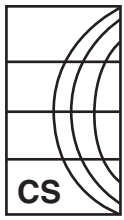

Whistleblowers and Organizational Protesters

Crossing Imaginary Borders

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abstract: The article contemplates a new alliance between whistleblowing and protesting. This is done in the context of seeking more powerful interventions in the fight against corruption in business and government. The prevailing view that whistleblowing and protesting are unconnectable forms of ethical resistance is challenged. The article argues that whistleblowing and protesting may have enormous untapped synergistic potential. This position is considered within a two-level analysis that recognizes the twin intersecting realities of people and structures in the fight against corruption. On the first level, the article elucidates how men and women of conscience use individual and/or collective strategies to expose and correct wrongdoing across two landscapes: the organization and the 'street' (public protests). On the second level, the focus goes beyond engaged individuals and collectivities using different landscapes for moral purposes, to a position that treats these landscapes as more than passive backdrops. They are seen as highly interactive action zones that variously promote or obstruct anti-corruption measures despite individual and collective action to the contrary. The article concludes with pointers for future research in this largely unexplored area.

keywords: organizational protesters ✦ public protests ✦ synergistic relations ✦ whistleblowing

We talk a lot of ethics these days. 'Transparency', 'corporate governance', 'codes of conduct', 'accountability' – this is the new lingua franca for a world jaded by statistics pricing business and government corruption at US$1.5 trillion a year (5 percent of the world economy) (Kaufman, 2003). This moral verbiage often replaces action to root out corruption and betrays a concern that the methods commonly deployed to counter wrongdoing in government and business circles are either not working or

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are highly vulnerable to sabotage (Dercks, 2001; Findlay, 1991; Maor, 2004). In fact, each new scandal carries a usually overlooked encryption suggesting this. Could poor performance in tackling serious misconduct have something to do with the polarized way we think about the programmes we devise to fight corruption?

The eminent American sociologist Mayer Zald, in a recent reminiscence, has detailed how an idea about conceptual unity accompanied his lengthy research career. He has long been firmly of the view that 'political processes within organizations have many parallels to those found in society' (Zald, 2005: 158). This combinative way of thinking blew open new research windows for Zald and his colleagues. He could now muse about bureaucratic insurgencies, mass insurrections and coups d'etat in formal organizations (Zald, 2005: 160–2). Zald was thinking syncretic thoughts, when others saw the social and the organizational in parallel orbits.

This article builds on this Zaldian approach. As part of a continuing search for a more effective offensive against corruption, I offer a conceptual framework that seeks to interlock two common anti-corruption strategies: whistleblowing and protesting. Could these normally separated and indeed often estranged forms of ethical resistance work together? Could we even go further with this image of the protester and the whistleblower side by side and imagine synergistic outcomes from this match-up? I build the case towards an affirmative response to this question by first summarizing the separately developed whistleblowing and protest fields. This is followed by a consideration of the attractiveness of each scholarship to management. Next comes the central part of the article, where I examine the possible co-productivities between whistleblowing and protest. The article concludes with compass bearings for research on what I see as the next phase in the development of ethical resistance – whistleblower–protester alliances. At this point, some conceptual clarifications are necessary.

Public interest whistleblowing is presented here as a solo voice strategy alerting us to the presence of wrongdoing in public and private workplaces. I define the whistleblower as a concerned citizen, totally or predominantly motivated by notions of public interest, who initiates of her or his own free will an open disclosure about significant wrongdoing in a particular organizational role. This disclosure is made to a person or agency capable of investigating the complaint and facilitating the correction of the wrongdoing; and as a result of this disclosure, the whistleblower suffers accordingly (De Maria and Jan, 1994).

Protesting, another important form of ethical resistance, is characterized as a voice *and* group mobilization strategy. Solo protesting, such as a disgruntled shareholder placarding outside a corporate headquarters, is

Table 1 *Comparing Whistleblowing and Protesting*

	Whistleblowing (Solo activity)	Protest (Group activity)
Internal	Individual disclosures through written and oral reports of wrongdoing to superiors inside the organization.	Group protest activities conducted within the organization: e.g. stop work meetings, industrial sabotage.
External	Individual disclosures through written and oral reports of wrongdoing to authorities outside the organization: e.g. media, lobby groups, regulators, professional association.	Group protest activities conducted outside the organization: e.g. street marches, picketing.

recognized; but only as a deviation from the norm of mass involvement. Mobilization is the most potent characteristic of protesting. Through mobilization of human and non-human resources, corruption and other grievances are brought to organizational and public attention. Protesting also brings pressure to bear on organizations hosting corruption to change their ways. At their most structurally complex, protests seek to control or at least influence law-making by electoral mobilizations and political wings (e.g. European green parties) (Edelman, 2001; Nelson, 2006).

Whistleblowing and protesting share a dual location status; they both operate internally (organizationally) and externally (extra-organizationally). Internal whistleblowers report to superiors inside the organization. Often exasperated with this process, whistleblowers also disclose wrongdoing outside the organization to the media, lobby groups, public authorities and regulators (Dworkin and Baucus, 1998). Protest activities are also conducted inside and outside the organization. Following Kassing and Armstrong (2002), I call the former *organizational protesting* and the latter *public protesting*. Table 1 schematizes these points.

The location (internal/external) of whistleblowing and protesting may have significant influences on strategic choice and organizational reaction. For example, Susan Ray disclosed internally about a nurse colleague dealing inappropriately with psychologically disturbed patients in a Canadian hospital. She got nowhere, so changed the locus and disclosed externally to the College of Nursing Ontario, the professional regulator.

As a result, she drew the fire of colleagues, the accused and the local nurses' union, who filed harassment complaints against her (Ray, 2006: 440). Thankfully for Ray, the College of Nursing Ontario determined that the reported nurse was mentally unfit and was required to stand down for treatment.

Locus of action may also bear important strategic consequences for protesters. For example, in April 2003, flight attendants protested on the sidewalk outside North West Airlines' annual shareholders' meeting. They were angry at the airline paying executive bonuses while at the same time instituting big pay cuts and redundancies (Newman, 2003). What the flight attendants were able to do and say on the street, with their placards, megaphones, media interviews and petitions, is different from what they were able to do and say the next day when they turned up for work. In this organizational context, memos and staff–union and staff–management meetings were the more appropriate methods of protest.

The point here is about movement between different modes of ethical resistance and the artificiality of thinking about the internal–external locus in either/or terms. The organization as a boarded-up, stand-alone phenomenon is being supplanted in the literature by an ecological view that stresses extra-organizational relationships over structural isolation, and human and physical resource fluidity in and out of the organization over structural autonomy (McAdam and Scott, 2005: 7).

There is also movement in the choice of resistance targets. Recent research suggests that employees choose from a range of audiences to express their dissent (Kassing and Armstrong, 2002: 40). Organizational protesters and internal whistleblowers are more like to target channels above themselves when they (1) hold managerial positions (Kassing and Avtgis, 1999), (2) have strong relationships of trust with supervisors (Kassing, 2000a) and (3) detect a workplace culture that supports free speech (Kassing, 2000b). By contrast, employees are more likely to laterally dissent to peers when the conditions favouring upwards protest are not present.

An inference from this research is that people with things to say or do about wrongdoing choose risk-assessed options inside and outside the organization. In other words, Monday's whistleblower may be Tuesday's petitioner, Wednesday's rally organizer, Thursday's delegation to management and Friday's media source. This is a very tantalizing but somewhat overstated proposition. A construction of ethical resistance as a continuum from solo voice through to organizational group protester, on to street-level protesting, and perhaps back again, is worth thinking about. It aligns with the 'anti-borders' view contained in the new ecological emphasis referred to earlier. However, this continuum of ethical

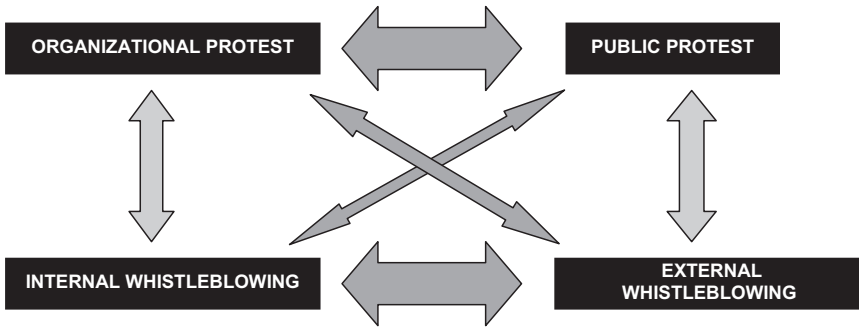

Figure 1 *Action Thoroughfares between Whistleblowing and Protesting*

resistance is validated more in anecdote than research. It also could be taken to assume that the ethical resister is faced with a feast of options. This is obviously not the case.

If there are several strategic continua embedded in ethical resistance whereby actors can migrate back and forth from internal to external disclosure, from internal to external protest, and even from the protest mode to the disclosure mode, then we are dealing with transient pro-social phenomena. While whistleblowing is *essentially* individual voice and protesting is *essentially* voice plus mobilization, they can both be metamorphic. When whistleblowers join action coalitions in their workplaces, or on the street, they stand to lose, perhaps temporarily, their individualist *locus standi.* The reverse may also be true. The protester can withdraw from action coalitions and concentrate on solo exposures of wrongdoing. Thus, I see action thoroughfares from organizational protest to public protest; from internal to external whistleblowing, and from whistleblowing to either organizational or public protest. I try to figuratively represent this idea in Figure 1.

We have much to learn about the comings and goings on these two-way streets. We are not helped by the fact that the whistleblower and protests scholarships have been, up until now, separate domains of enquiry. With rare exceptions (Elliston, 1982; Jubb, 1999), these scholarships go their separate ways, displaying no common cause, yet they seem to be concerned about similar things.

Researching the Whistleblower and the Protester

While the protest literature has a longer history then whistleblower scholarship, it has not been as accessible to management as the burgeoning

whistleblowing scholarship has. In general, the historical imperviousness of business to protest scholarship could be put down to what passes as *acceptable* business research. What, in other words, has business got out of protest scholarship? Whistleblowing is a different story. It is becoming friendly (Buono and Nichols, 1985; Makower, 1994; Post et al., 1998; Richter, 2001). Whistleblowing conjures optimistic possibilities of organizational remoralization of management systems and therefore reprofitization. It does this by offering organizations ripe for scandal a moral voice within, which, if listened to, offers pre-emptive protection from public exposure, regulatory overscrutiny and media attack (Skillen, 2003; Winscombe, 2002). In supporting whistleblowing, organizations now stand to enhance their social image in a community increasingly jaded by stories of commercial misconduct.

However, this new development should not be overstated. Whistleblowing's 'arrival' as a strategy to expose wrongdoing, particularly internal whistleblowing, is a very recent occurrence. It has long struggled against the stigma of breaching workplace loyalty (Camerer, 1996; Hacker, 1978; Larmer, 1992; Rongine, 1985: 284–6). This is evidenced by the titles of papers previously published including: 'The Whistleblower: Patriot or Bounty Hunter?' (Singer, 1992); 'Whistleblowers: Saint or Snitch?' (Anonymous, 1992); 'Whistleblowers: Heroes or Stool Pigeons?' (Fiesta, 1990); and 'Whistleblowing: Subversion or Corporate Citizenship?' (Johnson, 1996).

The four main scholarships that have declared a research interest in whistleblowing are: sociology, social psychology, management and ethics. Notwithstanding the fact that some of the classics in whistleblower scholarship have come from the sociological tradition (Beamish, 2000; Perrucci et al., 1980; Rothschild and Miethe, 1999), sociology has been slow to move off the mark. This is changing if the number of papers published in the last five years in sociological journals and the number presented to recent International Sociological Association conferences is any guide (Binikos, 2006: Marx, 2006; Pershing, 2003; Robinson, 2006; Uys, 2002; Uys and Senekal, 2006).

Whistleblower studies and reports true to the social-psychological framework show an interest in communication (King, 1997), ethical profiling and psychological assessments of whistleblowers (Brabeck, 1984; Jensen, 1987; Miceli and Near, 1984, 1988; Miceli et al., 1988, 1991).

Whistleblowing studies within the management literature usually take a different view. The focus ranges from how whistleblowing can enrich the ethical life of organizations (Brooks, 1993; Callahan et al., 2002; Miceli and Near, 1994; Ross, 2002; Winscombe, 2002), how it can be the frontline against fraud (Cruise, 2001: 413; Dubinsky, 2002; Keenan, 2000) and how it can assist the internal audit process (Figg, 2000); through to explorations

of the optimal conditions for whistleblowing (Callahan and Collins, 1992; Kanter, 1983; King, 1999).

The whistleblowing and ethics field is also quite busy. It is distinguished from the other fields by its avoidance of multivariate methodologies in favour of the case study method and the application of normative positions (e.g. virtue ethics, Confucianism) to the 'why' and 'why not' of disclosure (Cabrol-Cardoso, 2004; Lovell, 2002; Mohr and Horton-Deutsch, 2001; Park et al., 2005; Peternelj-Taylor, 2003; Ray, 2006).

Protest scholarship, on the other hand, runs its course mainly through politics, history and sociology. This gives it a much stronger multidisciplinary appearance. In protest scholarship there are many contributors with diverse frameworks. Whistleblowing scholarship is different. It has been dominated by a small group of researchers who exhibit very little variance in their approaches to methodology (De Maria, 2004).

Protest scholarship has been enriched by the recent confluence of two major social science traditions. Previously scholars either studied complex formal organizations or studied social movements. They toiled within conceptual circumferences that were built largely on stereotypes of organizations marked by hierarchy, authority and rational decision-making, and social movements characterized by informality, coalitions and goal and strategic choice conflicts (Morris, 2000: 445). Increasingly, organizational scholars and social movement scholars are coming to appreciate the cross-stitching that connects these two hitherto separated realities (McAdam and Scott, 2005: 4). Organizations and social movements are seen as linked by the normative commitments that actors in organizations share with those outside (Zald et al., 2005: 255). Organizations and social movements are being increasingly understood as interconnected forms of coordinated collective action and therefore amenable to similar forms of analysis (Campbell, 2005: 41).

By giving investigative legitimacy to more alarming conduits of change such as strikes, demonstrations and even revolution, protest scholarship is currently in the same place whistleblower research was a decade ago. Then, public interest disclosure was an alien topic threatening workplace solidarity and employee loyalty. To those who would listen, protest research sends out an ominous meta-message about the nature of the 'enemy' storming the city gates of capitalism (Albert, 2002; Cockburn et al., 2001; Moore, 2000; Shah, 2001; Tabb, 2001). This ideologically driven conceptual blind spot means that protesters have not been adequately recognized within organization-centric theories. The literature seems to be slowly moving away from treating activists as problems for the organization (Dougall, 2005; Dozier and Lauzen, 2000). In this respect it mimics precisely the same trend away from the demonization of the whistleblower that I spoke of earlier.

Movements towards corporate citizenship (McIntosh et al., 2003), ethical investment (Hancock, 2002; Sparkes, 2002) and the increased accountability of boards (Van den Berghe and de Ridder, 1999) are becoming more common, being driven by shareholder activism (Monks, 1998; Richter, 2001), public protests against business (for WTO protests, see Perrine, 2001; for the 'McLibel' case, see Vick and Campbell, 2001) and consumer activism (John and Klein, 2003; Kell, 1995). It is possible that these new movements, pushing business to higher and higher levels of probity and accountability, will precipitate a renaissance in protest studies.

Interestingly, protest scholarship is now following the whistleblower literature into pro-organizational discourses. Argenti's (2004) recent study of the collaboration between activist groups and Starbucks comes to mind here. Understanding how public protests extract change in organizations is now on the sociological agenda.

Towards a Co-Production of Whistleblowing and Protesting

In this section, we follow the case of Paul van Buitenen (2000, 2001) in order to elaborate a two-level analysis of how to theoretically contemplate whistleblowing and protesting co-production. On the first level, men and women of conscience use individual and/or collective strategies across two landscapes, the organization and the 'street' (public protests), to expose and correct wrongdoing. The focus here is on moral action with an emphasis on using these landscapes to achieve their pro-social goals using their particular brand of ethical resistance. On the second level, a meso-analysis is applied to balance the focus on actors. The spotlight here is on the landscapes themselves. It is more than engaged individuals and collectivities using different landscapes for their moral purposes. These landscapes are more than passive backdrops, they are in fact highly interactive action zones that variously promote or obstruct anti-corruption measures despite individual and collective action to the contrary.

Paul van Buitenen was a Brussels-based auditor in the European Commission's Financial Control Directorate. The European Commission is the very powerful executive body of the European Union. Van Buitenen discovered serious financial wrongdoing, fraud and mismanagement within the Commission in 1998. In December 1998, disillusioned with the efficacy of the official EC reporting channels that he used (as many whistleblowers do), he sent a 34-page letter (plus 600 pages of supportive documentation) to Magda Aelvoet, president of the Green Party in the European Parliament. The moment Van Buitenen delivered his incendiary allegations to the Green Party, the purpose of the whistleblower and the

protest group (Green Party) was fused. For the Green Party, Van Buitenen's information represented a rare benefaction – the receipt of highly credible facts from an ethical operator within an organization with a practised tradition of concealment and obfuscation (Shore, 2003).

On this first level of analysis, we see the insider, Van Buitenen, using individual strategies (solo disclosure of evidence of corruption) and the outsider, Magda Aelvoet, using collective strategies (through her Green Party) to expose and correct wrongdoing. This insider–outsider relationship has yet to be explored fully in the literature. Binder has enquired into why some outsider challenges to educational curricula make inroads in public schools while others do not. She found that the challengers who succeed are equipped with arguments that resonate with the cultural landscape at large and with organizationally familiar logics. In other words, culture and organization affinity matter to the success of outsider attacks on the organization (Binder, 2000: 69; Lowrence, 2006).

Rojas has recently noted that Binder's findings raise important questions about how bureaucracies respond to protest. Rojas was trying to account for why disruptive student protests pushing for the creation of more departments of African American studies in American universities did not have significant effects (Rojas, 2006). Social movement theories suggest that both disruptive and passive protest should be effective, although for different reasons. Rojas, relying on Binder, ruminated whether it was possible that protests deprived sympathetic bureaucratic insiders (who may be in the best position to support reforms) of their capacity to advocate on behalf of the protest goals. Rojas argued that the non-alienated insider is a source of vital strategic information: knowledge of the daily operations of the bureaucracy, of the organization's culture and wider political context and which arguments will work and which will be rejected by power holders (Rojas, 2006: 2161).

From the time of his external disclosures until his departure from the EC, van Buitenen remained a valuable informational asset to the Green Party. That he was not alienated by their protest tactics, or they by him, suggests a high level of shared meaning with the anti-corruption values in the cultural landscape into which the EC fitted as well as a shared understanding of the organizational logics peculiar to the Commission. Van Buitenen's and the Green Party's relationship was still viable five years on (*Business Weekly*, 2004). Van Buitenen 'travelled' from silent observer to internal whistleblower to external whistleblower to politicized activist. In 2004, he was elected to the European Parliament as a member of the party he formed, Europa Transparant (Transparent Europe).

Two questions arise at this point. First, was it this *combination,* high integrity whistleblower plus powerful protest group, that explains the extraordinary outcome: the resignation of EC president Jacques Santer

Table 2 *Whistleblowing and Protest: Similarities and Differences*

	Whistleblowing	Protesting
Similarities		
Morally propelled action	Yes	Yes
Personal risk-taking	Yes	Yes
Change-focused	Yes	Yes
Vulnerable to name calling	Yes	Yes
Strategic planning	Yes	Yes
Differences		
Protection against reprisals	Less	More
Violent change endorsed	No	Possible
Solo activity	Yes	No
Use of media	Last resort	First resort
Intra-organizational focus	Yes	No
Strategic options	Few	Many

and his entire 20-member commission on 15 March 1999 and Van Buitenen's survival? Second, was this combination synergistic in outcome? In practical terms, did both the Greens and Van Buitenen become more powerful through this exchange? The evidence that there were synergistic outcomes in this relationship is to be found in Van Buitenen's metamorphic move from (previously unknown) bureaucrat to high-profile moral campaigner *cum* politician. The identification of the Greens with this moral campaigner gave the party some needed synergy too as it was able to campaign legitimately on an anti-corruption platform.

Examining the synergistic possibilities between whistleblowers and protesters is an exacting exercise as there are real qualitative differences between whistleblowing and protesting. A handy starting point is a tabulation of these differences and similarities. This is presented in Table 2. It is based on rudimentary 'yes/no' and 'more/less' dichotomies, it is not supposed to capture nuance. The similarities provide the basis for future alliances. The dissimilarities show how challenging alliance building can be.

With regard to the similarities, both whistleblowers and protesters are propelled by moral considerations (Opp, 2004: 16). Both take personal risks (Martin, 1999), are change-focused and receive various levels of state protection in countries with democratic forms of government where the rule of law applies (De Maria, 2006; Konvitz, 2003). Both share a vulnerability to definitional defamation, which must impact on strategic effectiveness. Whistleblowing can still be rendered ineffective through impugning ulterior motives; as was Van Buitenen's lot and, of course, the lot of many protesters. The meanings that attach to them are riddled with

contradictions and hypocrisy, specifically the now-common accusation that protesters are 'unpatriotic'.

The dissimilarities between whistleblowers and protesters appear to outnumber the shared points, making the case for the co-conceptualization of whistleblowing and protest that more difficult. Protesters and whistleblowers can benefit from qualified legal, and at times constitutional, protection for both voice and mobilization. These did not completely protect Van Buitenen. He was rebuked by his EC superiors for whistleblowing and originally put on half pay for four months. Studies have reported a high demand for increased opportunities for ethical resistance in the workplace (Collom, 2003; Sanders, 1983). This could suggest a desire by organizational protesters for the same level of civil liberty protection theoretically available to their street-level colleagues.

Another significant difference between the two modes of ethical resistance concerns their respective attitudes to change. Whistleblowers do not embrace violent change; protesters sometimes do (Elliston, 1982). Whistleblowers also tend to use the media as a last resort (Callahan and Dworkin, 1994), protesters as a first resort when a free press is available (Tarleton, 2000).

Whistleblowing is structured as a solo activity. Protesting is usually never that: it always has an eye to coalition building and mass demonstrations. Whistleblowing normally has a primary internal life, with whistleblowers being active users of endogenous complaint pathways provided by management (De Maria and Jan, 1996; Kassing and Armstrong, 2002: 54). Public protest, on the other hand, has a public persona; as does organizational protest. But organizational protest is constantly moderated by the corporation wishing to cover the activity with a blanket of secrecy.

Whistleblowers, like Van Buitenen at the EC, often embrace the corporate direction of their organization; at least at the outset of their whistleblowings (De Maria and Jan, 1994: 59–73; Kassing, 2001). They seek an improvement, a reform and some ethical change, without the demise of the total system. Protesters often have fundamental worldview clashes with their targets and often seek radical overhaul, if not their demise.

Strategic options for internal whistleblowers are usually monochromatic. They have very little opportunities to digress from the simple stepped sequences usually inflexibly prescribed in administrative regulation or whistleblower statute (De Maria and Jan, 1996). The whistleblower's grievance-setting forum is in one of the most supervised and regulated sites in our society – the workplace (Collom, 2003). Whistleblowers do not have the freedom to use novel and attention-grabbing tactics such as candlelight vigils, banner fixing, leafleting, street carnivals and so forth; all of which are available to public protesters. Van Buitenen experienced all the

formalism and inflexibility associated with internal whistleblowing. That is why he broke free and reported externally.

Perhaps I can summarize this discussion of the first-level analysis by saying that the synergistic possibilities between whistleblowers and protesters are not a foregone conclusion. Much stands in the way of co-production here. It happened in the Van Buitenen case because he and the Green Party saw important social outcomes from cooperation. There was a high level of trust: both Van Buitenen and the Greens were morally propelled and change-focused in a way that did not engender conflict about whether the change would be sought violently or non-violently.

The article now turns to the second level of the analysis. It concentrates on the landscapes themselves. In the Van Buitenen case, the landscapes of interest are the European Commission and the two political parties, the Green Party and Europa Transparant. Van Buitenen formed this latter party and subsequently won a surprising 7.3 percent of the vote in the Netherlands, giving him two seats in the 732-member European Parliament. Both political parties have been considered in this article as parties of protest. At this level, it is more than engaged individuals and collectivities using different landscapes for their moral purposes. These landscapes are more than passive backdrops, they are in fact highly interactive action zones that variously promote or obstruct anti-corruption measures despite individual and collective action to the contrary.

In sociology, there is a limited concourse of literatures alert to this issue. Zald et al. tell us that one literature addresses how public protests lead to changes in the *environment* of the organization specific to responding to the demands of the protesters 'in the form of norms and directives attached to sanctions and surveillance' (Zald et al., 2005: 254). Another focuses on the organization's inner life, which facilitates or frustrates the incorporation of protester demands into the *modus operandi* of the organization.

Zald et al. have recently added to our understanding of the two landscapes by focusing on the compliance readiness of organizations with respect to change pressures coming into it from the organization's external environment, driven by protest (Zald et al., 2005: 264). They divide compliance readiness into two parts: *ideological commitment* (the extent to which the organization's leadership is sympathetic to and supportive of the protest demands) and *organizational capacity* (the extent the organization can resource the protest demands). Zald et al. treat both these dimensions dichotomously in terms of high and low commitments and capacities. Protests which are fuzzy, patchy or underresourced produce (all other things being equal) low 'pressure' for compliance. The reverse is also true. The authors then present a useful eight-cell typology of organizational responses as a function of protest pressure, ideological

commitment and organizational capacity. These range from Type A (low pressure, low capacity and low commitment) to Type H (high pressure, high capacity and high commitment). In Type A, protests are largely meaningless. In Type H, organizations embrace and absorb protester demands.

In conclusion, the blurring of the boundaries between organizations and their environments, including protester constituencies, should start a new conversation now on whether there is equal blurring of the boundaries between whistleblowers and protesters.

The Next Research Level?

This article comes at a time when conventional solutions to corruption are not delivering on their promises (Keenan, 1995; Santoro, 2003: 407). While studies of protest effectiveness are increasing (Jaynes, 2002), we have no formal research evidence that whistleblowing leads to long-term impacts on the profile of wrongdoing. This is quite extraordinary, given that business and governments now so eagerly embrace whistleblowing. Methodological problems explored in the article aside, the main reason for whistleblower ineffectiveness, in terms of the arguments put forth here, is that whistleblowing and protesting are blind to each other, and ignorant about the destructive interplay of secrecy and silence on their strategies. Certainly, in the popular mind whistleblowing works. The brave and honourable people who disclose win integrity awards and get voted *Time Magazine* Persons of the Year. However, I maintain that whistleblowing (and protesting), *on their own*, will never secure enduring anti-corruption outcomes against systems with silence and secrecy at their disposal.

As to the future, we need conceptual conversations and follow-on empirical research that challenges the main premise of this article. Can whistleblowers and protesters produce synergistic outcomes, or must they always operate in independent ways? There are also huge questions beckoning on the 'two-way street' I examined. To what extent is it possible for ethical resisters to move through a social action continuum from whistleblowing to mobilization and perhaps back again? If there is tactical fluidity, what drives this movement? Or, are protesters and whistleblowers drawn from different ideological communities where the cross-embracement of the others' strategies is rare, if not impossible?

The separate efforts by whistleblowers and protesters to challenge corruption and other forms of wrongdoing are constantly foiled. Should we not be contemplating new interventions that emphasize alliance-building between these important sources of ethical resistance?

Note

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