I. Political Process Theory

A. Two goals

1. general theory of social movements to explain:

a. emergence: necessary social conditions

b. success of movements

c. failure of movements

2. specific goal: explain civil rights movement (“Black Insurgency”)

3. Doug McAdam’s Political Process Theory and the Rise of the Black Insurgency

B. Political Process Theory: Assumptions

1. power in society: modified elite model

a. elites hold power and control institutions

b. but elites are not homogenous (^Mills and Domhoff)

c. differ in interests/goals/strategies

2. excluded groups

a. powerless within normal political processes

b. necessary to act extra-institutionally and unconventionally

3. social movements are rational

a. excluded groups: real grievances

b. movement: collective behavior to achieve political goals

4. social movements: long term political/historical processes

C. Necessary social conditions

1. social strain

a. needs to be present but is not sufficient

b. strain present before for black people

i. economically: debt bondage

ii. politically and legally: exclusion and segregation

iii. violence

2. political opportunity

a. breakdown in elite power structure

b. opportunity to define goals, strategies and tactics

c. political opportunity 1930-1965

i. black migration and political power

ii. “Cotton as King”

iii. Cold War

3. indigenous organizations

a. infrastructure: buildings to equipment

b. participation: membership, leadership, interaction

c. Black insurgency: 1930-1965

i. Black Church

ii. Black Colleges

iii. NAACP

4. cognitive liberation

a. view system as unjust

b. not inevitable (end of fatalism)

c. system can be changed (hope)

d. Black insurgency: 1930-1965

i. WWII

ii. movements of national liberation

iii. power of collective behavior

D. Reasons for Success

1. Maintain focus on goal

2. Agreement on strategies and tactics

3. New organizations (formal movement organizations)

4. new members

5. resources

E. Reasons for failure

1. bureaucratization

2. cooptation

a. $

b. conservative groups

3. loss of focus on goals/lack of coherent strategy

4. capacity of elite re-consolidate power

5. repression

6. Black insurgency 1965-1970

1. new goals: economic inequality
2. conflict: strategy, tactics
3. urban rebellions
4. Southern Strategy
5. diminishing support
6. repression: COINTELPRO
   1. infiltration
   2. dirty tricks
   3. legal harassment
   4. extra-legal violence