

CECILIA L. RIDGEWAY: Well, everyone -- that got your attention. It certainly got mine. I want to welcome you to the annual meeting of the American Sociological Association and this opening plenary which I hope is going to be exciting, a chance for some real dialogue about things that we all are concerned about. This as you recall, is a plenary session on inequality and contemporary social protest. And as you are acutely aware, we've had a couple of things happening over the last several years. We've had growing inequality in the U.S. and that has come head-to-head with the worst financial crisis since the Great Depression. Not surprisingly, the resulting social tensions have sparked social protests from the left as well as the right. So, what we're going to talk about now is contemporary social protest, what has happened, what's going on with it. And in some cases, maybe what we want to talk about is what protest is not happening that we would expect to see. What is going on with the tensions that we're experiencing now around inequality in American Society and social protest? We have two fabulous speakers to bring our attention to the -- to these issues. And the way we're going to -- this is going to work is that we're going to -- we have our two primary speakers who are going to be Barbara Ehrenreich and Theda Skocpol who are going to speak to us. Each will speak for about 30 minutes. And then we're going to have a dialogue and Q&A, right? Now, there are house mics in the -- in the aisles here. And we're going to have questions talking because this is something we all care about, right? And it's like idiotic to talk about social protest and somehow not have participation, right? So, we're going to have some participation, some talking involvement on this issue, some engagement. Now, I want to mention that if you look at your program, you notice that there was a third person, third scholar mentioned there, my colleague, Doug McAdam. I regret to say that he had an unexpected medical development -- nothing serious, he'll be fine. But it -- the timing was terrible and as a result he can't be here tonight. So, you're stuck with me to do the facilitation. We were always going to have two primary speakers with a facilitator but you're stuck with me, so -- for which I apologize. But here we are. Well, I'll do my best. Okay. So -- but we couldn't do better to set us up for this than to listen to our two speakers Barbara Ehrenreich and Theda Skocpol. Oh, I'm going to -- we're going to start with Barbara Ehrenreich and I'm going to make a few remarks to introduce her and then when she's finished, I'm going to introduce Theda. And then she's going to talk. And then we go -- will jump into our Q&A and dialogue and I'll facilitate that. Well, of course you all know who Barbara Ehrenreich is but I'm going to insist on saying something anyway. She is of course a long time observer of inequality in America. She's built her career as -- her own -- her own self-made career as a progressive social activist, as an investigative journalist and a kind of independent social analyst. An American society is a kind of society in which -- at least to me seems to live itself unusually in the middle distance in its own mind's eye. We're interested in our -- in the ideas and images and myths of ourselves, the American dream. The cultural sense of where we're going, who we are as a nation and so on. We seem to be more that way than many nations. So, myths and cultural illusions are what we're made out of as America -- Americans. Well, much of Barbara Ehrenreich's work seeks to strip away some of this -- the distinctive cultural myths and social illusions of American society. To reveal the operations of social power that constrain the life chances of the less privileged. How is this really being

made? You know when the Wizard of Oz, at one point, the wizard says, "Pay no attention to the man behind the screen." Well, Barbara Ehrenreich's work is about paying attention to the man behind the screen. Okay. Now, if that kind of work sounds like classical Sociology to you, it does to me too. In her scholarly training though, Barbara Ehrenreich actually is -- she was actually trained in the sciences, she has a PhD in Cell Biology. But she's applied her scientific skills and by that I mean, the skills of critical analysis and of skeptical empiricism to the analysis of social inequality and the behaviors associated with it. And the result has been a long string of insightful, sharply observed books. You all of course know "Nickel and Dimed" about living on a minimum wage job. But you probably also know "Bait and Switch" but just some other things that have certainly interested me is the way she's probed deep -- probed even deeper to take a scholarly look at collective emotions and rights like the "Passions of War" or impulsive "Collective Joy" a book on Dancing in the Streets, right? And more recently, she's written -- going back to talking about some of those myths and written about that American commitment to reality denying positive thinking about positive thinking. So, it's a great honor to welcome Barbara Ehrenreich.

BARBARA EHRENREICH: Thank you very much, Cecilia. I am not as -- well, as she mentioned I'm not a real sociologist, just a Sociology impersonator. So -- but I feel very honored to be treated as the real thing tonight invited to participate in this -- well, illustrious panel. Now, I don't talk mostly about inequality but it's hard to avoid bringing the subject of movements. Social movements, protest movements, mass, eruptions, whatever is going on when you talk about inequality. In fact, I'm going to make a wild speculation right now and that is, that the reason we are talking about inequality tonight at this plenary has something to do with those movements. This is just a little guess. But I got an invitation to join this panel and -- that'd be February of 2012?

CECILIA L. RIDGEWAY: Yes.

BARBARA EHRENREICH: Yeah, that was a long time ago.

CECILIA L. RIDGEWAY: [inaudible]

BARBARA EHRENREICH: And my guess is that the idea for the panel was probably hatched some time in the fall of 2011, right?

CECILIA L. RIDGEWAY: Yes. Yes.

BARBARA EHRENREICH: When occupying encampments we're spreading to -- in -- by my count anyway, 1400 cities and towns around this country. And these had, you know, that one clear inescapable theme, the 99% versus the 1%, you know, just in your face, inequality. You know, I think whatever occupy -- achieved looking back two years later -- almost two years. It did put inequality on the agenda. There's no way to dodge that anymore. Now, I spent a lot of time thinking about in Economic Inequality in particular. And just in the last few years, my thinking has undergone some dramatic changes. When I finished my book "Nickel and Dimed" I would've told you and I told many students and audiences. That

the major reason is -- and I still think this is true, but the major, major reason why we have so much poverty in a society that is generally thought to be "rich" is low wages. The low wages of about 30% or more of the American workforce. And, you know, what I had done in "Nickel and Dimed", I don't think I have to say much about that because some of you, thank you -- actually assigned that in your classes. But I wanted to see whether I could support myself on jobs I could get just walking in off the street in -- you know -- in applying for whatever. And I, had did not go out looking for the lowest paying jobs I could find. I looked for the best paying jobs I could find. Of course I also left home and found the cheapest possible accommodations and so on. But I did -- you know, I did try. I found, you know, obviously anything -- you know, I didn't use my own credentials. Although as a PhD in Cell Biology will not get you real far in the entry level workforce. So, I -- you know, and nobody -- there was nothing actually -- no way to fake on this, I didn't put -- I just put some college in my education. And that was, it thought enough and I never did find a help wanted ad for a political essayist. I in particular, never found a help wanted ad for sarcastic feminist, political essayist. So, you know, I really -- when I got the job's I got were, you know, waitressing, hotel housekeeping, nursing home aid, maid with a house cleaning service and a Walmart Associate as they're called. The -- my average wage -- and this is between 1998 and 2000 was \$7 an hour. Well above the minimum and that'd be the equivalent around \$9 an hour today. That turned out to be less than I could live on as one person living in places like residential motels and trailer parks. So, the less than I could live on at least if I wanted to live indoors. And this is all hard work, physically hard, mentally challenging. Never think that anybody can do it when you think -- in fact, I never used that word unskilled, to describe anybody's work, everybody's work. It takes skill, intelligence and a great deal of an -- concentration and deserves our full respect. But I -- you know, I thank you. And also the -- were concluded a lot of unexpected humiliations from the initial drug test to the constant assumption that we're stealing from our employers. And I should mention another, you know, factor which was a trial. The infrequency of bathroom breaks. That's something you think a lot about if you are in a desk job or a white collar desk job or if you're a professional. But there were jobs I had where bathroom breaks were so infrequent. Then I looked back on that drug test with nostalgia. You know, they don't say that could be your last time. Now, I could see for myself how hard it is to extricate yourself from this world of low-wage work which is such -- which is pretty much the American working class today. You may want, for example to leave your job for a better one. You may hear that Target is blunt paying slightly more than Walmart or whatever the changes you'd like to make. But a transition like that would be impossible if you have no savings. If you make near the minimum wage, you don't have the flexibility to say, "I can go two weeks without pay" because you don't get a paycheck, you know, until after of an -- two weeks where you're working somewhere. So, you -- or you may wish to take a second job or go to Community College. But you have no control in many jobs over your schedule. Now, this is one of the things that Walmart workers are angry about right now. And you're just going to work and find out what your schedule is for the next week. It's going to -- it's going to be posted. So, what if you had child care things planned? So, what if you have classes to take? You're stuck. And you -- pundits on the right use to speak of welfare as a

"trap." Well, low wage work is a far more effective trap I would say. Now, that's a grim enough perspective. But in the reporting I have done and that I have encouraged others to do through something called the Economic Hardship Reporting Project, which is findable on the web. I've discovered something even more alarming than I had realized from this earlier work. And that is, you know, the poverty and inequality are not just like regrettable features of the economic landscape. They are the results of an ongoing process affecting the middle class as well as the poor. A process which ineluctably drives down those were already poor or downwardly mobile and drives them down even further. We'd like to think of ladders going -- leading up and out of poverty. We know -- it need to start thinking instead, you know, the perfect model for me is these water slides and parks where the farther down you go the faster you go to, to come to a ignominious end to the bottom. Now, the fact is though, that both corporations and government have a tendency to single out the poor, the unemployed and the downwardly mobile and make things worst for them. First, in the subject of wages. The wages that, you know -- or officially stated like the -- a minimum wage of -- well, it's changing now. But what are wage? A 750 right now, still? Yeah, 750. Those are optimistically overstated wages. Because of the prevalence of something that doesn't get much discussion and that is wage theft by employers. Employers can do so many things that can simply program the computers to shave a few hours off of each person's week that they're going to be paid for or -- this -- and this is something I ran into in my work for "Nickel and Dimed" was they just require you to show up 30 minutes earlier than the day starts and the time clock starts. Or they just say, "Punch out, I've got more work for you to do." The paid part of your day is over. Now, I -- you know, here's where I need sociologists, I would really like to have a firm estimate of the amount this loss to workers in the form of aid of wage theft. The best estimate I could come up to -- I come up with is an estimate which is really shocking if you think about it, a hundred billion dollars a year robbed from low-wage workers. That's money, that serious money. That's on a scale of major social programs. And then there's a new practice that the New York Times just reported on recently -- of not paying wages at all in the old sense. You just give the employees a pay card so called from a bank which they are charged if they want to use. And if they don't use it enough like, if they're actually living on a, you know, a trust or something -- trust fund. If they don't use it enough then they are charged for not using it enough. In other words, the bank gets right in there to collect from people. As for getting jobs I -- I'm sure you've read about this too whenever growing number of employers openly discriminate against unemployed people. I am -- almost trouble saying that. It sounds so illogical. And this applies to all kinds of jobs including middle-class professional ones. Some states have been trying to outlaw this kind of prejudice against the unemployed but it's there and everybody who's looked for a job, knows you can't have a gap on your resume. Whether it was caused by child raising or recession or whatever. Now, increasingly, employers are demanding also that you prove that you used to have a stable work history. Now, that's not something you're going to have if the jobs you've been holding are like waitressing and cleaning jobs. Furthermore, an estimated 60% of employers now require a credit check before you can get a job and that's a real Catch-22. Of course, you know, the poorer you are, the more downwardly mobile you've

been recently are the more likely you have, you know, caused some damage to your credit rating. And just a couple of decades, it was just the bottom feeders--I mean decades ago, it was just the bottom feeders like the payday lenders will try to make a business out of lending money to people who are not considered good credit risk. But then, you know, there was a big change and I think for what brought -- you know, announced it to me was a Business Week coverage story in 2007 saying poverty has become big business and reporting on major banks getting in on this. Why would they be attracted to poor debtors or loan takers? Because the poor can be charged fabulously high interests rates. I talk about inequality. My colleague in Economic Hardship Recording Project, Gary Woodland calculates that the poor anything pay an effective surcharge of about thirty billion dollars a year for the financial products they consumed. And more than twice that if you add in Subprime credit cards, Subprime auto loans and Subprime mortgages. So that's \$60 billion a year. Another seriously large amount of money. Now, there's only one word I think for the sorts of practices that grind down people who are always already struggling, grind them down further and that word would be, predation. This is predation on a vulnerable. It's not just however, the private sector that is preying on people who need help. Local governments have been discovering that they can partially make up for declining tax revenues through fees, fines and in other cause, imposed on indigent defendants and most misdemeanor defendants in this country are poor or indigent or low-income. Often, for crimes no more dastardly than driving with a suspended license plate. Now, that may see, you know, it seems to me like, kind of an inefficient way for the public sector to make money, right? I mean why would you -- why would you want to jail people who, you know, who haven't paid a fine, you know, started with a fine for some minor traffic thing and we're unable to pay and so end up in jail. Well, you know, some counties have been working that out and actually, charging defendants for their car -- court cost and for rooming board on the jail. Again, how wide split is this, I need your help. It's very hard to get at those county and municipal court records. There's one I -- are here -- I have to give you one example of an actual person reported by the ACLU and this is a Michigan woman named Edwina Nolan, who was jailed in 2009 for failing to pay the \$104 a month that was needed to cover her 16 year-old son's incarceration. She was homeless at the time. She was picked-up on the street for filing behind in her son's jail charges. She thought, you know, when she finally received the back pay check because she was a working woman. She thought she could apply that now to her son's jail stay. Instead, it was confiscated and applied to the cost of her own incarceration. Does this make any sense? No, you know, this doesn't. It doesn't, I'm sorry, I can't give you some kind of mark sister associate logic or an hour and houses and then this is crazy. This is punitive law enforcement run on mock. And then number of possible criminal offense is leading to jail or fines and/or fines is been multiplying recklessly. All over the country -- countries and municipalities have been toughening up laws against truancy for example and ratcheting up enforcement sometimes going so far as the handcuff children found on a straight store in school hours. That's, you know, kind of a funny way to approach truancy. I sense one effect just like now LA were defined for truancy or was -- I think it \$200 and I think that's been pushed back a little bit by protest. But, you know, it lead some parents not to let their children

go to school because of the risk of missing a bus and being at a cuff and getting or beginning to get a record. In this city, New York City it is now a crime to put your feet up on the subway seat even if there's nobody else in the subway car and it's 3:00 AM. It's crisis, a crime, crime. You don't get a warning. You get arrested for doing that. So be warned while you visit the city. A woman in South Carolina spent six days in jail when she was unable to pay a \$480 fine for the crime newly invented I think of a messy yard. Some cities -- such and big ones like Houston and Philadelphia have -- have also made it a crime to share food with indigent people in public places. It's nothing. Seemed a little baffling but that sort of law was actually aimed at the pass of his group food not bombs which like to serve people vegan, homeless people vegan food in public parks. And they go to jail for that, this very nice pacifist to vegan people. Now, race is of course, a major factor in determining who gets prosecuted for what especially, when drugs are involved. And little nod here to Michelle Alexander for her powerful book, "The New Jim Crow." But this is not just something we can file under racial profiling or something. There's no safety here if you're poor or downwardly mobile in being what. Edwina Nolan, the double or triple victim that I mentioned before in Michigan is white, so was the woman with the messy yard and I see a lot of these in my extended family, most of which is white. And then, you know, in a third of the states today being in debt, can itself land you in jail. And there all kinds of ways to fall into debt even from normal middle class problems like student loans and medical bills. If a creditor such a hospital or a landlord or a city or whatever has a court summons issued to you and you failed to show up for your court date, a warrant will be issued for your arrest. It's very easy to miss a court summons because bill collectors who served them just often don't bother sending them out and this is known. All right. In a sequence and NPR reports is increasingly common. A person gets stuff for some minor traffic events say having a noisy muffler or a broken brake light. At which point the officer discovers the warrant, the outstanding warrant and the unwilling offender is immediately taken to jail. Now, each of these crimes, neo crimes and pseudo crimes carries financial penalties as well as jail time. But the amount of money extracted by these means is really fiendishly hard to pen down. No central agency tracks what's going on at the courts and then municipal count and county level -- there is a lot of research to be done. You do have to wonder here that the state, we're talking about the state. We think of the state. Well, we think next to the welfare state very often and the obligation of government to help, you know, dump down in quality and lift people up. It's not really how it looks at it from the bottom. Not that there are -- not that are welfare state and, you know, not to in any way deny the importance of that. And so many attempts to collect money from the poor can be -- I would think self-defeating. Most states confiscate the driver's licenses of people who owe child support virtually guaranteeing that they will be unable to work and never pay that child support. In New Mexico, in one town in New Mexico, there's a law that just passed, that punishes people who owe overdue traffic fines by cutting off their water gas and sewage. Now, once a person falls into the clutches of the criminal justice and the court system, you know, we encountered the kind of slapsticks sadism that you might have seen if you've ever watch the show Wipeout. Everywhere you turn there's another Catch-22, another reason why you won't qualify for a job or for a descent apartment, another reason why you

will be stuck forever at the low-end of a highly unequal income distribution -- where the threat of incarceration and indignities are always hanging over you. And this is the kind of situation that leads to rebellions and protests. Extreme inequality combined with government harassment and repression and well it looks very much to the person who's the victim of it like corruption, where they're trying to get money from you at every point. That can -- that - - this can lead to the -- this can lead to people in the streets. This maybe what, had sets it off, maybe very hard to predict something, you know, seemingly out of the blue is one of Tunisian police officer assaults a fruit vendor on the street of when, you know, something happens when people get onto the fact to the entire--in the entire criminal justice system, discriminates against people on a basis of their economic status or the race. We are now in a new era of mass protest. How new is something we could debate endlessly and, you know, you can always -- we've had -- we've had one nation after another erupt in mass protest recently. There are historical analogies, there are questions of when this started. Should we say, 2009 with the riots in the UK, 2011 with the Arab spring, I don't know. What is new is that we seem to have -- and I'm -- you know, this must be something we want to talk about here tonight, protests that do not grow incrementally out of social movements. As my experience, the anti-war movement of the 1960s did. Instead, we have movements that seemed to spring up out of the blue. No social scientist as far as I, you know, predicted the Tunisian Revolution, the Arab Spring, the uprisings in Turkey, Brazil or just read about this one, Bulgaria. Now, the suddenness of these uprisings is of course, a no small part due to the speed and efficacy of social media in the internet. But it is also or due to something else that's going on, and that is contagion. If you can point to one event in the world that led to the occupying movement in United States, it was the Egyptian Revolution. What -- which in term was inspired by the Tunisian Revolution. What comes next or what any of these leads to, no one knows. In this country, the veterans of occupier continue to be--continue to be active around the issues of debt, student debt and so forth. In the Arab world, the revolutions have stirred up fresh currents of secularism and even feminism as well of course, Islamist backlash. But I would propose that our job as social theorists, even completely fake ones like myself, is not to judge or second guess the movements of our time. It is to deepen the public's understanding of what there is movements are up against. What are the sources of profound inequality? How is it manufactured everyday? How is it maintained and how do we break its drip? Thank you.

CECELIA RIDGEWAY: Well, our second speaker, you also know absolutely know, but I'm going to once again, insist on saying just few things about her. It's Theda Skocpol. Of course, the formal stuff is that she's the Victor S. Thomas professor of Government and Sociology at Harvard University. We know her as legendary political sociologist. Right. She's of course, very well-known for her wide ranging analysis of the role of the state, in revolutions, in social policy and in the construction of social welfare. But she's also well-known for her equally proving analysis of how social policies affect civic engagement and the other way around. This problem of civic engagement, right? Which is right on the -- and particularly in the context of American democracy, which is right on the edge of social change and social movements, right? Like Barbara Ehrenreich, Theda Skocpol is an acute social analyst with her fingers on the poles of

the shifting tensions that are just below the structure of American life. We're always in that little funny mind space above, but what are the shifting tensions below that are driving what's happening, what explodes next. Furthermore, Theda Skocpol not only studies and has studied over in many, many wonderful books, civic engagement in American society and social policy, she actually these days, walks the talk, right? About civic engagement too because she's the founder and director of the Scholar Strategy Network, which encourages public engagement by academic scholars. If you haven't checked that out you should Google it, Scholar Strategy Network. You'll see all these listings she's put together of different types of work, of relevance to the -- to inform social problems that people can use, that can reach out, talk to communities, explain what's going on. Particularly relevant to our concerns here today, but not the only thing we want to -- wanted to talk about, is her recent book, the Tea Party and the Remaking of American Conservatism. So, what I want you to do next is to welcome one of our most acute observers of everyday social processes in the engagement of American Democracy in the growth of tensions, parties, what's going on with how people are reacting to these difficult economic times that we've just gone through. Please welcome Theda Skocpol.

THEDA SKOCPOL: Thank you. Cecelia and it's a great honor to be on a panel with Barbara Ehrenreich who's acutely visionary work, I think many of us have assigned to our students and learned from ourselves, and of course also an honor to be here with your president, Cecilia Ridgeway. What I'm going to talk about today is American national politics and how it has been roiled in extraordinary ways over the last four years and probably we're only getting started. To start, let me just remind everyone of the extraordinary moment of, for many people optimism, that positive changes and fruitful social movements were on the agenda that we symbolize, it wasn't caused but symbolized by that huge victory celebration for the election of President Barack Obama and in Chicago's Hyde Park in November of 2008. It looked like a turning point in American history, veterans of the soul, rights movement from the 60's had tears rolling down their faces and many social movement activist in realms ranging from immigration rights to the labor movement to environmentalist hoping for new and bold action on climate change were gearing up to -- they will push and work with the new president, the first African-American president, a democrat who had broken a little bit with the timidity of the species in our time and had actually spoken about the need to build a bottom-up economy, had not backed off from saying he was going to ask the wealthy to pay higher taxes and was in office with democrats who had made gains in the last two elections and held an almost majority, given that it takes 60 votes from the senate in the congress of the United States. I think a lot of people at that moment expected that the protest and the social movements that might gain steam because after all, this moment was also a moment of a gathering economic catastrophe, financial crisis that triggered a rapid downturn in an already stressed American population, high levels of unemployment the highest since the great depression. Many people thought that that moment would bring a gathering protest on the center and left that would interact with the new electoral victory, a victory fueled by young and minority and female voters to create what some called a new, new deal. Now the new deal back in the 30s was a combination of decisions in Washington, D.C. and social movements



from below that brought about changes that probably didn't look like they were anywhere near enough of the time and certainly weren't but did change the American political economy in a way that created possibilities for rising incomes and family well-being pretty much of the society in the post World War II era. Many people thought the United States was on a verge of another round of that in 2008. But that's not what happened exactly. Now, I will argue and I have argued in writing and I'm sure there are people in this room who disagree that in policy terms, the first two years of Obama's presidency did accomplish some major legislative changes, huge disappointments in labor regulation, stalled immigration reform and a defeat for what might not have been the best approach to carbon-copying legislation in the first place, certainly true. On the other hand, a financial reform ultimately did pass a pretty important reform of student lending, made headway in a financial crisis that delegitimated bankers somewhat, and above all, the affordable care act which for all its limitations, for all that it is not the single payer system that many of would prefer, is nevertheless as David Leonhardt of the New York Times put it, the most redistributive piece of social legislation to pass in 40 years because it promises to give affordable health insurance to many of the 30 million uninsured who are mainly low-income working people. The person I think of when I think of who's going to be helped as the home healthcare worker in her 30s or 40s who toils at a difficult, emotionally demanding job and does not have the most parts of the United States health insurance for herself or her family. It will, if fully implemented, deliver a first step toward affordable health insurance for such people and it is paid for by higher taxes on high-income people and on businesses. So, it's that alone is a major piece for legislation, but the legislation that was forged in those first two years was not in any way accompanied by a rising tide of social protests and social movements on the left that intersected with and were encouraged by and reinforced change in Washington, D.C. and in state capitals. Instead, it was just two months or really a month or so, into Barack Obama's presidency when the Tea Party protest erupted. And the Tea Party ended up creating a scale of protest action that created its own intersection with forces pushing to the right from above and has registered electoral gains in the state houses and in the congress of the United States that give it a staying power well beyond the early phases of highly visible street protests. So the Tea Party in some ways, has turned out to be the most powerful and sustained social movement to get political payoffs in this era, I'll develop that point in a second. Occupy also emerged, but much later and with the trajectory that looks in many ways like a quick peak and a quick tailing off. I'll say more about both the strengths and the limits of the occupied protests that whatever you may think of them, certainly arrived later than the Tea Party eruptions did. And then finally, I'll say a little bit about where we're headed. Now, let me start by talking about the Tea Party. The Tea Party is something that I ended up looking into more closely than I would've ever imagined. It's the first time in my life when I have gone out and done face to face interviews with popular political actors whose views are not only not my own but in many cases, hateful to me. My graduate student, Vanessa Williams and I got to know individual Tea Party people in New England for various parts of Virginia and in the Arizona. We observed Tea Party meetings and we ultimately persuaded individual Tea Party activists, people who attended those meetings or who organized local Tea Parties, to sit down for confidential face

to face, one on one interviews with us. Our method of research also included pulling together a national opinion polls and survey data, looking at organizations on the national stage that wield money and power and media in the name of the Tea Party. But when it came to the grassroots activists, we actually approached it on a way that's quite different for most others including the best journalists because we didn't just drop in on the public protests with the older white people in the colonial costumes carrying signs, denouncing Barack Obama is a Nazi and a communist for wanting to give healthcare to people. We tried to get to know them as individuals, we brought into their homes in some cases and talked with people face to face. And here's what we learned about inequality and protest in the grassroots part of the Tea Party. The Tea Party as a whole, is an intersection of three forces and it's important to realize that its power comes from that intersection. The other two parts of the Tea Party are big right wing media which helped the Tea Party to get visibility and viability in a way that most of their social movements cannot get very quickly because of Fox television, Right-Wing Talk Radio and a whole network of bloggers. And then there are unquestionably, what we call roving billionaires pushing ultra right wing free market ideas. They're not new to the scene. They've been doing it through freedom works and Americans for Prosperity and other various professionally run, opulently funded front groups for quite a long time, but they did jump on the Tea Party label and tried to associate themselves with and leverage the popular protestors when they emerged. So those two parts are very much part of it. But who are the people at the grassroots? When we started our research in 2010 and carried it through into 2011, many people on the left that we respected as commentators told us it was a waste of time because this was all Astroturf. These were really not popular protestors. I beg to differ with that quite profoundly. In the course of 2010 and 2011, some 900 regularly meeting local Tea Parties, meeting once a month at least and sometimes once a week, emerged and spread all over the United States. We eventually put together a database that identified them. And there are about 500 to 600 that are still at it several years later regularly meeting. They are not receiving checks from the Koch brothers at the local level. In most cases, they are run by volunteer, older, white men and women, the men or the couch potatoes of the Tea Party. In the surveys, there are about 55% of the Tea Party sympathizers and activists put the women, as has always been the case in American social movements, often are the ones who do the volunteer work to run the local Tea Parties. To set up the programs, to arrange the transportation, to do the baked goods, to sell at the meetings. So who are these people? What are they thinking? For the most part in addition to being white, they are older. When I went incognito to Tea Party meetings, I fit right in. Mostly over the age of 45 and in many cases, the ones who attend meetings are older, married couples who arrive in large cars festooned with bumper stickers like saying like, "Keep working. Keep working, the people on welfare depend on you." Things like that. They are angry and I would argue, afraid of a rapidly changing country. They are not, for the most part, the people who suffered in the economic downturn of 2009 but as older middle-class people at the grassroots, they are no highly wealthy people, they were frightened about their pensions and their home mortgage and their home values in the downturn. On the other hand, they're mostly on social security or Medicare or veterans' benefit. In our interviews, we were particularly

interested in who they were afraid of and who they were angry about. And these model citizens in many ways who turn out, who organize, who pressure their elected representatives, who turn out to vote. What are they afraid of? Well, they're afraid that they're losing their country to them to the freeloaders, to the moochers and who are the freeloaders and the moochers? Well, for those of us who studied social movements on the right across the course of American history, some of the categories won't be surprising at all. They are lower income people who are perceived as getting something for nothing at expense of taxpayers. The language that people use in interviews even with Harvard professors indicates that they are often people of color. They are illegal immigrants in their view. Undocumented immigrants who, in the Tea Party popular mind loom very, very large as a threat to the American way of life, in all places. And finally, and this was something we couldn't have found out in national surveys, they're young people. A lot of the tea partiers that we interviewed used examples of their own grandsons and granddaughters or grandnieces and grandnephews, who weren't getting jobs, who were getting married before they had children, who were moving back in with mom and dad, which would be the children of these tea partiers. Who thought they should get college loans, which are considered to welfare by tea partiers. And who liked Barack Obama, which is the cardinal sin in Tea Party land. Who, as one woman put it to me, we're screaming, "Obama, Obama, Obama." You could see in her mind's eye the millions in Washington when he was inaugurated. So this is a genuine reactionary popular movement, it erupted and spread to an extraordinary degree in 2009 and 2010. It was leveraged and featured by powerful figures on the right, in media and in the world of politicians and think tanks that wanted to ensure the failure of Obama's presidency and above all, to make sure that republicans move further to the right and refuse to compromise in any way with democrats during a period of legislative reform and social unrest. The movement ended up having quite a lot of impact in the 2010 elections, when most of the rising electoral coalition and social movement behind Barack Obama were disillusioned or upset at the depths of the economic crisis and did not turn out to vote. Three-out-of-five American voters voted in 2008 and again, mostly in 2012 but in 2010, it was two-out-of-five, tilted very heavily toward older white conservative people were precisely the ones most frightened by both the economic downturn and the potential for social changes and political changes that they abhorred. So many right-wing republicans -- and by the way, they are so right wing, that the majors political scientist use to locate legislators on the spectrum, that they're the most extreme in 50 years on those majors and it can barely move far enough to the right to capture what is happening in the house of representatives and I want to urge you all to realize that that's only the tip of the iceberg because in many ways, the more significant political changes occur in one state after another in the heartland of this country, where absolute extremist took super majorities along with the governorship and have taken advantage of the chance ever since to ram through legislation that slashes taxes on the well-to-do and business that shreds what's there, what's left of the social safety net for medical care and education, and as we all know, takes the offensive against the voting rights of minority and low-income and young citizens. That is far from over, the Tea Party itself has lost momentum in the sense that it's not adding more people to its ranks, it's not a popular label with most

Americans, and many journalists have concluded that because it's not popular, it's over. Particularly, they decided that after Barack Obama was reelected president in 2012. But it's far from over because the fears that are deliberately stoked and leveraged among the older white constituency of the Tea Party, paid off in electing a lot of people to office and they're still there. For the most part, they haven't been rolled back either in the states or in the House of Representatives, and they may not be anytime soon. Now, let me say something about Occupy. And here we have to stress that I didn't do the kind of research on our Occupy that my colleague and I did on the Tea Party. So I'm drawing on the best journalistic accounts and our own studies that a few of my students have done of Occupy. And my impression from that work, is that, in some ways, Occupy is the opposite of the Grassroots Tea Party component. It's -- they're older whites -- Occupy people for the most part are young adults, overwhelming with white once again from what we know. The organizational accomplishments are in some ways, parallel and in some ways divergent. Barbara said, 1400 cities and towns had at least small Occupy efforts and I believe that, I just got back from visiting Tulsa, Oklahoma where they had briefly an Occupy and that is not a leading urban center of the sort that you might -- that were visibly in the news when Occupy was featured. On the other hand, the major tactics used varied -- diverged pretty sharply. Tea Party protestors went from holding regional and local street protests, to organizing regularly-meeting groups that were spread all over the United States and have managed to sustain themselves in many cases. It's a little easier to do that when your constituency are older, semi-retired or retired people, most of who we found in our research had already had experience either in conservative politics or in civic life, organized civic life in one way or another. The Occupy people remained wedded to tactics like occupying tents in the middle of cities for longer than Tea Partiers remained wedded to their initial tactics. The big impact of Occupy was clearly to change the narrative and the media and to put new language into the public sphere which survives to this day and this is no mean accomplishment, and enables even ordinary Americans to talk about extreme inequality in ways that they had not before. The Tea Party's accomplishment has been to leverage one of the two major political parties in United States and drag it very, very far to the right. And in a two-party system where many citizens assume that when you go to the polling place, if you don't like the ins, you should vote for the outs, that is an extremely dangerous accomplishment if you don't agree with the Tea Partier's goals. And what are their goals? Their goals are in many ways to turn the republican party into a demolition organization, to remove what is left of taxes regulation, social spending in the United States and to block any resemblance of compromise. We can see it now in the rising threat among both elected Tea Part officials and some Grassroots Tea Partiers to shut down the American government this fall in order to stop the implementation of a law that has been on the blocks for two years, the Affordable Care Act or Obama Care, and was even found largely constitutional by a very right-leaning supreme court. So, what does this leave us? Let me just wrap that up very fast and open the floor for discussion. I've suggested that the inequalities that are at play in this period. First of all, the astonishingly increasing inequalities of income and wealth in this country. Barbara talked very movingly about the poor, but I think we need to remember that more and

more Americans are at threat of being thrown into the ranks of the working poor and four-fifths of American families have not seen income increase of any significant degree in the last 40 years. So, the economic downturn of 2009 and 2010 simply worsened trends that most people were already desperately struggling with in their communities and their family life and their work life. But on top of that, we obviously have an exacerbation of racial tensions and inequalities because black and brown people have suffered among the worst in this long and short term rise of inequality and pounding down of the middle and the bottom that's been going on and the election of the nation's first African-American president actually exacerbated. Not -- please don't misunderstand me, I don't think he's to blame. I think the opponents are to blame and those who have deliberately played on the fears of ordinary middleclass white people are to blame and just watch Fox News, the Tea Partiers that we interviewed told us that they only got their news from Fox News and they watched it six to eight hours a day. What Fox News hands out is racial innuendo and fear, non-stop, all the time. Vanessa was the one who had to watch, not me. I can't do it. I can't do it. So racial tensions have been exacerbated and politicized and then finally remember the point that I made about the Tea Party. In many ways, it's generational inequalities that are playing out in our period. Because an older generation, middleclass white people who play -- live their lives according to a certain logic and who now in interviews will say that they know Social Security and Medicare and veterans benefits are government benefits and they don't mind to spending on those because they earned them. Well, they did, I mean, they're not wrong and they think what most Americans think. But the point is they're resentful and afraid that something like the Affordable Care Act could somehow squeeze or reduce expenditures that -- on things they think they've earned to give something to them, who are the low-income people, the black and brown people and the undeserving young people, in their view. The American welfare state such as it was. It was built up after World War 2, was profoundly uneven on age lines. We eventually evolved a fairly universal -- I understand it's not really, but a fairly universal set of mildly redistributive social protections for the retired elderly in Medicare and Social Security. You may notice that today's radicalized Republican Party is doing all it can to get those dismantled. But they never stretched down to protect working age people. And one of the most obvious missing things was somehow of providing health insurance to all working people. That absence meant that the politics of welfare became much more racialized than it would've otherwise been. So if you sometimes turn on the television or read the newspaper and wonder why it is that the right wing in this country, top down and bottom up alike is so revved up about the Affordable Care Act when you think the Affordable Care Act is a pussyfooting inadequate law. Admit it, most people in the room think that. Right? I invite you to contemplate the fact that from the perspective of the right wing and particularly of elites like Jim Demint who had an Op ad in the Wall Street Journal today calling on the Republican Party to de-fund the government to stop ObamaCare. This pussyfooting law is a profound threat because it is an opening toward providing something of vital importance to working people and their families in the ranks of low and lower middle-income people. And if it can be carried into effect overtime, it could begin

to turn the sense of what's possible in ways that will resemble what everybody thought was going to happen in instant in 2008 but actually takes an enormous struggle to even begin.

CECILIA L. RIDGEWAY: I'm going to start by -- I want to ask the -- our speakers if they want to have some comments. I might ask question and I want -- that's all just to give you time to warm up to your own question, right? Now, you have that quick second when you're allowed to think of a question so you don't look blank when you're called on. So now is your chance, right? But we're going to have just a -- take a quick second here. Barbara, did you have a few comments that you'd like to make?

BARBARA EHRENREICH: Yeah. I expected more of a debate here. Well, I'm looking for one. I'm looking for a fight, you know, but I'm...

THEDA SKOCPOL: Rise to the occasion, Barbara.

BARBARA EHRENREICH: One sort of a different slang to what some of what you're saying. I think you were, you know, comparing -- using occupy to represent new movements.

THEDA SKOCPOL: Yeah, and that's not enough.

BARBARA EHRENREICH: Right.

THEDA SKOCPOL: We need a [inaudible]...

BARBARA EHRENREICH: And that -- well, yeah. I mean I have my own particular impatiences with Occupy as many people who where -- I didn't sleep overnight outdoors. I'm sorry. I'm too old for that. But, you know, I certainly hang out enough and I have, you know, frustrations with the hyper democratic process, et cetera. But what we're -- I think the real comparison, Theda, is -- or not a comparison to the Tea Party. But what I think is what's interesting is this global concatenation of insurgencies. Many of them, we don't know what happens next. I mean I've heard little reports trickle, like from Turkey. I don't know. Others overthrew governments, overthrew heads of state. Now, that's -- I don't know what you think about those, you know, all of these cases but that, you know, that's it. That's the -- that's the ultimate, doesn't it? I mean it -- you know, to an Occupy person would say yeah, but they still got class, they've still got hierarchy, they still got gender problems, et cetera. But if you are doing just straight, you know, historical score keeping, getting rid of a dictator, that's a big deal and it counts. And I think what we have to, you know, think, we have to be thinking globally, increasingly, about this protest. Just the fact that Occupy itself was so inspired by Egypt, that's kind of weird. Come to think about that. Anyway, my other comment is where I sort of leave you or depart from you in -- although much of the kinds of things you say are exactly what I would say to people and I always had to say by bolstering the welfare state, et cetera, is that it leaves liberals or lefties or what are we, sociologists, in the position of defending the government. And I have not felt like that in a long time, pre-Tea Party. It was in, you know, when was that, the '80s, the war on drugs started, the mass incarceration of people for a new crime, a newly invented crime. We became the prison industrial state. The, you know, it -- yeah, it's changed. I cannot

be in the position of saying, "Yeah, that's what I'm for. I'm for -- I'm for big government." No. Tea Parties, I'm with you on that. I'm not for this big government. And I can even find some strange threads of common ground. For example, the coercive aspect of ObamaCare, that you got to have health insurance or you're in trouble.

THEDA SKOCPOL: That's not true.

BARBARA EHRENREICH: You don't get...

THEDA SKOCPOL: I'm not going to let you say that.

BARBARA EHRENREICH: Oh, okay.

THEDA SKOCPOL: This is not true.

BARBARA EHRENREICH: No, it's not true. All right. Let me tell my sister that she is, you know, I get a lot from. She's the one who's going to be saved by ObamaCare, but she's also really mad that you were sort of required to buy into it. She's not a Tea Partier. She's a raving anarchist, practically. So, you know, the -- a left that is or a liberal side that is entirely about that, "No, this is our goal, a bigger welfare state, the government is fine," has got to grow up to the fact, I would say, that there is -- there is more of that's sinister to the US government than in its foreign policies. That the, you know, this is -- this is sort of iron boot of a repression which is so long been principally felt by minorities is increasingly felt also by people who are just not -- well, not affluent, whatever kind of color. So I'm -- I can't go with you on that. I mean I'm -- I have -- give me some Tea Party people and I will -- I -- well, I will look for this tiny shreds of some common ground.

THEDA SKOCPOL: And you won't find it. I actually spoke with them and, you know...

BARBARA EHRENREICH: I'm fine.

THEDA SKOCPOL: ...I looked with this figment in the leftist imagination of common ground and for example, many people told me that both the left and Tea Partiers resent Wall Street and the Wall Street bailouts. Well, that's true, except that the Tea Partiers blame the politicians and particularly democrats and ultimately black people for the Wall Street bailouts.

BARBARA EHRENREICH: Right. Right.

THEDA SKOCPOL: So, I mean, it -- it's -- I used to have to take an Excedrin and go back to the bed after interviewing people that I like personally. But believe me, they believe hateful things about everything that you believe. So, that's neither here nor there. I want to say that what I did leave out and didn't mention and I'll just throw it out there before we open the floor for everybody. I actually think that the Occupy isn't the only thing that's been going on in the center left and it's the one that captured the media attention and ended up having an effect on this course but we'd have to analyze the way the media operates there. I mean even in the more quiescent period in the early Obama presidency, organized

labor was mobilizing, immigration act was -- have been mobilizing and including young people all along. And you saw that remarkable -- the remarkable spread of protest after the Trayvon Martin episode. So I don't really quite agree with you that the action is worldwide and then it's all the same and you wouldn't expect me to think that because I analyzed revolutions. And for me, the irony in Egypt is that popular protest for liberation are now hand and glove with the reinstatement of a military regime. But it's an irony I expect from revolution. So I mean to -- I don't think that the kind of thing that's going on among young people in the west is the same thing that's going on in all of these other protests. And you have to ultimately look very closely at the structure of the state, the public policies, the economy, and the ethnic and class divisions in each of these situations. They aren't all cookie-cutter. They aren't all the same.

CECELIA RIDGEWAY: Can I ask a quick question amidst to this conversation which is one of the strains of tensions in American culture on this is the sense of this battle over government and, of course, American culture has always been on -- you -- remarkably anti-government, right? Small government oriented despite having large establishment -- well, perhaps you want to disagree with me there, but...

THEDA SKOCPOL: Well, it's against government in the abstract and all for it in the concrete. I mean...

CECELIA RIDGEWAY: Yeah. Right.

THEDA SKOCPOL: ...and think about the Tea Partiers we interviewed, I mean the seventh question in our open-ended interview schedule if they didn't already raise it was, "What do you think about social security?" I mean I'm trying to look at people and I'd say, "You know," they didn't know but, "You know, the most expensive things that the government -- federal government spends its money on are social Security, Medicare, or the military and veterans benefits. What do you think about those?" Well, we only found one person out of the -- of the -- all those we interviewed in the dozens who, who wasn't all for them. They're not against big government. They're against government that does things for people they find to be in threatening categories. And so I think that's a very important distinction to make.

CECELIA RIDGEWAY: Why is it -- can I ask also another question to that. If the Tea Party is motivated by fear but they're -- are themselves -- well, middle class not, not rich, they're -- they have a fear of falling because of all the -- all that has happened. Nevertheless, they are less fallen and many have fallen.

THEDA SKOCPOL: Yeah, that's right.

CECELIA RIDGEWAY: Why are they most afraid of -- why are they so hostile to the poor? Is that putting away the -- in other words, why are they so -- why are they saying "Those people are takers, we're makers," and why is that the enemy exactly in that?

THEDA SKOCPOL: That's a good question. Why don't we open the forum?

CECELIA RIDGEWAY: Yeah. How about that?

THEDA SKOCPOL: That's the question.



CECELIA RIDGEWAY: That is the question. What do you think, you know? These takers, makers things, why is it the poor that are chosen to be the victims in this?

THEDA SKOCPOL: Before Governor Romney was captured on tape saying that, we heard those phrases again and again, you know, in Tea Party circles.

CECELIA RIDGEWAY: I -- I've heard that. I've heard that from people. So -- okay. You had your chance to think, right, or to have some questions and stuff like that. So, what do you think? Does somebody want to say something?

BARBARA EHRENREICH: Can we get light -- can we get the lights down? I'm having trouble...

CECELIA RIDGEWAY: Well...

THEDA SKOCPOL: Is there any chance of turning the lights pointing them down so that I could -- I feel like a deer in the headlight.

CECELIA RIDGEWAY: They have trouble with that but, yes.

THEDA SKOCPOL: I can't see anything.

CECELIA RIDGEWAY: Here we have -- we have a person who wants to speak here. Could you identify yourself?

JOHN BUSHEY: John Bushey. I'm with George Mason University. I'm a PhD student. I'm not going to talk about your question to us. But I -- I'm going to shift gears a little bit. So, if we walk across campus there's the economics department and they're running a whole different discourse, right? And I don't think inequality -- so I took an economic-sociology class last year and there was seven economists and three sociologists and we got to hammer it out a little bit. And a couple of them said we don't -- we don't really care about inequality. And so -- and I -- and I said, "Well, probably our whole discipline is based on it." And they laughed. So, I'm just wondering what do we -- are we walking across campus and engaging with the other discourse that continues to propagate inequality while we scratch our heads and wonder how this keeps going on?

CECELIA RIDGEWAY: That's another -- that's another good question. Anybody want to comment on that or are we want to ask the crowd?

THEDA SKOCPOL: Well, I'm no defender of economists and people who know me will know that well. But I do think the economics profession is changing a little bit. I mean I do think there are more of them who are noticing the galloping wealth and income inequalities. They often have different explanations for where they come from. They don't emphasize the social and political mechanisms as much as other scholars do. But I don't think it's -- I don't think it's quite the block of denial that it was even 10 years ago.

CECELIA RIDGEWAY: Yes.

JOHN BUSHEY: I actually think there's somebody on that side.

CECELIA RIDGEWAY: Oh, is there somebody over there? I'm sorry. You know, it's hard here against the light.

THEDA SKOCPOL: It's very hard to see.

BOB FRANCIS: That's okay. Hello. I'm Bob Francis. I'm actually -- I actually work in public policy in Washington DC. I'm an -- maybe someday aspiring sociologist but today, I'm a policy guy. I'm curious, you know, I think Dr. Skocpol, your characterization seems to ring true, I think, with at least the people that I kind of hang out with about the Tea Party. But in Washington DC, there's certainly, I think, an attempt by Jim DeMint and group like the Heritage Foundation and other think tanks and also some members of congress, I would say, Rand Paul and others, to also try to put forward, I think, what they would say is a coherent sort of intellectual defense of a libertarian or of a, you know, of that sort of -- and maybe to the previous point, you know, kind of the economics -- the economists in the room. So, I just wonder if in a way -- this might not be -- didn't come out in the interviews but I'm just curious or if either of you have thoughts about, you know, is this a legitimate intellectual enterprise? Is there something legitimate intellectually behind sort of the...

THEDA SKOCPOL: Could you say a little bit more about what you see the intellectual enterprise be?

BOB FRANCIS: Well, I think...

THEDA SKOCPOL: You said libertarian. You think libertarians are the major strand here?

BOB FRANCIS: Well, I don't know if I would analyze it as a major strand but I do think there is an attempt -- even Paul Ryan, I think, during the presidential -- I mean there were just a couple of hearings on the Hill this past week about poverty and there's debates about the welfare state. There are hearings on the Hill about the best way to help the folks that Barbara Ehrenreich talked about. And I think, you know, you could -- I actually could even suspend...

THEDA SKOCPOL: Are you aware of what Paul Ryan's budget proposals to do?

BOB FRANCIS: I did. I work in policy, I have for seven years. So I'm very -- I've meet with members and their staff. I'm very tight into what's happening in Washington. So that's why I'm asking from the outsider -- from a sociologist point of view -- I mean I understand the policy but is there a sense that there is actually an intellectual basis for it?

THEDA SKOCPOL: Well, you know, no. And I have to tell you that I'm not speaking as a sociologist. I'm speaking as political scientist. And I and various colleagues that I've worked with in the Scholars Strategy Network have studied the Ryan budget in detail. And it would produce draconian cuts in all...

BOB FRANCIS: Right.

THEDA SKOCPOL: ...kinds of social supports and opportunities for lower, middle, and lower income people and transfer all of the savings but a small fraction to lower taxes on the wealthiest people in this country. It's not intellectually sustainable and, you know, intellectually sustainable is not a matter of the pretty words people put on things. It's in the details and the most interesting documents are budget documents, because when you get below the rhetoric to who pays, who loses, and who gains, that's when you see the morality that lies behind these things. Paul Ryan is as acolyte of Ayn Rand's. The Georgetown protesters who greeted his arrival at Georgetown by dressing up somebody as Jesus and reading the reverse beatitudes had his number perfectly.

GABRIEL: Hi. My name is Gabriel and I'm a professor at the University of Texas, San Antonio. And the first I'd like to -- I have three daughters and I only wish they were here because different but three wonderful role models, I think, for pretty young women to have up on the stage, so. I'll be -- I'll try to be as brief as I can. I'm going to ask this simply because I'm staying in a hotel room where I'm -- I accidentally ate a Snickers bar and it was \$8. And so as I listen talking tonight, I say to myself maybe what's becoming really difficult about being a progressive is I don't know if progressives really look themselves in the mirror. And my case study is DISA at this point because we're supposed to be a left-leaning -- I mean we're not supposed to be but we just generally are more left-leaning than economists and a lot of others. And so why would a left-leaning organization knowing that we have people here teaching at community colleges, people who don't teach at higher tier, Tier 1, and all these kind of stuff. We have graduate students. Why would we put this in, like, the most expensive place where a Snickers bar is \$8? Now...

THEDA SKOCPOL: I like that.

GABRIEL: ...I mean look and the -- and the...

THEDA SKOCPOL: [inaudible] hotel.

GABRIEL: ...the last thing -- the last thing that I will say is I, you know, I can afford, you know, I'm blessed and fortunate I can afford the \$8 but many of my students can't, a lot of people I know at community colleges can't. And so I'm making just sort of bigger point at being a progressive, you know, it's becoming difficult because the biggest progressives I know are going to go eat at 300-dollar fucking -- ooh, sorry. They are going to go eat a 300-dollar meal tonight, and that's okay. I don't doubt that but I...

FEMALE SPEAKER: Oh, I don't know who else. I'm not going to.

GABRIEL: ...I'm asking just a more general question about being a progressive in this climate of American society, so thank you and it was a wonderful panel. Thank you very much.

CECILIA RIDGEWAY: Let me -- I want to return this to the bigger picture, not just to us, but I will say just a few words about that because I made that speech myself, maybe 35 years ago, right, as when -- and

ASA was in New York and I was staying in a much city or hotel down the way that had an old pair of men shoes in it when I checked in.

AUDIENCE MEMBER: Me too.

CECILIA RIDGEWAY: The -- so, I get it. About that, here's the problem and actually, ASA isn't -- is -- I'm getting about it as you might imagine. The problem is meetings in New York have the highest attendance of any other place we go. So, it's a weird irony, it cost a fortune, it cost ASA a fortune. Do you know what they're paying for for these lights? It cost them a fortune, but people come, right? And so, there's this tension. ASA went through a process about 20 years ago of trying to go to smaller places like Cincinnati and Pittsburgh and Milwaukee and places like that are cheaper, nobody came. So, it's a tension, you know, that we got to talk about as sociologist, but I hear you about that, but let's keep also on the bigger society and not navel-gaze too much, so.

DIANNA FIELDING: Hi.

CECILIA RIDGEWAY: Yes. Hi.

DIANNA FIELDING: My name is Dianna Fielding. I'm with Hamline University from Saint Paul, Minnesota.

CECILIA RIDGEWAY: Yeah, yeah. We have trouble hearing you.

DIANNA FIELDING: Okay.

CECILIA RIDGEWAY: So, get that mic a little closer.

DIANNA FIELDING: Dianna Fielding, Hamline University, Saint Paul, Minnesota. This question is for you, professor, although of course Barbara Ehrenreich if you have a common -- you kind of mentioned this in your own talk. I'm very interested in knowing your opinion on how the internet affects these social of peoples. I know Occupy really kind of sites their online presence as giving them the ability to even create the Occupy movement, but now seeing the current NSA scandal and people just sort of posting on Facebook constantly and saying "Dang, we should really do something about this," but then never actually doing anything. I'm kind of wondering, do you view it as a positive influence or negative influence, something neutral? Really, what is the impact of it?

THEDA SKOCPOL: Of the -- of the new social media, right?

DIANNA FIELDING: Yes.

BARBARA EHRENREICH: What -- could you repeat the question?

CECILIA RIDGEWAY: Yeah. Would -- yeah, just to repeat the question about what the -- would you just repeat it again about the internet's affects...

BARBARA EHRENREICH: Or would you say something, right?

CECILIA RIDGEWAY: Yeah. Okay. Okay. But how about if she say it again for me too? So, sorry, I couldn't -- she said could I repeat it, but I was just saying, would you say it to me again, sorry? We're having trouble hearing.

DIANNA FIELDING: Yes. Basically, my question is, what do you feel is the impact of social media and the internet on movements like Occupy and other social movements?

CECILIA RIDGEWAY: Okay. So, that's what -- that's what I thought you said. Did you get that?

BARBARA EHRENREICH: Yeah.

CECILIA RIDGEWAY: What are the -- just the impact of the internet and social media on movements like Occupy and so on? So, what do you think?

BARBARA EHRENREICH: Well, it's obviously huge. I'm thinking not just of Occupy but, you know, things that -- and it's what I know about equivalence in other countries, or not equivalence, but similar movements. And I would make an argument for a lot of kinds of ideological similarity. It's just amazing to me, the rage of social media and beyond that, because obviously it wasn't only sort of educated young people at -- in these mass revolutions. It's their neighbors, their parents, everybody. But something has changed and just the fact of cell phones. So, you're -- if you're involved in a street action or protest, you can get in touch with people three blocks away and say, "That street in front of it is being closed off. There are mass arrest." You can do things like that. We couldn't do that in the old days.

CECILIA RIDGEWAY: Theda, do you want to say anything?

THEDA SKOCPOL: Yeah. I think the speeding up of communication is important and -- but I also think that the best research suggest that it's an intersection of technologies with networks and organizations that -- where you find the answer to who's mobilized, for what purposes, and above all, what it leads to. I sometimes get a little nervous -- we're going to go back to Gustave Le Bon, who thought that the French Revolution was just a spontaneous outpouring on the streets.

FEMALE SPEAKER: Mass hysteria, yeah.

THEDA SKOCPOL: And, you know, it wasn't. And it isn't now. And the best research I've seen on some of the foreign, Arab Spring protest suggest that networks are quite important and the educated people who know how to use these technologies are -- and are young enough to move around in street protest -- are still often key actors and even if we go back to the Iranian Revolution in 1979. I mean the fact that, at that point, the big breakthrough is the fact that you could have cassette recordings of the imam's sermons and you could send them out and replay them in another social setting. So, you always have to look at the communication technologies, but I also think you have to look at the networks in your organizations.

CECILIA RIDGEWAY: Yes. It's a speed up and I think it's a speed up, but maybe it's the same processes that had been going on but speeding up.

KEVIN LIGHT: Oh, hi. Kevin Leicht, from the University of Iowa.

CECILIA RIDGEWAY: Uh-hmm.

KEVIN LIGHT: I found this is session really interesting because I actually think what we maybe see here is something of a turning point almost. I don't know how to describe this except to use a quick phrase. Is it possible in social science we've actually discovered that there's something more important than sexism and racism and that's capitalism? I mean, suppose our -- suppose our Tea Party supporters have discovered that there's actually as much or more inequality, economic and wealth inequality, with in racial groups in there is between them, which there has been for, you know, the last 40 years. And they're on the losing end of the scale. Now, their responses are very adaptive, of course, but as a sort of interest -- interested that very -- there was a very little discussion of sexism and racism, there's a lot of discussion of capitalism. So, I'm just throwing that out there as a comment. Thanks.

THEDA SKOCPOL: Well, I would say that there was a lot of discussion in my remarks about political economy and I don't think that capitalism exist in the abstract and I think it plays out in given institutional and social settings. There are lots of forces that are not simply market forces, that are -- that are -- that are responsible for the extraordinary increases in inequality and the brutal treatment of the poor that we've seen in this country and I can only say that grassroots Tea Party, there's no perfectly well at their economic inequalities. And they may even resent wealthier people who try to manipulate them. I found out that at the grassroots but, that doesn't mean that they don't also fear and displace a lot of their anger onto a younger and lower income and racial minority groups.

BARBARA EHRENREICH: Oh, well, this is not in answer to that internally, just -- well, another grassroots kind of observation which I think is fascinating. In for -- when way in the end, there is a -- an organization for -- it start out as being an organization for unemployed people. They can now include the unemployed and anxiously employed. Oh, that's quite nutful.

THEDA SKOCPOL: That's probably the whole population.

BARBARA EHRENREICH: I don't know. That's -- and they have some -- a little support from the unions but really, not anything. But the -- the thing that interests me, most about them, and I'm sure of like an advisor and I go there sometimes, is it they attract Tea Party people, sometimes. Not--you know. Is it -- there's an awful lot of people who -- these are poor people and these are people...

THEDA SKOCPOL: Uh-hmm.

BARBARA EHRENREICH: ...and these people having economic hard times, obviously. And they have been -- they've had -- they felt an appeal, they felt something, you know, if they're white anyway, from the Tea Party. But, when I get to an -- you know, a left-ish anarchist, whatever we call them now, a kind of group that's economically focused, because we've talking about capitalism, but talking about a lot of

bread and butter issues and seeing it from their perspective as low-paying workers at the -- in the best of times, that's very attractive.

CECILIA RIDGEWAY: Uh-hmm.

THEDA SKOCPOL: Yeah. I actually think a lot of people are not aligned clearly with these...

BARBARA EHRENREICH: Yes.

THEDA SKOCPOL: ...labels and I didn't mean to imply that.

BARBARA EHRENREICH: Yeah. Uh-hmm.

THEDA SKOCPOL: I -- and all the research that I've seen on public opinion and ideology suggests that it's often much more complex, murky, ambiguous and shifting...

BARBARA EHRENREICH: Uh-hmm.

THEDA SKOCPOL: ...than the categories we use in our scholarships suggest, so...

CECILIA RIDGEWAY: And just to add, I guess I would say that I don't see actually what's going on with the Tea Party or what's going on with Occupy, as being only about the economic and there is a deep intersection there...

BARBARA EHRENREICH: Uh-hmm.

CECILIA RIDGEWAY: ...with gender and race as well. A lot of the drama with the Tea Party and so on and just distinctively wide and it has to do with immigration, changes of that sort, similarly the feeling of who's in charge, you know, and who are the others and so and so. I think these are -- I don't -- I think it's -- they are woven together.

THEDA SKOCPOL: Actually, I don't think the Tea Party is about economics at the popular level. I think it's about fears of generational, racial and cultural change.

CECILIA RIDGEWAY: Cultural change. Uh-hmm.

THEDA SKOCPOL: And immigrants are the boogeyman that they're most worried about.

CECILIA RIDGEWAY: Right. Right. I realize -- I'm blinded by the lights literally -- and that I've been neglecting there's a line at the mic here too and I just want to at least take somebody over here and then we'll come back to you.

JESSIE FINCH: First of all, I want to thank you all for being here tonight. It's been a great panel. My name is Jessie Finch. I'm a graduate student at the University of Arizona. And so, what you all were just saying ties in to exactly what I wanted to say which was to venture a scope answer to as the ever dutiful graduate student and answer to Dr. Ridgeway's question about why we fear, why these white Tea

Partiers are fearing the poor and in Arizona, the answer to that is absolutely immigration, and the racial intersectionality

AUDIENCE MEMEBER: There is nothing wrong with [inaudible]

JESSIE FINCH: ...there. I study operation streamline which is a federal program that puts -- in Tucson alone has put over 78,000 undocumented crossers into private prison companies in Arizona. And this operation streamline, SB 1070, which also happened in Arizona that all relates to this fear-focused legislation around these racial intersectionalities with class, is a big aspect to that comes from a group called ALEC, the American Legislative Exchange Council.

THEDA SKOCPOL: Uh-hmm. Absolutely.

JESSIE FINCH: And I was curious about you guys' opinions on that particular group and how this affects - - we've talked a lot about federal level issues with Obama, but state legislation that happens like SB 1070 which becomes model legislation in other states. And so, I was curious about what your thoughts are on these inequality issues at the state level through groups like ALEC and this was alluded to in earlier comments, but I'd like to hear a little bit more about your thoughts on this state level processes as well. Thank you.

THEDA SKOCPOL: Yeah. I mean, I'm going to make a statement that may get people a little angry and make things more lively around here. I actually think one of the big failings in -- on the -- among the academics who study the issues we're discussing today over the last half century has been the focus on the national government and the assumption of a unified state, which in United States is just not true. A lot of the action happens at state and local levels. A lot of successful movements for changing legislations in United States have taken the form of creating waves of imitation either of -- might argue more inclusive and more redistributive legislation across the states and nowadays, exactly the opposite. And the American Legislative Exchange Council, ALEC, is one of a number of [inaudible] and activist advocacy type organizations that's mastered the art of scoring state legislatures and state legislators. I mean, I recently read an interesting brief with a Scholar's Strategy Network by Carroll Drophly that said that there's similar groups for the new wave of attacks on abortion...

CECILIA RIDGEWAY: Uh-hmm.

THEDA SKOCPOL: ...providers. And you know, I think most Progressives in the United States have been focusing on trying to get the President to include things in his speeches and getting really angry when he doesn't. Meanwhile, a lot of the real changes that really are hammering people. And by the way, for Tea Partiers, opposition, the immigrants, the desire to round them up and send them back in the vast over estimation of how many are undocumented, is not just in Arizona. One of the things that Vanessa and I were really interested in our research was whether we would find different hot button issues at the top of the grassroots Tea Party agenda in different regions, we found that immigration and



fear and anger about immigration was at the top even in places like Massachusetts, were the most threatening immigrants are from Ireland. So, I mean, come on. I mean, this is -- and those kinds of widespread social anxieties are -- would have been in used very effectively by these groups that leverage state legislatures, get them to compete with one another to lower business taxes, to crack down on voting rights, to pass standard ground gun laws, ALEC is behind those two. And meanwhile, Progressives just don't operate it that level. Do you think it's beneath them or they don't feel they have leverage at state level in a lot of cases.

CECILIA RIDGEWAY: Okay. So, I'm going to take -- there's a person over this mic and I'm going to come back. I'm not ignoring you there, so...

PHYLLIS RIPPEYOUNG: Hi. I'm Phyllis Rippeyoung. I'm a Socio Professor at the University of Ottawa in Canada. I'm not sure if I have a question or a comment, but I hope to get to one of them. I want to preface my comment by saying that, I'm an immigrant. I'm an immigrant to Canada from the United States which someone told me recently, that it's a white a person, that means I'm an actually Expat, but -- so, but I had a really interesting experience. I just joined the University of Ottawa this year after being at another university in Canada. And we were going through these rounds of negotiations with the union. It's a very inactive union forever until about this year. And it really raised some interesting questions to me about the issue of sort of narratives of economic crisis and it's been a while since I've spent a lot of time in the states. Where I've been -- I've been interested in -- I'm interested in understanding a little bit better, perhaps your thoughts about sort of framing the economic crisis as being some of it affects everyone and the reason why this came to mind was because we've been in this negotiations with the University of Ottawa, actually has quite a bit of money compared to most universities in Canada because in their in a sort of unique position of offering a bilingual education, which means I get extra money for doing [inaudible] numbers of francophone students. And so -- and yet, we went through this negotiations. The university has all this money and yet they kept saying well, "We have no money, we have no money," and I'm moving right now and it happened to have the father of the owner of my house is on the board of governors of the university and he's also a regular columnist for the Global Mail, and he started telling me as well when he stopped by to figure out if they need to paint the deck. He started out telling me that the university has no money and the Union is saying there's always -- there's no money, but really there's no money and it seemed a little bit like negotiating outside of the college agreement but anyway, to get to my point, two days later, the university settled. They found the money and yet, they were claiming that they had no money. And so, I guess my question is, within all of these discussions of inequality, there's sometimes discussions about where have Unions gone in terms of you know, labor unions with, you know, auto workers, but what about faculty unions, what about Progressives, "Progressives, " who I think in some ways, they're got to be the sort of us and them, that they are the poor, they are those who are victims and yeah, we can sort of sit in a position that is separate from them because while we work for this universities that have no money. So we don't need to necessarily, you know get involved with our unions. We can accept the argument that there is no money. When I think that there is money in a lot of

places that isn't being used to the things that perhaps we would like it to be used towards. So, if that made any sense, I guess I'm asking about narratives and who's implicated and supporting them.

THEDA SKOCPOL: We don't need a narrative, we need taxes. Oh, I'm sorry. I'm political scientist. I don't do narrative.

PHYLLIS YOUNG: But how do you get the taxes? I mean, how do you get -- I mean. How can you completely deny the idea that how people talk about things and how issues are framed to have an impact on what people are going to vote for? I mean...

THEDA SKOCPOL: They do, but they don't have as much impact as everybody thinks. I mean I'm at the center on this. I have sat in endless meetings, in Academia and in Progressives, where people talk about, well if we could just change the word we were using for this. Things would work out.

PHYLLIS YOUNG: Well, let me...

THEDA SKOCPOL: Well, no, they won't.

PHYLLIS YOUNG: Let me rephrase it then. Why are there--why are Academics not more involved in unions? Why do we not have more people pushing for the kinds money or taxes?

THEDA SKOCPOL: Why are they what?

BARBARA EHRENREICH: Why [inaudible] involved in unions?

CECILIA RIDGEWAY: Why -- what...

THEDA SKOCPOL: That's a good question.

BARBARA EHRENREICH: That's actually -- I'm not an Academic so I shouldn't be answering it but I want to say sociologists are in trouble. In case nobody else has pointed that out to you. I think of you as brothers and sisters and I say that as a journalist. We're been wiped out in journalism. Just about--there is no one--there is no one. We can -- we can opionate and bloviate and everything, we just don't get paid for it. And I think sociologists are in -- you know spectacularly on a path to ruin. And it's another -- you know. If there's anything -- if there's been any sense here that we're talking about someone else and their needs, that should be removed. I mean, all the so called liberal professions. Law, sociology, journalism, what am I leaving out here, have been really decimated and from before the economic meltdown. We're doomed.

CECELIA RIDGEWAY: Okay. But let's have a few more questions before we die. I know, I promised you so I'm going to go to you, but there are also people way over there.

THEDA SKOCPOL: Why don't we collect a few.

CECELIA RIDGEWAY: Oh, you're over here, okay.

THEDA SKOCPOL: Why don't we let several people ask?

CECELIA RIDGEWAY: Can we have two or three people quickly ask there questions.

THEDA SKOCPOL: Yeah, let's do that.

CECELIA RIDGEWAY: Because we got to quit in about five minutes, six or seven minutes. So could we have -- could we just have several people ask their questions and have a kind of a good discussion of it?

THEDA SKOCPOL: Sure, let's do that.

WOMAN: Okay. Is it my turn now?

CECELIA RIDGEWAY: Yeah.

WOMAN: Okay. I think can raise this in a two real points out of what has been said. First of all, what is actually happening in this attack on big government that everybody seems to think it's such a way to prosperity and all of that. Is that -- the government actually is outsourcing. So, with whom do they outsource? They outsource with the big -- the big business, the big money. And the big money has no respect for you unions and doesn't have to account for them. This is happening in the prison system, the whole business of prisoners having to pay for their board and keep, that's because those prisons are owned, not by the people but sometimes by the very judges who put them in their. They're owned by corporations.

Uh-hmm.

WOMAN: Okay? Our schools, our schools in Washington for example, are going into charter. So they don't have to have union teachers. They don't produce better students. They don't produce better education but everybody think that this is getting rid of the government's hand in education. And so it's a good thing. This is the kind of thinking that is also, I'm afraid, going to destroy affordable health care because what they've been compelled to do in the compromises is contract with existing health insurance organization which applies the same principles and the same procedures.

THEDA SKOCPOL: No, they don't.

WOMAN: They do, in mental health they do. And I know that.

THEDA SKOCPOL: Well, they -- it...

AUDIENCE MEMBER: They've got...

THEDA SKOCPOL: You don't have it right.

AUDIENCE MEMBER: ...some of the same gatekeepers. Who are operating in some of the same ways. I'm seeing it from the ground up. I'm a sociologist, I'm also a psychologist. I also do consulting. But I'm

seeing it from the ground up. I do forensic work and I see what happens with people who don't have the right insurance. Okay?

CECELIA RIDGEWAY: Okay, we...

AUDIENCE MEMBER: So that's -- these are the two basic...

CECELIA RIDGEWAY: I don't want to interrupt you but you're making...

AUDIENCE MEMBER: Yeah, okay.

CECELIA RIDGEWAY: ...you've made a good point there that we want to discuss. We just have a few seconds, so if people could just quickly state a couple more questions that we can throw into the brew here and you've made a good point or at least something to consider of whether or not often the -- getting rid of government means essentially using government to buy services from already wealthy economic interest.

GEORGE CAMINO: You're going to go with me or you want to go...

CECELIA RIDGEWAY: Okay. One there and one here, we'll go over here.

GEORGE CAMINO: That's fine.

CECELIA RIDGEWAY: But state your questions quickly...

GEORGE CAMINO: No problem.

CECELIA RIDGEWAY: ...so can ask them too.

CHRISTINA CHASE: Hi, good evening. My name Christina Chase and I'm from Hunter College at the City -- University of New York. And I basically want to -- I feel like...

CECELIA RIDGEWAY: You speak up in the...

CHRISTINA CHASE: ...one of things we didn't get to talk upon.

CECELIA RIDGEWAY: ...mic.

CHRISTINA CHASE: As another contributor of growing inequality which is increasing in inaccessibility to higher education. I mean, I know I chose higher education to be my key out of poverty but considering all the austerity cuts -- cuts to financial aid, student loan debt, I don't think that that's going to be a reality for a lot of me and my colleagues and I. And I basically wanted to know your thoughts on student loan debt crisis and it's roll in both contributing to and maintaining inequality.

CECELIA RIDGEWAY: Okay. And the economic inequality. I -- with access to education.

GEORGE CAMINO: Okay. My name is George Camino from Saint Johns University in New York City. Prof. Skocpol, when you were speaking, I couldn't help but think of Joseph Gusfield's work, Symbolic

Crusades and the Woman's Christian Temperance movement which was not so much about prohibiting the drinking of alcohol but salvaging what they precede as a way of life that was threatened.

THEDA SKOCPOL: Uh-hmm.

GEORGE CAMINO: All those white, Anglo-Saxon Protestant but I continue to think about something else. In engaging Tea Party types, whether online or in person, is there certain ethos with regards to the way they speak and toward some things reminiscent of fascism in Germany? I mean the left has become socialist communist but I can't help but think that they speak like fascists. And I was just wondering about parallels because there are certain obvious parallels in terms of economic crisis, in terms of scapegoating, in terms of anti-gay, anti -- I mean this -- they're frightening parallels. I'm just wondering if you had any thoughts on that.

CECELIA RIDGEWAY: Okay. So we're going to add to the mix. We're going to have a big mix. Over here, one more.

MARK BRUNTON: Mark Brunton from the University of Maine. This is with Dr. Skocpol. I was very interested in what you said about the Tea Party and what I'd like to know is, how much of the changing job market, the changing labor trends plays into that resentment of that -- those older Americans towards the younger Americans and those other groups.

CECELIA RIDGEWAY: All right. Okay. Good question. All right.

HAVY GOWED: Havy Gowed **1:52:03**, Princeton University. I had a question about the link between poor people's time in revolution. So, Barbara made a point that when there's increase in the quality, people protest but what's interesting is that, Bouazizi, the street vendor has compatriots probably weren't at the protest because they didn't have the time to spend or the sustained time. The same as true for Egypt where people, you know, though people are calling for of all justice and bread and rights during the protest, those rights weren't met. And the people who were there in the square, despite not being the poorest, being the near poor, still didn't have their sort of views heard and haven't to this point. And I want to link this to Prof. Skocpol's point about the difference between the Tea Party and Occupy, Occupy being sort of a spark in protest and the Tea Party being the sustained effort. And I wonder also with the link of people's time giving that these retirees are wealthier, more settled and might have more time to sustain that sort of action. Thank you.

CECELIA RIDGEWAY: Sure. And this was about -- this last one was about -- the question was about poor people's time to sustain. And other -- it's going to be in a popular protest like that. A poor person, they're desperate trying to survive and they can't put their time into it and so protest developed but they don't represent the voice of the poorest. And the extent to with that happened in the Middle East. Okay. So we have -- do I -- did you -- I don't know if you want to just charge in there and say a few words of...

THEDA SKOCPOL: Do you want?

CECELIA RIDGEWAY: ...about some of these. Do you want me to repeat some of these?

THEDA SKOCPOL: No, I could remember some. I think it's one of the best established findings in the social sciences that are -- this is not the most economically desperate or the poor who lead protests. I mean...

CECELIA RIDGEWAY: Yeah, I could get...

THEDA SKOCPOL: It is one of the most established findings in the social sciences which, you know, it's true. I haven't been to sociology meetings through some years, so, maybe you've overturned this. But I haven't read it in the literature in an empirical way. The poor, the most desperate, those who are hammered the most, for that matter those who are most beaten up in repression are not the ones who are the leaders or the sustainers of protest. Now, that doesn't mean that some protest don't end up pulling them in representing their interest better than others, so that's variable. And I don't want to make a glib generalization but neither the Tea Party, nor Occupy were protest by the most hard hit economically, not at all.

CECELIA RIDGEWAY: Uh-hmm.

THEDA SKOCPOL: You know, on the generational thing, one of the things we tried to do when we're -- I think you end up doing this when you talk to people face to face. You're trying to figure out some way to understand what they're saying, even if you really don't agree. And I think what many of these older white Tea Partiers we're saying about the young was that they weren't following a life path that was like the one they followed. And they weren't noticing that the job market doesn't have a lot of openings for them, that college cause astronomically more than it did when they went to college. And of course, they were noticing and not liking the different attitudes of young people on issues like gay marriage or cultural change and I think cultural tensions are very much part of what's going on and, you know, one of the earlier comments suggest that the Tea Partiers are Libertarians, I -- actually not. I mean there's a small strand of Libertarianism, which is built up around Rand and Ryan Paul movements and the Tea Partier I got to know best told me that he's ideal presidential ticket was Ryan Paul for president and Rand Paul for vice-president. But on the other hand, he was full of resentment and tough attitudes on racial questions. He -- I don't know, probably he didn't go along with the Christian right attitudes about marriage, but about half of Tea Party identifiers and certainly activist and then people sitting in many of the meetings that we attended were Christian fundamentalist first and Tea Partier 2nd. So, all these strands are woven together and I don't think the Libertarian one or particularly, the intellectually rigorous Libertarian one is anything more than a very thin part of the overall mix.

CECELIA RIDGEWAY: There's some comment.

BARBARA EHRENREICH: Oh, yeah. Well I'm struck by another role of economically oppressed and down trying to meet people in some of these insurgency. The thing that most fascinated me about the

encampments, the Occupy encampments, was the mixture of people who came, sort of from the middle class, but they're not staying there, like the student loan debtors, who were -- you know, might as well be homeless in some ways because they're couch sleeping and couch surfing. They don't have an actual apartment anymore. And also people were long term homeless because encampments in many places were a magnet rightly so for homeless people. You're looking for some of that kind of--through the social support and the meals, any other things they could get in an Occupy encampment. My -- what little things I have read, you know, the sort of granular about the insurgencies in other countries. It's also very striking what we thought we're very distinct classes, being able to come together and in intimate kind of ways, making decisions together, taking actions and risk together. We -- I don't think should be surprised at the role of the very poor and repressed in these movements. I mean what we have actually right here, political scientist, Frances Fox Piven, I see you there -- was the only person I can really see. You know...

WOMAN: [inaudible]

BARBARA EHRENREICH: ...who's worked for so many years it's been about the role of the poor in protest movements. And I'm just partly -- you know, I'm pointing her up partly because some -- she's somebody here who has had some real experience with the far right. You may remember a couple of years ago when Glenn Beck decided that Frances Fox Piven had -- and Richard A. Cloward had personally caused the financial meltdown with an article they wrote in *The Nation* in 1968, which was brilliant. And I think you also brought on the Arab Spring, didn't you? Yes, so I just...

WOMAN: [inaudible]

BARBARA EHRENREICH: ...anyway, wanted to bring that in...

CECELIA RIDGEWAY: She's--she's not...

BARBARA EHRENREICH: ...and acknowledge Frances and the -- are the fascinating way that the far, far right decided at one point, there was actually a social scientist behind it all. Yes, I think...

CECELIA RIDGEWAY: Well.

THEDA SKOCPOL: ...I heard Frances [inaudible] in the couple of the meetings I was in along with Saul Alinsky. So, both of them and of course they don't have exactly the same approach but. They loom large in the right wing imagination.

CECELIA RIDGEWAY: Well, everybody, we're way out of time but I think -- this is certainly been highly provocative and at lot of fun. We didn't settle it but I do think we've raised a lot of the issues. So I think there's a lot to work with here. It's scary, right? There's a lot to work with here. It's scary. But I think that if we keep thinking about it we're going to get some more. I'm not as pessimistic as Barbara, said we're all doomed, but I don't know, you know. She's been right before. The -- but I do want to mention to you, we're -- there is a drinking be merry before you die brought -- coming on because there's a reception

outside, right? So if you go outside the room, there will be the ASA welcoming reception. So, thank you for coming and I hope you'll be coming to some of the other events.