From Mansbridge & Morris Oppositional Consciousness

2 Social Movements and Oppositional Consciousness

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Culture has made a triumphant return to sociology generally, and to social movement analysis specifically. While the resource mobilization and political process perspectives provided a much-needed challenge to collective behavior and related theories of social movements, their emphasis on rational movement actors and the material capacity for action by challenging groups obscured the importance of cultural factors in political activism. It is altogether proper that culture has returned to social movement analysis, for social movements are intensely cultural as well as structural phenomena. However, in turning attention to the cultural aspects of movement activity, it would be analytically costly to lose sight of the interconnected nature of culture and social structure in determining the terrain on which any particular social movement operates. Theoretical work on social movements has too often assumed that all movements confront basically similar tasks and operate out of the same internal logic. This assumption is problematic when applied to the organizational and material factors structuring movement activity; it completely breaks down when applied to cultural dynamics. Thus, in order to pursue a more comprehensive explanation, we examine one important way in which movements differ systematically and how such variation affects the tasks confronting movement leaders and organizers.

The new work (e.g., Jasper 1997; Goodwin and Jasper 1999; Johnston and Klandermans 1995; Morris and Mueller 1992; Snow et al. 1986; Snow and Benford 1992) that seeks to construct appropriate cultural and social psychological analyses of social movements addresses many issues crucial to understanding culture and social movements. For example, Gamson (1992) identifies four central problematics in the social psychology of movements—collective identity, solidarity, consciousness, and micromobilization. All these problematics address how actors are embedded in social networks and how they interpret events and construct meaning systems conducive to movement participation. The social constructionist paradigm provides relevant analytical tools to address these issues.

This new cultural and social psychology work is a vast improvement over the collective behavior tradition as well as the cultural blind spots

of resource mobilization and political process models, but it still has significant gaps. Although most contemporary work no longer views individuals in social movements as isolated or pathological, it still does not adequately situate individuals and social networks within systems of human domination. Taylor and Whittier (1992) are an exception to this generalization with their study of how lesbian-feminist communities provide collective support for individuals fighting such a system. Gamson's (1992) review of the recent social psychology literature on social movements suggests that questions of identity, solidarity, and consciousness are framed in a way that presumes the absence of the kind of oppositional communities revealed in Taylor and Whittier's work.

This lack of attention to the role of oppositional communities in struggles against larger systems of domination may result directly from the character of the movements that appear to be the empirical base for much of the new theoretical work. Environmentalists and antinuclear activists have to build identity, solidarity, and consciousness "from the ground up" because generally they are not mobilizing in the context of either personal identities that have an existing subordinate meaning in the social system or entrenched oppositional communities. An identity as an "environmentalist" is fully chosen rather than externally imposed by a dominant group (unlike the situation for, e.g., racial groups), and creating this identity often requires considerable education and persuasion. Even when sociological work concentrates on oppositional communities, however, we also have to be attentive to how the "frame" provided by an existing theoretical perspective may shape the "answer" found in the data. For example, Josh Gamson's (1989) study of ACT UP emphasizes the use of boundaries and the emergence of "new" categories/identities, and overlooks the roots of AIDS activism (especially in ACT UP) in earlier gay liberation and feminist movements. The extent to which movement activists have to create a collective identity and ideological basis for action—quintessentially cultural tasks—is heavily determined by the position of the group being mobilized in existing structures of domination and subordination.

As analyses in the new social movement tradition (Cohen 1985; Melucci 1989) have pointed out, one of the central goals of many movements is to bring about cultural change within their own constituencies and within target groups. The essence of such cultural change is to convince people to see things differently, to interpret social reality differently. The civil rights movement, for example, attempted to convince both Blacks and Whites that race relations in this country could be structured and practiced differently. Yet that movement did not have

to carve out a Black collective identity and an injustice frame because Blacks internalize and learn them as routinely as they learn to talk, to walk, and to socialize with peers, parents, and Whites. Nor was the development of a master frame a crucial task because historically Black people have consistently espoused a "freedom and justice" and an "equal rights" position in their quest for racial equality (Morris 1993b).

The existence of collective identities and injustice frames within oppressed populations does not mean that such groups can be easily mobilized to engage in risky and protracted collective action. Indeed, within oppressed populations certain cultures of subordination inhibit collective action. These cultures of subordination arise because oppressed populations devise survival strategies that enable them to cope with adverse social conditions they encounter on a regular basis. These strategies generate a language of submission that permeates a subordinate group's religion, music, literature, folklore, and educational experiences. Scholars of the Black experience, for example, have long documented the otherworldly aspects of Black religion that encourage passivity rather than militant action. This submission language appears in the blues, as in one popular tune during the era of Jim Crow: "I've been down so long that being down don't seem to bother me." Dominant groups actively encourage and enforce such cultures of subordination.

Such cultures of subordination play an important role in decreasing the possibility of large-scale mobilization and sustained collective action. They also encourage the view among scholars of social movements that collective action is possible only if such populations develop new collective identities and injustice frames. However, these accounts often overlook the coexistence of oppositional cultures with cultures of subordination. Opposition is often present in the same cultural materials that promote submission. Rather than running along parallel tracks, cultures of subordination and cultures of opposition travel crisscrossing routes with frequent collisions and cross-fertilization. Thus, much of Black religion speaks simultaneously of overthrowing oppression and rewarding meek souls in a blissful afterlife.

These cultures embody, therefore, an internal contest between opposition and subordination. This contest has received little scholarly attention and is obscured by frameworks that privilege emergent cultural properties. Indeed, members of oppressed groups tend to vacillate between their oppositional and subordinate cultures. In this delicate dance, movement leaders and organizers try to crystallize and elevate the oppositional side of the equation, making it an effective tool of combat. The analytical challenge is to illuminate the conditions that determine

whether and when an oppositional culture will develop in ways that a social movement can utilize for its purposes. The presence or absence of an existing oppositional culture creates radically different challenges for movement leaders and organizers.

The crucial task of the civil rights movement was to undermine the existing culture of subordination while elevating the existing oppositional culture in such a way as to convince Black people that their engaging in a set of nonroutine, risky actions could change the very nature of race relations, to the end that Blacks could become equal with Whites. Preexisting oppositional ideas embedded in music, prayer, ritual, the presentation of speeches, oratory, the written word—in short, culture—were pivotal in convincing large numbers of African Americans to embrace nonroutine collective actions. These cultural items had to be refined and refocused through consciousness-raising activities to be made combat-ready for the civil rights movement.

The growth of gay and lesbian activism since World War II illustrates the importance of oppositional culture in another way. In spite of the increased repression of the McCarthy era, the 1940s and 1950s were a period of rapid community development among lesbians and gay men in major urban areas. Bars and coffeehouses were established; gay neighborhoods became increasingly identifiable in major cities despite chronic police harassment; publications and organizations were established and maintained; more autonomous and increasingly oppositional gay and lesbian cultures came into existence (D'Emilio 1983; Faderman 1991). The Stonewall rebellion and the sudden appearance of gay liberation organizations throughout the country were rooted in a process of community development and politicization that had been gathering force for many years (D'Emilio 1983; Adam 1987). The ideology of gay liberation that heterosexuals heard for the first time in 1969 had been debated, refined, and circulated through different gay and lesbian organizations and publications for decades before emerging into public view. The examples of the civil rights and gay liberation movements suggest that the complex and often obscure relationship between culture and power needs to take a central place in social movement analyses.

Much of the recent cultural analysis of social movements contains the conceptual biases embedded in symbolic interactionism, classical collective behavior theory, dramaturgical analysis, and ethnomethodological approaches. In those frameworks, concepts such as emergence, social construction, negotiating, framing, and identity work are the key analytical concepts through which social processes are examined and interpreted. These frameworks tend to conceptualize the social world

as a drama in which actors are always constructing meanings, identities, rights, and privileges, and even social reality itself through complex social processes and interactions. The bias here is toward process rather than enduring social relations backed by both naked and symbolic power.

These kinds of cultural analyses are useful in understanding collective action. Social construction, the formation of collective identities, consciousness-raising, framing, media packaging, defining grievances, and developing ideologies are key internal dynamics of social movements. Such approaches to movement analysis have a great deal to contribute to the understanding of how fluid processes and subjective interpretations affect collective action. The new cultural approaches rooted in a constructionist framework have begun to illuminate these processes.

Nevertheless, we argue that these theoretical traditions have underemphasized issues pertaining to domination and oppression. The emphasis of these perspectives on fluid processes and the social construction of reality makes them sometimes slow to acknowledge the relatively stable aspects of most systems of domination. These perspectives often avoid explicitly dissecting systems of human domination, such as racial, class, and gender domination. Marx's analysis ([1866–67] 1970) of class domination and Weber's analysis ([1922] 1947) of various systems of domination demonstrate how central power, social inequality, and culture are to such social arrangements.

On the other hand, some analysts utilizing the perspectives that take power dynamics into account have become overly structural. Too often such analysts assume a mechanistic relationship in which structural inequality or some other social condition leads directly to collective action. The best classical analysts, such as Weber ([1922] 1947), Gramsci ([1929–35] 1971), and Thompson ([1963] 1966), focused on how objective structures of domination interact with subjectively experienced domination to produce collective action. In these approaches, culture functions either to inhibit or to facilitate collective action, depending on the mix of hegemonic or insurgent characteristics in that culture. By returning to this classic agenda in our studies of culture and social movements, we will give considerable weight both to systems of human domination and to cultural processes. We can then explore the intersection between structural and cultural factors.

This combination of structural and cultural analyses appears frequently in feminist and gay-lesbian theory, particularly gay-lesbian social history. D'Emilio (1983), Faderman (1991), Rubin (1975, 1984), Vance (1984, 1989), Collins (1990), and others have explored the role of the social construction of masculinity/femininity and heterosexuality

in establishing and maintaining deeply entrenched systems of political, economic, and cultural power. These social constructions themselves are products of power relations and historical forces, not neutral negotiations among individual or collective actors of equal social resources and standing. The social construction of gender in capitalist and colonial societies, for example, cannot be understood in isolation from the expansion of capital and capitalism, the social organization of sexuality, systems of racial and ethnic domination, and shifts in family structure. Symbolic interactionists and ethnomethodologists have tended to back away from a serious engagement with the links between these structures of social and economic domination on the one hand and identities and other constructions on the other hand. Feminist and gay/lesbian scholars, to the contrary, insist that human domination is fundamentally cultural and structural, and that the social construction of identities, ideologies, and symbolic systems is intimately embedded in the major systems of domination structuring a society.

A system of human domination can be defined as that constellation of institutions, values, ideas, and practices which successfully enables one group to achieve and maintain power and privilege through the control and exploitation of another group (Morris 1992). In any given society several major systems of human domination usually coexist and interact in complex ways. American examples include the systems of class, race, and gender. As Marx ([1846] 1965) and Gramsci ([1929–35] 1971) understood, dominant groups that benefit from the most powerful systems of human domination usually develop and disseminate a hegemonic culture that symbolically legitimizes their rulership. Such symbolic legitimation is never perfectly achieved. Such a culture must be reproduced, reshaped, and disseminated on an ongoing basis to counter the cultural and social forces at work attempting to undermine it (see Fantasia 1988; Scott 1985).

One of the most important cultural forces working against a hegemonic culture is the oppositional consciousness of oppressed groups. An oppositional consciousness is an empowering mental state that prepares members of an oppressed group to act to undermine, reform, or overthrow a system of human domination. Minimally, that mental state includes identifying with a subordinate group, concluding that the mechanisms that have produced at least some of the group inequalities are unjust, opposing the injustice, and seeing a common interest within the subordinate group in eliminating the injustice. The magnitude of oppositional consciousness ranges from this minimal level to a fully mature state. A more full-fledged oppositional consciousness includes

seeing some actions of the dominant group as forming in some way a "system"—that is, as linked and roughly functional for advancing the interests of the dominant group. It also includes a variety of other insurgent ideas and beliefs that provide coherence, explanation, and moral condemnation. Oppositional consciousness in the restricted sense we give it characterizes members of groups that have long been subordinate within a system of domination and subordination, along with those who identify deeply with them.

The existence of oppositional group consciousness presupposes the prior existence of an oppositional culture (see Mansbridge, chap. 9, this volume). An oppositional culture contains the frameworks of oppositional ideas and worldviews that permeate the larger culture of certain subordinate communities. These frameworks also contain partially developed critiques of the status quo as well as knowledge of isolated rebellious acts and prior episodes of organized collective action. These frameworks provide the raw materials that help shape and crystallize the collective identities that are in large part externally imposed on oppressed communities by dominant groups. In short, these frameworks facilitate the process by which collective identities become internalized and experienced subjectively by members of oppressed groups.

Yet oppositional cultures usually fail to provide shared definitions of experience that make clear the need for collective action. An oppositional culture, for example, may generate the familiar complaint within the Black community that Whites mistreat Blacks. This assessment falls short of directing members of that community toward lines of action that would collectively change their situation. Oppositional cultures often do not provide potential collective actors with the directions and strategies required to overcome repression. As a result, when cultures of opposition and subordination weave back and forth in their crossing, the culture of subordination often wins out because it focuses on the abundant knowledge of the negative consequences associated with rebellion.

A mature oppositional consciousness, in contrast to oppositional culture, challenges dominant beliefs and ideologies by distilling and synthesizing the ideas already present in that culture, giving them a coherence that forges them into symbolic blueprints for collective action and social change. As Taylor and Whittier have pointed out, one major purpose of oppositional consciousness is to supply subordinate groups with concrete accounts that challenge dominant understandings; indeed, oppositional consciousness is "an ongoing process in which groups reevaluate themselves, their subjective experiences, their opportunities, and their shared interests" (Taylor and Whittier 1992, 14).

In contrast to most oppositional cultures, oppositional consciousness directs individuals away from explanations of their fate based on neutral impersonal forces or personal shortcomings and identifies dominant groups and their structures of domination as the source of oppression. Oppositional consciousness thus critiques and undermines the submissive messages that sprout from the cultures of subordination. The mobilizing work of organizers and leaders has a major effect in crystallizing and disseminating oppositional consciousness.

Thus, although there is no hard and fixed line between what we mean by "oppositional culture" and a minimal oppositional consciousness, except that consciousness lodges more within the individual, oppositional culture alone can live more easily intertwined with a culture of subordination. The more an oppositional culture stresses not just group identification and opposition but the injustice of a group's subordination, the more it will breed individuals who will automatically have a minimal oppositional consciousness and actively resist the culture of subordination. In the evolution to oppositional consciousness that we describe, mere sense of difference, self-preservation, opposition, anger, and resentment develops into an understanding of unequal power, injustice, and finally the systemic quality of the oppression. We agree with Gamson that consciousness "involves a mesh between individual and cultural levels" and that oppositional consciousness pertains to the process by which "the meaning that individuals give to a social situation becomes a shared definition implying collective action" (Gamson 1992, 55).

Carriers of an oppositional consciousness perform several tasks. They identify the enemy as an oppressor, thus politicizing preexisting "we" vs. "they" dichotomies. They describe the nature of the oppression and the ways in which it is maintained. They highlight and reinterpret countercultural expressions previously somewhat camouflaged in rituals, religious ceremonies, music, poetry, dance, and jokes. They create free spaces where resistance can be contemplated, acted out, and condoned. They attach moral wrongness to their oppression while imbuing thoughts and acts of resistance with the mantle of rightness. Like hegemonic culture, oppositional consciousness must constantly be reproduced and refined to address the conditions of oppression as they appear in real time and space. Oppositional consciousness flows from historical and social processes, not from biology.

Systems of human domination thus give rise to the conditions that generate oppositional cultures as well as oppositional consciousness. Oppositional communities are the dialectical opposites of the dominant communities that espouse and disseminate hegemonic consciousness.

Victims of a system of domination usually possess at least some rudimentary forms of an oppositional consciousness, although the specific analyses and critiques of the dominant group will evolve as the precise dynamics of oppression change in minor or major ways (Scott 1985). There is considerable variation in the extent and level of maturity of such an oppositional consciousness and how entrenched it is in any given oppressed community. This variation is affected by levels of repression, the cohesiveness of the oppressed group, the institutional autonomy of the oppressed group, and the group's communication networks, including its media.

Collective identities are never created from a vacuum. Movement participants never develop full-fledged injustice frames on the spot. Only sometimes do those participants have to be schooled about who the enemy is; only sometimes do they have to be taught to interpret their situation as a social problem. The theoretical language of "emergence" and "becoming" distracts analytical attention from preexisting communities of oppositional culture and fledgling oppositional consciousness, which in some instances have been in place for decades, centuries, or even millennia.

When applied to historic oppressed groups, the conceptual language of emergence privileges the moment at which an oppressed group mobilizes and commits itself to public conflict with the dominant group. In actuality, open challenge usually follows the internal development of a community of resistance that includes a maturing oppositional consciousness, collective identity, and organizational infrastructure. African Americans have had long-standing communities of resistance in the United States (Harding 1983; Morris 1993b) with a well-developed sense of identity and at least some oppositional consciousness. In contrast, lesbians and gay men had to create communities of resistance before a social movement could arise to challenge the dominant heterosexual population. All too often the theoretical language of emergence privileges the perspective of the dominant group by defining a movement as emerging only at the moment that it gains sufficient internal resources to sustain an open challenge. For oppressed groups, the creation of important forms of identity, solidarity, and oppositional consciousness must precede public challenge in order for the challenge to be sustained and the movement leaders to survive.

Analysts who emphasize emergence and becoming as key movement characteristics often portray the tasks of movement leaders and organizers as far more difficult than they may be. Building on and refining preexisting collective identities and injustice frames is easier

than creating them anew. Indeed, in communities where oppositional cultures already exist, movement leaders often face the challenge of how to address existing inequities of power and how to use preexisting forms of oppositional culture and consciousness to convince oppressed people that at that moment it is advantageous for them to engage in risky collective action. Such populations have to be moved beyond the inertia created and maintained by cultures of subordination.

Theoretical approaches that underemphasize preexisting communities of at least fledgling oppositional consciousness also fail to understand the symbolic readiness of many groups to engage in collective action. They thereby reify the power and control of dominant groups. Gamson addresses this point head-on: "Are social scientists, in emphasizing how this culture of quiescence is produced and maintained, themselves promulgating yet another set of reasons for inaction, another discouragement to agency? Where are the cracks where some ideas of collective agency stay alive, ready to grow and prosper under the proper conditions, as they did so dramatically and to everyone's surprise in Eastern Europe, for example?" (1995, 97). In these cracks live preexisting cultures of opposition from which oppositional consciousness can be consciously developed by the activists in social movements.

Physical Segregation and Oppositional Consciousness

Ironically, most systems of human domination themselves produce many of the conditions that develop oppositional consciousness. Many such systems physically segregate those whom they oppress—for example, on the basis of race, ethnicity, or relation to the means of production. In racial systems of domination, the oppressed are normally segregated and treated differently on the basis of skin color. Distinct working-class communities dot the social landscape because workers are indirectly segregated on the basis of how much they are paid for the role they play in the economy.

The degree of segregation and community development varies across oppressed groups. Groups oppressed on the basis of race, ethnicity, or class are likely to live in geographically segregated communities where oppositional culture becomes a part of the bonds of family and neighborhoods. In contrast, most women in the United States have had close relationships with and live in close proximity to the dominant male population (Gurin 1985; Conover 1988; Sapiro 1990). These women were to some degree separated from one another through relative isolation in private households. Professional political women who came together in the nation's capital and activist women who came together in the civil

rights and antiwar movements soon found that their previous relative isolation required the conscious creation of organizations and institutions where the elements of a developed oppositional consciousness could be hammered out. The early consciousness-raising groups in the women's movement and the later pressure for women's centers at universities exemplified the movement's need for segregated safe spaces in which women could socialize, forge bonds of solidarity, and puzzle out together their own analysis of their oppression.

In yet a third pattern, in Europe and the United States throughout the twentieth century, the development of independent gay-lesbian social worlds preceded the development of lesbian and gay oppositional consciousness. In the first half of the twentieth century, gay-lesbian bars and other social spaces developed originally in Europe, as did the earliest articulations of a nascent gay-rights discourse. Before World War II, gay-lesbian social and political activity centered in Germany. The rise of the Nazis both destroyed the European gay communities and set back the oppositional discourse that was developing at these sites. In the United States, homophile organizations and national publications arose after World War II. The combination of social disruption and economic opportunity caused by mobilization during the war and boom in the postwar period produced a massive expansion of gay-lesbian social networks, commercial establishments, and proximate settlement in urban enclaves. When a period of renewed repression began in the 1950s, political organizations were founded in 1951 (Mattachine) and 1955 (Daughters of Bilitis) with the goal of organizing gays and lesbians and improving social conditions, although from an assimilationist standpoint. Throughout the 1950s and 1960s, gay-lesbian organizations and publications (particularly *One* and *The Ladder*) provided a collective forum for the gradual development of political analysis and action. The first visible protests occurred several years before the Stonewall Riots and the Gay Liberation Front (Adam 1987; D'Emilio 1983).

Sharon Groch (chap. 4, this volume) also provides considerable evidence that the primary factor influencing the strong oppositional consciousness of deaf people, as compared to the blind and the mobility impaired, was the physical segregation of deaf people plus at least partial control of their own spaces.

These different patterns of physical segregation and the capacity to talk together in unmonitored spaces powerfully affect consciousness and mobilization. In general, we theorize, the higher the degree of physical segregation, the greater the likelihood of a widespread mature oppositional consciousness.

The relationship between physical segregation and the development of oppositional cultures and oppositional consciousness is not, of course, inevitable. Subordinate groups can be highly segregated without substantial control of "their" space. The more closely segregated spaces are monitored, the harder it becomes for autonomous cultures to take root. The key is the degree of independent internal organization subordinate groups can forge within segregated spaces. Churches, schools, unions, and voluntary associations, coupled with explicit cultural products including newspapers, music, literature, and humor, are especially relevant in producing oppositional cultures in segregated spaces.

Despite even close monitoring by repressive regimes, subordinate communities residing in the most highly segregated spaces are often the most likely to find the privacy and cultural resources to develop oppositional cultures and oppositional consciousness. In many cases segregated institutions present a facade of normalcy that reassures dominant groups while fomenting oppositional cultures and oppositional consciousness behind the scenes. This facade/backstage division sheltered the growth of oppositional consciousness in Black churches and colleges in the south, in Iranian mosques during the shah's regime, and in working-class churches and universities in Chile during Pinochet's rule. In these spaces cultures of subordination struggled with cultures of opposition, but when political opportunities arose or repression for one reason or another was relaxed, the culture of opposition could blossom into oppositional consciousness and intense movement activity.

Although in general historically oppressed groups who are highly segregated are more likely than other marginalized groups to develop an oppositional culture and oppositional consciousness capable of facilitating and sustaining full-fledged liberation movements, this association is not perfect. Before the "second wave" of the women's movement in the United States around 1968, middle-class White women did not experience the spatial segregation from men conducive to the development of an oppositional culture or an oppositional consciousness. With their lives effectively entrenched in private households, they were to some degree segregated from one another. Betty Friedan captured their situation by pointing out that with the kitchen at the center of their lives "many women no longer left their homes, except to shop, chauffeur their children, or attend a social engagement with their husbands" (1983, 17).

Indeed, these women came to believe that their "problem" was a personal problem. So relatively absent was an oppositional culture that, in Friedan's words, "nobody argued whether women were inferior or

superior to men; they were simply different. Words like 'emancipation' and 'career' sounded strange and embarrassing." A woman was "so ashamed to admit her dissatisfaction that she never knew how many other women shared it" (Friedan 1983, 19). Without much of an oppositional culture, women became victims of a "problem that had no name."

In contemporary America, middle-class women confront a different reality. As women organized, they borrowed oppositional ideas, symbols, and practices from the Black movement. The phrase "women's liberation" took the concept of liberation directly from the civil rights movement, and the word "sexism" was coined as a direct parallel to racism. At the same time women began entering the work force in increasing numbers and interacting more often in both segregated and integrated work spaces. The activists consciously created segregated spaces such as women's bookstores and music festivals, at which at least some women could feel safe and develop their thinking. (Differences in class, race, sexual orientation, and activism did not make any one place feel safe for all women.) As a result of building a movement and interacting in the public sphere, women began to develop a fuller oppositional culture and an oppositional consciousness, transforming themselves into a group from whose more developed cultural apparatus the social movement could draw.

In short, physical segregation (by which we do not mean purely residential segregation) and the distinct oppressive treatment of dominated groups often converge to produce an ongoing culture of opposition. Although physical segregation is not necessary, it greatly facilitates the growth of such a culture. The culture then helps provide members of the group with a collective identity, an injustice frame, and some experience with resistance, whether at the level of contemplation or actuality. This oppositional culture and the oppositional consciousness that can be derived from it make collective action possible when other economic and social conditions are met. This culture and consciousness also enable collective action to spread rapidly once it is sparked. Thus, the majority of African Americans understood what one Black man meant when he exclaimed to the crowd in Los Angeles following the Rodney King verdict, "Justice is for the White man not the brother man!" The Los Angeles rebellion could never have become such an explosive force in a matter of hours had it not been rooted in a historical injustice frame on which the average African American, and even the average Latina/Latino, in Los Angeles could easily draw.

Oppositional Consciousness and Movement Type

For some movements the conceptual language of "emergence," "becoming," and "social construction" is more applicable than in others. Movements such as Mothers Against Drunk Driving, environmentalism, and the peace movement do not grow directly out of preexisting systems of human domination. While they may be linked to broad structures of domination like capitalism or military power, these movements are not tied to specific populations, such as social groups or social classes, that have a preexisting identity and culture. These movements attack what they perceive as undesirable conditions or future human catastrophes affecting humanity in general. Through one's own effort and self-education one chooses to become an environmentalist, an antinuker, or an active opponent of drunk driving. Each individual, in a facilitating or impeding context, voluntarily develops such an identity and takes on such a role for social and political purposes. In contrast, members of oppressed groups acquire their status involuntarily, often through classification at birth. The social consequences of their identity are externally imposed and enforced. An environmental activist may suffer some penalties for social movement activity, but a woman is penalized socially and economically whether or not she engages in feminist political activity.

Throughout this chapter we have emphasized the need to refocus theoretical attention on the interconnection of structure and culture and the resulting differences in the cultural tasks faced by different movements. Sociological analysts sometimes make a loose distinction between "new" social movements and another, even vaguer, category—presumably "old" social movements. If this distinction is temporal, it is not clear which time period constitutes the dividing line. If the distinction is based on targets for action and change, the criteria for categorizing the targets are not clear. Is second-wave feminism a "new" movement and women's suffrage an "old" movement? Both waves of feminist activity addressed similar issues of women's political and economic roles, treatment by men within and outside of the family, and the importance of women controlling their own sexuality and reproduction. Rather than focusing on the temporal dimension of old and new, we find it more useful to focus on preexisting structures of domination and subordination and the kinds of preexisting oppositional cultures in which movement leaders have to work.

In a recent work James Jasper has pointed out how important it is to distinguish between types of movements when examining the interaction

between social structure and cultural processes. He argues that a distinction should be drawn between what he calls "citizenship" and "post-citizenship" movements. Citizenship movements consist of "efforts . . . organized by and on behalf of categories of people excluded in some way from full human rights, political participation, or basic economic protections." These types of movements direct their demands to the state. On the other hand, post-citizenship movements are "composed of people already integrated into their society's political, economic, and educational systems. . . . These protestors are especially interested in changing their society's cultural sensibilities" (1997, 7). This useful distinction roughly maps onto ours but is too restrictive for our purposes. In our view, the movements that Jasper calls citizenship movements usually direct their demands at a variety of targets depending on the nature of their domination. They often demand deep social changes that the state is only partially able to facilitate. From our perspective, it is the relationship between social movements and systems of domination that provides the key distinction between them. Our typology thus rests on both movement goals and systems of domination.

Relating the goal of the movement to its preexisting group base produces a typology consisting of three types of movements: "liberation movements," "equality-based special issue movements," and "social responsibility movements." Each of these movements stands in a different relationship to enduring systems of human domination.

Liberation Movements

These are movements whose carriers have a historically subordinate position within an ongoing system of social stratification. This type of movement is aimed at overthrowing the relevant system of domination and is conducted almost entirely by the individuals whose daily existence is negatively impacted by those systems. The carriers of liberation movements are almost entirely members of oppressed groups for whom group membership is externally imposed, often from birth. Members of such groups are often differentiated from dominant groups on the basis of some social identifier such as race, gender, ethnicity, or social class position. Most are also physically segregated. Because of this long-standing state of oppression and segregation, such groups usually have developed both a culture of subordination and an oppositional culture. The two cultures of subordination and opposition coexist in tension, engaged in an ongoing contest for supremacy. As Scott (1985) has shown with respect to peasants, such groups often develop a rich culture of resistance as they and their interests routinely collide with concrete systems of domination.

It is from these infrastructures of oppositional culture that liberation movements rapidly take hold when other necessary conditions are met. The cultural challenge for movement leaders and organizers in this context is to refine, focus, and shape a preexisting consciousness rather than create it anew. Thus, the theoretical language of "emergence," "becoming," and "identity creation" is least relevant to an understanding of the cultural dynamics of liberation movements.

Equality-Based Special Issue Movements

These movements address specific issues that exclusively or disproportionately affect a particular oppressed group. In contrast to liberation movements, these special issue movements mobilize preexisting liberation ideologies and oppressed groups to fight a limited battle against a specific threat or mechanism of group oppression. These movements often appropriate the oppositional consciousness and culture of resistance generated by populations who are the carriers of liberation movements. The carriers of these special issue movements usually have a smaller goal than the full struggle to reform or overthrow large-scale systems of human domination. However, it is not rare for some participants in equality-based special issue movements to have been participants in the relevant liberation movement and to view their activism in this more limited movement as a part of the larger struggle waged by the liberation movement.

Examples of equality-based special issue movements include the pro-choice movement, the environmental racism movement, and the grassroots AIDS movement. The pro-choice movement seeks to keep abortion legal by relying on activism fueled by the ideologies and oppositional consciousness of the larger women's movement, which is, in our analysis, a liberation movement. Similarly, the environmental racism movement appropriates the ideology and oppositional consciousness of the Black liberation movement in its quest to improve the environment in poor minority communities.

The cultural tasks for movement leaders and organizers of equality-based special issue movements differ in some respects from those of liberation movements. In these special issue movements the task is to align the grievances and cultural interpretations of the movements with those of liberation movements in such a manner that these special movements can both adopt the legitimacy and the cultural capital of liberation

movements and, in the best instances, contribute to that legitimacy and capital. The activism generated by involvement in the special issue movements can either strengthen or dilute the larger liberation movement, in which the activists and leaders of the special movements are often participants. Their background in the larger movement provides the special issue movement with cultural resources and helps give it credibility and legitimacy. At the same time, these leaders and activists may see their work in the special issue movement as critical to the goals of the larger liberation struggle. The frame alignment analyses of Snow et al. (1986) are especially applicable to the cultural work carried out by these special issue movements. Yet the consciousness and ideologies of these movements are often the results primarily of cultural borrowing rather than emergence.

Social Responsibility Movements

These are movements that challenge certain external social conditions affecting the general population, conditions that a challenging group views as undesirable. Such movements seek to make individuals, corporations, and governments act in ways that are socially responsible in order to benefit humanity. Such movements include the antinuclear movement, the peace movement, and Mothers Against Drunk Driving.

The cultural realities confronting social responsibility movements differ sharply in one critical respect from the other two types of movements. The fundamental difference is that a member of such a movement chooses to assume and internalize the appropriate movement identity. Such identity transformations usually require considerable effort and self-education. In most cases, activists in these movements suffer penalties only for their social movement activity; in liberation movements, members of the oppressed groups are penalized socially and economically whether or not they engage in activist liberation politics.

Thus, participants in social responsibility movements are not directly connected to the most obvious oppressive systems of human domination. Movements of this type are not constructed by populations who have been exposed to extreme physical segregation or been the targets of oppressive regimes designed to keep them subordinate. They cannot, therefore, tap into their own segregated culture to access preexisting frameworks or ideological weapons. When they do not emerge from a religious or political background oriented toward such issues, participants in these movements must develop almost from scratch their collective identities, appropriate injustice frames, and an oppositional consciousness. In short, they must become activists by learning how to understand, for example, what a nuclear holocaust would be like or what would happen to earth and its inhabitants in the event of total environmental breakdown. Their activism depends in part on their ability to construct collective action identities and injustice frames. Yet even in this process of construction, such movements often borrow from some aspects of liberation and special issue movements.

Conclusion

This paper has emphasized the need to refocus theoretical attention on the interconnection of structure and culture and the resulting differences among the cultural tasks faced by different movements. Movements vary systematically in the issues they address and the constituents they mobilize. An appropriate cultural analysis must distinguish among types of social movements and the variety of cultural challenges that different types of movements face.

The three types of movements identified here are ideal types. They and the nature of their oppositional consciousness overlap in concrete societies. Yet we believe they correspond, albeit imperfectly, to social reality and should be distinguished for analytic purposes. Our analytic typology distinguishes three kinds of groups: liberation movements, which are based in historically subordinate groups and aim at overthrowing the system of domination that subordinates those groups; equality-based special issue movements, which are based in historically subordinate groups and aim at removing a specific mechanism of group oppression; and social responsibility movements, which are based in groups that have no particular history of subordination and aim at removing a specific threat to humanity or the planet as a whole or some non–historically subordinate subset of humanity on the planet.

In creating oppositional consciousness, liberation movements can draw on cultural strands nourished through a long history of subordination. Social responsibility movements draw eclectically from a diverse set of cultural strands, of which only the religious components normally have the psychological depths of the oppositional cultures nourished by subordinate groups. Equality-based special issue movements fall in between, drawing from the preexisting oppositional consciousness fostered by liberation movements and also from diverse other social responsibility strands. One cultural model does not fit all. Social movement theory at this point in its history needs analyses characterized by a specificity that attends to the effects of systematic human domination.

Oppositional Consciousness

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