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Introduction

In 1996, Senate President José Sarney introduced a bill guaranteeing all Brazilians access to AIDS treatment. This bill, eventually known as Sarney's Law, set Brazil on a path that would lead it to become a global standard bearer for HIV/AIDS policy in the developing world. This was a tortuous path, which led Brazil into prolonged conflict with world superpowers before it eventually emerged as a darling of the global health community. At the time, Brazil was brazenly rejecting global norms for AIDS policy, which focused narrowly on HIV prevention, by adopting social justice as a guiding principle and by codifying this expensive health benefit as a legal right. Powerful institutions such as the World Bank had deemed that AIDS treatment was an inefficient use of limited funds for containing the epidemic. Brazil, in bucking the advice of the international development community to concentrate its resources on prevention, was forced to finance its AIDS treatment program entirely on its own. Ultimately, the global development community adopted Brazil's emphasis on AIDS treatment access as a key complement to HIV prevention. And ultimately, Brazil became seen as a global trendsetter for AIDS policy norms.

While the story of Brazil's initial AIDS policy adoption has been told before,[1] the story of how Brazil's progressive AIDS policies were successfully maintained and implemented over the course of the two decades that followed the initial path to policy adoption is remarkable. In order to transform national policy guidelines into concrete government programs – such as those promoting condoms, needle exchanges, or even human-rights protections for HIV-positive Brazilians – national policymakers had to overcome the constant threat of political opposition from radical religious conservatives in the legislative

[1] In Portuguese, see Daniel and Parker (1993); Galvão (2000); Parker (1997); Teixeira (1997). In English, see Biehl (2007); Flynn (2015); Lieberman (2009); Nunn (2009); Parker (2003, 2009).

branch, as well as from governors and mayors in the executive branch who were responsible for administering most government AIDS programs (Biehl 2007). Such political challenges to policy implementation are further highlighted when we compare this success on AIDS policy with Brazil's record on implementing programs in the general public health system (usually referred to by the acronym SUS). Once considered to be a broad arena of successful policy adoption on par with that of AIDS policy, SUS programs fared worse over time than AIDS programs on almost all major indicators – such as access to care, quality of services, and government investment (World Bank 2005a, 2007). By 2010, Brazilians commonly spoke about national AIDS policy as "the SUS that actually worked" and as "the rich cousin of public health." Brazil's relative success on AIDS policy implementation, overlooked by most scholarship, was thus far from predetermined.

How, then, did Brazil sustain its AIDS policy success whereas other, comparable policy successes faltered over time? Social-movement advocacy has been highlighted in historiographic accounts as a driving influence on the initial adoption of AIDS policy in Brazil, but the widely accepted view attributes Brazil's continued success in implementing national AIDS policy to the political will and technical capacity of politicians and the bureaucrats they appointed to govern the national AIDS program. Whereas the initial adoption of AIDS policy in Brazil is viewed as a political act, driven forward in part by social-movement activism, the implementation of AIDS policy in Brazil is more commonly viewed as a technical challenge, driven forward by experts in government. But looking exclusively to committed politicians and bureaucrats, while certainly a key factor, fails to explain how these bureaucrats succeeded in pushing forward their AIDS policy goals despite the many political obstacles they faced. How did they overcome efforts by the Evangelical caucus to impose a different vision of AIDS policy norms? How did they ensure that recalcitrant governors and mayors would implement their policies? The process of AIDS policy implementation, in other words, was as inextricably linked to politics as was the process of policy adoption.

One does not need to scratch too far beneath the surface to discover a key underlying factor behind the sustainability of Brazil's national AIDS program: continued advocacy by Brazil's Movement to Combat HIV/AIDS (hereafter referred to as the AIDS movement). Behind nearly all of the judicial decisions that reinforced Brazil's national AIDS policies were lawsuits that had been filed by members of the AIDS movement. Behind almost all legislation strengthening benefits and protection for people affected by AIDS were congressional AIDS caucuses – organized by members of the movement. When the media publicized instances of AIDS policy malfeasance, it was often members of the movement who had brought the issue to the attention of the press. What's more, the political advocacy of the AIDS movement expanded significantly over the course of the twenty years following their initial policy success. Whereas the activism of the 1980s was concentrated in the small handful of states where

the epidemic had first taken hold, this later phase of activism extended to all twenty-six states of Brazil – including states in which civil society has historically been weak and fragmented. Thus, the continued advocacy of the AIDS movement was a necessary condition for Brazil's acclaimed policy success – suggesting more broadly that, while we tend to think of social movements as bringing change, they are also required to sustain those changes.

Focusing on what happened after Sarney's Law was passed and providing key insights into the necessary condition for sustained policy success, this book explains the expansion and endurance of Brazil's AIDS movement from 1998 to 2010. This expansion and endurance confounds three of the core propositions within traditional approaches to understanding social movements. Firstly, traditional scholarship suggests that social movements tend to dissolve or hibernate once their initial campaign succeeds (McAdam and Scott 2005: 39). Yet Brazil's AIDS movement underwent a period of major expansion only *after* the national government had built a globally pioneering AIDS program and committed to strong benefits and protection for HIV-positive Brazilians. Secondly, traditional scholarship suggests that a strong and cohesive civil society is a necessary precondition for such social-movement mobilization (Putnam et al. 1993; Wampler 2007; Wampler and Avritzer 2004). Yet the expansion of the AIDS movement extended to regions dominated by rural oligarchs, clientelistic politics, and histories of weak civic organization. Thirdly, traditional scholarship argues that those movements that survive over time tend to become coopted by government (Michels 1949; Piven and Cloward 1979). Yet Brazil's AIDS activists continued to make independent demands on government and to use public pressure tactics to achieve their goals even as they developed close relationships with policymakers inside government. This unexpected trajectory – the expansion of independent civic activism into increasingly poor and isolated communities just as the government was meeting the movement's demands – cannot be explained by traditional theories.

The ultimate composition and character of Brazil's AIDS movement also confounds the dominant theoretical approaches to understanding civic organization and mobilization in Latin America. Civil society in Latin America has traditionally been analyzed through the lens of one of two conceptual frameworks: corporatism and pluralism. Under corporatism, the framework used to characterize civil society in the twentieth century, state actors sought to coopt organized labor into a relationship of subservience and quiescence by providing unions with subsidies in exchange for their acceptance of state controls on their behavior (Collier and Collier 1979, 1991; Schmitter 1974; Stepan 1978). Thanks to state support, civil society organizations in this era were able to build enduring national coalitions, but they were also quiescent – restricted from pushing for radical political reform and, to some degree, from using public pressure tactics to achieve their goals. Under pluralism, the system used to characterize civil society at the beginning of the twenty-first century (Oxhorn and Ducatenzeiler 1998; Oxhorn 2006), state actors are seen as adopting a

hands-off approach to society, leaving organized interests to flourish or flounder on their own (Dahl 1961; Truman 1951). As a result, civil society in the contemporary period is seen as autonomous from the state, but weakly organized. While sometimes successful in achieving political reform, contemporary grassroots coalitions are seen as dependent on protest to achieve reform, and organizationally they are characterized as loosely structured and unstable (Arce 2008; Arce and Bellinger 2007; Chalmers et al. 1997; Collier and Handlin 2009b: 80–1; Roberts 2008: 342; Rossi 2015; Shadlen 2002; Silva 2009). The outcome of Brazil's AIDS movement, not predicted by either of these existing approaches, is the growth of an enduring national social movement that is organized into a stable coalition that makes independent demands on the state and combines insider strategies with public pressure tactics for achieving its goals.

The central role that civic advocacy played in sustaining Brazil's AIDS policy success, thus, raises two questions of relevance for social scientists and policymakers alike: How does civil society develop the capacity to organize and advocate for collective political goals? And, furthermore, what explains the endurance of civic activism once the initial success of setting policy has passed? The remainder of this chapter previews my answer to each of these questions – first in the context of Brazil's AIDS movement and then in comparison to existing theories of state and society.

THE ARGUMENT

The argument of this book is that Brazil's AIDS movement was able to endure and even expand over time because the movement was cultivated by national government bureaucrats who depended on activism to help them pursue their policy goals. These bureaucrats gave civil-society organizations in new communities and regions of Brazil resources and opportunities to help them participate in the AIDS policy process. Some of these resources and opportunities they gave directly to new grassroots groups; others were used to help established organizations build a national advocacy coalition with newer grassroots groups. Together, by providing resources for new groups and supporting bottom–up efforts at coalition building, national bureaucrats played a key role in helping Brazil's AIDS movement to expand and endure over time.

While the initial mobilization of the AIDS movement was largely a grassroots effort, in the 2000s it was government bureaucrats who led vast numbers of new civic organizations across Brazil to start working on AIDS policy by providing them funding for HIV/AIDS-related projects. As a result of these efforts, the population of grassroots AIDS organizations ballooned from around a dozen groups in a few major metropolises to over a thousand organizations distributed across all twenty-six states. It was also government bureaucrats who provided these new grassroots AIDS organizations with institutional opportunities for accessing the state by inviting them to participate in government policymaking circles. By opening space for grassroots groups

to participate in AIDS policy discussions inside government, bureaucrats were providing new organizations with a significant opportunity to influence AIDS policy from the inside.

But bottom–up efforts by Brazil's established AIDS advocacy groups to expand the movement were crucial as well. It was the older generation of pre-existing AIDS advocacy groups who provided the new generation of civic AIDS organizations with the incentives and skills they needed in order to use their government access for political advocacy. They did this by building out the structure of the AIDS movement into a national federation of independent advocacy organizations with local branches in all twenty-six states of Brazil – what I call a federative coalition – and by engaging new grassroots AIDS organizations to participate in it. It was through this national coalition structure that pre-existing advocacy groups inculcated these grassroots AIDS associations with expertise and skills as policy advocates, and with a shared sense of the broader mission and goals of the AIDS movement. Alone, neither state actors nor established civic advocacy groups could have succeeded in building up an organized nationwide movement. But together, with the combination of resources and political opportunities provided by bureaucrats on the inside, and incentives and skills provided by grassroots advocacy groups on the outside, a new generation of AIDS advocacy organizations emerged that cut across class, race, gender, and geographic divides in Brazil.

What, then, motivated bureaucrats and advocacy groups to collaborate in expanding the AIDS movement? On the surface, neither of these groups had incentives to do so. Within traditional approaches to analyzing civil society, state actors are generally thought to lack incentives to help build independent movements because their very essence is to serve as a check on the power of the state. If truly autonomous, then a stronger and more mobilized civil society – defined here as the set of voluntary associations in society that are independent from the state – has greater potential capacity to hinder state actors in the pursuit of their goals, even if a mobilized civil society can sometimes act in support of state actors. For this reason, state actors are often depicted in traditional social-movements literature as attempting to coopt or weaken civil society (Michels 1949; Piven and Cloward 1979). Established civic groups are also thought to lack incentives for helping to expand civil society. According to traditional approaches, growth in the number of civil-society organizations tends to threaten established civic groups by increasing competition for funding and influence (Cooley and Ron 2002; Kriesi 1996: 159; McCarthy and Zald 1977). For this reason, established civic organizations are often depicted in traditional scholarship as attempting to crowd out newer and weaker organizations from the political arena.

In contrast to traditional approaches, I argue that bureaucrats in Brazil's AIDS policy sector expanded independent civic organization and mobilization to help them combat opposition to their AIDS policy goals from other state

actors. In a heterogeneous state, composed of multiple branches and many agencies, bureaucrats often encounter obstacles to advancing their policy preferences not only from within society, but also from within the state. While national bureaucrats enjoy great leeway to design national policy, they often depend on legislators to approve their budgets. Similarly, legislators can propose new laws that contradict the policy guidelines previously developed by bureaucrats. National bureaucrats may also encounter political obstacles to their policy goals within the executive branch, such as when governors or mayors refuse to obey national policy guidelines. In order to advance their policy preferences, then, bureaucrats need to ensure collaboration from all these different parts of government.

By the time AIDS bureaucrats had begun to seek new allies in civil society, two dynamics related to Latin America's dual transition – democratization and neoliberal reform – had increased the complexity of the Brazilian state and, thus, the likelihood of intra-state conflict. Firstly, democratization had ushered in a new class of bureaucrats tasked with building government programs for formerly marginalized interests. Because their objective was transformative – to include new segments of the population into the welfare system – these bureaucrats had different interests from those in pre-existing state agencies. As the size of this new policymaking elite grew, so did the likelihood of intra-state conflict. AIDS-sector bureaucrats formed part of the new policymaking elite, representing new interests inside the state.

Secondly, decentralization – part of the second wave of neoliberal reforms in Latin America – had made national bureaucrats dependent on subnational actors to ensure that the policies they designed were implemented. In the early 2000s, when responsibility for AIDS policy was decentralized to the state and local levels, recalcitrant governors and mayors began to pose strong obstacles to the ability of federal AIDS bureaucrats to achieve their policy aims. It was at this point that AIDS-sector bureaucrats began to make an effort to build AIDS movements in new regions of Brazil, using state funding as inducements to encourage a wider variety of grassroots groups across Brazil to work on AIDS and offering them access to government policymaking spaces by creating new participatory institutions. In other words, national AIDS bureaucrats sought to mobilize grassroots organization outside the state in order to increase their leverage to advance their own AIDS policy goals over other actors inside the state.

In turn, this effort by national bureaucrats to cultivate new civic AIDS groups provided an additional, unintentional impetus for established advocacy groups to incorporate them into the political movement. The civil-society organizations that had taken on AIDS projects in response to state inducements tended to be relatively apolitical with respect to AIDS policy, prioritizing service provision over making demands on the state. Most of these new AIDS organizations had small budgets and limited staff. Moreover, they typically worked on multiple issues at once and had often organized initially to confront some other key social issue. In other words, they lacked incentives to

invest in advocacy. Left to their own devices, these grassroots groups likely would have stayed out of policy discussions, leaving the relatively small group of established advocacy organizations to continue driving the political arm of the movement. Yet national bureaucrats, by providing access to policymaking spaces through participatory institutions, had provided a level of political relevance to these civil-society organizations that they would not have achieved on their own. This opening of access to inside influence over policy decisions by politically unskilled and uninterested "civil society representatives" threatened to reverse the past political and policy achievements of Brazil's established AIDS advocacy organizations and to diminish the coherence of the movement. It was as a defensive response to this threat that established activist groups reorganized the structure of the AIDS movement into a federative coalition as a way to incorporate these new groups into the movement and, in doing so, develop them into active and effective policy advocates who shared a common understanding of AIDS policy priorities.

At the same time, as federal bureaucrats unintentionally motivated preexisting AIDS organizations to broaden their civic advocacy coalition, federal bureaucrats also provided the financial resources that allowed them to do so. AIDS-sector bureaucrats gave crucial support for this bottom–up effort to build a national coalition by providing funding for nearly all local, regional, and national meetings of the movement. This support extended from small amounts of financial and material resources to sustain the monthly meetings of AIDS associations that took place at the state level, to relative large amounts of funding for large-scale biannual events (*encontros*) that brought together the leaders of grassroots AIDS associations at the regional and national levels. By paying for space, food, lodging, and transportation, national bureaucrats provided critical assistance in helping AIDS associations overcome otherwise insurmountable costs to the development of formal, institutionalized structures for nationwide coordination. While all of these meetings and conferences were organized autonomously by members of the movement, almost all of them were funded at least in part by the national AIDS program.

Brazil's AIDS-sector bureaucrats were motivated to support civic coalition-building for the same reason they subsidized individual advocacy groups: because it supported their ultimate goal of increasing their leverage over AIDS policy opponents inside the state. The organization of the movement into a national coalition made it cheaper and more efficient for bureaucrats to invite them into their policymaking circles by eliminating the effort and potential controversy involved in choosing which interlocutors to represent the movement. Such a coalition also strengthened the political leverage that AIDS-sector bureaucrats could gain by collaborating with activists. By developing policies in collaboration with activists who clearly represented a broad national activist base, they could make strong claims that their policy recommendations were developed in consensus with civil society and, thus, represented the public interest.

The outcome of this combination of top–down and bottom–up dynamics was a nationwide social-movement coalition that was able to combine institutional strategies with outside pressure tactics to achieve its policy goals. The privileged access to government circles that AIDS activists enjoyed, as well as the hierarchical and centralized structure of the movement, helped activists incorporate insider strategies – such as lobbying and negotiation – into their repertoire. But AIDS activists also used government resources to simultaneously pursue contentious strategies for policy influence – sometimes even with the explicit encouragement of bureaucrats themselves. In contrast to the ephemeral social-movement networks held up by many scholars as characteristic of twenty-first century movements, this was an institutionalized, nationwide movement of NGOs, which used its close ties to government insiders to wield ongoing influence over AIDS policy while maintaining the autonomy that such privileged interests were forced to relinquish in the prior era of state corporatism.

ALTERNATIVE EXPLANATIONS

Alternative approaches to understanding civic mobilization focus more narrowly on civil-society organizations and activist leaders as the main protagonists. As I describe in Chapter 2, the widely accepted view within scholarship on Latin America suggests that state actors withdrew in the 1980s and 1990s from engaging civil society. Instead, subsequent scholarship has adopted traditional social-movement frameworks to analyze civil society in Latin America, pointing to instances in which new political opportunities and grievances have helped civil society to organize and make demands on government despite the retreat of the state. Each of these existing approaches to understanding civil society has provided important insights and, as I elaborate in Chapter 3, they also contribute substantially to explaining the initial rise of Brazil's AIDS movement in the 1980s and early 1990s. However, as I show next, none of these traditional approaches can explain the subsequent endurance and expansion of the AIDS movement throughout the following decades. As I argue more broadly in Chapter 2, without taking into account the role of state actors as a potential source of incentives and support, existing explanations are unable to explain the emergence of new forms of interest organization at the turn of the twenty-first century that are both autonomous and enduring.

Grievances

Some have argued that neoliberal economic reforms provided new grievances to inspire grassroots mobilization in the 1980s and 1990s (Kingstone, Young, and Aubrey 2013; Rossi 2015, 2017; Silva 2009). As Silva (2009) describes, governments destroyed citizen livelihoods in the process of neoliberal reform by dismantling key social programs while unemployment skyrocketed (23–6).

At the same time, national governments shut the working classes out of the political process by destroying the corporatist institutional channels they had previously used to make demands on government (29). As a result, a wide swath of citizens felt a broad sense of economic and political exclusion from these reforms. Conversely, neoliberal economic reforms threatened indigenous communities who had unintentionally been granted relative autonomy from state control under the corporatist system (Yashar 2005: 55–70). In the corporatist era, indigenous communities had enjoyed benefits such as labor freedoms, land titles, and political representation, whereas other communities had operated beyond the reaches of the state with relative freedom. In the neoliberal era, however, the state dismantled many of its earlier protections and benefits for indigenous peasants at the same time as it increased its presence in indigenous territories and promoted colonization by domestic and international companies. These grievances – either a sense of exclusion as in the case of urban factory workers or a sense of a loss of autonomy in the case of indigenous communities – motivated diverse groups in society to band together for policy reform campaigns.

In the case of Brazil's AIDS movement, grievances go a long way toward explaining the initial wave of mobilization around AIDS in Brazil, but they are less useful in explaining the subsequent endurance and expansion of the movement in the 2000s. As I describe in Chapter 3, AIDS activists in the 1980s and early 1990s faced multiple forms of state-sanctioned stigma and discrimination. Activists in the 1980s were further aggrieved by inadequate healthcare for those who were already ill. Yet the subsequent endurance and expansion of the movement occurred only after the national government had responded favorably to the movement's demands – only after the Brazilian government had included AIDS activists in politics by building a strong national AIDS program that focused on combatting stigma and discrimination, and only after the government had guaranteed free healthcare access for AIDS patients. More broadly, explanations that focus on grievances are unable to explain how movements can persist after the initial moment of success.

Political Opportunities

Other authors have focused on how the region-wide transition to democracy provided new political opportunities for citizens to make demands on government. At the most fundamental level, the reinstatement of civil rights, such as freedom of assembly, allowed citizens the space to gather and to develop strategies for influencing policy (Yashar 2005). National constitutions were drafted that incorporated explicit social rights in the text, legally obligating states to provide citizens access to social-welfare programs (Dagnino, Olivera, and Panfichi 2006; Elkins, Ginsburg, and Simmons 2013). These constitutions provided citizens and citizens' groups across much of Latin America with the legal foundation to make social-welfare demands on government. Experiments

with new policymaking institutions also provided opportunities for new groups of citizens to make demands on government. In particular, the concept of participatory governance, in which citizens collaborate directly with government insiders in the policy process, caught on among government and international policymakers in the 1990s and 2000s. As a result, a significant number of countries set up new policymaking bodies that incorporated citizens and citizen groups into budgeting and social policy decisions (Cameron, Herschberg, and Sharpe 2012; Dagnino, Olivera, and Panfichi 2006; Goldfrank 2011; Mayka 2019b; Wampler and McNulty 2011). Moreover, the international community's growing interest and involvement in new issues, such as ethno-racial rights, provided new opportunities for domestic activists in Latin America to leverage in pushing for change (Paschel 2016).

While political-opportunities approaches help shed light on the initial mobilization of Brazil's AIDS movement, they are less helpful in explaining how the movement endured over time. Brazil's AIDS movement was one of the vast numbers of social movements to emerge during the period of democratic transition. Just like activists from Brazil's other movements of the 1980s, Brazil's AIDS activists used this opening in the political opportunity structure to their advantage. As I describe in Chapter 3, they used civil-liberties protections to organize provocative, performance art-based street protests that criticized the weak government investment in combatting the epidemic (Daniel and Parker, 1993; Galvão, 2000; Parker, 1997, 2003, and 2009). Because of the early democratization of the public health sector, early AIDS activists pushed their agenda in the halls of government as well. After the new constitution of 1988 entered into effect, activists took advantage of the full reinstatement of democratic institutions by pursuing policy reforms through the courts and the legislature. Certainly, then, political opportunities – provided by the period of democratic transition and by the particular characteristics of the public health sector – helped make the initial demands of AIDS activists more effective. Yet it was not until the 2000s, well after the political opportunities associated with Brazil's democratic opening first emerged, that the AIDS movement spread to a wider range of groups that cut across traditional cleavages such class, race, gender, religion and geography.

Resources

Although not a focus of recent scholarship, we might also look to resources as a potential factor in the endurance and expansion of Brazil's AIDS movement. As a large body of literature has shown, resources are important for activists to be able to turn their grievances into action and to take advantage of the political opportunities presented to them (McCarthy and Zald 1977). Traditionally, scholarship in the context of Latin America placed a strong emphasis on how financial resources provided by the state shaped labor mobilization (Collier and Collier 1991). By contrast, current scholarship tends to focus on the prospects