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When does an issue trigger change in a field? A comparative approach to issue frames, field structures and types of field change

Santi Furnari

Abstract

Previous research has shown that institutional fields evolve around issues, but has devoted less attention to explain why certain issues trigger substantial field-level changes while others remain largely inconsequential. In this paper, I argue that the extent to which an issue is likely to trigger field change and the type of field change triggered depend on the structure of the field and the ways in which the issue is framed. I develop a model linking two types of issue frames (adversarial vs collaborative issue frames) with two types of field structures (centralized vs fragmented). The model explains how the likelihood of field change and type of field change vary across four configurations of these issue frames and field structures. In particular, I highlight four types of field change that entail different re-distribution of power within a field (weakening vs reinforcing the field's elite; aligning vs polarizing fragmented actors). Overall, I contribute a much called-for comparative approach to institutional fields, explaining how the effects of issue frames on field change vary across different fields.

"The aviation industry will tomorrow make a dramatic pledge to slash carbon dioxide emissions in half by 2050....The British Airways chief executive, Willie Walsh, will unveil an agreement between airlines, airports and aircraft companies to cut emissions to 50% below 2005 levels by 2050. Walsh warned earlier this year that [this agreement] *would add around £3bn per year to industry costs..."*

(*The Guardian*, September 21st, 2009).

Litrico and David (2017) show how the issue of carbon emissions transformed the field of civil aviation from a valued icon of globalization to a visible symbol of environmental degradation in a surprisingly short time (p. 990). In fact, this issue became so prominent to prompt key field actors, such as airlines and airports, to change the existing "rules of the game" and reach a new "field settlement" –i.e. a common framework of action to deal with the issue (Litrico and David, 2017: 988)- embodied by the emission cuts' collective agreement described above. This example highlights how some issues can catalyze enough support to break the "iron cage" (Di Maggio and Powell, 1983) in which organizations routinely operate within their field, inducing them to change the otherwise stable normative and cognitive frameworks underlying existing field settlements (Scott, 1994: 207).

Yet, for every issue that succeeds in triggering substantial change in a field, there are many other issues that remain largely inconsequential or even fail to attract enough attention and support. For example, Carpenter (2007) documents how the issue of child abuse struggled to attract attention and support in the transnational advocacy field, leading to "issue non-emergence" (p. 99). O'Sullivan and O'Dwyer (2015) show how the issue of socially accountable finance was captured and eventually absorbed into existing field settlements by powerful incumbents dominating the commercial banking field (p. 35). These contrasting

examples illustrate not only that issues may or may not lead to actual field change, but also that the *type* of change triggered by issues can be substantially different.

To address this phenomenon, this paper investigates two research questions: 1) *When is an issue more likely to trigger field change?* 2) *What different types of field change are more likely to be triggered by an issue?* These questions have been addressed only partially by current institutional research. Scholars have long recognized that fields "become centers of debates in which competing interests negotiate over issue interpretation" (Hoffman, 1999: 351), highlighting that the field-level debates surrounding an issue are consequential for the structuring of institutional fields (e.g. Meyer and Hollerer, 2010). Central to these accounts is the idea that issues have no objective meaning attached to them (Blumer, 1971), but are assigned meaning through "issue frames" –i.e. schemata of interpretation that field actors use to perceive, identify and label issues "in ways that are intended to mobilize potential adherents and constituents" (Snow and Benford, 1988: 198; cf. Goffman, 1974: 21). This perspective emphasises the dynamic relationship between issue frames and field change, unpacking a variety of processes by which frames can effect change, such as field-level framing contests (e.g. Gurses and Ozcan, 2015), bottom-up processes of frame amplification (e.g. Gray et al. 2015), frame mobilization (e.g. Granqvist and Laurila, 2011) and frame shifts (e.g. Litrico and David, 2017).

While this research has contributed key insights, it has also featured two important scope limitations. First, studies of field-level change have largely examined *one single field at a time*, devoting less attention to theorize how the outcomes of framing processes may vary *across different fields* –i.e. whether frames' effects on field change depend on different fields' characteristics. In fact, as Greenwood and colleagues noted, "fields are not all the same. Perhaps surprisingly, therefore, relatively little attention has been given to *comparing* fields or to developing frameworks by which to do so" (Greenwood et al. 2011: 334, emphasis in

original). Second, extant literature conceived field change mostly as a discrete "disruption" of the existing institutional order, paying less attention to theorize more nuanced *types* of field-level change. In fact, in their comprehensive review of institutional field research, Zietsma and colleagues recently argued that "there is a lack of theorization in studying field-level change holistically" (Zietsma et al., 2017: 409).

To begin addressing these limitations, in this paper I develop a model explaining how field structures and the content of issue frames jointly shape the likelihood that a given issue triggers field change and the *type* of change that is likely to be triggered. Building on social movement research and institutional theory, I identify two types of issue frames (adversarial vs collaborative) and two types of field structures (centralized vs fragmented). I argue that adversarial and collaborative issue frames are more or less likely to trigger field change depending on whether the structure of the field is centralized or fragmented. This is because the capacity of these different issue frames to mobilize the "critical mass of support" needed for field change varies across different field structures. I also argue that, when an issue frame triggers field change, the *type* of change triggered is likely to be different depending on the content of the frame and the type of field structure. In particular, I highlight four types of field change that entail different re-distribution of power within a field –i.e. changes that either reinforce or weaken the field's elite in a centralized field; and changes that either polarize or align the uncoordinated actors populating a fragmented field.

This paper makes three contributions to the extant literature. First, I contribute to issue-based approaches to institutional fields (e.g. Hoffman, 1999; 2001; Meyer and Hollerer, 2010; Litrico and David, 2017) by providing a model explaining when an issue is more likely to trigger field change. While previous research has established that issue frames are consequential for field change, this paper extends this general insight by specifying the content of two salient issue frames and by showing that the effects of these issue frames on

field change are crucially contingent on the field structure in which issue framing occurs. Second, I contribute to studies of field change (e.g. Dacin et al., 2002; Zietsma and Lawrence, 2010) by identifying four types of field changes that entail different re-distributions of power in a field. By doing so, I follow Zietsma and colleagues (2017)'s call to better understand the effect of change on power relations in a field (p. 409-410). While several "change pathways" in institutional fields have been recently identified (Zietsma et al., 2017) , these pathways capture changes in the institutional infrastructure and logics prioritization in a field, devoting relatively less attention to the patterned ways in which field-level power can change. In fact, power has been highlighted as the "most neglected component" of the field's construct (Meyer & Greenwood, 2008: 262), despite its fundamental importance in Di Maggio and Powell (1983)'s original conception of fields. Third, I contribute to social movement research by developing a typology of issue frames. While social movement research has typically defined frames inductively and empirically, this typology provides a theory-based conceptualization of the common and salient characteristics underlying a variety empirically-specified frames, thus responding to the call for theorizing the elements of frames that are more abstract and generalizable across contexts and issues (e.g. Benford, 1997).

This paper is structured in three main sections. First, I discuss existing research about fields and field change. Second, I develop the model and propositions advanced in this paper. Third, I discuss the theoretical contributions of the paper and its implications for practice.

Perspectives on fields and field change

An institutional field is generally defined as "a community of organizations that partakes of a common meaning system and whose participants interact more frequently and

fatefully with one another than with actors outside of the field" (Scott, 1994: 206-207). At least two perspectives on fields and field change can be distinguished in the literature.

A first perspective conceives fields as durable *structures* of network relations and shared meanings that channel ideas, symbols and norms (e.g. Di Maggio and Powell, 1983; Meyer et al. 1987; Scott, 1994; Scott et al., 2000). In this structural view, fields are seen as *fields of forces* (cf. Martin, 2003: 28) in that they shape and regulate actors' behaviour by defining "culturally legitimate models of organization and action" (Clemens & Cook, 1999: 442). Scholars in this tradition have identified field structuration as the key mechanism through which fields form and change (e.g. DiMaggio & Powell, 1983), arguing that the evolution of networks of inter-organizational relations is a key driver of field change (e.g. Di Maggio, 1986; Powell et al., 2005; see Owen-Smith & Powell, 2009 for review).

Although these studies provided crucial insights, they also featured two limitations. First, as it has been long noted (see Battilana et al. 2009 for review), they under-stated the role of actors in changing fields, often depicting field structuration as a "top-down deterministic process" in which free floating templates of meaning "become imposed on actors a result of increasing consolidation and domination within a field" (Suddaby et al. 2007: 356). Second, they over-emphasized the relational-network components of fields (Mohr, 2005), devoting less attention to the cultural-cognitive processes by which actors can change fields, such as the framing process by which actors construct frames to mobilize support for field-level change (e.g. Granqvist & Laurila, 2011; Gray et al., 2015).

A second perspective has instead conceived fields as *fields of play* (cf. Owen-Smith & Powell, 2008: 599; Martin, 2003: 20) –i.e. structured spaces of positions or "arenas" where actors compete for the advantages conveyed by those positions (e.g. Hoffman, 1999; Fligstein & McAdam, 2012; Bourdieu & Wacquant 1992). This political conception has highlighted the inherently contested nature of fields, focusing on actors' routine attempts to change the

existing social order to enhance their field positions. In this view, *contestation* is a key mechanism of field change (e.g. Hoffman, 1999; Zietsma & Lawrence, 2010). Differently from structuration studies, this political perspective has emphasized the agency of field actors in initiating and pursuing field-level change, pointing at the active role of social movements (e.g. Lounsbury & Schneiberg, 2008), institutional entrepreneurs (e.g. Levy & Scully, 2007) and new or peripheral players (e.g. Sauder, 2009; Leblebici et al., 1991).

An emerging research stream within this political perspective has highlighted the key importance of *frames* to explain the field-level change (Litrico and David, 2017; Gurses and Ozcan, 2015; Gray et al. 2015; Granqvist and Laurila, 2011; Guerard et al. 2013).[1] Overall, this body of work builds on insights from social movement studies, which first broke ground in pointing at the role of frames in mobilizing support and resources for change (e.g. Benford & Snow, 1988; 2000; Gamson, 1992; see Cornelissen & Werner, 2014 for review). Similarly, institutional scholars contended that framing dynamics are integral not only to social movements but more generally to the evolution of institutional fields (see Schneiberg & Lounsbury, 2008 for review), showing a variety of processes by which frames can amplify consensus around issues to bring about field change (e.g. Granqvist and Laurila, 2011; Gurses & Ozcan, 2015) and highlighting how frames change over time (Guerard et al. 2013; Litrico & David, 2017; Gray et al. 2015).

Although these studies have provided a dynamic view of fields, they have devoted less attention to how field structures may influence the effectiveness of different types of frames in producing field change. In addition, scholars in this tradition have mostly focused on frames' changes and framing *processes*, devoting less attention to systematically conceptualize the *content* of different frames and the different effects that such frames can have on field change. Yet, a long tradition of studies in social movement research has

highlighted that the content of frames is crucially important to understand why certain frames are resonant with potential supporters (see Johnston & Noakes, 2005 for review).

Insert Table 1 about here

Juxtaposing these two perspectives–summarized in Table 1- we note that each of them has separately emphasized one important driver of field change –i.e. *either* inter-organizational networks *or* actors' frames- but that these drivers have been mostly analyzed in relative isolation. However, extensive research has highlighted that field structures and actors' frames are inherently inter-related, so that understanding their interaction is crucial to more fully explain field change (e.g. Scott, 2008; Battilana et al., 2009; Greenwood et al., 2011; Grey et al. 2015). One of the reasons why extant research has not systematically conceptualized the relationship between field structures and frames is that the vast majority of studies of field change have relied on single case studies, thereby focusing *on one type of field structure at a time.*

To overcome this limitation, we need an explicitly comparative approach explaining how the effects of issue frames on field change vary across *different types of field structures*. Indeed, a "systematic program of comparative research" is "essential if we are to develop a better understanding of how and why we observe some [change] outcomes, but not others, given similar contextual conditions" (Micelotta et al., 2017: 21). Comparative frameworks are well-suited to "uncover sources of persistent heterogeneity by focusing on contextual differences" (King et al., 2009). Yet, despite comparative approaches have been foundational to organizational sociology at large (see, for example, Gouldner, 1954; Blau, 1955), a systematic comparative approach to issue frames and field-level change still awaits full realization. In fact, Micelotta and colleagues conclude their recent and comprehensive review

of the field-level institutional change's literature by noting that this "research has been dominantly *non-comparative*" (Micelotta et al., 2017: 20; emphasis in original).

In the following section, I start outlining such a comparative approach by connecting field structures, issue frames and field change.

Field structures, issue frames and field change

Figure 1 depicts the processes linking field structures, issue frames and field change. Below, I will first describe these processes, explaining the overall logic that connects field structures, issue frames and field change. I will then present a typology of issue frames and provide the definitions of centralized and fragmented structures. Next, I will introduce the core model advanced in this paper and illustrate propositions concerning the expected relationships between different types of field structures, issue frames and field changes.[2]

Insert Figure 1 about here

Figure 1 depicts field-level change as a cyclical process underpinned by the periodic emergence of "issues" (Hoffman, 1999), generally defined here as "unsettled matters of importance" (Merriam-Webster Dictionary, 2016) for the interests and objectives of some field actors. By "unsettled" I mean the fact that some actors perceive a given matter as in need of future action and discussion. Indeed, as Dutton and Jackson (1987) famously argued, the concept of issue features "importance" and "future-oriented" as its key attributes (p. 80). As mentioned in the introduction, the nature of an issue is *not* objectively determined but rather socially constructed by actors through framing (cf. Blumer, 1971). Thus, issues identify ways in which actors construe social reality via framing (cf. Trist, 1983).

Issues emerge when some field actors –i.e. issue proponents- start seeing and constructing some matter as "unsettled" and "important" (i.e. as an issue). Issue proponents emerge as the internal stratification of the field creates disadvantaged "field positions" (e.g. Battilana, 2006; cf. Bourdieu, 1990), which make their occupants more likely to perceive and frame some matter as an issue (e.g. Leblebici et al. 1991; Battilana et al., 2009). Because of their disadvantaged positions, issue proponents are more likely to dis-embed themselves from existing field structures (e.g. Seo & Creed, 2002; Battilana, 2006) and perceive, frame, and act upon issues in order to change the field structures that disadvantage them.

In order to change existing field structures, issue proponents attempt to mobilize the support of other field actors on their views of the issue. They do so by engaging in "issue framing" –i.e. by crafting *issue frames* that make some aspects of an issue more salient to other field actors in order to attract their support (e.g. Benford and Snow 2000). By "support" here I indicate the commitment of material, cognitive and emotional resources (such as attention, money, time, energy and effort) to the issue frame advocated by proponents (Klandermans, 2004). Given that multiple issue frames typically co-exist in a field at any given point in time and given that the support of other field actors is a scarce resource in a field (e.g. Hillgarnter and Bosk, 1988), issue frames compete among each other to mobilize others' support ("issue mobilization process"). Thus, many issue frames will not succeed in mobilizing support in the field ("neglected issue frame"), eventually decaying from field-level debates ("issue frame abandonment process") and ultimately resulting in the persistence of existing field settlements (see Figure 1).

Other issue frames will instead attract a level of support high enough to put pressure on field actors to act upon the issue and change existing field-level settlements (i.e. the established frameworks for action in the field) in order to accommodate the issue. I indicate this level of support as "critical mass of support", referring to the dictionary definition of

critical mass as "an amount necessary and sufficient to have a significant effect" (Merriam-Webster Dictionary, 2016) and the way in which this term is used in threshold models of collective behaviour (Granovetter, 1978). Following this analogy, a "critical mass of support" makes the issue "not avoidable" anymore for field actors, so that they broadly perceive they "have to deal with it" *with some form of change*. In other words, when an issue frame attracts a critical mass, even the actors that do not necessarily agree with the issue frame (e.g. the contested elites blamed for the issue) recognize the issue as an important problem that needs some form of change. Thus, according to this conceptualization, the issue frames that are likely to attract a critical mass of support are as a consequence likely to trigger *some form* of field-level change.

However, the specific *type* of field change triggered by a supported issue frame is not only the result of the issue mobilization process. Despite field actors may agree on the need for change, they may still disagree on *what* and *how* to change in order to address the issue – i.e. on the *type* of field change. For this reason, the specific type of field change results from what I label "the issue frame settlement process" (see Figure 1) –i.e. the process by which field actors negotiate and agree on a field settlement around the issue. As mentioned above, by "field settlement" here I mean a common framework of action aimed at guiding and organizing field-level activities to address the issue. Think of the civil aviation field's carbon emission agreement described in the opening of this article as one instance of field-level settlement. Previous research has shown that field settlements are important field change outcomes because they constitute "relatively durable truces" among field actors "about which frame is [going to be] used to organize activities" in the field (Rao & Kenney, 2008: 356; Litrico and David, 2017; Helms & Oliver, 2015). New field settlements establish new standards of "collective rationality" in a field (DiMaggio and Powell, 1983: 147), defining what is rational and what is not in the collective perception of field actors, thereby shaping

the "defined set of legitimate options" that will subsequently constrain organizations' choices and behaviours (Hoffman, 1999: 351).

As illustrated in figure 1, I argue that the structure of a field (centralized vs fragmented) hinders or facilitates the two processes described above (issue mobilization and issue settlement) depending on the content of the issue frame (adversarial vs collaborative issue frame). In other words, it is the interaction between field structures and types of issue frames that influences the likelihood that a given issue frame will attract a critical mass of support, and therefore trigger a field change, as well as the likelihood of the *type* of field change emerging as a result of the issue settlement process. In fact, as I will illustrate in detail below, fragmented and centralized structures provide different constraints and opportunities for adversarial and collaborative frames in both the issue mobilization and settlement processes, thereby shaping the capacity of these frames to mobilize a critical mass of support (and therefore trigger field change) and their capacity to serve as a basis for negotiating field-level settlements of a different type.

Adversarial and collaborative issue frames

Issue proponents create frames by engaging in in two basic framing processes. The first process is *diagnostic* framing, which involves the "attribution of blame or causality" (Snow and Benford, 1988: 200). The *diagnostic* component of an issue frame concerns the identification of the causes of the issue, including attributions about "who or what is to blame" for the issue (Benford and Snow 2000: 615). The second process is *prognostic framing,* which concerns the articulation of potential solutions to the issue, identifying also the processes, strategies and tactics to achieve those solutions. This *prognostic* component of issue frames focuses on how "reality should be changed and on what is to be done to change

that reality" (Benford 1993: 699). Thus, a given issue frame is made by these two components: diagnostic and prognostic.

In the social movement literature, diagnostic and prognostic components are typically considered as two *analytically distinct* elements of an issue frame (e.g. Benford & Snow, 2000; Kaplan, 2008). At the same time, this literature has established that these components are inter-related such that "more often than not there is a direct correspondence between diagnostic and prognostic framing" (Snow & Benford, 1988: 201). Indeed, in order to ensure the "logical consistency" of the issue frame as a whole, the solutions proposed in the diagnostic component of a frame typically follow from the causal attributions made in the prognostic component of the same frame (Johnston & Noakes, 2005: 11).

The social movement literature has identified a variety of frames empirically, on the basis of the specific movement and issue analyzed (see Benford & Snow, 2000). Another way is identifying "ideal type" frames that are theoretically defined (Gehrards, 1995). To enable a comparative approach, I follow this approach here by developing a typology of issue frames, identifying two basic ideal-types of issue frames -*adversarial* and *collaborative*- that vary on both the diagnostic and prognostic components defined above (see Table 2).

Insert Table 2 about here

In terms of diagnostic components, *adversarial issue frames* explicitly blame elite actors in the field as responsible for the issue at stake. Thus, they identify field elites as the root cause of the issue. By blaming elites, these frames focus on a concrete target for action –i.e. some concrete human agents whose practices must be changed to effectively solve the issue- typically drawing a marked line between the categories of "we" and "they". Consistently with

this diagnosis, the prognostic component of adversarial issue frames emphasises that a solution to the issue cannot be achieved within the existing field settlements which maintain those elites in power. Therefore, these frames envision processes and strategies that are conflictual in nature, such as boycotts (e.g. Gamson, 1992), protests (e.g. Davis, McAdam, Scott and Zald, 2002), and other forms of contention (Rao et al. 2000).

Differently, the diagnostic component of a collaborative issue frame does *not* assign blame for the issue to elite actors or other specific actors in the field, but rather identifies broad social conditions and forces as the root causes of an issue. Instead than holding responsible specific nameable actors, collaborative issue frames use "abstract targets that render human agency as invisible as possible" by blaming "actorless entities such as "the system", "society", "pollution" and "human nature"" (Gamson, 1992: 32) Thus, these frames use general abstractions as targets for mobilizing action, without highlighting clear-cut distinctions between "we" and "they" but rather emphasizing "an all-inclusive "we"" (Gamson 1992: 82). Consistently with this diagnosis, in their prognostic components collaborative issue frames point to solutions that can be reached within existing institutional arrangements –i.e. solutions achievable within the existing institutions shared by field actors. Also, they emphasize processes and strategies that are collaborative in nature, such as multi-stakeholder initiatives or other forms of inter-organizational collaboration (e.g. Hardy & Phillips, 1998; O'Sullivan & O'Dwyer, 2015).

Adversarial and collaborative issue frames are important not only because they are used by issue proponents to mobilize support for change, but also because they elicit responses from the actors targeted by the frames (i.e. the field's elites blamed or the actors whose support is needed). The responses of such targeted actors crucially influence the ways in which different issue frames can induce field changes and the type of field change likely to emerge. In the following sections, I explain why such responses are likely to be different

depending on the content of the frame used (adversarial vs collaborative) and the field

structure (centralized vs fragmented) in which issue framing occurs.

Centralized and fragmented fields

A centralized field is one "characterized by a distinct dominance order in which a few

groups of actors operate at the apex while others survive on the bottom" (Rao et al. 2000:

262; Meyer et al. 1987; Fligstein and McAdam 2012). Centralized fields are characterized by

the presence of dominant actors whose authority in the field is typically formalized or widely

recognized as legitimate (Meyer et al. 1987). These dominant players may include regulatory

authorities which ensure institutional compliance via law enforcement or tax incentives (e.g.

Scott el. 2000), professional organizations (Greenwood et al. 2007) or trade associations (e.g.

Van Wijk et al., 2013) that exercise their control by constructing shared norms and systems

of evaluation. These dominant actors enjoy great advantages and power from the institutional

infrastructure of a field, typically enforcing and reproducing the dominant institutions

regulating the field.

A fragmented field is one in which field actors depend on multiple and uncoordinated

constituents (Meyer et al. 1987). In fragmented fields "elites are disorganized and possess

little influence to change the system" (Rao et al. 2000: 259). Fragmentation is usually high in

fields when multiple regulatory bodies and state agencies have overlapping jurisdictions (e.g.

Suddaby et al. 2007), professions have weak jurisdictional power (e.g. Abbott 1988) and

consumers, suppliers and producers are disorganized (e.g. Rao et al. 2000).

The distinction between centralized and fragmented fields is one out of several

important classifications of fields that have been proposed in the literature. Another common

distinction sets apart "emergent" and "mature" fields (e.g. Maguire et al. 2004; Greenwood

and Suddaby, 2006). In this paper I privilege the centralized vs fragmented classification for

two reasons. First, it emphasizes the power distribution within the field as its salient dimension and thereby "offers the possibility of a more nuanced analysis of the relationship between field-level structures" and how actors respond to those structures (Greenwood et al., 2011: 336-337). Second, the mature vs emergent distinction has been recently criticized for its implicit underlying assumption that fields evolve according to a linear evolutionary lifecycle (Zietsma et al., 2017: 409) and so it is less well-suited to conceptualize different types of change, which is one of the central concerns of this paper.

Issues frames and types of change in centralized and fragmented fields

As discussed above, my central argument is that different types of issue frames are more likely to trigger field change depending on the structure of the field and, when they do, the type of field change triggered will be of a different nature in different field structures. Figure 2 below summarizes my propositions regarding the likelihood of field change and the type of field change under different configurations of issue frames and field structures. Below, I illustrate the arguments underlying the propositions in each quadrant of the matrix.

Insert Figure 2 about here

Quadrant 1: Adversarial issue frames in centralized fields

Centralized field structures are characterized by "unequal access to and unequal distribution of resources and social opportunities" (Lamont and Molnar, 2002: 168), featuring a considerable number of peripheral actors that are dissatisfied with existing field structures, which lock them in disadvantageous positions (e.g. Leblebici et al., 1991). The increasing inequality produced by field centralization provide issue proponents with mobilization

opportunities that they can successfully exploit via adversarial issue frames. Indeed, adversarial frames are more likely to attract the attention and support of peripheral actors in a centralized field for two main reasons. First, adversarial frames explicitly identify elites and central actors in a field as responsible of the issue at stake, thereby drawing clear lines between "good" and "bad" actors. By exacerbating the cognitive contrast between categories of actors in a field, adversarial issue frames are more likely to be easily understood and to be visible in a centralized, unequal context. Second, by identifying significant changes in existing institutional arrangements as solutions to the issue, adversarial issue frames are more likely to appeal to the interests of peripheral actors that are disadvantaged by those arrangements.[3] For these reasons, I argue that adversarial issue frames are likely to attract a critical mass of support in a centralized field and are therefore likely to trigger field change.

In turn, the critical mass of support catalysed by adversarial issue frames puts pressure on the field's elites to act upon the issue, thereby triggering the process of issue settlement described above –i.e. the elites will start *negotiating* with issue proponents and their supporters on a new possible framework of action to deal with the issue. The results of this process are likely to be shaped by several forces. On one side, the elites are likely to be de-legitimated by the critical mass of support received by the adversarial issue frame blaming them as directly responsible for the issue and, as a result of that de-legitimation, they are likely to be weakened in their bargaining position. On the other side, issue proponents are likely to be strengthened by the critical mass of support accumulated and are likely to display "purity" (Douglas, 1986) and distinctiveness, distancing themselves from the de-legitimated elites in the eyes of their supporters and interested audiences in the field (e.g., the media). Thus, in negotiating a new field settlement with the elites, issue proponents will presumably *not* settle for incremental solutions, such as adjusting existing field-level frameworks to

accommodate the issue. For these reasons, the elites are likely to be "forced" to concede a new field settlement that weakens their position in the field.

An example of the field change activated by adversarial issue frames in a centralized field is provided by Zietsma and Lawrence (2010)'s study of the coastal forestry field in British Columbia (BC). This study shows how two initially powerless social groups (i.e. environmental activists and aboriginal people) raised the issue of tree clear-cut logging in a field dominated by one large forestry firm and a "business-friendly government" (p. 197). These two groups engaged in a "war of the woods" by publicly vilifying dominant actors as "eco-lepers", accusing forestry companies of being "the real criminal" and casting the government "as an industry "lap dog"" (p. 205). By directly attacking the central and widely visible actors in the field, this adversarial issue frame became increasingly salient and visible in the eyes of the actors targeted for mobilization (i.e. customers, other environmental groups), which backed issue proponents in big numbers, supporting their cause and the field-level changes they advocated (pp. 197-198; pp. 204-206). Eventually, this adversarial mobilization resulted into a new field-level settlement that substantially weakened the power of the dominant actors by creating a field-wide committee (including environmental groups, forest companies and the government) with the power to define and ratify ecosystem-based harvesting practices (p. 198). This committee considerably weakened the power of the field's elite, leading to a substantial change in field practices (e.g. clear-cutting dropped from 95% to 45%). On the basis of the arguments illustrated, I submit the following proposition:

> **Proposition 1:** *In a centralized field, adversarial issue frames are likely to attract a critical mass of support and trigger field change; and when they do, the type of field change triggered is likely to be a new field settlement weakening the field's elite.*

Quadrant 2: Collaborative issue frames in centralized fields

Collaborative issue frames are unlikely to mobilize a critical mass of support in a centralized field for at least two reasons. First, by focusing attention on more abstract and actor-less entities, these frames are unlikely to be salient in a centralized field because they do not directly blame the central, visible actors dominating the field. In fact, as discussed above, in a centralized field potential supporters can more easily relate and understand frames which use dominant actors as key reference point (such as adversarial frames). Second, by advocating for more incremental and collaborative changes as candidate solutions to an issue, collaborative issue frames are less likely to resonate with the interests of the numerous peripheral actors populating a centralized field, which are disadvantaged by existing field structures and therefore more likely to buy into more radical change proposals. Thus, I argue that collaborative issue frames are unlikely to attract a critical mass of support in a centralized field and therefore unlikely to trigger field change.

Although it is *not probable*, the mobilization of a critical mass of support via collaborative issue frames is still *possible* in a centralized field, but *in less frequent cases*. This can happen when a collaborative frame taps into broader cultural beliefs deeply-held by field actors (e.g. Maguire et al., 2004). For example, a collaborative frame defining an issue as a "national emergency", a "dangerous disease", a "human rights violation" is likely to activate entrenched "higher-order cultural accounts that provide dominant logics of action" (Creed et al., 2002: 478), thereby becoming salient and prompting field actors to support the frame. Indeed, social movement studies have long acknowledged that a frame can mobilize support not only when it rings true to the everyday experience of potential adherents, but also when "it resonates with broader cultural narrations….that are part and parcel of one's cultural heritage and that thus function to inform events and experiences in the immediate present" (Snow and Benford, 1988: 210). In these cases, the grievances of peripheral actors in a

centralized field temporarily recede in importance as compared to the higher-order beliefs inducing actors to support the frame and collaborate to address the issue. In the words of Snow and colleagues, when frames activate these broad cultural beliefs, "domain-specific experiences are now given new meaning and rearranged, frequently in ways that were previously inconceivable, in accordance with…..a new primary framework [that] gains ascendance over others" (Snow et al. 1986: 475; see also Benford and Snow, 2000: 624).

However, there are two reasons why these cases are not likely to happen often. First, not many issues can be credibly framed in a way to invoke higher-order cultural beliefs. This is especially the case in a centralized field where the "experiential commensurability" of a frame (i.e. the extent to which it resonates with the "troublesome events and situations" *directly experienced* by actors (Snow and Benford, 1988: 208-209)) is likely to carry more weight than its resonance with broader cultural beliefs. Second, social movement research has indicated that issue proponents struggle to reproduce or integrate in their frames higher-level cultural discourse "in any consistent or structured manner" (Cornelissen and Werner, 2014: 205), so that this higher-level resonance with cultural beliefs is typically difficult to achieve and therefore unlikely (Fisher, 1997; Polletta, 2006; Steinberg, 1999).

When collaborative issue frames occasionally attract a critical mass of support and trigger field change, the type of change is likely to be a new field settlement strengthening the field's elite. By "strengthening" here I mean a change that enriches the domain of influence and power of the dominant actors in the field. Several factors make this settlement outcome likely. First, differently from the case of adversarial frames discussed above, a widely supported collaborative frame does not result into the de-legitimation of field elites, making issue proponents and their supporters more willing to cooperate with the elites in order to achieve a settlement. Second, as demonstrated by a long tradition of social movements' studies (e.g. see Lounsbury & Schneiberg, 2008 for review), elites typically collaborate with

challengers with the intent of bringing "the interests of the challenging group into alignment with [their] own goals" (Trumpy, 2008: 480).

Normally, dominant actors in a centralized field would have no interest in changing the existing institutional arrangements legitimating their power in the field. However, when a critical mass of support is attracted by issue proponents, elites will be "forced" to take care of the issue in some way, as explained above. In this scenario, elites are likely to agree on a *new* field settlement with issue proponents and their supporters, but they are also likely to shape the content of that settlement in a way that maintains their power. In fact, research has shown that elites typically react to collaboration attempts by challengers by accommodating issues symbolically (Bromley and Powell, 2012), by co-opting challengers' initiatives (e.g. Trumpy, 2008; Coy & Heeden, 2005), and by pursuing incremental adjustment of existing settlements or "elaborative changes" in order to expand their areas of influence to new domains of activity (O'Sullivan & O'Dwyer, 2015; Currie et al., 2012).

An example of this dynamics is provided by Van Wijk and colleagues (Van Wijk et al., 2013)'s study of how activist groups framed the issue of "sustainable tourism" as an issue requiring the collaboration of trade associations, tour operators and sustainability movements in the Dutch tourism field. As the authors document, sustainability activists successfully mobilized support on this issue by embedding their collaborative frame in the "global macro-cultural discourse on sustainable tourism that emerged in the 1970s and 1980s" (p. 369), so that their collaborative frame activated "the broader discourse on sustainable development" (p. 361) and its associated higher-order cultural beliefs. As this collaborative issue frame attracted increasing support, the organizations traditionally dominating this centralized field (i.e. the ANVUR trade association and the tour operators) started collaborating with the activists but also co-opting their changes proposals by developing practices that "posed fewer constraints on the industry's daily business" (p. 375). These "practices in a diluted form"

(p.375) allow the field's elite to successfully co-opt the activists' collaborative frame, diluting the change that they had initially advocated and maintaining the dominant position of the field's elite. On the basis of the arguments developed in this section, I suggest the following proposition:

> **Proposition 2:** *In a centralized field, collaborative issue frames are unlikely to attract a critical mass of support and trigger field change; but when they do, the type of field change triggered is likely to be a new field settlement reinforcing the field's elite.*

Quadrant 3: Adversarial issue frames in fragmented fields

Adversarial issue frames are unlikely to attract a critical mass of support in fragmented fields for two main reasons. First, due to the absence of a clear dominant actor in a fragmented field, adversarial frames will be less salient to mobilization targets. In fact, because an adversarial frame focuses attention on dominant actors as the focal reference point of the frame, this reference point becomes less clear and visible in a fragmented structure in which there is no clearly dominant actor. Second, by focusing attention on specific actors, adversarial frames are likely to be too narrow to appeal to the different actors constituting a fragmented field and to allow for the development of a collective identity among them (cf. Hunt and Benford, 2004; Polletta and Jaspers, 2001). An interesting example is Noy (2009)'s study of how community groups mobilize support around the issue of homeless policy in San Francisco, where authority over homeless policy issues was distributed across many uncoordinated government, private, and non-profit agencies. As the author explains, the adversarial frame used by community groups to advance homeless policy issues did not resonate with the heterogeneous and uncoordinated actors in this field, who looked at the frame from their different perspectives and "frequently fought bitterly with each other" (p.

233). Based on the arguments above, I contend that adversarial issue frames are unlikely to attract a critical mass of support in fragmented fields and are therefore unlikely to trigger field-level change.

Although it is *not probable*, the mobilization of a critical mass of support via adversarial issue frames is still *possible* in a fragmented field, but *in less frequent cases*. This can happen in the more rare occasions in which an adversarial frame, by repeatedly blaming some actors, activates "oppositional identity dynamics" (Polletta and Jasper, 2001) among the disconnected actors populating a fragmented field, increasing in turn the level of support for the frame. In fact, although in fragmented fields there are no clearly dominant actors, previous research has shown that under certain conditions frames can *socially construct* a salient rival or "virtual enemy" with the strategic intent to create the perception of a well-identified antagonist in the eyes of potential supporters (e.g. Hunt, Benford and Snow, 1994; Knight and Greenberg, 2011). For example, McEvily and Ingram (2007) documented how actors in the highly fragmented field of food cooperatives created the perception of Whole Foods –which at the time was not considered a "player" and competitor by the cooperatives- as a salient "dominating" rival, eventually sharpening the identity of food cooperatives and eliciting their increasing support against a "common enemy" (which was virtually unknown until that time). In fact, a long history of social psychological research explains how these oppositional identity dynamics can have strong motivational effects (e.g. Sherif et al., 1961; Tajfel and Turner, 1986; Greve, Pozner and Rao, 2006) and can therefore shape the likelihood that field actors will contribute their support.

However, previous research has shown that the conditions facilitating these oppositional identity dynamics are unlikely to be found in fragmented fields, making these phenomena plausibly less frequent in these fields. In fact, several studies have highlighted that oppositional identity dynamics occur when prospective supporters have the possibility to

interact closely and frequently in settings that are removed from their "imagined" opponents (Polletta and Jasper, 2001: 288; Creed et al. 2002). Different concepts have been used to describe these settings such as "free spaces" (Evans and Boyte, 1986; Rao et al. 2014), "havens" (Hirsch, 1990) and "sequestered social sites" (Scott, 1990). This research has emphasized that these settings feature more commonly in centralized field structures, in which they emerge as "institutions removed from the physical and ideological control of those in power" (Polletta & Jasper, 2001: 288). In fact, given the disconnection and un-coordination of fragmented fields, it is unlikely that actors in these fields will get together in the first place to create these kinds of spaces and, even if they do, it is unlikely that they will interact repeatedly and regularly in these settings for the prolonged time necessary to activate an oppositional identity dynamics. Therefore, this phenomenon is possible but not likely in fragmented fields, so that adversarial issue frames can, but are not likely to, succeed in mobilizing a critical mass of support in these fields.

When adversarial issue frames mobilize a critical mass of support, the type of change emerging is likely to be shaped by several forces influencing the issue settlement process. First, the increased salience of a "culpable agent" to blame is likely to prompt issue proponents and their supporters to behave in ways that visibly mark their difference from the vituperated actors. This argument is consistent with empirical evidence showing that the perception of a salient rival prompts actors in a social group to sharpen and clarify their own identities by contrasting and marking their difference from the perceived rival (Sherif et al., 1961; Tajfel and Turner, 1986; Greve, Pozner and Rao, 2006; McEvily and Ingram, 2007). In turn, the actors vituperated by issue proponents are likely to "counter-frame" (Rao et al. 2000; Guerard et al. 2013) and attack issue proponents and their supporters, activating oppositional dynamics such as the one described above in the Co-op case. These opposition dynamics are likely to polarize the views of issue proponents (and their supporters) against

the ones of the vituperated actors. Importantly, the salience of the issue increases in the eyes of the vituperated actors because these actors will presumably feel the need to defend themselves from what they perceive as "false accusations", which nevertheless have cumulated others' support. Thus, despite the vituperated actors initially were not interested in the issue per se, they are likely to become motivated to show they are taking into account the issue –i.e. they become motivated to "settle" the issue with some form of action and change. However, given the oppositional identities emerging in the field it is unlikely that the two camps will reach a common framework of action. Rather, it is more likely that two settlements will be reached, each representing the frameworks to deal with the issue developed by one of the two camps and each probably very different from the other.

An example of this dynamic is provided by Rao et al. (2000)'s study analyzing how the issue of "minor disputes" spurred an oppositional dynamics between two sets of actors in the fragmented socio-legal field: on one side, legal professionals (e.g. lawyers, judges and law professors); on the other side, social workers who advocated for alternative dispute resolution for minor disputes and articulated adversarial critiques of conventional legal practices, scapegoating legal professionals. Over time, these adversarial frames eventually attracted "critical masses of supporters" (p. 253), polarizing the views of these two camps about how to handle the minor disputes' issue, so that each group developed their own frameworks of action to address the issue. On the basis of the arguments illustrated in this section, I submit the following proposition:

> **Proposition 3:** *In a fragmented field, adversarial issue frames are unlikely to attract a critical mass of support and trigger field change; but when they do, the type of field change triggered is likely to consist of two new field settlements polarizing the fragmented actors in the field.*

Quadrant 4: Collaborative issue frames in fragmented fields

Issue proponents operating in fragmented fields are likely to attract supporters by framing issues in a way to appeal to the multiple interests and values of the heterogeneous actors composing a fragmented field (cf. Padgett and Ansell 1993). Since such diverse and uncoordinated actors typically lack shared meanings to understand each other, issue proponents need to find a common ground among these actors by framing the issue as a systemic problem for the field. For these reasons, a collaborative issue frame may be particularly well suited for mobilizing in fragmented fields. For example, Jacques Delors framed the issue of a common EU market to appeal to the interests of the EU governments which lacked central coordination on policy issues (Fligstein and Mara-Drita, 1996). By emphasizing synergies among the diverse actors composing a fragmented field, collaborative issue frames can also facilitate the development of a collective identity among field actors, which in turn supports mobilization (e.g. Polletta and Jasper, 2001). Via collaborative frames, issue proponents can craft broader collective identities, which can simultaneously appeal to the multiple different stakeholders populating a fragmented field (cf. Padgett and Ansell 1993). Thus, I argue that collaborative issue frames are likely to attract a critical mass of support in fragmented fields and are therefore likely to trigger field-level change.

In turn, the critical mass of support catalysed by collaborative issue frames triggers the process of issue settlement among the heterogeneous and uncoordinated actors present in a fragmented field. In that process, supported collaborative frames are likely to enhance the coordination between previously uncoordinated actors, facilitating the exchange of their different practices and templates in an effort to tackle what is perceived to be a common issue (cf. Trist, 1963). In turn, these collaborative engagements are likely to produce new hybrid practices and frameworks to tackle the issue (Hardy & Phillips, 1998; Furnari, 2014), which combine elements of the initially different templates in which the different actors are

socialized. Whether this hybridization is "partial" (combining previously unconnected elements "in new but recognizable ways" [Powell & Sandholtz, 2012: 94]) or "full" (fusing them together in un-distinguishable ways [Furnari, 2016: 564]), this process is likely to bring the parties closer to their previously distant, uncoordinated positions, so that the field-level settlement emerging is likely to align the fragmented actors in the field.

For example, Armstrong (2002)'s detailed history of the San Francisco's gay community field documents how this initially fragmented field (in the 80s) progressively "crystallized" around a new field settlement forming around collaborative frames and practices, such as the gay parade. In this context, what made a field settlement possible was not the identification of a common enemy, but rather the creation of collaborative frames – emphasizing the right to stand together to "affirm gay identity and celebrate diversity" (Armstrong 2002: 2). These issues were not framed in oppositional or adversarial ways, but rather in collaborative ways, emphasizing the opportunities for different organizations to re-unite around abstract ideals such as "diversity" and "diversity pride". By doing so, these frames facilitated "multi-vocal coordination" (Furnari, 2014: 453) in that they could be interpreted consistently from multiple perspectives simultaneously (Padgett and Ansell, 1993: 1263), thereby facilitating the coordination of the heterogeneous actors in the fragmented. This example points to the power of collaborative frames in fragmented structures, supporting the idea that, when collaborative issue frames work, the ensuing new field settlement is more likely to align the fragmented actors in the field. Based on the arguments illustrated in this section, I submit the following proposition:

Proposition 4: *In a fragmented field, collaborative issue frames are likely to attract a critical mass of support and trigger field change; and when they do, the type of field*

change triggered is likely to be a new field settlement aligning the fragmented actors

in the field.

Discussion and conclusion

This paper makes three main contributions to the extant literature.

First, I contribute to issue-based studies of institutional fields (e.g. Hoffman, 1999; Meyer and Hollerer, 2010) by explaining when an issue is more likely to trigger field change. While previous research has established the key importance of frames for explaining field change (Granqvist and Laurila, 2011; Gray et al. 2015), by and large this literature has under-studied the influence of field-level structures on the effects of frames. Differently, the contingent approach developed in this paper complements these studies of micro-level framing processes with an attention to how broader, field-level structures shape the outcomes of these processes (e.g. Meyer and Hollerer, 2010). By doing so, this paper addresses the criticism according to which studies of frames often "focus almost exclusively on meaning construction but fail to connect to the structural context in which this meaning-making occurs" (Fiss and Hirsch 2005: 30; see also McCammon et al., 2007). In addition, I contribute to this literature by specifying the *content* of two salient types of issue frames and showing how the effects of these frames on field change differ depending on the field structure in which framing occurs. By doing so, I complement extant research which has mostly focused on the *processes* of framing devoting less attention to the *content* of commonly recurring frames (e.g. Gurses and Ozcan, 2015; Gray et al. 2015; Granqvist and Laurila, 2011; Litrico and David, 2017; Guerard et al. 2013). The theoretical specification of frames' content suggested in this paper facilitates the systematic comparison of frames' effects across fields, usefully integrating the processual approach to framing dominant in institutional research.

In this respect, a promising direction for future research would be to take into account more the temporal dimension of framing, comparing how different issue frames may change over time in different field structures and the different speeds at which they may change. While this paper is *not* focused on framing dynamics, but rather on the variation of frames' effects across field structures, the model developed here also suggests useful pointers for future research aiming at exploring frames' changes. For example, when a field's elite is reinforced as a result of a collaborative change attempt (Quadrant 2 in Figure 2), it is plausible to hypothesize that issue proponents are likely to perceive the change as a failure and shift from a collaborative to an adversarial frame in order to counter-act the increased centralization of the field. Relatedly, it is plausible to hypothesize that issue proponents will change their framing strategies at different speeds depending on the type of change taking place in a given field structure. For example, issue proponents might be more likely to perceive as a clear-cut failure the reinforcement of the elite's status-quo (Quadrant 2) rather than a field change modifying existing settlements although in an unexpected direction (Quadrant 3). As a result, they might be more likely to change their frames faster in the former scenario than in the latter. Thus, an important question for future research is how long it will take issue proponents to change their framing strategies. In sum, while the comparative, synchronic approach outlined in this paper is valuable to understand how frames' effects vary across field structures, a promising direction for future research is to further unpack how frames and field structures co-evolve diachronically.

Second, I contribute to studies of field change (e.g. Hardy and Maguire, 2010; Zietsma and Lawrence, 2010; Van Wijk et al., 2013) by identifying four distinct types of field change that are likely to emerge from the interaction of different issue frames and field structures. I follow Zietsma and colleagues (Zietsma et al. 2017: 410)'s call to carefully specify "*what* is subject to change" in a field by focusing specifically on changes in the

power structure of a field, an hitherto under-studied aspect in institutional field research (Greenwood and Meyer, 2008: 260). By focusing on changes in field-level power, I complement the notion of "change pathways" which captures changes in a field's institutional infrastructure and logic prioritization (Zietsma et al. 2017). In addition, I explain how field-level changes are shaped by the ways in which issues are framed, thereby addressing the recent call for more research that theorizes the relationship between issue-level processes and field-level structural changes (Zietsma et al., 2017: 421). Finally, I further develop the notion of "field settlement" (Litrico & David, 2017) by conceptualizing different types of field settlements and articulating their implications for field-level power. This conceptualization facilitates the empirical operationalization of field level changes, directing attention to the specific moments in which actors in a field reach new collective agreements on an issue, tackling some of the difficulties in measuring field change highlighted by previous research (Suddaby et al., 2007: 334). In sum, the model developed in this paper usefully complements Zietsma and colleagues (Zietsma et al. 2017)'s recent framework, contributing to advance their research agenda "to clarify, systematize and further the study of institutional change at the field level" (Zietsma et al. 2017: 410).

In this regard, a promising direction for future research is to study how the pace, linearity, and scope of field change may intertwine to produce specific change configurations or patterns (Meyer et al. 2005; cf. Hinings & Greenwood, 1988; Grandori & Furnari, 2013). In fact, some fields are "likely to be characterized by disjunctions, oscillations, reversals of directions" (Zietsma et al. 2017: 410). While the model advanced here is limited in this respect because it does not consider directly these non-linear change dynamics, this paper provides a useful platform for future research to explore how different types of settlements might be more prone to reversals, oscillations and other feedback-loop dynamics. In fact, future research can identify the conditions under which settlements become more durable and

enforced over time, thus becoming institutionalized and effecting long-term structural changes in a field; rather than becoming decoupled from the actual practices of a field, thus gradually reverting the field back to its pre-settlement stage. While previous research has demonstrated that new field-level settlements are crucial change outcomes in their own right (Litrico & David, 2017; Helms & Oliver, 2015; cf. Rao & Kenney, 2008), it is also important to explain when and how they may become institutionalized into the patterns of regular relationships and taken-for-granted meaning systems that constitute field structures (Greenwood et al. 2011; Scott, 1994). The link between issue frames and field settlements theorized in this paper offers an important pointer to further investigate this topic, opening up new questions such as whether a weakly institutionalized field settlement may prompt issue frames to re-surface and, if so, with what likely support. Thus, the model advanced here can be used as a flexible platform to discover and investigate more complex research questions, which so far have been laying undercurrent in institutional research due to the lack of a baseline framework to link field structures, issue frames and field change.

Third, I contribute a theory-based typology of issue frames to social movement research, which has typically defined frames inductively and empirically (see Benford, 1997), devoting less attention to the conceptualization of the common characteristics underlying empirically-specified frames. For example, Benford (1997: 415) criticizes Gamson (1992) for inductively deriving a "plethora of specific frames" which does not facilitate the systematic comparison of frames across issues and movements. By providing a theoretically-specified typology of frames, I respond to the call for theorizing the analytic components of frames that are likely to recur across contexts and issues (Gerhards, 1995), re-balancing the "movement-centric" approach typically adopted in social movement studies (Lounsbury et al. 2013). In addition, while social movement studies typically focus on how issue frames are used for mobilizing support (Gamson, 1992), I also highlight that issue frames are important for

negotiating settlements around the issue. In doing so, this paper complements the mobilization-focused perspective of social movement studies with a focus on the role of issue frames in the process of settlement. This extension is important as it prompts field-level research to integrate insights from negotiation research, which has studied frames as devices for negotiating collective agreements (cf. Lewicki et al. 2003), but mostly at the intra-organizational or group (rather than field) level of analysis.

An important direction for future research would be to study how adversarial and collaborative elements can be mixed in hybrid types of frames and with what consequences. While there is not extensive empirical evidence on these hybrid frames, some studies provide examples of how collaboration and contestation can co-exist in certain fields. For example, Bechky and O'Mahony (2008) describe how challengers (open source projects) and incumbents (commercial firms) in the software field framed issues and practices to enable collaboration while "preserving their disparate interests" (p. 424). As a result, while the parties were able to converge "on a sub-set of interests on which they were able to collaborate" (p. 422), conflict and contestation remained pervasive (p. 446-448). While this example does not concern field-level change per se, it nevertheless illustrate how adversarial and collaborative frames may be potentially combined in hybrid ways. Since few examples of this sort have been documented in previous research, future studies should assess the empirical relevance of these hybrid frames and investigate the mechanisms underlying the emergence and consequences of such frames in different types of field structures. Another useful direction for future research would be to investigate internal variation within the ideal-types of adversarial and collaborative issue frames. For example, it would be useful to investigate whether fine-grained variations within a type of frame (e.g. a change from a radically adversarial to a moderately adversarial frame) are significantly consequential for field change and in what field structures this is more likely to be the case.

Indeed, it is important to note the limitations and bounded scope of the typology of issue frames developed in this paper. While this typology encompasses two theoretically salient and empirically relevant frames, capturing in a parsimonious way a variety of frames that have been analysed in the literature (e.g. Maguire et al., 2004; Zietsma and Lawrence, 2010; Rao et al. 2000; Van Wijek et al., 2013), the two ideal-types identified do not fully encompass all the ways in which issues can be framed in fields. At the same time, as any effort to construct an ideal-typical categorization, my conceptualization aims to "provide an abstract model, so that deviation from the extreme or ideal type can be noted and explained" (Blalock, 1969: 32). A similar scope limitation concerns the number and type of field structures considered –fragmented and centralized- which can be further extended to include fields characterized by different levels of institutionalization –contrasting "mature" (e.g. Greenwood and Suddaby 2006) and "emergent" (Maguire et al. 2004) fields- or fields featuring different levels of loose-coupling (e.g. Greenwood and Hinings, 1996). Despite these extensions would certainly enrich the model outlined here, my intent has been to provide a baseline model that can serve as a platform to analyse the interaction between different types of frames and field structures, so that future research can build on it, rather than offering a one-size-fits-all framework encompassing all types of field structures and change processes.

Despite its limitations, this paper has practical implications for issue proponents who advocate for field changes and for policy-makers that aim to encourage or coordinate field-level change. For issue proponents, this study highlights the importance of issue frames and the role of the institutional context –in particular, centralized and fragmented structures- in shaping the success of frame mobilization. Thus, the model outlined in this paper can support the selection of issue frames depending on the field structure that an issue proponent aims to change. In addition, the model conceptualizes the intersection between different types of

issue frames and field settlements, outlining a matrix of possibilities for collective action and its likely outcomes. For policy makers, this study highlights the importance of the dynamics of collective mobilization and settlement surrounding issues. Policy makers can therefore use the model outlined here to evaluate the likelihood of success of different mobilization and settlement attempts, assessing the constraints and opportunities provided by different types of field structures and issue frames.

Notes

[1] The concept of "frame" has a long history in social science and in management (see Cornelissen & Werner, 2014 for review). My use of this concept in this paper is consistent with the use of this concept in social movement theories (e.g. Snow et al. 1986).

[2] It is important to note that figure 1 is *not* the core model proposed in this paper (which is represented in figure 2 instead), but rather a schematic illustration of the overall processes connecting issue frames, field structures and field change. Indeed, because extant literature has already devoted much attention to the process dimension (as discussed in the literature review above), my aim in this paper is *not* to theorize directly the processes linking issue frames and field change illustrated in figure 1. Nor it is my aim to theorize the temporal aspects of these processes (such as speed, linearity, etc.). Rather, I theorize how the outcomes of these processes (i.e. whether they are likely to produce field change and what type of field change) vary depending on different configurations of field structures and issue frames (see figure 2). As discussed above, the reason why I am focusing on these aspects is that extant literature has devoted less attention to explain how the effects of issue frames on field change vary across different field structures, hence the need for a more comparative, variance-oriented approach. Thus, figure 1 should be interpreted only as a schematic illustration which serves to walk the reader through the overall logic connecting the key constructs of the model, and *not* as the core model that this paper contributes.

[3] It is important to note a key assumption underlying my arguments here: the peripheral field position of disadvantaged actors enables them to distance themselves from existing institutional structures and to become more aware of the contradictions that those structures imply, so that these actors are more likely to perceive the elites in a field as illegitimate and

are therefore more likely to mobilize for change. Extensive institutional research has supported this assumption both empirically (e.g. Leblebici et al., 1991; Maguire, 2004) and conceptually (Battilana, 2006; see Battilana et al. 2009 for review). Overall, this research has shown that, due to their peripheral positions, disadvantaged actors in a field are typically "less caught by institutionalized relationships and expectations" (Greenwood et al. 2011: 339) and more likely to become reflexively aware and critic of existing structures (e.g. Seo & Creed, 2002). Although it has been widely supported in the institutional theory literature, this assumption is at odds with system justification theory's argument that disadvantaged actors tend to justify and accept as legitimate the system disadvantaging them to reduce cognitive dissonance and maintain positive self-image (Jost et al., 2015).

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Table 1. Perspectives on fields and field change: Fields of forces versus fields of play

	Underlying conception of fields	Key mechanism of field change	Key limitations and unexplained aspects of field change	Foundational studies

Fields of forces perspective	• Fields are *structures* of relations and shared meanings that channel ideas, symbols and norms.
	
	• Underlying metaphor: fields as "networks"
		• Key mechanism: structuration
		
		• Focus on:
		
		  o how inter-organizational networks affect field change
		
		  o how field structures affect actors' behaviour
			• Limited attention to the role of actors in changing fields
			
			• Limited attention to actors' cultural-cognitive processes (such as framing) and their influence on field change
				• DiMaggio and Powell (1983)
				
				• DiMaggio (1983; 1986)

Fields of play perspective	• Fields are *political arenas* where actors vie for the advantages provided by field positions.
	
	• Underlying metaphor: fields as "games"
		• Key mechanism: contestation
		
		• Focus on:
		
		  o active role of actors in pursuing field change
		
		  o actors' cultural-cognitive processes (such as framing) and their influence on field change
			• Limited attention to how different field structures may influence the effects of frames on field change
			
			• The *content* of the different frames used by actors is not systematically conceptualized to compare frames' effects on field change
				• Hoffman (1999)
				
				• Fligstein and McAdam (2012)

Table 2. A typology of issue frames: Adversarial and collaborative issue frames

	Diagnostic component of frame *(Identification of the causes underlying the issue)*	**Prognostic component of frame** *(Identification of solutions to the issue and processes to achieve solutions)*
Adversarial issue frames	• Elites in the field are identified as the issue's root causes. • Blame and responsibility for the issue attributed to elite actors in the field.	• Solutions to the issue can not be achieved within existing field settlements. • Processes to achieve the solutions are envisioned to be conflictual in nature (e.g., protests, boycotts, contestation).
Collaborative issue frames	• Broad social conditions or forces are identified as the issue's root causes. • Blame and responsibility for the issue attributed to abstract entities de-emphasizing human agency (e.g., "the system", "society", and "human nature").	• Solutions to the issue can be achieved within existing field settlements. • Processes to achieve the solutions are envisioned to be collaborative in nature (e.g. forms of inter-organizational collaboration).
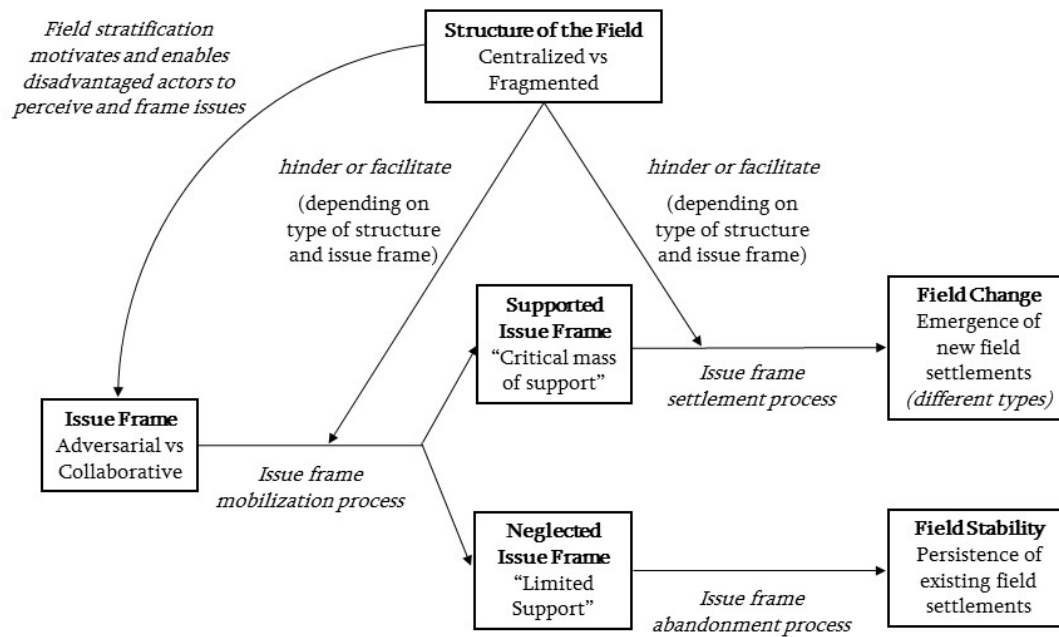
Figure 1. Processes linking issue frames, field structures and field changes.

TYPES OF ISSUE FRAMES USED BY PROPONENTS

	ADVERSARIAL	COLLABORATIVE
CENTRALIZED	Quadrant 1 Issue frame is likely to trigger field change And, when it triggers field change, the type of change is likely to be a *new field settlement weakening the field's elite*	Quadrant 2 Issue frame is unlikely to trigger field change But, when it triggers field change, the type of change is likely to be a *new field settlement reinforcing the field's elite*
FRAGMENTED	Quadrant 3 Issue frame is unlikely to trigger field change But, when it triggers field change, the type of change is likely to be two *new field settlements polarizing the fragmented actors in the field*	Quadrant 4 Issue frame is likely to trigger field change And, when it triggers field change, the type of change is likely to be a *new field settlement aligning the fragmented actors in the field*

TYPES OF FIELD STRUCTURES

Figure 2. Field structures, issue frames and types of field change.

Bio

Santi Furnari is Senior Lecturer in Strategy at Cass Business School, City University London, UK. He received his Ph.D. in Business Administration and Management from Bocconi University in Milan, Italy. His current research interests include the emergence of new institutional fields and practices, the design of organizational configurations and business models, and the use of fuzzy-set/qualitative comparative analysis (fs/QCA) in organization and management theory. Santi's research has been published in academic journals such as the *Academy of Management Review, Journal of Management,* and *Organization Studies*, among others. His paper on "Interstitial Spaces" has won the AMR Best Paper Award for the best

paper published in the Academy of Management Review in 2014 [Email: Santi.Furnari.1@city.ac.uk]

Corresponding Author:

Santi Furnari

Cass Business School

City University of London

106 Bunhill Row

LONDON

EC1Y 8TZ

santi.furnari.1@city.ac.uk