

Hi Everyone: this is the working outline of a book I have committed to do for Polity, oriented toward classroom use and intended as a cultural introduction to social movements. I could especially use advice on the coverage of general concepts as well as of cultural ones. (Also, on how to use an outline, something I haven't done since fifth grade.) Does this seem a good introduction to the field? Does it present all the basic concepts, and especially cultural concepts? Would you use it in teaching undergrads? Grad students?

Jim

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Social Movements: A Cultural Introduction

James M. Jasper

Social movements give regular people an opportunity to examine, articulate, and live out their most basic moral intuitions and principles. The major advance in research on social movements during the past twenty years has been the development of a sophisticated understanding of the cultural meanings and feelings that accompany action. Protestors and those they engage "feel their way," expressing and creating their own goals and identities as well as sifting through a variety of tactics to try to get what they want. Nowhere is the creation of culture, or its effects on the world we live in, more obvious.

One unique aspect of this book will be the incorporation of emotions into culture and politics. Emotions give cognitive understandings their power to motivate or even to attract attention. They are present in every stage and every aspect of protest. Another unusual dimension is the identification of strategic dilemmas that protestors must negotiate: for every choice there are costs and risks alongside the benefits.

Social Movements is meant to highlight the cultural sources, dynamics, and effects of social movements, but it should also serve as an introduction to the field of social movements. It moves through the many stages and dimensions of movements, from their origins and recruitment to their choices and internal dynamics to their potential impacts on the world around them. Each section will contain roughly 1500 words, for a total of around 65,000, plus recommended

readings. Its length and accessibility should make it popular with protestors themselves as well as with students.

Each chapter will open with a vignette about a social movement from the past or present, and other sections of that chapter will return to the same case from time to time.

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Chapter Outline

Introduction: Culture is Everywhere, but not Everything. Culture is composed of shared thoughts, feelings, and morals, along with the physical embodiments we create to express or shape them. Culture permeates protestors' actions, but also those of other players with whom they interact. It also shapes physical resources, the rules of arenas, and individual psychology, even though these are distinct from culture.

Case: The Occupation Movement (Indignados, Occupy Wall Street, etc.).

The point of the book.

What follows.

Chapter 1: What Is Culture? What are Social Movements?

Case: Wilkes and Liberty.

The Birth of the Social Movement. [NOTE: phrases like this with a period at the end are section headings]

Although humans have always found ways to resist and protest what they dislike, the modern social movement as we recognize it today emerged in late eighteenth-century Britain and America. It was a reaction to the emergence of increasingly powerful parliaments based on the idea of citizenship. As in other countries, later, social movements demanded rights and recognition for new groups who were excluded from political participation but who felt they were part of the nation.

Weapons of the weak [without periods, these headings are intended to be one or two paragraphs]

Democracy and Mobilization

Dimensions of Citizenship

- Arenas defined
- Types of Arenas
- Political opportunity structures
- Political opportunities
- The modern social movement

Coercion, Money, Words.

These are the three great families of means that people employ in their strategic engagements. Social movements, even though they may use all three, are largely defined by their specialization in persuasion, or words. To the extent they rely on coercion instead, they shade into armies or criminal gangs; to the extent they rely on money instead they become interest groups. For this reason, it is especially useful to understand social movements through the lens of rhetoric, namely culture deployed to have an effect on others, and to see strategic players as audiences for each others' words and actions. (Although money and coercion also have cultural components.)

- Coercion
- Payment
- Persuasion
- Coercive Efforts that are not social movements
- Revolutions
- Market activities
- Interest groups
- Self-help movements
- Social movements of the poor
- Social movements of the rich or powerful

What is and is not Culture.

Culture shapes both our means and our ends. It is the knowledge that allows us to organize marches, deliver petitions, and hire staff. It also informs what we want and who we think we are. Laws and rules – what is often called structure – are also a form of understanding. In addition to culture, there are physical resources of which some players control more than others; there are strategic interactions among players that have their own logic and dilemmas; and there are the biographical idiosyncrasies of individuals that shape their action but fall short of culture since they are not always shared.

- Resources
- Arenas
- Rules [including laws]
- Biography
- Cognition
- Morality
- Emotions

Emotions.

- Thinking-Feeling
- Reflex Emotions
- Urges
- Moods
- Affective Commitments
- Moral Commitments
- Emotions and meaning

Alternative Approaches.

The primary approaches to social movements that are not cultural are structural theories and rationalist theories. Structural theories have a "lock-and-key" model of protest: choosing the right strategy will open the door to success.

- Structures
- Lock-and-key models of strategy
- Rational choice
- Human nature
- Game theory
- Theories versus mechanisms

Action.

- Physical
- Based on meanings
- Resources and opportunities
- Dilemmas
- Emotions
- The Need for Interpretation
- Constraints: lead to chapter 1

Key authors: Charles Tilly, Sidney Tarrow, Michael Young, James Scott, Mancur Olson, Karl-Dieter Opp

Sidebars: 2 X 2 of approaches: material/cultural; macro-micro; typology of emotions.

Chapter 2: Contexts. Social movements must always maneuver through layers of cultural and political context, taking advantage of any opportunities they find. New sources of income, sudden weaknesses in opponents, shifts in broad understandings are all openings for activists, if they are savvy and nimble enough to recognize and take advantage of them. Those who lack resources can often compensate with intelligent strategic choices.

Case: The Religious Right in the U.S. and beyond.

- Religious and secular movements
- Rightwing versus leftleaning movements
- Need models to cover all sorts

Citizenship.

Political arenas provide most of the openings for action, especially when there are paths of participation in politics without severe repression by armies and police. Under repressive regimes, protestors hoping to gain citizenship rights must usually await or create divisions among political elites.

- Citizenship movements
- Post-citizenship movements
- New Social Movements

Moral Voice.

A social movement's moral vision can be conveyed through various media, from face-to-face conversations up through international news media. Activists try to promulgate their ideas as widely as possible, but the broader the medium the less they can control the messages it conveys. New communications technologies since the 19th century have encouraged the spread of social movements – but also efforts to monitor and suppress them.

- The Fundamentals
- The Media Dilemma

Media ownership
The Programmed Society
Private and Public Morality
Religious Movements

Sources of Power.

In addition to political participation and the media, movements can take advantage of monetary contributions or of having their members in key positions, such as machine workers who could bring entire industries to a halt through sit-down strikes. Like communications, improved transportation has aided mobilization.

Coercion
Money
Persuasion
Positional power
Transportation

Formal Organizations.

Professional activists
Moral entrepreneurs
Discretionary funds for supporting them,
Routines of protest
A "social movement society."
Decisionmaking in Groups

Informal Networks.

Information
Affective loyalties
Bloc Recruitment
New Social Movements
What do networks convey? Link to chapter 3.

Key authors: Alain Touraine, Alberto Melucci, Manuel Castells, Frances Fox Piven, McCarthy and Zald.

Sidebar: Research techniques: historical events; participant observation; case studies; interpretive techniques; other techniques.

Images: early factory protests; Ralph Nader; HQ of a big labor union; routine arrests.

Chapter 3: Sources of Meaning. The core of human nature is to impose meaning on the world around us and to communicate how we think and feel to others. We use almost any means we can in order to do this. We must pay attention to who creates the meanings, how they are embodied, and who the audiences are.

Case: U.S. Civil Rights Movement [include a lot on sermons]

Physical Carriers.

Almost anything can be used to convey meanings: sermons, letters, advertisements; frescoes, paintings, and stained-glass windows; rituals and other actions.

Different media have different patterns of ownership and dissemination. Music can convey different messages than the written word, for instance, just as radio music differs from live music. [Did the means change with widespread shift in literacy?]

Written forms

Visual forms

Music [especially church songs]

Jokes, gossip, graffiti.

Figurative Carriers.

Meanings come in many forms, which reach different audiences with different impacts.

Maxims and other common sense

Frames and slogans

Ideologies

Identities

Narratives and stories

Political Characters.

One important set of figures are heroes, villains, victims, and other character types that reflect literary tropes. It is hard to create blame without victims and villains, and it is helpful to social movements to position themselves as potential heroes.

Reputations for strength, good intent, and activity matter.

Victims

Villains

Heroes

Minions

Conversions

Interactions.

Rituals, broadly understood, make certain meanings salient for participants.

Dialogues focus attention rhetorically

Speech acts

Free spaces

The Cultural Innovation Dilemma

Our Bodies, Our Selves.

We both absorb and express meanings through our bodies. We use clothes, body modifications, gestures, and so on to display them. Emotions occur through our bodies, but so do all meanings.

Feelings and Emotions

Bodies as displays

Punk subcultures

Bodily stamina and failures

Key authors: David Snow, Robert Benford, Francesca Polletta, Hank Johnston, Gary Alan Fine, Randall Collins, Marc Steinberg, Colin Barker, John Krinsky, Norman Fairclough, Dick Hebdidge, Sara Evans and Harry Boyte

Sidebar: Physical Carriers of Meaning; Figurative Carriers of Meaning; 2 by 2 of political characters; Cultural Dilemmas [hero or victim, villain or clown] [check Klandermans]

Images: stained glass window, graffiti, a villain or hero [maybe from Nicole's cards]; levitation of the Pentagon? Highlander School.

Chapter 4: Recruiting. Most movements first emerge from the efforts of a small number of individuals, often participants in related social movements, who pick up on emerging cultural concerns and opportunities. They convince others to join them, either by persuading leaders of existing groups or by spreading their vision through social networks. They try to package their ideas, images, and morals in striking moral shocks, or to take advantage of shocks created by others. Recruitment usually occurs through a number of small steps, not through a sudden conversion – and the same mechanisms that first mobilize people also keep them involved.

Case: LGBTQ Movements.

Social Networks. [use Jasper in Freeman; compare to chapter 2]

Extensive research has shown that individuals are more likely to be recruited to a movement in which they already have family or friends. Ideas and ideologies travel across these networks, but networks can sometimes operate through emotional loyalties even in the absence of shared ideas.

- Friends and Family
- The Transmission of Ideas
- Affective Commitments
- Ideas can come later

Meanings Conveyed.

Eventually, ideologies must be packaged or framed in ways that resonate emotionally, morally, and cognitively with potential recruits. Trust as well as exposure are crucial to the spread of movement ideologies and viewpoints, as people judge the validity of ideas and morals partly on the basis of who embraces them.

- Frame Alignment

Ideological Education Storytelling

Moral Shocks.

An emotional state of shock gets people's attention. It can paralyze them, or develop into indignation and anger and propel them to action. Recruiters try to create these shocks through their own propaganda, but on occasion the vicissitudes of life push people into outraged action. The unnecessary death of a loved one is an especially strong prod to action.

- What they are
- Different contexts
- Evidence

Blame.

A key process in creating protest is finding a human source of a problem, a villain, to blame. If, instead, a social ill is attributed to nature, protest is less likely.

In its early days, AIDS triggered a battle over blame. Same-sex marriage did not. [the victims were those who simply wanted to marry]

- More on blame (from other books)
- Indignation

Threat.

Negative emotions grab people's attention. Most of the time, we live our lives through comfortable routines that require little attention. We are more willing to pay attention to politics when dramatic or frightening events disrupt these routines. I call this "the power of negative thinking."

- Sources of threat
- Emotions
- Paralysis and action
- Moral batteries: tie to motivation.

Key concepts: social networks, the Extension Dilemma, threat, moral shocks, blame, moral batteries.

Key authors: David Snow, Ziad Munson, Sharon Erickson Nepstad, Deborah Gould

Sidebar: 2 by 2 of types of blame; Dilemmas of Movement Building;
Notes: L and G communities held positions that became advantageous in the media and cultural industries, such as theater and television and Hollywood and the visual arts. When the movement radicalized in the mid 1980s, it was extremely creative in its use of visual images. On another front, GLAAD was very effective in changing tv images. Also, very caring images emerged during the AIDS crisis. Then, marriage was so normalizing, with stories of long-time couples. Images: ACT UP; Ricky in "My So-Called Life"?

Chapter 5: Motivating. Even those who have been recruited must have their commitment reinforced regularly, since there are always competing demands on their time and money. The same emotional processes that got them involved initially may keep them coming back, but additional factors also kick in.

Case: Dalit Rights. [especially about festivals, refigured gods, saints]

The Pleasures of Protest.

Collective marching, singing, and shouting can be exhilarating, even when they entail some risk or fear. Large gatherings help relieve the tedium of more routine activities such as writing letters, licking stamps, and making phone calls. These can be secular as well as religious (Diablo), and can even be made up on the spot.

- Interaction rituals
- Moving together
- All-encompassing music

Collective Identity.

Although some movements emerge from a pre-existing collective identity, much as the U.S. civil rights movement grew out of the African American community, movements form their own identities as well. These can be based on organizational membership or adherence to tactics (such as the nonviolent movement), or they can draw on the solidarity of an inspiring sense of a national or international effort.

- Dalits' old identity: escape it versus change it?
- The Stigmatized Identity Dilemma

- New identities
- Organizational and tactical identities
- Boundaries
- Imagined communities
- Nationalism
- The Band of Brothers
- Activist Tourism

Groups and Organizations.

Groups have many techniques for instilling and maintaining loyalty, including admiration for leaders and heroes, demonization of foes, love for the group, and pressures for conformity. One risk is that leaders substitute their own goals and interests for those of the group.

- Organizations help us think as well as telling us what to do
- Loyalties
- Boundaries
- Douglas and Wildavsky
- Bounded choices

Leaders.

- Decisive leaders
- Symbolic leaders
- Charisma
- Leader dilemmas. Lead: Who really decides?

Key authors: Nancy Whittier, Verta Taylor, Alberto Melucci, Hank Johnston, Benedict Anderson, Christian Smith, Janja Lalich, Jeff Goodwin, Mary Douglas
Sidebars: Internal Dilemmas: Shifting Goals, Fodder, Extension, Universalism, Bystander, Janus; Leader dilemmas?
Images: new dalit statues, Mayabarata, festival

Chapter 6: Deciding. Groups and organizations must make decisions about what to do, and they run the risk of alienating members who disagree with their choices. This risk is greater for the voluntary groups that compose most social movements, compared to groups with paid staff.

Case: Global Justice Movement [especially for its range of activities]

Routines and Creativity.

Protestors typically rely on a small “repertory” of familiar tactics, because their meanings are understood by participants and their external audiences.

Tilly on repertories

Sharpe’s long list of tactics

Innovation

Bureaucratization

Internal Democracy.

Groups often adopt rules and practices for making decisions that resonate with their moral goals. In many cases a concern with internal democracy becomes a goal as important as external efficacy.

Prefigurative politics

Discourse

Social forums

Are meetings fun?

Means as ends

Factions.

Factions not only embrace conflicting goals or means, but they come to be symbols of them too. Choices about what to do become choices about “who we are.” Out of factional disputes often arise radical flanks with different views of goals or means.

Schisms

Generations

Tastes in tactics

Radical flanks

Strategic Dilemmas.

All strategic players face many tradeoffs or dilemmas, and their emotional and cognitive visions show why they ignore some but wrestle intently with others.

How decisions are made

Tradeoffs and dilemmas

Learning

Reacting to others: lead to winning/losing

Key authors: Francesca Polletta, Donatella della Porta, Mary Bernstein, Joshua Gamson, Jo Freeman, Wini Breines, Jane Mansbridge, Geoffrey Pleyers

Sidebars: Dilemmas of Decisionmaking [Risk, Dirty Hands, Pyramid, Organization, Articulation, Today or Tomorrow?, Sorcerer's Apprentice, Commitment, more]

Images: of a meeting; of nonviolence;

Chapter 7: Winning and Losing. Ultimately, protestors want to change the world around them, and their relative success depends on their ability to coerce, persuade, or buy off others. Other players include opponents, allies, bystanders, and various parts of the state with decisionmaking authority – all of whom have goals of their own.

Case: the Arab Spring.

Tunisia: refers back to shocks, symbolic individuals, emotions

Egypt: recruitment, persuasion, diffusion

Libya and Syria: winning and losing (beyond the old truism that severe repression always works)

Other Players.

Protestors must engage a number of other strategic players, some sympathetic, some hostile, and others neutral. We can view them through the same interpretive lens we have used for protest groups.

The forces of order

Courts

Parties and legislators

Media

Intellectuals

Bystanders

Allies

Donors

The audience segregation dilemma (Egypt: supporters vs army?)

The Arenas of Conflict.

Social movements promote their goals in a variety of arenas, and often switch between arenas when they see opportunities for progress. They must constantly monitor and interpret what all the players are doing in these arenas. At their most successful, movements actually change the rules of the arenas or accept positions within them, making it easier for them to have influence in the future.

- Legal
- Illegal
- Disruption
- Arena switching
- Structural change

Repression.

- Forms of illegality, selective tolerance
- Police and armies
- Egypt's army
- Torture and pain

Persuading Others.

Protestors' main activity is trying to arouse helpful beliefs, feelings, and actions in others. Although in the long run they hope to change others' values, in the short run they may merely want to paralyze or frighten other players through threats.

- WUNC displays
- Sit-down strikes
- Exit the dictator
- Matching up with donors: Cliff Bob

Juggling Goals.

Like individuals, social movements have many goals they would like to accomplish. Some are stated and others not; some are the hopes of factions

and individuals while others are consensual; different ones come to the forefront when they seem easier to attain and recede when they seem difficult.

The articulation dilemma

The goal switching dilemma

Key authors: Todd Gitlin, Frances Fox Piven and Richard Cloward, Clifford Bob, William Gamson, Pierre Bourdieu, Edwin Amenta, Nonna Mayer

Sidebar: Dilemmas of External Interactions [Naughty or Nice, False Arenas, Form and Content, Rules, Basket, Players or Prizes, Radicalism, Security]

Chapter 8: Effects. Social movements have a variety of effects, apart from whether they win or lose. One of the longest-lasting impacts is on how people view and feel about the world, in other words the creation of a new moral sensibility.

Case: Animal Rights.

How We Think. Some movements affect how we think about the world, including basic scientific and technological rationality such as what we count or how we test new drugs.

How We Feel. Movements also affect our feelings, such as what we feel indignant about, or for whom we feel compassion.

The Moral Impact. Ultimately, movements help members to articulate new moral visions, based on new ways of thinking and feeling.

How We Act. New ways of thinking, feeling, and judging often lead to new practices, from more humane farming to new human dignity for once-marginal groups. Conscious strategic action leads to the creation of new habits and bureaucratic routines that are no longer consciously evaluated.

Writing History. In addition to trying to influence history, strategic players try to write the history of what happened. Memoirs but also scholarly works refight old fights, allocating credit and blame in ways that affect future efforts.

Key concepts: moral panics, compassion, indignation, reputation, the Today or Tomorrow Dilemma

Key authors: Ron Eyerman and Andrew Jamison, Gary Alan Fine

Conclusion: Action in Context. Culture helps us act in the world as well as to understand it. We relate to our social, psychological, physical (and spiritual) contexts partly through feeling our way around them, using our emotions as our guides.

Discontent. We express our discontent in many ways, and social movements are actually rare compared to the other ways. They are hard to assemble and maintain.

Action. Human action is full of dilemmas and tradeoffs, and so we are constantly juggling many goals, many means, and many different viewpoints. It is rare and temporary when large groups can speak with one voice, as they do in social movements. It is a great human accomplishment.

Progress? Although it is reassuring to think that social movements represent gradual progress toward social justice and equality, people can band together for any sort of goal, vicious as well as sympathetic. [refer back to religious right] But when progress is made, it is always because social movements have formed and prodded the rest of their society to follow along. Social justice depends on social movements.

Recommended Readings.

Include websites, such as Contexts Essential Protest songs, Beate's list of movies. Ask Amsoc for suggestions (and put on your website too); mention your website. 1-sentence annotation for 20-30 books that would provide a solid background to the field.

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45 sections @ 1500 words each = 67,500 words [6-8 pars each]

Or 350 pars @ 180 words each = 63,000 words