

Studying COPs: conclusions and lessons from Copenhagen

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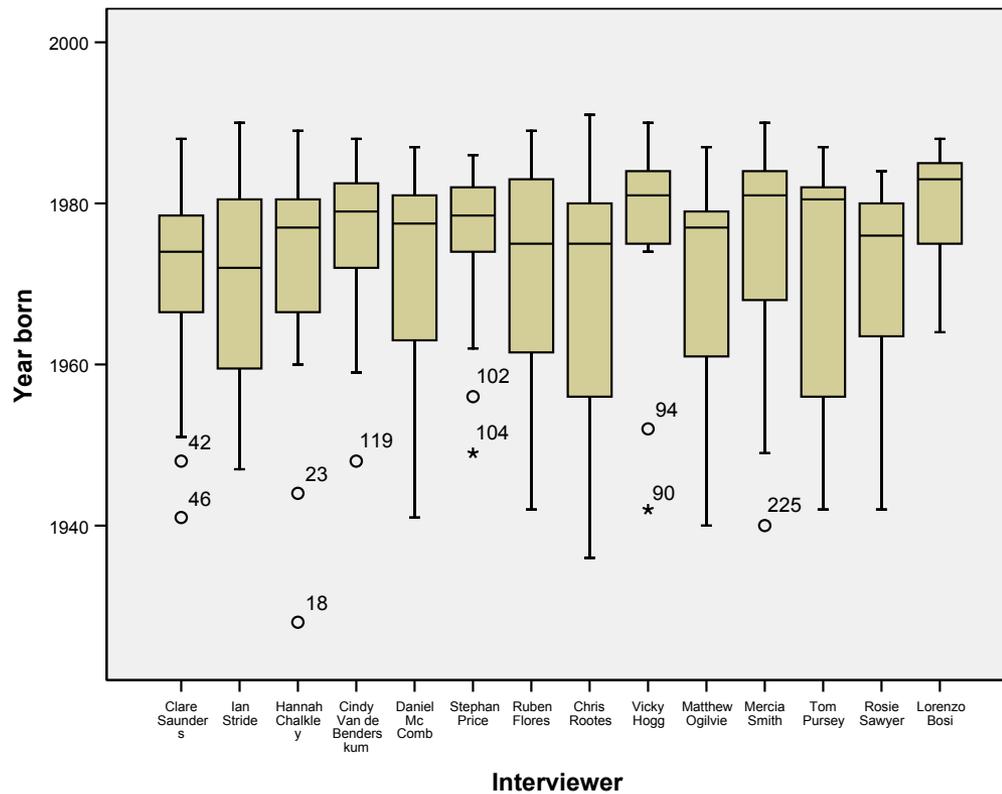
The protest survey methodology

Face to face	Mail back
Interviewer bias effects	Response rate bias
Need to be quick=few questions / little data	Can gather more extensive data
High response rates (up to 99%)	Low response rates (from c. 15-45%)

Key questions:

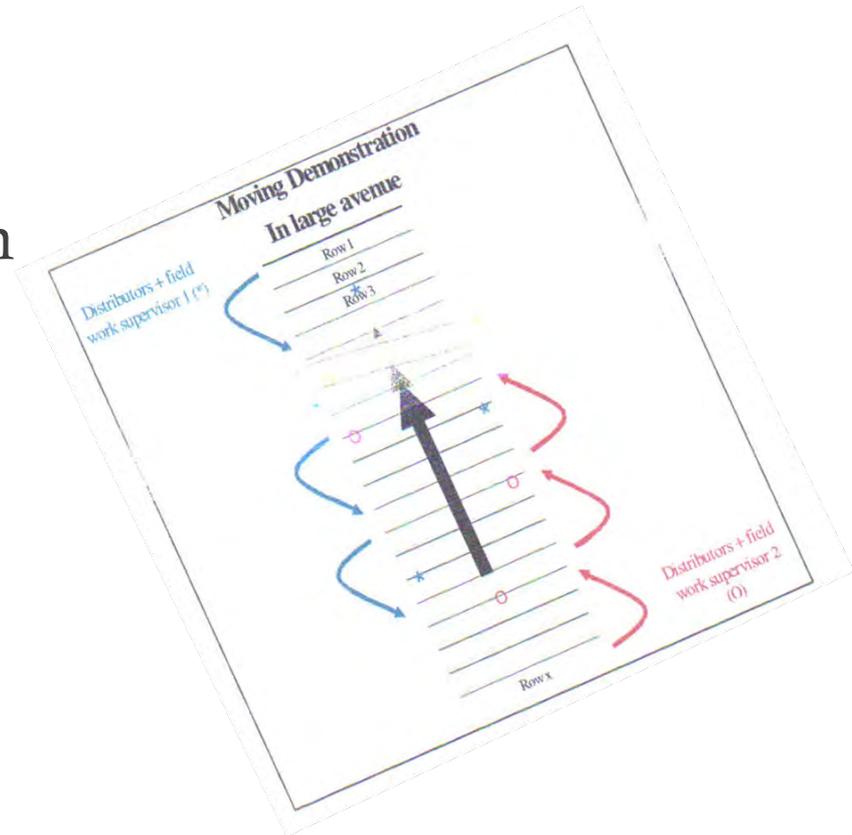
1. Is the sampling random? How do you ensure every demonstrator has an equal chance of being sampled?
2. How can we measure and account for non-response bias

Interviewer selection bias



Reducing interviewer selection effects and ensuring randomness

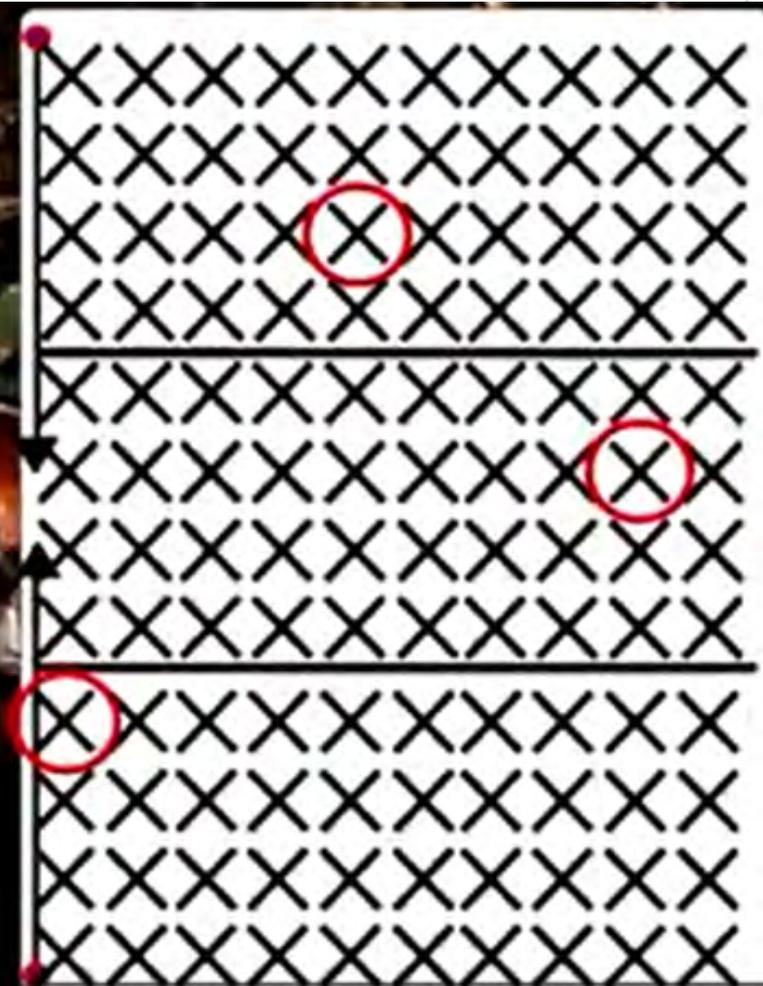
- Pointers / team leaders
- Random selection, every n rows, depending on estimated demonstration size
- 1000 questionnaires handed out.
- 4 teams (front left, front right, rear left, rear right)



Time to Act climate march 2015: estimated size 40,000

Each group was allocated a pointer
the pointer was to randomly select
protestors (1 out of every 40) and
(1 every four rows) who would
them out to the surveyors

both teams working their way
towards each other and meet
in the middle



Measuring response rate bias

- 1,000 mail back surveys
- 1 in 5 includes a face to face interview
- Two types of surveys include 8 matched variables
- Questionnaires and face to face interviews numbered 1-200
- Two sub-samples are compared:
 - Those who answered both surveys (considered **representative of those who send back the mailback**)
 - Those who respond to face-to-face but do not post back the mailback (considered **representative of those handed a survey but not posting back**)

Things that go wrong

- Mis-estimating the number of protesters
- Demonstration too large to even find the front or rear
- Demonstration too small, survey team too conspicuous
- Vigils (F2F impossible)
- Police blockades
- Violence
- Spontaneous crowd movements
- Not straightforward rows makes counting difficult

Surveying street demonstrations at COP

- Framing “The Climate Issue”: Patterns of Participation and Prognostic Frames among Climate Summit Protesters
- Article in: *Global Environmental Politics* 13:4, November 2013
- Mattias Wahlström, Magnus Wennerhag & Christopher Rootes

COP-15

Surveys from CCC project gave us

Data on participants in the three largest European climate

Demonstrations focused around COP-15:

- London and Brussels on December 5, 2009, the international day of action designed as a concerted display of demands for action by world leaders at COP-15, and
- the Copenhagen march on December 12, during COP-15 itself

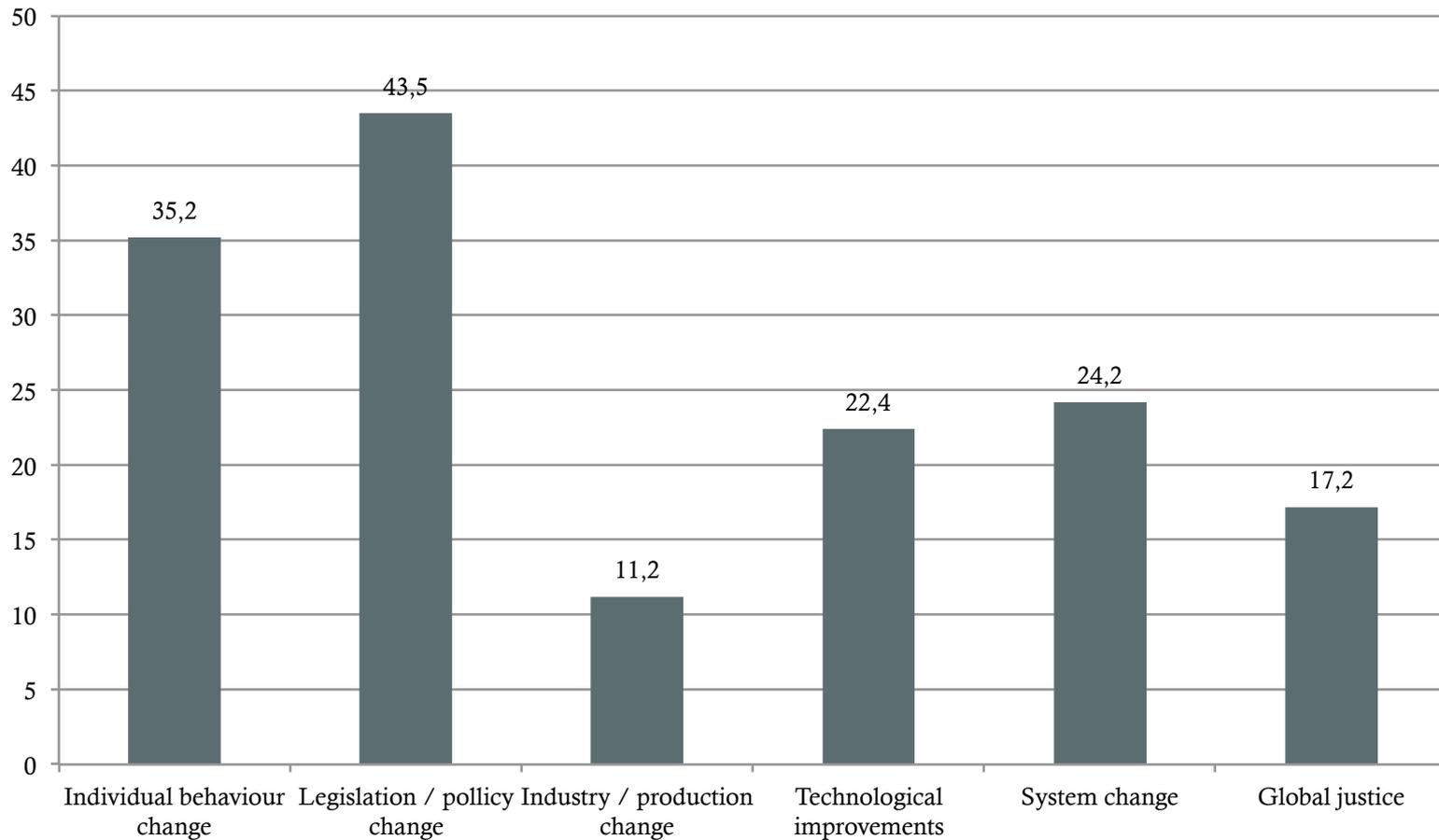
Our research focus

- Focus on *prognostic framing*
- What collective action framing did the participants employ concerning solutions to climate problems?
- A unifying frame to bridge its various factions?
- Climate justice ? — roots in the broader frame of environmental justice — considered increasingly salient for parts of the movement.

The Copenhagen demonstration

- Largest of several protests during COP-15, attracted between 50,000 and 100,000 people.
- Organized by a coalition of 538 environmental, religious, political, trade union, and solidarity organizations, from 67 countries.
- Our survey respondents: 51% Danish; 21% Swedish; 8% German; 4% UK, France, Belgium, Norway 3% each
- Proximity explains Danish, Swedish. But otherwise, how representative?
- Ease of completing questionnaire (in English) – bias against those less confident in English – under-representation of Francophone?

Climate Summit Protesters' Framing of How to Solve or Counteract the Climate Crisis (Copenhagen %)



Global justice movement identification

- Identify with the GJM 43.9
- Do not identify 17.8

Left–Right self-placement

- Mean (Left 0, Right 10) 2.2

Active in Organization (during last 12 months)

Salient findings

Those identifying with the GJM were:

- Twice as likely to be members of organizations
 - Of those, members of GJ, Third World, peace orgs were 50% more likely than members of environmental groups
- More likely to employ the system change/global justice frame

Overall

- Global justice-related frames were not salient
- Relatively few protesters named solutions to climate change that involve system change or global justice
- The dominant prognostic framing was that climate change must be dealt with by changing the attitudes and behavior of individual citizens, by legislation, or by policy change

Conclusions

- Rank-and-file participants in a movement do not frame political solutions to a problem as do its movement intellectuals or SMOs
- Announcements of the birth in 2009 of a transnational climate justice movement appear premature
- If a climate justice movement existed in 2009 it is one better embedded among organizations and movement intellectuals than among rank-and-file activists.

Implications for research

- Is it worth studying participants in street demonstrations?
 - Expensive
 - Logistically difficult
 - Outstanding issues with representativity / sample bias (although we have got the method as good as we possibly might)
 - What questions might we answer by doing so?
- Mattias Wahlström: repeated surveys to document emergence of the 'climate justice' frame
 - Warsaw 2013 COP-19 (small demo - 1250 - 54% Belgian; justice frame even *less* prominent than in 2009) [**CS: 35% of London 2015 respondents blamed capitalism or industrialism**]
 - Paris 2015 COP-21 (planned)?? will the 'climate justice' frame be more prominent?
- Can we catch other people in the act of participation in COPs (negotiators and insiders) for a thorough comparative design?

Alternative research strategies?

- A broader and deeper approach:

NGOs / lobbyists

Negotiators

Media

- Multiple methods:

Ethnography, interviews, document analysis and surveys
(with measures for systematic cross-comparative design)