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Chapter 1

Identities, Grievances, and New Social Movements

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In the last two decades, the emergence of new forms of collective action in advanced industrial societies stimulated a provocative and innovative reconceptualization of the meaning of social movements. Its relevance has been highlighted by the process of delegitimization of major political parties in Europe at the end of the 1980s, as shown in recent electoral results that have demonstrated considerable support for new or nontraditional parties in Germany, Austria, Italy, and France. In both Europe and North America, movements have arisen that stretch the explanatory capacities of older theoretical perspectives. Peace movements, student movements, the anti–nuclear energy protests, minority nationalism, gay rights, women's rights, animal rights, alternative medicine, fundamentalist religious movements, and New Age and ecology movements are but a sampling of the phenomena that have engaged the puzzled attention of sociologists, historians, and political scientists. What is significant for sociologists in such developments is the inability of these movements to be clearly understood within the European or American traditions of analysis. They constitute the anomalies of Kuhnian "normal science."

For much of this century sociological studies of social movements have been dominated first by theories of ideology and later by theories of organization and rationality. Especially in Western Europe, but also in the United States, sociologists have focused on the systems of ideas that movements have espoused. These have often been described in general terms, such as socialism, capitalism, conservatism, communism, fascism. The problem of the analyst has often been that of understanding the economic or class base of the movement or at least some set of discrete interests and sentiments, such as social status, that characterize a group in the social structure. The movement could then be seen as a response

to a felt sense of injustice that the ideology specified and that provided the basis for mobilization. Partisanship and mobilization involved a commitment to the ideas and goals of the movement and its program.

The basic problem of many analysts was to understand the process of movement formation by analysis of the social structure that gave rise to the ideology and the problems to which it was addressed. The focus was directed toward groups that occupied specific places in the social structure from which derived objective interests and demands. The nineteenth-century emphasis on labor and capital fit well into this general paradigm, from which it was also derived. Labor movements and the rise of new political parties have long been the ideal-typical images of social movements and mobilization; through them, the revolutionary actions of communism and fascism were further examined.

Marxist-oriented scholars, as well as some others, have emphasized the class origins and interests of movements and the ideological programs accompanying them. This emphasis on elements of ideology, commitment, and partisanship led to the dominance of ideas as ideologies in understanding the emergence of social movements and collective action. It furthered a focus on the strains and conflicts in social structure as the sources of movement formation, dissent, and protest activity. What it ignored was the importance of organization and the consequences of organizing into group associations. It assumed that the existence of potential conflicts and strains would automatically generate associations of people to correct them.

An interest in the organizational aspects of movements tapped an existing vein of theoretical and empirical interests. Since Max Weber and Ernst Troeltsch there had been a keen interest in charisma and routinization through the functional and strategic considerations of organizational expansion. A series of studies of religious organizations focused on the pathos associated with loss of an original mission as sects became churches. Others, influenced by Weber's writings on bureaucratic organization, have emphasized the internal changes within the movement as an organization. In more recent years, guided in part by conceptions of rational choice, sociologists have gone well beyond Weberian insights into a focus on how collective action depended on the ability

of associations to mobilize resources and to conduct the organization on the basis of planned and rational action.

As a corrective to the dominance of ideas and structural strain in the older theories, the resource mobilization perspective was a welcome addition and substitution. Sociologists, especially Charles Tilly and John McCarthy and Mayer Zald, pointed out that there was always strain in the society and that mobilization required both resources and a rational orientation to action. The actor in movements and in protest action was not under the sway of sentiments, emotions, and ideologies that guided his or her action, but rather should be understood in terms of the logic of costs and benefits as well as opportunities for action. When dealing with existent organized groups, as in labor unions or in the civil rights movement, the emphasis on organization could ignore the already existing ideologies. By treating the activities of collective actors as tactics and strategy, the analyst could examine movements and countermovements as engaged in a rational game to achieve specific interests, much like pluralist competition among interest groups in political analysis.

This broad canvas, theoretically spanning finer conceptual and empirical issues that have been debated for more than a century, nevertheless constitutes the painted backdrop for two fundamental questions about new social movements. Why did they create a theoretical problem for the sociologist? And what was lacking in either of the general perspectives outlined above? Such movements had certainly occurred in the past. Earlier this century, witness the Young Movements of Europe (Young Germany, Young Italy, etc.) and the temperance movements in the United States or suffrage movements and student movements on both sides of the Atlantic. In many ways, the student movements of the 1960s, by raising issues that were more than just "problems of interpretation," heralded the first challenges to these classic paradigms (Flacks 1967; Laraña 1982; Katsiaficas 1987).

The concept "new social movements" is a double-edged sword. On one side, it has contributed to the knowledge of contemporary movements by focusing attention to the meaning of morphological changes in their structure and action and by relating those changes with structural transformations in society as a whole. These changes are the source of these movements' "novelty" when compared with the model of collective action based in

class conflict that prevailed in Europe since the industrial revolution (Melucci 1989, see also Chapter 5). On the other side, there is a tendency to "ontologize" new social movements (Melucci 1989). This means using the term broadly, as if it captures the "essence" of all new forms of collective action. There is also a tendency to give the concept more explanatory power than is empirically warranted, which no doubt derives from its popularization. The concept, however, refers to an approach rather than a theory; it is not a set of general propositions that have been verified empirically but just an attempt to identify certain common characteristics in contemporary social movements and develop analytical tools to study them (Melucci 1989; Laraña 1993b). The bundle of new social movements mentioned earlier were difficult to conceptualize with either the imagery of the ideological movements of the past or the rationally organized interest group.

Conceived as such, the analysis of new social movements (NSMs) can be advanced by cross-cultural research and by contrasting them with movements of the past that originated in class conflict. To this end, a good starting place is the specification of the fundamental characteristics of NSMs. By no means do all current movements display the following characteristics of new social movements, nor can all current movements be designated new. In many cases, their appearance among current movements leads us to conceptualize them along dimensions of differences from earlier cases of collective action and social movements.

First, NSMs do not bear a clear relation to structural roles of the participants. There is a tendency for the social base of new social movements to transcend class structure. The background of participants find their most frequent structural roots in rather diffuse social statuses such as youth, gender, sexual orientation, or professions that do not correspond with structural explanations (Klandermans and Oegema 1987). This has been striking in two especially strong movements: the Greens in Europe and the ecological movement in America. It is evident also in such other movements as the anti–nuclear energy movement in Europe and America or the animal and children's rights movements in the United States.

Second, the ideological characteristics of NSMs stand in sharp contrast to the working-class movement and to the Marxist

conception of ideology as a unifying and totalizing element for collective action. Especially in Europe but also in the United States, movements were characteristically perceived in accordance with overarching ideologies: conservative or liberal; right or left; capitalist or socialist. Marxist thought, always more dominant in Europe than in America, provided the paradigm for perceptions of action, either bourgeois or proletarian. The new social movements are more difficult to characterize in such terms. They exhibit a pluralism of ideas and values, and they tend to have pragmatic orientations and search for institutional reforms that enlarge the systems of members' participation in decision making (Offe 1985; Cohen 1985; Laraña 1992, 1993a). These movements have an important political meaning in Western societies: They imply a "democratization dynamic" of everyday life and the expansion of civil versus political dimensions of society (Laraña 1993b).

Third, NSMs often involve the emergence of new or formerly weak dimensions of identity. The grievances and mobilizing factors tend to focus on cultural and symbolic issues that are linked with issues of identity rather than on economic grievances that characterized the working-class movement (Melucci 1985, 1989). They are associated with a set of beliefs, symbols, values, and meanings related to sentiments of belonging to a differentiated social group; with the members' image of themselves; and with new, socially constructed attributions about the meaning of everyday life. This is especially relevant to the ethnic, separatist, and nationalistic movements within existing states. The Catalan and Basque movements in Spain, the Asian and Hispanic movements in the United States, the ethnic movements in the former Soviet Union and even Palestinian nationalism are all examples of new identities emerging in the modern world. The women's movement and the gay rights movement also exemplify this trend. All of these new identities are formed as both private and public ones or old ones remade along new lines.

Fourth, the relation between the individual and the collective is blurred. Closely related to the above point, many contemporary movements are "acted out" in individual actions rather than through or among mobilized groups. The "hippie" movement is the most striking instance, but it is equally true of aspects of other movements where the collective and the individual are blurred, for example, in the gay rights and the women's movements. An-

other way of thinking about the same phenomena is that in and through movements that have no clear class or structural base, the movement becomes the focus for the individual's definition of himself or herself, and action within the movement is a complex mix of the collective and individual confirmations of identity. The student movements and various countercultural groups of the 1960s were among the earliest examples of this aspect of collective action.

Fifth, NSMs often involve personal and intimate aspects of human life. Movements focusing on gay rights or abortion, health movements such as alternative medicine or antismoking, New Age and self-transformation movements, and the women's movement all include efforts to change sexual and bodily behavior. They extend into arenas of daily life: what we eat, wear, and enjoy; how we make love, cope with personal problems, or plan or shun careers.

Sixth, another common feature of NSMs is the use of radical mobilization tactics of disruption and resistance that differ from those practiced by the working-class movement. New social movements employ new mobilization patterns characterized by nonviolence and civil disobedience that, while often challenging dominant norms of conduct through dramatic display, draw equally on strategies influenced by Gandhi, Thoreau, and Kropotkin that were successfully used in the past (Laraña 1979; McAdam 1988; Morris 1984; Klandermans and Tarrow 1988).

Seventh, the organization and proliferation of new social movement groups are related to the credibility crisis of the conventional channels for participation in Western democracies. This is especially true with regard to the traditional mass parties from which NSMs tend to have a considerable degree of autonomy—and even disdain. This crisis is a motivational factor for collective action in search of alternative forms of participation and decision making relating to issues of collective interest (Whalen and Flacks 1989; Melucci 1989).

Finally, in contrast to cadre-led and centralized bureaucracies of traditional mass parties, new social movement organizations tend to be segmented, diffuse, and decentralized. While there is considerable variation according to movement type, the tendency is toward considerable autonomy of local sections, where collective forms of debate and decision making often limit linkages with

regional and national organizations. This has been called the "self-referential element" of the new movements, and it constitutes another sharp distinction with the hierarchical, centralized organization of the working-class movement and the role of the party organization in the Leninist model.

These characteristics of new social movements are not independent of links with the past. Nor is there an absence of continuity with the old, although that varies with each movement. The women's movement has its roots in the suffrage movement of the late nineteenth century in America. New Age movements can trace connections to earlier spiritualist teachings and Eastern philosophies; and contemporary health movements have roots in various quasi-medical orientations that proliferated earlier in this century. Even movements with old histories have emerged in new forms with more diffuse goals and different modes of mobilization and conversion. It is both the newness of expression and extension as well as the magnitude and saliency of such movements that constitutes the basis for needing revised frameworks of understanding.

The theoretical roots of social movement scholarship provide a backdrop to the contemporary discussion of new forms of social movements. Are the new movements as new as they seem? What social and cultural changes have led to the emergence of such movements? Are the ideologies of the past 150 years, with their general programs of reform and revolution, no longer operative in these movements? Has the fulcrum of social movement action shifted from a concern for large-scale societal change to narrower, more self-oriented goals of claiming and realizing new individual and group identities? As Alberto Melucci, one of the contributors to this book, has written elsewhere concerning the influence of a changed social structure on movements, "The freedom to have which characterized . . . industrial society has been replaced by the freedom to be" (Melucci 1989, 177–78).

This volume was conceived as an effort to provide some provisional answers to these questions. Many of its chapters share basic assumptions of the social constructionist approach and synthesize the classic and modern perspectives in order to better explain contemporary social movements in Western societies. Social constructionist insights into the way that meanings and collective beliefs arise as central to movement emergence help explain the na-

ture of new grievances and from whence they came. This first chapter joins the theoretical debate by focusing on three of the themes mentioned above, all of which recur in the chapters that follow: the role of identity in social movements, the place of ideology and its relation to collective identity, and issues arising from ideational and structural continuity in contemporary forms of mobilization. Our goals are to identify the key issues, to point out provocative junctures of theory and research, and to reassess where this new conceptual apparatus might take us.

Dimensions of Identity in Social Movement Theory

About twenty-five years ago several American sociologists noted the growing popularity of social movements concerned with the identity of their members. Ralph Turner (1969; see also Chapter 4) observed that personal identity and personal transformation were increasingly themes of diffusely organized social movement organizations. Orrin Klapp (1969) also discussed the collective search for identity as a response to the impoverishment of interaction in modern society. He argued that modern, rationalized, social relations no longer provided reliable reference points from which to construct one's identity. The movements he observed—"identity seeking movements," such as religious and self-help groups, and less organized, trendy, collective behaviors—were attempts to reclaim a self robbed of its identity.

The new social movement perspective holds that the collective search for identity is a central aspect of movement formation. Mobilization factors tend to focus on cultural and symbolic issues that are associated with sentiments of belonging to a differentiated social group where members can feel powerful; they are likely to have subcultural orientations that challenge the dominant system. New social movements are said to arise "in defense of identity." They grow around relationships that are voluntarily conceived to empower members to "name themselves. "What individuals are claiming collectively is the right to realize their own identity: the possibility of disposing of their personal creativity, their affective life, and their biological and interpersonal existence" (Melucci 1980, 218).

Both approaches seem to assume that the pursuit of collective identity flows from an intrinsic need for an integrated and continuous social self, a self that is thwarted and assaulted in modern society. The link between the "morphological social changes" described by Melucci and identity-seeking behaviors seems to result from four factors that are characteristic of postmodernism: material affluence, information overload, confusion over the wide horizon of available cultural alternatives, and system inadequacies in providing institutionally based and culturally normative alternatives for self-identification (see Inglehart 1990, 347). The issues that NSM groups advocate reflect the expanded horizons of personal choice and point out cracks in the system, often in the form of newly defined global concerns. Individuals seek out new collectivities and produce "new social spaces" where novel life-styles and social identities can be experienced and defined. Much as Klapp's explanation of the collective search for identity implicitly criticized modern society, NSM research points out the need for system adjustments via movement formation and the cultural challenges that new movements pose (Habermas 1981, 36–37).

NSM thinking and research so far has produced important insights about the nature of these groups, but to date these insights have not taken the form of an overall theory. The four factors mentioned above are often left implicit; how they interrelate in the formation of new groups has not been developed. A cynosure of the new social movement perspective that needs further elaboration is the linkage between the broad structural changes that are said to characterize postindustrial society and identity problems for individuals. This task can begin with a systematic approach to the concept of identity itself. An understanding of who one is, in all its complexity, is fundamental to the formulation of goals, plans, assessments, accounts, and attributions that constitute making one's daily way. That it is so fundamental may explain why, from the new social movements approach, there is a tendency to refer to the concept of identity in a taken-for-granted way. There has been much written in sociology about various aspects of identity, and in the last decade, psychological research has increasingly examined the relationship between individual and group identity (Tajfel 1978; Tajfel and Turner 1985; Turner 1985; Turner et al. 1987). From this vast literature, three distinct dimensions of identity stand out as central for participation in social movements:

individual identity, collective identity, and public identity. A more theoretical approach requires clear conceptualizations about how they are related.

Individual Identity

For most sociologists, the term individual identity is inherently contradictory. Apart from the "hard wiring" of gender and kinship—which we are only beginning to understand—who a person is and what he or she becomes are thoroughly social processes. Yet, in several ways individual identity is important in understanding social movement participation. It relates to the wholly personal traits that, although constructed through the interaction of biological inheritance and social life, are internalized and imported to social movement participation as idiosyncratic biographies. Psychologists studying group formation (Tajfel 1978, 1981; Turner et al. 1987) clearly separate individual identity from its social aspects derived from group membership, but a sociology of social movements must recognize that individual identities are brought to movement participation and changed in the process.

The degree to which they are changed can be used as a means to classify movements—from totalizing cults of personal transformation, where the individual identity is taken over by the group, to checkbook quasi-movements like Greenpeace and Ross Perot's United We Stand America, where individual identification may not extend beyond a bumper sticker. Stephen Reicher has noted a parallel continuum regarding the degree to which group-based, socially constructed aspects of identity come to dominate the "imported" individual aspects (see Turner et al. 1987, 169–202).

The field of social movements has appropriated symbolic interactionist approaches to social roles and social location (Stryker 1980) as the conceptual foundation for thinking about individual identity. The social self of a movement adherent is made up of several social identities that are, in part, shaped as they are acted out, but also that correspond to institutional and organizational roles that proscribe normative behaviors (Merton 1957). These insights have influenced subsequent research in social psychology on role strain, role change, and role conflict. Another line of research has been directed at operationalizing and measuring individual identity in its various dimensions. A fundamental

problem is that most people can describe "who they are" in only limited terms. The verbal articulation of identity is often limited to counseling psychology or self-help psychologizing of a popular nature. Outside these contexts, and outside life-cycle influences that bring identity issues to the foreground, expression of individual identity in all its facets is not usually necessary. In the ebb and flow of everyday life, identity only becomes an issue when one's status quo is threatened.

In most sociological fields that touch on identity issues—social movements, deviance, family studies, health and medicine—discussions of individual identity are based on the basic framework described above. Erving Goffman's insights into the managed and situational nature of self-image (1959, 1967) have important implications for a sociological approach to individual identity, as does recent work on the relation between self-concept and spoken discourse (Perinbanayagam 1991), but these ideas have proven difficult to reconcile with positivistic research strategies. Recently, feminist research has broken new ground in specifying male-female differences in thinking about oneself and others that derive from biology and culturally defined gender influences.

One of the problems with this key concept is also a source of strength: its interdisciplinary nature in both sociology and psychology. One aspect of a psychological focus emphasizes pathological and unconscious forces and the developmental progress toward adulthood. The work of Erik Erikson (1958, 1968) has focused on the meaning of psychosocial identity as a subjective sense of "continuity and being oneself," and as a fundamental step in personal development. This subjective sense does not arise in isolation but requires the existence of a community. Sociologists and social psychologists have pointed out that personal identity emerges through the mirror of social interaction, that is, by playing different roles and by interpreting how others see us. Although the degree to which a core identity is established and functions as an integrating concept will vary, the basic insight of Meadian social psychology also holds true: Individual identity is quintessentially social and its core—if it can be apprehended at all by a reflective self—is relativized according to interactive situations. If identity is difficult to grasp because so much of its content is locked away in the black box of mental life, then it is more difficult to specify because the contents are shifted and rearranged accord-

ing to social context. The concept provides a tool to analyze a concrete set of facts and problems where the individual and the social realms intersect; this reinforces the need to integrate the biological and sociological models of human behavior.

The dichotomy of a core identity versus a malleable one—or individual versus social identity, to use Tajfel's terms (1981)—should be an important focus in future social movement research. A key question is the extent to which NSMs are disproportionately represented by a coming-of-age generation for whom questions of identity are paramount due to developmental psychological factors. In the three NSM groups studied by Melucci and his colleagues in *Altri Codici* (1984), in addition to the one that was characterized by Giovanni Lodi and Marco Grazioli (1984) as a "youth movement," all seem to be composed largely of people between the ages of eighteen and twenty-eight.

More than in other stages in one's life cycle, search for identity is a youthful activity. Erikson's (1968) fifth developmental stage occurs in late adolescence, when a process of solidification of a mature identity occurs through reconciliation of ascribed roles and new or emergent adult roles. He also pointed out that there is a intrinsic link between identity and ideology. An individual's identity becomes consistent when it is built in a common ideological orientation that renders it meaningful and gives it coherence. To take one example, in interviews with leftist and nationalist militants in Barcelona, Hank Johnston (1991) found that many spoke vividly of psychological dissonance that arose from reconciling a traditional, often religious, and middle-class upbringing with newfound Marxism. Identity reconciliation was the substance of interaction with dense interpersonal networks of young student and working-class militants. It forged a solidarity in these groups that imparted a resilience against state repression. It also provided for a unique flexibility and breadth that served to bridge different oppositional groups during mass mobilization. Sustained by intense discussions among friends, these networks were the functional equivalent of "new social spaces" discussed by Melucci.

It is our guess that among different social movements, the emphasis on identity quest results from the intersection of several factors, one of which is the coming of age of a cohort in an economic and social milieu that frees them from immediate material concerns and disposes them to intense introspection about

who they are. Although research on new social movements recognizes that these factors are related to participation, identity search and temporariness of involvement are treated as something new, deriving from system changes in postindustrial society (Lodi and Grazioli 1984). To the extent that we are dealing primarily with youth movements, or at least movements that bear the imprint of a large youthful membership, then identity search cannot be explained exclusively by postindustrial changes.

Collective Identity

The concept of collective identity has recently been thrust into the foreground of social movement theory. Aldon Morris's and Carol Mueller's book, *Frontiers in Social Movement Theory* (1992), contains several chapters that either deal directly with this concept or have sections that discuss it. Taken together, these treatments point out the multifaceted and interrelated nature of the concept; the paradoxical result is that the theoretical spotlight simultaneously reveals many more angles, corners, niches, and shadows. Let us see if we can clarify the ways of talking about collective identity, and in particular point out the relationship between several closely related concepts like group boundaries, group membership, solidarity, and the organization of everyday life.

The concept of collective identity refers to the (often implicitly) agreed upon definition of membership, boundaries, and activities for the group. According to Melucci (forthcoming), "Collective identity is an interactive and shared definition produced by several individuals (or groups at a more complex level) and concerned with the orientations of action and the field of opportunities and constraints in which the actions take place." It is built through shared definitions of the situation by its members, and it is a result of a process of negotiation and "laborious adjustment" of different elements relating to the ends and means of collective action and its relation to the environment. By this process of interaction, negotiation and conflict over the definition of the situation, and the movement's reference frame, members construct the collective "we."

This social constructionist definition has three dimensions that make collective identity an especially difficult concept to pin down empirically. First, it is predicated on a continual interpene-

tration of—and mutual influence between—the individual identity of the participant and the collective identity of the group. Second, by the very nature of the phenomena we study, the collective identity of social movements is a "moving target," with different definitions predominating at different points in a movement career. Third, distinct processes in identity creation and maintenance are operative in different phases of the movement.

In the midst of all this change and flux, this concept is often employed as if it was frozen in time and space, neglecting its process-based nature and shifting boundaries. A related problem refers to the "facticity" of collective identity and the way it serves as a predicate of behavior. A frequent usage, although one that seems to occur more as a rhetorical device than a conscious analytical position, is to speak of collective identity as something that stands above and beyond the individual social actors and takes on a life of its own. Suggestive of Herbert Blumer's early conceptualization of esprit de corps (1955) and other early collective behavior theorists that emphasized group consciousness, this is a definition that directs attention away from individual contributions and attaches it to a movement organization defined in the aggregate as a collective actor. In this usage, both "collective identity" and "social movement" can be spoken of without reference to the processes that constitute them. Rather, like Émile Durkheim's *conscience collective*, collective identity is the repository of movement values and norms that define movement behavior from some epistemological point beyond the individual participant. It is a "social fact" that dictates prohibitions and appropriate behaviors.

Yet there is a grain of insight that can be winnowed from the Durkheimian position. We have in mind the notion that an identity is both cognitively real—that is, based on lived experience and knowledge stored in memory—and idealized in Goffman's sense of ideal notions of how a role behavior should be. To share a collective identity means not only to have had a part in constituting it but also, in some instances, "obeying" its normative proscriptions. Clearly, this is an aspect of collective identity that meets Durkheim's external and constraining criteria for social facts; and, from this perspective, to partake in a collective identity means also doing (and not doing) certain things. The key insight is that normative and valuational elements of external social relations are closely associated with how one thinks about oneself; these elements guide and channel behavior within—and without—the group. In this sense, doing (appropriate movement-related behaviors) and being (identity) are inextricably linked. This closely follows Stephen Reichter's treatment of identity and crowd behavior (see Turner et al. 1987, 169–202). He suggests that the more the individual identifies with the group, the more likely emergent group norms will constrain and shape behavior. The power of emergent norms works through the mechanism of collective identity and the intrinsic human tendency to affirm group identification (see Tajfel and Turner 1985).

Bearing this in mind, we can turn to the more common, constructionist usage that has been drawn on by NSM thinking. The constructionist view has been emphasized in current analyses of radical feminist, gay, and lesbian groups (Margolis 1985; Marshall 1991), as well as attempts to explain ethnic politics and nationalism (Johnston 1985; See 1986; Nagel and Olzak 1982; Anderson 1991). Characteristic of this approach, Melucci asserts that "collective identity is a product of conscious action and the outcome of self-reflection more than a set of given or 'structural' characteristics. [It] tends to coincide with conscious processes of 'organization' and it is experienced not so much as a situation as an action" (1992, 10–11). By stressing the "process-based, self-reflexive and constructed manner in which collective actors tend to define themselves today" (10), contemporary approaches to collective identity acknowledge a strong symbolic interactionist influence. This tradition points to interaction among social movement participants as the locus of research on identity processes. In Europe, one tendency has been to explore this avenue of investigation through "intervention research" (Touraine 1981; Melucci 1984). In North America, research has followed an identity-focused agenda via traditional interactionist issues: self-presentation, dramaturgical analysis, conversions, and gender and gender interaction. Regardless of research strategy, the global point is that collective actors define themselves in a social context, and any constructionist view of identity must make reference to both the interactive situations where identity is formed and shaped and to the other people who join in the task.

This raises inevitable questions about the relation between group membership and collective identity. Debra Friedman and Doug McAdam (1992, 169) have discussed how individual attach-

ments to preexisting groups and interpersonal networks frequently function as sources of collective identity when these attachments are highly valued. The assumption of valued group attachments allows the authors to recast collective identity as a selective incentive, to use Mancur Olson's (1965) term, as a way of reconciling a microstructuralist focus with rational choice models. Collective identity becomes a valued commodity that is worth the commitment of time, resources the "capital" of individual autonomy and the risk of presentation of self because the group from which it is derived is also valued.

The issue goes to the core of social movement formation, and there are several answers, which, taken together, can help the student of social movements think more systematically about the creation of collective identities. First, following the argument of Friedman and McAdam, one can consider organizational strategy. In their analysis, the organization "provides an identity" and "shapes it for consumption." This might be called a "strategic constructionist perspective," to coin a term, that suggests, for some movements, there are leaders, committees, or cabals that plot the best collective identity for the movement, much like marketing executives strategizing the best way to present a product. It is a "top down" approach to collective identity that seems to be more useful in some movements than others. This approach would be especially useful in later stages of movement development when social movement organizations are established and likely to be thinking of these strategic terms. At earlier stages, however, when issues are being articulated and groups coalesce around issues, it makes sense that a more "bottom up" approach is, if not the entire answer, then at least deserving of a place in the theoretical equation. These issues are expanded in the next two sections.

Public Identity

While the two previous dimensions of identity involve self-assessments—either by an individual or by the group—the concept of public identity captures the influences that the external public have on the way social movement adherents think about themselves. Both individual identity and collective identity are affected by interaction with nonmembers and by definitions imposed on movements by state agencies, countermovements, and, especially in the contemporary movement environment, the media. There are different courses and different channels by which public definitions can influence movement identities, and it makes sense that, depending on the source, there can be different effects.

On the one hand, there is a long tradition of research on how impersonal influences affect movement identities. State repression can intensify we-them distinctions and fortify group identification and commitment (Trotsky 1957; Smelser 1962; Brinton 1965; Hierich 1971), especially in radical political movements (Knutson 1981; della Porta and Tarrow 1986; della Porta 1992; Pérez-Agote 1986). Particularly important in today's movement environment are the information media and the role of the media in shaping a movement's image (Gamson 1988; Gitlin 1980). Enrique Laraña (see Chapter 9) observes how a split in the internal and external images of a movement can result from journalists' tendency to focus on professionalized movement representatives and visible aspects of movement activities. Another element of media identity is the process of influencing the assignment of meaning through framing activities by leaders. This occurred in the Basque and Catalan movements in Spain and in Spanish student mobilizations during the 1980s.

On the other hand, a neglected aspect of research on public identity is personal influence and social impact. By this we refer to concrete interaction between members of a movement and nonmembers. Research in social psychology has demonstrated that the more intimate, local, and personally relevant an informational input, the greater the influence it has on opinion (Latané 1981). If media images of a movement can influence personal or collective identity, their influence carries more weight if it comes via people who are close to and who are valued by the movement participant. With the exception of totalizing groups such as cults and radical cells, the collective aspect of identity formation tends to be at best a part-time endeavor; and what others (especially primary relations) think about the movement can carry great weight in a developing collective identity. An individual's social life will include others outside the movement group. This is even more relevant for movement participants who are deeply associated in community life, especially in the early phases of the movement when the demands on time and resources characteristic of the increasing

pace of mobilization are just beginning. Then the relation between the public identity and the emergent collective identity is critical.

As a movement mobilizes, committed members will progressively exclude extraneous ties in favor of movement-based interaction. Boundary maintenance, a term used in ecological theory to understand the creation of resource niches, is another way of thinking about increasingly exclusionary behavior. Verta Taylor and Nancy Whittier (1992) discuss how radical feminists engage in a species of boundary maintenance by building alternative loci of affiliation called "feminist counterinstitutions" to affirm their collective identity. There is a time-budgeting dimension to these actions in that the larger proportion of daily activities that movement-related roles occupy in a social actor's overall identity—that is, the sum total of his or her roles—the sharper the boundaries, the clearer the we-they distinctions, and the stronger the collective identity. Boundaries can be thought of as activities and definitions that reinforce collective definitions through we-they distinctions, which are often marked by differences in physical appearance, dress, speech, demeanor, and other behaviors. There is variation in the panorama of movements regarding the sharpness of boundary distinctions. Taylor and Whittier review the efforts at exclusion among lesbian feminist groups, while other movements are less exclusionary and even may wax inclusive in later stages of their careers, with negative effects on collective identity and commitment (Zald and Ash 1966; Gerlach and Hine 1970). It makes sense that the strength of boundary maintenance (which is an activity) and we-they distinctions (which is a cognition) are related to collective identity in terms of the relationship between time and effort dedicated to movement activities.

We know a great deal about the social processes by which collective identity gathers strength, but our thinking about the topic has not been able to explain starting mechanisms, that is, the initial kick that moves potential participants to choose one set of social ties above others. This brings us to the third approach to the issue of emergent collective identities, and to what we see as a forgotten theoretical issue: the relation between what a social movement is about—its substance in the form of grievances, demands, and a program for change—and the way its collective identity can be codified in an ideology.

Ideology, Grievances, and Collective Identity

"Old movements" coalesced around shared grievances and perceptions of injustice. Programs for amelioration of these grievances and attribution of cause constituted the ideological base for mobilization. In the movement context, the link between ideology and grievances was strong, as it was conceptually in early theories of social movements. Ideology as a codification of wrongs and injustices was seen as a necessary process for mobilization to occur (Smelser 1962). In deprivation theories, the link between grievances and action was fundamental to explanatory logic, but typically it was left implicit. Research in the symbolic interactionist tradition emphasized the definition of a situation as unjust and warranting action; the specification of collective solutions was understood as key to mobilization processes. William Gamson, Bruce Fireman, and Steven Rytina's research into the emergence of injustice frames offers decisive insights into the earliest mechanisms by which grievances become articulated (1982; see also Gamson 1992).

In the 1960s, several observers—Daniel Bell, Ralph Turner, Joseph Gusfield, Orrin Klapp, among others—noted that an increasing number of movements and conflicts articulated grievances that were not based on economic and class interests. These movements were based on less "objective" elements such as identity, status, humanism, and spirituality. In a sense, the link between mobilization and grievances became less compelling. While not without their own ideological base and in varying degrees among different groups, these movements were less characterized by the extensive ideological articulation usually found in socialist and communist organizations. Shortly thereafter, the link between grievances and mobilization was further deemphasized as factors relating to resources, organization, and strategy gained theoretical predominance in the field.

The year 1990 brought the collapse of Marxist-Leninist states, and with it the debilitation of the most highly developed oppositional ideologies of the twentieth century. Richard Flacks (see Chapter 14) points out that there is much more to the Left's vision than the way it was distorted by the communist parties of the socialist bloc. He argues that the grand tradition of the Left has both been an integral part of how generations of activists have

thought about themselves and a transcendent view of what society could be. This tradition was internalized into one's social identity; it was lived in one's daily contacts and through the content of that interaction. Although ideology, grievances, and collective identity are analytically separate, there is a strong relationship between them, one that has been muted in the past but has been brought into the theoretical foreground by NSM research.

The traditional theories of social movements did not emphasize the link between grievances and identity as relevant to explaining movement formation, but it makes sense that the link was there. For laboring men and women, for peasants, and for anarchist militants, the substance of grievances, and their interpretation by ideologies, was embedded in everyday life. E. P. Thompson's (1963) study of the emergence of the English working class shows that identity as a tradesman permeated everyday life and that there were many instances when the collective identity deriving from a shared sense of injustice was particularly strong. In his study of protests of weavers in Rouen, France, William Reddy (1977) shows how structural changes outside village society threatened the way of life for seventeenth-century weavers. The forms of protest weavers instigated were closely linked with the defense of their traditional social statuses. Similarly, anarchist groups in nineteenth-century Spain first organized athenaeums where workers gathered at the end of the day to socialize, discuss issues, and take courses. Family activities such as picnics and choral groups were also organized (Esenwein 1989). In West Virginia, the identity of a united mine worker's organizer in the 1930s was closely linked to the injustices he and his compatriots faced in the mines, in the company towns, in company stores, and in seeing the ravages of poverty on their children. Although none of the militants would have characterized their involvement in terms of a quest for identity, through the newly ground lenses of NSM concepts, the degree to which close friends and everyday activities were linked with the movement becomes apparent. Collective identity and grievances are not the same, but their close association lies in the fact that the organization of how social movement adherents think about themselves is structured in important ways by how shared wrongs are experienced, interpreted, and reworked in the context of group interaction.

These observations are strikingly similar to recent work in

feminist theory and the women's movement about the politicization of everyday life. Because gender stereotyping and discrimination permeates most modern social relations, there is a fundamental injustice embedded at the level of quotidian interaction. An important aspect of the feminist program has been to create new social spaces, ones that are equally quotidian, where women can respond to, and in the extreme, withdraw from, gender discrimination and interaction with men in order to nurture their own identities (Taylor and Whittier 1992). These kinds of groups, which are characteristic of the women's movement, are often considered prototypical of NSM organizations.

To understand how movements are distributed on the axis of grievances and identity, we suggest that the following reckoning is helpful. First, all movements, to some degree, are linked with issues of individual and collective identity via the way that focal grievances affect everyday life. In the United States, mobilizations in response to economic crisis and rising unemployment during the 1930s, often led by communist activists, followed the classic pattern of European workers' movements (Piven and Cloward 1971, 62). People participated massively in collective action because they were hungry and without jobs. These were matters that went to the core of their existence and collective identity was not the focus of action. Yet, in the United States, status movements are closely linked with identity issues (Gusfield 1963; Zurcher and Kirkpatrick 1976; Luker 1984). Here the grievances are actuated by perceived threats to how one defines oneself, such as the way that the popularization of abortion threatens, for some women, traditional conceptions of motherhood. Status movements take action about "other people's business" because that business often poses a threat to how the mobilizing group defines itself. They might be seen as precursors of NSMs if we accept that identity issues become a basic mobilizing factor.

New social movements display a paradoxical relationship between identity and grievances. First, the very nature of grievances for NSMs merges them closely with the concept of identity. For movements about gender or sexual identity, for example, the collective grievances are inextricably linked with issues of identity quest in the group context. The support and identity-affirming functions of feminist and gay rights groups are well known. Second, where grievances have a more important place in group for-

mation, such as in ecological groups, the NSM perspective tells us that identity quest co-occurs as a displaced (or unconscious) but nevertheless fundamental raison d'être of group formation. Third, for some NSM groups, such fundamental grievances as threats to the ozone level, nuclear proliferation, or saving whales are so distant from everyday life that they can only remain immediate through their ongoing social construction and reassertion in the group context. Indeed, one might speculate that in those instances when the goals of NSM groups are particularly global and distant from achievement, it is the intensely personal orientations and the close melding of the group with everyday life that provide the sustaining lifeblood of cohesion. In rational choice terms, identity defense and affirmation provide the necessary counterbalancing selective incentives where the more practical payoffs of the movement are small.

Continuity in New Social Movements

An important focus of recent research has been the informal organizational networks as the platform from which movement formation occurs. Joseph Gusfield (1981) emphasizes the role of "carry-ons and carry-overs" from one movement to another; Adrian Aveni (1977), Mark Granovetter (1983), and Doug McAdam (1982, 1988) all argue for the importance of preexisting networks of relations in collective action; and Aldon Morris (1984) looks at the role of established social organizations—"movement halfway houses"—in the growth of the civil rights movement. In a similar vein, Leila Rupp and Verta Taylor (1987) discuss "abeyance structures" during the recumbent periods of the women's movement in a hostile political climate. In the even more hostile setting of the authoritarian state, Hank Johnston examines the role of "oppositional subcultures" in several nationalist mobilizations (1991, 1992, 1993; see also Pérez-Agote 1990). These subcultures are comprised of well developed but, for the most part, private social networks that are built up in response to repression and the stilted discourse of public life in closed societies.

The theoretical import of this work on the "microstructural" factors prior to mobilization is that the temporal frame of analysis gets pushed back in order to focus on premobilization phases as

partial explanations of the shape and course social movements take. This shift also tends to lay bare the role of cultural content since continuity arises not only through persistance of organizations but also through the shared meanings and beliefs of movement members. Its significance for current research on social movements might contribute to overcoming its structuralist bias and to framing research within the perspective of a "interpretative sociology" (see McAdam, Chapter 2; Gamson 1988). This "epistemological reframing" would permit a deeper approach to the study of social movement formation that draws on the latent, nonvisible, cognitive dimensions instead of visible and political aspects (Melucci 1989; see also Laraña, Chapter 9). Consideration of the historical preconditions of mobilization is of course nothing new—seeking causes in itself implies temporal priority—but the search for a movement's origins has, in the past, focused either on intellectual currents or preexisting resources rather than on the nonvisible networks that function in everyday life as premobilization structures.

Prior to this research, the analysis of social movements had taken a more "volcanic" approach: It is attracted to an event when it erupts through the surface of social life, and it focuses on the flow of human, organizational, and resource-related magma. Taylor (1989, 761) points out that NSM research tends to succumb to this tendency as well. Her research with Rupp (1987) chronicles how organizational and cultural continuities can shape highly non-institutionalized NSM forms of organization. Their study reviews how the intense commitment, rich and variegated culture, and strong activist networks facilitated the resurgent women's movement in the mid 1960s. Although their emphasis is on continuity in repertoires of contention, there are several points where one sees continuities in the shape of everyday organization within the retrenched movement, especially the solidarity, cohesiveness, and commitment within the abeyance networks they describe. These characteristics were important sources of personal support in the difficult postwar years of the women's movement and suggest that in periods of quiescence factors related to personal and collective identity may be at work to establish links of continuity (Taylor 1989; see also Laraña, Chapter 9). One is led to speculate the degree to which the prior organization stimulated smaller support

groups that, in contrast to lobbying organizations, characterize the newness of contemporary feminism.

In a similar vein, the roots of the New Left in the United States have been traced by several researchers (Whalen and Flacks 1984; Wood 1974; Isserman 1987) who have pointed out strong continuities with the Old Left. Taking the women's movement and the New Left together, the point is that while events of greater or lesser magnitude punctuate history, there is an important thread of organizational and cultural continuity for many NSMs in the United States insofar as the focus of analysis shifts to everyday activities. On the other hand, research in the European tradition has stressed the special significance of great historical events and the path-breaking influence of ideas and persons. From this perspective, as analysts of new social movements in Europe sifted through the soil of postmodernism, they have located the first sprouts of new social movements among the relatively recent mobilizations of students and the New Left in the late 1960s (Habermas 1981; Kriesi 1992).

The fact that the NSM perspective has generated wider enthusiasm in Europe than in the United States provides evidence about the nature of theory construction and its patterns of diffusion in sociology. As we pointed out earlier, the European tradition of social movement research, reflecting the influence of Marxist thought, emphasized structural backgrounds of class to a greater extent than the American studies. In the United States, the situation has been historically different and there has never been a strong party representing the working class. Flacks (see Chapter 14) attributes this fact to the peculiar characteristics of the American labor force, especially its multiethnic character, which is the result of waves of immigration. Instead of the unification of the people sharing the tradition of the Left, there has been a fragmentation of the working class in ethnic groups and trade unions based on ethnic solidarity. The growth of a unified working-class party was prevented by a system where the competition between ethnic groups created obstacles to class solidarity. The absence of strong leftist parties and socialist unions in the United States atomized working-class organization into local manifestations and decentralized civil society to a greater extent than in Europe.

If we search for cultural factors, there is a long tradition of individualism and self-help/self-improvement movements in the

United States (Meyer 1975). These have roots in the broader cultural templates discussed over 150 years ago by Alexis de Tocqueville in *Democracy in America* and more recently by Bellah et al. (1985). In the words of de Tocqueville, the American propensity to "self-interest properly understood" fomented a wide array of interest groups and voluntary associations that exercised influence at local levels of government early in the nation's history. These local forms of participation continued to characterize American society throughout the nineteenth and twentieth centuries. In Europe, despite wide variations between countries, there were two social forces that shaped civil participation differently: the institutional church and the Left. While European society today is more secularized than the United States, the Catholic church and other religious groups played important roles in the development of social movement organizations, especially in some countries like Belgium, Italy, and Spain. The church in Europe enjoyed a quasi-monopoly on the kinds of transcendental questions that sects and cults in the United States have regularly taken up. These observations must be taken as generalizations that gloss many factors, but they stress that the utility of the NSM perspective is intimately related to the cultural and intellectual soil in which it germinates.

A final point regarding continuity in NSM groups is often overlooked, but it is central to cultural and organizational continuity over long periods. We have in mind the relations between generational cohorts alluded to earlier (see Braungart and Braungart 1984). Intergenerational relations are a key aspect of how continuity in culture, ideology, and organizational form is achieved (Mannheim 1952). This is not to imply a one-way relation from the wizened older generation to the young. Rather, in many movements there are opportunities for reciprocity where the older members mitigate the radicalism of youth, and youthful members open new horizons to the older generation (Johnston 1991). These are processes that are not examined in depth by new social movement research, despite methodological strategies, for example, participant observation and "intervention," that would seem to lend themselves to such questions (Touraine 1981; Melucci 1984). To the extent that the quest for identity is a youthful activity, theoretical concern with intergenerational relations will become more relevant for the study of contemporary movements. Whittier's (1993) treatment of generational relations in the women's move-

ment may signal the beginning of a shift in interest in this area of research.

Conclusions

This chapter opens with a review of European and North American traditions in social movement scholarship and two questions about new social movements: Why have they posed such a challenge to traditional theories? And, What was it about the traditional theories that proved to be inadequate? From the NSM perspective, the answer to the first question centers on the link between structural change characteristic of postindustrial society and movements that emphasize identity in the context of a wide variety of grievances and forms of organization embedded in the everyday life of participants. The answer to the second question is that traditions of the past, perhaps colored by their particular ideological lenses, did not grasp the everyday and identity dimensions of the "old movements" they sought to explain.

The heart of this chapter focuses on the idea that a more systematic approach to NSMs requires stronger conceptual development regarding identity, especially if the linkages between the social actor and structural changes characteristic of postmodern society are to be specified. Identity has two central dimensions—individual and collective—both of which are shaped by a third—public identity. Both individual and collective identity are characterized by a dualistic epistemology in which continuity and change coexist as alternative approaches. Individual identity is composed of both its fixed aspects, which are "imported" by each participant to social movement groups, and by its fundamentally malleable quality, which is shaped in the course of interaction within the collectivity. Similarly, collective identity can be conceptualized at any point in time as a fixed content of meanings, frames of interpretation, and normative and valuational proscriptions that exercise influence over individual social actors. On the other hand, collective identity is also an emergent quality of group interaction, which is strengthened by group solidarity and boundary maintenance activities and shaped by public images of the group via interaction with nonmembers.

Part of the task we face is to refine both conceptual and

methodological tools. Research strategies must permit the complexity of identity to unfold in the data-gathering process. This issue is echoed in Bert Klandermans's call for longitudinal research of movement activists (1992, 53–75, see also Chapter 7). Batteries of questions focused wholly on identity issues will be required for meaningful comparisons over time. But the complexity of identity is such that fixed choice questions can access only some dimensions of the concept. More often than not, the raw data of identity is expressed in halting and fragmented accounts, platitudes, and monologues—sometimes spontaneous, sometimes rehearsed—of "who we are" and "who I am." Moreover, aspects of identity can change in the course of data-gathering itself. In some instances, different aspects of identity are invoked for different behaviors being observed, or for different phases—and even responses—in the interview process. A woman may discuss issues of the environmental movement as an activist, as a mother, as a manager, as a spouse, or as a Latina. Sociological intervention, discourse analysis, informal interviewing, and qualitative research strategies, such as those suggested by Scott Hunt, Robert Benford, and David Snow (see Chapter 8) would be very helpful.

Our examination of continuity and change in individual and collective identities suggests further research. First, in examining the "imported" qualities of individual identity, we note a potential correlation between identity quest and youthful composition of NSM groups. The degree to which there is a mix between young adults, for whom identity questions are important, and older members is an important dimension on which NSM groups might be distributed. The processes of intergenerational relations, reflected in the cohort composition of new social movements, while traced in several studies of the New Left and the women's movements, has not been pursued elsewhere.

Second, we note that the emphasis of "identity quest" will differ among NSMs and, given the centrality of the concept, it makes sense that this is a dimension on which NSM groups should be categorized. Comparisons require reliable measures of both individual and collective identity orientations that, by freezing concepts that are also inherently malleable and emergent, violate the dual nature of identity concepts. Nevertheless, there is much to be gained by intermovement and cross-national comparisons. It may be necessary to shed prejudices about measures of individual

identity deriving from susceptibility theories in order to establish a comparative data base about who joins NSMs.

Third, we also note that the link between grievances and everyday life of movement participants might vary between NSM groups. The extent to which grievances are tied to everyday concerns in contrast to more global issues that seem quite removed from mundane concerns is a provocative question, and it makes sense that there will be considerable variation in the panorama of NSM groups. A working hypothesis is that where global concerns are far removed from everyday life, movement cohesion requires the selective incentives of a strong identity component. Moreover, the relationship between identity and the immediacy/globalness of grievances may comprise another dimension on which NSMs can be analyzed.

A final observation arises from current events in Europe. The specter of violent skinheads and neofascist youth movements in Europe raises the question if these, too, somehow fit into the NSM equation of identity quest, everyday embeddedness, and broad structural change. When seen in the context of the crisis of credibility of the main traditional political actors, the emergence of xenophobic movements presents similarities with post–World War I Europe. In the past, NSMs have been discussed as a creative force of change, signifying directions for cultural and social innovation. Yet, there may be a darker side that parallels the dangers presented by collective identities in the mold of totalitarian movements of the past. Surely the rise of nationalist movements and ethnic hatred also go to the core of how social actors think about themselves. Unlike mass society theory, the NSMs represent alternative channels for participation in public life (see Flacks, Chapter 14). If this is so, the revival of violent racist groups in the same European countries that give birth to Nazism and fascism would confirm the Marxist dictum, "History repeats itself: the first time as a tragedy, the second as farce."

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