

Introduction

From: Sidney Tarrow, *Power in Movement*
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Power and movement: two words that seldom appear together in learned or popular discourse. Yet all through history, ordinary people have erupted into the streets and exerted considerable power - if only briefly. In the last thirty years, alone, the American Civil Rights movement, the peace, environmental and feminist movements, and revolts against authoritarianism all over the world have brought masses of people into the streets demanding change. They often succeeded; but even when they failed, their movements had profound effects, and set in motion important political and international changes.

Power in movement grows when ordinary people join forces in contentious confrontation with elites, authorities and opponents. Mounting, coordinating and sustaining this interaction is the peculiar contribution of the social movement. Movements are created when political opportunities open up for social actors who usually lack them. They draw people into collective action through known repertoires of contention and by creating innovations around their margins. At their base are the social networks and cultural symbols through which social relations are organized. The denser the former and the more familiar the latter, the more likely movements are to spread and be sustained.

Triggered by the incentives created by political opportunities, combining conventional and challenging forms of action and building on social networks and cultural frames is how movements overcome the obstacles to collective action and sustain their interactions with opponents and with the state. How they do so, and the dynamics and outcomes of the protest cycles they produce, are the main subjects of this book.

There are three major puzzles in the relations between power and movement. First, although ordinary people possess the resources for collective action during many periods of history, they mainly accept their fate or rise up timidly, only to be repressed. Under what conditions does the power in movement arise?

A second question relates to the dynamics of movement. Popular power arises quickly, reaches a peak and soon evaporates or gives way to repression and

routine. Is there a common dynamic in the careers of social movements, linking their enthusiastic births to peaks of contention to their disillusioned ends?

The third question relates to movement outcomes. Do movements have an impact beyond the short-lived mobilizations that fill the evening news? The deterrents are considerable: Participants tire and defect; early protests that succeed create opportunities for others and for countermovements; elites control dissidence through reform or repression, while counterelites lead discontent off in new directions. If the impact of movements is so mediated and short lived, is the power in movement real?

THE APPROACH OF THE STUDY

These are the questions that I will address in this study. I will not attempt to present a history of the social movement. Nor will I press a particular theoretical perspective on the reader or attack others - a practice that has added more heat than light to this area of study. Instead, I will offer a broad framework for understanding the social movements, protest cycles and revolutions that began in the West and spread around the world over the past two centuries.

Too often scholars have focused on particular theories or aspects of movement to the detriment of others. An example is how the subject of revolution has been treated. As Charles Tilly observes in a recent book, "great" revolutions are usually studied as *sui generis* phenomena (1993b), which makes it impossible to say how they differ from less great ones or from rebellions, social turmoil, riots and routine contention. The systematic study of "violence," which began in the wake of the American riots of the 1960s, has been segmented from that of peaceful protest. Movement organizations have frequently been detached by scholars from the mass phenomena that are thought to produce them and from the institutional politics that surround them. Strikes and industrial conflict have produced their own academic specialty, with little attention paid to the intersections between labor insurgency and the political struggle.

The irreducible act that lies at the base of all social movements and revolutions is *contentious collective action*. Collective action takes many forms - brief or sustained, institutionalized or disruptive, humdrum or dramatic. Most of it occurs within institutions on the part of constituted groups who act in the name of goals that would hardly raise an eyebrow. It becomes contentious when it is used by people who lack regular access to institutions, act in the name of new or unaccepted claims and behave in ways that fundamentally challenge others. It produces social movements when social actors concert their actions around common claims in sustained sequences of interaction with opponents or authorities.

Contentious collective action is the basis of social movements; not because movements are always violent or extreme, but because it is the main, and often the only recourse that most people possess against better-equipped opponents.

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Although the forms of collective action differ as much as the forms of repression and social control used to combat them, contentious collective action is the common denominator among the movements that we will examine in this book. Organizers know this and use it to exploit political opportunities, create collective identities, bring people together in organizations and mobilize them against more powerful opponents.

The theory of collective action is, therefore, where we must begin. But a word of caution: Collective action IS not an abstract category that can stand outside of history and apart from politics for every kind of collective endeavor - from market relations, to interest associations, to protest movements, to peasant rebellions and revolutions.' The contentious forms of collective action that are associated with the social movement are historically and sociologically distinct. They have power because they challenge opponents, bring out solidarities and have meaning within particular population groups, situations and political cultures.

This means that, although we begin with the theory of collective action, we will not get very far before we must relate collective action to people's social networks, to their ideological discourses and to their political struggles. To the general formulations of collective action theory, we will need to add the concrete record of history and the insights of sociology and political science. In particular, bringing people together in coordinated collective action at strategic moments of history against powerful targets requires *a social solution* - what I will call the need to solve the social transaction costs of collective action. This involves mounting collective challenges, drawing on common purposes, building solidarity and sustaining collective action - the basic properties of social movements.

THE BASIC PROPERTIES OF MOVEMENTS

With the emergence of the national social movement in the eighteenth century, early theorists focused on the three facets of movement they feared the most: extremism, deprivation and violence. Nineteenth-century industrialism and the horrors of the interwar period gave new force to this persuasion. Many of the movements of the latter period - fascism, Nazism, Stalinism - fit the image of violence and extremism formed at the start of the French and Industrial Revolutions. With the exacerbation of ethnic and nationalist tensions since the fall of Communism, a revival of this approach is already visible.

But these characteristics are the polar expressions of more fundamental characteristics of movement. Extremism is an exaggerated form of the frames of meaning that are found in all social movements; deprivation is one particular source of the common purposes that all movements reflect; and violence is an exacerbation of collective challenges - seldom sustained without official sanction. Movements, I will argue, are better defined as *collective challenges by*

*people with common purposes and solidarity in sustained interaction with elites, opponents and authorities.*² This definition has four empirical properties: collective challenge, common purpose, solidarity and sustained interaction. Let us examine each of them briefly,

Collective challenge

There are many forms of collective action - from voting and interest group affiliation to bingo tournaments and football matches. But these are not the forms of action that are most characteristic of social movements. Movements mount challenges through disruptive direct action against elites, authorities, other groups or cultural codes. Most often public in nature, this disruption can also take the form of coordinated personal resistance or the collective affirmation of new values.

Collective challenges are most often marked by interrupting, obstructing, or rendering uncertain the activities of others. But particularly in repressive systems, it is sometimes signified by slogans, by forms of dress or music or by renaming familiar objects with new or different symbols. Even in liberal states, people may identify with movements by words, forms of address and private behavior that signify - and are reinforced by - their collective purpose. Such movements have been characterized as "discursive communities."³

Collective challenge is not the only kind of action we see in social movements. Movements -- especially organized ones - engage in a variety of actions. These range from providing "selective incentives" to members, to building consensus among current or prospective supporters, to lobbying and negotiating with authorities and to challenging cultural codes through new religious or personal practices. But the most characteristic actions of social movements are collective challenges. This is not because movement leaders are psychologically prone to violence, but because, in seeking to appeal to new constituencies and assert their claims, they lack the stable resources - money, organization, access to the state - that interest groups and political parties control. Without such resources, and representing new or unrepresented constituencies, movements use collective challenge to become the focal point of supporters and gain the attention of opponents and third parties.

Common purpose

Many reasons have been proposed for why people affiliate with social movements, ranging from the juvenile desire to flaunt authority all the way to the vicious instincts of the mob. While it is true that some movements are marked by a spirit of play and carnival while others reveal the grim frenzy of the mob, there is a much more common - if more prosaic - reason why **people band together in movements: to mount** common claims against opponents, authorities

or elites. This does not require us to assume that all such conflicts arise out of class interest, or that leadership has no autonomy; but only that common or overlapping interests and values are at the basis of their common actions.

Both the theory of "fun and games" and that of mob frenzy ignore the considerable risks and costs involved in acting collectively against well-armed authorities. The rebel slaves who challenged the Roman Empire risked certain death when they were defeated; the dissenters who launched the Reformation against the Catholic Church took similar risks. Nor could the black college students who sat-in at segregated lunch counters in the American South expect much fun at the hands of the thugs who awaited them with bats and verbal abuse. People do not risk their skins or sacrifice their time to social movement activities unless they think they have good reason to do so. Common purpose is that reason.

Solidarity

The most common denominator of social movements is thus interest; but interest is no more than an objective category imposed by the observer. It is participants' *recognition of* their common interests that translates the potential for movement into collective action. By mobilizing consensus, movement entrepreneurs play an important role in stimulating such consensus. But leaders can only create a social movement when they tap more deep-rooted feelings of solidarity or identity. This is almost certainly why nationalism and ethnicity - based on real or "imagined" ties - or religion -- based on common devotion - have been more reliable bases of movement organization in the past than social class.'

Is a riot or a mob a social movement? Usually not, because their participants typically lack more than temporary solidarity. But sometimes even riots reveal a common purpose or solidarity. The ghetto riots all over America in the 1960s or in Los Angeles in 1992 were not movements in themselves, but the fact that they were triggered by police abuse indicates that they arose out of a widespread sense of injustice. Rioters' attacks on others - Catholics in eighteenth-century England, Jews in 1930s Germany, Asian-Americans in Los Angeles in 1992 - show that crowds acquire an identity through attacks on an "other." Mobs, riots and spontaneous assemblies are more an indication that a movement is in the process of formation than movements themselves.

Sustaining collective action

Long before there were organized movements, there were riots, rebellions and general turbulence. It is only by sustaining collective action against antagonists that a contentious episode becomes a social movement. Common purposes, collective identities and an identifiable challenge help movements to do this. But unless they can sustain this challenge against opponents, they will either

evaporate into the kind of individualistic resentment that James Scout calls "resistance,"⁵ harden into intellectual opposition or retreat into isolation. The social movements that have left the deepest mark on history have done so because they sustained collective action against better-equipped opponents.

Yet movements are seldom under the control of a single leader or organization; how then can they sustain collective challenges in the face of personal egotism, social disorganization and state repression? This is the dilemma that has animated collective action theorists and social movement scholars over the past few decades. It will be the first problem to be addressed in the theoretical

chapter that follows. The basic argument is that changes in the political opportunity structure create incentives for collective actions. The magnitude and duration of these collective actions depend on mobilizing people through social networks and around identifiable symbols that are drawn from cultural frames of meaning.

AN OUTLINE OF THE BOOK

In the past twenty years, heavily influenced by economic thought, political scientists and sociologists have focused their analyses of social movements on what seems like a puzzle: that collective action occurs even though it is so difficult to bring about. Yet, that puzzle is a puzzle - and not a sociological law - because, in many situations and against many odds, collective action *does* occur; often on the part of people with few resources and little permanent power.

Examining the parameters of the collective action problem, and proposing how social movements "solve" it is the first task of Chapter 1. But the chapter approaches two other theoretical issues that are equally important: first, the dynamics of social movements once they have begun; and, second, the reasons why their outcomes are so varied. Although Chapter 1 outlines these theories in a general way, the evidence for them will be found in specific movements analyzed throughout the remainder of the book.

In Part I, I will show how and where the national social movement developed in the eighteenth-century West, when the resources for turning collective action into social movements could be brought together. The focus is first on what I will call, with Charles Tilly, the modern "repertoire" of collective action (1978); and then, on the changes in state and society that supported that transformation. It was when flexible, adaptable and indirect forms of collective action - what I will call the *modular* repertoire - were diffused through print, association and state building that national social movements developed. They brought together broad coalitions of supporters around general claims, using the political opportunities created by the expansion of the national state to do so. The state, I will argue, served not only as *a target* of collective claims, but increasingly as *a fulcrum* of claims against others.

Even deep-seated claims remain inert unless they are activated. In Chapter 5, I argue that the major activating factor consists of the changes in political opportunities that give rise to new waves of movements and shape their unfolding. Although particular actors interact regularly with opponents in stable cleavage structures, the rise and fall of social movements is too irregular to be explained *by such stable* cleavages. Political opportunities are both seized and expanded by social movements, turned into collective action and sustained by mobilizing structures and cultural frames.

These are not random processes. Repeated confrontations link particular social actors with antagonists through forms of collective action that become recurring routines: the strike between workers and their employers; the demonstration between protesters and opponents; the insurrection between insurgents and the state. The national social movement developed as a sustained collective challenge to elites, authorities or opponents by people with collective purposes and solidarity, or by those who claimed to represent them. The main forms of collective challenge that empower people in movement all over the world today will be analyzed in Chapter 6.

In Chapters 7 and 8, I will examine the two kinds of resources of social movements which make it possible for them to solve their coordination problem: the use of cultural and ideological frames to mobilize consensus and their structures of mobilization. In the literature on social movements, these - in the form of "ideology" versus "organization" - have often been seen as competing paradigms. Here they will be viewed as complementary solutions to the problem that movements need to solve; that is, how to mount, coordinate and sustain collective action among participants who lack more conventional resources and explicit programmatic goals.

In the final section of the book, I will turn from these analytical aspects of movements to their dynamics and outcomes. From the late eighteenth century on, once the resources for sustained collective action became available to ordinary people and to those who claimed to represent them, movements spread to entire societies, producing the periods of turbulence and re-alignment that I call "cycles of protest." As I show in Chapter 9, the importance of this change is that, once a cycle begins, the costs of collective action are lowered for other actors; new movements that arise in such contexts do not need to depend as much on internal resources as on the generalized opportunities of cycles of protest.

The theoretical importance of this change is that, in cycles, all kinds of movements develop and the causal connection between broad macro-social trends and movement emergence is much weaker than most scholars have supposed. In the presence of such general periods of turbulence, even the poor and disorganized can draw upon opportunities created by the "early risers" who trigger the cycle, and on the influential allies who step forward to take their

lead. But because structures of opportunity change so rapidly, these successes are usually brief and their outcomes sometimes tragic. This is the argument of Chapter 10.

Such periods of movement have repercussions that sometimes result in immediate repression, sometimes in reform, often in both. But in political/institutional and in personal/cultural terms, the effects of protest cycles go well beyond a movement's visible actions, both in the changes that governments initiate, and in the periods of demobilization that follow. They leave behind permanent expansions in participation, popular culture and ideology, as I will argue in Chapter 10.

This takes us to the social movements of the current period and to those of the future. In the last few decades, a wave of democratization has spread across the globe, culminating in the dramatic changes in Central and Eastern Europe in 1989. In the 1990s, a new wave of ugly movements, rooted in ethnic and nationalist claims, broke out, bringing the world to a peak of turbulence and violence that it has not known for many years. The central question raised by these waves *of* movement is: Will they eventually be absorbed and institutionalized into ordinary politics just as the strike and the demonstration were in the nineteenth century? Or have collective action and popular politics burst through the boundaries of convention and provided the bases for *a movement society* - one in which disruptive, even catastrophic, conflicts will become a regular part of life for much of the world's population?

In the concluding chapter, I will argue for a synthesis of these alternatives. Disruptive conflicts have surely broken out in the 1990s, as they always do at the ends of wars and during the collapse of empires. But just as the election campaign and the strike were absorbed into institutional politics during the nineteenth century - changing their nature irrevocably - the new forms of participation that have arisen since the 1960s may be domesticated by the end of the twentieth. The shape of the future will depend not on how violent or widespread collective action becomes, but on how it is absorbed into - and transforms -- the national state. But since the latter may, itself, be dissolving into broader transnational and supranational bodies, the social movement may follow suit. In our time, the world may be experiencing a new and far-reaching power in movement.

Collective action and social movements

The theory of collective action has been preoccupied with how individuals become convinced to act on behalf of collective goods. But this is less problematic than many collective action theorists have thought, for collective action occurs all the time. Movements *do* have a collective action problem, but it is *social*: coordinating unorganized, autonomous and dispersed populations into common and sustained action. They solve this problem by responding to political opportunities through the use of known, modular forms of collective action, by mobilizing people within social networks and through shared cultural understandings. An example drawn from recent American politics will introduce these variables.

MARCHING ON WASHINGTON

On the morning of April 25th, 1993, a march began in Washington, D.C.' Marching on Washington has become a routine form of protest in the America of the 1990s. By bus, train and private car, marchers arrive in the nation's capital, converge on the Mall and are led by an army of well-drilled parade marshals to the steps of the Lincoln Memorial. There, leaders inspire them, lead them in song and assure them that their collective presence will bear fruit. Representatives of the media take up favored positions, endorsements from absent dignitaries are read out, and members of Congress assure those present that their cause is just.

Elements of drama alternate with moments of farce and outbursts of spontaneity. Parties precede the demonstration and ritual visits to congressmen's offices follow, allowing the demonstrators to remind their representatives that their votes have weight. At day's end, warmed by the sunshine and fellowship, the marchers repair to their vehicles, assured that they have struck a blow for justice, for freedom and especially for rights.

But this march is unusual for several reasons. First, it advances a cause - the

rights of gay and lesbian Americans -- that a few decades ago would have brought few people into the streets. Now it brings what are by some estimates almost a million supporters of that cause to the nation's capital.' Second, it focuses on a particular right - that of gay men and lesbians to serve in the military - that angers conservatives and makes liberals uneasy.' Third, in their dress, their manner and their comportment, the marchers show Americans an image of their diversity: from men and women in uniform, to well-dressed yuppies, to college students, housewives and ministers of the gospel.⁴ According to an article in the *Washington Post*,- 26 April 1993, only the occasional drag queen in full regalia reminds Americans that this group is somehow "different. "

Aware of that difference, the march's organizers face a dilemma: how to put forward a set of unsettling demands for unconventional people in ways that will not make enemies of potential allies. They do so by playing down their difference before the media and the country while celebrating it in private. Like most of those who have demonstrated on this ground in the past, gay and lesbian Americans say they want no more than the rights that other Americans enjoy. Their speeches echo a pattern that is familiar since the 1960s; their songs follow the refrains of the civil rights marches of the past, and "straight" and consensual slogans flank the assertion of their right to serve in the military. No differently than most who have marched here in the past, they solve the dilemma of difference by adapting familiar routines to a radical purpose.

The march on Washington helps us to pose three basic questions of social movement theory: first, why people act collectively in face of the many reasons why they "shouldn't"; second, why they do so *when* they do; and, third, what are the *outcomes* of collective action? In this chapter I will first review how collective action theorists have posed these questions, beginning from three major marxist theorists - Marx, Lenin and Gramsci - and turning from them to the more recent choice-theoretic tradition. I will then propose a theoretical framework that begins from the social nature of collective action, and proceeds from there to the dynamics and the outcomes of movements. I will argue that movements depend on their external environments (and especially on political opportunities) to coordinate and sustain collective action. As a result, to apply usefully to social movements, the theory of collective action must be extended from individual to collective decision making: from simple microeconomic models to socially and historically embedded choices; and from single movements to the dynamics of the political struggle. This is why we will begin with structural theorists like Marx, Lenin and Gramsci who provide a firmer grasp of the collective context of movements.

MARX, LENIN AND GRAMSCI

It would not have occurred to the earliest theorists of social movements, Marx and Engels, to ask what makes individuals engage in collective action: or rather, they would have posed the question as a problem of society's structural development rather than one of individual choice. But although they paid little attention to the link between social structure and individuals, Marx and Engels were surprisingly modern in understanding the problem of collective action as one that is rooted in social structure. And Lenin and Gramsci had a clear understanding of the role of political opportunities, organization and culture in producing collective action.

Karl Marx answered the question of how individuals get involved in collective action in class terms: People will engage in collective action, he thought, when their social class is in fully developed contradiction with its antagonists. In the case of the Western proletariat, this meant when capitalism had forced it into large-scale factories where it lost the ownership of its tools but developed the resources to act collectively. Among these resources were class consciousness and unions. It was the rhythm of socialized production in the factory that would pound the proletariat into a class for itself and the unions that would give it form. I

Marx dealt summarily with a problem that has worried movement activists ever since: Why members of a group who "should" revolt often fail to do so. Like modern theorists, he was concerned with the problem that the workers' movement could not succeed unless a significant proportion of its members cooperated in collective action. But in explaining why this so often failed to happen, Marx used an unsatisfactory theory of "false" consciousness - unsatisfactory because no one could say whose consciousness was false and whose was real. He thought that class conflict, and the solidarity that would come from years of toiling side by side with other workers, would eventually solve this dilemma.

We now know that as capitalism developed, it produced divisions among the workers and institutional mechanisms that integrated them into capitalist democracy. Through nationalism and protectionism, workers often even allied with capitalists, suggesting that more than class conflict would be necessary to produce collective action on their behalf. A form of consciousness had to be created that would transcend the narrow trade union consciousness of the workers and transform it into revolutionary collective action. But without a clear-cut concept of organization and of working class culture, Marx left this problem to be solved by his successors as he lost himself in the intricacies of capitalist economics.

The organizational problem was Lenin's major preoccupation. Learning from the Western experience that workers on their own will act only on behalf of

"trade union interests," Lenin proposed the solution of an elite of professional revolutionaries (1929: 52ff.). Substituting itself for Marx's proletariat, this vanguard would act as the self-appointed guardian of the workers' "real" interests. When it succeeded in gaining power, as in Russia in 1917, it transposed the equation, substituting its own party interest for that of the working class. But in 1902 this was far in the future; to Lenin, organization seemed the solution to the collective action problem.

Lenin's organizational amendments to Marx's class theory were a response to the political opportunity structure of Czarist Russia. In superimposing an intellectual vanguard on an unsophisticated working class, he was adapting the theory to the political context of a repressive state and to the backward society it ruled - both of which he saw retarding class consciousness and inhibiting collective action.¹ The theory of the vanguard was an organizational response to a historical situation in which the working class was unable to produce a revolution on its own. But it solidified the tendency already found in European social democracy to think of the masses as needing direction, and of leaders as the source of the "consciousness" to provide it.

When Lenin's revolution failed to spread to the West, Marxists like Antonio Gramsci realized that at least in Western societies, organization was not sufficient to raise a revolution and that it would be necessary to develop the workers' own consciousness. Gramsci accepted Lenin's injunction that the revolutionary party had to be a vanguard (just as he thought Italy shared. many of Russia's social conditions), but he added to Lenin's solution two theorems: first, a fundamental task of the party was to create a historic bloc of forces around the working class (1971: 168); second, this could only occur if a cadre of "organic intellectuals" developed from within the working class to complement the "traditional" intellectuals in the party (pp. 6-23).

Both innovations turned out to hinge on a strong belief in the power of culture. For Gramsci, the movement became not only an organizational weapon - as it was for Lenin - but a "collective intellectual" whose message would be transmitted to the masses through a cadre of intermediate leaders.⁹ This would produce consensus among the workers, create the capacity for autonomous initiatives and build bridges to other classes. The process would be a long and a slow one, requiring the party to operate within the "trenches and fortifications" of bourgeois society, proselytize among nonproletarian groups and learn to deal with cultural institutions like the church.

But Gramsci's solution - as embodied in the fate of the Italian Communist party after World War II - posed a new dilemma. If the party as collective intellectual engaged a long-term dialogue between the working class and bourgeois society, what would prevent the cultural power of the latter - what Gramsci called "the common sense of capitalist society" from dominating the party, rather than vice versa? Collective action there. would be; but it might; well be on behalf of the collective interest of the bourgeoisie.

All this was in the future. For the moment, Gramsci's contribution was not only to show that the Western working class was locked in a structure of long-term strategic interaction with other classes and with the state, but that the relations between leaders and followers could not follow Lenin's bimodal model of an intellectual vanguard imposing its consciousness on the base. To Lenin's insistence on organization, Gramsci added an appreciation of the need for consensus; and, instead of his assumption that a vanguard of leaders would come from the intelligentsia, Gramsci saw the need for multiple levels of leadership and initiative.

Each of these three theorists emphasized a different element of the structural foundations of collective action: Marx wrote of the fundamental cleavages of capitalist society that created a mobilization potential; Lenin of the movement organizations that were necessary to structure it and prevent its dispersion into narrow corporate claims; and Gramsci of the cultural foundation necessary to build broad consensus around the party's goals.

The modern theory of social movements is based on all three of these elements and on one other as well: Although Marx underestimated the independent impact of politics, Lenin and Gramsci anticipated modern social movement theory in their appreciation of politics as an *interactive* process among workers, capitalists and the state. They saw that it was not primarily in the factory, but in interaction with the state that the fate of the working class movement would be decided. This was evident in both Lenin's success, which took advantage of the wartime collapse of the Czarist regime, and in Gramsci's failure, which was the result of the collapse of political opportunities in the West after the 1914-18 war.

These features of collective action - the translation of a movement's mobilization potential into action through organization, consensus mobilization and political opportunity structure - form the skeleton of contemporary social movement theory. But in place of Lenin's centralized party, we now recognize the importance of looser mobilizing structures; instead of Gramsci's collective intellectual, we focus on broader, and *less* controllable cultural frames; and for the tactical political opportunism that both theorists favored, we work from a more structural theory of political opportunities. But first, a newer strand of collective action theory must be introduced and assimilated.

INDIVIDUAL AND COLLECTIVE CHOICE

The decade of the 1960s revitalized social movements - and social movement *theory* -- in both *Europe* and the United States. A generation of scholars, many of them coming out of the movements of that decade, made the field of social movements and political protest central to the study of modern history, political science and sociology. But the theory of movements has also been affected by

intellectual trends in the academy, shifting attention from the marxists' emphasis on social class to political economists' focus on individuals seeking marginal improvement in their lives. For many scholars, the problem came to be seen as not how classes struggle and states rule, but how collective action on behalf of collective goods is even *possible* among individuals who are guided by narrow self-interest - especially when others appear ready to defend these interests for them."

The most influential student of this dilemma was the American economist Mancur Olson (1965). Although Olson acknowledged the importance of nonmaterial incentives, his theory started and finished with the individual. For Olson, the problem of collective action was aggregative: How to involve as high a proportion of a group as possible on behalf of its collective good. Only in this way could the group convince its opponents of its own strength.

In his book, *The Logic of Collective Action*, Olson posited that only a large group's important members have sufficient interest in its collective good to take on its leadership - not quite Lenin's "vanguard," but not far from it. The only exception to this rule is in very small groups in which individual and collective goods are closely associated (pp. 43 ff.).¹² The larger the group, the more people prefer to "free ride" on the efforts of the individuals whose interest in the collective good is strong enough to pursue it.¹³

To overcome this problem, would-be leaders must either impose constraints on their members or provide them with "selective incentives" to convince them that their participation is worthwhile (p. 51). Thus, the collective good of unions is to provide their members with joint goods that all the workers in a plant will enjoy whether they participate or not. And if this is so, why would anyone join the union? Only by offering the workers selective incentives like pension plans or recreational opportunities -- or by constraining them with automatic dues deductions - will the union gain their participation. For Olson, as for Lenin, the collective action problem had an organizational solution.

Students of social movements were quick to object that Olson disposed of collective action too hastily during a period of history - the 1960s - that was bursting with participation." They argued that people participate in movements not only as the result of self-interest, but because of deeply held beliefs, the desire to socialize with others and because they too understand the Olsonian dilemma." Collective action *does* take place, in large groups and small, under conditions of both high and low risk. A more fundamental question was whether social movements actually fit Olson's theory. I will argue that they do not, and that the real problem for social movements is social.

Two American sociologists, John McCarthy and Mayer Zald, thought that Olson's theory did apply to movements but saw a new solution to the collective action problem in professional movement organizations.¹⁶ Observing in the 1960s the rise of many such organizations (1973), they thought that the **greater** affluence and widespread organizational skills available in modern society pro-

vide organizers with resources with which to mobilize people. These organizers are not simply those who have a large stake in a collective good, as Olson had theorized, but professional "movement entrepreneurs" with the skills and opportunities to draw existing reservoirs of grievances into social movement organizations - what McCarthy and Zald called SMOs (1977).¹⁷

McCarthy and Zald seem not to have been worried about the fact that Olson was not primarily concerned with social movements, but with interest groups." In fact, Olson had generalized from an even narrower category - economic associations. In this realm, his version of the collective action problem clearly applied, and for three reasons. First, in economic associations, the measure of success is marginal utility, clearly defined and generally understood. Second, for such organizations, the proportion of the group that engages in collective action is crucial - for if significant portions of the members do not support their leaders, opponents will have little reason to take them seriously. Finally, such associations are formally and transparently organized; they consist of identifiable leaders attempting to mobilize formally associated members into collective action around a finite set of goals.

But none of these criteria applies theoretically to social movements." First, the reason for an individual's affiliation with a movement is not necessarily marginal utility - not even when that concept is broadened beyond its economic meaning.' Research has shown that people associate with movements for a wide spectrum of reasons: from the desire for personal advantage, to group solidarity, to principled commitment to a cause, to the desire to be part of a group. This heterogeneity of motivations makes the problem of coordination much more difficult for a social movement than for an interest group, but it also makes it possible for movements to draw on resources other than pecuniary ones to involve people in collective action."

Second, while the proportion of the members who participate in collective action is a critical measure of the strength of an economic association, movements have no certain size or clear membership and are often *informal* at the time of their public appearance. This makes Olson's criterion of proportional participation meaningless for social movements. While "bringing out" a large number of people can be an important measure of a movement's power, how *many* people need to participate depends on the "structure of the struggle" they are involved in (Fireman and Gamson 1979: 17). Indeed, for some forms of collective action, numbers are even inversely proportional to the movement's power.²²

Third, the transparent, bimodal relationship between leaders and followers that Olson saw in economic associations is absent from movements, many of which do not even have formal structures. To the extent that movements are organized, they are made up of a far more mediated and informal set of relationships among organizations, coalitions of organizations, intermediate groups, members, sympathizers and crowds. "It is misleading to equate a social

movement with any kind of single collective decision-making entity," writes sociologist Pam Oliver, "no matter how loosely structured" (1989: 4)."

The gay march on Washington in April 1993 illustrates all three of these differences. First, although some of those who attended the march had a personal interest in gaining access to the military, most did not. They participated for a variety of reasons, mostly connected with their solidarity with the gay **community**. **Second, though organizers made a major effort to bring large numbers** of people to the capital, the proportion of the gay community that turned out was irrelevant to their success or failure - indeed, no one knows how

many gay and lesbian Americans there are. Third, the gay movement is not an organization. Although we can identify a national leadership that mounted the march, like most major demonstrations in America, it was run by a coalition of disparate groups, each with its own network of affiliates, members, friends and allies and hangers-on. And as the occasional expressions of exotic behavior at the march showed, the organizers had little control over their supporters.²⁴

On the other hand, the organizers of the gay rights march *did* face a collective action problem: that of bringing together a coalition of groups, organizations and individuals they didn't control in a coordinated campaign of collective action. They had to bring them to a given place at a given time, direct their energies against an identifiable set of targets, and sustain their claims afterwards through different forms of collective action. To do all this, they needed to bring supporters to Washington from all over the country on the same day and convince them - and, through them, a larger public that proceeding down the Mall to the Lincoln Memorial was a meaningful act. They also had to convince the country that their action had a particular meaning, coordinating the efforts of scores of autonomous organizations, persuading allies, opinion groups and the media that the demonstration was important and preventing outbursts of excessive zeal. Finally, they had to follow up by lobbying members of Congress after the march was over. Their problem was not one of overcoming individual "free riders," as Olson's theory predicts; it was "social" - coordinating, sustaining and giving meaning to collective action.

THE SOCIAL IN SOCIAL MOVEMENTS

An analogy from the theory of industrial organization will help us to highlight the difference between Olson's theory and our own. In Oliver Williamson's theory of the firm, companies depend on external suppliers and producers of components, but reduce this dependency by internalizing their assets. Williamson argues that when companies become concerned over opportunistic advantage-taking on the part of controllers of key assets, they absorb the processes - the supply of components and information - and decrease the transaction costs of production and distribution.²⁵ Some transaction costs - like the costs of regulation - can never be absorbed, but the internalization of contracts mini

makes the costs of exchange. The result is to produce large-scale industrial units whose size and structure are determined by the technical criteria of control over assets.

But not all firms can, or even wish to internalize their assets, and there are alternatives to solving the transaction cost problem in this way. For example, as firms grow, they become unwieldy and insensitive to their environments and lose internal control. An alternative to internalization is for small-scale firms that are loosely linked in producer associations to cooperate in acquiring supplies and information and distributing their products. Building on existing cultural understandings and social networks, they and their competitor/colleagues make what Hardin would call "contracts by convention" (1982: ch. 11). In some cases, as in the vertical fragmentation of Japanese firms studied by Ronald Dore (1986), and in the small-scale sector of the "Third Italy" (Trigilia 1986), they gain in efficiency over large consolidated units by depending on the local trust and social networks that large-scale industrial monoliths lack. As Trigilia writes of the Italian small-scale sector:

local institutional resources have influenced entrepreneurial capacity and cooperation among, the actors, making it possible to reduce the transaction costs both between firms and between managers and workers. (1986: 142)

Social movements - not being groups and lacking compulsory coordination - are seldom in a position to solve their collective action problem through internalization. (In Chapter 8, I will even argue that when this has been tried, it has had *negative* consequences for the movements which tried it.) Like the small-scale producers studied by Trigilia, they draw upon external resources - opportunities, conventions, understandings and social networks - to coordinate and sustain collective action. When they succeed, even resource-poor actors can mount and sustain collective action against powerful opponents.

The most important opportunities are changes in the structure of political opportunity. The most important conventions relate to the forms of collective action that movements employ. Their major external resources are the social networks in which collective action occurs and the cultural and ideological symbols that frame it. Together, opportunities, repertoires, networks and frames are the materials for the construction of movement. Let us begin with the structure of political opportunity.

Political opportunity structure

The main argument of this study is that people join in social movements in response to political opportunities and then, through collective action, create new ones. As a result, the "when" of social movement mobilization - when Political opportunities are opening up - goes a long way towards explaining its **44** why." It also helps us to understand why movements do not appear only in

direct response to the level of supporters' grievances. For if it is political opportunities that translate the potential for movement into mobilization, then even groups with mild grievances and few internal resources may appear in movement, while those with deep grievances and dense resources - but lacking opportunities may not. The concept of political opportunity structure will also help us to explain how movements are diffused; how collective action is communicated and new networks are formed from one social group to another as opportunities are seized and created.

By political opportunity structure, I refer to consistent - but not necessarily formal; permanent or national - dimensions of the political environment which either encourage or discourage people from using collective action. The concept of political opportunity emphasizes resources *external* to the group - unlike money or power - that can be taken advantage of even by weak or disorganized challengers. Social movements form when ordinary citizens, sometimes encouraged by leaders, respond to changes in opportunities that lower the costs of collective action, reveal potential allies and show where elites and authorities are vulnerable.

The most salient changes in opportunity structure result from the opening up of access to power, from shifts in ruling alignments, from the availability of influential allies and from cleavages within and among elites as I will argue in Chapters 4 and 5. State structures create stable opportunities, but it is changing opportunities within states that provide the openings that resource-poor actors can use to create new movements.

How these aspects of political opportunity structure affect the mobilization of a movement could be seen in the march on Washington in April 1993. An electoral realignment had just occurred: from a Republican government favoring the religious right and the muscular military to a new Democratic president. The latter in an early campaign promise had promised to end the ban on gay men and lesbians in the military. There was an evident split within the political elite on the broad issue of "family values" which gave the National Gay and Lesbian Task Force the opportunity to gain policy advantage. And it found influential allies in the women's movement, among civil rights groups and even in Congress. Politics opened the gates of opportunity.

Contention by convention

Anthropologist David Kertzer writes that general knowledge of particular routines in a society's history helps movements to overcome their deficits in resources and communication (1988: 104ff.). No less than in the case of religious rituals or civic celebrations, notes Kertzer, collective action is not born out of organizers' heads but is culturally inscribed and communicated. The learned conventions of collective action are part of a society's public culture.²⁶

Particular groups have a particular history - and memory - of collective

action. Workers know how to strike because generations of workers have struck before them; Parisians build barricades because barricades are inscribed in the history of Parisian contention; peasants seize the land carrying the symbols that their fathers and grandfathers used in the past. Political scientists Stuart Hill and Donald Rothchild put it this way:

Based on past periods of conflict with a particular group(s) or the government, individuals construct a prototype of a protest or riot that describes what to do in particular circumstances as well as explaining a rationale for this action. (1992: 192)

There are more general conventions of collective action that I will call, with Charles Tilly, the "repertoire of contention." Tilly observes that people cannot employ routines of collective action of which they are ignorant; each society has a stock of familiar forms of action that are known by both potential challengers and their opponents - and which become habitual aspects of their interaction. If we accept the assumption that individuals have available knowledge of the history and previous outcomes of the forms of collective action in their societies, then we can see that leaders propose - and followers respond to more than the abstraction of "collective action." They are drawn as well to a known repertoire of particular *forms* of collective action.

In the past, most forms of collective action were closely linked to particular groups and situations of conflict: the grain seizure, the ritual shaming or *charivari*, the anti-seignorial riot. But sometime in the late eighteenth century, a sea change occurred. Assisted by the widening diffusion of information through the print media and the knowledge generated by movement networks and associations, the same collective action routines began to be employed across wide territories, broad social sectors and for different kinds of issues - what I will call the *modular* repertoire. As I will show in Chapter 2, the petition, the strike, the demonstration, the barricade and the urban insurrection became learned responses applied in a variety of settings, providing conventions that assisted movements to bring together even very large and disparate groups.

Because movements seldom possess either selective incentives or constraints over followers, leadership has a creative function in collective action that more institutionalized groups lack. Leaders invent, adapt and combine various forms of collective action to stimulate support from people who might otherwise stay home. Albert Hirschman had something like this in mind when he complained that Olson regarded collective action *only* as a cost - when to many it is a benefit (1982: 82-91). For people whose lives are mired in drudgery and desperation, the offer of an exciting, risky and possibly beneficial campaign of collective action may be a gain. Leaders offer forms of collective action that are inherited or rare, habitual or unfamiliar, solitary or part of concerted campaigns. They link them to themes that are either inscribed in the culture or invented on the spot, or - more commonly - blend elements of convention with new frames of meaning. Protest is a resource, according to political scientist Michael Lipsky

(1968), and the forms of collective action that movements choose are a corrective incentive to mobilization.

But there is a dilemma in the dependence of movements on collective action to communicate their claims and to link leaders and followers: On the one hand, the demonstration of numerical strength and solidarity can convince participants that they are stronger than they really are; on the other hand, dependence on the conventional repertoire creates certainty and even boredom about the results of a demonstration.

The result of the first problem is that - in exaggerating their strength - movement activists may force confrontations with authorities that they are almost sure to lose and that alienate possible supporters. The result of the second is that - in a demonstration-sated society - no one will listen to a movement because half-a-million people march down a boulevard. One result of this lack of impact is that some militants turn towards more routine forms of political activities, while others are tempted by more extreme forms of collective action, violence and symbolism to draw attention to themselves and radicalize confrontations with authorities. The result is to bring about the factional splits that are endemic to movements and to speed their decline.

The organizers of the gay rights march knew about the conventions of collective action when they marched on Washington. Had they invited the gay community to no more than a pleasant walk down a green sward towards a pile of marble, they would have walked alone. But marches on Washington, like Parisian barricades, British petitions and Chinese political theater, have a long and symbol-rich history. For a generation of Americans, they are associated with the stirring days of the Civil Rights movement, with Martin Luther King's "I have a Dream" speech, and with their own youth. Using the conventions of collective action in America helped the organizers to solve the coordination problem of collective action.

But these organizers also suffered from the dilemma of collective action. On the one hand, they were unable to control the minority of their supporters whose strategy was to physically demonstrate their "difference" - in some cases by marching seminude, in others by cross-dressing - thereby providing the movement's opponents with rare footage to support their anti-gay and lesbian ideologies. On the other hand, the ability to bring out almost one million people led the militants in the movement to exaggerate their power. For once the marchers went home, the processes of ordinary politics took over.

These aftereffects of collective action tell us that single campaigns are not social movements. Unless a movement sustains its interaction with opponents, allies and authorities, it is quickly discounted and easily repressed. As we shall see in the next chapter, for centuries, collective action arose among peasants, Protestants, taxpayers, householders and consumers without producing sustained interaction with authorities or elites. Today as well, violent, passionate collective action often erupts, only to be followed by dispersion and disillusionment.

Why is this the case? If movements were interest groups, with selective incentives to distribute and constraints to apply, we would have our answer: Movements succeed when they are well organized. But movements are not interest groups and - as we have seen - they often appear in the absence of well-defined organizations or leaders. The question thus becomes: Once opportunities appear, how is collective action diffused, coordinated and sustained?

Mobilizing structures

The answer begins with the social: Although it is individuals who decide, whether or not to take up collective action, it is in their face-to-face groups, their social networks and their institutions that collective action is most often activated and sustained. This has been made clear through recent research both in the laboratory and in the real world of movement mobilization. Olson had focused on individuals, but by the early 1980s, scholars were finding that **group** processes transform the potential for collective action into movement participation. For example, sociologist Doug McAdam's work on the Freedom Summer campaign showed that - far more than their social background or ideologies - the social networks in which Freedom Summer applicants were embedded played a key role in determining who would participate and who would not (1986; 1988). At the same time, European scholars like Hanspeter Kries (1988) were finding that movement subcultures were the reservoirs in which collective action took shape. This dovetailed with what sociologist Alberto Melucci (1989) was learning about the role of movement networks in defining the collective identity of the movements he studied in Italy. Similarly, historians like Maurice Agulhon and Ted Margadant were finding that the sociability of traditional communities could serve as an incubator for movement mobilization.²⁸

Experimental researchers were also learning about the importance of social incentives to cooperation. In an ingenious piece of research, William Gamson and his collaborators showed that a supportive group environment was essential to triggering individuals' willingness to speak out against unjust authority - authority that they might well tolerate if they faced it on their own (Gamson,

Fireman, and Rytina 1982). Similarly, when Robyn Dawes and his associates carried out a series of experiments on collective choice, they found that neither egoistic motives nor internalized norms were as powerful in producing collective action as "the parochial one of contributing to one's group of fellow humans" (Dawes, Van de Kragt, and Orbell 1988: 96).²⁹

Institutions are particularly economical "host" settings in which movements

can germinate. This was particularly true in estate societies like prerevolutionary France, where the provincial *parlements* provided institutional space where liberal ideas could be aired (Egret 1977). But it is also true today. In America, sociologist Aldon Morris showed that the origins of the Civil Rights movement were bound up with the role of the black churches (1984). In Italy and Latin America, the Catholic Church was an unwitting accomplice in the formation of networks of "base" communities (Levine 1990; Tarrow 1988).

The role of social networks and institutions in stimulating movement participation challenges Olson's pessimistic conclusion that large groups will not support collective action for collective goods. For when we look at the morphology of movements, it becomes clear that they are only "large" in a nominal sense. They are really much more like an interlocking network of small groups, social networks and the connections between them.³⁰ Collective action may arise only among the best endowed or most courageous of these groups, but the connections between them affects the likelihood that one actor's action will incite another. As Gerald Marwell and Pam Oliver put it, "Olson's 'large group' problem is often resolved by a 'small group' solution" (1993: 54).³¹ And since a movement is really a congeries of social networks loosely linked to one another, it may survive when an arithmetical "large group" would not.

The importance of this finding becomes clear when we study the morphology of demonstrations like the gay march on Washington. As in most major demonstrations today, few people came to Washington alone. They participated as members of friendship networks, interest groups, local branches of movement organizations and groups of professional colleagues.³² The mobilization of preexisting social networks lowers the social transaction costs of mounting demonstrations, and holds participants together even after the enthusiasm of the peak of confrontation is over. In human terms, this is what makes possible the transformation of episodic collective action into social movements.

Consensus mobilization

But as Trigilia discovered in the small-firm sector of Central Italy, coordination depends not only on structural features of society like social networks and institutions, but on the trust and cooperation that are generated among participants by shared understandings; or, to use a broader category, on the collective action *frames* that justify, dignify and animate collective action; Ideology, as David Apter wrote in his classic essay, *Ideology and Discontent*, *dignifies* discontent, identifies a target for grievances and forms an umbrella over the discrete grievances of overlapping groups (ch. 1).

In recent years, students of movements have begun to use technical terms like cognitive frames, ideological packages and cultural discourses to describe the shared meanings that inspire people to collective action.³³ Whatever the terminology, rather than regarding ideology as either a superimposed intellectual

category or as the automatic result of grievances, these scholars agree in seeing that movements shape grievances into broader claims in a process of purposive "framing work" (Snow and Benford 1988).

But while movement organizers actively engage in framing work, not all framing takes place under their auspices. In addition to building on inherited cultural understandings, they must compete with the framing that goes on all the time through the media which transmit messages that movements must attempt to shape and influence. As sociologist Todd Gitlin found, much of the communication that helped the American New Left to develop passed through the medium of the media and took the place of what would have had to be organizational efforts in earlier periods of history (1980). Just as movements build on existing social networks, they use the external resources of the media to try to mobilize a following. But against the inherent power of the media to shape perceptions, movements possess little cultural power.

The organizers of the April 1993 march on Washington paid the price for this weakness. Despite the organizers' efforts to project a conventional image, according to the *Washington Post*, 26 April 1993, some of the media went out of its way to photograph men dressed up in women's clothes and lesbians marching bare breasted. As Gramsci knew, consensus mobilization comes up against the cultural power of capitalist society - especially of the kind that requires no conscious manipulation but results from the ordinary business of the media and the state.

To summarize what will have to be shown in detail in later chapters: The collective action problem is social, not individual. Movements are produced when political opportunities broaden, when they demonstrate the existence of allies and when they reveal the vulnerability of opponents. By mounting collective-actions, organizers become focal points that transform external opportunities, conventions and resources into movements. Repertoires of contention, social networks and cultural frames lower the costs of bringing people together in collective action, creating a broader and more widely diffused dynamic of movement.

THE DYNAMICS OF MOVEMENT

The power to trigger sequences of collective action is not the same as the power to control or sustain them. This dilemma has both an internal and an external dimension. Internally, a good part of the power of movements comes from the fact that they activate people over whom they have no control. This power is a virtue because it allows movements to mount collective actions without possessing the resources that would be necessary to internalize a support base. But the autonomy of their supporters also disperses the movement's power, encourages factionalism and leaves it open to defection, competition and repression.

Externally, movements are affected by the fact that the same political opportunities that have created them, and which diffuse their influence, also produce others - either complementary, competing or hostile. Particularly if collective action succeeds, these opportunities produce broader movement *cycles* which spread from movement activists to ordinary interest groups and citizens and, inevitably, bring in the state. As a result of this dynamic of movement diffusion and creation, movements succeed or fail as the result of forces outside their control. This takes us to the concept of the protest cycle.

Cycles of protest

As opportunities widen and information spreads about the susceptibility of a political system to challenge, not only activists, but ordinary people test the limits of social control. Clashes between early challengers and authorities reveal the weak points of the latter and the strengths of the former, enabling even timid social actors to align themselves on one side or another. Once triggered by a situation of generally widening political opportunities, information cascades outward and political learning accelerates. As Hill and Rothchild write,

As protests and riots erupt among groups that have long histories of conflict, they stimulate other citizens in similar circumstances to reflect more often on their own background of grievance and mass action. (p. 193)

During such periods, the opportunities created by early risers provide incentives for new movement organizations to form. Even conventional interest groups are tempted by unconventional collective action. Alliances are made - often across the boundary between challengers and members of the polity (Tilly 1978: ch. 2). New forms of collective action are experimented with and diffused. A dense and interactive "social movement sector" appears in which organizations compete and cooperate (Garner and Zald 1985). Movement organizations fight for the support of what may, at some point, turn out to be a declining base of support. The results of this competition are radicalization and outbidding, leading to violence, defection and increased repression.

The process of diffusion in protest cycles is not merely one of "contagion" although a good deal of such contagion occurs. It also results when groups make gains that invite others to seek similar outcomes: when someone else's ox is gored by demands made by insurgent groups; and when the predominance of an organization or institution is threatened and it responds by adopting contentious collective action. For example, after its decline under the Bush administration in Washington, the fundamentalist Christian Right in America was given a second chance by the controversy about gay men and lesbians in the military.

As the cycle widens, movements create opportunities for elites and opposition groups, too. Alliances form between participants and challengers and oppositional

elites make demands for changes that would have seemed foolhardy earlier. Governmental forces respond either with reform, repression or a combination of the two. The widening logic of collective action leads to outcomes in the sphere of politics, where the movements that began the cycle can have less and less influence over its outcomes.

At the extreme end of the spectrum, cycles of protest give rise to revolutions. Revolutions are not a single form of collective action; nor are they wholly made up of popular collective action. As in the movement cycles to which they are related, collective action in revolutions forces other groups and institutions to take part, providing the bases and cognitive frameworks for new social movements, unhinging old institutions and the networks that surround them- and creating new ones out of the forms of collective action with which insurgent groups begin the process.

The difference between movement cycles and revolutions is that, in the latter, multiple centers of sovereignty are created, turning the conflict between challengers and members of the policy into a struggle for power (Tilly 1933b). This difference - which is substantial - has led to an entire industry of research on "great" revolutions, which are usually compared only to one another. This specialization has squandered the possibility of comparing revolutions to lesser conflagrations, making it impossible to isolate which factors in the dynamic of a protest cycle lead it down the path to revolution and which ones lead it to collapse.

Outcomes of movement

These arguments suggest that it will not be fruitful to examine the outcomes of social movements in a direct way. Decisions to take collective action usually occur in social networks in response to political opportunities, creating incentives and opportunities for others. Both challenge and response are nested in a complex social and policy system in which the interests and actions of other participants come into play, and traditions and experiences of contention and conflict become the resources of both challengers and their opponents. Particularly in general cycles of protest, policy elites respond, not to the claims of any individual group or movement, but to the degree of turbulence and to demands made by elites and opinion groups that may not correspond to the demands of those they claim to represent.

From the point of view of the outcomes of social movements, the important point is that, although movements almost always conceive of themselves as outside of and opposed to institutions, collective action inserts them into complex policy networks, and, thus, within the reach of the state. If nothing else, movements enunciate demands in terms of frames of meaning that are comprehensible to a wider society; they use forms of collective action drawn

from an existing repertoire; and, they develop types of organizations that mimic the organizations they oppose.

Thus, we can begin to study collective action as a result of individual decisions made in an organizational framework, but we quickly arrive at the more complex and less tractable networks of politics. It is through the political opportunities seized and created by protesters, movements and allies that major cycles of protest and revolution begin. They, in turn, create opportunities for elites and counterelites, and action that has begun in the streets is resolved in the halls of government or by the bayonets of the army. Movements - and particularly the waves of movement that are the main catalysts of social change - are part of national struggles for power."

This interpenetration of movements, institutions and political processes could be seen in the outcomes of the April 1993 march on Washington. After a month of detailed wrangling among lobbyists, congressmen and the military, Massachusetts Congressman Barney Frank called a press conference to propose a compromise. Gay men and lesbians should be able to serve freely in any branch of the military, he argued, provided they suppress their sexual preferences while on duty. According to the *New York Times*, 19 May 1993, when Frank was attacked by gay activists for caving in on so central an issue as lifting the ban completely, he answered: "We don't have the votes for that in Congress. "

Dismayed gay activists condemned Frank for being a part of the system they abhorred. But it was the *movement* that had entered the system's logic by organizing a campaign that employed a standard repertoire of collective action, repressed its difference, built a coalition based on a network of organizations and on broadly accepted cultural understandings and linked its claims to an ongoing debate in Congress and in the country. In fact, as Congressman Frank pointed out, the march did not fail because its leaders played by the rules of Washington politics, but because they played the game badly. For when it came to the crucial but boring work of using their electoral muscle, too few demonstrators showed up in their representatives' offices.

The theoretical message of this story is that, because movements solve their transaction cost problem through external resources, it is far easier for them to mount collective action than to sustain it - especially when the terrain of the contest shifts from the streets to the halls of politics. As Frank observed, bringing almost a million demonstrators to Washington was easier to accomplish than convincing them to stay in town and petition their representatives when the march was over.

The outcome of the gay march also illustrates how easily movements create, political opportunities for others. For despite their discipline and restraint, the, movement's organizers could not counter the negative images with which the media and some political commentators chose to frame it. In the wake of the

demonstration, right wing and veterans' groups mobilized to lobby Congress against gay access to the military. Under these pressures, even President Clinton, his own draft history a source of sensitivity, defected from the full support he had offered during the 1992 campaign and worked out a compromise with the military. And the religious Right had a field day claiming that a gay assault on America's religious values was underway.

The import of this story - as of this entire chapter - is that we can begin our study of social movements with the determinants of individual collective action. But because the collective action problem is not that of free riders, but of the coordination of collective action necessary to solve movements' transaction cost problem, we must turn to the opportunity structures that create incentives for movements to form; to the repertoire of collective action they use, to the social networks on which they are based and to the cultural frames around which their supporters are mobilized. These factors make the study of social movements specific, complex and historically rooted.

Both the complexity and the historical specificity of movements will best be understood if we first turn to the development of the national social movement. **In** the next three chapters, basing the account on information mainly drawn from Britain, France and the United States, I will trace the development of movements at the intersection between three broad sociopolitical processes: the development of modular forms of collective action; the growth of social networks and national communications media; and the consolidation of the political opportunity structure of the modern state.