Oppositional Consciousness

The Subjective Roots of Social Protest

Edited by

Jane Mansbridge

and

Aldon Morris

The University of Chicago Press • *Chicago & London*

9 Complicating Oppositional Consciousness

Jane Mansbridge

The Oppositional "Spectrum": No Single Continuum Will Do

We are tempted to think of oppositional consciousness as simply running along one continuum from less to more. One spectrum might be conceived as follows: (1) recognizing that one group *differs* from another group; (2) recognizing that the groups are not only different but *unequal*, and that one's own group is on the losing side of the inequality; (3) recognizing that those inequalities are *unjust*; (4) recognizing that one's group has a *common interest* in ending those injustices; (5) recognizing that *collective action* can play a key role in reducing or eliminating those injustices; and (6) believing that group action can *succeed* in reducing or eliminating the injustices.[1]

Several necessary but analytically separable dimensions may enter at several points along what might otherwise seem a one-dimensional continuum. Feelings of being a member of, or deeply identified with, a group in a way that is salient to one's *identity*, of *warmth* toward the group and/or its organizations, of *opposition* to another group or groups, and of discontent or *anger* are all analytically distinct and may enter at almost any point along the continuum. The explicit identification of another group (or groups) as the cause and beneficiary of the unjust inequalities can also enter at any point after the recognition of injustice. So can the conclusion that the injustices are systemic. Nor does each point on the continuum require the existence of the prior points. The spectrum, in short, is loosely rather than strictly defined.

Take, as the first point on this loosely defined spectrum, the recognition that two aggregates of people differ on some characteristic. This recognition involves one's consciousness becoming alert to that characteristic, finding it salient. The process is analytically distinguishable from, but in practice often occurs at the same time as, recognizing that one belongs oneself to one of those groups. The separate recognition of identity produces a sense of "us" and "them"; it means I am different from them in a group-related way and need to make sense of that. Because healthy human beings usually like themselves, the analytically distinguishable moment of belonging is often hard to separate from some weak form of positive group identification—warm feelings toward one's

own group and others in it. But one may come to have neutral or even strongly antipathetic feelings toward a group of which one is, in others' eyes, a member.[2]

Note that difference need not mean opposition. The members of my family, who live in this house, are different from the members of another family who live in the house next door, but this difference does not necessarily usher in a sense of opposition. I may feel far more warmly toward all members of my family than toward any member of the family next door, but never feel that I (or we) and they are in any sense opposed. The move from "us *and* them" to "us *against* them" is an analytically significant step.[3]

Nor does opposition necessarily require discontent or anger. My son and his best friend used to play tennis against each other all summer, every hour in which they could get down to the courts. Besides their liking each other, one thing that made their interaction so much fun was that they were evenly matched. Although they competed with each other, opposing the other with great energy on the courts, the game would have lost its edge, even for the winner, if one of them had consistently begun to win. A number of traditional rivalries have this quality of opposition without discontent. In Japan high achievers tend to see their competitors as engaging with them in a form of cooperation, each individual or business being raised to greater heights through the opposition of the other. The less equal the opponents and the deeper the opposed interests, the more likely it is that opposition will generate anger and discontent.[4]

Opposition can easily generate inequality if the members of one identifiable group successfully use their oppositional stance toward another group to get greater resources for themselves, either by generating more external resources or by appropriating resources from the group they oppose. Conversely, inequality can also generate opposition. Patterned inequalities easily generate opposition when the disadvantaged see the others' greater resources as diminishing their well-being.

Yet even recognizing inequality, the next stage on the continuum, does not necessarily entail opposition. As John Rawls and many before him have pointed out, some inequalities can benefit the less privileged.[5] Unequal distributions of power, influence, prestige, honor, and material resources can benefit everyone in a society in two ways. They can give everyone an incentive to strive for more of these goods whenever such striving benefits everyone. They can also make the social statement through this unequal distribution that the activities that produce more of these rewards are good. Inequality can thus serve a useful incentive function and a useful normative and attention-directing function. When

the inequalities produce largely beneficial outcomes and feelings of envy are weak, inequalities need not produce opposition.

Some circumstances can even produce both inequality and opposition without a conclusion that the inequalities derive from injustice. The "delinquent cultures" of some young peer groups can generate high degrees of opposition to the mainstream without any grounding in a cognitive conclusion that their opposition to the dominant culture is an opposition to injustice.

The key move in the creation of oppositional consciousness is perceiving existing inequalities as unjust. When inequalities derive from a dominant group's exercise of power, in the sense of threat of sanction or use of force, those inequalities are almost always unjust. Because what is just is often highly contested, especially between dominant and subordinate groups, oppositional consciousness requires, at minimum, the conceptual resources that allow members of a subordinate group to draft a definition of just treatment and just distribution that challenges the definitions of the dominant group. It requires, as Morris and Braine point out in this volume (chap. 2), challenging dominant beliefs in the justice of the status quo.[6] Classically it also requires conceiving of an identity of interest among members of the subordinate group in ending these injustices.[7]

As we have conceived it, any minimal definition of oppositional consciousness requires four factors—identifying with an unjustly subordinated group, recognizing the injustice in that group's position, opposing that injustice, and recognizing a group identity of interest in ending that injustice. The definition revolves around injustice. Oppositional consciousness, in our understanding, does not consist simply in identifying with one's own group and opposing another. It requires that one see the group with which one identifies as the recipient of injustice. It requires that one's opposition be opposition to that injustice, and to the group or groups that brought the injustice about. It requires that the perceived identity of interest among the group members be based on bringing this injustice to an end.

Beyond these four key moves, moving to a more than minimal oppositional consciousness requires recognizing some systemic quality to the pattern of injustices, based in the greater power of a dominant group. It requires seeing these injustices as in some degree related, as extending beyond the relations of any two individuals to a larger society-wide system, and as functional for members of the dominant group. It requires, in short, identifying the holders of power as oppressors in a system of domination rather than merely as guardians of the common good.

A key further move is recognizing a need for collective action to redress the perceived injustices or to overthrow the system of domination.[8] As with several other "stages" in the spectrum, this recognition need not follow deductively from the previous stages but may be independently generated. In many cases in human life, each of us can get what we want only if many individuals act collectively. The recognition that a situation requires collective action can be almost purely cognitive, as in figuring out a puzzle, or learned through a fuller mixture of emotion and cognition, the way one learns by growing up in a family. Some people recognize the need to act collectively before others do, usually because their past experience has led them to identify the situational cues more easily. The recognition that a problem requires collective action can appear anywhere along the oppositional continuum.

In addition, when we speak of a "mature" oppositional consciousness, we mean a consciousness that incorporates a well-worked-out, internally coherent set of ideas and beliefs, analyzing the injustices at the core of the system of domination, suggesting how they came into being, and identifying the individuals and interests that benefit from the injustices and/or have intentionally produced them.[9] A mature oppositional consciousness thus incorporates what might be called an "ideology" and a repertory of strategies and potential lines of action.

Finally, a mature oppositional consciousness includes a sense of efficacy, the belief that acting collectively can bring about change. Specific references to comparable moments in history when similar groups succeeded in their goals undergird this sense of efficacy. To be realistic, that sense of efficacy should rise when political opportunity structures open up and decline when repression sets in.[10]

It would be hard to overemphasize the openness, instability, and multifaceted nature of this spectrum. As the history of the Chicago Freedom Movement demonstrates (Waite, chap. 7, this volume), oppositional consciousness can be "internally differentiated" in the sense of taking many different forms among individuals who are differently situated in their material lives and ideological perspectives. Oppositional consciousness can be undercut by "hegemonic consciousness" in ways that are impossible fully to sort out. At the same time, as the AIDS movement in several cities demonstrates (Stockdill, chap. 8, this volume), oppositional consciousness can be "multidimensional," including many or all oppressed groups. It need not remain at the point of focusing only on the injustices against and subordination of one's own group. Indeed, individuals who have developed even a minimal oppositional consciousness regarding one group are often more likely than others to

recognize injustice and the workings of power in the subordination of other groups and to feel empathy for their plight.[11]

In several chapters of this book we distinguish oppositional consciousness from oppositional culture. Roughly, we rely on three points of distinction, regarding focus, priority, and locus.

Regarding focus, we make two points. First, oppositional consciousness focuses explicitly on injustice; oppositional cultures often do not. Some oppositional cultures (such as "delinquent peer cultures" or musical countercultures) have little or no reference to injustice. Second, as Morris and Braine (chap. 2, this volume) point out, oppositional cultures are relatively unfocused. They are usually too variegated, too full of unrelated and sometimes contradictory elements, to provide the coherent ideological frame and direction that characterize a mature oppositional consciousness. Oppositional cultures may be almost entirely reactive and resistant, without a picture of a more just world toward which a group should struggle. They can often intertwine and coexist easily with dominant cultures that lead subordinates to accept their destinies as natural.

Regarding temporal priority, oppositional consciousness, with its specific focus on injustice and in its mature forms its developed analysis and strategic repertory, usually evolves from an earlier oppositional culture that has prepared over the years a cauldron of relevant themes, symbols, stories, and pieces of wisdom. Sometimes, however, this prior preparation can be skipped. As Sharon Groch (chap. 4, this volume) points out about mobility-impaired activists, groups without an earlier oppositional culture can borrow major elements of oppositional consciousness from another group that has already developed it.

In addition, individuals who have developed an oppositional consciousness (through either path) can together create a new culture expressing their new consciousness. Groch has coined for such new cultures the term "cultures of oppositional consciousness." Such cultures stress all the attributes of an oppositional consciousness, and are actively created by individuals with such consciousness. Anna-Maria Marshall (chap. 5, this volume), for example, writes of "feminist oppositional culture." In this phrase, the word "feminist" signals a new culture of oppositional consciousness. One job of social movement activists is (in some cases) to create a culture of oppositional consciousness almost from scratch or (in the more usual case) to transform an existing oppositional culture, with its diverse and possibly contradictory strands, into a culture of oppositional consciousness, focused on rectifying injustice.

Regarding locus, we follow ordinary language in, for the most part, locating culture in the group and consciousness in the individual. In general, "culture" refers to the customs, habits, values, and focal concerns of a social group, "consciousness" to the perceptions, thoughts, and feelings of an individual. Occasionally, however, we also follow ordinary language in locating "consciousness" in a group. In this usage, groups can be said to "have" or "gain" oppositional consciousness whenever most individuals in them develop an oppositional consciousness, thus facilitating easier mutual communication and trust.[12]

In our conceptualization, a "mature" or "full-fledged" oppositional consciousness usually describes the mental state of a current or past activist. A minimal oppositional consciousness is more easily accessible to nonactivists. How many strands of a more mature oppositional consciousness are an everyday part of the analytic and emotional world of nonactivists depends on the development of the larger culture of the group.

Motivating Action

Acting for a group requires more than oppositional consciousness. It requires more than recognizing injustice, formulating an understanding of common interests, identifying systemic domination, understanding the need for collective action, devising strategies for action, and feeling sufficiently efficacious to act. Actually acting needs further motivation.

Even Karl Marx was not clear on this point. When Marx wrote that the working class needed to transform itself into a group "for itself" (*für sich*), the short word "for" covered an important ambiguity. Here "for" implies not only "in favor of, on the side of," but also "in support of, in defense of."[13] Defending implies a commitment to act. But being "for" something in the sense of favoring it does not automatically lead one to act to defend it. Moving from recognizing the need for collective action (and thus favoring it) to being willing to act on its behalf requires something else inside the heart and brain.

Like other thinkers of his time, Marx did not work out the logic through which the individuals who constitute a group "for itself" come to *act* for the group. Not until after World War II did game theorists work out the strategic logic that applies to a particular kind of good—one whose structure is such that those who do not contribute to bringing it about nevertheless will benefit from it (i.e., cannot be excluded from it). Until that time almost every social thinker assumed that when an individual was part of an aggregate that would benefit from an action, it would make sense for the individual to contribute to that action.

This is not so. As most social theorists now know, whenever a gain for a group will benefit all the individuals in it whether or not they have

contributed to that gain, some motivation for contribution is needed other than wanting one's share of the group benefits. The kinds of goods that social movements try to bring about are almost always these kinds of "nonexcludable" goods (i.e., those goods from whose benefits no one can be excluded). Once some have paid the price to bring legal reforms into being, for example, everyone will benefit, including those who never lifted a finger to bring the reforms about.[14] Forests of paper have been consumed in the last two decades working out the implications of this insight and debating its relevance to collective action.[15] Even those who downplay the force of this insight, however, will agree that, in addition to all the elements of oppositional consciousness we have previously listed—including recognizing systemic injustice and a common interest in removing that injustice, recognizing the need for collective action, and believing that collective action will succeed—motivating the individual to *act* for the collective requires something more.

When we cannot rely on strong inner commitments, getting people to act for a good, a group, or a cause outside their own narrow self-interests involves structuring incentives so that the material, social, and self-enhancing rewards of such action are relatively high and the costs relatively low. Yet activists themselves stress inner drives that relate less immediately to any such external rewards and costs. Activists in social responsibility movements often stress the effort "to realize a moral vision" or "to be a certain kind of [moral] person."[16] Activists in liberation movements, also driven by a moral vision, often have, in addition, a more visceral anger toward the dominant group and empathy with others in the subordinate group. They may feel humiliated when they see another member of their group humiliated, joy when they see a member of their group succeed, and a host of other complicated perceptions and feelings conditioned by a lifetime in a social system that has made them aware of the ways they themselves partake in a collective subordination.[17]

In general, considering oneself a member of a group activates certain social norms appropriate to that group membership. It also activates a set of perceptual biases that filter information relating to oneself and the group. But accepting these norms is not inevitable. Simple acceptance of membership does not entail acting for the group, even when group norms prescribe such action.[18]

As each individual negotiates the contours of his or her self, within a world in which much is given and much suffused with both overt and hidden power, each can be motivated to act for the group by almost as many motives as exist in human experience. Two basic motives, "love" and "duty," not usually separable in practice, are also usually indissolubly mixed with norm-following, self-enhancing, socially oriented, and materially self-interested motives. They can be mixed with hatred, desire for revenge, and a host of other motives that lead people to do something that then benefits their group. Yet "love"—or coming to care so much for the welfare of another, a group, or a cause that you experience its good as your own—and duty are analytically distinguishable. And they both play relatively important roles in the move from simply favoring one's group to acting for it.[19]

Experiencing a group's good as your own can take morally insignificant (but sometimes life-transforming) forms, such as belonging to or even rooting for a sports team.[20] It can take much more significant forms in versions of family loyalty, nationalism, and religious group identification. In any form it provides a motive for acting for the group, and can prompt major material and emotional sacrifices on the group's behalf. Members may try to cultivate in one another feelings of warmth, closeness, sense of likeness, or linked fate with a group, knowing that these feelings and perceptions encourage experiencing the group's good as one's own.[21] But none of these ensures that you do feel pain when the group suffers or joy when it succeeds. Nor do warmth, closeness, likeness, or linked fate lead automatically to the conclusion that you must help the group. Indeed, even experiencing the group's good as your own does not guarantee that you will act on its behalf. You also need some belief that your efforts will in fact help the group. And the costs cannot be too high.

You can also feel a sense of duty—the conviction that you "ought" to act for the good of your group and/or for one or more of the principles motivating a social movement. Like the degree to which one experiences the good of the group as one's own, this principled commitment is analytically separate from any other stage in the "spectrum" of oppositional consciousness. Such a sense of duty could arise at any stage. I could believe it was my duty to act to help anyone in need, whether or not they were members of my group and whether or not my group differed from, was opposed to, was unequal to, or was unjustly dominated by other groups. I could believe it was my duty to act against injustice or for equality whether or not any movement espoused this principle. When a "free-rider" problem arises (whenever the benefits of a collective action are "nonexcludable"), some philosophers (such as John Rawls) hold that one has a "natural duty" to contribute to the collective good. People vary in the degree to which they develop and act upon such convictions of duty.[22] In addition, the experience of duty is heavily influenced by how your community defines your duty, how important that duty is to being

a member of that community, who calls upon you to act upon that duty, and how well those who call you to your duty activate the moral strands that have meaning to you as a member of that community. Duty, in short, derives not only from the demands of reason but also from the commitments one has as a member of a community. Some Israelis feel a commitment to help displaced Palestinians precisely because they are Israeli, and thus part of a group that both is committed to fighting oppression and has itself caused this displacement. Many African Americans respond to Jesse Jackson's call to vote on the grounds that their own people gave their lives so that they today might have that right. Moral condemnation and moral praise by respected leaders or peers activate these internal moral commitments.[23]

Activists in many kinds of movements act from a mixture of these kinds of individual motives. But activists in liberation movements, striving to end a system of domination and subordination in which they themselves are members of the subordinate group, have particular reason to experience the good of the subordinate group as their own. The very social cues that mark their subordination, the oppositional culture from which they come, the investments they have made in trying personally to cast off the strands of subordination buried in their psyches, and the recognition of shared struggle with even nonactivist members of the group all reinforce the experience that the good of this group is a good for oneself and a harm to it a harm felt personally.

In practice, the analytically separable motives of love, duty, and hundreds of others intertwine in the lives of most activists. In my own life, the sense of accountability that I feel to the feminist movement comes in part from my having made the good of other women my own, so that I involuntarily cheer inwardly when a woman becomes prime minister or head of a university. It comes in part from a sense of duty to the ideas and individuals involved in the cause, so that I would feel to a degree immoral if I let them down. It comes in part from a principled commitment to a cause that I have reason to think is just, and in part from a simple impulse to rectify injustice, each of which could be separate from any of the other motivations.[24] When I feel anger at seeing a woman treated unjustly because of her sex, I cannot separate out what is empathy, what is rage at similar half-remembered experiences of my own, and what is a response to injustice itself.

My sense of accountability is also deeply intertwined with my relationships with other individuals who have these identifications and commitments. Those individuals inspire me; it is on some of their characters that I have in part modeled my life. They can also implicitly reward and

punish me, not only because in some cases I have thrown my social lot in with theirs but also, far more importantly, because the parts of their voices that I take most seriously now play a considerable role among the internal voices that I consider my own. Most importantly, I would not be the person I am if I had not, miraculously, had the time and personal freedom to become active in the women's movement in 1967 and 1968. At that moment the movement itself was in a highly creative stage, I needed its help to figure out tentative answers to important questions about my own life that I had never posed before the movement posed them, and I could take personal, lasting comfort in solidarity with others who both faced the same questions and recognized the need to act together to make the world better for women. The content of the resulting accountability to the movement, and the forms it now takes, derive from a collective past and present, which are as much part of me as any other shaping force.

Experientially, my sense of accountability to the movement comes mostly from having developed an identity in which all these things, mixed together in ways that would be hard to tease apart, simply make up who I am. At this point, parsing out motivations becomes almost impossible. Decisions then seem to flow—not always without consideration or anguish—from the implicit precommitments now embedded in my understanding of myself.[25]

Thus, having laboriously separated out these elements analytically, we find that life complicates matters by mixing them together inseparably. These chapters, grounded in the experience of actual collective action, make clear how closely interwoven is the fabric of motives, self, and others. They make it clear how dependent our selves are on the historical moment and the historically contingent cultural resources available at any given point. When parishioners from different churches in Chicago gathered at a prayer breakfast for Carol Moseley-Braun, what motivated them? A sense of solidarity, of closeness with others in the room (the cluster of affective motivations that lead one to make a group's good one's own)—of course. We human beings need the company of others. But we can get that company in other ways than attending a prayer breakfast in which we will probably be asked to commit our money and our time. Many participants in the collective action described in these chapters seem also to have been inspired by a conviction of duty—to further the good of the group or to fight injustice. Most were motivated by commitment to a cause. Many were brought to take action by the call of a friend or a leader. Particular events had sparked action, and participation in those events had left a memory—of group efficacy or solidarity—that

served to prompt actions in the future. Everyone was also drawn there in part by the cultural resonance of that particular event at that moment in history. In short, for most participants in the prayer breakfast, and in all the other activities described in these chapters, many motives had come together to form an identity in which love, duty, and commitment to a cause were taken for granted, parts of the everyday furniture of the soul.

In each of the chapters in this book, however, events take place that ask the participants to move that furniture around a little to accommodate slightly new understandings of self, stretched definitions of solidarity, expanded commitments in duty. Moseley-Braun's campaign encouraged churchgoers to get involved in politics. The disability movement encouraged individuals who were deaf, blind, or mobility impaired to identify with one another. The logical progression of sexual harassment law encouraged lawyers and plaintiffs to adopt a feminist analysis. The progressive organizations of the northern Midwest encouraged Cristaleño migrants to adapt tactics, symbols, and a sense of mission from the labor organizing and civil rights traditions. The Chicago Freedom Movement encouraged African American ministers and elected officials in Chicago to join actions that might endanger their positions of local leadership. AIDS activists in New York, Los Angeles, and Chicago encouraged local groups and their own members to change their practices and ideas regarding race, sex, and sexual orientation.

Work on social movements has documented well how networks of friends and acquaintances get others involved in the movement. The role of crystallizing events is not as well documented. A breakfast, a strike, a march may all suddenly pose the question, "Which side are you on?" and call forth moral, emotional, and cognitive facets of one's identity that were previously relatively dormant. Much of this book shows how oppositional consciousness causes action. But it also shows how action causes oppositional consciousness. When Lynn Feiger took on a set of sex discrimination cases, they turned her into a feminist. When Jesus Salas got involved in union organizing in Wisconsin, he found himself becoming a leader.[26]

One major theme of this book is that the encouragement to expanded consciousness that forms the core of each of these events will be more successful the more it takes as its starting point the existing cultural language and symbolic structure of the participants. Activists and nonactivists then work in symbiosis to craft new symbols and forms that further the expanded project. A female political candidate becomes David against Goliath. A panoply of civil rights and anti–Vietnam War symbols, with a few creative changes, now fits the disability rights movement.

"Discrimination" expands to include sexual harassment. La Raza builds on Black Power. Latino AIDS activists hold a candlelight vigil on the Dìa de los Muertos. But this building process did not work in Chicago. The Chicago Freedom Movement met its cultural and symbolic match in Chicago's black elected officials and church leaders. The CFM did not have access to symbolic resources unavailable to the Chicago elite, and they failed, at least in their immediate goals.

Another theme highlights the ways the non-self-interested motives of duty and love can mingle with "self-enhancing" motives, such as self-esteem, honor, and reputation in the community, and with more narrowly self-interested motives, such as the need and desire for material resources. The analyses of sexual harassment lawyers and plaintiffs, of elected officials and church leaders in Chicago, and of particular organizing strategies among AIDS activists help spell out how movement activism can sometimes succeed by combining material rewards with more altruistic motives in ways that do not drive out the altruism.[27]

These chapters also reveal that the separate characteristics of oppositional consciousness are not indissolubly intertwined. One can have almost any one without the other. "Oppositional consciousness" is thus an additive construct.[28] Some of its features are more common than others. Feelings and analyses differ from individual to individual. More people consider their group's position unjust than see the need for collective action. Some have thought more about causes than about strategies. Some feel more anger than others toward the dominant group. Toward their own group some feel more warmth, some more disdain. Analyses can disagree, as in the Chicago Freedom Movement's confrontation with the black elected officials and established clergy in Chicago. One political meeting, such as the Carol Moseley-Braun breakfast, can gather under its tent an immense range of stances, analyses, commitments, and degrees of oppositional consciousness. One outcome, such as sexual harassment law or the beginning of the La Raza party, can require the participation of a host of different individuals with different degrees and forms of oppositional consciousness.

Finally, these chapters make it clear that action requires more than oppositional consciousness, and more than oppositional consciousness combined with the motivations of duty, love, or commitment to the cause. Even when my principles tell me I ought to act collectively and I identify deeply with a particular group, I am less likely to act if I conclude that my actions are not likely to have a positive effect or that a small positive effect will be offset by major personal costs.[29] Holding oppositional consciousness constant, personal and structural incentives

deeply affect any individual's likelihood of acting in any given instance. Some people are more likely to enjoy, or even need, the experience of affecting the world. Some are more vulnerable to shame or blame from others, or more likely to need the affection of others in the group. Opportunity structures at any given moment in history greatly affect whether or not one will act. So does the existing variety of organizations that try to foster collective action on behalf of the group. Levels of repression, friendship networks, communication networks, and group and individual resources of all kinds make individuals with the same level of oppositional consciousness more or less likely to act.

Assorted Difficulties and Problems

Aside from the difficulty of defining precisely a multistranded concept, the problems and difficulties with oppositional consciousness come in two kinds: the difficulties of achieving it and the problems incurred when it is achieved.

The difficulties in achieving oppositional consciousness arise primarily because, as Morris and Braine point out, all cultures among subordinated groups combine not only elements of resistance and opposition but also elements of acceptance, even glorification, of the subordination. In the African American culture of Southern tenant farmers from after the Civil War through the 1930s, for example, one strand of jokes portrayed the "nigger" protagonist as stupid or in other ways innately inferior to the white ruling class. I myself remember as a young woman in high school telling the first man I ever loved, in all seriousness and believing it myself, that the reason he got lower grades than I in our history class was that he was brilliant and creative whereas I was just a memorizer. Until recently and perhaps even now, many a woman, asked what she did for a living, would answer, "Oh, I'm just a housewife," accepting implicitly the common devaluation of work in the home. Simone de Beauvoir steadfastly insisted throughout her life that within their couple it was Sartre who had the more penetrating intellect, not she. Subjects of colonial powers faced the same problem of, to some degree, implicitly accepting the culture of the occupying power as superior.[30]

It is not at all easy in these situations to sort out what in one's own subordinate culture to hang onto and what to drop, what constitutes "aping" the dominant culture and what constitutes a sensible and effective appropriation. Oppositional consciousness helps in taking the first steps in the process, by facilitating one's separation from the dominant group, but it can sometimes go too far in rejecting certain

features of the dominant culture that in the long run it would be useful to adopt. The deliberative process—of sorting, sifting, examining, testing against one's experience, learning from the experiences of others—often takes activist leadership, because activists, talking with one another in relatively protected spaces, can more easily come up with new ideas that break through the previous hegemony. But sometimes leaders and activists get in the way. Sometimes they promote a way of being that looks good to them, in the enclaves in which they talk mostly with one another, but that does not work in the lives of others. For others, building a satisfying life may be more important than acting according to the rigid dictates of a particular ideology or set of ideals. In the long run, a combination of activists and nonactivists is probably most likely to sort and sift effectively, creating viable understandings that reject subordination without rejecting some of the most usefully appropriable features of the dominant culture.

In this incremental process, however, some of the more problematic features of oppositional consciousness emerge. A separation from the dominant group, crucial for forging a separate identity, can make it harder to recognize change and subtleties within that dominant group. When African American teenagers start to sit apart from Whites in their school cafeterias, they avoid the major costs of being constantly "on stage" and having to act as tokens when Whites turn to them as exemplars of their group. They help one another by reinforcing their own group ties and rejecting the dominant culture. But they can also harm one another by cultivating an oppositional stance that lumps all Whites into one category and rejects useful features of the dominant culture. In the same way, cohesive oppositional ideologies, useful for stimulating thought, can come to block that thought when situations change. A focus on justice can deteriorate into resentment, blocking vision and corroding the soul. Political unity, a powerful tool for achieving political gains, usually also suppresses meaningful and creative divisions.[31] Much of the opposition to "identity politics," both from outside and inside the subordinate group, focuses on these problematic outcomes of oppositional consciousness.

Nationalism, for example, can overlap with oppositional consciousness. Not all nationalisms are built on a conviction of past or present oppression, but some are. When they are, the extremes to which some of their proponents can go highlight the problems of oppositional consciousness. The experience of daily indignity at the hands of the dominant group cements group identity, fuels anger against the dominant group, prompts attention to a host of injustices, helps locate the source

of those injustices in a system of domination, and encourages the thought that all members of the group have an identity of interest in overthrowing that system.[32] The group hatreds to which such a history can give rise are well known. Those hatreds can be countered, in part, by commitments to nonviolence, to loving one's enemy, and—for either practical or idealistic reasons—to remaining in the same polity with one's former oppressors. More often, however, those hatreds give rise to the evils of violence, intolerance, and unthinking separatism.

These problems are real. They deserve considerable thought and investigation. We nevertheless contend that, if oppositional consciousness is not a necessity in a subordinate group's acting to overthrow, undermine, or reform a system of human domination, it is at least an extremely useful tool and necessary in many historical circumstances. To condemn oppositional consciousness or try to avoid it would be to divest oneself voluntarily of a highly effective personal and collective means to a desired end. But it would also be foolish to consider all versions of oppositional consciousness an unadulterated good. As with almost any powerful tool, its users should become consciously and then habitually aware of its inbuilt hazards—in this case, primarily an exaggeration of difference from the dominant group, an enforced and biased unity among the subordinate group, and a deafness to new and contradictory information.[33] Oppositional consciousness does not differ in these respects from the motivating consciousness behind any social movement, but its enmeshment in these traps may be greater, given its roots in central features of the identity of members of a subordinate group.

In addition to understanding the particular dynamics of oppositional consciousness, then, we need also to develop an understanding of the ways, after a system of oppression has been overthrown or has begun to be reformed, that we can begin to repair the damage to self and others caused in the process.

As the bonds of subordination loosen, many strategies become available for loosening those bonds further. To the degree that the social world makes it possible to step out of one's subordinate identity, it can be highly subversive of that identity itself to parody the identity, performing a version that pokes fun at the idea of a stable, "natural" gender, race, or nationality. One need not reject, but can play with the identity that others assign one and that one may at times want to claim oneself. Such playful subversion can support rather than undermine oppositional consciousness, for oppositional consciousness need not be greedy in the sense of eating up all distance from the oppositional identity or refusing all other identities. Play is often highly creative. It also frees one from

the quest—which Foucault points out is in any case futile—for one's "authentic" self.[34]

The Problem of Group Essentialism

Group essentialism poses a final thorny problem for the study and practice of oppositional consciousness. Although the rhetoric of some political movements may suggest the contrary, oppositional consciousness does not require that one think of one's group membership as having an essential link with oneself, or of the group itself as being defined by some inner essence. Certain nationalist movements, which resemble oppositional social movements in being based on reactions to continuous reminders of subordination in everyday life,[35] do claim an essential quality of national belonging, often based at least in theory on "blood" or genes. Important strands within the women's movement worldwide, several Black anticolonial movements, and some sections of the African American antiracist movement have also adopted "essentialist" understandings of what it is to be a woman, a Black, or an African American. Yet recognizing and acting against the historical subordination of a group of which one is a member does not require adopting such essentialist understandings. It does require thinking in group terms, both for reasons based on the concept of justice and for reasons based in the existing history of domination and subordination.

The concept of "justice" inherently requires categories. In its thinnest form, justice means treating similar cases similarly. If we define justice as giving each individual his or her due, we mean giving these individuals their due on the basis of some trait or behavior. If a given trait or behavior is held to warrant a certain treatment, and if one individual with that trait or behavior receives the treatment while another with the same trait or behavior does not, we consider the disparity unjust, unless some acceptable reason can be given for the different treatment. Conceptually, such an acceptable reason creates another category of individuals who warrant a different treatment.

This inherent characteristic of the concept of justice means that if any human being anywhere in the world makes a claim of injustice, that person must be thinking of a category of individuals who, for one or another reason, "deserve" a given sort of treatment. Suppose I think that God is unjust in letting my baby die. In making this claim about injustice, I implicitly claim that I am no different and did not act differently in the relevant respects from other human beings whose babies did not die. Any differences between myself and others in the relevant category (perhaps the group of "human beings," perhaps the group of "God-fearing human

beings," perhaps some other group) do not justify my being treated differently from them. The claim of injustice requires conceptualizing a relevant category or group.

Oppositional consciousness includes not only the claim that certain treatments are unjust, but also the claim that those treatments derive from a history of unjust domination and subordination. In this history, individuals who have a certain trait or who are capable of certain behaviors have treated those without that trait or who are not capable of those behaviors as inferiors, to be given less favorable treatment. The subordinate group, however, claims that the trait and/or behaviors in question have no relevant relation to the less favorable treatment. There is no relevant functional relation, for example, between having a dark skin and being denied access to a water fountain. There is no relevant functional relation between having female sexual characteristics and being denied the vote.

Just as no claim of injustice can be made without thinking of individuals as members of categories, no claim for rectification based on a history of domination and subordination can be made without thinking of individuals as members of historically meaningful groups. Yet it is perfectly possible to make such claims without restricting the meanings of the lives of the individuals who make those claims to their membership in the relevant group. It is also possible to make claims of injustice or historical domination without freezing or stabilizing the meaning of membership in the group. Indeed, one goal of a group may be to eliminate its own existence as a separate group.[36]

Yet political activity in the name of a group tends to accentuate the significance of the group. The more important a group becomes in the life of its members, the more sacrifices the members are usually willing to make in its name, both from love and from duty. And the more important the group becomes in the life of its members, the more that group can use potential ostracism as a sanction against free-riding.[37] Well-organized and politically powerful groups usually draw on all three sources—love, duty, and fear of sanction—to inspire individual action on behalf of the group. Accordingly, members of a group have an incentive to paint group membership as valuable and important. To some degree they have an incentive to treat group membership as an essential, immutable, and central individual characteristic. Political organizing usually benefits from such essentialism, which makes group membership a matter of personal essence rather than a contingent relationship.

Systems of domination and subordination often reinforce this essentialism. It is often in the interest of a dominant group to portray

the group differences that make up the pattern of domination and subordination as natural, God-given, and of the essence of each member, not as merely contingent. But it seems also to be part of a healthy human psyche to like the person one is. When the larger social system makes salient a particular trait that one has, it is often a mark of self-esteem to value that trait positively. Negative external evaluations are often most easily countered by positive internal evaluations, both by the individual and by the group culture. Thus positive psychological mechanisms can sometimes produce essentialist understandings of group membership.

Group incentives to prevent free-riding, the imperatives of political organizing, dominant cultural interests, and the self-protective psychological investments of members of subordinate groups all coincide to build a powerful machine driving toward essentialism. Oppositional consciousness—with its emphasis on group difference, inequality, injustice, the need for and belief in group action, along with feelings of group identity, warmth toward the group, and the stance of opposition to and anger at the dominant group—adds fuel to that machine.

But oppositional consciousness does not inevitably lead to essentialist understandings of the group. Unjust patterns of domination and subordination are produced by power, and they can be undone by power. Those patterns are historical and contingent. Subordinates in a system of domination and subordination can have a strong interest in seeing as mutable and contingent the meanings of group membership that the system has created. Thus, some commitment to ending at least the current version of essentialism is usually built into the goal of ending a system of domination and subordination.

In addition, individuals will always have some interest in seeing themselves not only as embedded in communities that give their lives meaning but also as different in some respects from others in those communities. In every society, each individual has a name that bespeaks individuation. In modern societies where individual freedom has a strong value, individuals often want to see their group identities as relatively voluntary and can make those identities more voluntary by their own efforts. Making a group membership more voluntary need not mean rejecting it. In societies where particular traits and behaviors are highly salient, such rejection may be impossible. But individuals may nevertheless take their own stance toward that membership, perhaps making it central to their lives, perhaps entering fully into it on a temporary basis, perhaps criticizing it, perhaps playing with it or parodying it (or its opposite) from a critical distance.[38]

Currently, U.S. third world feminists are crafting what Chéla Sandoval calls a "differential oppositional consciousness," meaning a "form of marginalized subjectivity [that] perceives itself at the center of myriad possibilities all cross working—any of which are fodder for one's loyalties."[39] This "tactical subjectivity" can "recenter" itself depending on the kinds of oppression it confronts. Sandoval argues that this kind of oppositional consciousness requires strength, flexibility, and grace:

> enough strength to confidently commit to a well-defined structure of identity for one hour, day, week, month, year; enough flexibility to self-consciously transform that identity according to the requisites of another oppositional ideological tactic if readings of power's formation require it; enough grace to recognize alliance with others committed to egalitarian social relations and race, gender, and class justice, when their readings of power call for alternative oppositional stands.[40]

Activists at the intersection of several group memberships, each with strong claims on their identities and commitments, have often evolved a fluidity of identity that responds to the demands of the moment.[41] They have also developed analyses that respond to overlapping systems of domination and subordination by showing how those systems support one another.[42]

The individuals described in this book—attendees at a political prayer breakfast in a Black church, individuals with disabilities, victims of sexual harassment, migrant workers, participants and nonparticipants in the Chicago Freedom Movement, and AIDS activists—all participated in some negotiation or attempted renegotiation of their identities. The breakfast attendees experienced cultural pulls consciously intended to make them more politically active. The individuals with disabilities unconsciously evolved and then consciously crafted cultures that made claims on their identities. The victims of sexual harassment chose to draw more or less heavily on strands of feminist thought to make sense of their experience. Migrants to Wisconsin and Minnesota from Crystal City, Texas, adopted new identities as activists in a larger progressive community. African Americans in Chicago at the time of the Freedom Movement accepted or rejected the claims that the Reverend Martin Luther King Jr. and his allies made on their membership in the Black community. AIDS activists consciously forged new identities that allowed them to organize across class, gender, and race.

All these negotiations and renegotiations, however, took place upon one bedrock reality—subordinate status in a larger system of domination and subordination. Each individual had to make a decision, indeed many

decisions, about how to confront that reality. In most cases, but not all, oppositional consciousness helped the individuals involved to contribute effectively to a social movement designed to end their subordination.

In this book we have striven to highlight the importance of oppositional consciousness to subordinates who in a system of domination and subordination are working for change. We have tried to reveal some complexities within that concept and some subtleties in the way oppositional consciousness is formed. These chapters aim to show variety and change, borrowings and transformations, success and failure. They will have succeeded if they capture a wide spectrum of the ways actual individuals, with their own needs, networks, and symbolic structures, respond to the political and symbolic opportunities presented by their historical moment.

Notes

This chapter has benefited greatly from the suggestions of the reviewers for the University of Chicago Press, Sidney Tarrow, Aldon Morris, and Christopher Jencks. Remaining problems in analysis and interpretation are entirely my responsibility. I began work on these chapters while a Fellow at the Center for Advanced Study in the Behavioral Sciences. I am grateful for financial support provided by the National Science Foundation, Grant #SBR-9601236.

1. As we shall see, the last four stages on this list are crucial for social movements. Similar components, not always conceived as stages, thus appear in others' analyses as well. Piven and Cloward (1977), among the first to produce a list of such components, suggested the following: (1) the system loses legitimacy, (2) people who are ordinarily fatalistic demand change, and (3) the challengers develop a new sense of political efficacy. (McAdam 1982 gave these elements the title "cognitive liberation.") Operationalizing relevant elements for the 1972 American National Election Study, Gurin, Miller, and Gurin (1980) first measured "identification" with one's own class, race, gender, and age group; then "consciousness" of class, race, gender, and age with indexes of (1) power discontent, (2) rejection of legitimacy, and (3) collectivist orientation. (See also Kalmuss, Gurin, and Townsend 1981; Miller et al. 1981; Gurin 1985.) Schlozman and Verba (1979) measured class and race consciousness on the dimensions of (1) concern with fairness, (2) opposing interests, and (3) solidarity. See Klein 1984 on the three stages of political consciousness: (1) recognizing group membership and shared interests, (2) rejecting the traditional definition for the group's status, (3) blaming a system of inequality, not oneself. See Conover 1988 (focusing on the transitions from objective group membership to identification and politicization) on the four elements of group consciousness: (1) group identification ([a] awareness of membership in the group, [b] psychological attachment to the group), (2) well-developed schemas with information on the group's status, (3) attribution of responsibility (for bad group outcomes to others and good outcomes to group members), (4) emotional reaction based on that attribution (see also Conover 1984). See Snow and Benford 1992 on the three "functions" of collective action frames: (1) punctuation [accenting injustice], (2) attribution [of responsibility for committing and redressing injustice], and (3) articulation [creating coherent cognitive packages]. See Klandermans 1997, 38 ff., on the three components of collective action frames: (1) injustice, (2) identity, and (3) agency (on p. 43, he adds [4] attribution). See also Gamson 1992. See Oberschall 1993, 1996, on the four dimensions of social movements: (1) discontents and grievances,

(2) convictions of injustice, (3) the capacity to act collectively, and (4) political opportunity. Note that in many theories these components can apply whether or not the participants are themselves subordinates in a system of domination and subordination (or deeply identified with those subordinates). That is, they extend beyond "oppositional consciousness" per se. The stage of recognizing a common interest derives primarily from Thompson [1963] 1966 and should not be taken literally (see n. 7 below).

2. The National Election Study measures perceptions of likeness by showing the respondent a list of groups and asking, "which of these groups you feel particularly close to—people who are most like you in their ideas and interests and feelings about things." It then asks which single group the respondent feels closest to. The National Black Election Study, based on the NES, also asks how "close" to Black people the respondent feels "in terms of ideas and feelings about things" (Gurin, Hatchett, and Jackson 1989, 76; Tate 1994, 24). The result, which combines feelings of being "close" with a perception of being "like," or having the same "ideas and feelings," is often called "group identification" (see, e.g., Gurin, Miller, and Gurin 1980; Gurin 1985; Conover 1984, 1988; Rinehart 1992). The NES also measures feelings of warmth toward several specified groups through a "feeling thermometer" measuring "cold or unfavorable," neutral, or "warm or favorable" feelings (see Gurin, Miller, and Gurin 1980; Gurin 1985; Conover 1988; and Cook 1989 for a "relative" feeling thermometer).

3. See Ogbu 1990, 150, for the way "immigrant identities" differ from the identities of the dominant group in the receiving society but are not necessarily opposed to those identities.

4. See Fülop 1998 for Japan; note that Thompson [1963] 1966 posits not only an objective identity of interests within the group but also interests objectively in opposition to those of the dominant group. The degree of opposition in interests, perhaps deriving in part from intergroup competition for scarce resources (Miller, Hildreth, and Simmons 1988, 108), derives from an interaction of both "objective" and "subjective" factors. In the tennis example, the common interest in enjoyment presumably outweighs the conflicting interests in competition for scarce resources (the win).

5. Rawls (1971) argues that inequalities are just if they meet certain criteria of liberty and benefit the least advantaged sections of society. Many existing inequalities, of course, are not just, but are held in place by more or less visible systems of power.

6. Gurin, Miller, and Gurin (1980, 31) find this "rejection of legitimacy" the most important predictor of "collectivist orientations." Every social movement theorist who has addressed the issue agrees that oppositional social movements must interpret or reinterpret central problems as unjustly caused. (See, e.g., Turner 1969; Piven and Cloward 1977; Moore 1978; Gurin, Miller, and Gurin 1980; McAdam 1982; Gamson, Fireman, and Rytina 1982; Ferree and Miller 1985; Snow et al. 1986; Snow and Benford 1988, 1992; Klandermans 1989, 1997; Tarrow 1998; Gamson 1992; Johnston 1994; Oberschall 1993; 1996, 94; Conover 1988, 64). McAdam (1982, 50), and later Ferree and Miller (1985, 43–44) and McAdam, McCarthy, and Zald (1988, 713–14; 1996, 9), describe the process as reversing "what Ross (1977) calls the 'fundamental attribution error' "—that is, "the tendency of people to explain their situation as a function of individual deficiencies rather than features of the system" (1996, 9; not the same as Pettigrew's 1979 "ultimate attribution error," in which positive behaviors by in-group members and negative behaviors by out-group members are attributed to internal factors, while negative in-group and positive out-group behaviors are attributed to external factors). See also Major 1994 for the psychological literature. Although a concern for justice is implicit in such conceptions as "exploitation" and "oppression," Marx did not make justice explicitly central in his analyses, preferring a more scientific and less moral language (Buchanan 1982). Writers influenced by Marx, such as E. P. Thompson, followed this lead by not making justice central in their definitions of class consciousness. Building on our own experiences of oppositional consciousness in social movements and on the analyses of previous social movement theorists, however, we have made the perception of injustice central to our definition. See Kaye and McClelland 1990 for critical perspectives on Thompson, pointing out how he underemphasized the forces of language, culture, increased communication, political opportunity and provocation, and disunity. In spite of Thompson's intended break with some Marxist scholars, he continued to rely unconsciously on economic determinants of consciousness (Sewell 1990, 57). Moore 1978, by contrast, urges us to focus on "the sense of injustice" in understanding working class militance; Steinberg 1995, 1996, cites nineteenth-century workers' speeches that make justice central.

7. Thompson [1963] 1966, for example, writes, "[C]lass happens when some men, as a result of common experiences (inherited or shared), feel and articulate the identity of their interests as between themselves, and as against other men whose interests are different from (and usually opposed to) theirs" (9). Elsewhere he repeats this formulation: "In the years between 1780 and 1832 most English working people came to feel an identity of interests as between themselves, and as against their rulers and employers" (11); "a consciousness of the identity of interests between working men" (807); and "a consciousness of the identity of the interests of the working class, or 'productive classes', *as against* those of other classes" (807, emphasis in original). We do not take the term "identity of interests" literally. In our analysis the phrases "identity of interests" and "a common interest" mean only an assumed common interest among the great majority of the group on the specific point of ending the system of domination. We expect conflicting interests on means, and on many other matters, within the group and even some such conflict as to the goal of ending domination itself. The writings of women of color feminists (e.g., Collins 1990) have taken us some way beyond Thompson's formulation. (See Waite, chap. 7, this volume, for conflicts among means in the Chicago Freedom Movement.) Conceptions of "linked fate" do not make as stringent assumptions as conceptions of "identity of interest." Gurin and Townsend 1986, Gurin, Hatchett, and Jackson 1989, Dawson 1994, and Tate 1994 all analyze versions of a linked-fate question, which on the 1984 and 1988 National Black Election Study is worded, "Do you think that what happens generally to black people in this country will have *something to do* with what happens in your life?" (emphasis mine).

8. Gurin, Miller, and Gurin (1980, 31) call this step "collectivist orientation." Note that in our formulation, recognizing a need for collective action does not include a commitment to acting on behalf of the group, which we argue is importantly a separate move. Our definition of oppositional consciousness differs in this way from the definition of "group consciousness" in Miller, Gurin, and Gurin 1978, cited in Conover 1984, 1988, and Gurin, Hatchett, and Jackson 1989, 81. It also differs in this way from Snow and Benford's "collective action frames," which, among other functions, assign "responsibility for carrying out [the needed collective] action" (1992, 136). Some forms of oppositional consciousness may include such an assignment of responsibility, for example to all members of the subordinate group. But some may not.

9. Snow and Benford (1992) also describe "collective action frames" in much this way. Our understanding of oppositional consciousness includes not only cognitive elements, such as appear in collective action frames and ideologies and are stressed in McAdam's 1982 term "cognitive liberation," but also affective elements such as warmth (e.g., with group identification) and anger (e.g., with the recognition of injustice).

10. See Tilly 1978 and Tarrow 1998, with citations, for "political opportunity structures"; McAdam 1982 on the sense of power and efficacy as a key component of cognitive liberation; and Klandermans 1989, 1997, on the importance of the belief that collective action can be successful. The key component of "agency" in Gamson 1992 and in Klandermans's 1997 summary of conditions for social movements consists of the belief that it is possible to alter conditions.

11. Wilcox (1990) shows that Black consciousness is associated with, and perhaps facilitates, feminist consciousness. Survey data consistently reveal, for example, that African American men are more likely than White men to support the women's movement (Mansbridge 1999). Gay and Tate (1998) indicate that gender identification seems

to enhance the impact of race identification on support for many liberal causes. However, Cohen (1999), along with Stockdill (chap. 9, this volume), shows that oppositional consciousness regarding one's own group in no way guarantees recognizing the injustice done to other groups. As Cohen points out, the very fact of a group's subordination (and therefore its leaders' desire to have the group look respectable both to its own members and to the dominant group) can exacerbate its tendency to oppress a subordinate group in its midst.

12. When we use "oppositional consciousness" in this group way, we produce some conceptual overlap with a culture of oppositional consciousness. The term "culture of oppositional consciousness" is intended to draw attention to symbols, ritual, forms of dress and speech, and other cultural artifacts. The analysis of these distinctions derives from an inductive rather than a deductive strategy. Our coauthors followed their own linguistic intuitions when choosing the words with which to describe the phenomena they portray in this volume. We reasoned that the authors themselves were closer than the two editors to the actions and ideas they were analyzing. After the fact, we consulted and coordinated. Fred Harris (chap. 3, this volume) tacked on the last two paragraphs that appear in his article. Sharon Groch (chap. 4, this volume) changed her wording several times as we worked out the implications of our distinctions. Others changed a word or a sentence here and there. The result is a tentative tripartite distinction among oppositional culture, oppositional consciousness, and cultures of oppositional consciousness. Most cultures of oppositional consciousness are activist cultures (see, e.g., Taylor and Whittier 1992), but the focus on injustice characteristic of oppositional consciousness, and even its more fully developed set of strategies for analyzing structural causation and rectifying injustice, can spread in varying degrees beyond activist enclaves to the larger subordinate group.

13. Marx wrote that the English working class was "already a class as against capital, but not yet for itself" ([1846–47] 1963). The contrast between *an sich* ("in itself") and *für sich* comes from Hegel. Elster (1985, 346, n. 2) comments, "It is widely assumed that Marx himself used these terms [*an sich* and *für sich*] to distinguish between classes that lack and classes that possess class consciousness. As far as I know, he never actually uses the term 'in itself' (*an sich*)." "For itself," the more common term, holds in several languages the double meaning it had for Marx, e.g., for Rabbi Hillel: "If I am not for myself, who will be for me? But if I am only for myself, what am I?" (Avot 1:14).

14. Those not familiar with this problem should note particularly that the resulting "free-rider problem" applies *only* to goods that, once brought into being, can be "consumed" by those who have not contributed to bringing it into being. It is only when noncontributors cannot be excluded from the benefits that it pays each individual (with no motivation other than wanting those benefits) to free-ride, that is, to let others bring the good into being. Then, if the good must also be jointly supplied (supplied by more than one), and if everyone takes the individually rational strategy of letting the others do the work, the good will not be produced. In the less extreme situation, if only a few contribute (or many contribute but give less than is needed), the individual rationality of all the actors results in the good being *under*produced compared to what would have been produced if the noncontributing beneficiaries could have been excluded from the good. Versions of this free-rider problem have been analyzed under many names (the "collective action problem," "common pool problem," "social dilemma problem," and, in the two-person version, "prisoners' dilemma problem"). See, e.g., Olson 1965, Hardin 1982, Mansbridge 1990. Thinking of what would happen if each individual acted only on narrow self-interest serves as a useful heuristic. One should not make the mistake of assuming that such narrow self-interest comprises a major part of human interaction, or the more subtle mistake of modeling behavior as if it were the only human interaction and allowing the other motivations to slip ever lower in one's understanding of human behavior. But with these caveats, parsing out what would strategically follow if each acted only on narrow self-interest illuminates both the probability of certain outcomes if no other motivations are introduced and the resulting need to explore the full panoply of human motivations. Previous theorists of common interests—such as Plato, Thomas Aquinas, Thomas Hume, Alexis de Tocqueville, and Karl Marx—were hampered in their thinking by not understanding the free-rider logic (see Mansbridge 1990, 1995, 1998). It is therefore also a mistake to see no benefit in the language and thinking of "rational choice theory" (which explores the free-rider logic, among other strategic interactions), although strategic calculations based on narrow self-interest cannot explain the primary motivations of many who contribute their time, money, energy, and sometimes their lives to a social movement.

15. See citations in Ferree 1992.

16. Jasper 1997, 9; Teske 1997, 97. See also Monroe, Barton, and Klineman 1991, 341, and Williams 1985.

17. Jasper 1997 makes the same distinction that we do between liberation movements (which he calls "citizenship" movements") and other movements (which he calls "post-citizenship" and we call "equality-based special issue" and "social responsibility" movements). Thinking of liberation movements as "citizenship" movements, however, obscures their relation to a system of domination that extends far beyond the state, focuses attention primarily on their relation to the state (Jasper 1997, 78), underplays their stress on the need to change social practices and cultural interpretations (Jasper 1997, 324), and neglects the source of these emotions in a shared experience of subordination.

18. I have adapted this brief account of self-categorization theory from Turner 1987 (see also Dawson 1994 and Conover 1984, 1988, who draws on a comparable "self-schema" theory). Yet this theory can take us only so far. We still need to explore, as social movement theorists are doing, the many things that lead some people to characterize themselves as members of groups committed to political action, or "define their situation so that participation is appropriate" (Klandermans 1992, 77). Although membership in some groups is ascriptive, or given, I know of no such groups in which membership in the group so automatically entails action on behalf of the group that in order to act as "themselves" its members have no alternative than to act on its behalf. As soon as two people who do not want to act on the group's behalf find each other, they can create a subgroup of "not very loyal" group members, whose definition does not entail any action for the group. (To avoid this process, participants in many groups try both to make membership in the group valuable—or maintain or increase its value—and to deny that membership to anyone not willing to act for the group. See Friedman and McAdam 1992; Hardin 1995.) Although self-categorization alone thus may explain relatively costless progroup activity, such as the allocation of greater goods to one's in-group in a minimal group experiment, it will not fully explain more costly sacrifices. To explain costly action on behalf of the group, it is therefore not enough to say that people have a "collective identity" in the sense of simply seeing themselves as members of the group. They must also have a motive for action on behalf of the group. If, however, in the process of "enlarging" their personal identities "to include the relevant collective identity as part of their definition of self" (Gamson 1992, 60), individuals come to experience the group's good as their own, this hedonic identification (see n. 20 below) can provide a direct motive for acting on behalf of the group.

19. Several social theorists have independently identified the first two of these motivations, labeling them "affection" and "principle" (Hume [1741–42] 1985), "sympathy" and "commitment" (Sen [1977] 1990), "empathy" and "morality" (Jencks 1990), "we-feeling" and "conscience" (Dawes, van de Kragt, and Orbell 1990), and "love" and "duty" (Elster 1990, Mansbridge 1990). It might clarify the analysis to call the first in this pair "hedonic identification." The second of Knoke's (1988, 315) motivational pair, "affective-bonding" and "normative-conformity," confusingly mixes the motivation of duty with the motivations of avoiding social punishment and acquiring social reward. The motivation of commitment to a cause is captured to some degree by the second of Wilson's (1962) terms "solidary" and "purposive." Turner's (1987) self-categorization theory proposes the motive of acting according to group-appropriate norms. Chong 1991 and Hardin 1995 help

sort out some socially oriented motives (e.g., the desires to gain friendship, maintain social standing and reputation, and avoid ostracism [Chong 1991, 34–35]) and materially self-interested motives relevant to collective action. Teske 1997 explores some of the relevant self-enhancing motives (e.g., efficacy, increased knowledge, a sense of growing as a person). Other self-enhancing motives might include something as simple as a desire for closure, that is, to finish a job once begun. Holmes 1990 investigates some malevolent motives, which can also benefit one's group.

20. Preliminary work indicates, for example, that both testosterone and serotonin (body chemicals associated with hedonic satisfaction) rise when a sports team with which one identifies wins and fall when the team loses (Bernhardt et al. 1998, James 1997). One can presumably identify hedonically not only with a team or group but also with a general collection of political stands ("left" or "right"), or with specific causes (the cause of peace or the cause of the homeless). In some cases, commitment to a group or cause may run no deeper in one's identity than identification with a sports team, or with decisions to grow one's hair long or not wear trousers with pleats. Yet even in a relatively shallow form, the commitment can become such a fully integrated part of one's identity that one will feel violated when asked (or forced) to change. When social theorists talk about "expressive motivations" for collective or altruistic action ("expressive" being a favorite word among economists for motivations that stem from commitment), the phrase nicely captures this kind of relatively shallow expression of self. In social movements, however, most such commitments are also suffused with moral values, which draw from cognitive conclusions about what is right and from moral commitments to do what is right. This moral character, not captured by the word "expressive," usually plays a central role in decisions to give or risk one's life, or make other major sacrifices of narrow self-interest, for a cause.

21. See nn. 2 and 7 above on warmth, closeness/likeness, and linked fate. Survey analysts use these feelings and perceptions as independent variables in a constellation of factors predicted to make action more likely, rather than expecting them automatically to usher in action.

22. On the duty of "fair play" in a free-rider situation, see Rawls 1971. For an application, see Schwartz and Paul 1992, 214–15. On individual variation, see the speculations of Freud ([1930] 1961), who gave the name "superego" to the faculty or collection of faculties that respond to the prompting of duty or "conscience." Psychologists often err in seeing conscience as an internal authority to be placated, as one might placate a parent. This metaphor misses the way the commands of morality and justice not only are located within an individual but have an external authority deriving from the evolution of social learning passed on through the generations, from reason, and from the meaning of membership in a particular community.

The role of individual conscience in human action undoubtedly varies from individual to individual and from culture to culture. Many tight-knit cultures based on close ties and reputational networks may not require a strong internal apparatus of conscience, with its corresponding internal guilt, but can rely more heavily on social shame. Social shaming typically does not distinguish between failures to live up to social norms and failures to live up to what Westerners would consider "moral" norms, which are the typical subjects of conscience.

23. I thank Aldon Morris for the Jackson example; the Israeli example comes from Hochman 2000. This understanding of duty is related less to Kant's conception and more to conceptions in Sandel 1982 and Baier 1987. Analytically we must distinguish between another person activating one's own internal moral commitments and the other doling out social praise or blame (which serve as external sanctions), even though in practice these are almost always mixed. Choosing or accepting membership in a group that will activate one's moral commitments and whose members will praise one for moral activities and blame one for free-riding can act as a form of "precommitment" (Elster 1983). In addition to simple attraction to others with similar moral commitments and admiration for others in the group, an implicit desire for precommitment may help explain why some individuals

find it important to gain friends, maintain standing, and avoid ostracism among other political activists (or morally committed people), who are not usually the most powerful or wealthy people in a community.

24. See Frank 1988 and Jolls, Sunstein, and Thaler 1998 for the impulse to revenge and other impulses to rectify injustices, independent of outcomes to self. It is even conceivable that some part of these impulses is innate.

25. See Batson 1991 for experiments that tease apart the different motivations behind an altruistic act, distinguishing acting to make oneself feel better from acting only to help the other. Understanding the component parts of motivation (such as hedonic identification and duty) can serve a useful analytic purpose, particularly for those who plan to try to operationalize parts of the concept in close-ended survey questions. Such an analysis, however, cannot capture adequately the social or psychological reality of action driven by an at least temporarily relatively coherent sense of self in relation with others (see Teske 1997). Oliner and Oliner (1988) and Monroe (1996), for example, report that rescuers of Jews in Nazi Germany often explained their actions with such comments as "I didn't think about it; I just did it," and expressed the feeling of having "no choice." Cohen (1985), Ferree (1992), Gamson (1992), Monroe (1996), and Teske (1997) rightly point to the demands of "identity," and more broadly "self," that motivate what we problematically call "non-self-interested" acts. Monroe (1996), Teske (1997), and Jasper (1997) further stress the moral dimension of this identity. Teske in particular persuasively attacks my own earlier formulations of these mixtures of motivations. Although Monroe, Teske, and Jasper all studied activists who were not themselves subordinates in the systems of domination and subordination they were trying to end, their conclusions apply to these actors as well.

26. See, e.g., Freeman 1975, McAdam 1988, and Whittier 1995 for the effects of social networks; see Fantasia 1988, Klandermans 1992, 81–82, Teske 1997, 1–3, and Sewell 1996 for the effects of a crystallizing event. See Sapiro 1990 for social movements causing consciousness as well as consciousness causing social movements.

27. Elsewhere (Mansbridge 1990, 1998) I argue that in order not to be extinguished altruistic motivations often require a protective "ecological niche" of material reward, which must be appropriately structured so as not to undermine the altruistic motivation.

28. Gurin, Miller, and Gurin (1980) provide some support for this contention in their statistical analysis. Miller et al. (1981) demonstrate that the components are not only additive but interactive.

29. In some instances such as bearing witness, however, costs may be irrelevant. Jasper (1997, 38) quotes Derrick Bell's (1992, xvi) analysis of his conversation with a Mississippi woman during the civil rights movement: "Her goal was defiance, and its . . . effect was likely more potent precisely because she did what she did without expecting to topple her oppressors. Mrs. MacDonald avoided discouragement and defeat because at the point that she determined to resist her oppression, she was triumphant." Jasper adds, "For many, martyrdom is its own reward."

30. See Levine 1977, 321 ff., for examples of Black jokes; Bair 1990, 269 ff., for Beauvoir; Fanon [1961] 1968 for colonized peoples.

31. See Brown 1988, Chirot 1994, and Scheff 1994 for resentment; Hardin 1982 for the uses and abuses of unity.

32. Johnston's (1994) sensitive discussion of these daily indignities also reveals, in the cases of Catalan, Basque, and Lithuanian nationalist movements, how maintaining opposition to the dominant groups was strongly facilitated by what we would call the "safe spaces" of the church and the extended family.

33. See Mansbridge 1986, particularly chap. 9 for the pressures to deafness and uniformity in a variety of movements that Morris and Braine (chap. 2, this volume) call "equality-based special issue movements" and "social responsibility movements." These pressures can be, and usually are, even greater in liberation movements. Many observers have pointed out that group unity flourishes with the demonization of an "enemy." Turner

1987 points out that the phenomenon of "meta-contrast"—highlighting similarities within the group and differences with outsiders—is inherent in the conceptual framing of a "group." Moreover, the more salient the self-categorization, the greater the "perceptual accentuation of intra-class similarities and inter-class differences" (49). See Taylor and Whittier 1992 and Dawson 1994 for the perceptual minimization of group differences and exaggeration of differences between one's own group and outsiders. Turner and Dawson also explore the positive and negative functions of group-based cognitive biases in absorbing information. See Tajfel 1974 for the first experiments demonstrating an easily triggered and possibly innate human in-group bias. See Brewer and Brown 1998 for a summary of the psychological literature on the behavioral consequences of in-group identity, theories of group identification, whether in-groups require out-groups, and conflict, competition, and comparison. See Taylor and Whittier 1992, Mansbridge 1994, and Groch, chap. 4, this volume, for the potential creativity in movement enclaves where members speak primarily to one another.

34. See Butler 1990 on "drag" as mocking the notion of an authentic gender identity, although she points out that not all parody is subversive; the task is to find or invent strategies that will serve this function. I borrow the concept of a greedy consciousness from Lewis Coser's (1974) "greedy institutions," defined as institutions that require undivided commitment. See Foucault [1976] 1980c for a rejection of the "repressive" hypothesis, which holds that if one were able to remove this or that repressive mechanism, the authentic self would emerge from beneath. (Butler 1990 points to contradictions within Foucault's work on this point.)

35. See Johnston's (1994) closely observed account.

36. Fraser 1997 distinguishes between the political goals of recognition and redistribution. The first involves the continuance of the group in more favorable conditions (as in the gay and lesbian movement). The second may involve the disappearance of a group qua group (as when the working class becomes all middle class, or the proletariat becomes the universal class).

37. See Hardin 1995 on the ways groups benefit from enforced unity.

38. On embeddedness, see Sandel 1982; on being born into embeddedness but taking a voluntary stance toward it, see Hirschmann 1989; on criticism, see Walzer 1988; on parody, see Butler 1990. Because essentialism also marginalizes nondominant or minority referents within a group (see, e.g., Harris 1990; see Cohen 1999 for "secondary marginalization"), fighting this tendency requires recognizing and struggling against processes of marginalization, recognizing the parallels among oppressions, and cultivating mutual understanding on the basis of those parallels (see, e.g., Stockdill, chap. 8, this volume).

39. Sandoval 1993, 49. Sandoval defines U.S. third-world feminism as the political alliance made during the 1960s and 1970s "between a generation of U.S. feminists of color who were separated by culture, race, class, sex or gender identifications but united through their similar responses to the experience of race oppression." The connection, she argues, is a "mobile unity, constantly weaving and re-weaving an interaction of differences into coalition" (Sandoval 1993, 53, n. 2). See also Sandoval 2000.

40. Sandoval 1991, 15. See also Sandoval 1993, 87.

41. Sandoval (1991; 1993, 97; 2000), cites many, particularly within third-world feminism, who have developed similar concepts, e.g., Anzaldúa (1987) on "la consciencia de la mestiza."

42. See, e.g., Combahee River Collective [1977] 1983 and Stockdill, chap. 8, this volume. These analyses are strongest in their understanding of how different systems of oppression support one another. They are weaker on the ways one system of oppression may undermine another, as, for example, when the power system that emerged from capitalism undermined and eventually replaced the power system that emerged from feudalism.

References

Aarons, Leroy F. 1970. "The Chicanos Want In." *Washington Post*, November 11, B1–B5.

ACT UP/NY (Women and AIDS Book Group), ed. 1992. *Women, AIDS, and Activism*. Boston: South End Press.

Acuna, Rodolfo. 1988. *Occupied America: A History of Chicanos*. New York: Harper and Row.

Adam, Barry D. 1987. *The Rise of a Gay and Lesbian Movement*. Boston: Twayne Publishers.

Allen, Pamela. 1970. *Free Space: A Perspective on the Small Group in Women's Liberation*. New York: Times Change Press. Abridged in *Radical Feminism*, ed. Anne Koedt, Ellen Levine, and Anita Rapone. New York: Quadrangle, 1973.

Allen, Robert. 1992. *Black Awakening in Capitalist America*. Trenton: Africa World Press.

Almond, Gabriel A., and Sidney Verba. 1963. *The Civic Culture*. Boston: Little Brown.

American Printing House for the Blind. 1992–93. *Annual Report*. Louisville: American Printing House for the Blind.

Anastos, Kathryn, and Carola Marte. 1991. "Women: The Missing Persons in the AIDS Epidemic." In *The AIDS Reader: Social, Political, Ethical Issues*. Ed. Nancy McKenzie. New York: Penguin.

Anderson, Alan B., and George W. Pickering. 1986. *Confronting the Color Line: The Broken Promise of the Civil Rights Movement in Chicago*. Athens: University of Georgia Press.

Anzaldúa, Gloria. 1987. *Borderlands/La Frontera: The New Mestiza*. San Francisco: Spinsters/Aunt Lute.

———, ed. 1990. *Making Face, Making Soul—Haciendo Cara: Creative and Critical Perspectives by Feminists of Color*. San Francisco: Aunt Lute.

Anzaldúa, Gloria, and Cherríe Moraga, eds. 1983. *This Bridge Called My Back: Writings by Radical Women of Color*. New York: Kitchen Table/Women of Color Press.

Arendt, Hannah. [1963] 1965. *On Revolution*. New York: Viking.

Arno, Peter S., and Karyn L. Feiden, ed. 1992. *Against the Odds: The Story of AIDS Drug Development, Politics, and Profits*. New York: HarperCollins.

Asetoyer, Charon. 1992. "First There Was Smallpox." In *Women, AIDS, and Activism*. Ed. ACT UP/NY (Women and AIDS Book Group). Boston: South End Press.

Bachrach, Peter, and Morton Baratz. 1963. "Decisions and Non-decisions: An Analytical Framework." *American Political Science Review* 57:632–42.

Baier, Annette C. 1987. "Hume: The Woman's Moral Theorist?" In *Women and*