

# 1 Social Movements

## *The Structure of Collective Action*

The voluntary coming together of people in joint action has served as a major engine of social transformation throughout human history. From the spread of major world religions to community-led public health campaigns for reducing debilitating vector-borne diseases at the village level, collective mobilization may lead to profound changes in a wide variety of contexts and societies. At key historical moments, groups have unified in struggle in attempts to overthrow and dismantle systems of oppression and subordination, as observed in indigenous peoples' resistance to colonialism and in rebellions launched by enslaved populations. In the twenty-first century, collective action by ordinary citizens around the world could prove decisive in slowing down global warming and in supporting planetary survival. In short, the collective mobilization of people creates a powerful human resource that can be used for a range of purposes. In this volume we explore a particular type of collective action—social movements.

The study of social movements has increased markedly over the past two decades. This is largely the result of theoretical and empirical advances in sociology and related fields as well as an upsurge in collective action in the United States and around the world. The variety of mobilizations examined by students of social movements ranges from the anti-Trump resistance to anti-neoliberal and austerity protests in Asia, Africa, Europe, and Latin America. Already by 2011, global protests reached such a crescendo that *Time* magazine crowned the "Protester" as the "Person of the Year" (Andersen 2011). Then, in stunning fashion, citizens broke the record for the largest simultaneous demonstrations in the history of the United States, with the women's marches in 2017 and 2018. With so much social movement activity occurring in the twenty-first century, some experts predict we are moving into a "social movement society" (Meyer 2014) or a "social movement world" (Goldstone 2004).

On the basis of the best systematic evidence available from global surveys and “big data” collections of protest events over time (Ward 2016), social movement activity continues to be sustained around the world at heightened levels in the contemporary era (Dodson 2011; Karatasli, Kumral and Silver 2018). Indeed, over the past two decades groups engaging in social movement activities have not just proven to be impressive by their scale and intensity of mobilization, but have also transformed the social and political landscapes in the United States and across the globe. A brief sketch of some of the largest movements, including the anti-Trump resistance, immigrant rights, and movements for economic and climate justice, exemplifies these claims.

### *Women’s March and Anti-Trump Resistance*

The Women’s March against the newly inaugurated Trump administration in early 2017 represented the largest simultaneous mass mobilization in US history, with the organizers, in the opening of their mission statement, explicitly stating a threat to the protection of rights, health, and safety as the primary motive for the unprecedented demonstrations.<sup>1</sup> Activists repeated the marches again in January 2018 with equally impressive levels of mobilization. The initiators of the mass actions strived for an intersectional strategy to unite women and others against structural exclusions along the lines of race, class, gender, and sexuality. The Women’s Marches were held in hundreds of US cities and drew between four and five million participants (see figures 1 and 2), including people in dozens of countries outside the United States. The movement immediately evolved into the “Resistance” and has sustained mobilizations against subsequent exclusionary policies and public gestures by the Trump administration against immigrants, women, racial minorities, religious minorities, and LGBTQ communities (Meyer and Tarrow 2018).

### *Immigrant Rights*

Between February and May 2006, the immigrant rights’ movement burst on to the public scene in dramatic style with massive demonstrations and rallies in large and small cities in dozens of US states (Bloemraad, Voss, and Lee 2011; Zepeda-Millán 2017). The participants found motivation to take to the streets from new legislation (House Bill 4437) passed in the Republican-dominated U.S. House of Representatives that would make living in the United States without proper documentation a serious criminal offense for the undocumented, as well as for those aiding them. The impending negative consequences associated with this legislation mobilized

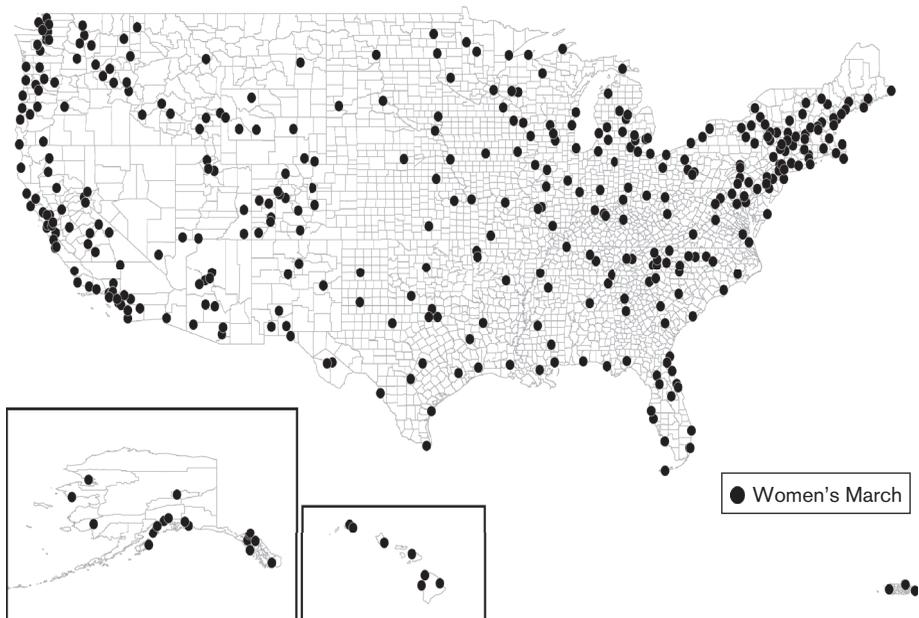


FIGURE 1. Locations of Women's March, 2017. Compiled by author from [www.womensmarch.com/](http://www.womensmarch.com/) in January 2017.

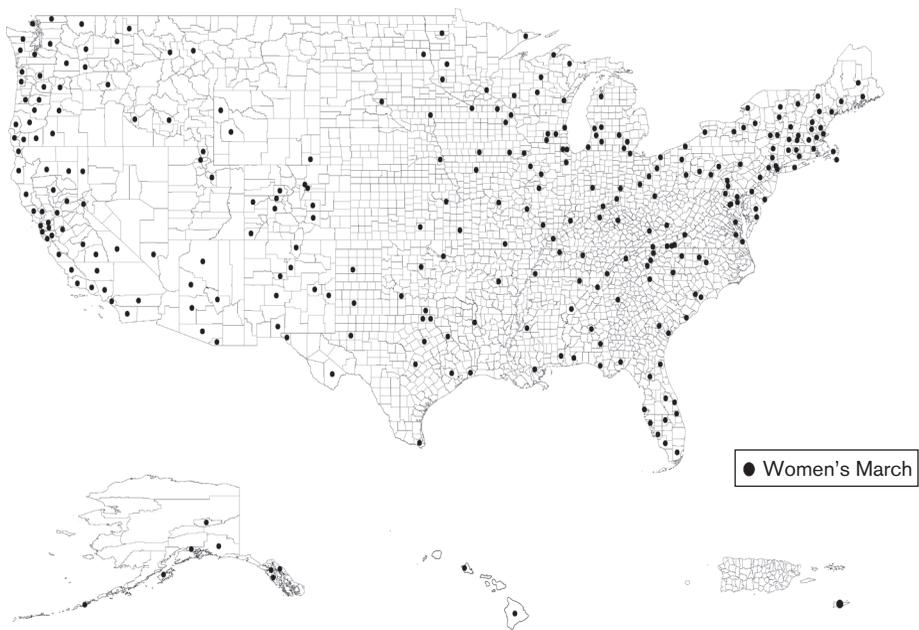


FIGURE 2. Women's March, 2018. Compiled by author from [www.womensmarch.com/](http://www.womensmarch.com/) in January 2018.

communities throughout the national territory, with several cities breaking records for protest attendance. The resources used to mobilize the movement included organizations of churches, radio stations, public schools, and an emerging pan-Latino identity (Mora et al. 2018). With some of the demonstrations drawing up to a million participants, Congress backed down and shelved the legislation in a stalemate between the House and the Senate. The power of mass collective action had prevented the implementation of a punitive law that potentially would have led to widespread disruption of working-class immigrant communities in the United States. A similar campaign emerged in the summer of 2018 against the Trump administration's policy of family separation of immigrants seeking asylum at the US-Mexican border, with protest events reported in over seven hundred cities.

### *Movements around the Globe for Economic Justice*

Between 2000 and 2018, from the advanced capitalist nations of Europe and North America to large swathes of the developing world, citizens launched major campaigns against government economic cutbacks and privatization of social services and the state infrastructure—or what economists and sociologists call the economic policies of *neoliberalism*. Labor flexibility in France, austerity in Spain, Portugal, and Greece, and economic reforms in Argentina, Brazil, China, Costa Rica, and India all drew hundreds of thousands of people to public plazas and mass demonstrations demanding protection of their *social citizenship rights*—the basic right to a modicum of economic welfare provisioned by the state (Somers 2008).

The global movement for economic justice took off in the wealthy capitalist nations in the late 1990s and early 2000s with major protest events outside of elite financial summits in Seattle, Prague, Davos, Doha, Cancun, Quebec City, and Genoa. The mobilizations kept up steam by aligning with movements in the global South via the World Social Forum network. In July 2017 the global economic justice movement mobilized over one hundred thousand people to demonstrate against the G20 economic summit in Hamburg, Germany. Similar types of street demonstrations occurred in the United States over economic inequality between late 2011 and early 2012 with the occupation of public squares in the “Occupy Wall Street” movement. Privatizations of water administration, public health, telecommunications, and energy catalyzed some of the largest mobilizations in South America, Asia, and Africa over the past two decades. Taken together, there has been a recent upsurge of movements around the world struggling for more equitable forms of economic globalization (Almeida 2010a; Castells

2015; Almeida and Chase-Dunn 2018). On the dark side of politics, we also find that extremists and populist demagogues use the heightened inequities associated with economic globalization and free trade to mobilize right-wing and racist movements in the United States, South America, and Europe (Berezin 2009; Robinson 2014).<sup>2</sup>

### *Transnational Movement for Climate Justice*

Since 2000 a worldwide movement has gained momentum in an attempt to slow down global warming. The “climate justice movement” seeks a global accord among the world’s nations for an immediate and drastic reduction in carbon emissions. By 2006 the climate mobilizations had reached multiple countries on every continent. Climate justice activists use cyber networks and social media to coordinate with hundreds of nongovernmental organizations, concerned citizens, scientists, and environmental groups around the planet to hold public gatherings and demonstrations demanding governmental and industry action to reduce greenhouse gases. The global mobilizations usually take place in conjunction with annual United Nations-sponsored climate summits in order to place pressure on national leaders to act (including an enormous street march of four hundred thousand persons in New York City in 2014). Between 2014 and 2018 alone, the climate justice movement successfully mobilized thousands of protest events in 175 countries on multiple occasions—the most extensive transnational movement in history.

These four movements demonstrate the multiple facets of social movements discussed in the pages that follow. They all involve *sustained challenges seeking social change using resources to maintain mobilization*. All four movements first mobilized in reaction to real and perceived *threats to their interests*. Finally, and perhaps most germane here, the movements resulted in deep changes within the societies they operated in. The Women’s Marches sent a powerful message that all attempts to deepen social exclusion by the newly elected Trump administration would be met with massive resistance. The immigrant rights movement forced anti-immigrant politicians to backpedal from their legislation as the mobilizations spilled over into a movement that fights for other immigrant rights issues, such as the right to education and employment for immigrant youth—the “DREAMers’ Movement” (Nicholls 2014)—a comprehensive immigration reform act that provides a path to citizenship, and an end to the policy of family separation of asylum seekers. Economic austerity protests have swept several new left-wing political parties into executive power and

parliaments in South America and southern Europe. The climate justice movement forced a long-awaited global treaty on carbon emissions at the end of the 2015 Paris Climate Summit.

## DEFINING SOCIAL MOVEMENTS

The four movements portrayed above clearly exhibit properties of social movement activity. Throughout this text, we will work with the following definition: *A social movement is an excluded collectivity in sustained interaction with economic and political elites seeking social change* (Tarrow 2011). In such situations, ordinary people come together to pursue a common goal. Social movements are usually composed of groups outside of institutionalized power that use unconventional strategies (e.g., street marches, sit-ins, dramatic media events) along with more conventional ones (petitions, letter-writing campaigns) to achieve their aims (Snow and Soule 2009). The outsider status and unconventional tactics of social movements distinguish them from other political entities, such as lobbying associations, nonprofit organizations, and political parties (though these more formal organizations may originate from social movements). Most people participate in movements as volunteers and offer their time, skills, and other human resources to maintaining movement survival and accomplishing goals. Throughout this book, I will emphasize the *exclusion* of social groups from institutional, economic, and political power as a primary motive for engaging in social movement actions.

Social movements range from community-based environmental movements battling local pollution, to women's movements organized on a transnational scale attempting to place pressure on national governments and international institutions to protect and expand the rights of girls and women (Viterna and Fallon 2008). We will explore these different levels of social movement activity in the next chapter. The modern social movement form arose with the spread of parliamentary political systems and nationally integrated capitalist economies in the nineteenth century (Tilly and Wood 2012). Before the nineteenth century, collective action was largely based on local grievances at the village level and mobilization was sustained for shorter periods of time (Tilly 1978). Nonetheless, we observe important forms of collective mobilization throughout human history (Chase-Dunn 2016). The core movement elements of *sustained collective challenges by excluded social groups* attempting to protect themselves from *social, political, economic, and environmental harms* form the basis of our definition of social movements and drive the largest campaigns of collective action in the twenty-first century.

### *The Core Movement Elements*

*Sustained Collective Mobilization* Social movements are collective and sustained over a period of time. How and why individuals come together to pursue common goals provides much of the content of this book. The larger the scale of collective action, the longer the mobilization should endure to be considered a “movement.” Local neighborhood and community movements may last for only a few months or a year as they tend to have short-term and specific goals, such as preventing pollution from a nearby facility or demanding street lights for nighttime safety. Larger national-level mobilizations likely need to sustain themselves for at least a year to be considered a social movement. In contrast, a single demonstration or protest does not constitute a social movement. At the same time, collective actors must find ways to maintain momentum and unity. Preexisting organizations, social relationships of friends, neighbors, the workplace, schools, ethnic ties, collective identities, and a variety of resources assist in prolonging the mobilization process (see chapter 4 on movement emergence).

*Excluded Social Groups* Social movements are largely constituted by groups with relatively less political and economic power. Their exclusionary status provides the rationale for taking the social movement form (Burawoy 2017; Mora et al. 2017). Non-excluded groups benefit from more routine access to government and economic elites in terms of having their voices heard, and are *relatively* more likely to receive favorable resolutions for their grievances via petitions, elections, lobbying, and meetings with officials. Excluded groups (along racial, economic, citizenship, and gender lines, among many others) lack this routine access and may at times resort to less conventional forms of seeking influence to gain the attention of authorities and power brokers.

*Social, Economic, and Environmental Harms* A central motivation for social movement mobilization involves real and perceived harms. A critical mass of individuals must come under the threat of a particular harm, such as discrimination, job loss, or environmental health, that motivates them to unify and launch a social movement campaign, especially when institutional channels fail to resolve the issue at hand. Opportunities may also arrive to reduce long-standing harms, such as decades of discrimination or economic exploitation (Tarrow 2011). Social movement mobilization is much more likely to materialize when large numbers of people mutually sense they are experiencing or suffering from similar circumstances. This

was precisely the case for the 2006 immigrants' rights protests discussed above. Millions of citizens and noncitizens came under a suddenly imposed threat of criminal prosecution for their undocumented status or for aiding nonlegalized immigrants. This led to mutual awareness among immigrant communities and to rapid mobilization (Zepeda-Millán 2017).

Throughout the text, I will emphasize these three core movement elements of (1) collective and sustained mobilization, (2) social exclusion, and (3) threats as key dimensions in characterizing social movement activity.

## BASIC SOCIAL MOVEMENT CONCEPTS

As in most subfields of sociology and the social sciences there is a vernacular or jargon for discussing key social processes and terms. The field of social movements is no exception. As we progress deeper into the study of social movements in this book, new terms will be introduced and defined. To begin, some of the principal concepts used to discuss social movements are presented below.

### *Grievances and Threats*

An initial condition for social mobilization centers on shared grievances. In other words, people collectively view some facet of social life as a problem and in need of alteration (Simmons 2014). A wide variety of grievances have ignited social movement campaigns, including police abuse, racial and gender discrimination, economic inequality, and pollution. At times, communities experience grievances as "suddenly imposed," stimulating mobilization in a relatively short time horizon (Walsh et al. 1997). Recurring instances of suddenly imposed and shocking grievances were behind the anti-police abuse demonstrations in the United States between 2014 and 2015 following jury acquittals or dramatic videos that went "viral" on social media and the internet. These incidents catalyzed the Black Lives Matter movement into a new round of the struggle for racial justice in the United States (Taylor 2016).

At my home institution, the University of California, Merced, many students experienced the surprising presidential election results of November 2016 as a suddenly imposed grievance. The university is composed of a large majority of students of color, many coming from immigrant families. The following e-mail I received from a student the day after the elections demonstrates how the unexpected election results immediately led to some of the largest protests in the history of the new campus:

Good morning Professor Almeida,

As professor of the social movements, protests, and collective action class, I thought I'd inform you of the protest that occurred on campus last night. At about 11:00 pm, students on UC Merced classifieds on Facebook, posted that they would organize to speak up against the results of the presidential election. Students started getting together in the main entrance of the university, they advanced through the summits and the sierra terraces encouraging students to come out of their rooms. The students continued walking through scholars lane and finally gathered around the New Beginnings statue. It was there that the organizers informed the students that there would be another protest today at 10:00 am in front of the library. Afterward, the students walked back downhill chanting. . . . Students were also seen holding signs with words in Spanish such as "la lucha sigue" and "marcha". The crowd of students gathered once again in the summits courtyard, where the organizers re-announced the protest that will take place today and where the students continued their chants. A few trump supporters were seen during the protest, but the organizers reminded the students that "this is a peaceful protest". The entire protest lasted about two hours.

We will later discuss how grievances move from the individual to the group level. But even in this short e-mail we can see elements of the structure of collective action discussed throughout this book, including the role of Facebook and social media, everyday organizations such as the dorms, and the appeals used to bring more people into demonstrations. Another important issue related to grievances, explored in the chapter on theory (chapter 3), is whether people are responding to an intensification of grievances (*threats*) or to new possibilities (*opportunities*) to reduce long-standing grievances.

### *Strategy*

The actual planning of demands, goals, tactics, and targets as well as their timing is part of an overall social movement strategy (Maney et al. 2012; Meyer and Staggenborg 2012). Once the collective action process moves from grievance formation to actual mobilization, social movements will likely formulate a set of *demands*. Demands are communicated to power holders as a means to negotiate and attempt to address and reduce the original grievances. Scholars also use the term "claims" interchangeably with movement demands. Demands or claims are often written in formal letters during negotiations, as well as displayed on banners and chanted in unison during protest rallies, or publicly stated during press conferences held by social movement leaders. Social movements increasingly express demands

and claims via various social media platforms (e.g., Facebook, WhatsApp, Twitter). Demands may be communicated in very specific terms, such as raising the salaries of fast-food workers to a fixed wage amount (e.g., \$15 per hour), as observed in recent strike campaigns in the United States.

*Goals* are generally conceived as broader than a set of demands (though they often coincide); for example, the larger goal of a “living wage” and “economic justice” for fast-food industry workers. Goals and demands are also categorized from reform minded to radical—from changing part of a government policy to calling for the complete transformation of a society, the latter acting as a common aim defining revolutionary social movements. We will observe in chapter 7 that goals provide a way to measure movement success in achieving social change in terms of specified objectives.

Social movements also employ a variety of *tactics*—a repertoire of actions from teach-ins and educational workshops to media events (such as press conferences) and street demonstrations. Tactics range from the highly conventional, such as petitions and letter-writing campaigns, to the highly unconventional and disruptive, such as “die-ins,” sit-ins, and traffic obstruction. At times, tactics may escalate to the level of violent acts, as in the case of riots, revolutions, and terrorism. Classifying tactics into conventional, disruptive, and violent is a useful categorization scheme. It leads to interesting questions about the conditions shaping the type of tactic and its effectiveness in mobilizing people, influencing public opinion, and achieving stated goals.

As another component of their overall strategy, social movements eventually *target* institutions to present their demands. The targets are often multiple and commonly involve some part of the government such as city councils, school boards, state agencies, the courts, and congressional and parliamentary bodies, which may be the final arbiters of the conflict. Depending on the nature of the movement, a variety of targets may be drawn into the campaign, including the mass media and other institutions (schools, hospitals, churches, private industry).

### *Coalitions*

Collective actors often join with other groups to extend mobilization to other regions and sectors of society. When a collectivity aligns with at least one other group to engage in collective action, a *coalition* has formed. The formation of social movement coalitions raises intriguing research questions about their composition and consequences for mobilization (Van Dyke and McCammon 2010; Van Dyke and Amos 2017). At first glance, a

coalition of multiple social groups (e.g., students, immigrant rights organizations, women's associations, environmentalists) appears to strengthen the level and size of mobilization by publicly exhibiting that several sectors of society are unified over a particular grievance or issue such as police abuse or a government's foreign policy in launching a military action. Large coalitions may be especially potent in struggles for democracy and human rights in authoritarian regimes by demonstrating that large segments of society oppose the prevailing lack of freedom and civil liberties (Schock 2005; Almeida 2005; 2008a). At other times, coalitions introduce new problems in sustaining collective action by trying to negotiate a consensus about strategy in terms of tactics, goals, and targets. This may lead to movement infighting and the rapid dissolution of mobilization.

### *Framing*

The framing process incorporates many of the ideological and cognitive components of collective action (Snow et al. 2018). Chapter 5 is dedicated to the framing process and collective action frames. We will learn how movement leaders actively convey grievances to larger audiences in order to draw in more support for the movement and maintain commitments from movement participants. Movement ingenuity and creativity are put to the test in the way activists use existing cultural idioms and symbols to express social problems and motivate people into action.

### *The State*

Throughout this work, I will use *the state* to refer to the government. The state may be local (e.g., city council), regional, or national. Social movements are deeply shaped by states, and at times movements have a profound impact in changing government policies and priorities. Different types of states often determine the possibilities for collective action and the forms they take. Repressive governments that do not allow citizens to form autonomous organizations or to assemble publicly place enormous obstacles for groups to initiate social movement campaigns. In some cases, governmental repression pushes groups into more radical demands and forms of mobilization. More-democratic states will likely tolerate social movement mobilizations and use softer forms of repression when trying to control or pacify mass dissent (e.g., manipulate the mass media, deny permits for demonstrations). Even at the local level in the United States there is wide variation among city governments and the amount of political space granted to excluded and marginalized populations.

*Social Movement Organizations*

Once social movements come into existence, they are likely to form organizations that support further mobilization (McAdam 1999 [1982]). We call these kinds of associations social movement organizations (SMOs) (McCarthy and Zald 1977; McAdam and Scott 2005; Minkoff and McCarthy 2005). The acronym SMOs has become so widespread in social movement studies that scholars often neglect to define the term. Examples of SMOs include the People for the Ethical Treatment of Animals (PETA), and the internationally active environmental organization Greenpeace. SMOs appear to be proliferating across national boundaries in the twenty-first century (Smith and Wiest 2012), a theme we explore in chapter 8.

These core social movement concepts are applied throughout this text. We can briefly start using these terms by returning to the Women’s March and addressing the following questions: What were the grievances driving the largest mobilizations in US history? How would you describe the strategy of the organizers of the event? What were the central demands and goals of the marches? How would you classify the core tactic of the street march (conventional or disruptive)? What features did the organizers use in their framing strategies to bring millions out to protest? The maps in figures 1 and 2 illustrate where the women’s marches occurred in the 3,007 counties of the United States. Why did some counties have multiple women’s marches while many more counties failed to produce even one event? Chapter 4, on movement emergence, directly addresses this question.

#### MAJOR THEMES IN THE STRUCTURE OF SOCIAL MOVEMENTS

In the following chapters we explore in depth the multifaceted nature of social movements—the collective coming together of ordinary people to overcome exclusion and mount sustained campaigns for social change. We move from *methods* and *theoretical underpinnings* of social movements to the major subareas guiding the study of collective mobilization. These themes include *social movement emergence*, *collective action frames*, *individual recruitment and participation*, *the impacts of social movements*, and *the global spread of movement activities*.

*Methods*

While it might seem rather simple to identify a social movement on the basis of the concepts just outlined, systematically dissecting movement

dynamics using social science methods is a challenging process. In the first part of chapter 2, I classify levels of social movement activity, from the microscale of everyday forms of resistance in small insular groups to the macroscale of mobilization spreading over entire societies and across countries. I next introduce the major techniques used in social movement research, including observation, interviews, newspapers, social media (Twitter, Facebook, WhatsApp, etc.), surveys, archives, and government statistics. Each method is directly linked to specific areas and dimensions of collective action, such as movement emergence and movement recruitment. Readers will be introduced to strategies on how to carry out collective action research, especially the appropriate techniques for collecting data for particular dimensions of social movement activity.

### *Theory*

Chapter 3 introduces the main theoretical explanations for social movement dynamics. Theories provide guides that reduce the social world to the most important features driving social movement mobilization. We review early models of social movements that failed to account for the unequal distribution of power and resources in modern societies. The universe of contemporary movement theories will be examined, including rational actor, new social movement, and political process frameworks. The now-dominant political process approach centers on the larger political environment and how differentially configured political contexts shape the likelihood of social movement emergence, forms of mobilization, and movement outcomes. Special attention is given to the negative conditions driving collective action within the political process tradition as movements in the twenty-first century increasingly respond to environmental, political, social, and economic threats. With social movement theories in hand, readers will have the tools to scrutinize elite and mass media accounts of real-time social movements in terms of their origins, motivations, and consequences for changing society.

### *Movement Emergence*

Chapter 4 examines how social movements are most likely to arise when a particular collectivity comes under threat or receives signals from the political environment that advantages may be forthcoming if groups decide to mobilize. In other words, either “bad news” or “good news” may motivate episodes of collective action (Meyer 2002). Under bad-news or threatening conditions, a community or population perceives that its situation will become worse if it fails to act and that it may lose collective goods (e.g., loss of land, rights,

employment). In the good-news political environment, groups sense that they will acquire new collective goods if they act in concert (e.g., new rights, higher wages, greater environmental quality). Often, bad-news and good-news protest campaigns are triggered by government policies that signal to would-be challengers that the state is becoming less or more receptive to the issues most meaningful to the population in question.

Besides these motivations for movement emergence, some type of organizational base needs to be in existence to mobilize large numbers of people (McCarthy 1996; McAdam 1999 [1982]; Andrews 2004). These organizational assets may be traditional, such as solidarities based on village, religious, regional, or ethnic identities, or they may be associational, rooted in secondary groups such as labor unions, social clubs, agricultural cooperatives, educational institutions, and more formal social movement organizations (SMOs) (Oberschall 1973). Without preexisting solidarity ties and organizational links, either formal or informal, it is unlikely that threats or opportunities will convert into social movement campaigns. Hence, social movement scholars give special attention to variations in organizational resources across localities and over time in explaining social movement emergence (Edwards and McCarthy 2004; Edwards et al. 2018). More recent work in the resource mobilization subfield has expanded into sophisticated network analysis of the means by which a field of SMOs, potential participants, and sponsoring organizations are structurally connected to one another and how the variations in those structures affect social movement emergence (Diani and McAdam 2003; Diani 2015; Hadden 2015). The struggles of low-wage fast-food workers and the student movement against gun violence in the United States exemplify these dynamics.

### *Framing*

Chapter 5 features the framing perspective and how it derives from the interpretive tradition in sociology, with a special concern for the ability of activists to construct social grievances (Snow et al. 2014; Snow et al. 2018). It is now largely understood that injustice and organizational resources alone do not explain the timing and location of social movement mobilization. Movement leaders and activists must construct norm violations, grievances, and experiences of oppression and injustice in socially meaningful and convincing ways that will motivate the targeted populations to participate in collective action (Snow et al. 1986; Snow and Benford 1988). In other words, social and political activists must “frame” the social world in such a manner that it resonates with rank-and-file movement supporters as well as sympathizers and fence-sitters. We explore the creative ways that movements

employ cultural artifacts, such as popular music, to reach their intended audiences of adherents and potential sympathizers. The framing perspective incorporates the human agency components of the collective action process.

### *Movement Participation*

Social movement recruitment and individual-level participation draw on microlevel models of collective action. Chapter 6 covers these individual-level dynamics in detail. Early explanations of social movement recruitment and participation emphasized the irrationality aspects of mass movements. Political movements of the unruly were viewed as fulfilling psychological deficits for movement participants—a kind of therapy to overcome sentiments of alienation and social strain inherent in fast-paced industrialized urban societies (McAdam 1999 [1982]). By the late 1970s and early 1980s, scholars began to look at more than just the beliefs and psychological profiles of movement participants. They also examined the microstructural context of mobilization, namely the social ties and networks of potential movement recruits (Snow et al. 1980; McAdam 1986). This newer empirical research found that movement participants were often highly socially integrated in their everyday lives and more likely to belong to civil society associations and clubs than those who did not participate in social movements. In addition, the connections individuals maintained with movement-sympathetic organizations and individuals made them much more likely to join a protest campaign, whereas those connected to organizations and individuals opposed to such activities were much more likely not to participate (McAdam 1986).

The most recent studies demonstrate how social networks interact with new political identities forged by political events (Viterna 2013). Further, movement mobilization occurs at a faster rate when entire groups and organizations are recruited en masse—a process termed “bloc recruitment”—as opposed to organizing single individuals one at a time (Oberschall 1973). Readers will develop a more pronounced understanding of the kinds of individual contexts, based on biography, ideology, networks, identities, and past collective action experience, that are more likely to condition one’s choice to join social movement campaigns. Existing data sets on movement participation are also introduced, including state-of-the-art projects of collecting participant motivations in real-time protest demonstrations (Klandermans 2012).

### *Social Movement Outcomes*

Perhaps the most important social movement arena involves movement impacts—the subject of chapter 7. What kinds of changes in the political

environment can be attributed to the existence and actions of a social movement? What aspects of social change can be explicitly associated with the activities of a movement? Students of social movements examine various dimensions of social movement outcomes. The enduring changes associated with movements include impacts on individual movement participants, changes in the political culture, influence on state policies, and “spillover” into other social movements (Meyer and Whittier 1994; Whittier 2004). In comparison to movement emergence, there is less scholarly consensus on social movement outcomes (Jenkins and Form 2005; Amenta et al. 2010). Often it is difficult to decipher the particular contribution of a social movement to a specific outcome while attempting to control for nonmovement influences. Despite these scientific shortcomings, major movements of excluded social groups in the United States and elsewhere have improved their circumstances. Constituents represented by such movements obtained major policy changes because large numbers of people engaged in social movement struggles, including the women’s movement, the African American civil rights movement, the Mexican American labor and civil rights movement, and the LGBTQ civil rights movement, among many others.

*Global South, Authoritarian Regimes,  
and Transnational Movements*

Chapter 8 focuses on movements in the global South and transnational movements (movements operating in more than one country). The majority of social movement studies concentrate on movements in industrialized democracies in the global North. However, a growing body of literature now exists on political contexts outside of the advanced capitalist states. The more stable forms of government in Western democracies allow for a greater upkeep of social movement organizations and more space to launch largely nonviolent campaigns. In nondemocratic and quasi-democratic nations (e.g., monarchies, dictatorships, military juntas, theocracies, authoritarian populism), where associational freedoms are proscribed and regular multiparty elections do not occur, scholars face challenges in explaining when social movements will arise and what forms they will take. One fruitful avenue investigates “cracks in the system,” small political openings, or larger moves toward political liberalization in nondemocracies. These conditions often provide a conducive environment for a few activists in civil society to attempt to form civic associations and possibly even begin to seek small reforms. Other movements may be launched in institutions outside the purview of state control, such as religious institutions (mosques, religious schools, Catholic

youth groups, etc.) or remote territories not completely controlled by the administrative state apparatus and army (Goodwin 2001). Foreign governments and movements may also support a fledgling movement in a non-democratic context.

The expansion of transnational social movements that link members and organizations across more than one country is a major global trend over the past three decades (Smith and Wiest 2012). Two noteworthy transnational movements in the early twenty-first century are international Islamic solidarity and the global economic justice movement. Internationally connected Islamic movements benefit from the concept of *ummah*—the larger community of believers that links the Muslim world beyond national borders (Lubeck and Reifer 2004; Roy 2006). With global migration flows and new communications technology, Islamic-based social movements easily mobilize internationally. Examples include transnationally organized insurgencies such as Al Qaeda or the Islamic State (ISIL). The *ummah* concept is also a powerful unifying force for nonviolent transnational antiwar and antidiscrimination movements in the Islamic world and diasporic communities, and it played a major role in the rapid diffusion of Arab Spring uprisings in 2011 against repressive governments.

The global economic justice movement (sometimes referred to by critics as the antiglobalization movement) is another major transnational movement that emerged in the late twentieth century. Supporters of this movement use global communications technologies to mobilize constituents. The global justice movement arose almost simultaneously with the expansion of the global internet infrastructure between the mid-1990s and the early 2000s. Several organizations in Europe and Canada, including the Council of Canadians, Jubilee 2000, People's Global Action, and ATTAC, began to work with nongovernmental organizations in the developing world to place pressure on newly emerging and older transnational governing bodies and economic institutions, such as the United Nations, the World Trade Organization (WTO), the International Monetary Fund, the World Bank, the Group of Eight (G8), and the European Union.

The demands of the global justice movement vary but tend to focus on economic justice, environmental protection, and the need for more transparency in decision-making among the elite transnational economic and political institutions mentioned above. Though the movement held several major protests in the late 1990s outside WTO and G8 meetings in Europe, a massive demonstration at the 1999 WTO meetings in Seattle, Washington, served as a breakthrough for the global justice movement. It was the largest sustained protest in an American city in several decades (Almeida and

Lichbach 2003). Global justice activists coordinated the arrival of participants from around the country and the world via the internet and organized the protests in the streets of Seattle with cell phones. Dozens of countries across the globe also experienced protests in solidarity with the actions in Seattle. The success of the Seattle mobilizations provided a template for organizing dozens of similar global days of action in the twenty-first century during major international financial conferences, World Social Forums, free trade meetings, and climate change negotiations, including the 2017 G20 Summit in Hamburg, Germany, and the 2018 G20 Summit in Buenos Aires, Argentina.

The Conclusion ends our long journey through the field of collective mobilization dynamics by summarizing key features of social movements we have considered in previous chapters. The collective knowledge of methods, theory, emergence, framing, and movement outcomes accumulated from previous chapters is applied to particular case studies of movements emerging in the 2010s and likely in the 2020s. New frontiers of social movement research are also presented, including recent global patterns in the use of social media technology in recruitment practices, as well as transnational movements such as climate justice.