54

SOCIAL MOVEMENTS

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In the summer of 1999, three women entered the Lilith Fair, a rock concert organized by and for women musicians and singers, wearing gags and shirts with the phrase "Peace Begins in the Womb." They walked to a line of information booths representing various women's causes and interests, ultimately standing next to the booths of the National Organization for Women (NOW) and Planned Parenthood Federation of America. The three protesters, members of Feminists for Life, a group organized around the claim that opposition to abortion is the most authentically feminist position, had applied for booth space at the Lilith Fair that year and had been denied. The activists wore gags to convey what they saw as their forced marginalization in the feminist movement as punishment for their efforts against abortion. NOW and Planned Parenthood, larger organizations that supported abortion rights, had both been granted booth space, and the members of Feminists for Life bought concert tickets to stage their demonstration and silently protest their exclusion ("Meet FFL Activists" 2002).

It doesn't really matter that the rock concert, organized for several years by popular musician and songwriter Sarah McLachlan, was not explicitly feminist. It provided a venue in which to contest the very definition of the identity "feminist." An extremely successful commercial endeavor to prove that women did not need to tour with male musicians to sell tickets, McLachlan described the tour environment as inspired by feminist values. In this spirit, promoters granted space to organizations supporting women's causes from rape and incest help lines to cancer research foundations. The groups used their tables to display information and promote themselves and their causes. It's not clear whether there were any large long-term effects from this gag protest; Feminists for Life showed up at only one concert on the tour and Lilith did not change any of its concert policies. The Lilith concerts continue, reaching a distinct audience. Feminists for Life also continues, reaching a much smaller one, and still tries to contest the definition of feminism while opposing abortion rights.

The story, however, underscores a few distinct points about social movements that we will explore in this chapter. First, although social movements make expressly political claims on matters of public policy, in this case abortion rights, they are not limited to the policy process; social movements are always about more than their explicit claims, including components of culture and values. Second, social movements are vehicles that express a constructed social and political identity, in this case feminism, one often, as in this case, contested. Third, social movements such as American feminism have deep roots and long legacies that are not easily bounded in time. Note that the American feminist movement, expressed most strongly in two distinct waves separated by roughly 50 years (prior to suffrage, in 1920, and as one of several important movements commencing in the 1960s) (Rupp and Taylor 1987; Banaszak 1996; Sawyers and Meyer 1999), continues to influence both American culture and politics. Finding discrete beginnings and endings of social movements is difficult.

Fourth, social movements consist of both interested individuals and established organizations that coordinate much of a movement's efforts. These groups and individuals agree on some aspects of politics or values but differ on other issues, such as preferred organizational forms, decision making, and values. Groups cooperate, to some degree, in the service of shared goals, but factions within them compete for both prominence and support. Fifth, while social movements establish distinct spaces and cultures, they are not divorced from mainstream politics and culture; they draw ideas, support, and grievances from the larger society and contribute the same back to it.

In this chapter, we examine the phenomenon of social movements, beginning with a brief discussion of the historical importance of the topic in sociology. We outline the interactions within movements, between movements, and with the environment outside of the movement, including both the government and the rest of society. We then offer a working definition of "social movement" identifying key issues in understanding the origins, development, and ultimate impact of social movements.

SIGNIFICANCE OF SOCIAL MOVEMENTS IN SOCIOLOGY

The study of various forms of social movements, collective expressions of values, grievances, and identities that spill over the boundaries of conventional politics, is deeply rooted in sociology. Predictably, from the outset, scholars have defined social movements in accord with their larger vision of how societies function and/or change. Marx, as a critical example, saw social movements as the expression of material interests that organized class conflict and ultimately propelled social and political change. In contrast, Durkheim ([1933] 1979, [1951] 1997) viewed social movements as the collective expression of aggregate psychological dysfunction and anomie, representing a society's failure to integrate diverse social constituencies. Following this line in focusing on crowd behavior, Le Bon (1977) saw movements as a collective phenomenon that represents the loss of individual identity and conscience.

Such visions remain and continue to inform, albeit in nuanced ways, more contemporary treatments of social movements. In broad terms, social movements can be seen as the rational employment of less conventional means to achieve political gains unlikely to be won otherwise and can also be seen as the expressed frustration of a constituency unsuccessful in winning acceptance or accommodation from mainstream society. Historically, such evaluations have often turned on the particular social movement under scrutiny and the normative concerns of the analyst. As might be expected, scholarly focus has shifted in response to perceived gaps in the latest wave of scholarship, such that research has moved back and forth between studies that look at movements from the outside in, starting with the context in which movements emerge

and develop, and those that look at movements from the inside out, which focus on the dynamics, processes, and meanings of individual mobilization within social movements.

As sociology is the study of both how societies function and how societies change, social movements offer a rich ground for empirical study of both these phenomena. Social movement actors, while envisioning a better world, fight in this one. The progression of a social movement offers a vision of how society and state work (the world they fight in) and how societies change (when activists can achieve some portion of their goals).

The first large wave of scholarship on movements, following World War II and set in the context of an expanding American role in the world, focused on the heinous movements that had led to the war, particularly Nazism. Understandably, analysts viewed the Nazi movement, which emphasized mass mobilization and emotion, as a symptom and consequence of a society gone mad. Contrasted with more moderate and conventional means of politics, such as interest associations and political parties, scholars saw movements as the product of societal dysfunction. Following Durkheim, both scholars and popular analysts (e.g., Hoffer 1951; Kornhauser 1959; Smelser 1962; Lipset and Raab 1970) contended that movements were irrational, dysfunctional, and ultimately dangerous. They occurred in societies that didn't offer sufficient number and variety of integrating institutions, including social clubs and advocacy groups. In short, movements were the province of the disconnected.

This "collective behavior" approach to social movements took deep root even as the world around was undermining its very tenets. As the civil rights movement, commencing in the 1950s, and a broad range of 1960s movements (antiwar, antinuclear, student, ethnic identity, feminist, environmental) emerged, the basic template of social dysfunction proved to be of extremely limited value.

At an aggregate level, particularly in light of the Cold War, the United States defined the sort of open democratic polity filled with the intermediary associations that would preempt the development of social movements. The movements of the 1950s and 1960s belied the notion that such associations would prevent social movements. Rather than being a futile gesture of exasperation, analysts found that protest often led to real political gains (e.g., Lipsky 1968; Piven and Cloward 1971, 1977; Gamson 1990). At the individual level, empirical studies of student activist leaders showed them to be relative models of emotional health: Compared with their less active colleagues, the student leaders were better connected with a variety of social organizations, displayed more developed and integrated personalities, and even enjoyed better relationships with their parents (Keniston 1968). The notion of movements as the product of social dysfunction mostly gave way over time to a view of social protest as an augmentation of more conventional politics, a sensible strategy—particularly for those badly positioned to make claims

effectively in other ways (Lipsky 1968; McCarthy and Zald 1977). Protest and social movement activity was increasingly seen as less a rejection of more conventional politics than an addition to it.

Scholars' analytic focus turned from the social and political factors that promoted protest movements to the purposive efforts of organizers to generate social protest. Assuming a continual sufficiency of grievances, McCarthy and Zald (1977) pointed to the logistical achievement of applying a range of resources, including money, expertise, and public support, to the production of organizational growth and protest activity. Scholars devoted a great deal of attention to the "free-rider problem," that is, the predisposition of individuals to benefit from collective action without participating in it (Olson 1965).

Influenced by this "resource mobilization" perspective (Jenkins 1983), scholars pointed out that the free-rider problem was less an absolute constant than an elastic tendency that responded to external circumstances (Meyer and Imig 1993). Returning to look at the context in which movements emerge, scholars within the "political process" or "political opportunity" perspective (e.g., Eisinger 1973; Tilly 1978; McAdam 1982; Kitschelt 1986; Tarrow 1989; Meyer 1990, 2004) emphasized that the external world affected the issues, tactics, and ultimate influence of social movements.

More recently, critics have charged (e.g., Goodwin and Jasper 2003) that the political process approach had flattened political agency out of the study of social movements, imposing a rigid deterministic framework on the interpretation of collective action. These criticisms have spurred a vigorous debate and encouraged the injection of culture, emotion, and narrative to the study of social movements.

DEFINING SOCIAL MOVEMENTS

Social scientists collectively grapple with defining social movements depending on what they want to rule in or rule out. As a result, definitional disputes over the past few decades developed over whether to include or exclude such phenomena as civic advocacy groups, riots, revolutions, religious sects, and artistic innovations (e.g., Snow 2005). Tarrow's (1998) succinct definition of movements as "collective challenges, based on common purposes and social solidarities, in sustained interaction with elites, opponents, and authorities" (p. 4) provides a useful starting point. This definition is broad enough to be very inclusive, but others nonetheless emphasize the need to extend conventional analytical boundaries to include, for example, the pursuit of cultural change (e.g., Gamson and Meyer 1996; Rochon 1998), a range of authorities who might be challenged (Snow 2005), desperate political rebellions (Einwohner 2003), the distinct worldview within social movements (Whittier 1995), and resistance to repression in authoritarian settings (Boudreau 2004). The real challenge for

scholars is less to develop a strict taxonomy that consensually categorizes diverse phenomena than to develop strong analytical tools that can be useful for understanding those phenomena (see McAdam, Tarrow, and Tilly 2001). Such a focus on tools and processes will allow for the accumulation of knowledge while avoiding the trap of generalizing from selective cases, no matter how interesting (see McAdam et al. 2005).

We can view social movements not only as continuous with other social and political behavior but also as including something more. We can start by thinking about the claims that social movements express, recognizing the critical importance of political context. For large numbers of people to engage in ongoing challenges to mainstream politics and culture, they must believe that their efforts are necessary and, at least, *potentially* successful. In the absence of the belief of necessity, most people will confine themselves to personal pursuits and more conventional, and less costly or risky, political action. In the absence of the belief in potential efficacy, most people will not want to waste their efforts. This is not to say that there are not dedicated individuals and organizations who will pursue their vision of social goods regardless of the political environment and their judgment of likely efficacy (e.g., see Nepstad 2004), only that such individuals and groups will remain politically marginal without the support of others who are not normally engaged in social action. Therefore, social movements are partly distinguished by their interaction with mainstream politics and culture, drawing individuals and ideas from the mainstream and targeting at least some of their activities toward that mainstream.

Although social movement challenges are generally typed by one cause or claim, say, supporting civil rights or opposing taxes, those involved with such movements frequently agree on much more than those expressed claims. This agreement includes both a variety of political ideas and softer cultural norms, such as aesthetic choices about music, literature, and presentation of self (Taylor and Whittier 1992). Thus, while the most visible element of a social movement, its claims on policies, tends to be simple, the reality underneath that demand, the metaphoric nine-tenths of the iceberg, is broader. A critical question for scholars is to establish why a particular side of that iceberg, that is, a defined set of critical issues, becomes ascendant at one time or another.

Social movement activity contains elements of spontaneity, but these occur around a structure provided by established groups. Depending on the political setting, these groups can be covert, as were the *samizdat* networks in the former Soviet Union, or very visible and recognized by the government, as we see in the range of advocacy organizations that define interest group politics in the United States (Clemens and Minkoff 2004). While individuals join in social movements as they grow, and operate autonomously in the service of shared convictions, formal organizations provide a bulwark for mobilizing and interpreting collective action.

For most movements, several organizations are engaged in shared efforts to mobilize support and effect change. These organizations, however, operate with conflicting concerns. On the one hand, cooperation with groups that share some goals enhances the prospects for political efficacy. At the same time, organizations seek to survive, particularly groups that have established professional positions whose occupants earn their living from the organization (Staggenborg 1988; Wilson 1995). Cooperation with other groups entails risks for social movement organizations; sharing the spotlight may mean losing control of an organization's public presentation of itself, can compromise credibility by affiliation with tainted allies, and can risk individual identity by obscuring individual organizations' efforts in the service of a larger goal. The opportunities of politics encourage cooperation while the exigencies of organizational survival demand securing a distinct identity, a niche in the larger universe of groups, so as to ensure the continued flow of resources (Rochon and Meyer 1997). Organizers must balance these competing pressures and the ways by which they affect the dynamics of social movements.

By definition, the peak of social movement activity is limited in time. The unusual mobilization of groups and individuals in the service of collective goals changes through the interaction of challengers with the world they challenge. States and societies manage social movement challenges to minimize disruption and uncertainty. The most obvious management strategies include repressing activism through harsh punishment, acquiescing to political claims through policy reform, or recognizing social movement actors and affording them less difficult and disruptive means of making claims; in liberal polities, such as the United States, management strategies often include all three strategies, unraveling a social movement coalition in the process (Meyer and Tarrow 1998). We can think of this process as *institutionalization of dissent,* which doesn't decisively resolve the claims or concerns of a social movement but undermines its capacity to disrupt day-to-day life.

DEVELOPMENT OF SOCIAL MOVEMENTS

Although some scholars have offered models of social movement activism that assume fixed patterns of mobilization and demobilization based on constants such as personal disappointment (Hirschman 1982) or inevitable collective disappointment in the face of the unavoidable intractability of social problems (Downs 1972), it makes more sense to see social movement trajectories as contingent and as intimately tied to the larger political context. We can gain analytical leverage on the emergence of social movements by thinking about an individual's decision to engage in movement activity. If most people are unlikely to join protest movements unless they believe their efforts are necessary and possibly successful, we need to understand when those beliefs will become widespread. Organizers' tactics and rhetoric are important in conveying such beliefs, as discussed below, but understanding the ebbs and flows of collective action begins with an analysis of the circumstances in which these beliefs take root. Scholars focusing on the emergence, development, and ultimate impact of social movements describe the world around a social movement as "political opportunities."

External factors go a long way in defining the costs, risks, and potential outcomes of collective action. The first articulation of the concept of political opportunities focused on the comparative openness to political participation of urban governments in the 1960s. Peter Eisinger (1973) found that urban riots were most likely in cities that had what he described as a combination of "open" and "closed" political opportunities. Tilly (1978) expanded this finding to national politics and refined it theoretically. His claim was that political regimes that actively invited conventional political participation preempted protest by offering potentially effective alternatives. At the same time, regimes could limit protest through repression, essentially raising the costs and risks of social movement participation while minimizing the apparent prospects of efficacy. Social movements, then, take place in an atmosphere of some tolerance and openness, but without full inclusion—when activists can believe that protest might be both necessary and potentially effective. Changes in opportunities encourage activists to take to the streets, through either increased tolerance and safety or enhanced threats and provocation.

Empirical studies of social movements over long periods of time (see, especially, McAdam 1982; Costain 1992) emphasized governmental openings and limited repression as precursors for social movements, essentially focusing on one side of the curve. But some studies have emphasized the importance of threat in provoking mobilization (Meyer 1990; Smith 1996; Almeida 2003). How can we reconcile these apparently contradictory findings? We believe that the key is to recognize differential opportunities facing different constituencies. While some constituencies who are generally excluded from meaningful participation can be drawn into social movements by expanded tolerance, others who normally enjoy routine access to the political process will turn to social movements only in response to threats or exclusion (Meyer 2004).

The recognition of differential opportunities also throws analytic light on the process of demobilization. When authorities respond to social movements, they shape the context in which challenges continue or not. Faced with harsh repression, most activists will retreat, waiting for better times and perhaps organizing for them. Offered chances for apparently meaningful consultation on matters of policy or viable political participation, activists will emphasize less costly, more routine means of politics at the expense of social protest. Either response can mark the end of a period of high mobilization by diminishing the attractions of protest as a political strategy.

Polities have preferred strategies for dealing with dissent that reflect both the nature of political institutions and the developed culture of dissent and governance. Thus, many smaller parliamentary democracies, for example, the Scandinavian countries, offer extensive opportunities for dissident factions to present their ideas and to compete for parliamentary representation, providing numerous routes for communication, if not political efficacy. In doing so, they diminish the attractiveness of protest. In contrast, more authoritarian contexts, including state communist governments such as China in 1989 or the Roman Catholic Church (Katzenstein 1998), respond decisively to protest efforts, rejecting claims and often sanctioning protesters harshly. These authorities diminish the attractiveness of protest by undermining hopes of efficacy.

Larger liberal polities can offer mixed receptions to both movements and differential responses to various parties within a movement coalition, welcoming some claims and claimants into mainstream politics while repressing or ignoring others. Such differential responses diminish the volatility of social movements by facilitating the breakup of movement coalitions (Sawyers and Meyer 1999). Policy reforms, for example, can diminish the urgency of action for some activists; even if they do not satisfy all members of a coalition, they can rob a movement of the capacity to command public attention.

The nature of the challenged authority affects the shape and claims of the dissenting coalition that mounts a social movement. In authoritarian settings, people with a wide range of grievances can unite around basic civil liberties and simple procedural issues of inclusion. In Eastern Europe before the end of the Cold War, for example, all reformers had a common interest in political openness. In contrast, in liberal polities with a range of potentially viable political issues and venues for action, activists choose not only whether to engage political and social mobilization but also what claims to make, where, how, and with whom. When the state offers readily accessible, relatively low cost, and essentially no-risk means of participation—such as voting or political campaigning—to choose protest movement activity is not obviously natural, and the increasingly common forms of protest politics are those that are the least disruptive, such as petitions and demonstrations rather than riots or other violent action (Meyer and Tarrow 1998).

The issue of which claims to make or what issues to pursue is, perhaps paradoxically, most difficult in liberal politics. In such settings, it is possible to engage on a broad spectrum of political issues. Organizers press their preferred claims, trying to link them to potential activists' concerns. Issue activists try to launch new campaigns, but only periodically do their entreaties reach responsive audiences in the political mainstream and threaten to alter the normal conduct of politics. Although it is easiest analytically to focus on their efforts, attributing success or failure to the tactics or rhetoric of appeals for mobilization, this is fundamentally mistaken. External political realities alter the risks or costs that citizens are willing to bear in making decisions about whether to engage in political activism and what issues are viable for substantial challenges. It makes sense to be more concerned about nuclear war, for example, when the president of the United States suggests that it may be inevitable and survivable and increases spending on nuclear weapons; it also makes sense to distrust the more conventional styles of politics that produced such a president (Meyer 1990). Similarly, it seems more reasonable to organize for women's rights when the state establishes a commission on women, formally prohibits discrimination, and suggests that it may play a role in combating it (Costain 1992). Activists are not ineluctably linked to one set of issues. An American activist concerned with social justice may protest against nuclear testing in 1962, for voting rights in 1964, against the war in Vietnam in 1967, for an Equal Rights Amendment (ERA) in 1972, and against corporate globalization at the end of the century, without dramatically altering his perception of self or justice. Rather, he will be responding to the most urgent, or the most promising, issues that appear before him. In this way, the issues that activists mobilize around are those the state sets out as challenges and opportunities.

The important point is that movements arise within a particular constellation of social and political factors. Movements do not decline because they run out of gas, recognize their failures, or because adherents get bored and move on to something else. Rather, protest movements decline when the state effects some kind of new arrangement with at least some activists or sponsors. Such arrangements can include repression, incorporating new claims or constituencies in mainstream institutions, and policy reform. Protest campaigns dissipate when activists no longer believe that a movement strategy is possible, necessary, or potentially effective. Repression inhibits the perception of possibility. In contrast, when established political institutions such as parties and interest groups take up some of the claims of challenging social movements, the perception that extrainstitutional activity is necessary erodes.

Mobilization: Constructing Political Opportunity

Regardless of the objective conditions of political alignments, potential participation, or public policy, movements do not emerge unless substantial numbers of people are invested with a subjective sense of both urgency and efficacy. The job of the organizer is to persuade significant numbers of people that the issues they care about are indeed *urgent,* that alternatives are *possible,* and that the constituencies they seek to mobilize can in fact be invested with *agency* (Gamson and Meyer 1996).

The process of building activism is a function of successfully building on shared cultural understandings to generate a new vision of change in which political mobilization is necessary. Scholars have described the

rhetorical dimension of this process as "framing," that is, providing a cognitive structure of interpretation that links personal political choices with larger social conditions (Gamson 1992; Snow and Benford 1992). Organizers convey collective action frames through their own organizational materials, through speeches, stories, and songs, and mediate through reports in the range of mass media (Ryan 1991; Rohlinger 2002).

Of course, organizers do not construct these interpretations in a vacuum nor do potential activists interpret each new appeal solely on its own terms. Both operate in a larger political environment, a crucible in which their values are honed. Critical to the successful emergence of protest movements is a positive feedback loop through which well-positioned elites reinforce both an alternate position on issues and the choice of protest as a strategy. In the case of civil rights in the United States, for example, the Supreme Court's 1954 decision *Brown v. Board of Education* legitimated criticism of segregation and offered the promise of federal government intervention as a powerful ally against southern state and local governments. The decision suggested new possibilities for social organization.

Organizers recognize, then, that to promote and then sustain activism they need to build and reinforce not only a shared understanding of a social problem but also a sense of community among potential activists. The sources of community and the struggles for change understandably differ across movements and across contexts. Successful labor organizers in Poland built unions around the shared experiences of their members, both at the workplace and at home, addressing the range of concerns in both spheres (Osa 2003). East German dissidents organized in the Protestant Church, while the intellectuals in Czechoslovakia who spearheaded the revolution of 1989 found political space in the now famous Magic Lantern theater. The first step in launching any effective political campaign is searching out and filling available free spaces, nurturing in embryo the social values activists want to see expressed in the larger society. Even in a repressive state with an underdeveloped civil society, social movement mobilization is the activity of the organized, *en bloc,* rather than a mystical melding of atomized individuals.

What Movements Do

Organizers, established groups, sympathizers, zealots, outsiders, opponents, and bystanders, both inside and outside government, can engage in the life of a social movement, mobilized in different ways for overlapping goals. Whereas organizers spend a great deal of effort in crafting demands, fashioning slogans and arguments, and devising strategy, they rarely enjoy complete control of even their own side of a social movement's efforts, much less the critical responses of government and mobilized opponents (Meyer and Staggenborg 1996). Because most movement organizations are constant in actively seeking to mobilize new supporters and stage new actions, movements have porous and blurry boundaries. Indeed, a key dilemma for activists is how broadly to draw the lines of alliances within a movement: More supporters means more diversity and less control; narrower, sharper coalitions of action afford greater clarity, more control, and likely less influence (Meyer 2007).

Organizations mobilize action in accord with both established practices within an institutional context (e.g., voting, lobbying, strikes, petitions) and in accord with their own established scripts of action. Charles Tilly (1993) has observed that the astonishing thing about what he describes as the "repertoire of contention" is how limited the actual range of tactics employed is. In contemporary settings, with the social movement a well-established form of organization and political claims-making, resorting to well-known strategies for influence, for example, the mass demonstration, minimizes the costs and risks for those involved, allowing easy access to mobilization and the prospect for sustained efforts.

Much movement activity surrounds the promotion of ideas. Organizers write and post analyses of social problems and potential solutions, as do individuals with no necessary connection with movement organizations. They assemble different versions of their arguments, some designed to generate outside, perhaps even extranational, support (e.g., Keck and Sikkink 1998), others directed to closer policymakers and political figures, and still others, in short form, designed to mobilize mass support. It's hard to overstate the diversity of ways to communicate movement ideas, ranging from long manifestos, sometimes published as books (think of Betty Friedan's *Feminine Mystique*), to bumper stickers and buttons. East German peace and democracy activists, for example, devised a patch depicting a statue given to the United Nations by the Soviet Union, depicting swords beaten into plowshares. When the government rightly interpreted the patch as an attack on its own policies and existence, activists took to wearing blank patches, developing a symbolic politics based on a sort of irony (Tismaneanu 1989). Organizers can file lawsuits on behalf of their concerns or constituencies, seeking to mobilize allies within the government. These kinds of communication range from developed and documented arguments to symbolic shorthand.

Activists also engage in actions to draw attention to themselves and their ideas. Sometimes, this involves using well-established means of political participation in new ways or for new causes. They circulate petitions, engage in referenda or electoral campaigns, lobby elected officials, and—where and when they can—vote. They can try to reach potential supporters by going door to door or more efficiently appearing at events and organizations that might support their effort—in other words, finding locations where they might reach a number of likely supporters, such as church services, union meetings, theater groups, professional associations, or community picnics. Supporters can sign, mark a box, make financial contributions, talk to neighbors, feed activists, or even quietly smile when they learn of activist efforts.

Somewhat more dramatically, organizers can stage demonstrations, which often feature large assemblies of people united in the service of a few clear demands. People cheer and chant, listen to speakers and music, hold signs, talk to other demonstrators, yell at counterdemonstrators, and return to their homes knowing that many more people agree with them. The demonstration becomes a symbol for a broader range of activities, both representing and punctuating a movement campaign that always includes much more over a longer period of time.

In addition to mass demonstrations, activists have devised still more dramatic means of showing numbers, commitment, and endorsing their ideas. Activists engage in vigils, sometimes fasting, strike, organize boycotts, and establish semipermanent camps in support of their cause. Sometimes they dress in costumes, in the hope of attracting the attention of the mass media; recently, activists against cruelty to animals paraded naked as a costume. Farmers drove tractors to Washington, D.C., to protest foreclosure policies, and environmental activists often ride boats or bicycles to demonstrate their concerns. Gay and lesbian activists staged "kiss-ins" in the 1980s, in efforts to boost their political and social visibility.

And sometimes, some activists break laws or employ violence to promote their ideas and undermine policies with which they disagree. Civil rights activists in the United States willfully violated local segregation laws, asking to borrow books in segregated libraries; they also violated orders not to march or demonstrate, sometimes suffering harsh punishment from police. Antiabortion activists assemble outside clinics that perform abortions, trying to talk or yell young women out of entering the clinics. On occasion, they assemble in large numbers to try to block all access to the clinic. Some zealots shoot doctors or bomb buildings and may alienate as many potential supporters as they mobilize in the process. Radical and disruptive tactics, such as civil disobedience or violence, then can serve as a double-edged sword, generating visibility, demonstrating commitment, and potentially provoking a backlash.

The inventory of tactics above is hardly complete. The point is that movements are characterized by a tremendous diversity of activity, all seen to be in the service of common purposes. Just as activists in the same movement have a diversity of opinions and concerns, people generate a broad range of actions to support their ideas, and partisans on all sides argue about who is actually "in" or "out" of the social movement of the moment.

THE EFFECTS OF SOCIAL PROTEST MOVEMENTS

Activists, authorities, and their opponents all act as if social movements matter, but the when and how they do is a matter of considerable uncertainty and debate. Because the conditions that promote social movements also promote alternative solutions for redress, disentangling the relative effects of movements and institutional actors is no easy matter (Amenta 1998; Meyer 2005). Beyond this, the diversity of claims and tactics within a social movement, often occurring simultaneously, make it virtually impossible to tease out which group or event had what effect. Furthermore, the effects of social movements often play out over a very long time and generate consequences far beyond the imagination, much less the intentions, of activists, authorities, and opponents. Activists virtually never get *all* they demand and may not get credit for what concessions they do get; they also may produce outcomes that they do not explicitly call for but that are nonetheless of great consequence.

For heuristic purposes, we can identify distinct levels of influence that social movements can affect. Social movements challenge current public policies and sometimes they also alter governing alliances and public policy. Because movement activists aspire to change not only specific policies but also broad cultural and institutional structures, they therefore can affect far more than their explicitly articulated targets. The organizations that activists establish for a particular political struggle generally outlive that battle and continue to engage in politics, often on different issues and in different ways. Movements also change the lives of those who participate in them in ways that can radically reconstruct subsequent politics, including subsequent social protest movements. Movements build communities of struggle and communities that can sustain themselves and also change in unanticipated ways. We can see the influence of protest movements in four distinct but interdependent areas: public policy, political organizations, culture, and participants (Meyer and Whittier 1994). Each of these is important not just for its impact on the larger society but also for its direct and indirect effects on other social movements.

Public Policy

Movements generally organize and mobilize around specific policy demands ranging from ending drunk driving to toppling a government. Activists seek to represent their concerns and their claimed constituencies within mainstream political institutions, to speak for those who protest, and often to attract notice of external actors, broadening the scope of the political struggle (Schattschneider 1960). Social protest can set agendas for government, giving political life to issues otherwise ignored. It can embolden supporters within government, giving them inspiration or cover for political reforms, partly by at least implicitly promising future support for politicians who prove to be allies.

Scholarship on social movement impact on policy derives generally from the pioneering work of William Gamson (1990), who traced the political and policy outcomes of 53 challenging groups in America before World War II. Gamson identified two kinds of positive

responses—recognition as legitimate actors and policy concessions—that did not necessarily come together. Gamson identified the organizational attributes such as size, resources, and disruptiveness that seemed to come with success but didn't examine how groups achieved influence. A number of other scholars have conducted case studies of particular movements or issues, finding the ways in which social protest percolates through the political system to produce some changes.

Because public policy includes symbolic and substantive components, policymakers can make symbolic concessions to try to avoid granting the aggrieved group's substantive demands or giving it new power. Elected officials can offer combinations of rhetorical concessions or attacks, in conjunction with symbolic policy changes, to respond to or preempt political challenges (Edelman 1971). Visible appointments to high-level positions, rhetorical flourishes, and symbolic policy changes may quiet, at least momentarily, a challenging movement demanding substantive reforms. Both symbolic and substantive concessions in response to pressure from one social movement change the context in which other challengers operate. They open or close avenues of influence, augment or diminish the pressure a movement can bring to bear, or raise or lower the costs of mobilization. Thus, movements can alter the structure of political opportunities they and others face in the future.

And sometimes this influence, shrouded in apparent defeat, has longer-term consequences. One clear response to the American movement against the Vietnam War was the end of the draft, even as President Nixon publicly announced that the broad movement would have no impact on his conduct of the war. (Politicians are understandably loath to credit protests for influencing their views or policies, given the obvious risks of appearing weak, manipulated, or of encouraging others to protest.) The end of the draft, in conjunction with the domestic political fallout of the war, created a policy consensus within the military and among strategic experts that minimized large-scale American participation in extended wars for roughly 30 years. This is not what demonstrators sought in 1969, but it is hardly insignificant.

Advocacy Organizations

Strong social movements spur the creation of new advocacy groups, which generally continue even well after the peak of mobilization has passed (Minkoff 1995; Wilson 1995). NOW, for example, established in the early part of the second wave of American feminism, has continued in good and bad times for the movement, preserving a vision of feminist ideals, advocating and educating on matters of policy, and serving as a resource for subsequent mobilization campaigns. Green parties that developed in advanced industrialized countries during the early 1980s as the extension of social movements, such as the peace, feminist, community, and environmental movements,

continued to exist in most countries. Sometimes members even entered parliaments or government. They have taken on new issues and tried to compete for new constituencies, becoming a relatively stable part of the political reality in several European countries.

Sometimes organizations stick with a relatively narrow range of issues, but just as frequently, they respond to new political challenges. In the movement against the American war in Iraq, for example, Meyer and Corrigall-Brown (2005) note the presence of numerous organizations whose primary concerns are not in foreign policy or peace but instead in women's rights, civil rights, or the environment. A clear legacy of social movements is the establishment of organizations that can fight on related causes through a variety of means in the future.

Culture

Social movements struggle on a broad cultural plane where state policy is only one parameter (Fantasia 1988; Whittier 1995). Movements must draw from mainstream public discourse and symbols to recruit new activists and advance their claims, yet they must also transform those symbols to create the environment they seek. Symbols, meanings, and practices forged in the cauldron of social protest often outlive the movements that created them. The familiar peace symbol, for example, designed to support the British Campaign for Nuclear Disarmament in the 1950s, migrated to the United States during its antiwar movement, back to Europe in the 1980s, and to Asia as a rallying point for prodemocracy movements in the 1990s.

Indeed, in the absence of concrete policy successes, movements are likely to find culture a more accessible venue in which to work, building support for subsequent challenges on matters of policy. In the late 1970s and 1980s, Eastern European dissidents chose explicitly "antipolitical" strategies of participation, in a deliberate attempt to create a "civil society," that is, a set of social networks and relationships independent of the state. Publication of *samizdat* literature, production of underground theater, and appropriating Western rock music to indigenous political purposes were all important political work for democratic dissidents. This battle, in the least promising of circumstances, proved to be critical in precipitating and shaping the end of the Cold War.

Thomas Rochon (1998) contends that while the explicit political struggle takes up a large share of activist attention, it is the cultural changes that are both more likely and more lasting. Citing the example of the women's movement in the United States, Rochon notes that while activists lost in their campaign for ratification of the ERA, they effected large-scale changes in the way women were viewed in a variety of venues, including the family, the workplace, and politics. We might note that in responding to ERA advocates, opponents frequently laid out a list of all the aspects of gender equity they supported (Mansbridge 1987; Sawyers and Meyer 1999). The area of

cultural effects of movements is underdeveloped both theoretically and empirically, but it promises to be an area for important work in the future.

Participants

Social movements also affect those who participate in them, sometimes dramatically and forever. People who participate in movements step into history as actors, not simply as victims, and this transformation is not easily reversible. Movement activists forge new identities in struggle, identities that carry on beyond the scope of a particular campaign or movement. Someone who has forged a sense of self and values through collective action and tried to exercise political power through membership in a community of struggle will not readily submit to being acted on by distant authorities in the future.

Activists come to see themselves as members of a group that is differentiated from outsiders. They interpret their experiences in political terms and politicize their actions in both movement contexts and everyday life. Collective identities constructed during periods of peak mobilization endure even after protest dies down. Onetime movement participants continue to see themselves as progressive activists even as organized collective action decreases, and they make personal and political decisions in light of this identity (Taylor and Whittier 1992; Whittier 1995). Veterans of Freedom Summer, for example, became leading organizers in the peace and student movements of the 1960s, the feminist and antinuclear movements of the 1980s, and beyond (McAdam 1988). By changing the way individuals live, movements contribute to broad cultural change, but beyond that they seed mainstream politics and society with activists, organizations, and issues that animate change in the future.

In summary, movements can influence not only the terrain on which subsequent challengers struggle but also the resources available to challengers and the general atmosphere surrounding the struggle. In changing policy and the policy-making process, movements can alter the structure of political opportunity new challengers face. By producing changes in culture, movements can change the values and symbols used by both mainstream and dissident actors. They can expand the tactical repertoire available to new movements. By changing participants' lives, movements alter the personnel available for subsequent challenges.

FUTURE PROSPECTS FOR THE FIELD

Academic inquiry on social movements has advanced substantially over the past few decades through a process of oscillation, emphasizing first context, then activists, then context again. On almost parallel tracks, scholarship has also shifted over the decades from emphasizing emotions, then rationality, then emotions again. Increasingly, however, scholars have come to read—and write—across constricting paradigms, working toward synthetic approaches that adapt to the analytic problem at hand. This is a promising development, one that is likely to aid in the development of robust concepts, often organized around questions of *how* activists translate opportunities into mobilization and *how* institutional politics processes and manages the challenges of protest mobilization.

Scholars have also responded to the new movements of our time, extending the analytical frame of social movements to consider a broader geographic diversity of cases, transnational activism, fundamentalism, and terrorism. Underlying such studies is the notion that concepts and methods developed in the study of a relatively limited set of cases can be developed to cope with a broader range of phenomena. These developments make the study of social movements an especially promising, and potentially important, field of study.