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## Together We Rise: How Social Movements Succeed

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Together We Rise: How Social Movements Succeed

## Abstract

Social movements, such as Black Lives Matter, surge when support grows for their social justice goals. At their core, social movements advance when people act collectively by rising in solidarity with a shared purpose to address injustice and inequality. Drawing on insights from consumer psychology, this review investigates how social movements succeed in creating social change. We build on an established 21<sup>st</sup> century framework for how social movements succeed to outline the promising practices of successful social movements. For each of these practices, we identify the consumer psychology mechanisms that motivate collective action and encourage people to transform from bystanders to *upstanders*, those who provide the grassroots momentum for successful social movements. We illustrate this framework with examples from the growth of the Black Lives Matter movement. Finally, we highlight insights from consumer psychology that promote an understanding of social movements, and we raise research questions to encourage more consumer psychologists to investigate how social movements succeed.

Keywords: social movements, social change, Black Lives Matter, collective action, grassroots

*Change will not come if we wait for some other person or if we wait for some other time. We are the ones we've been waiting for. We are the change that we seek.*

U.S. President Barack Obama

Black Lives Matter. March for Our Lives. #MeToo. Climate Strikes. Standing Rock. The Women's March. Marriage Equality. Over the last decade, we have witnessed soaring numbers of social movements inspire civic activation, spur collective action, and create social change (Klein, 2020). In fact, political scientists have observed that we are currently experiencing the largest wave of mass social movements in world history (Buchanan, Bui, & Patel, 2020; Chenoweth et al., 2019). Social movements are forged when grassroots efforts by diverse groups of people and organizations come together to achieve a social justice goal (de la Sablonnière, 2017; Feldman, 2020). Yet we often become aware of these movements only as their work nears completion, when the voices clamoring for social justice reach their peak and the movement has become widespread. In truth, although many successful social movements appear to emerge spontaneously, they grow and succeed through tireless local grassroots organizing over months—if not years and even decades—to change hearts and minds (Meyer, 2015; Satell, 2015). Social change, then, happens not by chance occurrence, but rather by linking individuals, organizations, and their networks together in a common cause and shared purpose.

How, then, does one lay the groundwork and build the infrastructure for a successful social movement? All social movements require one vital practice to transform protest by the few into a tsunami sweeping the many: people and organizations united in collective action. According to Chenoweth and Stephan (2011, p. 61), social movements succeed in activating change when they “mobilize a high number of participants with a more diverse array of skills, abilities, and perspectives.” The voices of organizers at the grassroots level echo this practice. According to the executive director of Future Coalition, Katie Eder, the U.S. organizer of the worldwide Climate Strikes, “The work that I do and that so many other people do in the movement is about bringing people together. My personal theory of change is that by coming together, by uniting, by reaching across differences and collaborating, that’s how we can create real change” (Silva, 2020).

Yet a wealth of research suggests that people often do not join in taking action; in effect, they are bystanders (Darley & Latane, 1968; Fischer et al., 2011; Garcia, Weaver, Darley, & Spence, 2009;

van Bommel, van Prooijen, Elffers, & Van Lange, 2012). So then, how do social movements activate bystanders, who may lack awareness of a problem or the motivation to take action? How do movements transform bystanders to *upstanders*, the people who contribute to a solution through action? What motivates people to rise up at the grassroots level to become upstanders, joining in collective action to build a movement? And, as grassroots collective action grows, how do movements successfully seize the moment to create social change? Our review examines these questions through a consumer psychology lens.

At their core, social movements succeed when people rise together as upstanders. Because research in consumer psychology focuses on how people behave, consume, and make decisions, consumer psychologists are uniquely situated to investigate the factors that motivate people to engage in social movements. Specifically, consumer psychology provides insight into the motivational, emotional, cognitive, and behavioral forces that spur people—individually and collectively—to take action as upstanders, forging the infrastructure for successful social movements (e.g., Aaker, Rudd, & Mogilner, 2011; Chaney, Sanchez, & Maimon, 2019; Griskevicius & Kenrick, 2013; Jost, 2017; Keller, Harlam, Lorewenstein, & Volpp, 2011; Mathur, Block, & Yucel-Aybat, 2014; Norton, Mochon, & Ariely, 2012; Oyserman, 2009, 2019; Pham, 2004; Rudd, Catapano, & Aaker, 2019; So et al., 2015; Touré-Tillery & Fishbach, 2011; Wood & Hayes, 2012; Woolley & Fishbach, 2017; Wooten & Rank-Christman, 2019; Wyer, 2011). Drawing on insights from consumer psychology and its associated disciplines, we explore the process, how and why, collective action by people and organizations build such infrastructures for social movements.

Many academic disciplines—including history, political science, sociology, anthropology, and economics—have examined how social movements succeed and accomplish their goal of social change (e.g., Blumer, 1939; Davies, 1962; Gurr, 1968; Smelser, 1962). We build our review on the foundation established by this extant research, but more specifically, we draw from a recent framework for understanding and conceptualizing modern 21<sup>st</sup> century social movements. To this end, we structure our review and the insights offered by research in consumer psychology around the strategic and systematic framework developed by Crutchfield (2018) to understand how social movements in the United States over the last 30 years have succeeded. Crutchfield's framework examines several key practices; in effect, it delineates an interconnected structure essential to the

success of modern social movements. At the center of this framework is the vital role of grassroots organizing—local groups targeting and organizing their own communities—to spur collective action, build social movements, and create social change. Consistent with the assertion that social change begins at the grassroots level (Heath, 2020), this framework emphasizes that successful social movements activate people in their own communities, motivating them to become upstanders, and then connecting and coordinating those local efforts to include more people, organizations, and networks.

We begin this review by briefly summarizing research focused on social movements and collective action. Next, we present a framework—the promising practices—that distinguish successful 21<sup>st</sup> century social movements. Our framework integrates relevant concepts from consumer psychology and its associated disciplines into an adaptation of Crutchfield's framework to provide a unique perspective on how social movements succeed and why social change happens. We offer an exemplar movement to illustrate this framework in action: Black Lives Matter. Finally, we highlight the contributions and generative potential of this work to academic research and community organizing efforts. We identify opportunities where we, as consumer psychologists, can contribute more research to understanding how social movements succeed and why social change happens.

### Social Movements and Collective Action

*Each time a [person] stands up for an ideal, or acts to improve the lot of others, or strikes out against injustice, [he/she/they] sends forth a tiny ripple of hope.*

U.S. Attorney General Robert F. Kennedy

Social movements have interested scholars for decades (e.g., Horn, 2013; Millward & Takhar, 2019; Obregón & Tufte, 2017; Oliver, 1993; Oliver, Marwell, & Teixeira, 1985). Movements result from collective action (sometimes referred to as the critical mass; e.g., Diani, 1992; Oliver et al., 1985; Olson, 1965), which is when a common or shared societal interest among a group of people motivates them to take action (i.e., protest, march, boycott) (Horn, 2013; Oliver, 1993; Olson, 1965). People often engage in collective action to achieve “a goal that they believe will improve society” (Gage, 2018) and “in response to situations of inequality, oppression, and/or unmet social, political, economic or cultural demands” (Horn, 2013, p. 19). The collective action that spurs social movements

involves many people with a shared purpose acting in solidarity (Diani, 1992; Gage, 2018; Horn, 2013), often coordinating in a well-organized manner (Goodwin & Jasper, 2014). Figure 1 depicts how social movements grow. As separate groups with a shared purpose become connected in a network, their coordinated efforts ripple out to shift social norms and create social change. Simply put, when people rise together as upstanders on an issue, particularly one involving injustice or inequality, they forge social movements with the momentum needed to drive social change.

Scholars have explored contemporary social movements that result from grassroots collective action often characterized as bottom-up change (e.g., Goodwin & Jasper, 2014; Obregón & Tufte, 2017). One model for such movements, the public as thermostat, connects policy change to public opinion such that warming and cooling changes in public sentiment toward a social justice issue send a signal to adjust policy and laws (Wlezien, 1995). This model explores why and when social change occurs from the bottom up, and demonstrates that grassroots collective action drives public policy and legislative change (Wlezien, 1995; Wlezien & Soroka, 2012). Social movements also create change from the bottom up when “activists seek change by lobbying social spheres of society rather than the obvious political spheres of governments” (Millward & Takhar, 2019; p. NP3). This research on bottom-up change is consistent with the theory of social change advanced by Angela Davis, political activist and scholar, who wrote that people must rise up to take collective action and cannot “rely on governments, regardless of who is in power, to do the work that only mass [social] movements can do” (Davis, 2016, p. 35).

How do today’s grassroots social movements build infrastructures for success? With the rise of communication channels such as social media, along with the decline of institutions once influential in sparking social change (e.g., churches), the way to build a successful social movement is changing (Goodwin & Jasper, 2014). This is particularly true given that social media offers ‘everyday people’ engaged in grassroots collective action an accessible platform to magnify their voices (Goodwin & Jasper, 2014). Thus, while we infuse this review with the ideas and findings from extant research on social movements, we structure our review around an adaptation of Crutchfield’s (2018) framework exploring how recent social movements in the United States have succeeded. Crutchfield and her research team at the Global Social Enterprise Initiative at Georgetown University studied a range of social movements from tobacco control and marriage equality to the expansion of gun rights

to provide insights to ongoing and future social movements working to shift hearts and minds as well as laws and policy. Specifically, Crutchfield's research focused on large scale modern movements in the United States that resulted in social change—for example, shifting public sentiment on marriage equality and securing marriage rights. We build on Crutchfield's framework by providing insights from consumer psychology that explore the forces propelling successful social movements. We preserve the practices in this framework in their entirety, but modify the labels for and the order of those practices to illustrate how and why social movements succeed. In the section that follows, we present our framework together with consumer psychology and related research illuminating how social movements succeed.

### A Framework for How Social Movements Succeed

Our framework for how social movements succeed constitutes an infrastructure for creating social change with a focus on the essential role of people—*upstanders*—who are engaged in grassroots organizing and collective action. Figure 2 depicts our framework—the iterative practices of successful social movements—which build the momentum needed to shift societal norms and influence public policy, thereby bringing about social change. In the same way a megaphone amplifies a single voice, as Figure 2 illustrates, social movements channel, focus, and amplify the voices and actions of people at the grassroots level to create social change. The practices of successful movements grow their grassroots, strengthen their movement's momentum with connection, collaboration, and small wins, and ripple out to activate more individuals, communities, and organizations. These practices include building grassroots momentum, assembling networked movements, being leaderful, broadening the network by forming coalitions of organizations, and winning hearts and minds. We harness research in consumer psychology to explore how and why these practices contribute to success. As Crutchfield (2018, p. 11) noted, "Winning movements made their destinies come true, rather than being destined to succeed." We begin, as most social movements do, with building grassroots momentum.

#### Building Grassroots Momentum

*Develop enough courage so that you can stand up for yourself and then stand up for somebody else.*

Maya Angelou, American poet, author, and civil rights activist

Successful 20<sup>th</sup> century movements are born, sustained, strengthened, and grow momentum at the grassroots level (Crutchfield, 2018). The grassroots of a social movement are those individuals and groups at the local community level who engage in collective action, organizing their own communities on behalf of the movement. The participation of greater numbers of individuals in collective action is critical to the success of social movements (Chenoweth & Stephan, 2011). Yet, the quality and depth of that participation matters as well. Social movements succeed when individuals and groups at the grassroots level are cultivated, nurtured, and connected—both to the movement’s cause and through relationships between the movement’s members. In effect, successful social movements create and construct an interconnected grassroots community which embraces decentralized, local action while channeling the movement toward a shared purpose and goal. In the sections that follow, we explore research in consumer psychology to understand how connecting people to the movement and connecting movement members to each other contribute to grassroots momentum.

*Connect People to the Movement.* People must feel that their role in and connection to a social movement matters. This process often begins when they connect their own values and identity to the movement’s purpose and mission. Reminding people of how they are connected to the movement by communicating shared values “is more likely to influence action and meaning-making” (Oyserman & Schwarz, 2017, p. 535). People seek out and interpret information in a way that is consistent with the groups or issues they believe are self-relevant (Wood & Hayes, 2012). Thus, when people understand who they are and what they stand for (i.e., their individual identity), they are more likely to feel connected to a social movement that aligns with that identity, which in turn can enhance their sense of well-being (Aaker et al., 2011; Gilovich, Kumar, & Jampol, 2015; Henderson & Rank-Christman, 2016; Mogilner, 2010; Oyserman, 2019; Rudd et al., 2019). In general, people who connect their individual identity to a collective identity—establishing a shared identity and sense of belonging to a community—demonstrate greater altruism (Tajfel, 1981), increased participation in social movements (Polletta & Jasper, 2001), and stronger group engagement (Blader & Tyler, 2009).

Connecting to a social movement can also empower those who may individually feel powerless to create change (Talukdar, Gulyani, & Salmen, 2005). By acknowledging a shared collective identity, movement members can take on greater psychological ownership of the

movement's purpose and mission (Shu & Peck, 2011; Wiggins, 2018), solidifying grassroots commitment to its success. People who feel powerful demonstrate greater action orientations (Galinsky, Gruenfeld, & Magee, 2003; Rucker, Galinsky, & Dubois, 2012), such that they are more likely to advocate for their beliefs (Moreland & Levine, 1989); develop stronger, more certain convictions; and become more committed to a cause (Rucker, Tormala, Petty, & Briñol, 2014). Indeed, research in consumer psychology finds that attitude certainty is an important determinant of advocacy behaviors, that is, the more certain people are about their attitudes toward an issue, the more likely they are to share their ideas and to try to persuade others to join the effort (Cheatham & Tormala, 2015). According to Rucker et al. (2014, p. 121), "Attitudes held with certainty tend to be resistant, persistent, and influential on people's thoughts and behavior." Next, we consider the role of connecting individuals within the movement to each other.

*Connect Movement Members to Each Other.* Decades of research in consumer psychology and related disciplines have demonstrated the power of social influence, the impact one person can have on another person's beliefs and behaviors (e.g., Asch, 1955; Irmak, Vallen, & Sen, 2010; Lee, Cotte, & Noseworthy, 2010; Wood & Hayes, 2012). As grassroots members of a social movement form connections to each other, they influence—and are influenced by—others in the movement as they develop a collective sense of purpose and identity. When people share common ground, as do grassroots members of a social movement, they reinforce their shared views, thereby deepening their social bonds (Berger, 2014). Indeed, even something as simple as sharing food together influences trust in unfamiliar people and increases cooperation (Woolley & Fishbach, 2017). Knowing members by name or recognizing their faces also has benefits, including enhanced feelings of respect among members (Henderson et al., 2018; Rank-Christman, Morrin, & Ringler, 2017). Furthermore, discussing topics of common interest (e.g., the shared goal of the movement) makes people feel more connected to one another (Clark & Kashima, 2007). Ultimately, social connections and a collective identity enhance wellbeing, help people feel that they matter, and allow them to see that their role is important (Gilovich et al., 2015; Rudd et al., 2019).

Fostering bonds among grassroots members of a social movement requires trust. Trust is vital, given that members are likely to rely on trusted others within the movement for collective action, especially under conditions of perceived risk (Perry & Hamm, 1969) and in situations that require

actual risk-taking. Furthermore, in emotionally difficult situations, people rely more heavily on benevolent others whom they trust than on experts (White, 2005). When initially interacting with someone unfamiliar, people look for cues to determine how much trust is warranted (McKnight, Cummings, & Chervany, 1998; Woolley & Fishbach, 2017). One important cue used to establish trust is active listening, the “process of actively sensing, interpreting, evaluating, and responding to verbal and nonverbal messages (Castleberry & Shepherd, 1993, p. 36). Active listening regulates negative emotions (Rimé, 2009) and boosts well-being through social support (Buechel & Berger, 2018). Furthermore, active listening increases trust and satisfaction in relationships (Aggarwal, Castleberry, Ridnour, & Shepherd, 2005). By investing in relationships with other movement members and actively listening to their concerns, grassroots movement members weave together and strengthen their bonds of collective identity (Palmatier, Dant, Grewal, & Evans, 2006).

As Satell (2016) noted, “It is when small groups connect—which has become exponentially easier in the digital age—that [movements] gain their power.” These connections may take place in shared, physical spaces where like-minded movement members meet in person to exchange ideas (Bublitz et al., 2019; Nardini et al., 2020) but they may also occur on online platforms (Bublitz et al., 2020). Regardless of the form they take, shared spaces provide critical support, giving grassroots movement members a positive and consistent setting in which to connect (Rosenbaum, Ward, Walker, & Ostrom, 2007). By establishing common ground and sharing space, movement members reduce barriers to connection, empower each other, and begin to see themselves as a collective “we” rather than an individual “me” (Bublitz et al., 2020). This becomes the basis for building a networked movement, the practice that we explore next.

### **Assembling Networked Movements**

*Never doubt that a small group of thoughtful, committed people can change the world; indeed, it is the only thing that ever has.*

Margaret Mead, cultural anthropologist and author

Successful social movements cultivate grassroots momentum by building collaborative, networked structures that connect members, groups, leaders, and organizers across communities at the local, state, and national levels (Crutchfield, 2018). Networked movements invest money, time, and

talent in seeding and supporting collaboration—rather than competition—among groups and grassroots leaders across localities. These movements adopt goals, plans, and practices specific to particular localities (e.g., a city or state), rather than a single, undifferentiated, nationally focused strategy. Finally, networked movements look for and pursue small, localized wins that can nudge the movement forward. These small wins, in turn, catalyze social change, build momentum, and lead to larger-scale changes over time (Azmat, Ferdous, & Couchman, 2015). Thus, to maintain and enhance grassroots momentum, successful movements engage in the following: building a network to connect the movement, investing in the network, and nudging forward incrementally with wins at the local and state levels. Each of these practices are introduced in the sections that follow, informed by research in consumer psychology.

*Build a Network to Connect the Movement.* As movements formalize their networked structure, they must establish a means for local groups and their leaders to coordinate their efforts, communicate important information, and reflect on prior successes and failures in a way that informs future strategy. Because building a networked movement is a collaborative effort, it requires a broad range of support, cooperation, and alliances to build awareness and grow collective resources (Sud, VanSandt, & Baugous, 2009). Beyond collaboration, successful networks require active management. Formalizing networks with coordinated, systematic sharing enhances the accountability members feel toward each other and accelerates sharing across groups (Wenger, McDermott, & Snyder, 2002).

Networked movements need a strategy and supporting process for effective communication that includes ways to collaborate across and share information throughout their network (Achrol & Kotler, 1999). This includes the sharing of information that may be held by and exclusively known to individual members but important for the group's success, exemplifying the fact that the *quality* of shared information is often more vital to success than the *quantity* (Marlow et al., 2018). To that end, movements should maintain an open environment to ensure all members are comfortable and motivated when it comes to sharing information across their network (Frenzen & Nakamoto, 1993). One way members connected within a movement achieve effective collaboration is by setting goals together, which also strengthens their shared vision and purpose (Chaney et al., 2019; Salas, Reyes, & McDaniel, 2018). Furthermore, research in consumer psychology highlights how subtle language adjustments that focus on the collective instead of the individual (e.g., using “we” instead of “you and

I") make people feel more connected (Simmons, Gordon, & Chambless, 2005) and increase the quality of interpersonal relationships (Fitzsimons & Kay, 2004). People respond more favorably to "we" than to "you and I," particularly when they have a close relationship with the source of the message (Sela, Wheeler, & Sarial-Abi, 2012).

People in a movement's network often reflect a diverse community, spanning differences in age, ethnic background, and social status. When these diverse movement members share a collective sense of self, and signal it appropriately, it enables the flow of information (Belk, 2014; Rank-Christman & Henderson, 2019). For example, groups that have been similarly marginalized may feel a sense of solidarity and therefore are more likely to join efforts to create change (Chaney et al., 2019; Wooten & Rank-Christman, 2019). Lee et al., (2010, p. 74) identify certain opinion leaders they call "brokers of the network." These brokers are individuals who hold advantageous positions within their networks in that their influence spans numerous "unconnected individuals or subgroups," putting them in "a unique position which allows them to reach others with optimal efficiency" (Lee et al., 2010, p. 74). These brokers may serve as a bridge within a movement between groups, communities, or localities within the network.

Facilitating and establishing connections among the members of a movement is vital. The strength of ties between movement members determines the depth and frequency of people's interactions within a network (Iacobucci & Hopkins, 1992). Strong ties connect people who trust each other and interact frequently, whereas weak ties connect people who interact less frequently (Brown & Reingen, 1987; Granovetter, 1973; Ryu & Feick, 2007). Yet both strong ties (i.e., with close friends) and weak ties (i.e., with distant acquaintances) play an important role within a network when it comes to information and resource sharing (Brown & Reingen, 1987; Granovetter, 1973), emotion regulation (Heath, Bell, & Sternberg, 2001; Rimé, 2009), and bonding (Berger, 2014). Although people are more likely to seek information (e.g., referrals), emotional support (e.g., help processing loss), and bonding (e.g., a sense of increasing belongingness) from those with whom they share strong ties (Berger, 2014), they can gain valuable information through weak ties (Brown & Reingen, 1987). Furthermore, by strengthening weak ties in a social network, movement leaders are increasingly likely to spread information, attitudes, and behaviors to more distant clusters of members (Centola, 2010). Building a networked movement also requires an investment of resources, which we examine next.

*Invest in the Network.* Social movements operate in a competitive funding environment and often face a dearth of resources, whether it be money, time, knowledge, or all of the above (Bublitz et al., 2020; Smith, Cronley, & Barr, 2012). Without funding and technical assistance, movements cannot develop a coordinated strategy for collective action and build a networked movement (Crutchfield, 2018; Popovic, 2015; Satell, 2019). Fundraising efforts for grassroots social change are further complicated by the funding practices of many grant-giving entities, which often offer only one-time funding and typically do not support repeat grant requests (Dees, 1998) or funding for operational expenses.

In addition to time and money, expertise, knowledge, and skills are essential resources when it comes to creating social change (Bublitz et al., 2020). Sharing information, marketing, and technical resources within a network not only increases performance, but also enhances the network's efficiency and resilience (Jang, 2017). Technology, for example, can accelerate sharing within a network, as it allows people to collaborate across geographical and temporal boundaries (Bublitz et al., 2020; Markus, Manville, & Agres, 2000). Sharing informational resources online allows a social movement to create a broad community of skilled members who can integrate shared knowledge (Faraj, Jarvenpaa, & Majchrzak, 2011) and support each other through challenges (Bublitz et al., 2020). Furthermore, by sharing online, members develop a sense of community and connection with others they would otherwise not know (Belk, 2010, 2014; Baker & Hill 2013; Bublitz et al., 2020). During difficult times when resources are limited, a culture of sharing helps to preserve the network by encouraging members to work through their differences (Thomas, Price, & Schau, 2012) and navigate tensions (Baker & Hill, 2013). Fostering relationships within a network, especially among people in distant nodes of the network, also helps ensure a balanced distribution of limited resources and creates a reservoir of pooled knowledge.

People have a proclivity to share with one another (Belk, 2010; Packard & Wooten, 2013), particularly in relationships that are oriented toward creating community (Clark, Oullette, Powell, & Milberg, 1987; Small & Simonsohn, 2008) and with others to whom they feel psychologically close (Belk, 2014; Packard & Wooten, 2013). For example, friends engage in word-of-mouth within their network and serve as role models, inspiring others to imitate their behavior (Ryu & Han, 2009). In addition to sharing information, friends also provide emotional and financial support, and serve as an

avenue for exchanging resources (Gibbons & Olk, 2003). Indeed, people determine how to allocate scarce resources based upon the closeness of their relationships to others; when people feel a sense of interdependence with other people, they are more likely to allocate resources to them (Aron, Aron, Tudor, & Nelson, 1991). People are also more influenced by those with whom they feel a close connection (Rogers, Goldstein, & Fox, 2018). For example, people were more likely to vote when encouraged to do so by someone they knew as compared to when asked by a stranger (Nickerson, 2007). Finally, the closer people feel to one another, the more focused they are on the total benefit to the collective, as opposed to personal benefit (Tu, Shaw, & Fishbach, 2016). Such psychological closeness is fostered through shared values and attitudes (Brown, Novick, Lord, & Richards, 1992), often manifested as a movement's collective identity. Next, we consider how networked movements achieve success as a result of accruing wins at the local and state level.

*Nudge Forward with Local and State Wins.* Because successful social movements are a culmination of small-scale victories (e.g., a policy shift in local communities), movements should pursue these small victories rather than striving only for larger-scale opportunities to make change (e.g., putting all its resources toward efforts to modify a national policy; Azmat et al., 2015; Crutchfield, 2018). Research in consumer psychology on goals shows how seeing incremental progress can enhance goal pursuit (Cheema & Bagchi, 2011; Koo & Fishbach, 2010; Touré-Tillery & Fishbach, 2011; Wiebenga & Fennis, 2014) because it “serves as a proxy for [goal] achievement and provides external validation” (Mathur, Block & Yucel-Aybat, 2014, p. 485). Successes along the way, when communicated to a broader audience, can nudge attitudes, preferences, political identity, and behaviors (for a review see Rao, 2017).

Grassroots movements effectively create social change when norms shift and society begins to recognize—if not accept—a particular issue, practice, or belief as the new norm. Consumer psychology has long acknowledged the influential power of social norms (e.g., Asch, 1955), as well as the fact that *changing* these norms can be especially difficult (Abrahamse, Steg, Vlek, & Rothengatter, 2005; Miller & Prentice, 2016). Societal shifts in social norms generally do not result from a few well-connected individuals taking a stand; they are more likely to occur when grassroots members shift the social norm within their circles of influence, with the new norm then rippling out to create more and larger influence circles.

Indeed, research in consumer psychology supports this premise (Satell, 2019; Watts & Dodds, 2007). For example, people are more likely to adopt a product or service when they have a large number of friends who have already adopted it (Katona, Zubcsek, & Sarvary, 2011). To further expand their reach, movements can also shift norms indirectly by focusing on the beliefs and behaviors of bystanders (Miller & Prentice, 2016), who are more likely to become upstanders if they feel supported by others. For example, bystanders were more likely to stop someone from driving drunk when they felt supported in doing so (Turner, Perkins, & Bauerle, 2008). This form of social support may enhance people's propensity to act and increase the belief that their actions will create meaningful change (Anderson & Galinsky, 2006). Similarly, framing the choice to act in a way that clearly highlights both the benefits of action as well as the cost of inaction may increase an individual's propensity to join a movement (Keller et al., 2011). Thus, people are more likely to engage in changing social norms when they do so in the company of those who share their values and support their efforts, and when reminded of the cost of inaction.

Regardless of whether social movements shift norms directly or indirectly, successful movements start locally with people who often share their immediate circumstances (Goldstein, Cialdini, & Griskevicius, 2008), such as those who are viscerally connected to the movement's purpose. People are more likely to conform to the thoughts and behaviors of similar others (i.e., social groups to which they belong; Cialdini & Goldstein, 2004; Shang, Reed, & Croson, 2008; Swann & Bosson, 2010), and they are more likely to deviate from those with whom they wish to disassociate (Berger & Heath, 2008; White & Dahl, 2006) unless that person engages in a positive, beneficial behavior (White, Simpson, & Argo, 2014). Therefore, as social movements work to expand their network of members and shift social norms, they may need to destigmatize their purpose, goals, or behaviors (e.g., Argo & Main, 2008) by connecting them with the shared values of others (Miller & Prentice, 2016). Incrementally shifting social norms in particular localities or among specific groups of people enables movements to grow a nationwide network of support, which increases their power and visibility (Barringer & Harrison, 2000; Wheatley & Frieze, 2011). As their actions become more visible, grassroots movements create information cascades (Bikhchandani, Hirshleifer, & Welch, 1998) leading to more people taking similar action, as often happens with participation in public

protests (Steinert-Threlkeld, 2017). In the next section, we explore how leadership shapes successful movements.

### **Being Leaderful**

*Individually we are a drop, but together, we are an ocean.*

Ryunosuke Satoro, Japanese writer

Leadership is a key factor in successful social movements (Funes, 2020; Meyer, 2015). Many social movements have been characterized as *leader-led* in which a dominant leader drives a hierarchical, top-down structure that directs the actions of a group (Meyer, 2015; Satell, 2015). Conversely, other social movements have been described as *leaderless*, with flat, non-hierarchical, essentially grassroots structures that provide all members with decision-making authority (Hardt & Negri, 2017; Satell, 2019). In contrast, successful modern social movements are *leaderful*, embracing a hybrid form of leadership in which multiple leaders and organizations build coalitions, share power, embrace decentralized grassroots organizing, and drive collective decision-making as they work together toward a shared goal (Crutchfield, 2018). In such social movements, leaderful leaders influence the movement's focus, strategy, and network structure, but they also acknowledge and "realize that ultimate power is amassed by empowering others" (Crutchfield, 2018, p. 151).

*Cultivate Leaderful Skills.* There are several commonalities among leaderful leaders including the diversity of their origins, their mastery of active listening, their empathy and willingness to let go of ego, and their singular focus and passion for the movement. Similar to successful social entrepreneurs, leaderful leaders have diverse backgrounds that include social work, medicine, environmental studies, and marketing (Bublitz et al., 2019). Research indicates that entrepreneurial success is more likely when organizational leaders have a range of knowledge and professional experiences, thereby offering creative solutions to an established problem (Staniewski, 2016). Leaderful leaders are also masters of active listening (Castleberry & Shepherd, 1993), which deepens relationships and commitment (Comer & Drollinger, 1999). In concert with active listening, leaderful leaders are also empathic, willing to let go of ego, and collaborative rather than competitive (Crutchfield, 2018). Such traits are invaluable. For example, within a group, empathy engenders a focus on others rather than self, and to that end fuels cooperation toward a shared goal (Thomas,

McGarty, & Mavor, 2009). In his book, *Blueprint for a Revolution*, Popovic (2015, p. 48) writes, “If you want to win, you need to pull people toward your movement and recognize that you can’t win without them.” Empathy and active listening encourage such cohesion. Finally, leaderful leaders relentlessly focus on the movement’s goal and impact. In effect, they offer the movement a “vision for tomorrow” focused on the movement’s shared purpose and goals (Popovic, 2015).

*Build a Leaderful Movement.* Leaderful leaders weave together networks, manage coalitions, and forge connections among people and organizations (Satell, 2019). In social movements, leaderful leaders recognize that for a movement to succeed, they must cultivate leadership throughout the movement’s network by developing and empowering grassroots leaders. As described by David Brooks (2018), grassroots leaders work “at the tip of the shovel, where the actual work is being done...with a feel for how things work in a specific place, and an awareness of who gets stuff done.” Grassroots leaders are situated within a particular locality and understand the community in which they work (Nardini et al., 2020). In successful social movements, leadership is cultivated throughout the movement.

The core leadership challenge for social movements is building an infrastructure that strengthens the network of connections among individuals, leaders at all levels, and organizations (Suarez, 2019). Leaderful leaders build these connections in three key ways. First, they acknowledge that leadership begins at the grassroots level. Grassroots leaders have an insider’s perspective of their community’s needs, resources, and operations (Nardini et al., 2020). By inviting and empowering local leaders to step forward, movements acknowledge that transformational change happens one person at a time in particular localities (Wheatley & Frieze, 2011). Next, the faces and voices of leaderful movements are those of the people who have lived experience with the movement’s purpose, individuals who can speak passionately and personally on its behalf (Fredrick, 2018). Sharing their stories and the movement’s story with agency and psychological ownership, they move others to share their passion for the cause (Talukdar et al., 2005; Bublitz et al., 2016). Finally, leaderful leaders unite diverse coalitions of amiable and adversarial allies to work together toward a shared goal. The power of networked movements arises from a fusion of each organization’s expertise and strengths, creating synergy within the movement that allows its members to accomplish more together than they

could individually (Achrol & Kotler, 1999). In the next section, we consider how to build broad, successful movement networks that include coalitions of organizations.

### **Expanding the Network: Assemble Coalitions of Internal and External Organizations**

*If you want to go fast, go alone. If you want to go far, go together.*

African Proverb

Successful movements bring together diverse—and sometimes adversarial—organizations and groups operating in the same movement space to form a coalition of allies working together toward a common purpose with a shared agenda. For social movements, this process of creating an organizational coalition is often difficult, messy, and complex given that “every cause is plagued by struggles over power, credit, money, and personality” (Crutchfield, 2018, p. 103). Networked movements develop flexible paths that allow multiple organizations and their constituencies and leaders to work together. In addition, successful movements enlist a broad coalition of support external to the movement that include businesses, social enterprises, and nonprofits. Businesses exert influence through advocacy, reforming their policies and practices, and using their connections and the power of their brands to advance a social movement. In the sections that follow, we provide insight into building a coalition of internal allies within a movement and generating support from external allies such as businesses.

*Build a Coalition of Internal Allies.* Building a coalition of supportive allies within a social movement is difficult and challenging. Successful movements devise ways for the organizations within a movement to find common ground to resolve intra-movement conflict, work together, and move toward a cooperative agenda (Gray, 2000; Vangen & Huxham, 2012). Furthermore, organizations led by leaders who are open to new experiences actively seek new knowledge and co-create together (Dweck, 2006; Luchs & Mick, 2018) putting them in a better position to prevent differences from blocking their attempts to collaborate. One process for building coalitions within a movement involves encouraging dialogue “to frame and reframe the meanings of relevant issues,” as such exchanges challenge organizations seeking to build a coalition to think about a problem from alternative points of view (Hargrave & Van de Ven, 2006, p. 869). Resolving intra-movement conflict so that members can collaborate toward a common goal may bolster the pride members feel as they advance the collective effort of the movement and may also motivate future joint actions (Norton et

al., 2012; Passyn & Sujan, 2012). Sharing power and resources, a key practice of leaderful grassroots movements, may also help reduce power struggles. As internal allies collaborate and coordinate, the movement grows, gaining visibility, voice, and power.

Understanding and harnessing power within a social movement is essential to building a coalition of organizations that work together. Power is the capacity to influence others and exert control over the resources of the group (Anderson & Galinsky, 2006; Rucker et al., 2012). Power increases optimism and self-efficacy and encourages risk-taking (Anderson & Galinsky, 2006), which may be needed as the movement pursues its purpose and goals. Optimistic individuals are more persistent in their quest for a solution (Chan, Sengupta, & Mukhopadhyay, 2013; Han, Lerner, & Keltner, 2007). Levels of social power, cultural differences, and differences in organizational identity may exacerbate the desire for power in decisions about the best course of action to advance group goals (Oyserman, 2006). Movements increase their likelihood of success when they harness the power of their coalition to leverage their differences, engage in productive dialogue, and craft a collaborative strategy.

Why might organizations within a movement be motivated to work together synergistically in a coalition? Certainly, it affords them a greater likelihood of achieving the movement's purpose and goals (Crutchfield, 2018; Gray, 2000; Vangen & Huxham, 2012). In addition, one indirect benefit organizations within the movement derive from participation in a coalition is a boost to their reputations (Nowak, 2006). This enhanced status, along with pride—a sense of satisfaction or accomplishment in seeing one's work advance—may also fuel participation (Klein, Lowrey, & Otnes, 2015; McClendon, 2014). When pride is authentic (i.e., the result of hard work and success), it can encourage perseverance and empathy (McFerran, Aquino, & Tracy, 2014).

*Generate Support from External Allies.* Successful movements benefit from the support of external organizations such as businesses with the power and resources to advance the movement's purpose and goals on a larger scale. While some companies and brands may be reticent to take a stand on divisive political issues (Smiley, 2019), others weigh in on matters such as sensible gun reform, equal rights, and anti-racism (Nassauer, 2018). At the 2013 Starbucks shareholders meeting, CEO Howard Schultz noted that "Not every decision is an economic decision. The lens in which we are making that decision [to support marriage equality] is through the lens of our people" (Starbucks,

2019). Indeed, research indicates that decisions by businesses regarding support for societal causes are frequently connected to employees' (Hemingway, 2005) and company leadership's (Hemingway & MacLagan, 2004) support for specific causes. Through advocacy and by altering their policies and practices, businesses can exert substantial influence on the success of social movements (Crutchfield, 2018).

Businesses engage in support for social movements through Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) initiatives as a way to enhance the image of the products and services they sell (Brown & Dacin, 1997) and to benefit the public's evaluation of their company (Nassauer, 2018; Sen & Bhattacharya, 2001). Such efforts can have a positive impact on a firm's financial performance (Orlitzky, Schmidt, & Rynes, 2003) by allowing companies to sell goods and services at a premium price (Bhattacharya & Sen, 2003) and generating positive media attention with the power to insulate the company from negativity (Klein & Dawar, 2004). This is especially true when consumers see a connection between the firm and the cause (Kuo & Rice, 2015). That said, research also shows that CSR efforts can increase donations to a cause or organization (Lichtenstein, Drumwright, & Braig, 2004). Consumers with psychological and emotional connections to a brand experience enhanced positive brand connections when that brand offers public support for a cause that aligns with their values (Newman & Brucks, 2018). However, regardless of the specific reasons why businesses decide to support a movement, when they take such action, they influence public opinion and help ensure the success of the movement. Next, we consider how successful social movements win people's hearts and minds.

### **Winning Hearts and Minds**

*Our struggle is not the struggle of a day, a week, a month, or a year, it is the struggle of a lifetime. Never, ever be afraid to make some noise and get in good trouble, necessary trouble.*

U.S. Representative and civil rights leader John Lewis

To win people's hearts and minds, successful movements work to make its purpose and goals—the social change the movement is seeking—the new normal (Meyer, 2015; Satell, 2015). Successful movements “change public attitudes so people believe the changes are fair and right,” and to accomplish this, these movements “lead with messages that connect to people at their human core”

(Crutchfield, 2018, p. 13). In this section, we focus on insights that inform how to win people's hearts and minds, including those of movement members and leaders throughout the network; the broader public in a locality, state, or country; and decision-makers such as lawmakers and policymakers. Successful movements follow several promising practices for winning hearts and minds that include connecting with emotions that spark action, uniting through the movement's narrative, and winning hearts and minds with social sharing.

*Connect with Emotions that Spark Action.* Research in consumer psychology explores how a broad range of emotions influences judgement, decision-making, and behaviors (Han et al., 2007; Shiv, 2007; So et al., 2015). One emotional spark frequently examined as a motivator in social movements is anger. Research on anger finds that it is “a constructive emotion that... functions to correct wrongdoing and uphold moral standards” (Tausch et al., 2011, p. 131; see also Fischer & Roseman, 2007; Weber, 2004). Anger in response to injustice leads to feelings of moral outrage and is “one of the strongest predictors of participation in collective protest” (Jost et al., 2012, p. 198; see also Martin, Scully, & Levitt, 1990; Van Zomeren, Postmes, & Spears, 2008). However, despite the fact that anger can play an important role in motivating public support in the fight against social injustice, if the system or the status quo is perceived as just (Jost et al., 2012), or if the efficacy of action is perceived as low (Tausch et al., 2011), anger may not serve as an effective catalyst to spark action.

It is important to recognize that beyond anger, a host of other emotions also motivate affiliation with a social movement. They include frustration (Jost et al., 2012); anxiety, which prompts a preference for safety or solutions that provide a sense of control over the situation (Raghunathan, Pham, & Corfman, 2006); sadness, which may prompt people to seek comfort (Raghunathan et al., 2006); and feeling excluded, which prompts rumination and causes people to lean on their emotions to process information (Lu & Sinha, 2017). Positive emotions such as those involved in prosocial behaviors also spark action by enhancing feelings of affiliation (Rudd et al., 2019) and encouraging people to volunteer time or make donations (Aaker & Akutsu, 2009; Aaker et al., 2011; Dunn, Gilbert, & Wilson, 2011). Such acts of generosity can inspire individuals to “pass it on,” acting generously toward another person because the positive feelings of warmth and admiration inspire benevolence (Van de Vyver & Abrams, 2015; see also Mafael, 2019). People also seek meaning by helping others

and doing purposeful work to make a difference in their community (Schlosser & Levy, 2016). Furthermore, motivation “to make a prosocial difference is inherently relational” (Grant, 2007, p. 394). Ultimately, as a movement experiences small wins, people may feel optimism and hope, which are associated with lower rates of depression, greater feelings of self-worth, and higher levels of competence (Gillham & Reivich, 2004; Peterson, 2000). Working within a movement to accomplish a common goal can also provide social connectedness, enhancing a sense of purpose that advances both individual and collective well-being, and encouraging people to take action (Baker & Hill, 2013; Gilovich et al., 2014; Rudd et al., 2019; Shavitt, Jiang, & Cho, 2016).

People are more likely to participate in a movement when they identify with an issue and they believe their actions are likely to result in meaningful positive change (Van Zomeren, Leach, & Spears, 2012). When people believe they share “traits, characteristics and goals linked to a social role or social group,” they may feel a psychological pull to act on another’s behalf (Oyserman 2009, p. 252). That pull is stronger when people feel psychologically close to the group that will benefit from their collective action (Ein-Gar & Levontin, 2013). However, as a movement attempts to motivate bystanders who are more psychologically distant from an issue, other mechanisms may be needed to generate broader support and action. Empathy, a key determinant of prosocial behavior (Escalas & Stern, 2003; Krishna, 2011), may be a mechanism that could prompt more people to become upstanders, joining a movement as it grows (e.g., Eisenberg & Miller, 1987; Williams, O’Driscoll, & Moore, 2014). Research suggests that combining negative emotional cues (e.g., sadness, fear, tension) with positive messages (e.g., strength, inspiration, helping messages) predicts such broader social support and spurs action (Liang, Chen, & Lei, 2016; Xu, Kwan, & Zhou, 2020). Another method for demonstrating the relevance of a movement is through its narrative (Bublitz et al., 2016; Crutchfield, 2018). In the next section, we explore uniting the movement through storytelling.

*Unite through the Movement’s Narrative.* To shift social norms and change attitudes, beliefs, behaviors, and ultimately policy, movements leverage the power of storytelling—the sharing of a movement’s narrative. Stories play an important role in the communication strategy of successful movements because they attract the listener, generate engagement, and motivate action (Goodman, 2015). Effective stories transport listeners into a world where they vicariously experience the emotions of those depicted in the story (Escalas, 2004; Green & Brock, 2000; Hamby, Brinberg, &

Daniloski, 2017; McFerran, Dahl, Horn, & Honea, 2010) and feel empathy as they gain a first-person view of an injustice (Van Laer, 2014). For example, successful movements often tell the stories of individuals with lived experience of the problem the movement is seeking to solve (Crutchfield, 2018). Stories persuade because people are innate story processors (Adaval & Wyer Jr., 1998; Escalas, 2004; Mick, 1987). As Berger (2014, p. 595) points out, “Sharing an emotional story or narrative increases the chance that others will feel similarly.” In the case of social movements, stories allow listeners to connect with the movement’s purpose, thereby both persuading more people to become upstanders as well as strengthening the conviction of established upstanders.

Certainly, stories create meaning. Stories focused on topics people care about are more likely to prompt action because they are personally relevant (Strange & Leung, 1999). Stories that encourage self-referencing by speaking directly to listeners and directing them to adopt a first-person perspective (e.g., “imagine you are”) shapes their opinions and perceptions (Van Laer, 2014). Then, listeners compare the story to their own beliefs, experiences, and values to determine if and how the story should guide their actions (Fisher, 1989; Hamby et al., 2017). It is these shared beliefs, experiences, and values that unite the storyteller and the listener, prompting the listener to act (Hamby et al., 2017). To motivate a broad audience, movements must craft narratives that connect on an emotional level with listeners in a way that evokes shared values and engenders action.

*Win Hearts and Minds with Social Sharing.* Social media is one of the most powerful tools social movements have to reach a broad, geographically dispersed audience quickly. Thus, social movements must build connections with people online and work toward winning hearts and minds through social sharing. Online interactions and connections allow people to acquire information to formulate opinions, communicate their values, identify others who share those values, and form a coalition (Berger, 2014). Social sharing in the virtual world is an important way that people signal their identity and manage their self-concept (Berger, 2014; Packard & Wooten, 2013). Online interactions also help people regulate their emotions as they share frustrations, moral outrage, inspiration, and hope (Berger, 2014).

People often feel more comfortable sharing online or reaching out to “receive social support from online friends when they might not feel comfortable doing so offline” (Buechel & Berger, 2018, p. 51). Online interaction can also deepen social bonds (Chen & Kirmani, 2015). As people find an

online community that shares their values, their online interactions and relationships may strengthen and evolve, prompting future offline interactions (Buechel & Berger, 2018). Yet it is important to note that how a message is crafted (Luangrath, Peck, & Barger, 2017; Pancer, Chandler, Poole, & Noseworthy, 2019) and how it is sent—for example, via a text message versus an email—changes the way a message is perceived (Kaju & Maglio, 2018). Social media activity also varies due to income inequality (Walasek, Bhatia, & Brown, 2018) and demographic factors such as age (Anderson & Jiang, 2018).

Social movements would be well advised to tap into social platforms and the power of positive marketing to generate “mutual benefit for consumers, organizations, and society” (Mittelstaedt, Kilbourne, & Shultz, 2015). Yet, despite acknowledging the power of social media, “Veteran organizers believe that the internet is no substitute for mobilizing people to demonstrate in the streets. You have to march and raise your collective voice to show solidarity through the physical presence of bodies and voices” (Kercher, 2020). In the next section, we illustrate our framework for how social movements succeed with a contemporary social movement: Black Lives Matter.

### **Black Lives Matter**

*btw stop saying we are not surprised. that's a damn shame in itself. I continue to be surprised at how little Black lives matter. And I will continue that. stop giving up on black life. . . Our lives matter.*

Excerpt from Facebook post, Alicia Garza, co-founder, Black Lives Matter, July 13, 2013 as cited by Cobb, 2016

Black lives matter. Three words conceived in frustration and grief at the acquittal of the shooter in the death of Trayvon Martin, a Black teenager. Patrisse Cullors took these words from her friend Alicia Garza’s 2013 Facebook post and added a hashtag: #BlackLivesMatter. After creating the hashtag, Garza and Cullors quickly teamed up with fellow activist Opal Tometi to promote the hashtag on Twitter and Facebook. Their goal was to build “a network of community organizers and racial justice activists using the name Black Lives Matter,” which resonated among grassroots groups as “simple and clear in its demand for Black dignity” (Ryder, 2020).

In 2014, the fatal police shooting of 18-year-old Michael Brown in Ferguson, Missouri, ignited nationwide demonstrations, bringing Black Lives Matter to the world’s attention. Cullors and

Brooklyn-based activist Darnell Moore “coordinated ‘freedom rides’ to Missouri from major cities across the United States. Hundreds of protestors took to the streets...to join the protests, disseminating information and tweeting updates about events and demonstrations” (Cobb, 2016). Inspired organizers returned home from the protests in Ferguson to found Black Lives Matter chapters in their own communities, “broadening the political will and movement building reach catalyzed by the #BlackLivesMatter project and the work on the ground in Ferguson” (<https://blacklivesmatter.com/herstory/>). Tometi notes that these chapters are “the ones leading,” explaining that “Momentum...ebbs and flows, and there is especially momentum when there is a tragedy...People want to create a chapter and rise up” (Chotiner, 2020).

Black Lives Matter has become a rallying cry for protests against criminal injustice in the deaths of Black Americans including Eric Garner, Tanisha Anderson, Tamir Rice, Mya Hall, Walter Scott, Sandra Bland, Alton Sterling, Stephon Clark, Ahmaud Arbery, Breonna Taylor, and many others. Seven years after its inception, on May 25, 2020, following the videotaped killing of George Floyd, an unarmed Black man in Minneapolis, Minnesota, by a white police officer who kneeled on Floyd’s neck for more than 8 minutes, Black Lives Matter gained a groundswell of support as people and organizations united in collective action. Protestors in more than 2,500 towns and cities in all 50 states across the United States (Buchanan et al., 2020) and in countries across the world rose together to demonstrate, march, and affirm: Black Lives Matter.

Black Lives Matter is a 21<sup>st</sup> century civil rights movement, recognized as the largest movement in U.S. history (Buchanan et al., 2020; Campo-Flores & Jamerson, 2020). To understand the growth of this movement, we examine Black Lives Matter through our framework to demonstrate how social movements succeed.

### **Building Grassroots Momentum**

After the Ferguson protests, the hashtag #BlackLivesMatter was “quickly adopted by grassroots activists and protests all across the country” (Ryder, 2020). To build this momentum, people in local communities—the grassroots of a movement—needed to connect to the movement and to the people within it. According to founder Patrisse Cullors, Black Lives Matter chapters make these connections by “co-creating with comrades, allies, and family a culture where each person feels seen, heard, and supported” and where “differences and commonalities are respected and celebrated.”

Melina Abdullah, Black Lives Matter Los Angeles co-founder, explained: “[Black Lives Matter members] have been welcoming all kinds of people, regardless of race, regardless of age [to the movement]. They have welcomed the military who are taking a knee. They have welcomed police in uniform who are taking a knee. People really want this to work, and they know this will work if there is a broad coalition of people with the same basic goals” (Miller, 2020). As Black Lives Matter chapters formed across the country, individual members connected to the movement at a visceral level, as they identified with it, were motivated by its cause, and developed relationships within the movement.

Black Lives Matter significantly expanded its network of supporters after the killing of George Floyd (Demby, 2020). Individuals who had never participated in protests before and who could never have imagined themselves participating felt compelled to get involved. People were exposed to the movement through social media platforms where they could share ideas, educate themselves and others, foster bonds, build relationships, reaffirm goals, and feel inspired. Zee Thomas, a 15-year-old Black teen, connected to the movement by organizing a team of young women to bring a Black Lives Matter march to Nashville, “I got inspired by what people were doing all across America...I was like, ‘Why isn’t Tennessee doing anything? Why are they silent?...Enough is enough. We’re going to do something’” (Bennett, 2020). After the Nashville protest, Thomas saw a tweet from a mother: “And, I remember it so clearly, because I started crying. She said, ‘I’m happy that my daughter will grow up in a world that these young girls will change.’ And that’s a moment where I felt really powerful, because my main goal...is to make sure that people know that things will change” (Bennett, 2020). Lois Dennis, a white second-grade teacher in Bethel, Ohio, a 95% white town of 2,500 people, attended a Black Lives Matter rally in Bethel noting, “I wanted to be there. I needed to be there.” As a child, Dennis lived in a nearby Ohio town and swam at an all-white swim club. Her Black classmates watched her swim from the hillside outside the pool’s gates, “I never questioned or asked why. That’s why I want to stand with Black Lives Matter—that sort of quiet racism, that’s accepted for so many years, and never questioned” (Petersen, 2020). Tiana Day, a 17-year-old Black teen living in San Ramon, California, connected on social media with Mimi Zoila, a 19-year-old white teen, to organize and lead a protest of thousands across San Francisco’s Golden Gate Bridge. “I have always had this,

like, boiling thing, this boiling passion in my body to want to make a change in the world. I just never knew what it was,” said Day. “This movement lit a fire in me” (Bennett, 2020).

In June 2020, as Black Lives Matter built momentum, Givhan (2020) observed, “No matter the city, the protesters look the same: eclectic, motley, fed up. They are diverse in age, gender and race. They have braids and dreadlocks. They are dressed in hijabs, muscle tanks and ripped jeans. They are adorned with elaborate tattoos and wear scholarly spectacles. They look like college students and soccer parents, the people next door and the neighbors from down the street...The people alone are a relentlessly powerful message.” Motivated by its members’ sense of purpose and collective identity based on shared values, Black Lives Matter established common ground to connect movement members and fuel grassroots momentum.

### **Assembling a Networked Movement**

From its inception in 2013, the hashtag #BlackLivesMatter gave the movement a shared voice with which to assemble its network. The hashtag became the symbol of the movement’s broad collective identity. It serves as a rallying cry, not only to communicate injustice in local communities, but also to bind local incidents to widespread, systemic injustices such as inadequate access to healthcare, housing, and education that cut Black lives short (Chotiner, 2020; Eligon, Burch, Searcey, & Oppel, 2020; Jones, 2020; Leigh, 2020). Black Lives Matter worked to solidify its network both through a physical presence in local communities and global social media activism.

In 2014, Garza described the formation of the Black Lives Matter network in Ferguson, Missouri, as “Black people of all stripes coming together to love on one another, committed to our collective transformation” (Pleasant, 2015). Black Lives Matter’s work in Ferguson involved coordinating and pooling local and national expertise and resources that ranged from medical aid to legal support. According to Tometi, “So hundreds of us are on the ground and from that point we develop a network, because people are like, ‘Hey, Fergusons are everywhere,’ and we don’t want to just go back home and act like this was a one-off act of solidarity. We want to do something. And that was essentially the beginning of our network” (Chotiner, 2020). Language used by the founders and leaders throughout the movement, such as “we” and “our network,” highlight the movement’s collective identity, fueling the growth of its network. By systematically investing in its network—sharing, collaborating, coordinating and investing resources and knowledge in its grassroots—Black

Lives Matter coalesced separate small wins, driven and energized by localized actions, into a nationwide movement.

Yet movements assemble networks not only through in-person protests, but also by marshalling social media support. As youth activist Zee Thomas notes, “Social media was like my best friend when it comes to this. I met my other organizers there. They contacted me on Twitter and Instagram. They were like, ‘Can I help?’ I was like, ‘Sure’” (Bennett, 2020). Another youth activist, Brianna Chandler comments, “But I’ve never really been what I consider to be ‘on the front lines.’ Most of what I do is online. So, when I realized that I wouldn’t be able to actually go anywhere to protest, due to COVID and safety concerns, I just kind of sat down and typed out how I was feeling. I posted, and then I kept thinking and writing and posting and it grew from there. [It’s] what I call ‘consciousness raising,’ because I think that educating people is essential to movement building. There are a lot of different parts of a movement” (Bennett, 2020).

It is those different parts that provide the underlying strength to this “loose national and international umbrella network” (Maqbool, 2020). Whether “on the front lines” or online, Black Lives Matter built a network through in-person and social media relationships, leveraging resources at the local, state, and national levels to inform, educate, motivate, and empower others.

### **Being Leaderful**

In contrast to 20<sup>th</sup> century leader-led movements for civil rights (e.g., Joseph, 2020), Black Lives Matter, “doesn’t require centralized leadership structures to make waves...The [movement] is structured around a community-centered leadership model” (Bellan, 2020). It “eschews hierarchy and centralized leadership” and has been described as “not your grandfather’s civil-rights movement” to distinguish it from 1960s-style activism (Cobb, 2016). Black Lives Matter supports a decentralized structure with grassroots leaders working “in the trenches, side-by-side” along with community members (Remnick, 2020). According to Garza, “The power goes on in the local chapter because [grassroots leaders] know what is going on, and they are the ones familiar with the terrain. Our chapters are the ones leading” (Chotiner, 2020). Melina Abdullah confirms this: “Group-centered leadership is in our guiding principles. Leadership is not just about oratory, it’s also about facilitation, planning, bringing arts to the movement, things that don’t get as much recognition” (Maqbool, 2020). As reported in Maqbool (2020), Abdullah continues, “The guiding light for this doctrine, and for

Black Lives Matter as a whole, she says, has been Ella Baker—the feminist civil rights leader who championed collective grassroots activism over activism focused on a single leader.”

This decentralized, multi-pronged, leaderful approach is intentional and strategic to ensure the stability and longevity of the movement. As Opal Tometi reflects: “We’ve structured ourselves in this decentralized way so that we could be more safe, to be quite honest. There have been assassinations that have really destabilized movements,” (Waldmeir, 2020). Thus, the focus is on cultivating leaderful leaders at all levels. “This moment and movement is producing high-impact, low ego leaders in many sectors, all focused on a facilitative style of leadership, where sustainability and outcomes are more important than shine or visibility” states Purvih Shah, the Bertha Justice Institute Director at the Center for Constitutional Rights (Tonita, 2015). According to the Black Lives Matter co-founders: “We create much more room for collaboration, for expansion, for building power when we nurture movements that are full of leaders, and allow for all of our identities to inform our work and how we organize.” (Tometi, Garza, & Cullors-Brignac, 2015).

The prominent role of female and youth leaders in Black Lives Matter is evidence of its commitment to cultivating leaderful leaders. Abdullah points out that “Black women have always been at the heart of the Black freedom struggle. Often times they have been painted over, and this time we are refusing to allow ourselves to be painted over” (Maqbool, 2020). Nineteen-year-old Nuopl Kiazolu, president of Black Lives Matter New York, asserts, “We’re gonna keep protesting, and we’re gonna keep applying the pressure... Because this is not a moment, it’s a movement. Young people have been carrying every single movement we’ve seen across the world... We are not just the future. We are the present” (Bellan, 2020).

Black Lives Matter elevates the local expertise, shared identity, and lived experiences of its grassroots leaders; recognizes the power, voice, and agency of the people supporting the movement; and emphasizes being leaderful: moving forward, collectively and inclusively, together.

### **Expanding the Network: Assemble Coalitions of Internal and External Organizations**

Black Lives Matter built, and continues to build, a coalition of allied organizations within the movement that includes the NAACP Legal Defense and Education Fund, Color of Change, and the Movement for Black Lives. NAACP President Derrick Johnson notes that, “All of us are fighting for a solution,” and the groups are looking for ways to support one another (Campo-Flores & Jamerson,

2020). Since its inception, Black Lives Matter has also allied with the LGBTQ community (Salzman, 2020). Deja Smith, a Black transgender woman and founding member of the Intersectional Voices Collective, credits Black Lives Matter's founders with "creating space for LGBTQ voices from the start" and for including them as "part of their cultural movement" (Salzman, 2020).

Support from external allies, including prominent public figures and businesses, has been crucial to the movement's success. In 2016, Colin Kaepernick—at the time a quarterback with the San Francisco 49ers—knelt on one knee during the pre-game playing of the U.S. national anthem to protest police brutality and racism. His action was both lauded and highly criticized. In a show of support, Nike chose Kaepernick as the face of its 30<sup>th</sup> anniversary "Just Do It" advertising campaign in 2018, compounding the controversy. These actions and others by early celebrity and business allies were often divisive, igniting as much opposition as support. Yet the efforts of these initial allies raised awareness, pushed conversations, and challenged individuals and organizations to think about the issues raised by Black Lives Matter, ultimately paving a path for later supporters. Four years after Kaepernick took a knee, players kneeling in solidarity is becoming the norm as support for Black Lives Matter has grown worldwide in the wake of moral outrage over the killing of George Floyd; now it is those standing that are outliers (Branch, 2020).

By June 2020, following the killing of George Floyd, prominent companies across a range of industries, from Best Buy to Citigroup, released public statements of support denouncing systemic racism (Roberts & Washington, 2020). John Foley, the chief executive officer of Peloton, emailed a message to the Peloton community, "Black Lives Matter. This week, what's become clear to me is we must ensure [Peloton] is an anti-racist organization." Peloton is not the only brand demonstrating support for racial justice. Brands such as the NFL, Coca-Cola, Nike, H&M, Target, Apple, Home Depot, Amazon, Twitter, United Health, and Warby Parker are just a handful of the companies around the world making policy changes, pledging large sums of money, and taking other steps to show their support for the movement, including designating Juneteenth a paid company holiday (Friedman, G., 2020; Livingston, 2020). Forty-eight states plus Washington D.C. also passed legislation recognizing Juneteenth as a public observance or holiday (Friedman, G., 2020). Juneteenth, celebrated on June 19, commemorates the date in 1865 of the final pronouncement to enslaved citizens in Galveston, Texas, that slavery had ended in the United States. Meanwhile, other companies announced plans to retire

brands long rooted in racist stereotypes—brands such as Quaker Oats’s Aunt Jemima line of products and Colgate-Palmolive’s Darlie toothpaste—and FedEx demanded the renaming of the Washington Redskins football team (Cramer, 2020).

Whether it is explicit calls in corporate ads for consumers to become allies of the movement, prominent displays of the words “Black Lives Matter” painted on city streets, on NBA basketball courts, player jerseys, and other merchandise, or unprecedented sports boycotts by celebrity athletes, support for the movement by businesses and prominent figures is vital. That is because such advocacy can foster public support for the movement amongst consumers with psychological and emotional connections to those brands (Newman & Brucks, 2018). Thus, the actions of allies broaden the network of support for the movement, building greater momentum for influencing public opinion and shifting public norms and beliefs.

### **Winning Hearts and Minds**

In spring 2020, Black Lives Matter experienced seismic growth, winning hearts and minds to become the largest movement in U.S. history (Buchanan et al., 2020). It is crucial to ask, *Why this moment? Why now?* Indeed, why in May and June 2020, did Black Lives Matter win so much individual and institutional support? Just a few years ago, the statement “Black Lives Matter” was controversial and not supported by a majority of Americans (Del Real, Samuels, & Craig, 2020). However, over the last several years, and especially since 2018, polls have shown slowly rising support for the movement. In June 2020, after the killing of George Floyd, polls found a spike in support with a majority of Americans supporting Black Lives Matter (Cohn & Quealy, 2020). According to Kandace Montgomery, a Minneapolis Black Lives Matter organizer and director of Black Visions Collective, “This moment is a direct result of long-term, sustained, often slow community organizing” (Campo-Flores & Jamerson, 2020). A culmination, says Jessica Byrd, founder of Three Point Strategies and a leader in the Movement For Black Lives, of “keeping our foot on the gas these last years, but also really growing a connected ecosystem” (Aguilera, 2020). Justin Hansford, executive director of the Thurgood Marshall Civil Rights Center at Howard University, further explains the shift as “the result of six years of hard work by people who are in the movement and [who] have put forward so many discussions that really changed people’s hearts and minds” (Del Real et al., 2020).

Foundation building is key to winning hearts and minds because changes in behavior and mindset happen over time. According to Berger (2013, p. 206), “No one would claim that the size of the fire depends on the exceptional nature of the initial spark. Big forest fires aren’t caused by big sparks. Lots of individual trees have to catch fire and carry the flames.” Likewise, movement organizers have to build momentum to be in a position to act when needed. Over the last six years, there have been too many opportunities for Black Lives Matter grassroots groups to demonstrate against police brutality, killings, and racial injustice. McFadden (2020) asserts that “the networks created by those protests nurtured the infrastructure necessary to seed engagement today.” That said, why did George Floyd’s death in May 2020 spark such outrage in the hearts and minds of people worldwide, moving “our work forward by leaps and bounds” (Campo-Flores & Jamerson, 2020) and turning bystanders into passionate, active upstanders?

One factor is context. Context matters. When the video of George Floyd’s death was widely transmitted via traditional and social media channels, the United States was in the third month of a global pandemic, caused by the spread of COVID-19. People, unless deemed essential, were confined to their homes; school life, home life, work life, and social life were thrown into sudden chaos with no finite end in sight, and the range of negative emotions—anger, anxiety, sadness, despair, frustration, helplessness and social exclusion—that influence judgement, decision-making, and behavior were widespread. In the midst of the pandemic, the painful video of George Floyd’s death compounded these emotions, creating empathy, greater social connectedness, a shared sense of purpose, and personal relevance toward the movement—a movement that reminded the world that Black lives, many of whom worked in industries deemed as essential during the pandemic, do matter. “There was something really powerful about what the pandemic did for humanity—it created a real sensitivity to our own frailty,” [notes Opal Tometi.] “It gave people an opportunity to reflect on their own vulnerabilities” (Waldmeir 2020). According to Yong (2020), “Americans were in the mood for systemic change… primed by months of shocking governmental missteps.” Said Hansford, “At a time of already heightened tensions because of the coronavirus pandemic, Floyd’s death unleashed a flood of energy and frustration over the direction of the country… I think [before that] a lot of the Black Lives Matter movement’s rhetoric about how pervasive racism was in America [had] seemed far-fetched to many people” (Del Real et al., 2020). As the chief operating officer of Sundial Brands,

Cara Robinson Sabin, noted, “The pandemic—and the fact that many people are working remotely, sharing their stories in video chats and conference calls—is making it easier for some to open up...There’s something about looking at people’s faces on video that feels more intimate” (Safdar & Hagey, 2020).

Beyond fueling the wealth of emotions that often drive social action, the pandemic also created time. Time for social sharing in the virtual world as online interactions provided an outlet that helped people regulate their emotions by sharing their frustrations, moral outrage, inspiration, and hope. And, given that typical schedules were disrupted, time for people to participate in protests on the ground. According to a Wall of Moms activist participating in Black Lives Matter protests, “We’re a bunch of mad white ladies with nothing but time” (Weiner, 2020). According to another Wall of Moms demonstrator, Margaret van Vliet, a former Oregon state housing director, “I was at home thinking that I have to lift my voice. So here I am” (McGreal, 2020).

This confluence of events sparked many people to shift from bystander to upstander, uniting through, and enriching, the movement’s narrative. A number of Black executives who had kept silent about their personal stories of racism now felt “compelled by the moment” (Safdar & Hagey, 2020) to share their stories with their colleagues. Some of these Black executives said that they felt a sense of responsibility to use their platforms on behalf of those without an opportunity to widely express their views, and that their goal was to change perceptions in a way that many others could not. By sharing his personal narrative, noting that he is “an African-American leader in this business,” Mike McGrew, communications chief at Constellations Brands, said he felt a duty to “help people understand stuff that they didn’t understand before” (Safdar & Hagey, 2020).

In assessing the success of Black Lives Matter, three factors were key to propelling bystanders to become upstanders ultimately contributing to the success of the movement: People need to feel *able* to contribute because they have access, time, knowledge, allies, power, and a voice or platform; people need to *want* to contribute because they feel an inner motivation fueled by their convictions or passions to become involved; and people need to feel they *have* to contribute because they feel a compulsion to do so, whether based on their own moral compass, the fear of missing the moment, or simply because it feels like the right thing to do.

The Black Lives Matter marches and demonstrations, combined with the emotions, stories, and conversations of the millions of individuals participating in and witnessing those events, enabled the movement to change not only hearts and minds, but also policy. We are witnessing towns, cities, and states across the U.S. and in major cities around the world rethink the role of and funding for police (Stockman & Eligon, 2020), ban no-knock warrants (Campbell & Nuyen, 2020) and police neck restraints (Kaur & Mack, 2020), revise or instantiate the duty to intervene (Slotkin, 2020) and argue for other reassessments of policy in organizations, in the marketplace, and in broader society. These policy wins, often small and iterative, nudge the movement forward, and have a substantial impact on people's lives. They also demonstrate that when people rise together, movements succeed in creating social change.

Yet these wins come at a price. One of the consequences of the growing success of Black Lives Matter is pushback. As Gay (2020) stresses, "Even with the force of public outrage, there are crystal-clear reminders of what we are up against... and the enemy we are facing is powerful beyond measure." According to McFadden (2020): "It's clear that social movements are endemic to American life: The constant presence of protests and activism has shaped culture and policy over the past 60 years. Yet the anticipation of delays and deterrence by oppositional forces is built into movement work. Key players have to continuously adapt their strategies and challenge resistance by powerful actors to achieve any movement's goals." Whether it is derision about what the movement stands for, cynicism about the underlying motivations of allies, skepticism about sustained social change, outrage at the perceived actions of protestors, hijacking of the movement's narrative, inner tensions concomitant with a leaderful approach, or apprehension about what will be lost as social justice gains, it must be noted that the success of social movements spurs both positive and negative emotions and attitudes, and superficial and sincere gestures of support. At every step depicted in our framework, Black Lives Matter has had multiple opportunities for failure or success. As the Black Lives Matter movement inevitably enters a less visible phase and the spotlight shifts, "We think that the movement activity has somehow ended," states Allen Kwabena Frimpong, co-founder of the AdAstra Collective, which studies and supports social movements. "But it hasn't. It's that what is required of us has shifted ... in this phase of the cycle. It's a time to build strategy...the unseen, deliberative work of activism will persist whether the cameras are on or off" (McFadden 2020). To sustain success, social

movements must be relentless in continuing to protest, persistent in challenging the status-quo, and unwavering in their commitment to social change.

## Conclusion

According to Douglas McAdam, an emeritus professor at Stanford who studies social movements, the Black Lives Matter movement is “achieving what very few do: setting in motion a period of significant, sustained, and widespread social, political change. We appear to be experiencing a social change tipping point that is as rare in society as it is potentially consequential” (Buchanan et al., 2020). Our analysis of Black Lives Matter helps us to understand the psychological forces underlying the success of this movement, the forces that change hearts and minds and spark collective action. Angela Davis (2016) offered insight into the enduring power of these forces when she said, “I’m no longer accepting the things I cannot change. I’m changing the things I cannot accept.”

## Discussion and Conclusion

*Every substantial change in American history [attributed to social movements] was preceded by large numbers of powerful people explaining that it wasn’t possible. Most people are easily convinced of the futility of their efforts. Those brave enough to believe otherwise make history.*

David S. Meyer, professor of sociology and political science

Using a consumer psychology lens, we explore how social movements succeed in creating change and achieving their social justice goals. In doing so, we bridge the micro processes of individuals and grassroots communities and the macro processes of movements and social change. We connect research in consumer psychology focused on people’s motivations, thoughts, feelings, and actions with the ways in which social movements build an infrastructure to transform society. We assert that “the macro starts with the micro” (Heath, 2020, p. 236), and that the psychological processes investigated in consumer psychology research are integral to understanding the success of social movements. In this way, our approach to this research review—bringing together disparate, micro-level findings from consumer psychology to understand an important and complex macro-level social change problem—is unique and offers a contribution. By integrating findings from consumer psychology research that spotlight individual phenomenon, we create a floodlight to illuminate a vital

social justice issue. Specifically, our research builds on Crutchfield's (2018) framework for how 21<sup>st</sup> century social movements succeed. We integrate relevant concepts from consumer psychology into Crutchfield's (2018) framework and examine how consumer psychological research informs the practices highlighted in the framework: by building grassroots momentum, assembling networked and leaderful movements, building a broad coalition of support, and winning hearts and minds.

People in local communities united in collective action, and the grassroots momentum they create, are the foundation of successful social movements (Crutchfield, 2018; Heath, 2020). The effectiveness of grassroots support suggests that people not only have a responsibility to act as upstanders to improve their community and society, but can also view their transformation from bystander to upstander, as "necessary, possible, and at least potentially effective and that each individual's role might matter" to a movement's success (Meyer, 2015, p. 67). Movements achieve their goals and social change occurs when broad and diverse coalitions of people and organizations join together in collective action (McCarthy & Zald, 1977). At their core, social movements succeed when people become upstanders, taking action to create social change.

To grow beyond their grassroots, social movements need to assemble networks by connecting members, groups, and organizations across localities, establishing a common purpose, and collaborating to achieve the movement's goals. Yet developing a networked movement is difficult, as movements, like organizations, struggle to grow and scale their operations (Bloom & Chatterji, 2009; Crutchfield, 2018). Even when communities face similar challenges, the unique circumstances in each locality often require that grassroots groups tailor local solutions (Nardini et al., 2020). Thus, social movements cannot simply scale social change by streamlining and replicating their practices across communities (Dees, Anderson, & Wei-Skillern, 2004; Zook & Allen, 2011).

In fact, it is clear that additional research is needed to better understand the psychological processes underlying individual and collective action that determines the success of social movements. Table 1 lists future research questions. In the following section, we explore several implications and directions for such research.

### **Implications and Directions for Future Research**

*Converting Bystanders to Upstanders.* The key to building grassroots momentum is activating people in their communities, transforming them from bystanders to upstanders. This review examines

consumer psychology research that provides insight into the motivational, emotional, cognitive, and behavioral forces that spur people to take action. As people move from inaction to action, from bystander to upstander, they play a pivotal role in efforts to create social change. Future research should investigate the forces and factors that propel people's transformation along the continuum from bystander to upstander: what is the process by which bystanders become upstanders? As people join together in collective action, social movement victories take many forms, such as stronger public support for a cause, community conversations that increase understanding of an issue, policy changes on the local and state levels, and meaningful action by businesses to change the workplace and the marketplace. With each victory, the needle of public sentiment moves, social norms shift, and society changes.

Research by Weaver & Hamby (2019) investigate the consequences of remaining silent. Yet, many more questions remain: What causes someone to switch from seeing a problem as external to their lives to suddenly feeling a sense of personal responsibility to act? What gives someone the courage to speak out against injustice, even when it might set them apart from their family, friends, and colleagues? When and why does someone feel empowered to act, organize, and lead social change? How do people become upstanders? What is the role of the marketplace in suppressing or supporting social change?

Leaderful movements consist of communities of upstanders who take action to create change, collaborate with other individuals and groups, and recruit new members to join the movement. These leaders are key to building coalitions of support for a social movement that includes businesses, social impact organizations, and grassroots groups ready to join the fight to solve society's challenges (Friedman, T., 2020). Social change is most likely to come about when people in grassroots communities stand up and take action (Crutchfield, 2018). Our framework for understanding how and why social movements succeed underscores the need to provide youth and adults with the skills, literacy, and resources necessary to become upstanders.

*Addressing Inequality.* What are the structural problems that plague our society and how do we address them? Social movements provide one path for addressing societal inequities through bottom-up change to drive public policy and legislative change (Stimson, 1991; Wlezien, 1995). Research documents the many disparities people face that make them vulnerable to racism and

poverty (Hill & Sharma, 2020). Yet Hill (in press) contends that the current mechanisms targeting incremental policy change are not generating results that reduce these disparities (see also Lamberton, 2019; Mirabito et al., 2016). Fundamentally, mounting evidence suggests that we need to stop addressing systemic societal ills within silos that ignore the overlapping sources of disadvantage (Corus et al., 2016). Instead, we should recognize how the intersectionality of poverty, educational inequality, healthcare inequity, and racism creates the poverty trap at the root of such disparities.

Consider, for example, the fact that higher rates of chronic illness, coupled with lower rates of health insurance coverage, increased the vulnerability of Black and Brown Americans during the coronavirus pandemic, resulting in disproportionately higher rates of COVID-19 infection, hospitalization, and death in communities of color (Eligon et al., 2020; Leigh, 2020). As Rev. Martin Luther King observed, “Of all the forms of inequality, injustice in healthcare is the most shocking and inhumane.” Public health experts blame these health disparities on “long standing structural inequality,” including compromised access to healthy food, health insurance, adequate housing, and quality education (Eligon et al., 2020). The COVID-19 pandemic also revealed how educational and employment disparities magnified layoffs for Black and Latinx workers as disproportionately fewer held the kinds of jobs that enabled them to work from home (Jones, 2020), a scenario that further diminished their access to healthcare and led to worse outcomes as the pandemic ravaged the United States.

Efforts to fix these structural problems with incremental policy changes have not succeeded. Black and Brown communities cannot escape the systemic problems that trap generations in poverty without systematic, societal solutions embedded within the social support system (Galston, 2020). This paper outlines a framework for such change that calls for first organizing at the local community level and then in networks across localities to raise a groundswell of support to shift public opinion and societal norms, at which point policy changes are much more likely to yield meaningful, transformative results. Future research should continue to explore ways to shift public opinion and societal norms to create systemic societal change. Such research should take into account that because a society is an amalgamation of its people, it is vital to include people’s views and behaviors as part of the change process.

*Funding the Movement.* Social movements require funding and other resources, such as space to organize and access to technology, to succeed. Social impact initiatives often fail because of inadequate funding (Janus & Threlfall, 2016). Furthermore, racial disparities in funding result in Black-led nonprofits and social justice initiatives obtaining significantly less funding than equivalent white-led initiatives (Dorsey, Bradach, & Kim, 2020). These disparities suggest that we need to find more effective and equitable strategies for funding grassroots efforts. Recent evidence suggests that funders are revising their allocation strategies. Bloomberg Philanthropies, for example, recently vowed to commit significant resources to racial equity in the form of financial (e.g., housing and small business ownership), social (e.g., education), and civic (e.g., voter rights) initiatives (Bloomberg, 2020). However, our research suggests that more substantial efforts are needed to bridge the opportunity gap, fund grassroots initiatives, and create a generation of people prepared to become active participants in society (Bublitz et al., 2020). Government agencies and public and private funding entities must rethink their approach to selecting which organizations and initiatives to fund. For example, rather than focus only on large-scale organizations with established track records, funding entities should identify mechanisms to support new and innovative initiatives, often led by people of color and youth, as such groups make an impact at the grassroots level in local communities. Future research should explore changes to funding processes essential to providing resources to grassroots initiatives.

## Conclusion

Resolving systemic forces that perpetuate inequality and injustice depends on bottom-up grassroots organizing by social movements (Crutchfield, 2018; Meyer, 2015; Satell, 2019). As Fredrick (2018) noted, for social movements to succeed, people must believe that “Change is possible. Change is deliberate.” Furthermore, those engaged in social movements must “connect, elevate, amplify, and empower the business leaders, social entrepreneurs, and local leaders who are rising and ready to be the solution” (Friedman, T., 2020). We call on researchers to continue investigating the psychological processes that empower people to rise together, build social movements, and collectively change our society for the better.

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Table 1: Future Research: How consumer psychology can better inform collective action

<b>Building Grassroots Momentum</b>	
<i>Connect people to the movement</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• What motivates a bystander to become an upstander, prompting people to participate in collective action?</li> <li>• How does participation in collective action yield meaning-making experiences that shift behavior and beliefs?</li> <li>• How do different emotions (e.g., positive and negative) prompt joining vs. sustained engagement in collective action?</li> <li>• What beliefs and behaviors interact to create both private and public support for social issues?</li> <li>• How do people navigate conflict between their individual identities (family, political, work) when supporting social change?</li> </ul>
<i>Connect movement members to each other</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• How do relationships with strong (vs. weak) ties motivate upstander behavior?</li> <li>• Which message frames (e.g., approach vs. avoidance; cognitive vs. affective) influence collective identity (i.e., us vs. them)?</li> <li>• How does the jargon and group speak of a movement strengthen or undermine group identity?</li> <li>• How can groups leverage positive peer pressure to shift public opinion, behaviors, and policy?</li> </ul>
<b>Assembling Networked Movements</b>	
<i>Build a network to connect the movement</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• What are the primary motives that encourage groups to join forces and form a network?</li> <li>• Which factors are most important in the development of a collective identity that connects a broad coalition of supporters?</li> <li>• What are the best ways (e.g., online, face-to-face, etc.) to grow and share knowledge within a network?</li> <li>• How does psychological closeness increase information sharing? How and when can it backfire?</li> </ul>
<i>Invest in the network</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• How do groups align to create synergy within the collective, but maintain their unique missions?</li> <li>• Which organizational structures are most effective and efficient when sharing information and resources within a network?</li> <li>• How does power-sharing prevent emotions that undermine collaboration within a network (e.g., resentment, jealousy)?</li> <li>• How can we overcome the current funding disparities and encourage more diversity in who leads collective action?</li> </ul>

- 
- Nudge forward with local and state wins*
- How can networks tap into the public's need to belong when activating upstanders to grow a movement?
  - Which online and offline behaviors signal support for collective action at individual, community, and societal levels?
  - How can local wins be replicated and magnified within other communities?
  - What are the best ways to leverage early wins to expand the network and grow the movement?
- 

### **Being Leaderful**

- Cultivate leaderful skills*
- What motivates leaderful leaders and how do they sustain that motivation?
  - What are the best practices for developing the critical skills of leaderful leaders?
  - What are the specific traits that help maximize the growth and development of leaderful leaders?
  - What local knowledge and skills help leaderful leaders succeed? Are their knowledge structures different from others in the group?
- 
- Build a leaderful movement*
- When does being leaderful result in action (vs. inaction)? Can there ever be too many leaders?
  - How do leaders and “brokers of the network” advance network goals compared to individual and subgroup goals?
  - How do leaders leverage gains in one locale to create behavioral change in other parts of the network?
  - How do movements protect the well-being of leaderful leaders to retain their engagement and grow the movement?
- 

### **Broadening the Network: Forming Coalitions of Organizations Within and External to the Movement**

- Build a coalition of internal allies*
- What factors boost motivation to persevere during the long and often slow road to create social change?
  - Which strategies help internal groups to resolve conflicts and set aside differences to grow and maintain the movement?
  - How can productive dialogue diffuse and resolve conflict in a way that advances the larger goals of the movement?
  - What are the knowledge benefits to individuals and the network of developing coalitions between diverse communities?
-

- 
- Generate support from external allies*
- When communications (e.g., hashtags, slogans/taglines) become brand-like, who manages the image of the brand, how?
  - What motivates corporate support for a movement (e.g., PR, financial, support for employees); which have greater impact?
  - How can companies leverage emotional connections to their brands to support social change? What are the risks?
  - What organizational actions depict authentic versus inauthentic support for social change?
  - What are the tangible and intangible benefits to companies that authentically support social change?
  - Considering both sides, when is it helpful (vs. risky) for a movement to seek external involvement and support?

### **Winning Hearts and Minds**

- 
- Connect with emotions that spark action*
- How might negative and positive emotions work differently to shift public opinion?
  - Considering different routes to persuasion, how might movements increase public support for social change?
  - What factors increase positive, supportive behaviors and decrease negative, counterproductive behaviors?
  - How do emotions motivate people to step up?
- 
- Unite through movement's narrative*
- What are the best storytelling practices to create emotional connections that inspire positive action?
  - How do you craft a cohesive story about a movement in a way that engages diverse audiences?
  - How do products (buying a t-shirt) and experiences (marching in protest) connect people to the movement's narrative?
  - How does the movement's narrative motivate policy change?
- 
- Win hearts and minds with social sharing*
- What are the best ways to leverage the power of social media to shift attitudes, beliefs, and societal norms?
  - How can social media be used to open a dialogue rather than reinforce differences and divisiveness?
  - How does sharing images of participation in collective action on social media impact support for social change?
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Figure 1:

## How Social Movements Grow: The Ripple Effect

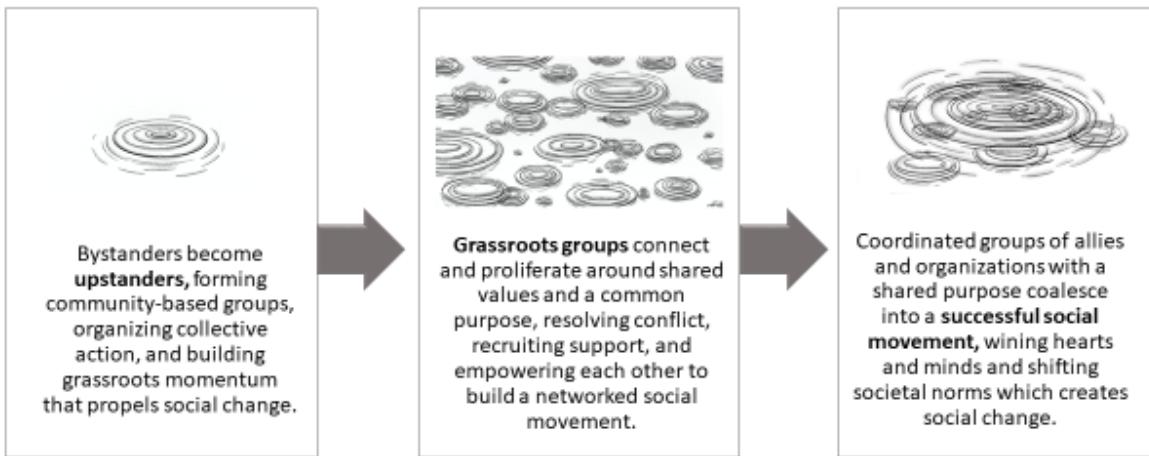


Figure 2:

A Framework for How Social Movements Succeed

