I. Contemporary Social Movement Theories

A. Classical Collective Behavior Theory

1. assumptions

a. normally functioning society (good)

b. normal people (don’t gather in crowds)

c. pluralistic concept of power

2. Gustave Le Bon: “The Crowd”

a. unit of analysis: crowd

b. composition: alienated, frustrated, marginal

c. goals: none

d. behavior:

i. psychopathological

ii. law of mental unity: herd

iii. irrational acting out: violent

3. Tarde and Blumer

a. contagion theory

b. circular reaction theory

4. Summary: Social Strain

1. social change causes social strain
2. psychic trauma on “some” people

c. a and b cause collective behavior

5. (Social strain) – leads weak psyches to - misbehave in groups (collective behavior) – disrupt the normal functioning of society- with no real goal (psychopathology of the crowd)

1. Social Movements 1960s and 70s

1. domestic

a. definitions: popular movements for social change

b. examples

i. civil rights (black insurgency)

ii. feminist or women’s rights movement

iii. AIM

iv. UFW

v. Anti-Vietnam War movement

vi. environmental

vii. gay rights

viii. anti-poverty

x. occupational safety and health

xi. Free Speech

2. global: post WWII to present

a. post colonial movements of national liberation: popular movements to liberate nation from colonial control

i. Vietnam

ii. Algeria

iii. Guatemala

iv. Angola and Mozambique

v. Indonesia

vi. Congo

vii. Iran

c. anti-globalization movements

i. Seattle 1999

ii. Landless Peasants Movement

iii. Cochabamba

iv. “The Take”

C. Characteristics of Social Movements

1. popular or "grassroots"

a. large number

b. shared grievances

c. egalitarian

d. examples

2. belief: social system is unjust

a. institutions contradict fundamental values

b. social arrangements contradict fundamental values

3. belief: social change not possible within system

a. power: concentrated in few

b. institutions: controlled by few

c. institutions: serve interest of few

4. goals/commitment

a. social justice

b. goals

i. narrow: FSM

ii. broad: Civil Rights Movement

5. strategy

a. overall plan to achieve goals

b. civil rights

i. make injustice visible

ii. non-violent civil disobedience

c. anti-war: stop war machine

6. tactics

a. specific actions

b. civil rights: lunch counter sit-ins, freedom rides, marches, mass arrest, voter registration

c. anti-war: draft card burning, disrupt recruitment, stop troop trains.

7. long term

D. Successes

1. end of legal segregation

2. change in women’s roles (obligations, expectations, norms)

3. consumer protection

4. rights for farm workers

5. occupational safety and health regulations

6. environmental regulations

7. end the war and challenge conventional wisdom about American foreign policy

E. Forced change in social theory: Social Movement Theories

II. Political Process Theory

A. Two goals

1. general theory: social movements

2. application: rise, success, and failure of the black insurgency

1930-1970.

B. Political Process Theory: Assumptions

1. social strain: necessary but not primary cause

2. modified elite theory of power

a. reject pluralist theory of power

b. elites hold power and control institutions

c. elites are not homogenous (differ from Mills, Domhoff)

d. differ in goals/strategies

3. excluded groups

a. reject: norm functioning of society not good

b. excluded groups have real grievances

c. powerless within normal political processes

d. necessary to act extra-institutionally and unconventionally

e. collective behavior

4. social movements are rational

a. collective behavior to achieve political goals

b. goals

i. inclusion

ii. transformation: social institutions or power arrangements

5. social movements: long term political/historical processes

C. Political Process theory and the Black Insurgency

1. political opportunity

a. breakdown: elite power structure

b. opportunity: define and achieve goals

c. Black insurgency: 1930-1965

i. black migration: tenancy to industrial north

ii. the fall of “Cotton as King”

iii. Cold War

2. 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

3. cognitive liberation

a. delegitimation: system is unjust

b. not inevitable

c. belief: change things

d. Black insurgency: 1930-1965

i. WWII

ii. movements of national liberation

iii. power of collective behavior

4. sustain movement strength

a. need to build new organizations

i. new organizations

ii. CORE, SNCC, SCLC

b. broaden participation

c. increase resources

d. problems

i. Iron Law of oligarchy: bureaucratized, hierarchical, rigid, self-perpetuating

ii. cooptation

iii. loss of indigenous support

iv. factionalism

v. disagreement over strategy, tactics and goals

changing goals: civil rights to economic justice and war

changing tactic: lunch counters to marches, protests, strikes in North and riots

D. Power Elite response

1. Re-consolidate power

2. support $: moderate goals

3. repression: COINTELPRO

i. infiltration

ii. dirty tricks

iii. legal harassment

iv. extra-legal violence

E. Backlash: 1973 “Crisis of Democracy”

1. Samuel Huntington

2. Report to the Trilateral Commission

3. “Crisis”

a. “excess of democracy” or too much popular participation

b. legitimation crisis

c. threat to the elite (“Establishment”)

4. Goal: “reassertion of undemocratic authority”

5. Solutions

a. cultivation of passivity in certain groups

“”blacks, Indians, Chicanos, white ethnic groups, students and women . . .”

i. restore “some measure of apathy and noninvolvement”

ii. “. .. return to a measure of passivity and defeatism”

b. “application . . . of theories of order developed for subject societies of the Third World”

i. control the media and education

ii. weaken labor

iii. reinforce conventional wisdom: success and failure

iv. lower expectations, “hopelessness”

F. “Crisis” and the University

1. University as a “subversive” institution

a. certain professor, usually humanities

i. “value oriented intellectuals”

ii. criticize established institutions

iii. challenge authority and effectiveness

iv. not “technocratic and policy oriented intellectuals”

b. ideas

i. democracy and citizenship as active participation

ii. importance of history for understanding present

iii. importance of critical thinking

iv. importance of humanities

philosophy

literature

v. importance of “sociological imagination”: biography and social forces

vi. society and social justice

c. participants

d. organizations

e. target

f. examples

i. Free Speech Movement

ii. Anti-Vietnam War Movement

iii. Students for a Democratic Society

2. Goal

a. re-establish university within system of power arrangements

b. strategy

i. depoliticize university

ii. transform into vocational institution

iii.. “passify” students so they apathetic, uninvolved

iv. neutralize intellectuals

v. underfund

3. Restructuring the University

a. gatekeeper: limit access

i. underfund

ii. increase cost

iii. increase debt burden

b. distribution of resources

i. business

ii. technology

iii. sports

c. marginalize humanities

i. learning must be utilitarian

ii. present vs 1960s -50% degrees

iii. present: business

d. adopt business model

i. supply and demand

ii. owner/consumer

iii. product: degree

iv. education is production process

v. research, researchers and grants

e. dependent on corporate funding

i. $500 million UC Berkeley and BP

4. requires preparation: K-12

a. socialization

i. non-democratic norms: obedience and respect for authority

ii. education as testing

No Child Left Behind

Race to the Top

iii. education as vocational training

b. banking method as learning (flush theory)

c. gatekeeping

i. inequality: funding and resources

ii. knowledge exclusion

Lies My Teacher Told Me

People’s History of the United States

Labor’s Untold Story

5. Success

a. credentialism

b. vocationalism

c. knowledge base

d. critical thinking and complex reasoning

e. “passivity”

f. academics

i. 1960s 40 hours per week 2003 thirteen hours per week

ii. 20 hours per week or more 1960 67% 1981 20%