

CHAPTER 8

THE OUTCOMES OF SOCIAL MOVEMENTS

Conceptualizing Outcomes

In looking at what social movements accomplish, the first decision we must make is what precisely we are investigating. In sociological terms, what is the dependent variable? “Success, of course,” you might answer. “We are interested in explaining what factors make a social movement successful.” But success turns out to be an elusive concept. Consider these points:

- It is sometimes difficult to identify the goal of a particular social movement or movement organization. Goals may be vague or very general—such as “the liberation of women” or “saving the environment.”
- Organizations and groups within a social movement, or even factions within a social movement organization, may disagree on goals, or may agree to pursue different but complementary goals. For example, in the movement to stop the Vietnam War, some groups tried to stop the army from drafting men to fight, for example by blockading draft induction centers. Other groups refused to pay their federal income taxes that would support the U.S. military effort. Freid (1994) describes a rape crisis center in which two subcultures developed among the staff and volunteers, one with a service orientation that saw the group’s purpose as aiding victims of sexual violence, and one with a political orientation that was concerned more broadly with changing the patriarchal structure of society.
- Social movement goals may change over time in response to new opportunities and obstacles.
- Take a social movement with multiple goals that achieves some, but not all, of them. Has it succeeded? Partially succeeded? Some goals may be deemed more important than others, so does it matter which goals are achieved?
- Social movements may create changes that they do not intend. Some of these may be detrimental to the beneficiary group, but they may also create unintended changes that aid the beneficiary group. For example, the Townsend Movement, which started in 1934, was unsuccessful in achieving its main goal: the implementation of the Townsend Plan, which would have provided \$200 per month for Americans age sixty or older, funded by a sales tax. Yet the movement influenced the passage in 1935 of the Social Security Act, which provided financial assistance and medical care for the elderly. The Townsend Movement failed by its own,

narrowly-defined standards of success, and yet made substantial gains for the elderly. Is this success or not?

An alternative is to broaden our focus to the *outcomes* of social movements. Outcomes is a category that includes all intended and unintended results of a social movement. For example, social movements often result in the creation of countermovements, though they do not intend to do so. Another example is the role of movement against the Vietnam War in creating the “Vietnam syndrome” of the 1980s and 1990s. As a result of popular opposition to the Vietnam War, the U.S. government became reluctant to send troops into ground combat. Many hence credit the movement against the Vietnam War with preventing the U.S. from invading Nicaragua after the successful socialist revolution there in the 1979 (Joseph 1993). By investigating outcomes, we avoid the need to pinpoint a movement’s goals, and instead can focus on various changes brought about by the movement, whether or not such changes were clearly intended by the movement.

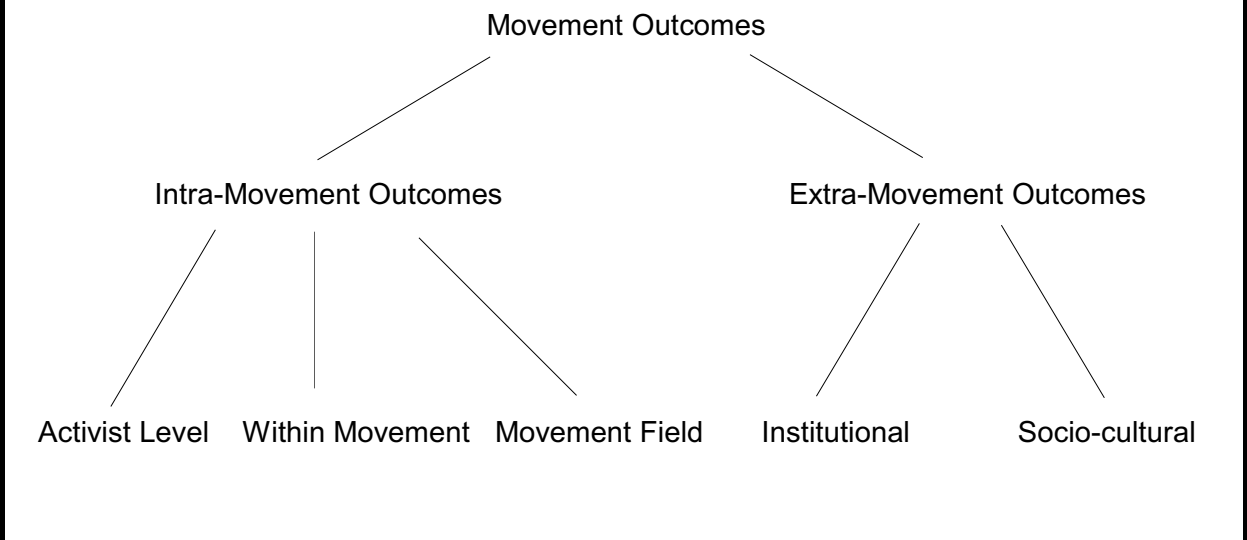
We have further work to do in figuring out what we are studying: what do we mean by outcomes? Sociologists call this process of defining one’s terms *conceptualization*—coming up with a clear, complete definition of our term. A useful step in conceptualization is to identify the different dimensions, or subparts, of what we are looking at. We can identify at least two dimensions of outcomes.

- First, in terms of *locus of change* (where it occurs), an outcome can be internal to a movement or movement field (say, changes in participants themselves) or external (such as influencing government policy or popular attitudes). Earl (2000) provides a useful typology (Figure 1). *Movement field* refers to that part of a society occupied by movements and their participants.
- A second dimension is *directness*. Direct outcomes are those that are “articulated as movement goals and reflect the movement’s primary ideological rationale” (Cress and Snow 2000: 1065). Indirect outcomes are changes that result from a movement’s influence, but are not directly intended by it. They are “less likely to be ideologically based or articulated as proximate objectives” (Cress and Snow 2000: 1065). Indirect outcomes can be judged as positive, neutral, or negative with reference to a movement’s goals.

Combining these two variables, we can create a typology of social movement outcomes, as seen in Table 2. Note that three cells in the direct outcomes column are left blank, since by our definition social movements direct their primary efforts toward the larger society, not inward toward SMO’s or their participants. Of course, in pursuit of their primary goals movements might pursue indirect outcomes, and some examples are listed in that column.

Figure 1

The Locus of Social Movement Outcomes (adapted from Earl 2000)



Types of Outcomes

Institutional Outcomes

The goal of most social movements is a change in some social institution: pressure government to create a new law; persuade business leaders to change some policy; and the like. Recall that *social institutions* are stable set of relationships, governed by agreed-upon rules, that exists to organize some area of social life. They include the government, the economy, the family, education, religion, medicine, and the mass media. Social institutions consist of organizations, groups, and individuals. Oftentimes movement activists are interested in changing a specific organization, and we include that as a form of institutional change.

When a social movement targets a social institution for change, it may be seeking either substantive changes or structural changes (Kitschelt 1986). Substantive change alters the output of an institution without affecting the structure of the institution itself, while structural changes alter the very way that the institution operates.

1. Substantive Outcomes

Access and agenda setting. This includes getting one's concerns put on the opponent's agenda through government hearings, for example, or successfully persuading influential people to press for some changes. For example, during the 1960s and 1970s the number of congressional hearings held by the U.S. government on issues pertaining to women, racial and ethnic minority groups, and the elderly

Table 1. A Typology of Social Movement Outcomes
(adapted from Earl 2000)

	Directness of Change		
	<i>direct</i>	<i>indirect</i>	
Locus of Change	<i>activist-level</i>	-----	biographical changes (such as changes in one's career path)
	<i>intra-movement</i>	-----	securing foundation grants for a social movement organization
	<i>movement field</i>	-----	African-American Civil Rights movement influenced the creation of other racial-ethnic movements (e.g. Chicano movement)
	<i>institutional</i>	a business granting higher wages to striking workers	government practice of "embedding" journalists during wartime (result of movement against the Vietnam War)
	<i>sociocultural</i>	changes in public attitudes when this is an explicit goal of the movement (ex: increased acceptance of homosexuality)	rise of cultural conservatism (anti-abortion, anti-gay) as a response to the movements of the sixties

increased greatly, in response to the social movements of the time (Baumgartner and Mahoney 2005).

Nuclear freeze mov of the 1980s succeeded in softening Reagan's negative view of the Soviet Union and his ardent support for the arms race, most probably the result of the political calculation given the widespread public support for arms control (Joseph 1993). While the Freeze did not succeed in its goal of halting the arms race, it did contribute to changes in U.S. policy. It put arms control on Reagan's agenda, pushing him to start arms control negotiations with the Soviets, which eventually resulted in a nonproliferation treaty (Joseph 1993).

New laws and policies, or changes in existing laws or policies or their implementation. Some examples include the gay rights movement's success in eliminating sodomy laws in many states; the homeless movement's goal of increasing government funding for homeless shelters; or the goal of some

pro-life SMO's of overturning Roe V. Wade, the Supreme Court decision that legalized abortion.

One-time benefits. A social movement may seek a one-time-only gain that does not alter existing policies. An environmental group whose goal is to stop strip mining in a particular area is one example.

2. Structural/Formal Gains

Inclusion in decision making. Most notably, a challenger may gain access to the decision making process of a social institution. For example, the women's suffrage movement sought the right to vote for women to enable them to participate in electing government leaders. Movements on behalf of the homeless have sought representation on city policymaking committees.

Creation of new organizations or institutions. In addition to changing the structure of existing institutions, social movements may create organizations and institutions of their own. In the 1970s, the women's movement created shelters for battered women and health clinics serving women. Territorial ethnic groups sometimes seek increased political autonomy—for example, Native Americans have at times sought to secede from the U.S. and for their own nation-states and form their own governments.

Sociocultural Outcomes

For some social movements, the goal is to change some aspect of a society's culture. Indeed, the concept of *new social movements*, as you will recall, focuses on recent social movements that have mainly addressed culture, rather than the economy or politics. In fact, even movements that focus on changing social institutions typically also attempt to change culture as a route to success.

A simple way to define *culture* is this: everything that we think, do, and have as members of a society. Hence culture includes shared values, beliefs, and attitudes, including religious beliefs; established practices, such as how we make food or conduct marriage ceremonies; and material objects, like art, architecture, and clothing.

1. Changes in Values and Beliefs

A frequent objective of social movements is to change the way people think. The gay rights movement seeks the increased acceptance of homosexuality in our society, but it also seeks legal changes like the legalization of same-sex marriage. The pro-life movement strives to persuade people that abortion is morally wrong. Even when the ultimate goal is institutional change, activists often attempt to change public opinion as an indirect means to influence power holders. Of course, changes in beliefs or values can also run counter to a social movement's interests. For example, many see the rise of religious conservatism in the U.S. since the 1980s as a reaction against the movements of the 1960s.

In some cases, social movements may produce changes in beliefs or opinions on a narrow or superficial issue. In others, deeply-rooted values may change. The nuclear freeze movement of the early 1980s succeeded in increasing the number of Americans who were concerned about nuclear war and the policies of the Reagan administration. But it probably did not succeed in changing underlying attitudes, as

evidenced by the public shift away from concern with nuclear weapons and toward economic concerns by the 1984 election (Joseph 1993).

2. Changes in Cultural Production and Practices (Earl 2004)

This includes changes in art, literature, and music, as well as language and everyday behaviors. For example, the women's movement of the 1970s gave rise to a new genre of music, women's music, as exemplified by musicians like Holly Near and Chris Williamson. Social movements of the poor in Latin America prompted the creation of Liberation Theology within the Catholic church, which calls for followers of Christ to be on the side of the poor in history. The social movements of the 1960s led to the creation of Ethnic Studies, Women's Studies, and Peace Studies programs on college campuses (Earl 2004). As a result of the civil rights movement, whites no longer call grown black men "boy," and since the women's movement, adult women are seldom referred to as "girls."

3. New Collective Identities and Communities

The formation of communities of like-minded people may be a primary or a secondary goal of a social movement. Some movements, like the Black Power movement that began in the 1960s, sought to create communities of resistance to the dominant culture. Mainstream U.S. culture denigrated blacks and their African heritage, and so central to the notion of Black Power was a celebration of the African heritage of blacks in the U.S.



A feminist bookstore in Thunder Bay, Ontario.

by adopting African dress, learning

African languages, and developing pride in their physical beauty. During the same period, Native American activists also promoted pride in their ancestry, and one result was an increased self-identification by Native Americans on the U.S. Census (Nagel 1995). Women and particularly lesbian women have developed numerous communities in U.S. cities, where one can find women's bookstores, health clinics, and newspapers, for example (Taylor and Whittier 1992).

Movement and Movement Field Outcomes

1. Creation of Sustained Organizational Structures

A common outcome of social movement activity is the creation of a lasting organization(s) that presses for change. The nuclear freeze campaign of the 1980s gave rise to the organization Freeze, which

eventually became Peace Action, a group that continues to this day to oppose the development of nuclear weapons and war. During the Chicano movement of the 1960s and 1970s, Mexican-American students formed MECHa (Movimiento Estudiantil Chicano de Aztlan), which still exists on many college campuses.

2. Creation of New Movements, or Exertion of Influence on Other Movements (through the Spread of Identities, Tactics, and Ideology)

Social movements may spawn other movements. Indeed, movements often emerge together in cycles, such as during the 1960s, and those “early risers” that emerge first influence later movements in the same cycle. Not only did the United States experience large-scale protests from students, racial minorities, and others; but this phenomenon spread to France, Mexico, and other countries (Katsiaficas 1987). Movements can influence each other in two different ways: *generative effects* or *spillover effects* (Whittier 2004). These effects sometimes result from direct contact between movements—such as when movement participants join a different movement—and sometimes from indirect contact, when a movement is simply observed by others who duplicate some aspects of it.

Generative effects. Activists within a particular social movement may “spin off” to form a new movement, and in doing so borrow information, participants, ideology, frames, or tactics from the older one (Whittier 2004). The second wave women’s movement is a case in point. It was founded in part by



Workers during the 1937 sit-down strike at the General Motors Plant in Flint, Michigan.

women in the New Left (the Civil Rights, student, and antiwar movements) who, experiencing sex discrimination both within these movements and in the larger society, decided that women needed to struggle for their own rights. They had learned skills and knowledge from their previous activist experiences. They used networks among women’s activists to recruit participants. They used many of the same tactics, like marches and sit-ins, that New Left groups had used.

Spillover effects. Movements may share a *master frame*, particularly when they are part of the same cycle of protest (see chapter 5 for an extended discussion of framing processes). Social movement participants who adopt a particular collective identity may bring that identity with them into other movements. For example, influenced by

the women's movement of the 1960s and 1970s, today many organizations in the peace and racial justice movements identify themselves as feminist. Finally, movements often influence the tactics used by subsequent movements. Typically, movements choose from a relatively limited set of tactics—a “repertoire of contention” (Tilly 1979)—that are accepted as appropriate and useful. For example, in the mid-1930s, sit-down strikes—whereby striking employees refused to leave their workplaces—spread through American factories. First used by workers at the Hormel Meatpacking Company in Austin, Minnesota, the tactic spread to the rubber industry, to auto plants, and then almost every other industry. At the height of its use, in 1937, there were 477 sit-down strikes involving 398,117 workers (Bernstein 1971). The sit-down enabled the workers to stop production until their demands were met; they were not destructive or violent; and they prevented strikebreakers from replacing the workers (Brecher 1997).

3. Creation of Countermovements

Social movements may also spur the creation of a movement by opponents. The pro-choice movement's success in legalizing abortion led to the creation of the pro-life movement. The gains of racial justice movements have resulted in the rise of white supremacist groups.

Activist-level Outcomes (Biographical Effects)

One of the most in-depth studies of the effects of social movements on participants themselves is McAdam's (1988) work on Freedom Summer. Freedom Summer was a project of the Civil Rights movement that brought northern whites, mostly students, to Mississippi for the summer of 1964 to help with voter registration drives and freedom schools in Black communities. Early in his research, McAdam discovered the existence of a set of completed applications from participants and from those who applied and were accepted but did not go (“no-shows”). McAdam interviewed subjects from the two groups twenty years later and, comparing them, was able to discover precisely how participation in Freedom Summer had affected individuals in the long term. Other studies of movement participants have confirmed McAdam's basic findings, as described below.

1. Increased Politicization

Participation in social movements tends to make people more political (aware of how power operates in society). When participants see the obstacles that ordinary people face in changing society, they may become more radical—more committed to exposing and changing the root causes of injustice. McAdam (1988) found that participants in Freedom Summer rated themselves as more radical than no-shows immediately following the summer, and this difference was still present decades later. A study comparing activists in the civil rights movement in 1961 with nonactivists sympathizers found that activists were more likely to read newspapers and magazines, to have knowledge about political issues, and to express interest in them (Rochon 1998). They also scored higher on “subjective competence” (Rochon 1998: 141)—they were more likely to say that they would take action if they were mistreated in a

white store and would take action to desegregate a school. Another study found that high school students who had more political knowledge and a stronger sense of self-efficacy were more likely to later participate in campus protests in college, and that the difference between the two groups increased as a result of the participation (Rochon 1998). Their distrust of government, trust in other people, and sense of themselves as holding strong opinions also increased relative to nonprotesters.

2. Continued or Increased Participation in Social Movements

Once someone participates in a social movement, they are more likely than others to do so again. This probably results from both the increased knowledge of and of the possibility of making change, as well as a strengthened moral commitment to improving the world. In short, participation is empowering. A study of antinuclear protesters found that in a first wave of protest, activists were motivated primarily by their feelings about nuclear power. However, in a second protest wave, they were motivated more by their prior experiences of activism (Opp 1988).

3. Increased Likelihood of Choosing Jobs with Social Value

Individuals who participate in social movements pursuing peace and justice are less likely to choose conventional jobs and career paths. They are less likely to end up in the business world and more likely to be in "helping professions" like teaching and social work (McAdam 1988).

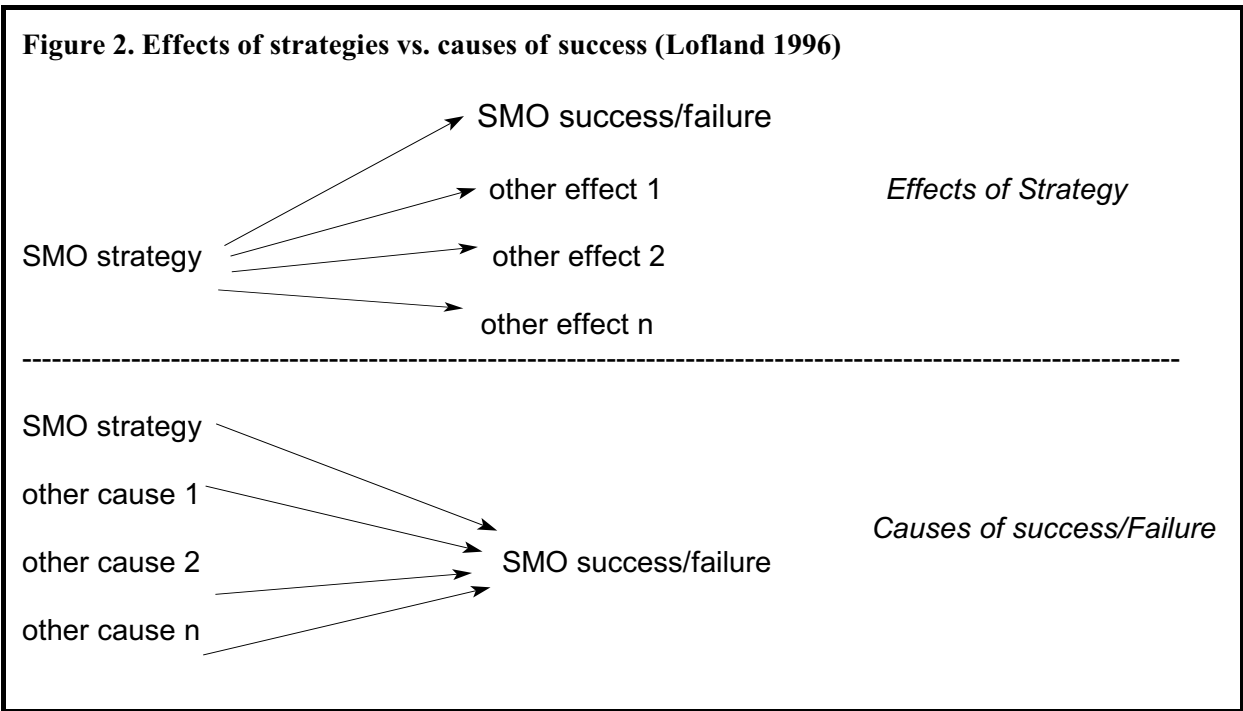
4. Decreased Likelihood of Marriage

On average, participants are more likely than nonparticipants to marry later or stay single; divorce more often; and have children later or have no children (McAdam 1989).

The Question of Causal Attribution

In addition to specifying outcomes, we are presented with a second methodological challenge: isolating a social movement's influence from that of other factors. In Figure 2, the top set of arrows illustrates that SMO strategy may have multiple effects, in addition to the ones it intends. The bottom set of arrows illustrates the possibility that some other variable besides the social movement--public opinion, a society-wide crisis, or even other movements--might have influenced the outcome in question. Recall from the previous chapter the three different models of movement effects: direct effects (when a social movement, by itself, creates change); mediated effects (when a third party--such as public opinion or political allies--intervenes between the movement and the target to affect change); and the joint-effect model (when social movements plus some other factor leads to change).

During the civil rights movement, for example, voter turnout among African-Americans in the south increased dramatically. Was the movement itself responsible? It turns out that three-fourths of the increase occurred *before* the Civil Rights Act of 1964 and the Voting Rights Act of 1965. The increase



was largely among blacks with more “black consciousness,” and who had low trust of the government and high sense of efficacy. It is likely that the civil rights movement had a “ripple effect” on them (Rochon 1998: 155).

The problem of causal attribution is compounded by the fact that authorities are typically very reluctant to admit to being swayed by social movements. In fact, when Small (1987) interviewed former government officials about how antiwar protests affected their decisions about the Vietnam War, he decided not to pose the question directly, and instead asked them what about the antiwar movement caught their attention.

Factors Affecting Outcomes

Internal Factors

1. Organizational Viability

Not surprisingly, organizations that are able to survive over time and to remain active are more likely to succeed. Cress and Snow’s (2000) study of fifteen social movement organizations operating on behalf of homeless people found that of the five organizations that were successful, all were “viable organizations”: able to survive over time (defined as staying in existence for at least one year) and active during that time (by conducting regular meetings, and planning and carrying out campaigns).

2. Organizational Unity

Gamson's *The Strategy of Social Protest* (1975) is the most cited work in social science on the outcomes of social movements. Gamson studied fifty-three social movement organizations, randomly selected from hundreds that existed in the United States from 1800 to 1945. He identified two different dimensions of success: acceptance (being recognized by the target as a legitimate representative of interests) and new advantages (gaining benefits from the target that were sought by the organization). Gamson found that 58 percent of the groups received either acceptance, new advantages, or both. Of all the groups, 43 percent experienced a formal schism, and these groups were less likely to succeed. This was confirmed by later reanalysis of his data (Mirowsky and Ross 1981).

3. Degree and Type of Organization

There is an ongoing debate among social movement scholars about what form of organization best contributes to the success of social movements. Gamson's (1975) analysis found that organizations that were more likely to succeed were centrally organized (as measured by whether a group has a dominant leader or some other centralized leadership, like a committee) and bureaucratic (as measured by the presence of written constitution or charter, the maintenance of lists of formal members, at least three levels of internal division). Other sociologists reanalyzed Gamson's data using more sophisticated techniques and found that these variables contributed to acceptance, but not to new advantages (Mirowsky and Ross 1981). This is probably because bureaucratic, centralized organizations have an identifiable leader(s) for targets to dialogue with.

The major challenge to Gamson's conclusions is Piven and Cloward's Poor People's

Movements. The authors concluded, based on their examination of the movements of the poor during the Great Depression, the civil rights movement, and the welfare rights movement, that building mass membership organizations is antithetical to the success of poor people's movements. They argued that the primary source of power available to poor people is disrupting social institutions that depend on their continued participation. Disruption does not always bring success, but when poor people are able to gain concessions from elites, it is by using disruption: strikes, sit-ins, demonstrations. However, leaders of poor people's movements often focus on getting people to join their



A march led by the Welfare Rights Organization, one of the social movement organizations studied by Piven and Cloward in their book *Poor Peoples Movements*.

organizations, rather than mobilizing people to engage in disruptive actions. They do so in part because they mistakenly believe that it is only through organization that the poor can gain concessions from elites, and in part as a way to build their own power as leaders.

The problem is that building organizations tends to reduce the disruption on which the movement's power depends. First, it diverts time and their energy into organizational tasks. (This can be illustrated by my experience working for a peace movement organization—not part of a poor people's movement, but nevertheless we had one staff member, who spent the vast majority of his time raising money for the organization, the vast majority of which went to pay his salary! It made me wonder how much benefit we were getting from having paid staff.) Second, movement leaders are induced to discourage disruption because in their efforts to find resources to build organizations, they turn toward elites. Elites provide such resources to organizations of the poor, however, only to the extent that these organizations serve to quell disruption. So, Piven and Cloward state, "it is not possible to compel concessions from elites that can be used as resources to sustain opposition organizations over time" (xxi).

Finally, there is some suggestion from the literature on social movements that different types of organizational forms may be useful and necessary at different times and for different purposes. Informal organization seems to be more effective at creating solidarity among movement activists, which is crucial as movements are starting out, and for using more disruptive tactics that can effectively bring pressure to bear on targets. On the other hand, formal organizations are more likely to receive external funding and are better positioned to retain the gains made by a movement (Jenkins and Eckert 1986; Jenkins and Halcli 1999; Haines 1984). A study of the pro-choice movement found, not surprisingly, that formalized social movement organizations—ones with consistent staffing—are more stable than informal ones, more likely to get foundation funding, and better able to take advantage of changes in the political environment (Staggenborg 1988).

4. Accountability Structures

In his study of the United Farm Workers, Ganz (2000) (see box at the end of this chapter) concluded that when leaders must answer to their constituency, they are more likely to make good strategic decisions. This accountability is maximized when decision making processes are regular (meetings are held regularly, for example); authoritative (in the sense that the decisions made lead to actions); and open (such that all movement participants can take part). In addition, leadership accountability increases when organizations rely at least in part on their own constituency for funding, instead of seeking outside sources.

5. Diversity of Leadership

A movement headed by a "leadership team" (Ganz 2000), rather than a single leader, is likely to produce better strategic decisions. Formulating strategy is a creative process, and so it is enhanced by multiple inputs. A team of leaders brings together more information and ideas, and hence deliberations can be more thorough. Both Martin Luther King, Jr. and Cesar Chavez surrounded themselves with

leadership teams, even though in the popular imagination their successes are attributed to individual genius and charisma (Morris and Staggenborg 2002). “King had...an unexcelled ability to pull men and women of diverse viewpoints together and to keep their eyes focused on the goal...King demonstrated...a rare talent for attracting and using the skills and ideas of brilliant aides and administrators” (Bennett 1970:32-33).

In Birmingham, Alabama in 1963, King and other leaders of the SCLC (Southern Christian Leadership Conference) were planning a mass disruption of the city. Their plan was to hold demonstrations and an economic boycott that would lead to mass arrests and fill the city jails. However, they were encountering difficulty mobilizing people to take part, and they debated whether to allow children to participate in such a potentially dangerous action. King left town for a speaking engagement, and while he was gone other leaders began including children in the demonstrations. Confronted with this reality, King accepted the decision upon his return—and the campaign succeeded in disrupting the city and inspiring movement activists in other places (Morris and Staggenborg 2002). As brilliant as he was, if King alone had been responsible for the planning, the campaign may well have failed.

When two or more organizations or groups work together within a movement, connections among leaders facilitate the sharing of information, forms of organization, and tactics. There are numerous examples from the civil rights movement. Hattie Kendrick was a longtime local movement leader who was crucial in recruiting young leaders and putting leaders in contact with one another (Herda-Rapp 1988).

In addition, the composition of the leadership team matters. Leadership composed of individuals with a variety of backgrounds, viewpoints, and skills is more likely to formulate effective strategies (Ganz 2000). In particular, the most effective leadership teams include both “insiders,” or indigenous leaders, and “outsiders,” who do not come from the movement’s constituency (Marx and Useem 1971; Ganz 2000). Insiders understand the history and culture of the



Members of the United Farm Workers “leadership team.” Sociologist Marshall Ganz is second from the right; Cesar Chavez is fourth from the left.

constituency group and can use this knowledge to mobilize support and choose appropriate tactics. For example, during the campaign of the United Farm Workers movement for a union contract with grape growers, Mexican and Mexican-American leaders chose to hold a crucial meeting in Our Lady of Guadalupe Church in Delano, California, the community's religious center, and scheduled it for September 16, Mexican Independence Day (Ganz 2000). Insider leaders are more apt to be trusted by their constituency. Leaders with strong ties to the constituency group are especially effective at recruiting participants and locating indigenous resources. They are apt to have a strong commitment to the movement because of their personal ties to the group.

On the other hand, outsiders bring new information and alternative viewpoints to the decision making mix. Better strategy is formulated when the leadership team can draw from a range of potential tactics, and outsiders can bring insights from their experience in other movements and organizations. They are important in linking the movement with outside sources of participants, resources, and ideas. They can be especially effective at building alliances that further the movement's goals.

6. Organizational Diversity within a Movement

The presence of different organizations with a range of ideologies and strategies optimizes a movement's chances of succeeding. In the civil rights movement, a number of different organizations played crucial roles. The SCLC (Southern Christian Leadership Conference) was the central organization for many campaigns. The NAACP (National Organization for the Advancement of Colored People) fought and won legal battles. SNCC (Student Nonviolent Coordinating Committee) brought young people into the movement who were especially willing to engage in dramatic, risky actions like sit-ins. CORE (Congress on Racial Equality) was a multiracial group that sponsored the Freedom Rides to integrate interstate transportation in the south (Morris and Clawson 2002). It is unlikely that any one of these organizations alone could have achieved what the civil rights movement as a whole was able to. In the feminist movement, the existence of two branches with different ideologies, organizational styles, and strategies—the older branch, which formed NOW (National Organization for Women), and the younger branch, which formed consciousness-raising groups and engaged in direct action—meant that diverse women could find a “home” in the movement. Research on the impact on policymakers of the movement against the Vietnam War found that different tactics were effective at different times (Small 1987).

In addition, research shows that when a social movement includes more radical in addition to more moderate groups, it is more likely to succeed. This is termed the *radical flank effect* (Haines 1988) and it has three components. First, the presence of radicals within a particular movement makes moderate groups in the movement more attractive negotiating partners to the target. The target (state officials, for example) would rather sit at the bargaining table with moderates than deal with the radicals. Second, the presence of radical groups tends to prompt an increase in financial support for groups from outsiders—again, the moderates become the preferred organization for them to support. Third, when radical groups emerge, moderate groups themselves tend to become more radical in their demands.

The experience of the NAACP is a perfect illustration of these effects. During the 1950s the NAACP was driven underground in the deep south; it was considered too radical for white power

structure to tolerate. When new, more radical civil rights groups were created in the early 1960s that used direct action, like sit-ins, to confront segregation, like SNCC and the revitalized SCLC, the NAACP suddenly looked moderate by comparison, and over the next several years contributions to the NAACP increased tenfold. In addition, the goals of the NAACP became more radical during this time, though not as radical as the other groups.

These findings are particularly interesting given the frequent calls for more unity within the peace and justice movement (broadly defined) in the United States. While collaboration among groups makes sense, the diversity of peace and justice organizations is an asset that should be maintained.

Strategic Decisions

1. Nondisplacing Goals

Groups that seek to displace the opponent—fire the boss, replace the university president, etc.—are less likely to achieve their goals. The corollary is that groups whose goals do not include replacing the opponent—for example, that seek to change a law but not replace the lawmakers—are more likely to succeed (Gamson 1975; Schumaker 1975; Mirowsky and Ross 1981). Of course, in some instances the source of an injustice is a particular individual rather than a procedure or policy, and so a social movement would logically seek to unseat them.

2. Disruptive Tactics

A number of studies have found that movements that use or threaten to use disruptive tactics are more likely to succeed than those that do not. Note that this is not the same as saying that violence succeeds. Disruptive tactics can be violent or nonviolent; the defining feature is that they upset the social order, thereby threatening the power of elites. Other scholars have used the terms “negative inducements” or “unruliness” (Gamson 1975) or “constraints” similarly. Gamson’s study found that those groups that used constraints—actions that disadvantage the target in some way—had a higher than average success rate. And, the use of nonviolent constraints was more strongly associated with success than was the use of violent constraints (Gamson 1975; Mirowsky and Ross 1981). Piven and Cloward made a major contribution to the literature by demonstrating that when movements of the poor succeed—such as the industrial workers’ movement in the 1930s and the civil rights movement of the 1960s—it is by disruption, or specifically by withholding the contributions that they normally make to institutional life in the form of work, or rent, or obeying laws.

Whether disruptive tactics contribute to success or not is likely dependent on the circumstances under which they are used. When the political environment is favorable toward a movement, disruption can be unnecessary or, at worst, counterproductive—it can waste an organization’s resources and alienate real and potential political allies (Cress and Snow 2000; Amenta et al. 1999). Cress and Snow’s (2000) study of homeless organizations in a number of cities found that those that were successful either (1) used disruption and had allies on the city council, or (2) used nondisruptive tactics and were situated in

cities that had a record of responsiveness to homelessness. Where an organization *both* had city council allies and was in a responsive city, tactics were irrelevant. Similarly, a study of 212 protests in the U.S. from 1960 to 1971 that targeted public officials found that “constraints” (disruptive actions) were more effective when third parties were not involved in the conflict or were unsupportive of the movement, and they were less effective when third parties were involved in and supported the demands of the movement or were neutral or divided regarding support of the movement but are potentially supportive (Schumaker 1978).¹

3. Tactical Innovation

But disruption’s success depends on the target’s inability to respond effectively to it. Over time, targets adapt to particular tactics, becoming better at controlling them in order to minimize disruption. For social movements whose primary power is the power to disrupt, then, tactical innovation—the periodic introduction of new tactics—is key to regaining the initiative (McAdam 1983). The civil rights movement used tactical innovation to maintain momentum. The bus boycotts, initiated in the mid-1950s, signaled the beginning of mass participation in the civil rights movement. However, after a time opponents were able to neutralize the impact of bus boycotts through legal means and extra-legal harassment of participants. The movement experienced a lull in activity until a new tactic, the sit-in, was introduced in 1960. Similarly, one result of the widespread protests of the 1960s was that town governments created a permit system for marches and demonstrations. They adapted to the protests by providing a legal channel for them, removing much of their ability to disrupt.

4. Choice of Resources to Mobilize

While material resources—money, office space, computers, and the like—can certainly help social movements to meet their goals, they are not always necessary for success. For example, civil rights organizations received money from wealthy donors and attracted support from northern whites, but only *after* they had demonstrated their mass appeal and power (Morris and Clawson 2002). Movements can compensate for a lack of material resources with committed people and a good strategy. As stated above, Piven and Cloward found that movements of the poor do not win by mobilizing material resources, but by using their powers of disruption. The homeless movements that Cress and Snow (1996) studied that were successful had in common not money, but leadership, outside support and advice, and office and meeting spaces. The United Farm Workers compensated for their lack of material resources by developing an effective strategy, which they were able to do with access to a variety of relevant

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Other research on the relationship between disruption and success provides mixed results. Studies of labor movements have found a negative association between using violence and achieving success for labor conflicts in the United States and Italy, but not in France (Giugni et al. 1999). A study of the effects of the movement against the war in Vietnam found that demonstrator violence and property destruction increased the number of pro-peace votes in Congress, but decreased the number of times that Congress voted on war-related measures (McAdam and Su 2002).

information, creative thinking, and the motivation of leaders (Ganz 2004).

5. Effective Framing

Recall that framing refers to the process of shaping one's message so that it captures the attention of and appeals to some audience. While there is much research on how social movement organizations frame their messages, there is little explanatory research on the relationship between framing and success. Cress and Snow (2000) found that all of the successful homeless organizations that they studied used clear and well-articulated diagnostic frames (which identify a problem and its cause) and prognostic frames (which specify what needs to be done to fix the problem).

External Factors

1. The Political Environment

Just as the political environment influences whether a social movement emerges in the first place, it also influences its chances of success. In their study of the United Farm Workers, Jenkins and Perrow (1977) argue that the end of the government *bracero* program made it much easier for farm workers to press their demands on growers. This program had permitted Mexican workers to enter the United States for short period to work on farms. Hence, when farm workers went on strike, growers could easily replace them with braceros, reducing the bargaining power of the UFW. (While it was illegal to do so, the law was not enforced.)The termination of the bracero program in 1964 was one factor in the UFW's success in organizing unions in the mid-1960s (Jenkins 1983).

Internal fragmentation in the opponent's group may also help a social movement succeed. During the Vietnam War, some U. S. government leaders began to question the war, which greatly increased the antiwar movement's chances of success. Another important part of the political environment is opportunities for access to the political process. In the United States, the antinuclear weapons movement was able to get antinuclear referendums on ballots in some states in 1976, which led more legislators to adopt antinuclear positions in Congress—but France and Germany has no such referendum process, and so antinuclear activists there were less successful in influencing policy (Kitschelt 1986).

2. Allies

Can social movements succeed directly, solely through their own efforts, or only indirectly, by influencing public opinion or gaining the support of powerful allies, like political officials? Evidence exists for the direct effects of movements, but it also shows that the likelihood of success is greater when a social movement has powerful allies. A study of the movement to ratify the Equal Rights Amendment in different states found that the presence of powerful allies, the strength of opponents, and public opinion all influenced success, but the movements themselves had a direct effect regardless of these other factors (Soule and Olzak 2004). At the same time, in most cases powerful allies help. The United Farm

Workers succeeded where previous efforts had failed in part because of support from a liberal coalition of religious groups, civic organizations, and government officials (Jenkins and Perrow 1977). Gamson's data also show that third party support aids movements, except movements whose goals include revolution or displacing the opponent (Mirowsky and Ross 1981).

3. Public Opinion

The mere presence of sympathy among the public may influence a movement's target, and hence contribute to the movement's success. People in positions of power are typically very concerned with their public image. Amnesty International works to free political prisoners around the world using this very principle: it organizes individuals to write letters to public officials urging them to free a particular prisoner. The hope is that faced with such negative publicity, the officials will choose to release the prisoner to save their image.

The use of nonviolent tactics may be an important factor in generating support from the public, as in the civil rights movement. In 1963, civil rights leaders in Birmingham feared that a visit to the city by Martin Luther King, Jr. would anger Bull Connor, the local mayor, and hence endanger local black activists. However, King predicted that a confrontation that led Connor to respond violently would in fact outrage the American public and force the federal government to intervene to protect civil rights workers. His strategy worked, because he was able to portray the civil rights movement as nonviolent and the white segregationists as violent.

A useful contrast is the Black Panthers, a group that did not take a principled stand against the use of violence (and advocated for the rights to use violence, at least in self defense). The Panthers never generated the public support that King did, and the government and other opponents were able to paint them as dangerous and criminal. This lack of public support enabled the FBI and local police departments to use unjust (and violent) methods to repress the Panthers, with little negative reaction from the majority white public.

4. Social Control by Opponents.

Social control refers to efforts to contain, alter, or repress a movement. It is safe to say that the average American is unaware of the extent to which the U.S. government has used illegal tactics, including violence, against social movement activists. Throughout the 1800s and early 1900s, workers' strikes and rallies were regularly attacked by federal or state government troops, often at the request of business owners, or by armed opponents who the government failed to stop. It was only in 1935 that these practices stopped, when labor unions were granted the legal right to collective bargaining.

The social movements of the 1960s were targeted by the FBI's COINTELPRO (Counterintelligence) program, described in chapter 7, which—in the words of FBI director J. Edgar Hoover—sought "to expose, disrupt, misdirect, discredit or otherwise neutralize the activities of various New Left organizations, their leadership, and adherents" *whether they were doing anything illegal or not* (emphasis mine). The majority of the program's actions were directed against the Black Panthers, but

they also targeted the American Indian Movement, SDS (Students for a Democratic Society), and others. The tactics used by COINTELPRO, and their consequences, are detailed in The COINTELPRO Papers by Churchill and Van der Wall.

Why Did the United Farm Workers Succeed?

In 1966, the United Farm Workers (UFW) succeeded in pressuring grape growers in California to sign the first union contract in the California agricultural industry. It did so where other attempts had failed. Why?

Jenkins and Perrow (1977) sought to answer this question by comparing the UFW with a similar effort twenty years earlier by the National Farm Labor Union (NFLU). In both cases, the constituency was the same (primarily Mexican-American and Filipino migrant workers); grievances were the same (low wages, difficult working conditions, and substandard living conditions); the groups used similar tactics (primarily strikes and boycotts); and the obstacles faced were similarly formidable (poverty and resignation among migrant workers, few resources, and a strong supply of farm labor that prevented strikes from succeeding). The authors concluded that two factors accounted for the UFW's success. First, unlike the NFLU, the UFW gained support from outside groups, notably labor unions and religious organizations. For example, these groups helped promote a boycott against the grape growers, convincing consumers not to buy grapes and grocery store chains not to stock them. Second, the UFW faced less repression by public authorities than had the NFLU. By the 1960s, federal laws and the attitudes of officials had changed from unfavorable toward farm workers to supportive or at least neutral. Court rulings were less often favorable to the growers, for instance, and congressional hearings were held on the living and working conditions of migrant workers.

Another useful comparison is between the UFW and a rival union, the Agricultural Workers Organizing Committee (AWOC), which competed to organize migrant workers in the 1960s. Ganz (2000) argues that the UFW succeeded where the AWOC failed because it had a more effective strategy. This was a result of its greater "strategic capacity"—defined as leaders' access to and effective use of information for strategic decision making. This difference was, in turn, due to differences in the leaders' biographies and in organizational structures. In terms of biography, UFW leaders brought a diversity of backgrounds and experiences to the group (some were Mexican-American and some were Anglo (white) clergy). In particular, Mexican-American leaders had "local knowledge" of the farm workers' lives, legitimacy as their leaders, and a personal commitment to the cause. The clergy were connected to religious and middle-class groups, who were a potential source of support; brought different perspectives to strategic decision making; and had a vocational commitment to the cause.

In terms of organization, the UFW's structure held leaders accountable to the organization's constituency. The UFW was headed by a six-member executive committee elected by the farm workers. The staff held regular, open meetings where strategy was deliberated. The UFW was funded largely by farm workers themselves, so leaders listened to them. In contrast, the AWOC was structured hierarchically, with decisions handed down from the top. This allowed for little input from farm workers themselves. The staff of AWOC were appointed by the AFL-CIO, and resources flowed from the top down, so leaders had little incentive to solicit the views of farm workers or other sympathetic groups.

Did Protesters End the Vietnam War?

That is the question that Melvin Small set out to answer in his book *Johnson, Nixon, and the Doves* (1988). Small researched the influence of the antiwar movement on policymakers during the Vietnam War by reading written documents and interviewing former officials in the Johnson and Nixon administrations.

His work was complicated by several factors. First, policymakers are reluctant to admit that their foreign policy decisions are subject to public pressure, preferring instead to maintain that they are guided solely by concern for national security. Second, human motives are complex, including the motives of public officials for choosing one particular course of action over another. Nevertheless, Small felt that his research could shed some light on what, if any, impact the antiwar movement had on these two presidents.

Small concluded that antiwar activities did influence policymakers in the Johnson and Nixon administrations. On numerous occasions, decisions about military strategy, diplomacy, speeches, and the like were influenced by antiwar events: large demonstrations, statements of opposition to the war by prominent intellectuals, letters from individuals opposing the war, and the like. For example, in September 1967, White House policymakers began planning how to react to the upcoming March on the Pentagon, which was expected to—and did—bring thousands to Washington in October. But more important was the administration's reaction afterwards. Johnson officials and military leaders were directed to give the public very optimistic accounts of the war's progress throughout the fall of 1967, which they did. However, on January 31, 1968, North Vietnam mounted a massive surprise attack on the South. After that, Americans were reluctant to believe any positive reports, and Johnson's approval rating plummeted. In March, Johnson began withdrawing troops from Vietnam.

In the summer of 1969, antiwar organizers began planning the October 15 Moratorium, a day when people across the country opposed to the war would participate in meetings, marches, and seminars, wearing black arm bands to show their support for the effort. When Nixon officials learned that about the Moratorium, they responded in several ways. They scheduled the president to speak on conservative campuses. A letter from an antiwar student, together with Nixon's reply, was made public. President Nixon himself ordered his aides to leak to the press rumors about the communist affiliations of the Moratorium's leaders. However, the Moratorium was successful in attracting widespread participation. Nixon had threatened the North Vietnamese with massive military retaliation if progress at the bargaining table did not begin by November 1. The Moratorium persuaded President Nixon that the public would not support escalating the war, and he decided not to implement Operation Duck Hook, a plan of massive attacks against the North Vietnamese.

The antiwar movement succeeded in reducing public support for the war, particularly among students and faculty at the more prestigious colleges, which peeved both Johnson and Nixon. The constant criticism from the movement clearly irritated both politicians and, Small suspects, contributed to Johnson's decision not to run for reelection in 1968.