest is not terrorism" alongside a photocopied image of Governor Luis Fortuño with an Uncle Sam-like hat using the Puerto Rican flag and multiple dollar signs (Figure 32). Another example was a handheld poster, which read, "*Mamá, papa, abuela, abuelo, te apoyan!*" or "Mama, papa, grandma, grandpa, they support you!" (Figure 33).

Figure 32. Photograph of protest sign. Photo Courtesy of
http://www.cubadebate.cu/noticias/2011/02/10/trabajadores-de-la-upr-logran-paralizarla/

Figure 33. Photograph of protest sign. Photo Courtesy of
http://www.cubadebate.cu/noticias/2011/02/10/trabajadores-de-la-upr-logran-paralizarla/

Graphic Arts: Political Cartoons and Memes

Many of the images and text that comprised the posters and banners on campus also were present in the political cartoons and Internet memes that proliferated on social networking sites, such as Facebook and Twitter. While student activists and artists on the island created some of these images, one political cartoon that was widely distributed via social networks was a political cartoon designed by Carlos Latuff, a Brazilian political cartoonist. Latuff's work is mostly self-published on independent digital forums, such as deviantART or Indymedia. Latuff created a political cartoon picturing a young woman—presumingly, a student activist wearing a red t-shirt that reads, "*Huelga*" with one hand on the iconic tower of the university and her other hand holding a rat by its tail bearing the face of Governor Fortuño with a dollar sign on his body (Figure 34). Across the top of the flyer, it reads, "*La UPR no se vende!*" which translates to "The UPR is not for sale!"

Figure 34. Political cartoon by Carlos Latuff.

Over the course of the 62-day occupation, students designed a slogan and logo for the strike, which was displayed on flyers, posters, and t-shirts read, "*11 Recintos: 1 UPR*" which translates to "11 Campuses: 1 UPR" (Figure 35). A student from the Humanities spoke about the decision-making process regarding this slogan:

> Another slogan of the movement was 11 Recintos: 1 UPR. It was created when the other campuses began to join the strike one by one. At some point, there were 11 campuses on strike because one campus that were not on strike, approved a student takeover for one day. Some of us also wanted to be more radical and wanted to say 10 Recintos: 1 Huelga, because it was a way to point to the campus not on strike and say, "Well, you should be on strike!"

Figure 35. Logo for the UPR occupation.

The slogan referenced the fact that there were 11 campuses that comprise the island-wide university system; however, there was solidarity among all campuses and recognition that issues concerning the main metropolitan campus are connected to the issues impacting the other 10 campuses.

Students also created memes, which played a dynamic role during the occupation. Memes, an idea, image, or style, which spreads, often in the form of mimicry, from person to person on the Internet. Often memes take the form of a clever re-working of an existing idea. In the case of the occupation, student activists with access to digital editing tools were able to create humorous advertisements or movie posters to poke fun at the situation at hand. For example,

someone altered the poster for the movie, *How to Lose a Man in 10 Days*. They photo shopped the faces of President of the Board of Trustees, Ygrí Rivera, and President of the UPR, Jose Ramon de la Torre, over the faces of Kate Hudson and Matthew McConaughey, and changed the name of the movie from *How to Lose a Man in 10 Days* to *How to Lose the UPR in 10 Days*, indicated that Rivera and de la Torre were capable of destroying the public university in 10 days or less (Figure 36). During the 62-day occupation, graphically designed memes were spread widely on Facebook and Twitter.

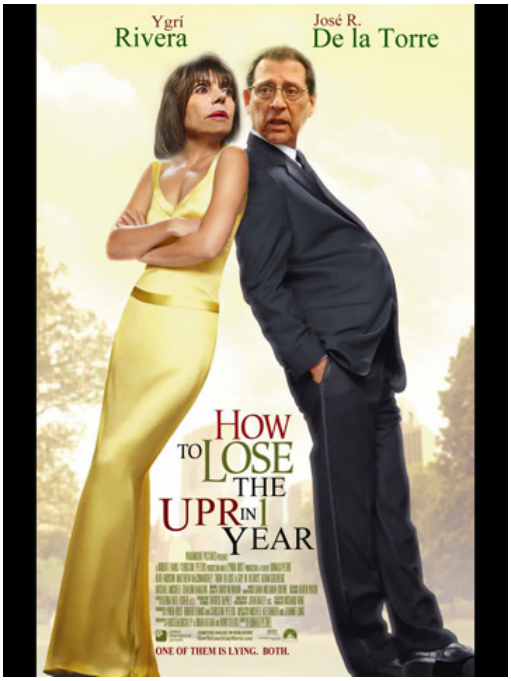

Figure 36. Movie poster meme during the UPR occupation.

Murals

The students also expressed the movement visually in the form of murals, which were found on the concrete benches and walls of the university. These murals generally featured any number of slogans that called for a critical dialogue with the administration, while also pointing to the importance of maintaining a public university for the people. A tradition at the UPR is the painting of the streets, which is called *Pintura en la Calle*. This tradition, which generally occurs

once a year when students paint the sidewalks and streets out front of the Jose M. Lazaro library on the Rio Piedras campus, was adopted and utilized during the movement. During Ocup(arte), the 48-hour occupation of specific buildings and departments on campus, the students spent part of their day painting the plain concrete benches in the central plaza of the campus.

In Figure 37, a student in the Humanities is painting a bench by hand and using a stencil to paint the word *Arte* (or Art) numerous times on the concrete bench. Many of the painted benches were painted, as can be seen in this particular bench, not necessarily by formal artists, but any number of students expressing themselves. Some of the painted benches depicted the presence of student activists, painted in bright colors. For example, one bench was painted with the colors of the rainbow to depict the inclusion of the lesbian and gay community in the movement—which incidentally had not been a strong sector in previous strikes on the island.

During the 62-day occupation, murals were also painted in most of the campsites organized by academic colleges. For example, in the Department of Social Sciences, students painted a mural depicting a dozen students from the occupation holding a sign that read, *Solidaridad* or Solidarity. The mural displayed images of the students proudly in solidarity with not only one another, but also with the strike, as a whole.

Figure 37. Painting of the benches during Ocup(arte). Photo Courtesy of https://reoccupied.wordpress.com/2010/04/21/updates-on-the-university-of-puerto-rico-occupation/

Overall, visual arts demonstrated the differentiated ways in which individuals could participate in the strike, as anyone could design their own flyer or poster to hold up and hang on the gates of the university.

Music and Radio

Protest Songs: The Plena

Protest songs were incorporated in every protest event accompanied by a group of percussionists. Even in smaller pickets where groups such as *Papel Machete* or *Sembrando Conciencia* were not present, protestors would march in a circle, singing and clapping. These songs are representative of traditional forms of protest, in that protest songs are based on a traditional form of music in Puerto Rico—the *plena.*[15] *Plenas* are a narrative style of music, generally relying upon a call and response form. Given the narrative form, *plenas* lyrically tell a

[15] For examples of the songs used during the occupation, see Radio Huelga's "Huelga Mix," which can be found at: http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=K1y92tG3A48.

story, which makes them easily adaptable for protestors. A photojournalist described the significance of the plena for protest on the island.

> The *plena* is like the musical expression of any movement in Puerto Rico. Anytime there is a strike or a march or *piquete*, people will sing *plena*. And usually, what they are going to be singing refers to what is happening. It is like they are talking and singing the classical *plenas* and adapt lyrics to the terms of the situation. *Plena* is very unique in a sense, well, maybe not unique, but its not like samba or rock in the United States, which is played everywhere. But *plena*, I don't really know of any other country where people play it, so it is unique in that sense. I just think that there is special dancing, people playing music, and people signing in the streets. People seem happy.

Furthermore, the *plena* is easily adaptable which makes it easy to use in a variety of protests on the island. The *plena* structure is described by one of the radio journalists for the college station,

> Every time there is a protest, especially here on campus, somebody is bound to sing the *plena*. And that's where many of the slogans of the strike come from. The more traditional ones can be adapted to the current situation. What is interesting about the *plena* I think is that it has this sort of counter phonic structure, so they have someone who signs and improvises and then you have a chorus or refrain and that is where the slogan comes in. That is very adaptable to whatever situation you are protesting against.

In this way, the *plenas* of the student occupation were both traditional, from past protests on the island, while also at times, innovative.

A radio journalist from the university radio station describes the traditional *plenas* that were present in the occupation, as well as the ways in which these *plenas* were adapted to the current situation.

> You have old school *plenas*. "Lucha, si! Entrega, no!" I've been hearing this since I was five years old. There's another one that was adapted for Fortuño. It's, "Fortuño que bronca" and they sing, "bronca bronca bronca es" because it becomes a play on words. Bronca means like, a fight, like "Fortuño wants a fight. Fight, fight, fight, it is." Like bronca, bronca, bronca. But if you repeat bronca, bronca, bronca, you start to sing cabron! (Laughs). So, "Fortuño que bronca, bronca, bronca, es." You are saying, "Yeah, Fortuño wants a fight, we will fight, we'll fight, we'll fight" but at the same time, you are saying, "He is a motherfucker!" I remember hearing that the first time with Rossello [the previous governor] with that past manifestation. It is interesting in our chants, there is always a comedic thing going on. It is serious, but we can turn it into something, you know comedic and laugh.

Other popular chants focused more specifically on the issues of privatization and the ways in which the university suffered from the changing political-economic ideologies of the government. A student from the Humanities described these chants and slogans that were paired with the *plena*,

> I remember one came from a Vietnam [Humanities camp] student that became very popular that says, "The price of living is rising and going up. Our education has become like a business" (sings the *plena* quietly). There was also one against Fortuño that became popular and says, "Where is Fortuño? Fortuño is not here. Fortuño is selling what's left of the country, the island."

Lastly, some *plenas* were associated with the radical history of nationalist political groups on the island, such as the socialist organizations. A Humanities student described this *plena*, "There were some new ones and old ones just done differently. Recycled. My favorite one was the one that talks about molotovs. It says, "Here comes the UPI with their Molotov bombs and then they say "Boom! Awwwwwwwww! Boom!" It is actually from the 1980s."

Musical Concerts

During the occupation, there were various musical performances that took place, not only within specific camps—such as collective jam sessions, but also large musical events that produced large numbers of attendance, such as the concert called *Vivan Los Estudiantes* (which loosely translates to "The Students Live"). This concert allowed many Puerto Rican celebrities to perform and was attended by many well-known Puerto Rican celebrities, such as *Calle 13*. During the event, a video was shown of international artists, such as Rene Perez from *Calle 13*, Juanes, and Ricky Martin, stating their support for the students.[16]

Vivan Los Estudiantes, with the accompanying video, was one of the most popular events of the strike receiving international coverage. For the students, this video demonstrated

[16] The video is available on www.youtube.com as "Artistas Solidarios con Huelga UPR," where you can also hear the students cheering along with each statement of support. The direct website is found here: http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=n1kYcLhcWKY&feature=related.

solidarity among the people of Puerto Rico, as well as enhanced mobilization as otherwise non-supporters reconsidered their positions due to the support of celebrity. A student from the Economics department described the importance of the concert and video,

> The other thing that show me the importance of the arts and the music in the social movements of the university is the impact of the music and the people who use music to send a message. *Vivan Los Estudiantes* was the most spontaneous artistic expression and the most beautiful expressions of art that I have ever seen. The video that made Calle 13, Ricky Martin, Juanes, other artists of popular celebrity. They have a political message in their songs. They do. That show me that we are capable of anything! If we use creativity and arts to make things better. And that was a very, I was in shock when I saw it. Artists that I admire were saying, "I believe in your ability, in your rights." And it was good. In the first moment, it was a concert that was organized by students with minimal administration. That also make me believe that we can make anything if we have the desire, the total concentration, and our heart to make something work. That strike gave me hope in my generation.

A student from the Social Sciences department also described the importance of this particularly concert and video,

> What was really astounding was the amount of sympathy in traditional commercial artists. We didn't really expect to have it. So, we have the support of traditionally left leaning or independence leaning artists and we also strangely have the support of more commercial artists who haven't communicated about social issues in Puerto Rico. Ricky Martin is pro-statehood and has never really commented, apart from his charity work with children here. He never really commented on the political situation here in Puerto Rico and the social issues. Other commercial artists like Calle 13 or Ruben Blades who is not Puerto Rican but has a relationship with the island, expressed support for the students. It showed that we really had conquered the heart of the Puerto Ricans. The fact that these people who had never been involved in any of these things were publically using their exposure to support us, really meant that. We joked about Ricky Martin. We said, "Okay, we can go home now, Ricky Martin supports us." Because, you know, Ricky Martin is the most important Puerto Rican worldwide. But in the other sense, we had the support and it really give us the opportunity for what we were asking for—to be heard.

In addition to *Vivan Los Estudiantes*, there were smaller concerts that took place both within the occupation and immediately outside of the gates of the occupation. One evening, several of the independent punk rock bands on the island snuck into the occupied campus to perform. For the students, these moments illuminated the potential to create a "feel-good"

moment during an otherwise tense strike. A photographer of the strike discusses the role of the musical concerts, "When there were concerts at night, there were like two or three of these. It just helps, in that sense, to lower the tensions, feel good about something for a moment. It's a balancing act. It also helps with solidarity." A less known and discussed event was the performance of the orchestra at the strike. A faculty member discusses this performance; "Another one was when the symphonic orchestra played right in front of a whole group in the street. Of course, they had their own issues because apparently some of them were going to be laid off and they were protesting against."

Radio Huelga and Amor de Barricada

During the occupation, a group of students at the Rio Piedras campus joined together to start their own radio station, *Radio Huelga*, with the intention of providing a reliable media source to communicate within and outside of the occupied campuses. Given the dispersion of the occupation into six different campsites on the Rio Piedras campus and 11 campuses island-wide, the students found it necessary to create their own media forums. *Radio Huelga* broadcast through both a low-power AM station (1650AM) and through a live-streaming page on the Internet. The station produced a variety of shows with the most creative of which was a radio soap opera called *Amor de Barricada* or "Love Between the Gates."

Amor de Barricada was an innovation on tradition entertainment form on the island—the radio soap opera. The plot of the show was based on a love affair that takes place between students from two different campsites during the occupation. A Law student describes the concept for the show,

> "On the radio station, they had a radio soap opera with writers and a script. They had like 67 episodes and it was genius. They made a parody of what was happening around inside and outside of the strike. They had a parody of me, they had a parody of Waldemiro, they

> had a parody of everyone and it was just a great way to represent what was happening in an artistic way, which was the screenwriting.

Throughout the interviews, students often laughed at the concept of the show and mentioned how important the humor of the show was for releasing the tensions between the different groups. One Humanities student talked of the importance of the show,

> Because there were moments that were very serious. So we need to laugh. And that was a very important role played by the telenovela, the radio telenovela. Its called Barricade Love, *Amor de Barricada*. It was a student from Humanities that falls in love with a student from Beverly Hills. *An impossible love.* They were not enemies, but the reason was the strike. And in the novella, everyone was an object of the joke. They joke about everyone. It was important to release that tension.

The primary audience for the show was the students of the occupation, as the content focused on inside jokes about the internal life of the occupation. However, due to the fact that the show was broadcast on the Internet radio show, it was also accessible to a broader community including other students who were unable to join the occupation and other supporters on the island. Given that the students responsible for the show chose to use a traditional form, it is feasible that the show was also entertainment for those outside of the occupying students. The use of tradition in a cultural form was an important aspect of the show, as described by a law student,

> The people in Barricade Love, *Amor de Barricada*, the radio soap opera, they also deserve some sort of prize because they did something that wasn't done on the island for decades, which is the radio soap opera. I wasn't even alive when the last famous radio soap opera was on or being produced. And they went back and brought that from art traditions to today and exposed to people to the fact that this existed. It was incredible. So, it's an awareness of your past and your traditions that was exposed to do that artistic expression. It was an artistic way to express that you are not intimidated by these people in such a way. I think art played a role in the strike to convey messages that would not be able to be exposed in a traditional way. So, it would have been really hard for us to lower those tensions, to show that we weren't going to be compelled without having confrontation with the police or government, to bring back traditions of our culture and our heritage to the strike.

In an interview with the creator and writer of the show, Mariana Monclova, in the *Claridad* newspaper, spoke about how the show was intended to help deal with the intense emotions of the

occupation, "*Amor de Barricada* helped us as an emotional balm…While listening to the jokes and situations that developed, tempers were calmed…everyone could laugh and identify." A Law student expressed other explanations for why the release of this tension was so important.

> It released tensions, and also, not necessarily just the internal tensions between us, but a release of the tensions of everything. You need a place of expression, feeling against what was happening, it being the internet, it being the public street or public sidewalks, you really don't have an outlet and you just need to explode at some point, so it was an outlet for of people. Just to be creative and how you let that out, that tension.

Amor de Barricada enabled students to alleviate tensions between the different camps by artistically and culturally expressing their differences in a humorous manner. Through the process of making jokes about the different identities of Camp Vietnam and Camp Sparta versus Camp Disney and Camp Beverly Hills, the students were able to make their disagreements fodder for humor. By laughing at themselves, the students were able to embrace the silliness, in some sense, of their own identities and the identities of the other camps. In this way, the humor of *Amor de Barricada* demonstrated how cultural expression operated to release the day-to-day tensions between heterogeneous activists that often disagreed, as well as enabled the students to endure over the course of 62 days without fragmentation or ultimately, dissolution. *Amor de Barricada* and other cultural expressions served as "cultural glue," maintaining a sense of cohesiveness within the movement but without sacrificing their individualized camp identities.

Plenas, musical concerts, and the radio soap opera were capable of performing several functions in the occupation. One of the primary roles of music was to provide entertainment and leisure, particularly given the mundane everyday life of an activist during an endless occupation. For instance, in the case of the concert *Vivan Los Estudiantes* provided a source of entertainment for student activists and supporters of the movement. The inclusion of numerous celebrities in this celebratory event provided a much-needed break from the daily tasks of the occupation.

Similarly, the programming on *Radio Huelga*, particularly the music broadcasts which were 24 hours a day, helped to keep activists engaged over the course of grueling days at the front line.

In addition, music was seen as enhancing mobilization and solidarity with the occupation. These moments of spectacle encouraged others to become involved in the events taking place during the occupation. A professor at the UPR discussed the tradition of carnival-esque atmosphere of political events on the island,

> Most political and public events, if you don't have music or food or drink, then it is not a good event. It follows that we have a high turn-out for elections, much higher than the U.S., about 60 to 70 percent. It has to do with the carnival-esque atmosphere. It is the caravans, speeches, music—a lot of entertainment. It is getting them away from their homes and participating in the public—with massive support. In this case [of the UPR], the atmosphere is part of the reason people go out and participate.

While the plena was an expected form of protest music, it also encouraged nearby individuals to join the protest due to the sheer amount of noise generated from singing and clapping along to protest songs.

Lastly, as demonstrated in the work of *Amor de Barricada*, music also was able to ease tensions that arose over the course of the occupation by making fun of the differences between the student activists. In this way, it is suggested that the radio soap opera allowed for and acknowledged the complicated differences between the students, politically; while also maintaining their solidarity by poking fun at these differences in ways that perhaps prevented fragmentation or dissolution of the movement.

Conclusion

Overall, the art world of the student occupation was one dimension that illuminated why the occupation would later became dubbed, "the creative occupation." The strike was often described in terms of the diversity of artistic expressions—including, traditional forms such as the plena or poetry, as well as innovative forms, such as street theater. In this sense, there were a

large variety of artistic expressions for students and supporters to observe, as well as to participate. This created an atmosphere of diversity and dynamism, which could lead to enhanced mobilization.

In particular, for the activists engaged in the UPR student movement one of the goals was to incorporate as many different voices as possible, which led to a multiplicity of forms as different individuals bring different talents to the creative tactical repertoire. One student from the Law School confirmed the importance of including art in the strike,

> Art was very important, it was more than important, it was one of the things that from the starting point really differentiated this strike from other strikes. It really made it unique, which is the amount of students that were involved [with art]. You wouldn't necessarily be, say, before the strike, you had never really made anything creative or that would be considered artistic. But you were here and you took part in that and you drew something here and participated in that and that was good. That students were exposed to that and became a part of it, those that wouldn't necessarily be part of that before the strike. So, it makes students more conscious about the importance of that, of the art of the strike.

This multiplicity of artistic expressions was one of the ways in which activists maintained a sense of difference and choice. In a sense, individuals participating in the strike could *curate* their own strike experience.

As boundaries between art and everyday life have disappeared, individuals, groups, corporations, and even, governments, use art and aesthetics to "design" or "curate their identity (Featherstone 2007; Ivey and Tepper 2006; Jenkins and Bertozzi 2008; Tepper and Gao 2008; Tucker 2010). The aestheticization of the environment is pertinent for the entire public sphere; however, specifically young people (those born in the 1990s and after) have grown up in an environment, in which an aestheticized life is taken for granted (Ivey and Tepper 2006). They are comfortable in stylizing their identity and individuality through aesthetic means and consumer products (Jenkins and Bertozzi 2008; Ivey and Tepper 2006). In this sense, artistic expression is a natural way of living in the world. Thus, it is an expected avenue for also launching political

expressions. Not only do individuals curate their identities, groups and social movements also curate their protests, navigating multiple aesthetic choices—such as organizational style, logos, and t-shirts. Thus, the aestheticization of everyday life provides an explosion of choice, allowing for a custom designed identity as "curated" by the individual (Tepper 2008).

Secondly, due to the inclusion of artistic expressions, a movement is capable of generating a dynamic and exciting movement, which may draw individuals in to participate, as well as garner more media coverage. The dynamic environment of the occupation made it creative and something desirable in which to participate. There is a long history of protest on the island of Puerto Rico, particularly deriving from the left or socialist political groups. Due to the normalization of protest on the island, some activists recognized the need to innovate on traditional forms of protest, such as marches and parades. A faculty and union member talked about the points of departure from past protest on the island and the UPR student occupation,

> The Clown Police and Papel Machete, they all have, it seems to me, they have the objective of making the marches and activities more attractive or more interesting to bring the attention of people who would normally not look at these things. People in Puerto Rico, I guess as opposed to the US, are very accustomed to the left marching up and down everywhere. It's, I try to put myself in the eyes of the people who are not of that persuasion and drive by and there are 200 socialists marching down the street in San Juan, "There's another march by socialists! It's what they do, right?" And they won't look twice, because they know who they are and they know they are protesting and they may sympathize with what they are protesting, but they are going somewhere else and you know, its not a big deal. I guess in some other places, people are marching with flags in the street and everyone wants to know what is going on, but not here. So, having big figures, loud drums, people walking around on stilts, all of these things make the activity much more carnivalesque spectacle and people will say, "Oh, what is going on here? What is this? This is very festive, very colorful, it is not the old socialists protesting yet another injustice." And so I think it is very good. I like it very much. I think it adds a lot to what we do. And that has been something fairly recent. For many years, the activities were very plain. Of course, you still have the cultural purists, you know, who are upset because the drums are replacing the plena and whatnot.

There is little sociological research about the role of humor and spectacle in creating an exciting protest atmosphere. From Bakhtin's medieval carnivals to the artistic subcultures of

Dada, the Surrealists, and the Situationists (Bakhtin 1968; Duncombe 2002; Krier and Swart 2012; Langman and Ryan 2009; Reed 2005; Schechner 1993; Shepard 2011) to the modern day protest actions of ACT UP (AIDS Coalition to Unleash Power) and the Battle of Seattle (Duncombe 2011; Grindon 2004; Jordan 2011; Reed 2005; Schechner 1993; Shepard 2011), individuals and activists throughout history have utilized play and carnival to create spaces of resistance. These scholars explore the ways in which activists "produce" a movement or protest action that appears to be fun, dynamic, exciting, and ultimately irresistible; thus, potentially increasing participation, mobilization, and sustained engagement (Edelman 2001; Ehrenreich 2006; Eyerman 2006; Juris 2008a; Langman 2012; Reed 2005; Schechner 1993; Shepard 2011). We find evidence of the importance of these dynamics in the handbook for the Direct Action Network, from the Battle of Seattle protests, as activists write about the use of culture within the movement,

> Traditional demonstrations and protests, while essential, oftentimes alienate the general public, and are ignored by policy makers. Taking to the streets with giant puppet theater, dance, graffiti, art, music, poetry and the spontaneous eruption of joy breaks through the numbing isolation…We must strike to use all our skills in harmony to create an enduring symphony of resistance. The cacophony against capital will be deafening when nine days of large-scale theater preparations culminate in the largest festival of resistance the world has ever seen. We will make revolution *irresistible* (my emphasis) (Reed 2005: 255).

Another aspect of producing a dynamic and exciting protest atmosphere is that it may be more generative of media coverage. Particularly in the age of new media technology and social media, there has been increased scholarly attention paid to the role of the Internet and social media in protest (Ayres 1999; Bennett, Breunig and Givens 2008; DiMaggio et al. 2001; Earl et al. 2010; Jennings and Zeitner 2003; Van Laer 2010; Yang 2009). Less attention has been paid to the feedback potential of social media on the day-to-day lived reality of social movement. In Guobin Yang's book, *The Power of the Internet in China: Citizen Activism Online*, the author

argues that the Internet and social media produces a digital culture of contention, supplement more traditional forms. Yang writes,

> The new rituals and genres of expression in online activism, such as the digital circulation of Flash movies and YouTube videos, turns artistic creativity into an ever more contentious activity—and contention into an increasingly artistic activity, in the use of new media technology (2009: 84).

Changes in technology have the power to ultimately shape the nature of protest. In Todd Gitlin's *The Whole World is Watching: Mass Media in the Making and Unmaking of the New Left* (2003), the author asserted that the accessibility of television and the desire to ascertain television coverage led activists in the 1960's to make strategic choices to garner the attention of the media. Similarly, it is expected that contemporary movement activists, considering their broadcast potential—from both mainstream and social media—might choose different strategies and tactics with the mentality that the whole world *might* be watching.

Activists also recognized how artistic productions operate as a release valve. As tensions were building over the course of the 62-day occupation, whether based on differences *within* the occupation or confrontations between the police and students, artistic expressions help to provoke emotions that help students deal with these troubles. For instance, the Unit of Clown Police helped for students and supporters to mock the official police force in a lighter tone, and similarly, the radio soap opera *Amor de Barricada* allowed for students to laugh at their differences in a way that helped to prevent any fragmentations between the groups.

The art world of the occupation helped to manage movement pluralism in that it both enabled differentiation and difference, in terms of the presence of multiple forms and ways of participation; and it helped with tensions that may arise due to differences within the movement, particularly as related to different ideologies and beliefs. However, the use of artistic expressions in protest is not without its own conflict.

CHAPTER VII

THE AFTERMATH

Introduction

On June 22, 2010, twelve students from the eleven campuses of the UPR, recognized as CNN (or, the Central Negotiating Committee), sat down with the administration and Board of Trustees of the University of Puerto Rico to negotiate Certification 98. For the first time in the history of protest at the university, student activists were successful at *both* forcing the administration to negotiate, but also in achieving their primary goal—that of, reversing the elimination of tuition waivers. During the negotiations on June 22, 2010, the administration had decided to negate the elimination of tuition waivers; however, they refused to budge on the implementation of a new annual student fee, which they planned to begin in January 2011.

Summer of 2010

On June 23, 2010, many student activists attended a celebratory event at the convention center in Ponce, a city on the southern coast of the island. The event was not only a celebration of their unprecedented victory, but also the ratification of their agreement with the university. However, this celebration was short-lived.

On the same day as the negotiation, Marcos Rodriguez Emma, the Secretary of Interior, was quoted in *Primera Hora* as casually remarking that the negotiation and ratification was only worth the paper it was written on.[17] The remark infuriated student activists, particularly after their 62-day struggle. Additionally, on the same day, Governor Fortuño passed a law to alter the number of Board of Trustees for the university. It was suspected by the students that the

[17] See article in *Primera Hora* at http://www.primerahora.com/noticias/gobierno-politica/nota/marcosrodriguezemmadicequenohayacuerdossobrelaupr-396454/

Governor passed this law given the perception that the Board had caved to the students and this action would allow his administration to appoint new members from his political party who would be unlikely to negotiate with the students in the future.

In reaction, students gathered on June 23, 2010 for a *piquete* in Old San Juan outside of La Fortaleza, the governor's mansion. The protest event would be my first on-the-ground observation of the student movement. At the time of arrival, very few protestors had arrived; however, the street leading to the governor's mansion was already barricaded with 8 police officers. The *piquete* was composed of student activists, faculty members, community supporters, and the media (Figure 38). During the four hours of the *piquete*, students marched in a circle, singing *plenas* in call and response. However, there were also handmade hand-held signs with slogans from the occupation, such as "*Once Recintos Una UPR*" (or, translates to "11 Campuses, One UPR"). After spending two hours outside of *La Forteleza*, student activists decided to march to *Escuela de Artes Plastica*, the public art school located in Old San Juan. Activists wanted to show their support for the smaller occupation taking place as the art school. At the encampment, student activists from both schools discussed their specific grievances, as well as plans for the future (Figure 39).

Figure 38. Photograph of protest at La Forteleza on June 23, 2010. Private Collection.

Figure 39. Photograph of protest at La Escuela de Plastica Artes on June 23, 2010. Private Collection

Throughout the summer, there remained a buzz on the island. Everyone seemed to be talking about the occupation. On campus, students continued to refer to the areas of campus by their camp name. For example, one student upon providing directions remarked, “It is over near Camp Vietnam.” Every week, there seemed to be at least one to two protest events scheduled, as

well as students continued to meet with by action committee. They wanted to maintain the momentum, as well as to review their process from the occupation and begin planning for the future. However, there were also immediate goals of the protest events, such as protesting disciplinary actions by the university that were being brought against various student leaders.

On June 30, 2010, the government was scheduled to finalize the next year's fiscal budget. It was decided the meeting would not be open to the public or the media. Student activists led the charge to protest the lack of access to a public building. Once word leaked out that students would be protesting at the Capitol building, the Chief of Police, Jose Figueroa Sancha, decided to amp up security by way of riot police and police officers on horseback. As students arrived and attempted to enter the building, they were met by police officers with pepper spray, who pushed them back off the stairs leading to the building (Figures 40 and 41). Many students ended up in the hospital later that evening. During the altercations, an iconic photograph (see Figure 42) was captured that set the stage for the ushering in of the second wave of the student movement, namely, that of police brutality and violence. This iconic photo shows a mother and daughter, Betty Pena and Elisa Ramos Pena respectively, being beaten by an official police officer. The administration officially responded that all actions by police officers were seen as necessary as if the students had been granted entry into the Capitol building, there would have been a dangerous situation.

Figure 40. Photograph of Police Violence at protest at El Capitolio on June 30, 2010.

Figure 41. Screenshot of media coverage of protest at El Capitolio on June 30, 2010 by Noticentro.

Figure 42. Front page of Primera Hora showing coverage of El Capitolio protest on June 30, 2010.

The events at the capitol, in some ways, changed the narrative of the student protest in that many of the protest events that took place after the fact were focused on protesting police brutality. For example, students spearheaded a national march against police brutality in an all-day protest event on July 17th. This large-scale protest event, while focused on police brutality, represented a moment when large swaths of people came together to protest police brutality on the island. Numerous individuals were present at the protest, such as student activists, union members, and community supporters; as well as some popular artists on the island. Through sheer presence and protest signage, it was noted that student activists were the primary organizers of the event. They had become a force to be reckoned with politically.

As the summer continued, students continued to operate as a political group of their own. They continued to hold smaller protest events, as well as meet in their action committees.

Specifically, students were beginning to organize and think through how to deal with what seemed like the inevitable implementation of the new annual student fee. In these conversations, student activists made claims that they weren't sure what the next stage of the student movement might be look like, but they stated they knew it would need to be different—that the next phase of the movement would not be able to occupy the university, nor organize in the same way.

The Second Wave

As the fall semester began, student activists continued to meet in their action committees by discipline. Throughout the months of September and October, three academic colleges, specifically, the more radical groups—Humanities, Social Sciences, and the Education School—held 24- and 48-hour occupations of their specific buildings (Figure 43). Most of these occupations served as an opportunity for student activists to interact with one another, as well as other students to explain their concerns over the expected newly implemented student fee.

Figure 42. Photograph of the occupation of Humanities building in September 2010. Photo Courtesy of https://occupyca.wordpress.com/2010/10/20/upr-humanities-occupied/

However, the tensions between the different groups of student activists would come to a head in November, when the student council called for a student assembly for a vote about how to react to the soon-to-be implemented annual student fee in January 2011. During the student assembly, the students voted by majority to engage in a 48-hour strike to take place on December 7th and 8th. The more conservative students were apprehensive about shutting down the university with another student strike, particularly after the long 62-day occupation; however, the more radical students proposed that after the 48-hour strike, the students should begin an indefinite *huelga* starting on December 14th. After hours of discussing the issues, a majority voted for the 48-hour strike. However, after this first vote, many individuals began leaving before a vote was taken on the indefinite strike. The students that remained behind voted on the indefinite strike, which was also by majority—however, some students expressed that this was not a true majority, since many students had already left. In my conversations with student activists, I heard varied narratives about this assembly, highlighting the tensions between the various constituents and their desired approach to protest in a violent environment.

Not only were tensions present in the student assembly, but also they continued to shape what is commonly referred to as the second wave of the student movement. Much of these tensions were highlighted by confrontations with the police, who came to occupy the university for the first time in 40 years.[18] Throughout the second wave, conflicts between police and student activists would continue. Various students would react in ways, such as engaging in direct contact with police officers. The lack of consensus and unity among student activists led to

[18] In the aftermath of the death of Antonia Martinez Lagares, a student who was shot dead by police during a student demonstration on March 11, 1970, decisions were made to reduce on-campus conflicts by removing the United States' Army Reserve Officers Training Corps (ROTC) and an institutional commitment to resolving conflict without official police intervention.

increasing fragmentation, as more conservative students dropped out from the student movement.

This fragmentation would come to a head on March 7, 2011, when a handful of radical students congregated outside of Chancellor Guadalupe's office. As the chancellor walked to her vehicle, students began shouting at her. The moment quickly escalated as students began throwing water on her. As she got to her vehicle, the event worsened as students begin throwing rocks at her vehicle, breaking the windows of the vehicle. The violent event took place only a few days before the student movement was scheduled to hold an event to commemorate events from March 11, 1971, when a young student, Antonia was killed during a student protest. The attack on the Chancellor became a defining moment for the movement. Leading up to this point, the students were the ones victim to police brutality; however, this event changed the narrative and further fragmented the movement. When I spoke to student leaders about the action, they were careful to state they did not approve of the action; however, they would also describe the amount of frustration felt by students as they moved into the second wave of the movement. It was not only this one event, but, rather the unfolding of the more confrontational second wave of the movement that led to an increasingly ideological and tactical divisiveness between student activists and subsequently, the fragmentation of the student movement.

From my own observations in March 2011, I discovered a movement that seemed to have quickly fragmented, resulting in lower attendance at protest events. On March 11, 2011, I arrived to the main campus of the University of Puerto Rico in Rio Piedras. The march of solidarity was scheduled to begin outside of the iconic tower of the UPR. I arrived at the scheduled time; however, I was the first person to arrive. Slowly, others began to arrive. However, as we began to organize ourselves for the march, it was immediately apparent that the movement had greatly

diminished. Not only was the attendance lower than what I had witnessed prior to the attack on the Chancellor, but there was also a sense of frustration among students. In light of the violent attack and fragmentation, the student movement of 2010 and 2011 had come apart.

CHAPTER VIII

TWO FACES OF THE CREATIVE OCCUPATION

"There is a time when the operation of the machine becomes so odious, makes you so sick at heart, that you can't take part, you can't even passively take part, and you've got to put your bodies upon the gears and upon the wheels, upon the levers, upon all the apparatus, and you've got to make it stop. And you've got to indicate to the people who run it, to the people who own it, that unless you're free, the machine will be prevented from working at all!"
–Mario Savio, December 2, 1964

"Si usted no nos deja sonar, no vamos a dejarte dormir."
"If you do not let us dream, we will not let you sleep."
–UPR Students, Huelga 2010

Introduction

The unprecedented success of student activists at the University of Puerto Rico in 2010 warrants a close investigation. While my research is not comparative in nature, it is necessary to explore the 62-day occupation in a way that takes into account prior protest at the university, such as, the unpopular and unsuccessful 2005 strike, and what took place in the aftermath of the occupation. Over the course of my research, I had numerous conversations with student activists and scholars on the island about what distinguished this strike from the others. Specifically, individuals spoke about five major distinctions—occupation of the campus, an organizational style of action-committees, new media technology and social media, broad mobilization across different sectors, and lastly, the heightened presence of artistic and cultural expressions. This dissertation focuses primarily on the heightened presence of artistic and cultural expressions, particularly its relationship with broad mobilization across different sectors.

In the case of the University of Puerto Rico's 62-day student occupation of 2010—more commonly referred to as the "creative occupation"— student activists presented two faces of the occupation—one of unity *and* diversity. This was accomplished in part through creative expressions. Activists used artistic and cultural expressions to maintain a sense of unity, while at the same time, using these expressions to demonstrate differences of ideology and tactics. Furthermore, these creative expressions became an important mechanism in easing tensions over difference between the various constituents of the occupation, over an indefinite time period. These findings have important implications for contemporary styles of protest, which will be explored after an overview of my key findings.

Overview of Key Findings

In my dissertation, I explore the relationship between creative protest and movement diversity in the case of the University of Puerto Rico 62-day occupation in the spring and summer of 2010. Through a qualitative case study, which included observation, in-depth interviews, and analysis of movement documention, I uncover how student activists understand creativity in protest, specifically how creative protest influences movement diversity and difference. To date, researchers have explored how creativity shapes social movements, particularly in respect to issues of unity. However, researchers have not closely examined the ways in which creativity influences movement diversity. The evidence presented in this dissertation addresses this gap and offers insights into the ways in which movement activists can manage movement diversity in ways that keep the movement from fragmenting or dissolving.

My key finding is that creativity in protest works to *manage* movement diversity by enabling activists to *both* unify and differentiate within the movement. Or in other words, artistic and creative expressions, such as performance art and symbolic identities, act as a *cultural glue*

that not only helps to maintain solidarity among highly differentiated activist groups, but also allows them to demonstrate their differences.

I begin by examining the historical, economic, and political environment that shaped the backdrop of the occupation at the University of Puerto Rico. First, I highlight the events that provoked student activists to organize and strike, such as the election of Governor Luis Fortuño, the passage of Law 7, and the passage of Certification 98. Secondly, I highlight the existing political divisions that marred past protests on the island, and more specifically, student protests at the university. Overall, I demonstrate how political divisions and diversity within the student movement create an environment in which broad mobilization is difficult to achieve. This sets the stage to explore the work that was accomplished by creative expressions in terms of diversity among student activists.

Next, I examine the cultural and symbolic world of the six different camp identities of the occupation. I begin by explaining how students organized themselves leading up to the occupation, such as the creation of action-committees and their assignment to each of the six major transportation gates. However, the major question of this chapter is to understand how and why these action committees transformed from filling a logistical need, such as covering each main gate, to being highly steeped in symbolic expressions. Through an examination of the camp names and the development of their symbolic and expressive content, such as t-shirts, logos, and cultural calendars, I provide evidence of how these cultural expressions allowed students to demonstrate their differences from one another, while still expressing a solidarity with the broader occupation. For example, differentiated camp names—such as Camp Sparta and Camp Beverly Hills—symbolically represented the different ideologies and tactics between the camps. While Camp Sparta and Vietnam were recognized as being more radical in their tactics, Camp

Disney and Camp Beverly Hills preferred more non-confrontational tactics. Cultural expressions worked to identify difference among activists, but also in a way that used humor to ease the tensions around these differences. It became easier to laugh at the differences between Camp Vietnam and Camp Beverly Hills, based on the basic understanding of these symbolic distinctions; rather than to fully come to terms with the very real and historical differences between students from the Humanities school, who often are more radical and socialist-identified nature, and students from the Law School, who are often supporters of statehood for the island. In addition, the heightened visibility of these differences allowed students to participate in camps that most closely represented their preferences. In this way, students were still able to experience a sense of unity with the overall movement, without feeling the need to sacrifice their own individuality. As in the past, protests at the university had been "held hostage" by the socialists, this strike enabled high levels of differentiation, which, in turn, enhanced mobilization.

However, a high level of differentiation among movement activists also lends itself towards infighting and tension within the ranks. The tensions between differentiated camps become exacerbated by a 24-hour indefinite occupation. In my next chapter, I examine how artistic expressions, in addition to cultural expressions of camp identities, were also used to enable unity and differentiation among activists and manage movement diversity. For example, the use of traditional *plenas* (or, protest songs) during marches and other protest actions demonstrate a sense of unity with the movement. However, the multiplicity of artistic expressions, as well as the ability to participate in any number of artistic creations, illuminated high levels of differentiation. Student activists and artists could participate in any number of cultural events over the course of the occupation, choosing which ones that aligned with their approach to protest. For example, there were options to participate in lectures about prior protests

on the island or a workshop where they could learn how to create paper maiche puppets to be utilized in broad scale protests. The variety of artistic expressions in which to participate enabled activists to at one time feel unified and connected to the movement, while also allowing them to choose which expressions they felt comfortable to participate in. Lastly, these artistic expressions were often seen as ways that activists could mitigate tensions for the overall occupation, as well as between the different camps. The Clown Police and other performances utilized humor and celebration to break the tension of the occupation and bring some levity to the students. Similarly, *Amor de Barricada*, the radio soap opera, drew upon the differentiated camp identities to poke fun at these very real differences. It was often noted that humor through artistic expressions helped to ease frustrations and keep conflict at bay.

The role of art and culture in the 62-day occupation became emphasized in conversations by student activists, particularly in light of what took place in the aftermath of the occupation, both in the fall of 2010 and spring 2011. As the context shifted, it became clear how important artistic and cultural expressions might have been for the students' success. However, it is not my assertion that it was *only* these creative expressions that were responsible for the success of the movement, but rather, these expressions in tandem with the occupation of the campus. Without the ability to work closely together, as well as to use creative expressions to mitigate the differences and tensions, I would theorize this contributed to the overall fragmentation and eventual dissolution of the movement during the second wave.

Contributions

Theoretical Contributions

This dissertation contributes to the renewed interest in art and creativity in social movements. Movement scholars have examined creative activities in social movements and have

also examined movement diversity, but at this juncture we do not how and whether creative protest can help manage movement diversity. A majority of the existing social movement literature has focused on the ways in which artistic and cultural expressions are utilized to produce unity within movements, particularly through communication, visibility, and emotional resonance. However, my research illustrates how creative protest manages movement diversity by *both* unifying and differentiating movement activists. In the case of the University of Puerto Rico, I found that high levels of differentiation, or movement diversity, existed alongside artistic and cultural expressions.

In addition, the notion of diversity *within* social movements is not often discussed in the literature, but rather a focus is placed on issues of unity despite the fact that social movements are rarely unified events. However, two scholars, Jeffrey S. Juris and Amin Ghaziani, have sought to answer the question of how activists maintain high levels of diversity among movement participants.

Jeffrey S. Juris describes how the networked organizational style of the anti-globalization and World Social Forum protests allowed for diverse activists to participate together in protest actions. However, Juris's research mostly focuses on large protest events, which generally do not require diverse activists to interact with one another often. In this sense, there may be a sense of broad unity, such as protest against globalization; however, most groups are working on their own for their specific goals such as environmental issues as related to globalization or worker's rights. Therefore, Juris's explanation is useful to apply to broad protest movements that are not necessarily concerned with producing a sense of unity. In this sense, Juris's explanation is not useful for explaining the student movement at the University of Puerto Rico given the need to create a movement that is unified and recognized as a group with one designated goal.

On the other hand, Amin Ghaziani's work on cultural anchors focused on collective self definitions of identity and strategy, or what he refers to as "cultural anchors" in the case of the LGBT marches on Washington. In this case, Ghaziani and colleagues argues that the use of cultural anchors—loosely coherent ideas about the group's identities and strategies—allow for differences of opinion among activists. In the case of LGBT marches, it was necessary to use loose definitions of identity and strategy in order to keep the group together. More specifically, Ghaziani's work focused on group definitions of strategy—or, in other words, why they were marching on Washington. Therefore, while individuals may have a variety of explanations of this strategy, Ghaziani explored the ways in which the movement was conveyed to the public by analyzing the media discourse to explore the cultural anchors of the movement. For instance, they found that community building was often discussed as the cultural anchor of the marches. However, the notion of cultural anchors focuses more externally, how activists convey themselves to others, rather than focusing on how cultural anchors keep the group together, particularly after large protest events.

The argument I make about creative protest and its association with movement diversity fills a gap in the existing literature, as well as improves upon the alternative explanations provided by Juris and Ghaziani. Juris's research does not address long term protest, but rather focuses on larger scale one-off protest events; therefore, he does not address how diverse activists can continue to work together over any length of time. On the other hand, Ghaziani's research does focus more on activists whom work together over the long term; his focus seems to be limited in its use of the notion of cultural anchors by focusing primarily on the framing of the identity of activists or strategies. In this sense, his work continues to place emphasis on the idea of unity. I argue that in a political environment where *diverse* activists are increasingly coming

together to protest, such as the Occupy movement, it is necessary to think about the importance of how to manage diversity and difference in the protest environment. Understanding how difference can be displayed in part through artistic and cultural expressions demonstrates how these mechanisms can act as a glue or mechanism to actively manage difference, not just to convey a thin sense of unity, as in the case of Ghaziani's work, nor just to allow for activists to come together for one-off events during a couple of hours on a Sunday, like in the case of Juris's work.

Empirical Contributions

In addition to theoretical contributions, there are also empirical contributions of my dissertation. More broadly, my research contributes empirically by producing research on an understudied group, the people of Puerto Rico. Although Puerto Ricans on the island are technically considered U.S. citizens, there is a lack of research on the island. Furthermore, mainstream media, despite the fact that similar political and economic factors shape the daily lives of Puerto Ricans, oft ignores events on the island. For example, although an economic crisis, similar to what was experienced in the United States, also occurred on the island, which subsequently lead to a climate of austerity and budget cuts—there is generally little comparison between the two locations. Furthermore, while some of the events were set in motion before they occurred in the United States, the island offers an interesting opportunity in which to potentially think through how these same mechanisms may operate in the mainland United States.

Not only is there a lack of sociological research on the island of Puerto Rico, there is a lack of research in English. While the history of protest at the University of Puerto Rico has been well written about on the island, it has solely been in Spanish. Therefore, my dissertation

contributes empirically to our understanding of protest on the island, but also offers an account of the 2010 student occupation in English.

Implications

The broadest implication of my research is regarding the complex relationship between art, culture, creativity, and protest—in contrast to existing literature. Prior research on the role of artistic expressions within social movements has focused on the notion of producing solidarity and a sense of unity among activists. However, my research demonstrates how artistic and cultural expressions can perform a variety of tasks within a social movement.

For one, artistic and cultural expressions can work to perform the diversity of the movement, rather than simply a sense of unity. Individuals may utilize their own voices through these expressions in a way to demonstrate how varied the movement can be. In addition, this performance of diverse artistic and cultural expressions also increases the visibility of the movement, particularly for media coverage. Given the 24-hour news cycle and an increasingly competitive media environment, social movement activists must create a dynamic protest environment to garner attention. In this way, the more colorful and dynamic presentation of a protest, the more likely they may receive media coverage. However, all of this diversity may also amplify tensions between the diverse groups involved in the movement. I also uncovered how artistic and cultural expressions worked to navigate tensions between activists of different ideologies and values. This becomes increasingly important in light of an indefinite protest, such as the *huelga* of 2010 at the University of Puerto Rico. Indefinite protest actions face any number of unknown factors, including changes in weather, limited resources and supplies, and sleeping in tents.

Beyond the immediate case of the University of Puerto Rico's student occupation of 2010, this research suggests a style of protest that may characterize a number of contemporary protest actions. One thing that was particularly interesting about the case of the student occupation at the University of Puerto Rico was how it seemingly anticipated a style of protest that become popularized with the occupation of hundreds of public parks across the United States and globally in 2011—known as, the Occupy movement. Not only did both the occupation at the UPR in 2010 and the occupation of Zuccotti Park in 2011 have similar protest styles, there was also a similar political and economic backdrop leading up to both occupations.

In Puerto Rico, this began with an economic recession in 2006, which led the government to shut down for weeks at a time. In response, the people of Puerto Rico elected conservative Governor Luis Fortuño in 2008. Governor Fortuño had vowed to balance the budget and get the island out of debt, primarily by gutting the bloated government.

In the United States, a similar dynamic unfolded with the economic recession of 2008 and subsequently, the election of numerous conservatives as state governors, who also implemented austerity and an attack on the public sphere. For example, the state of Wisconsin elected Scott Walker to governor, who proposed legislation known as the 2011 Wisconsin Act 10, which was to address the state's budget deficit. Similar to the case of Puerto Rico, Governor Walker planned to cut budgets related to collective bargaining, retirement, and sick leave funds for public sector employees. The proposed legislation, similar to Certification 98 in Puerto Rico, prompted activists to occupy the capitol building in Madison. However, this would just be the beginning of protests in the United States.

In September of 2011, a small group of activists gathered in Zuccotti Park in Lower Manhattan to protest Wall Street. The primary message of the movement was that it represented

the 99%, or the broad masses of individuals who were unable to share in the wealth and economic prosperity of the 1%. As activists gathered in Zuccotti Park, they organized themselves in ways that embodied the same style as student activists at the University of Puerto Rico; despite, the fact that there was no communication between the activist groups. They were occupying a public space, organized themselves into camps or action-groups, mobilized a heterogeneous population, and, featured a heavily aesthetic occupation.

During late September, I had the opportunity to visit Zuccotti Park with several student activists from the University of Puerto Rico. I observed these similarities, particularly, the use of artistic expressions by way of hundreds of creative posters and slogans (see Figures 44 and 45). However, there were also differences, in that student activists at the UPR organized by ideology, while the activists of Zuccotti Park created action groups based on logistical needs, such as the kitchen, the library, communication, and arts (see Figure 46). Beyond the similarities of the student occupation of the UPR with the Occupy movement, there were also other cases of protest globally that were constituted of the same characteristics, namely, student protests in Chile and Montreal—which made use of public spaces and performativity protest actions, such as a Thriller flash mob performance.

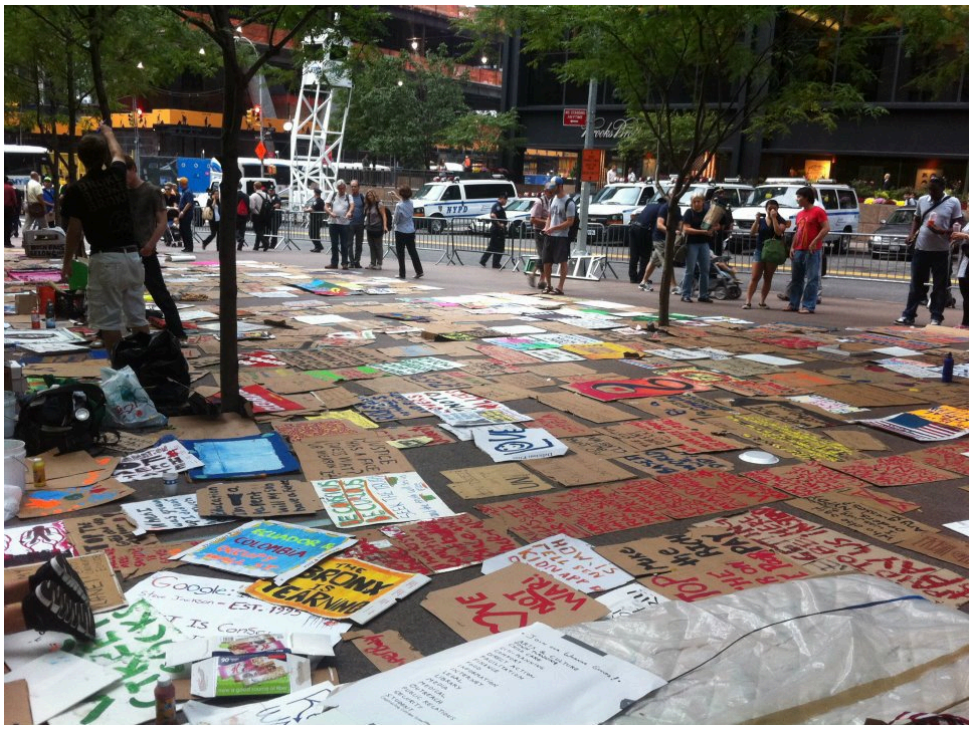

Figure 44. Photograph of Occupy Wall Street, September 2011. Personal Collection.

Figure 45. Photograph of Occupy Wall Street, September 2011. Personal Collection.

Figure 46. Photograph of Occupy Wall Street, September 2011. Personal Collection.

These similarities, across time and place, suggest a style of protest with several key characteristics—a backdrop of austerity, the occupation of public space, an organizational style comprised of action-groups or spokes councils, high levels of heterogeneity among participants, the presence of social media and smartphone technology, and a significant use of artistic and cultural expressions. While several of these characteristics are rooted in history, such as the use of art in protest or a spokescouncil organization style; one of the primary distinctions that distinguished protests of 2010 and onwards is the presence of new media technology, smart phone technology, and social media.

Future research should focus on extend sociological exploration to other potential cases, to not only explore the relationship between creative protest and movement diversity, but also the relationship to these others factors. Scholars should seek a comparative case in which to

measure the impact of creative protest. For instance, a comparison between two cases with high levels of heterogeneity, but one where creative protest was incorporated and another were creative protest was not would provide more empirical leverage on if this relationship holds up in other cases. More broadly, scholars should explore the various impacts of creative protest. Given a birds eye view of contemporary protest, particularly those focused on issues of austerity and public space, creative protest seems to be a dynamic that is not going away. Therefore, it is important to further explore this relationship. It has implications for both culture and movement scholars, but also for activists who may be seeking ways in which to manage movement difference.

"Everything but the Funnel Cake…"

It is important to recognize that the use of artistic and cultural expressions within social movements is not without conflict. There was a sense among some activists that overly artistic expressions in the protest may detract from the movement message. In fact the title of this dissertation came from an informal conversation I had with a self-identified anarchist and a few other friends. We were discussing the art of the 62-day occupation. I suggested that given the high levels of protest on the island of Puerto Rico that art may be used to create a more exciting environment. I immediately recognized that there were some reservations about the power of art in protest. One of the individuals responded, "That's how protest is on the island. It's like a carnival or festival. It has everything but the funnel cake." We continued to discuss their opinions on how an emphasis on artistic expression might detract from the message, particularly as individuals may be mobilized or participate in the protest for what could be deemed as "the wrong reasons."

However, this was not the only opinion on the inclusion of art in protest. For example, a student leader stated:

> But that's political too. What we gained in the first movement…all of the drama, art, culture; it was center to our politics. It was an important thing; we were discussing it again this week in my study group, the work of art and culture in politics. It has substance too. You know, it's important to build a relationship between those aspects because a human being is not just the political aspect or just the cultural aspect or just the academic aspect, we are complex human beings. We are all of that…I think it's important, it's part of the political process.

Or in other words, some activists found that the distinction between art and politics to be a false dichotomy. While the student activist at the university would continue to debate the role of art in their occupation, these expressions continue to emerge in a number of contemporary movements; therefore, warranting a further investigation of these relationships.

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APPENDIX A

Timeline of Protest Events for the UPR Student Strike, Phase One

Date	Event	Type of Protest Event
October 15, 2009	National Strike of Law 7	National March
April 21, 2010	48-Hour Strike at UPR	Student Occupation
April 23, 2010	Huelga Begins at UPR	Student Occupation
April 28, 2010	Que Vivan Las Estudiantes	Musical Concert in Support of Student Occupation
May 8, 2010	Protest of Board of Trustees at Botanical Gardens	Student Piquete
May 14, 2010	Protest of Food and Water Restrictions for Student Occupation	Community Support of Students
May 20, 2010	Protest of Fortuno's Fundraiser at The Sheraton	Student Occupation
June 3, 2010	Protest at "The Gold Mile" in Hato Rey	Student Piquete
June 22, 2010	Celebration of Victory	Celebration of Students at Ponce Convention Center
June 22, 2010	Protest at La Fortaleza and Escuela de Plastica Artes	Student Piquete
June 26, 2010	Protest of Board of Trustees at Botanical Gardens	Student Piquete
June 30, 2010	Protest of Budget Negotiations	National Piquete
July 2, 2010	Protest at Police Station Against Violence	National Piquete
July 14, 2010	Protest at UPR about Student Sanctions	Student Piquete
July 18, 2010	National Strike of Police Brutality	National March
July 22, 2010	Protest at UPR about Student Sanctions	Student Piquete
July 28, 2010	Piquete of Mayor in Barceleoneta	National Piquete

Timeline of Protest Events for the UPR Student Strike, Phase Two

Date	Event	Type of Protest Event
September 22, 2010	24-Hour Strike in the Humanities at UPR	Student Occupation
September 23, 2010	Anniversary Celebration of Grito de Lares	National Celebration
October 19-21, 2010	24-Hour Strikes of Humanities, Education, Social Sciences at UPR	Student Occupation
November 30, 2010	Protest at Chancellor's Office	Student Piquete
December 6, 2010	Elimination of UPR Gates and Capitol Security Incident	Student Incident
December 7-8, 2010	48-Hour Strike at UPR	Student Walk-Out
December 9, 2010	Police Occupation of the UPR	Student Incident
December 12, 2010	Student March to El Capitolio	Student March
December 14, 2010	Second Huelga Begins at UPR	Student "Occupation"
December 15, 2010	Protest of Board of Trustees at Botanical Gardens	Student Piquete
December 20, 2010	Protest on UPR Campus	Student Piquete
January 11, 2011	Student March on UPR Campus	Student March
January 12, 2011	Protest and Information Dissemination	Student Piquete
January 13, 2011	Protest at Plaza Universitaria	Student Piquete
January 19-27, 2011	Civil Disobedience Protest at Plaza Universitaria	Student Piquete and Civil Disobedience
February 9, 2011	Street Painting Protest at Lazaro Library	Student Cultural Protest
February 12, 2011	Valentine's Day National March in Support of Students	National March
March 7, 2011	Protest of Chancellor and Attack of Chancellor	Student Piquete
March 9, 2011	24-Hour Cultural Protest	Student Cultural Protest
March 11, 2011	International Day of Solidarity Protest	Student Piquete

APPENDIX B

Interview Questions for Artists

1. What is your particular medium? Can you describe a couple of your most recent works?

2. Please describe the current environment of social movements and activism on the island. What are the social movements? What are their aims? Which groups are involved in this movement? How might the movement describe success?

3. Would you describe your art as political? Is it overtly political? Or how do you think about political art? Can art be used in a political nature without being overt?

4. Could you describe more specifically the political nature of your art? Can you provide a couple of examples of how your specific work is political?

5. Please describe any social movements that you are actively engaged in. Again, what is the movement? What are the aims? What groups are involved in this movement? How might the movement think about success?

6. In thinking about the movement(s) you are involved with, can you describe the genesis of the movement? What produced the movement? Are there aspects of the political and cultural environment that affects the movement?

7. In thinking about these political and cultural changes in the environment that shape social movements, what ways do you incorporate these into your own work? Do others incorporate these into their work? Can you provide some examples?

8. How do you and others in the movement think about the role of art in activism? What effects do you think art may have on a movement? What is its purpose?

9. How might art contribute to building collective identity among various movement constituents? Does it foster mobilization and solidarity? Can you describe the ways you think this happens?

10. How do you think about the differences between legitimate (formal events and gallery art) and illegitimate art (graffiti, street theatre) in terms of impacting social movements? Is one more or less successful in achieving movement goals?

11. What about other forms of art—including your own medium? Do you feel that certain mediums are better suited for activist art? Are specific forms of art more present in specific types of social movements? For movements in Puerto Rico?

12. Overall, do you think artists should be engaged in activism? Do you see yourself as both an activist and artist? Is there a role that you think artists should play in activism and social movements?

13. Describe the student movement at UPR. How did it begin? What are/were the aims of the movement? What changes in the political and cultural environment produced the movement? What coalitions or organizations were present during the two months of the strike.

14. Can you tell me about the various campsites set up at the gates. What faculties were present? How were they similar or different from one another? What about the cultural aspects? Were there different ideologies? Were there different lectures, art shows?

15. What narratives or slogans were used by the student movement to generate recognition, mobilization, and solidarity? Where did these slogans come from?

16. What is the role of artists in the student movement at UPR? More generally, how do you think about the role of artists in activism? (For example, your work with MASFALDAS).

17. Are there certain types of art that are more prevalent in activism and social movements here on the island? Theatre? Music? Visual Arts?

18. As an artist, how do you incorporate political and cultural issues in your own work? Could you describe some specific pieces you've been involved with that you could refer to as "protest art?"

19. Are there places where artists are not present in protest? Any specific movements where artists have not historically had a strong presence?

APPENDIX C

Interview Questions for Student Activists

1. Please describe the current environment of social movements and activism on the island. What are the social movements? What are their aims? Which groups are involved in this movement? How might the movement describe success?

2. Please describe any social movements that you are actively engaged in. Again, what is the movement? What are the aims? What groups are involved in this movement? How might the movement think about success?

3. In thinking about the movement(s) you are involved with, can you describe the genesis of the movement? What produced the movement? Are there aspects of the political and cultural environment that affects the movement?

4. How do you and others in the movement think about the role of art in activism? Has your movement involved artists, such as in protests or strikes? Can you describe any specific examples of the inclusion of artists in your movement? Describe the artwork and the artist. What effects do you think art may have on a movement? What is its purpose?

5. In thinking about the inclusion of art in your particular movement, were there examples of both legitimate (gallery art, formal events) and illegitimate (graffiti, street theatre) that were used for different purposes? Do you think these different types of art affect the movement's success or failure differently?

6. What about different forms of art—do you find differences between the use of visual art or music or theatre? Is there one that seems more successful for the movement goals than others? Is one more likely to occur, particularly in Puerto Rican social movements?

7. Overall, what do you see as the role of art? Should art play a role in activism? Should artists be engaged in activism?

8. Describe the student movement at UPR. How did it begin? What are/were the aims of the movement? What changes in the political and cultural environment produced the movement? What coalitions or organizations were present during the two months of the strike.

9. Can you tell me about the various campsites set up at the gates. What faculties were present? How were they similar or different from one another? What about the cultural aspects? Were there different ideologies? Were there different lectures, art shows?

10. What narratives or slogans were used by the student movement to generate recognition, mobilization, and solidarity? Where did these slogans come from?

11. What is the role of artists in the student movement at UPR? More generally, how do you think about the role of artists in activism? (For example, your work with MASFALDAS).

12. Are there certain types of art that are more prevalent in activism and social movements here on the island? Theatre? Music? Visual Arts?

13. As an artist, how do you incorporate political and cultural issues in your own work? Could you describe some specific pieces you've been involved with that you could refer to as "protest art?"

14. Are there places where artists are not present in protest? Any specific movements where artists have not historically had a strong presence?