

SOCIAL MOVEMENT ORGANIZATIONS

Social movements & social movement organizations are related:

Social Movement - Collective efforts by relatively powerless groups using extra-institutional means to promote or resist social change (e.g., political, cultural, economic, ethnic, sexual identity)

Pro-life & Pro-choice; NRA & Handgun Control; Civil Rights Movement & KKK



Social Movement Organization (SMO) - Named formal organization engaged in actions to advance a movement's goals

Movements often have many SMOs pursuing change agendas. What differences in the goals & tactics of these environmental SMOs?

Greenpeace; Sierra Club; Audubon Society; Nature Conservancy; World Wildlife Federation; Friends of Earth; Natural Resources Defense Council; Earth Now!; Earth Liberation Front; ...

Is Hamas a SMO?

In last year's Palestinian parliamentary elections, Hamas (Islamic Resistance Movement) scored an unexpected victory over Fatah.



Hamas uses violence in its avowed goal to destroy Israel. The U.S. considers it a terrorist organization. But, Hamas also runs schools, clinics, and welfare services in the Palestine territories. Although he backs free and fair elections in the Mid-East, Pres. Bush refuses to negotiate with any Hamas-led government.

Are Hamas and other Islamic fundamentalist organizations (Muslim Brotherhood, Islamic Jihad, Ansar Al Islam, Al-Qaeda) part of a broad international social movement?

How closely do these organizations' goals, structures, and action fit the social movement organization definition?

Should the SMO definition be modified to restrict both org'l ends (reform, revolution) and means (lobbying, terrorism)?

Old & New Social Movements

Major 19-20th c. social movements were national struggles for independence from colonial rule (Norway, India, Algeria) and working-class movements for union collective bargaining rights.



U.S. Civil Rights Movement of 1950-60s was a new type of movement based on **social-group identities**. Deprived minorities sought rights of political inclusion: Latinos, Native Americans, women, gays & lesbians.

With post-industrialization, many **New Social Movements** emerged around cultural values, lifestyles & middle-class interests: Environmental, peace/anti-war, human rights, social justice, consumer protection, animal liberation, ...

Many NSMs draw international participants and require transnational cooperation to achieve their collective goals

Network Recruiting for Collection Action

Dense networks provide pre-existing channels for recruiting participants and micro-mobilization for collective action.

Movement activists target friends, family, coworkers whose shared social identities & attitudinal affinities for movement values and goals may predispose them to participate.



High-risk/cost activism raises barriers to mobilizing SM supporters: Rational decision is not to participate when perceived low success is outweighed by potentially heavy costs; e.g., police violence or losing a job.

But networks can offset negative rational calculations, if people value preserving or forging strong social ties to SM adherents. To assure compliant control, **religious cults** often recruit weakly tied persons & force members to cut links to family and friends.

Networks Helped MADD to Survive

How do personal networks enable SMOs to acquire resources & mobilize for collective actions to achieve organizational goals?



John D. McCarthy

Social Capital The networked access to resources “present in specific sociopolitical contexts.” Social networks can be seen as preconditions “capable of either constraining or facilitating movement mobilization ... and also as the outcomes of movement mobilization.”

Edwards & McCarthy’s study of MADD found:

- ▶ Chapters with patronage & weaker ties at founding had greater survival advantages
- ▶ Lower survival chances if chapter emerged from a pre-existing group or had a leader with strong ties




Why did strong leader ties increase survival only when a MADD chapter de-emphasized victim services?

Contingent Effects of Strong Ties

TABLE 3: Strategic Choice and SMO Persistence

Victim Aid Emphasis	Effect of Preexisting Strong Leadership Ties among Family and Friends on the Odds of Persistence
0	26.45 (26 survivors per 1 disbanded)
1	11.64
2	5.12
3	2.25
4	.99
5	.44
6	.19 (1 survivor for 5 disbanded)

Chapters with strong leadership ties had the lowest survival chances when they strongly emphasized victim aid



MADD chapters “were more likely to persist when they relied on personal social networks to recruit new members and deemphasized victim assistance activities. ... Among groups that downplay victim aid, and thereby place greater emphasis on other activities, strong preexisting leadership ties confer the expected advantages, and those advantages are substantial.” (p. 645)

Resource Mobilization & Tactics

Resource Mobilization Theory – Movement growth and success requires obtaining control of resources (money & bodies) to achieve collective goals. Resources can come from activists, constituents, other organizations: churches, foundations, unions. Personal networks are major means to recruit new participants.



To be effective, movements must convert their resources into collective actions to influence public opinion and targets. SMOs deploy a diverse repertoire of **extra-institutional tactics**, some of which emphasize confrontations and the disruption of conventional political routines.

Nonviolent: Posters, petitions, Websites, teach-ins, public rallies, protest marches, sit-ins, hunger strikes, pies-in-the-face

Violent tactics: trashing buildings & burning autos, street fights, riots, assaults, bank robberies, bombings, assassinations

Mobilizing Support

Movements can provoke counter-movements with opposing goals. Discuss ways to mobilize wider range of potential supporters, their resources, and their participation in one of two opposing SMOs:

Assoc'n of Community Organizations for Reform Now (ACORN):

Mobilize a living-wage campaign to pass local ordinances requiring private businesses that benefit from public money to pay their workers a **living wage**. Ordinances cover employers who hold large city or county service contracts or receive governmental grants, loans, bond financing, tax abatements.

A Fair Shake for Business:

Mobilize to prevent a living-wage ordinance and the taxes on businesses & nonprofit organizations needed to pay for them. Increased minimum wages will mean that less-skilled workers and welfare recipients won't be able to compete for jobs with better-qualified applicants.

A Political-Process Model

Doug McAdams' (1982) political-process model explains rise and decline of U.S. black protest movement with three components:



- 1) **Political Opportunity:** greater receptivity to change demands
- 2) **Cognitive Liberation:** challengers' subjective experiences of shifting political conditions giving them a "new sense of efficacy"
- 3) **Indigenous Organizational Strength:** "structural potential" of challengers to mobilize & take advantage of political opportunity

Indigenous organizational strength includes numbers of members & leaders; structures of solidary incentives; and communication networks.

Preparing ground for civil rights movement, the rapid growth from 1931 to 1945 in three types of institutions "gave blacks the organizational strength needed to generate a campaign of collective insurgency" from 1954 to 1967:

- **Black churches:** ministers and their congregations
- **Southern Black colleges:** college students
- **Southern chapters of NAACP:** activists & lawyers

Sit-ins coordinated thru a "well-developed communication network linking SBC campuses into a loosely integrated institutional network" (1982:138)

Mississippi Freedom Summer

Recruitment process involves strong identification with values, prior activism, and integration into supportive networks. Evidence comes from Doug McAdam's study of 961 applicants to Student Nonviolent Coordinating Committee's Mississippi Freedom Summer black-voter registration drive of 1964.



Compared to 241 who withdrew, the 720 who went to Mississippi had more org'l affiliations, higher levels of past civil rights activity, more extensive & stronger priorities to other Freedom Summer participants.

“The differences are especially pronounced in the two strong tie categories, with participants listing more than twice the number of volunteers and nearly three times the number of activists as the **withdrawals.**” (McAdam 1986; see also McAdam 1988; Fernandez & McAdam 1988; McAdam & Fernandez 1990; McAdam and Paulsen 1993).

Success is Becoming an Insider

Over its life cycle, a SMO may change from radical outsider to accepted political insider. William Gamson (1975) found that centralized and bureaucratized SMOs have better chances of **success** (gaining recognition & acceptance). Movements with complex org'l structures can wage stronger action campaigns.



But, as a movement wins legitimacy & resources, it runs a **risk of cooptation** – bought-off by minor concessions from its targets. Leaders get diverted into running orgs and neglecting original goals; e.g., building homeless shelters instead of solving root causes of homelessness.

Can you give an example of a SMO that transformed into a bureaucratic org and compromised the purity of its struggle?

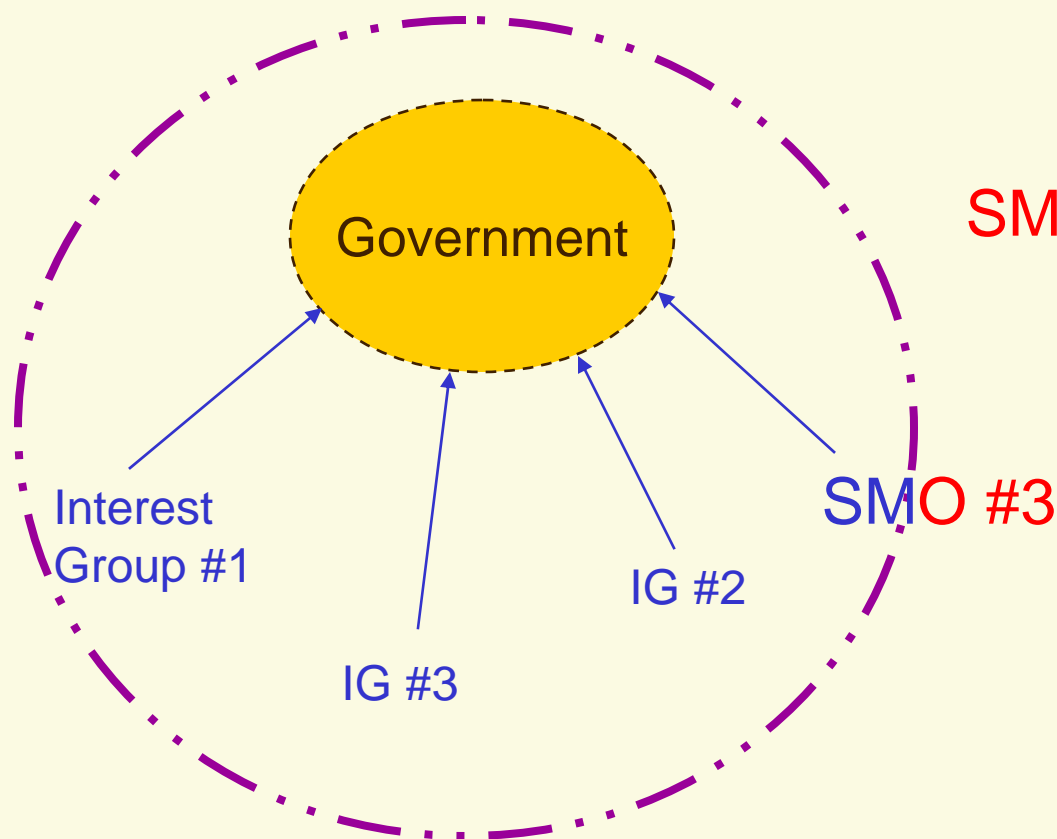
How can SMOs avoid twin dangers of organizational routinization and cooptation, continually renewing their energy & idealism?

Is Michel's "Iron Law of Oligarchy" the inevitable fate of SMOs?

Penetrating the Polity

When SMOs gain recognition, legitimacy, & access to the polity, they cease to be outside challengers. Transformed into institutionalized interest groups, they now compete to influence state policies, using conventional political tactics, e.g., campaign donations and lobbying.

SMO #1



SMO #2

SMO #3

The Global Anti-Capitalist Movement

During the 1990s, an anti-capitalist movement began challenging globalization of benefit only to developed nations & corporations.



A decentralized SMO network uses the **Internet** to coordinate protests by socialists, greens, labor unions, anarchists, and indigenous peoples. They seek to promote **diverse interests**: privatization of water rights, endangered species, child labor, forgiveness of national debts.

Inspired by the Indians of Chiapas, Mexico, **People's Global Action** <www.nadir.org/nadir/initiativ/agp/> targets transnational institutions allegedly undermining local community control and decision-making: World Bank, International Monetary Fund (IMF), G8 Summit, World Economic Forum, World Trade Organization (WTO)

WTO – Ensuring Free Trade?

WORLD TRADE
ORGANIZATION



The WTO, created in 1995, is a primary target of activists in the anti-corporate globalization movement.

“The WTO is the only global international organization dealing with the rules of trade between nations. At its heart are the WTO agreements, negotiated and signed by the bulk of the world’s trading nations and ratified in their parliaments. The goal is to help producers of goods and services, exporters, and importers conduct their business.” www.wto.org



Core WTO principles: “Trade without Discrimination” and “Promoting Fair Competition” among nations.

The WTO multilateral trading system is negotiated and signed by governments. Contracts guarantee member nations’ trade rights & bind governments to keep trade policies within agreed limits. Purpose is to ensure that trade flows as predictably and freely as possible, by helping producers, exporters, and importers of goods and services conduct their business smoothly.

WTO – A New Evil Empire?

Anti-globalists criticize the WTO for its allegedly undemocratic decision-making and lack of openness in reaching agreements. They claim the 25 richest developed nations manipulate trade deals to the disadvantage of 120 poor developing countries.



Developing nations often lack staff and expertise to win favorable tariff reductions. Textile quotas block clothing imports from low-wage countries. U.S., EU & Japanese agricultural subsidy rates are \$20K/farmer.

What makes for “a level playing field” in free trade talks?

- Should all nations have equal access and status in trade disputes? How can poor nations afford negotiators & experts?
- Should negotiations produce actually equal outcomes and implementation? Would genuine trade “fairness” require a massive transfer of wealth from the richest to poorest nations?

Computer-Supported SMs

Internet & Web revolutionized international SM protest strategies

“The Independent Media Center is a network of collectively run media outlets for the creation of radical, accurate, and passionate tellings of the truth. We work out of a love and inspiration for people who continue to work for a better world, despite corporate media’s distortions and unwillingness to cover the efforts to free humanity.” <www.indymedia.org>



Computer-supported SMs deploy “new digital technologies to coordinate actions, build networks, practice media activism, and physically manifest their emerging political ideals” (Juris 2005)

How do flexible, decentralized networks enhance coordination?

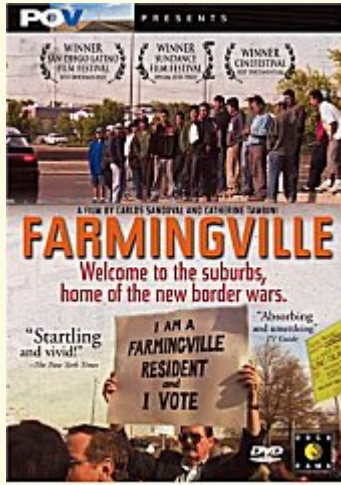
Why are established SMOs less suitable for anti-global capital fight?

What is role of radical “Indymedia” in sustaining an activist culture?

Are CSSMs contributing to participatory democracy? How or why not?

Farmingville

This film won the 2004 Sundance Film Festival's Special Jury Prize.



“In the late 1990s, some 1,500 Mexican workers moved to the leafy, middle-class town of Farmingville [Long Island, New York]. In some ways it’s a familiar American story: an influx of illegal immigrants crossing the border to do work the locals won’t; rising tensions with the Anglo population; charges and counter-charges of lawlessness and racism; protest marches, unity rallies and Internet campaigns – then vicious hate crimes that tear the community apart.” (Box cover)

- What perceived social problems led to a grassroots opposition movement? What were its goals?
- How did that opposition movement’s actions trigger a counter-movement? Who were its supporters and what were its goals?
- What mobilization tactics did each group deploy? How successfully?
- How did both movements pressure local politicians to adopt their preferred policy solutions? What was the ultimate outcome? Any winners & losers?
- How was the failure to resolve this local conflict a consequence of a federal government unable/unwilling to deal with problems beyond community control?

Shorter Writing #3:

The opposing Farmingville SMOs faced organizational problems of acquiring resources, maintaining boundaries, achieving goals.



Discuss two strategies or tactics deployed by either Farmingville SMO in their efforts to mobilize resources and coordinate collective actions by their members and sympathizers for changing, or resisting changes in, the community's immigrant labor problem.

Discuss why each method was (or might have been) effective or counter-productive for achieving a SMO's preferred public policies.

DUE in class Thursday, October 4

PAPER SPECS: Maximum word limit = 500, typed double-spaced with one-inch margins, 12-point Times Roman font. Include your name and student ID, Assignment #, and "Word Count = 000"

References

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