CONTENTIOUS CONNECTIONS IN GREAT BRITAIN, 1828-1834

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Figure 1: Event Types in Kent, 1828-1834

Event Types, Kent 1828-31

- Violent: 20%
- Other Unp: 14%
- Election: 8%
- Author: 29%
- Assoc: 9%
- Other Pub: 20%
- Other: 0%

Event Types, Kent 1832-34

- Violent: 14%
- Other Unp: 13%
- Election: 12%
- Author: 42%
- Assoc: 6%
- Other Pub: 13%
- Other: 0%
Figure 2: Event Types in Lancashire, 1828-1834

Event Types, Lancashire 1828-31
- Violent: 18%
- Other Unp: 12%
- Election: 5%
- Author: 20%
- Assoc: 20%
- Other Pub: 26%
- Other: 4%

Event Types, Lancashire 1832-34
- Violent: 12%
- Other Unp: 5%
- Election: 5%
- Author: 28%
- Assoc: 29%
- Other Pub: 17%
- Other: 4%
Figure 3: Event Types in Middlesex, 1828-1834

Event Types, Middlesex 1828-31

- Violent: 13%
- Other Unp: 9%
- Election: 4%
- Author: 31%
- Assoc: 20%
- Other Pub: 21%
- Other: 2%

Event Types, Middlesex 1832-34

- Violent: 7%
- Other Unp: 5%
- Election: 10%
- Author: 34%
- Assoc: 34%
- Other Pub: 8%
- Other: 2%
Figure 4: Event Types in Great Britain, 1828-1834

Event Types, Great Britain 1828-1831
- Violent: 18%
- Other: 5%
- Election: 6%
- Author: 29%
- Assoc: 17%
- Other Pub: 20%

Event Types, Great Britain 1832-1834
- Violent: 11%
- Other: 5%
- Election: 12%
- Author: 43%
- Assoc: 7%
- Other Pub: 17%

Figure 5: *Attack* Relations Among Categories of Actors, Kent 1828-1834 (0.5%+ of All Relations in Place and Period)

\[ \text{\textbullet = relations within category} \]
Figure 6: *Attack* Relations Among Categories of Actors, Lancashire 1828-1834 (0.5%+ of All Relations in Place and Period)

\[\text{\(\nabla\text{ = relations within category}\)} \]

\[\begin{align*}
1828-31 \\
\text{Crowd} & \rightarrow \text{Repressive} \\
\downarrow & \hspace{1cm} \\
\text{Workers} & \rightarrow \text{Other}
\end{align*}\]

\[\begin{align*}
1832-34 \\
\text{Church} & \rightarrow \text{Trade} \\
\downarrow & \hspace{1cm} \\
\text{Officials} & \rightarrow \text{Locals} \\
\downarrow & \hspace{1cm} \\
\text{Inhabs} & \rightarrow \text{Crowd} \\
\downarrow & \hspace{1cm} \\
\text{Other} & \rightarrow \text{Interest} \\
\downarrow & \hspace{1cm} \\
\text{Workers} & \rightarrow \text{Other}
\end{align*}\]
Figure 7: *Attack* Relations Among Categories of Actors, Middlesex 1828-1834 (0.5%+ of All Relations in Place and Period)
Figure 8: *Claim* Relations Among Categories of Actors, Kent 1828-1834 (0.5%+ of All Relations in Place and Period)

1828-31

- Other
- Trade
- Electors
- Constable
- Inhabs
- Royalty
- Govt
- Workers
- Parliament
- Locals
- Crowd
- Church
- Repressive

1832-34

- Interest
- Royalty
- Workers
- Inhabs
- Govt
- Locals
- Parliament
- Church
- Crowd
- Repressive

▼ = relations within category
Figure 9: *Claim* Relations Among Categories of Actors, Lancashire 1828-1834 (0.5%+ of All Relations in Place and Period)
Figure 10: Claim Relations Among Categories of Actors, Middlesex 1828-1834 (0.5%+ of All Relations in Place and Period)
Figure 11: Parliamentarization as Changing Objects of Claims
Figure 12: Differences in Parliamentarization among Kent, Lancashire, and Middlesex, 1828-1834
Table 1: Selected Objects of Claims, 1828-1834, as Percentage of All Claims

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Object</th>
<th>Kent 1828-31</th>
<th>Kent 1832-34</th>
<th>Lancashire 1828-31</th>
<th>Lancashire 1832-34</th>
<th>Middlesex 1828-31</th>
<th>Middlesex 1832-34</th>
<th>Great Britain* 1828-31</th>
<th>Great Britain* 1832-34</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Royalty</td>
<td>5.6</td>
<td>14.0</td>
<td>3.2</td>
<td>2.0</td>
<td>6.1</td>
<td>3.4</td>
<td>5.9</td>
<td>6.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gentlemen</td>
<td>1.3</td>
<td>0.0</td>
<td>0.0</td>
<td>0.0</td>
<td>0.4</td>
<td>0.1</td>
<td>0.5</td>
<td>0.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Government</td>
<td>0.0</td>
<td>0.0</td>
<td>0.6</td>
<td>0.0</td>
<td>0.9</td>
<td>0.0</td>
<td>1.1</td>
<td>0.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ministers</td>
<td>1.9</td>
<td>3.2</td>
<td>3.6</td>
<td>0.7</td>
<td>6.4</td>
<td>6.4</td>
<td>3.6</td>
<td>7.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MP</td>
<td>12.5</td>
<td>9.7</td>
<td>5.5</td>
<td>10.5</td>
<td>6.6</td>
<td>14.1</td>
<td>9.5</td>
<td>13.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other Parliament</td>
<td>25.0</td>
<td>23.6</td>
<td>24.4</td>
<td>25.7</td>
<td>12.9</td>
<td>22.8</td>
<td>20.7</td>
<td>24.9</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*10 percent sample of all claims; includes Kent, Lancashire, and Middlesex
### Table 2: Frequencies of Major Verb Categories, 1828-1834, by County

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Area:</th>
<th>Kent 1828-31</th>
<th>Kent 1832-34</th>
<th>Lancashire 1828-31</th>
<th>Lancashire 1832-34</th>
<th>Middlesex 1828-31</th>
<th>Middlesex 1832-34</th>
<th>Great Britain* 1828-31</th>
<th>Great Britain* 1832-34</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Verb Category</td>
<td>1828-31</td>
<td>1832-34</td>
<td>1828-31</td>
<td>1832-34</td>
<td>1828-31</td>
<td>1832-34</td>
<td>1828-31</td>
<td>1832-34</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Attack</td>
<td>6.9</td>
<td>17.2</td>
<td>14.9</td>
<td>13.8</td>
<td>13.0</td>
<td>12.2</td>
<td>11.5</td>
<td>10.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cheer</td>
<td>26.3</td>
<td>23.7</td>
<td>8.1</td>
<td>7.2</td>
<td>19.7</td>
<td>18.1</td>
<td>17.5</td>
<td>17.5</td>
</tr>
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<td>15.4</td>
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<td>9.9</td>
<td>7.2</td>
<td>6.8</td>
<td>5.7</td>
<td>5.1</td>
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<td>13.1</td>
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<td>17.2</td>
<td>18.4</td>
<td>14.8</td>
<td>7.9</td>
<td>12.4</td>
<td>10.7</td>
</tr>
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<td>Deliberate</td>
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<td>40.9</td>
<td>20.2</td>
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<td>Enter</td>
<td>3.1</td>
<td>5.4</td>
<td>6.5</td>
<td>5.3</td>
<td>3.6</td>
<td>2.8</td>
<td>6.3</td>
<td>2.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other</td>
<td>1.9</td>
<td>4.3</td>
<td>8.1</td>
<td>3.3</td>
<td>3.1</td>
<td>3.9</td>
<td>3.4</td>
<td>6.0</td>
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<tr>
<td>Total</td>
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<td>100.0</td>
<td>100.0</td>
<td>100.0</td>
<td>100.0</td>
<td>100.0</td>
<td>100.0</td>
<td>100.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Number of Actions</td>
<td>160</td>
<td>93</td>
<td>308</td>
<td>152</td>
<td>1420</td>
<td>1014</td>
<td>402</td>
<td>234</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

* Ten percent sample of all actions; includes Kent, Lancashire and Middlesex
Table 3: Three-Step Relation Strengths of Major Actors, 1828-1834, by County

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Actor</th>
<th>Kent 1828-31</th>
<th>Kent 1832-34</th>
<th>Lancashire 1828-31</th>
<th>Lancashire 1832-34</th>
<th>Middlesex 1828-31</th>
<th>Middlesex 1832-34</th>
<th>Great Britain* 1828-31</th>
<th>Great Britain* 1832-34</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Church</td>
<td>0.024</td>
<td>0.000</td>
<td>0.007</td>
<td>0.000</td>
<td>0.008</td>
<td>0.004</td>
<td>0.014</td>
<td>0.005</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Constable</td>
<td>0.018</td>
<td>0.024</td>
<td>0.022</td>
<td>0.009</td>
<td>0.039</td>
<td>0.022</td>
<td>0.069</td>
<td>0.063</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Crowd</td>
<td>0.080</td>
<td>0.060</td>
<td>0.178</td>
<td>0.186</td>
<td>0.135</td>
<td>0.088</td>
<td>0.132</td>
<td>0.129</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Electors</td>
<td>0.042</td>
<td>0.036</td>
<td>0.000</td>
<td>0.040</td>
<td>0.020</td>
<td>0.108</td>
<td>0.028</td>
<td>0.028</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Government</td>
<td>0.086</td>
<td>0.023</td>
<td>0.059</td>
<td>0.038</td>
<td>0.109</td>
<td>0.084</td>
<td>0.084</td>
<td>0.128</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Inhabitants</td>
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<td>0.036</td>
<td>0.073</td>
<td>0.075</td>
<td>0.043</td>
<td>0.021</td>
<td>0.051</td>
<td>0.028</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Interest</td>
<td>0.028</td>
<td>0.000</td>
<td>0.015</td>
<td>0.000</td>
<td>0.050</td>
<td>0.017</td>
<td>0.022</td>
<td>0.015</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Locals</td>
<td><strong>0.182</strong></td>
<td><strong>0.228</strong></td>
<td>0.089</td>
<td>0.039</td>
<td><strong>0.133</strong></td>
<td><strong>0.150</strong></td>
<td>0.051</td>
<td>0.052</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Official</td>
<td>0.000</td>
<td>0.006</td>
<td>0.000</td>
<td>0.013</td>
<td><strong>0.158</strong></td>
<td>0.037</td>
<td>0.050</td>
<td>0.028</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pariahs</td>
<td>0.008</td>
<td>0.021</td>
<td>0.013</td>
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<td>0.033</td>
<td>0.046</td>
<td>0.011</td>
<td>0.029</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Parliament</td>
<td><strong>0.285</strong></td>
<td><strong>0.298</strong></td>
<td><strong>0.200</strong></td>
<td><strong>0.339</strong></td>
<td><strong>0.245</strong></td>
<td><strong>0.331</strong></td>
<td><strong>0.327</strong></td>
<td><strong>0.364</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Repressive</td>
<td>0.046</td>
<td><strong>0.105</strong></td>
<td>0.032</td>
<td>0.065</td>
<td>0.096</td>
<td>0.088</td>
<td>0.061</td>
<td>0.047</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Royalty</td>
<td>0.041</td>
<td><strong>0.114</strong></td>
<td>0.029</td>
<td>0.017</td>
<td>0.060</td>
<td>0.039</td>
<td>0.041</td>
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</tr>
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<td>Trade</td>
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<td>0.049</td>
<td><strong>0.134</strong></td>
<td>0.038</td>
<td>0.063</td>
<td>0.030</td>
<td>0.046</td>
<td>0.019</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Workers</td>
<td>0.076</td>
<td>0.000</td>
<td>0.077</td>
<td>0.058</td>
<td>0.050</td>
<td>0.009</td>
<td>0.015</td>
<td>0.000</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Bold** = Relation strength >0.100

0.000 = No formations in this category

*10 percent sample of all claims; includes Kent, Lancashire, and Middlesex
When 18th century British activists started inventing the social movement, they had little idea what a peculiar and influential political form they were fabricating. They fashioned a new sort of campaign: the sustained challenge to authorities on behalf of a relatively well defined program in the name of an aggrieved population by means of coordinated public performances displaying the worthiness, unity, numbers, and commitment of the program’s supporters. As they took shape in Great Britain, social movements regularly came to include associational founding and recruitment, public meetings, processions, demonstrations, petition drives, and statements to the press. Although it took half a century for this configuration of activities to become standard politics, and longer than that for it to acquire the name social movement, the configuration’s emergence marked a new stage in British popular politics.

The social movement certainly had peculiar properties for its time. It emerged in a day when popular politics divided mainly between direct action, on one side, and appeals to patrons, on the other. Britain’s violent, often vindictive 18th century forms of direct action included Rough Music, donkeying, window breaking, pulling down of dishonored houses, and seizure of high-priced or sequestered grain. They also had positive counterparts such as parading heroes in chairs or placing candles in windows for public celebrations. Although the direct petition to King or Parliament had some standing as an appeal to patrons by middle-class Britons, ordinary people more often asked local notables to bring their troubles to the authorities’ attention.

In this context, it was peculiar for people to start making claims by the means we now recognize as belonging to social movements: forming special-interest associations, holding public meetings, organizing petition drives, marching, lobbying, making statements for public consumption, and so on. These new means abandoned both direct action and appeals to local patrons, despite the fact that either of the old strategies often continued to produce results in the short run. The new means, in contrast, had no prospect of realizing people’s claims in one or two iterations. They only worked — if they did! — over the long run and after repeated efforts. They often neutralized themselves, furthermore, by provoking counter-movements on the part of opponents.

Yet social movement strategies turned out to have wide appeal. The new bundle of political forms, the social movement, centered on campaigns in support of or opposition to publicly articulated programs by means of associations, meetings, demonstrations, petitions, electoral participation, strikes, and related means of coordinated action. It provided an opportunity to offer a sustained challenge to powerful figures and institutions without necessarily attacking them physically, but also without kowtowing to them. It said, in effect, “We are here, we support this cause, there are lots of us, we know how to act together, and we could cause trouble if we wanted to.” It asserted the consequential presence of new political actors and/or political programs.

Why, how, with what correlates and consequences did social movements become so prevalent in Great Britain and elsewhere? This paper takes up only one causal strand in
that complex fabric of cause and effect. It concentrates on the interdependence of a) widening adoption of social-movement forms and b) increasing centrality of Parliament (more precisely, the House of Commons, and by extension parliamentary elections) to Britain’s popular politics. The overall argument on which the paper builds runs as follows:

- Britain’s enormous increase of military expenditure from the Seven Years War (1756-63) onward significantly enhanced tax-authorizing Parliament’s leverage in national politics.

- Parliament used its enhanced powers by acting more decisively and effectively on matters that directly affected the welfare of ordinary people, even in the face of royal and noble opposition.

- The crown and royal patronage became less central to most forms of national politics, especially those directly involving popular interests.

- Despite a narrow parliamentary electorate, as a consequence, parliamentary debates, legislation, and election both more frequently took up issues of concern to ordinary people and incited popular responses.

- Because propertied males affiliated with the state church wielded disproportionate weight in Parliament and in national politics at large, people outside that small category more often faced threats than benefits to their interests from governmental action.

- Yet some members of Parliament sought popular support as a counterweight to factions based on landed wealth, and therefore made alliances (intermittent or long term) with popular political leaders.

- Organized popular forces therefore discovered that they could gain political weight through a combination of a) displaying support for advocates of their interests and b) threatening to disrupt the routines of elite politics.

- Populist political entrepreneurs experimented incessantly, probing the existing political system for soft spots, adapting established forms of claim-making to new participants, occasions, or issues, and devising new tactics as opportunities presented themselves.

- Repeated interactions among popular claimants, objects of claims, authorities, and Parliament (especially the House of Commons) established the social movement as a standard way of making sustained claims at a national scale in Great Britain.
Although the process was well under way by 1828, the major national campaigns of 1828-1834 – notably the vast mobilization that preceded and produced 1832’s Reform Act – consolidated both social movement politics and the position of the Commons at the center of popular claim-making.

Schematically, the argument says that parliamentarization and the expansion of social movement politics reinforced each other. Earlier work (Tilly 1995, 1997) has made the general case for such a line of argument. This paper amplifies earlier analyses by looking more closely at changes in the forms, participants, and objects of popular claim making during the seven turbulent years from 1828 through 1834. It adds a comparison of three significantly different political regions to previously documented national trends. Building on the recognition that claims of X on Y or vice versa establish relations among political actors and among categories of political actors, it uses formal network analyses to document its major empirical claims. After a summary sketch of social movement activity in Great Britain from the 1780s into the 1830s, it proceeds to a close examination of 1828-1834.

**The Rise of Social Movements in Great Britain, 1787-1834**

Although we could trace elements of social movement activism back to the libertarian campaigns of John Wilkes in the 1760s and the anti-Catholic campaign of George Gordon in the 1780s, crystallization of Britain’s social movement repertoire greatly accelerated with national campaigns against the slave trade, then against slavery itself. In sometime collaboration with activists in other western countries, British antislavery movement organizers played a major part in abolishing both slave trading and slavery itself through most of the Atlantic world. Heroic activists sometimes campaigned publicly against slavery in major regions of slave-based production, including British colonies. Crucial campaigns first took place, however, mostly where slaves were rare but beneficiaries of their production were prominent. For the most part, anti-slavery support arose in populations that benefited no more than indirectly from slave production.

The British version of the social movement’s story begins in 1787. British Quakers, Methodists, and other anti-establishment Protestants joined with more secular advocates of working class freedoms to oppose all forms of coerced labor. A Society for the Abolition of the Slave Trade, organized in 1787, coordinated a vast national campaign, an early social movement.

At first glance, the central role of Manchester, Lancashire, the industrial revolution’s first great metropolis, in that campaign looks strange. Textile production in Manchester depended heavily on cotton produced by slaves in the Americas. But in Manchester, both masters and workers trumpeted the superiority of free over slave labor, despite disagreeing bitterly over what sorts of freedoms workers should actually enjoy. (Manchester masters contested, for example, any rights of free laborers to form unions and to strike. In common with their fellows elsewhere in Britain and North America, they advo-
icated individual-to-individual contracts as the basis of employment; see Steinfeld 2001.) In 1788, Manchester’s citizens sent to Parliament a petition against the slave trade endorsed by a reported 10,639 citizens, about two thirds of its adult male population. Even at the risk of paying more for cotton produced by free labor, they agitated for the end of slavery. During the winter of 1787-88 abolitionists organized multiple public meetings in the city, typically leaving a copy of the petition in place for signature or endorsement with an X after the meeting.

Manchester’s initiative set the city against the leaders of Liverpool, the main port through which slave-produced cotton entered England. In the name of economic progress and property rights, Liverpool’s leaders objected to anti-slavery activism. Manchester’s example, however, had the wider resonance in Great Britain. Perhaps 100 thousand people throughout Britain put their names to abolitionist petitions in 1787-1788. At the same time, other associations, public meetings, and petition drives were agitating for parliamentary reform as well as for repeal of restrictions on political rights of Catholics and of Protestant Dissenters (non-members of the state-backed Anglican Church such as Baptists and Methodists).

During the next two decades, British activists rounded out the social movement repertoire with two crucial additions: the lobby and the demonstration. Lobbying began literally as talking to Members of Parliament in the lobby of the Parliament building on their way to or from sessions. Later the word generalized to mean any direct intervention with legislators to influence their votes. British activists also created the two forms of the demonstration we still know today: the disciplined march through streets and the organized assembly in a symbolically significant public space, both accompanied by coordinated displays of support for a shared program.

Of course all the forms of social movement activism had precedents, including elite public meetings, formal presentations of petitions, and the committees of correspondence that played so important a part in American resistance to royal demands during the 1760s and 1770s. They drew heavily on organizational repertoires already prevalent among activist Dissenters such as the Quakers. But between the 1780s and the 1820s British activists (religious and secular) created a new synthesis. From then to the present, social movements regularly combined associations, meetings, demonstrations, petitions, electoral participation, lobbying, strikes, and related means of coordinated action.

Within Great Britain, Parliament began responding to popular pressure with partial regulation of the slave trade in 1788. By 1806, abolition of the slave trade had become a major issue in parliamentary elections. In 1807, Parliament declared illegal the shipping of slaves to Britain’s colonies. From that point on, British activists demanded that their government act against other slave-trading countries. Great Britain then pressed for withdrawal of other European powers from the slave trade. At the end of the Napoleonic Wars in 1815, the major European powers except for Spain and Portugal agreed
to abolition of the trade. Under economic and diplomatic pressure from Britain, Spain and Portugal reluctantly withdrew from officially sanctioned slave trading step by step between 1815 and 1867. From 1867 onward, only outlaws shipped slaves across the Atlantic. With Brazil’s abolition of slavery in 1888, slavery lost all legal standing in Western Europe and the Americas.

Meanwhile, the social movement form had been consolidating outside the purview of antislavery politics. During the great wars of 1792-1815 with France, not only British advocates of democratic reform but also their pro-regime opponents widely adopted associations, public meetings, demonstrations, electoral campaigns, pamphlets, and petitions as means of conveying their messages. Severe wartime restrictions on association and assembly slowed the pact of social movement mobilization until the postwar years, but through the wars reformers and workers continued to rail publicly against corruption and capitalist exploitation.

In the company of 18th century style attacks on machines, enclosures, and exploitative employers, the immediate postwar years (1816-1820) brought a great surge of social movement mobilization on behalf of political reform and workers’ rights to organize. Even the vast popular campaign of support for Queen Caroline, the estranged wife of new King George IV, in 1820-21 occurred largely through meetings, processions, and demonstrations. Electoral campaigns attracted wider and wider participation in social movement style. In Ireland (from 1801 part of a fragile United Kingdom), Daniel O’Connell and his allies were organizing the mass-membership Catholic Association to break down the exclusion of Catholics from national politics and Parliament. At the same time, Protestant Dissenters within Great Britain were campaigning for expansion of their own restricted political rights. Literati, political activists, and officeholders alike commonly interpreted the swelling of popular campaigns as the Rise of the Crowd. They disagreed sharply, to be sure, on whether the crowd’s rise threatened liberty or promised liberation (Herzog 1998, Morgan 1988, Plotz 2000).

Several of these social movement campaigns culminated in the years from 1828 through 1834. In 1828, as a response to widespread agitation, Parliament’s repeal of the 17th century Test and Corporation Acts opened up political participation for Protestant Dissenters. In 1829, under even greater pressure from campaigns and counter-campaigns, Parliament staved off threatened insurrection in Ireland by reducing restrictions on Catholic political participation – balancing that measure by narrowing the franchise in Ireland and banning the massive Catholic Association. By far the greatest social movement mobilization, however, centered on demands for parliamentary reform: widened eligibility for membership in Parliament, an expanded franchise, equalization of existing representation, and increased public accountability for Parliament itself.

The Reform Act of 1832 made modest concessions in all these directions. Although historians keep debating whether, to what extent, and how popular demands promoted passage of the Reform Act (see, e.g., Archer 2000: 70-72, Price 1999: 264-273), they
generally agree that popular participation in social movements oriented to Reform in 1830 to 1832 exceeded anything Great Britain had ever seen before. At a minimum, massive popular mobilization gave parliamentary supporters of Reform such as Thomas Babington Macaulay plausible grounds for their arguments that modest concessions would hold off revolution. They could, after all, point to the specters of France and Belgium, where revolutionaries had installed new regimes in 1830.

Radical societies, political unions, and workers’ associations allied uneasily in a turbulent national campaign. Widespread involvement of organized workers in the 1830-32 campaign made the Act’s virtual exclusion of workers from the vote a more salient public issue in 1832-34, when Parliament often sided with the propertied on such questions as the Poor Law. Precisely because the example of the Reform movement, the victory of Parliament, and the expanded space of representative politics made established local assemblies crucial arenas for communication with national authorities, a great deal of contention during those later years simultaneously began in local assemblies and/or concerned the proper membership and conduct of local assemblies.

Three Regions from 1828 to 1834

Let us close in on a major moment in the social movement’s consolidation, the seven years from 1828 through 1834. Those years cannot show us the long-term interplay between Parliamentary change and social movement development. But they allow us to witness a momentous break: Mass mobilization promoted the Reform Act of 1832, which in turn altered relations between British subjects and the seats of national power. In order not to render an already complex analysis utterly incomprehensible, the evidence to follow will employ a crude distinction between 1828-31 (“before” the Reform Act, which actually passed in June, 1832) and 1832-34 (“after” the Act). The evidence comes from a more general study of contentious politics in Great Britain from 1758 to 1834.

The study as a whole catalogs 8,088 “contentious gatherings” (CGs) occurring in a) Southeastern England (Kent, Middlesex, Surrey, and Sussex) during 13 scattered years from 1758 to 1820 and b) Great Britain (England, Wales, and Scotland) as a whole during the seven years from 1828 through 1834. CGs are occasions on which a number of people (in the instance, ten or more) outside the government gathered in a publicly accessible place and made visible collective claims bearing on the interests of at least one person outside their own number. The machine-readable catalog contains truncated, edited textual transcriptions of such events reported in Gentlemen’s Magazine, the Annual Register, or the London Chronicle for 1758, 1759, 1768, 1769, 1780, and 1781; in those publications as well as the Times of London for 1789, 1795, 1801, 1807, 1811, 1819, and 1820; and in Gentlemen’s Magazine, Annual Register, Morning Chronicle, Times, Mirror of Parliament, Hansard’s Parliamentary Debates or Votes and Proceedings of Parliament for 1828-1834 (for technical details and closely related research, see
Within that set, the present analysis deals with CGs occurring in the counties of Kent, Lancashire, and Middlesex, and sometimes in Great Britain as a whole, aggregated into the two periods 1828-1831 and 1832-34:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Period</th>
<th>Kent</th>
<th>Lancashire</th>
<th>Middlesex</th>
<th>Great Britain</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1828-31</td>
<td>192</td>
<td>273</td>
<td>1166</td>
<td>4045</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1832-34</td>
<td>101</td>
<td>187</td>
<td>1454</td>
<td>2839</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>293</td>
<td>460</td>
<td>2620</td>
<td>6884</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

As a rough index of mobilization and demobilization, CGs declined significantly from 48 to 34 per year in Kent, dropped slightly from 68 to 62 per year in Lancashire, rose from 292 to 485 per year in Middlesex, and diminished mildly from 1011 to 946 per year over the whole of Great Britain. The three counties displayed different patterns of mobilization and demobilization as functions of their dominant activities. Kent was a region of capitalist agriculture, Lancashire Britain's prime concentration of capitalist industry, and Middlesex the densest part of London and environs. (A full 38 percent of the catalog's 6884 CGs from 1828 through 1834 occurred in Middlesex, a proportion inflated by London-centered sources, yet still indicative of London's primordial place in national politics.) The three counties by no means exhaust the variety of Great Britain in the 1830s, but they offer an opportunity to see whether parliamentarization and social movement expansion operated differently in agrarian, industrial, and urban environments.

Evidence to come indicates that after the massive parliament-centered mobilizations of 1828-1831, agrarian Kent subsided not only into lower levels of public contention but also into more parochial forms of claim making. To the extent that social movement politics existed in Kent after Reform, it split between popular efforts to open up local power structures and elite appeals to national authorities. Although workers continued to figure more prominently in popular contention in Lancashire than elsewhere, both Lancashire and Middlesex moved more definitively than Kent toward a system of public claim making strongly centered on Parliament. That claim making increasingly took social movement forms.

Our machine-readable descriptions of CGs include separate records for 1) whole events, 2) sources consulted, 3) each distinct individual named in our accounts, 4) each separate location involved, 5) participating formations (any person or set of persons the sources describe as acting distinctly from others), 6) individual actions by those formations transcribed as stylized verbs, and 7) coders’ and editors’ comments on the event and/or its sources. Here we concentrate on whole events, participating formations, and the verbs of individual actions. Some verbs (e.g. “exit”) are intransitive; they have no
objects. In the whole data set, just over half of the verbs have objects – formation A does X to formation B. A “group of silk weavers,” for example, may cheer a Member of Parliament. In this case, we call the Member of Parliament (MP) object of a claim. We regard all such claim making as establishing a relation at two levels: between the particular parties involved in the CG at hand, and between the categories of political actors involved more generally. Thus we take the illustrative case as evidence not only of a concrete relation between the silk weavers of London’s Spitalfields district and their local MP, but also of a more general relation between members of trades (silk weavers, in the instance) and MPs as a class of actors. The present analysis focuses exclusively on relations among categories of actors. It uses formal network methods to identify relations among categories.

A rough tabulation of claim objects in 1828-31 and 1832-34 for our three counties and Great Britain as a whole therefore provides a first indication of whether we have any changes in the orientation of contention “before” and “after” the Reform Act to explain. We do. Table 1 provides that information. For ease of computation, we have based the figures for Great Britain as a whole on an unbiased 10 percent sample of all 20,853 claims.

**Table 1 about here**

Royalty, Gentlemen, and Government represent the centers that, according to our account of parliamentarization, were already losing sway during the half century or so before 1828, and continued to lose ground as a consequence of Reform. Royalty means the king and his immediate family, who had stood at the center of national patronage politics during the 18th century, but had suffered diminished influence after 1760 as Parliament gained power. Gentlemen (nobles, peers, and gentry) and Government (high officials of the realm) were likewise losing their centrality in public politics. (The House of Lords also became more peripheral in the process, but that more complex story deserves telling elsewhere.) Increasing responsibility of Ministers to Parliament rather than the king signals a shift rather than a diminution of Ministers’ political weight. MPs and Parliament, in our account, became more crucial to popular politics, while Ministers acquired increasing ties to both of them.

Table 1 confirms the relative decline of Royalty, Gentlemen, and Government, on one side, the relative rise of MPs and Parliament, on the other. But Kent, the rural county, behaves differently from Lancashire and Middlesex, the industrial and urban counties; in Kent, Royalty becomes a more frequent object of claims after Reform, while MP and Parliament lose some of their prominence. (Royalty likewise gains slightly over Great Britain as a whole.) It is as if rural elites – both in Kent and elsewhere in Great Britain – tried Parliament, lost, and turned back to Royalty while their industrial and urban counterparts were moving enthusiastically into a parliamentary regime.
Changes in occasions for claim making amplify that picture. A rough classification of occasions for CGs distinguishes:

**Violent Gathering**: attacks on poorhouses, affrays of hunters with game wardens, public shaming of renegade workers, pulling down of dishonored or dangerous houses, beating of informers, and other direct applications of force.

**Other Unplanned Gathering**: nonviolent market conflicts; responses to the arrivals of dignitaries, heroes, or blackguards; popularly-initiated public celebrations of major events and other instances of assembly and claim-making without substantial prior planning.

**Election Meeting**: gatherings to endorse candidates, hear campaign speeches, or attend elections themselves.

**Authorized Assembly**: offering demands, complaints, or expressions of support with respect to others in regularly constituted bodies such as vestry meetings, wardmotes (i.e., ward assemblies), and city councils.

**Association Meeting**: similar claim making in official sessions of explicitly named associations, including religious, economic, and political organizations.

**Other Public Meeting**: previously announced discussions of public issues open to the general citizenry (or sometimes the “respectable inhabitants”) of a locality.

**Other**: organized celebration, delegation, parade, demonstration, strike, or turnout.

No event qualified as a CG unless our sources provided direct evidence of at least one public, contentious claim – we demand, we support, we condemn, we humbly pray, and so on. We called a claim “contentious” if its realization would have (positively or negatively) affected the interests of at least one person outside of the claiming formation. That meant excluding many gatherings at which people discussed public issues. The sources, for example, announced thousands of public meetings that we excluded for lack of reported claims on people outside their own participants. In this classification of gatherings that did qualify, categories overlap; for example, “other” public meetings often followed closed meetings of associations. Some CGs began as meetings, but then someone started a brawl; this classification treats such events as violent. Since violence increased the likelihood that our sources would mention a gathering and that they would describe claim-making activity, the catalog exaggerates the relative frequency of violent events. Because of selectivity in the sources, the catalog also greatly underrepresents industrial conflict – turnouts, strikes, and public struggles within trades. Comparisons with other sources, however, provide no indication that the catalog’s selectivity biases comparisons over time (see Tilly 1995, Appendix 1).
The categories permit distinctions among

1) the violent confrontations and other unplanned gatherings that had prevailed in 18th century CGs, but became less frequent after 1800

2) the authorized local assemblies of residents, parishioners, ratepayers, or electors that persisted from the 18th to the 19th centuries but became increasingly important as arenas for debate of national political issues, and

3) the elections, association meetings, other public meetings, and “other” forms that formed primary sites for social movement activity.

As we will see, violent and unplanned gatherings continued to decline significantly over the short interval from 1828 to 1834 while the second and third categories (authorized assemblies and public meetings) continued to increase. Meanwhile, the relative prominence of authorized public assemblies varied significantly from county to county.

**Figures 1-4 about here**

Figures 1 to 4 summarize before/after differences in distributions of CG types for the three counties and for Great Britain as a whole. In agrarian Kent, violent events of 1828-31 included multiple incidents of the 1830 Swing rebellion, in which landless laborers burned hayricks, attacked threshing machines, and sometimes clashed directly with farmers and repressive forces as they urged substantial farmers and local officials (on some occasions successfully) to take measures against falling wages and unemployment. Violent events and other unplanned gatherings did not disappear in Kent after 1831, but they diminished from 34 to 27 percent of all CGs. In Kent, the shares of associational and other public meetings also diminished. Before 1832, Kent had not only hosted the earliest phase of the Swing rebellion, but also fostered multiple meetings and counter-meetings organized by associations supporting and opposing Catholic rights. The partial resolution of that issue in 1829 and the partial parliamentary reform of 1832 left the regularly scheduled meeting of residents and officials Kent’s principal occasion for popular claim-making.

Lancashire, pioneer of antislavery mobilization, already had long experience with associational meetings before 1828. A significantly higher share of its 1828-31 CGs (20 percent) than of Kent’s (9 percent) arose from associational meetings. That proportion grew larger in 1832-34. As in Kent, nevertheless, authorized local assemblies loomed larger after the Reform Act’s passage than before; in Lancashire, too, citizens took to addressing authorities by means of previously announced and publicly sponsored meetings. Similarly, violent and other unplanned gatherings lost ground, as rough confrontations between workers and masters or authorities gave way to non-violent routine politics.
In Middlesex – essentially London – we see a place where the “before” of 1828-31 already resembles the “after” of 1832-34 in Lancashire. Violent events and other unplanned gatherings nevertheless sank from 22 percent to 12 percent of London’s total CGs while associational meetings increased to more than a third and authorized public assemblies gained moderately. London shows us the widespread use of issue-oriented general public meetings during the 1828-31 mobilizations around Test and Corporation Act repeal, Catholic Emancipation and, overwhelmingly, Reform. Between 1832 and 1834, Londoners continued to make claims during electoral campaigns and by means of various sorts of demonstrations. But they gathered mainly to deliberate, then pass resolutions, send petitions, or otherwise communicate their will to public authorities.

A look at Great Britain’s totals makes clear that Kent represented changes in the country as a whole more faithfully than did Lancashire or Middlesex. True, associational meetings figured more prominently nationally than in Kent both before and after Reform. But on the whole, the shift toward authorized public assemblies and electoral gatherings already apparent in Kent describes a national trend as well. After the massive mobilizations of 1828-31, Great Britain at large settled into more routine versions of authorized claim making. Increasingly, Britons formed associations to pursue collective interests. They then voiced those interests especially by participating in electoral campaigns and pressing local authorities to convene assemblies of constituted bodies, assemblies in which local people deliberated on the day’s public issues. As the people of Kent retreated toward relatively exclusive assemblies and attacks upon them, the people of Lancashire and Middlesex continued in the social movement mode of unauthorized public assemblies, special interest associations, and raucous participation in elections. The sort of politics displayed by Lancashire and Middlesex actually became more central to relationships among Great Britain’s major political actors. To see that more clearly, we must examine relationships as such.

**Claim Making Networks**

In this analysis, we represent relationships not among individuals or concrete groups, but among *categories* of individuals and groups. The entire data set included about 12,000 different concrete formation names, as given in our sources. Here we group them into just 16 categories grouping together actors that occupied, according to earlier analyses (Tilly 1997), similar positions in the British national polity of the 1830s. With examples, the 16 categories are:

*Church*: Catholics, Protestant Dissenters, Society of Friends

*Constables*: beadles, keepers, New Police

*Crowd*: assemblage, mob, multitude

*Contentious Connections: 11*
Electors: delegation, electors, freeholders

Government: gentlemen, King’s Ministers, nobles

Inhabitants: house occupants, inhabitants, populace

Interest: advocates of free speech, Benefit Societies, farmers

Locals: churchwardens, local officials, supporters

Officials: alderman, Common Council, Common Serjeant

Other: associates of prisoner, individual name, others

Pariahs: Irish, poachers, poor

Parliament: Commons, Lords, Member of Parliament

Repressive: city marshal, police, troops

Royalty: King and Government, Majesties, Queen

Trade: chief mate, employers, master

Workers: artisans, labourers, weavers

Let us be clear: the categories do not summarize our best judgments of a formation’s social composition, but the name assigned to it by reporters in the publications from which we drew the catalog. Two important qualifications follow. First, the same individuals could appear in different formation categories from one CG to another; individual members of a formation called Workers in one event, for example, sometimes showed up as members of other formations called Church, Crowd, Inhabitants, Interest, or Pariahs. Second, formations vary in social homogeneity: the category Parliament includes persons much more similar to each other than the category Inhabitants. All this is as it should be: we are examining in whose name and on whom sets of people made public collective claims in Great Britain during the years from 1828 through 1831. The categories group together sets of claimants and objects of claims that occupied similar positions in British public politics of the 1820s and 1830s.

In a similar fashion, we aggregated the verbs our accounts used to describe actions by formations within CGs. The full data set includes about 2,000 different verbs, reduced here to just 8 categories (again with samples):

Attack: batter, battle, decry
In our three counties and for Great Britain as a whole, the proportions of all verbs for the whole period 1828-1834 constituted by these categories appear in Table 2.

**Table 2 about here**

Deliberation (the meeting, resolving, moving, and seconding of organized public assemblies) increased significantly in all three counties after Reform; the deliberately called public assembly became a dominant setting for making of collective claims. Yet some indicative differences appear among counties. Despite the attack-centered Swing rebellion of 1830, Kent’s frequency of attacks actually rose after 1831; those attacks, increasingly verbal rather than physical, divided between those initiated especially by citizens excluded from local political deliberations and those directed by public assemblies toward national governmental actors or institutions. By comparison with other counties, nevertheless, Kent’s formations did a good deal of cheering, mostly in support of local notables and royalty. Control and attack reached their peaks in Lancashire as a consequence of repeated confrontations between working class gatherings and forces of order, on one side, between workers and enemies within their own trades, on the other. Middlesex claimants put more of their energy overall into the characteristic acts of social movements: claiming, communicating, and deliberating. Over Great Britain as a whole (including the three counties singled out here), the most remarkable shift between 1828-31 and 1832-34 increased the share of Deliberate verbs from 20.2 to 29.5 percent of the total. The public meeting and its decorum became the principal site of collective claim making.

We could read the overall pattern as a temporary shift from the intense social movement mobilization of 1828-31 toward a common aftermath of social movement surges: heightened activity by associations and constituted public bodies. (The shift was only temporary: during the later 1830s, for example, Britain’s industrial regions produced the vast social movement mobilization called Chartism.) In Middlesex after 1831, claiming
gave way to deliberating, as authorized assemblies and associational meetings provided
the occasions for more than two thirds of all Middlesex CGs. Even more so than in Kent
and Lancashire, public deliberation became Middlesex’s standard form of collective
claim making. These broad differences lead immediately to questions about who did
what to whom, and how that changed from before to after Reform. An analysis of claim
making networks helps answer those questions.

Here we concentrate on just two verb categories: attack and claim. Although they in-
clude verbal and symbolic actions as well as physical damage and seizure, Attack verbs
represent the older forms of direct action on behalf of local interests. Claim verbs indi-
cate the use of relatively formal collective means in the social movement vein. For each
of the verb categories taken separately, we have constructed matrices displaying the
frequency with which members of the 16 formation categories carried on actions having
other formations for their objects. (We now aggregate the previously distinguished Gen-
tlemen, Government, and Ministers into a single entity – Government – just as we lump
together MP and Other Parliament.) Before looking more deeply into the structure of
those matrices, we diagram the more frequent relations thus identified in each county
and period as simple networks. Figures 5 through 10 show relations occupying at least
0.5% of all transitive actions occurring in the locality for Attack and Claim verbs in Kent,
Lancashire, and Middlesex separately for “before” and “after” the Reform Act: 1828-31
and 1832-34.

**Figures 5-7 about here**

A significant contrast between agrarian Kent, on one side, and industrial-urban Lanca-
shire and Middlesex, on the other, reappears in these network diagrams. As in the tabu-
lations of claim objects, these more refined analyses show us Kent’s recession from na-
tionally oriented, parliament-centered mobilization in 1828-31 to more parochial and/or
elite politics in 1832-34. In Lancashire and Middlesex, we see continuation of popular
participation and a further move toward centering claims on Parliament. The Attack
diagram for Kent 1828-31 reveals a configuration oriented toward named individuals
(the principal component of Other), but including (mostly verbal) attacks on Parliament
and particular MPs as well as on the national establishment (Government). By 1832-34,
Government has disappeared as a major object of attack in Kent, but local assemblies
continue to attack Parliament. Kent’s attacks of 1832-34 still swirl around named indi-
viduals, mostly local leaders of one sort or another.

In both Lancashire and Middlesex, crowds figure just as prominently among attacks as
in Kent, but pair more regularly with repressive forces – that is, not regular local peace-
keepers but exceptional crowd-busters such as troops and marshals. (The category
Constable brings together different varieties of regularly established local police; Mid-
dlesex attacks of crowds on constables in 1828-31 consisted largely of resistance to
Robert Peel’s New Police.) There Lancashire and Middlesex divide, with attacks prolifer-
ating in industrial Lancashire after 1831, but narrowing to the pair crowd-repressive in metropolitan Middlesex.

**Figures 8-10 about here**

Claim relations, characteristic of the public meetings we have already seen gaining importance, tell a somewhat different story. In Kent, 58 percent of all CGs in the pre-Reform mobilization of 1828-31 began as public meetings of one sort or another. In Figure 8 we see that during the same period Parliament formed the center of Kent’s public claim making, despite competition from local office-holders, national government figures, and royalty. After Reform, assemblies of Kent inhabitants continued to address Parliament on occasion, but royalty and government gained relatively. In this regard, Lancashire and Middlesex differed not only from Kent, but also from each other. During 1828-31, the claim making patterns of Lancashire and Middlesex strikingly resembled each other, with inhabitants sometimes making claims on royalty, but inhabitants and everyone else joining to make claims on Parliament.

During 1832-34 the two counties split apart. Lancashire’s people continued to center their claims on Parliament, but separate clusters linked a) inhabitants, electors, and others, b) locals, officials, and crowds. Despite parliamentarization, Lancashire’s local politics remained rambunctious and partly independent of national affairs. Lancashire’s social movements bifurcated. In Middlesex, the pattern of orientation to Parliament that characterized 1828-31 contention stayed in place with almost no alteration whatsoever. Middlesex remained the national center of social movement politics. From the perspective of parliamentarization as well, Middlesex led the way, Lancashire followed to some extent, but Kent dragged its feet.

**The Centrality of Major Actors**

If the evidence on one-step relations between contentious actors and their objects clearly identifies parliamentarization as a continuing trend through the period of Reform, it does not pinpoint Parliament’s place within the larger set of relations that connected all actors. Our analyses so far have dealt only with direct relations, as when Inhabitants assemble to petition Parliament. Network techniques make it possible to ask how closely connected any actor was to other well connected actors, as when Crowds bedevil Officials, who turn to Constables, who in turn harass Crowds. More precisely, we examine objects of claims to determine the extent to which they are termini of claim-making chains in which intermediate claimants themselves are major objects of claims directed at them alone. Instead of looking at Attack and Claim separately, we lump all sorts of claims together. The idea is to determine whether the Reform mobilization produced significant shifts and regional differences in the relative prominence of different objects of claims.
Table 3 about here

Using Ronald Burt’s Structure program, we measure this sort of centrality by means of three-step relation strength. The measure is an eigenvector measure varying over actors from 0 (an actor receiving no relations at all) to 1 (an actor constituting the only object of claims for every other actor). On the double bet that a) claims reverberate beyond a single step of relationship and b) every category of political actor in Britain of the 1830s could reach the national level through fewer than four steps of relationship, we weight the relations by proximity, up to 3 steps. The procedure measures exclusive relations received by a particular formation. It represents the proportion to which i has an exclusive relation from j, including relations to itself, for example inhabitants making claims on other inhabitants. As a measure of centrality, this variable estimates the extent to which actor i is the object of exclusive relations from everyone. As it should, relational strength gains more from exclusive relations with powerful players than exclusive relations with weak players. To that extent, it measures not only centrality, but also power.

Our one-step network diagrams have already shown us Parliament receiving more claims from powerful actors than any other object did. Table 3’s three-step measures permit refinement of the earlier observations. In Kent, we witness the emergence of a distinctive popular politics in which appeals to the king retained prominence after 1831, while repressive forces such as troops and marshals battled with local citizens. As hinted earlier, crowds show up as persistent nodes of claim making in Middlesex before 1832 and in Lancashire throughout the period, but not in Kent for either period. In Lancashire, we see a popular politics centering not only on crowds but also on masters and skilled artisans (Trade) rather than workers presenting themselves as workers. (Many workers participated in formations here classified as Crowds, but we persist in using the names our sources assigned to formations rather than second-guessing the sources. We treat the assertion and attribution of public names as consequential political acts, expressions of political identities; see Jenson 1993, Tilly 1998a, 1998b.)

As an understandable consequence of intensifying local-national connections, locals (for example, churchwardens, clergy, committees, local officials, parishioners, supporters, and wardmotes) appear as the sorts of brokers we might reasonably expect in Kent and Middlesex, but not in Lancashire. In Kent and Middlesex, these intermediaries played crucial parts in the politics of assembling and addressing national holders of power. In Middlesex, officials (which means essentially officers of London’s municipal administrations) occupied similar positions in the major mobilizations of 1828-31, but then lost prominence in the post-Reform politics of 1832-34. In parallel, Middlesex citizens centered their appeals of 1828 through 1831 not only on Parliament but also on the king’s ministers and other high officials. With passage of Reform, the appeal to high governmental officials declined in importance to the overall structure of claim making. That decline in the centrality of Government occurred in all three counties.

Contentious Connections: 16
Nevertheless, the major news of Table 3 arrives in the line devoted to Parliament. In all three counties and Great Britain as a whole, Parliament figured more centrally in claim making than any other class of formations. Parliament only gained in centrality after Reform. By 1832-34, in Kent, Lancashire, and Middlesex alike Parliament was attracting close to a third (.298, .339, and .331) of all the claims it could, in principle, have attracted. Yet the three counties show us three somewhat different variants of parliamentarization:

In agrarian Kent, considerable persistence of local politics coupled with adoption of standard arrangements in which regularly convened assemblies of residents and local officials sent appeals to the king’s close collaborators or, especially, to Parliament.

In industrial Lancashire, division between a) the local politics of workers, tradesmen, and crowds and b) the national politics of local assemblies communicating with Parliament, assemblies more often involving special-interest associations (especially work-based associations) than in Kent or Middlesex.

In Middlesex, the fullest coincidence of social movement politics with Parliamentary foci – crowds, authorized assemblies, special-interest associations, and public meetings on one side, Parliament on the other, with local officials often in between.

Figure 11 about here

Figure 11 recalls the general meaning of parliamentarization. Consistent with the relation-strength analysis, it centers on objects of collective claims. Broadly speaking, parliamentarization entails shifts of claim making from the local to the national scale, and from indirect national representation through various patrons to direct national representation of both local and national actors. More concretely, in this scheme local power holders and members of local communities continue to make claims, but become less frequent objects of claims. At the national scale, royalty, nobility, and great patrons likewise become less frequent objects of claims as parliament becomes the focus of national claim making. In terms of this scheme, our three counties followed different trajectories between 1828 and 1834. Figure 12 summarizes. After several decades during which politics moved in a parliamentary direction in all three counties, Kent actually veered back slightly toward local and/or indirect claim making after 1828. Lancashire continued its long movement toward national and direct politics, but remained in a more local position than Middlesex. The national center, Middlesex, had led Great Britain’s parliamentarization long before 1828. It continued to do so thereafter, ending the years from 1828 to 1834 concentrating a large part of its making of claims on Parliament itself.

Figure 12 about here

This analysis has not fully untangled the causal web between parliamentarization and the proliferation of social movement politics. In order to get at general relations among actors,
furthermore, we have neglected the demonstrating, petitioning, lobbying, pamphleting, electoral campaigning, and day to day organizing that constitute the actual texture of social movements. But the increasingly crucial place of public meetings in Britain’s popular politics (which the evidence presented here documents amply) represents a major cause, effect, and component of the social movement’s rise to prominence.

Social movement politics emerged, as we have seen, to different degrees and in somewhat different versions in agrarian, industrial, and urban regions. Those differences confirm that something more was happening than the mere mechanistic adoption of new political prescriptions from the top down. British people created their new forms of politics through struggle. In the process, they forged new relationships to national centers of power.
REFERENCES


*Contentious Connections: 19*