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The Cultural Impacts of Social Movements

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Abstract

The most important impacts of social movements are often cultural, but the
sheer variety of potential cultural impacts—from shifts in public opinion to
new portrayals of a group on television to the metrics guiding funding in a
federal agency—presents unique challenges to scholars. Rather than treat-
ing culture as a social sphere separate from politics and the economy, we
conceptualize it as the ideas, values, and assumptions underpinning policies
and practices in all spheres. We review recent research on movements' im-
pacts on public opinion and everyday behavior; the media and popular cul-
ture; nonpolitical institutions such as science, medicine, and education; and
politics. We focus on cultural impacts that have mattered for movements'
constituencies and address why movements have had those impacts. We
conclude with an agenda for future research, seeking greater connection be-
tween the literatures on movements and the literatures on the institutions
that matter to movements.

INTRODUCTION

The enduring impacts of social movements are often cultural. Movements change the way we live and work. They make some behaviors socially inappropriate and others newly appealing. They create new collective actors, alter lines of social cleavage, and transform what counts as expertise. Indeed, the policy changes that have been the subject of considerable sociological investigation have often depended on broad changes in public attitudes. For example, American public opinion changed dramatically before marriage equality was ratified by the Supreme Court (Fetner 2016). In contrast, in the absence of favorable public opinion, Supreme Court rulings won by movements for school desegregation (Bonastia 2012) and abortion (Halfmann 2011, Luker 1984) produced little in the way of immediate change in the first case and backlash in both cases. Yet, with the exception of a few books and articles (Earl 2004, Eyerman & Jamison 1991, Rochon 1998, Van Dyke & Taylor 2018), there has been little systematic effort to account for movements' cultural impacts.

The relative lack of attention is understandable. Movements' impacts are often difficult to isolate from the changes in policies, values, and behaviors that would have occurred in the absence of those movements. And the sheer variety of movements' cultural impacts—from shifts in public opinion to the creation of new genres of art to the inclusion of new groups in policy—presents challenges that ascertaining political impacts does not. Undoubtedly, different things are going on when a movement leads a broad swathe of the public to adopt a new term like "Ms." than when the same movement leads a much smaller group of activists to reject mainstream gender roles entirely. A single theory of cultural change cannot apply to the many potential sites of cultural impact. Moreover, while policy changes typically are well documented, cultural changes often are not. In addition, most sociologists of culture favor a definition of culture that encompasses everyday practices as well as beliefs, making it impossible to rely solely on opinion surveys to capture social movements' cultural influence.

These challenges notwithstanding, several recent developments have provided resources for theorizing movements' cultural impacts. Scholars have made headway in isolating movements' political influence from the influence of other contemporaneous developments (Amenta et al. 2010). Moreover, recognizing that movements often target institutions other than states, scholars have begun to theorize the conditions for movements' impacts on formally nonpolitical institutions such as education, science, and especially business (Arthur 2011, Epstein 2016, King & Pearce 2010). At the same time, scholars who study movements targeting states have come to recognize the cultural dimensions of movements' emergence, trajectories, and impacts (Polletta 2008).

Finally, theoretical approaches both within and outside of sociology can profitably be adapted, and sometimes have been adapted, to account for movements' cultural impacts. For example, institutionalist perspectives in organizational theory have put culture front and center in accounting for organizational change (Schneiberg & Lounsbury 2017). Political scientists and political sociologists provide material for treating movements as carriers of ideas that reorient policymaking (Béland 2005, Hall 1993, Stone 1989) and as operationalizing concepts such as equality or discrimination once policy has been adopted (Dobbin 2009, Zippel 2006). Scholars of political communication and public opinion have explored how audiences receive and respond to different kinds of political messages (Chong & Druckman 2007, Earl & Garrett 2017). Science and technology scholars have studied how mobilized disease sufferers challenge what counts as knowledge (Epstein 2016). Media studies scholars have traced activists' effects on the content of television and film (Lopez 2016). Together, these materials offer tools for accounting for movements' cultural impacts.

In this review, we describe some of the diverse cultural consequences movements have had, and we try to understand when and why movements have had those consequences. Movements have

had important impacts on art, music, and fashion (Roy 2013, Van Dyke & Taylor 2018), as well as on other movements (Taylor & Van Dyke 2004, Van Dyke & Taylor 2018, Whittier 2004) and on activists themselves (Giugni & Grasso 2016). Here, however, we choose to focus on cultural consequences that lie outside movements and that might be expected to provide collective benefits for movements' constituencies (Amenta & Young 1999).

We begin by defining key terms: movements, culture, and impacts. Then we review recent research on movements' impacts in several sites: public opinion and everyday behavior; the media and popular culture; formally nonpolitical institutions such as science, medicine, education, and religion; and political institutions. Of course, these sites are not independent. For example, corporations have been more receptive to challenges from insider activists when they face the prospect of government regulation (Dixon et al. 2016). Media coverage affects movements' fortunes in almost all the arenas we discuss. Still, treating the sites of cultural impact separately allows us to identify both different and similar dynamics of influence. We conclude with an agenda for future research that seeks greater connection between the literatures on social movements and on the determinants of influence in institutions.

DEFINING MOVEMENTS, CULTURE, AND IMPACTS

Following Snow and colleagues (2004), we define social movements as sustained and organized collective actions to effect change in institutions by citizens or members of institutions who are excluded from routine decision-making. This definition includes the efforts of many advocacy organizations but not those of interest groups made up of trade associations or professional organizations (Amenta et al. 2009). We define culture as the symbolic dimension of policies and practices (Polletta 2008), and, like others, we thus see movements as having cultural impacts in politics and on the economy (Bosi et al. 2016, Van Dyke & Taylor 2018). New identities, categories, criteria of moral worth, and forms of knowledge all count as cultural in our view. We draw particular attention to the institutional schemas that shape actors' taken-for-granted ideas about how an institution does and should operate (Polletta & Gardner 2015). Movements often have their most significant impact by altering such schemas; on the other hand, existing institutional schemas channel and sometimes block reform (Adams et al. 2005).

We use the terms impact, consequence, and influence interchangeably to refer to cultural changes that are attributable to movements, whether or not the movement actively sought those changes. We focus on impacts that might be expected to help or harm the movement's intended beneficiaries (Amenta & Young 1999). Of course, movements typically see their desired reforms as benefiting society at large. However, it is reasonable to treat African Americans as the primary intended beneficiaries of the civil rights movement, the environment as that of the environmental movement, and so on. And, in fact, this criterion of impact covers most movement campaigns that have been deemed successful.

Several authors have advanced broad theories of movements' cultural impacts. Eyerman & Jamison (1991) argue that movements function as something like cultural laboratories, producing forms of knowledge that diffuse more broadly. Rochon (1998) sees mass movements as carrying the values forged in critical communities of activists and scholars into much broader political and social arenas. For d'Anjou (1996), movement campaigns have cultural impacts when they operate within an action-structure that is politically and culturally favorable to their cause. For Van Dyke & Taylor (2018), movements' cultural impacts are dependent on features of the cultural object, the strength of social movement organizations, and the political and cultural context. More typically, scholars focus on demonstrating a particular movement's cultural impact in a single arena—say, on public opinion around a single issue or on university curricula—and, less commonly, seek to

account for that impact. Accordingly, in the following review, we group research findings by the different perspectives they offer on the determinants of movements' impacts, including on public opinion and everyday behavior, the media and popular culture, and nonpolitical and political institutions.

PUBLIC OPINION, MEMORIES, LANGUAGE, AND LIFESTYLE

In accounting for movements' impacts on public opinion, some scholars have treated movements as being similar to political elites, such as elected officials and media commentators, who have been demonstrated to influence public opinion by providing something like information shortcuts (Zaller 1992). Thus, Banaszak & Ondercin (2016) argue that media coverage of events staged by the women's movement primed audiences to reconsider traditional gender roles and entertain alternative views (see also Mulligan et al. 2013, Page et al. 1987). Another perspective attributes movements' influence on public opinion to the resonance of their frames or messages. For example, Andrews and colleagues (2016) trace white Southerners' greater support for sit-ins in counties that experienced them to protesters' communication of values of fairness, democracy, and religion (see also Mazumder 2018). Baumgartner and associates (2008) attribute the decline in Americans' support for the death penalty to the resonance of the innocence frame introduced by death penalty opponents (see also d'Anjou 1996 on abolitionism). Another route to impact is that movements may not change people's opinions about an issue but rather raise the issue's profile, importance, or salience. This was the case with civil rights (Burstein 1985), immigration (Cary et al. 2014), and lesbian and gay rights (Powell et al. 2010, Woodly 2015).

However, research also indicates that protest may not budge public opinion, as was the case with the Occupy movement (Bartels 2016) and anti–Vietnam War protests (McAdam & Su 2002). A movement's impact may be canceled out by the impact of a counter-movement (Meyer & Staggenborg 1996), as was the case with environmentalists on climate change (Brulle et al. 2012). Or movement action may backfire, leading to more negative views of the group or issue, as was the case for nuclear freeze proponents (Page et al. 1987). Movements' influence on public opinion may depend on their being endorsed by more mainstream political elites. Anti–Vietnam War sentiment was limited until political leaders and reporters began to criticize the war (Zaller 1992), and public support for the Equal Rights Amendment in Oklahoma declined after legislators rejected it (Mansbridge 1986). At a cross-national level, public opinion on issues of importance to a movement's constituency may be driven more by political regime type, demographics, religion, and economic development than by the existence of a movement (Adamczyk 2017).

Movements may have an impact on public opinion in the longer term by how the movement is remembered. Survey respondents who spontaneously identified episodes from the civil rights movement as significant historical events were more likely to espouse racially liberal views (Griffin & Bollen 2009). Activists have some power to shape the movement events that are remembered. For example, gay rights activists were successful in winning recognition for the 1969 riot at the Stonewall Inn as the founding moment of gay liberation (although it was not) by connecting the event to a media-friendly and popular parade (Armstrong & Crage 2006). Yet, despite activists' best efforts, collective memories of movements tend to be marked by themes of collective acclamation and progress rather than contention and unachieved goals (Eyerman 2015, Polletta 1998). Alongside ideological constraints on activists' abilities to craft memories of the movement are institutional constraints, such as the congressional routines that determine when politicians can talk about movements (Polletta 1998), the settings that privilege some voices in reconstructing movement events (Cunningham et al. 2010), and the possibility that state actors may already have a monopoly on the memory of famous activists (Jansen 2007).

Outside of public opinion as measured by surveys, movements influence the beliefs, identities, and behaviors that shape people's everyday lives. However, ascertaining movements' roles, separate from other contemporaneous developments, is often difficult. For example, the movements of the 1960s undoubtedly affected norms around sex and intimacy (Yankelovich 1974), but those movements were also coterminous with the growing use of the birth control pill and the spread of post-materialist values (Inglehart & Norris 2003) that possibly spurred both activism and new sexual norms. It is easier to see changes in everyday behavior in the wake of movement-influenced legal rulings or legislation. For example, contrary to the concern that the 2015 Supreme Court decision legalizing same sex marriage would lead lesbians and gay men to embrace a narrow heterosexual understanding of romantic relationships, the ruling at once encouraged people to explore legal recognition for other forms of nonmarital relationships (Bernstein 2018) and was perceived by lesbians and gay men as insufficient legal protection for their families (Baumle & Compton 2017).

We may also be able to identify the conditions for the impact of a particular movement's strategies: for example, the LGBT movement's encouragement of people to stop concealing their sexual identity and instead come out as gay. Supporting Allport and associates' (1954) group contact hypothesis, research has shown that heterosexuals who know someone who is homosexual are more likely to support LGBT rights (Fetner 2016). But research also suggests that the effects of intergroup contact are mediated by intensified public dialogue about homosexuality (Powell et al. 2010) and by the partisan cueing we discuss above (Dyck & Pearson-Merkowitz 2014). The creation of movement identities may be another mechanism of influence on everyday behavior. Simply alerting subjects to the environmental impact of their past behavior led them to engage in subsequent positive environmental behaviors (Cornelissen et al. 2008), which may have been due to their new self-perception as environmentalists [and see Brown et al. (2004) on the power of the politicized collective illness identity, Taylor (1996) on the postpartum depression movement and gender identity, and Ghaziani et al. (2016) on LGBT identities].

Still another site of movement influence is the diffusion of new linguistic terms and concepts (Rochon 1998). Tarrow (2013) argues that new terms introduced by movements diffuse widely when they are resonant, or congruent with culturally familiar ideas, and modular, or easily adaptable for use by other actors and around other issues. Haltom & McCann (2004) make a similar argument about resonance in accounting for tort reformers' success in the 1980s in circulating outrageous stories about so-called crybaby victims whose penchant for litigation was supposedly driving up the cost of malpractice insurance. The stories were mainly untrue but meshed with Americans' deep-seated beliefs in independence and personal responsibility. Mansbridge & Flaster (2007) suggest that the term "male chauvinist" may have become popular, even among conservative women, because it seemed jokey rather than unappealingly political and serious, as did the terms "feminist" and "sexist." As was the case with crybaby victims, the term male chauvinist diffused widely because it was featured not only in the news but also in television and film, magazines, and stand-up comedy. Certainly, money helps get movement ideas a broader hearing (Haltom & McCann 2004), but it is difficult to predict which ideas will capture the public imagination—or at least the imaginations of the producers of popular culture.

Finally, broad movements such as environmentalism, feminism, Christian conservatism, and social justice activism have spurred narrower lifestyle movements (Haenfler et al. 2012) in which people attempt to live in tune with their ideological commitments: buying local, sustainably grown, or animal-free food; boycotting or "buycotting" firms that have good or bad records; living simply; pledging virginity until married; and so on. What impacts do these efforts have? Conscious consumers are more likely to become politically active (Willis & Schor 2012). The 2.5 million adolescents who took a virginity pledge sponsored by the Southern Baptist Church were more likely to delay intercourse, but when there were many pledgers in the local community

and pledging became normative, it lost its force (Bearman & Brückner 2015). In other words, lifestyle movements may depend on their connection to subcultures (Cherry 2015) and even on their marginality for their effects on behavior.

Where does the research on movements' impacts on opinion, memories, language, and lifestyles leave us? Given the pattern of contingent successes, failures, and backlash when it comes to movements' impacts on public opinion, further research should compare movements to identify which aspects of movements' actions and frames, along with counter-movements' actions and frames, combine with features of the political and cultural context to influence public opinion. Rather than taking opinion polls as straightforward reflections of popular beliefs, scholars should continue to gauge public opinion by additional means, such as letters to elected officials (Lee 2002) and focus group discussions (Blee & McDowell 2012, Gamson 1992, Perrin 2009, Taylor & Rupp 2006), and to treat the appearance and framing of polling questions about an issue as themselves signs of movement impact (Amenta 2006). Research on collective memory, for its part, should move beyond a focus on commemorative activities to explore how past movements figure in contemporary partisan politics. We know, for example, that foes of affirmative action cast Martin Luther King Jr. as committed to color-blindness as a policy rather than a goal (Tarrow 2013). To what extent have representations of late 1960s movements shaped Americans' views of whom the government serves today (see McAdam & Kloos 2014)?

With respect to movements' impacts on people's identities and behaviors, scholarship would also benefit from more comparative studies. If the LGBT movement has been successful in combatting the stigma attached to homosexuality, why has the reproductive rights movement been unable to undermine the stigma attached to abortion? Perhaps the stigmatized condition must be seen first as involuntary (Garretson & Suhay 2016), which may produce the sense of linked fate that Clair and associates (2016) find was important to activists' success in destigmatizing people with AIDS/HIV. This is in part what activists seeking acceptance for fat people are up against (Saguy 2012). On the other hand, the marijuana legalization movement has destigmatized a behavior—marijuana use—that is typically seen as voluntary, although activists' focus on first legalizing marijuana for medical use may have eased their task (Kilmer & MacCoun 2017). Comparative work would help us to isolate movements' role in the stigmatizing and destigmatizing of behaviors. Finally, we should examine the pathways by which movement-generated values, ideas, and beliefs diffuse and, in particular, ascertain whether media coverage is always necessary to that diffusion.

THE MEDIA AND POPULAR CULTURE

Gamson (1992) calls the news media a master forum to which all key political actors pay close attention, including the public, policymakers, and elites in other institutions (see also Ferree et al. 2002, Gamson & Wolfsfeld 1993). Although news institutions typically report on movements far less frequently and seriously than they do on political institutional actors (Gamson & Wolfsfeld 1993, Oliver & Maney 2000), movements do get coverage. The *New York Times* published articles on more than 21,000 protest events from 1960 to 1990 (Walker et al. 2008). US labor organizations were covered by the *New York Times* more than once daily for every year in the twentieth century, and the civil rights, veterans, and nativist/white supremacist movements received similarly extensive coverage for much of the century, with only a few organizations accounting for the bulk of each movement's coverage (Amenta et al. 2009). Moreover, once a movement or key organization begins to appear in the news, it often remains there for a significant period (Amenta et al. 2019, Seguin 2016).

Beyond just being covered, movement actors and actions have often been treated favorably in the news. The Townsend Plan mainly succeeded in getting its demands conveyed in front-page

coverage in the 1930s and 1940s (Amenta et al. 2012), as did the Big Four civil rights organizations in the 1960s (Amenta et al. 2019). US activists on each side of the abortion debate influenced the framing of the discussion more than did political elites (Ferree et al. 2002). Anti-Muslim fringe activists shaped newspaper discourse after September 11, 2001 (Bail 2014). The Tea Party was favorably covered in major print and television sources (Boykoff & Laschever 2011). Occupy Wall Street influenced discourse surrounding inequality (Gaby & Caren 2016). The labor and environmental movements secured long-term reporting beats for their issues, and the 1960s civil rights movement and the 2000s Tea Party secured shorter-term beats, in each case structurally improving the movement's chances for continuing favorable coverage (Amenta et al. 2019).

Professionalized news organizations are typically commercial entities, which provide openings for movements through their operating procedures and news values (Gans 1979, Schudson 2011). Journalists see events as newsworthy if they are timely and novel, have potential impact, are in close proximity to readers, exhibit conflict or include prominent people, and focus on events that are officially political. Journalists also view themselves as referees, balancing the two main sides in debates, which in the US context are usually the two main political parties (Gamson & Wolfsfeld 1993, Gans 1979). Although these procedures typically marginalize movements, as activists are not legitimately elected officials or routinely influential, news organizations' focus on politics, interest in novelty and conflict, and concern for balance can be exploited by movements to gain coverage of their positions on issues.

One set of explanations for when and why movements and particular movement organizations receive coverage relies on the characteristics of the movement and the actions it takes. The more closely movement actors resemble institutional political actors, the more likely they are to be covered, and with substance (Andrews & Caren 2010, Elliott et al. 2016). Large organizations (McCarthy et al. 1996), and those with media departments (Rohlinger et al. 2012) and an orientation to policy (Elliott et al. 2016), have an advantage in gaining coverage. Moderate organizations receive more substantive coverage (Amenta et al. 2019), whereas organizations that espouse goals outside mainstream values or endorse violent tactics are marginalized in the news (Gamson & Wolfsfeld 1993). Large events are more likely to be reported (Earl et al. 2004), as are those targeting legislative issues (Oliver & Myers 1999). Politically assertive action, which seeks to preempt political institutional actors, led to substantive coverage for the Townsend Plan, which endorsed candidates for office, placed initiatives on ballots, and sponsored congressional legislation (Amenta et al. 2012). Although disruptive capacities improve movements' chances of coverage (Amenta et al. 2009), as does violence in events (Earl et al. 2004), the coverage of disruptive protests often focuses on public order—window breaking and skirmishes with police—rather than on protesters' goals (Gitlin 1980, Oliver & Maney 2000, Smith et al. 2001). However, disruptive protest can provide coverage opportunities for moderate organizations (Gamson & Wolfsfeld 1993), and boycotts and civil disobedience brought substantive treatment for civil rights organizations (Amenta et al. 2019). But when movement organizations are being tried or investigated, coverage is rarely substantive (Amenta et al. 2012, 2019).

Scholars also address the role of social, political, and newspaper contexts on movement coverage. Social crises can cast doubt on the legitimacy of experts, allowing movement actors to challenge previously dominant accounts (Bail 2014, Elliott et al. 2016, Epstein 1995). Political contexts also influence coverage. Movements have gained more news attention with unified left-wing or right-wing regimes in power, and particular movements and organizations have gained more coverage when policies beneficial to their constituencies are put in place (Amenta et al. 2009, Elliott et al. 2016). Moreover, left-leaning or liberal newspapers are more likely to report on progressive social movements than are conservative papers and to provide more substantive coverage of progressive movement actors (Amenta et al. 2019, Oliver & Myers 1999).

Rather than treating newsgathering routines, movement characteristics and actions, and contexts separately, scholars have advanced interactive explanations for news coverage (Oliver & Maney 2000). Amenta et al. (2009) find that movements with disruptive capacities and many organizations operating in a period in which favorable policies were being enacted for their constituents, and operating when partisan regimes were in power, gained the most extensive coverage. Elliott et al. (2016) find that the coverage of better-resourced and policy-oriented LGBT and AIDS organizations was boosted in the wake of new policies that favored the movements' constituencies; poorly resourced, protest-oriented organizations, by contrast, received more extensive attention during the AIDS crisis. Bail (2014) argues that fringe organizations gain substantive coverage when they display emotions during crises. The Townsend Plan transmitted its demands through the news when it was engaged in assertive action at a time when old age policy was before Congress (Amenta et al. 2012). Abortion movement organizations dominated news coverage only in countries where party systems were open to movement influence (Ferree et al. 2002; see also Halfmann 2011).

The media landscape has been transformed in this century, with many newspapers killed off by drops in revenue (Pew Res. Cent. 2015), the rise of 24-hour cable television news, and the ubiquity of the internet. Perhaps the most important factor for movement influence has been the rise of Fox News and other conservative media, which provide alternative means of dissemination for the ideas of right-wing movement organizations (Rohlinger 2015) and spur those organizations' coverage in professional national news media (Banerjee 2013). While national news organizations continue to dominate newsgathering (Gottfried & Shearer 2016, Pew Res. Cent. 2010), set the agenda for television news, and influence political leaders, the public circulation of newspaper stories increasingly depends on social media such as Facebook and Twitter (Schudson 2011). Hashtags such as #MeToo and #BlackLivesMatter both prompt and shape newspaper coverage.

In social media users' ability to share and like news stories and material that is produced by movement organizations, we can see movement impacts that are unmediated by news editors. The limited research in this area suggests that discussion on social media is more likely than that on traditional media to legitimize protesters by, for example, representing their demands and covering peaceful rather than only violent protests (Harlow et al. 2017). Social media are also more likely to feature extremist voices in opposition to movements (Ray et al. 2017). On the other hand, social media coverage of movements may be prone to the same emphasis on spectacle as traditional media (Poell 2014). With respect to the conditions for impact, advocacy organizations are more likely to have their tweets retweeted and/or marked as favorites when they tweet to a large network, tweet a lot, and retweet messages sent by others in the network (Guo & Saxton 2018). There may be a kind of emotional seesaw dynamic in online discussion, where, after a period of prolonged rational debate, advocacy groups spur more discussion if they introduce an emotional message (Bail et al. 2017).

While research on movements' impacts on news media coverage is now substantial, there has been much less study of how movements influence the other media that make up popular culture. Activists have long sought to change demeaning popular cultural portrayals of the groups they represent (Montgomery 1989, Perlman 2016). They have also created their own popular cultural media to combat groups' stigma and present unrepresented perspectives (Cockrill & Biggs 2018, Lopez 2016), and they have sought to increase the representation of minority groups among the writers, producers, and performers of popular culture (Lopez 2016, Perlman 2016).

Media advocates' tactics around television shifted in the mid- to late 1970s from petitioning the US Federal Communications Commission to deny television stations' licenses and demonstrating at network headquarters to collaborating with producers and presenting awards for positive portrayals of the groups and issues they represent (Lopez 2016, Montgomery 1989,

Rossman 2000). Some scholars argue that the result has been the replacement of invisibility by carefully regulated visibility, with African Americans represented as exemplars of hard work, mobility, sacrifice, and individualism (Gray 1997), and gay men and lesbians conforming to conventional ideas about love and sex (Seidman 2002). On the other hand, experimental research suggests that this sort of visibility has positive effects: Exposure to gay characters on television is associated with more favorable views of gay equality (Bond & Compton 2015), and exposure to counter-stereotypical portrayals of African American characters is associated with more favorable views of affirmative action (Ramasubramanian 2011). Moreover, an oppositional activist strategy is likely to fail, Rossman (2000) argues, as it involves protesting media content that has already been produced and is therefore expensive to alter, and because writers are invested in their creative identity and are therefore resistant to persuasion. The profit imperative probably explains why conservative groups have generally failed in their efforts to limit sexual and violent content in film, television, and music (Montgomery 1989), while the premium writers and producers place on novelty probably explains why activists' ability to gain sensitive portrayals of their issues tends not to last (Polletta & Tomlinson 2014).

In other cases, too, we see movement impacts on cultural production shaped and limited by institutional dynamics. Book publishers responded to the civil rights movement and the threat of controversy by omitting black characters altogether (Pescosolido et al. 1997). Publishers capitalized on the fashion for realism in the late nineteenth century by featuring stories of labor strife—but they were just as likely to publish stories that were inimical to workers as those that were favorable to them (Isaac 2009). In these cases, too, the cultural impacts of the movements were of mixed benefit for the constituencies the movements represented.

Future research on movements' impacts on news media should capitalize on the fact that many newspapers, including regional and ethnic ones, are now digitally archived, which allows for comparative and historical analyses of coverage across movements, organizations, and newspapers. Such research could more definitively address the consequences of disruptive action on coverage. It might also identify the conditions in which movement groups are represented in the news as experts or as being similar to mainstream interest groups rather than as zealots or dangerous mobs. We also need more research on the relationship between movements' appearance in traditional media and social media. To what extent does social media coverage shape news coverage, and can social media coverage ever substitute for news coverage? With respect to popular culture, the fragmentation of audiences has coincided with the extension of partisan identification, affecting even what kinds of television dramas people watch. How have those developments affected the points at which media advocates can be effective?

NONPOLITICAL INSTITUTIONS: BUSINESS, SCIENCE, EDUCATION, AND MEDICINE

In recent years, scholars have recognized that much movement activism is directed not just at states but also at businesses, universities, and scientific and medical institutions, among others (Armstrong & Bernstein 2008, Snow et al. 2004, Soule 2009, Walker et al. 2008). There is now a large literature on movements' efforts to change corporate policies and practices (see King & Pearce 2010, Schneiberg & Lounsbury 2017). In explaining the conditions for those efforts' impacts, scholars point out that corporations are not accountable to the public in the way that states are, for example, through elections or daily scrutiny by news organizations. Yet corporations are vulnerable to the direct and potential loss of profit (Luders 2010) as well as to the loss of reputation and investors' confidence (Bartley & Child 2014), and they are alert to possibilities for securing competitive advantage (Raeburn 2004) or increasing market share (Dubuisson-Quellier 2013).

Activists have been able to capitalize on these features, as well as on firms' tendency to imitate similar enterprises (Raeburn 2004). Protests and boycotts have been important strategies. Successful challenges have often been framed in terms of investors' interests and market logics (Lounsbury et al. 2003) as well as the virtue of risk avoidance (King 2016), or they have convinced firms that consumers have adopted movement-friendly criteria of worth (Dubuisson-Quellier 2013). Perhaps because outsiders have less access to decision-making, research on corporate challenges points to the importance of insider allies (Raeburn 2004, Weber et al. 2009), though a reliance on insiders and on nondisruptive tactics runs the risk of cooptation (Briscoe & Gupta 2016, Jaffee 2012).

External and institutional conditions have also aided, dampened, or foreclosed effective challenges. Movements are more influential when businesses face the possibility of state regulation (Dixon et al. 2016, Seidman 2007) or when actions gain media attention (Dixon et al. 2016, King 2008). Companies with larger, visible brands have more to lose and thus are more easily shamed (Bartley & Child 2014), as are businesses seeking to be viewed as socially responsible (Soule 2009).

When are activists likely to win corporate reforms and ones that are substantive rather than superficial? A series of studies have relied on mediation models to simultaneously assess the roles of movements' strategies, corporate vulnerabilities, and market conditions (Dixon et al. 2016, Dubuisson-Quellier 2013, King 2008, Sine & Lee 2009; reviewed in Schneiberg & Lounsbury 2017). King (2008) finds that boycotts that failed to reduce revenue brought corporate concessions all the same when they generated media attention, especially among corporations recently suffering sales declines. Weber and associates (2009) find that the influence of protests against German pharmaceutical firms' investments in biotechnology depended on whether the firm had a diversified portfolio or operated as a pharmaceutical research specialist. Dixon and associates' (2016) study of 31 corporate campaigns in the 1990s and 2000s shows that activists were best able to avoid superficial firm-friendly reforms when they garnered media attention or the threat of state action.

In accounting for movements' cultural impacts on education, science, religion, and medicine, scholars have similarly drawn attention to the importance of institutional vulnerabilities, such as the growth of the field, changes that have made the institution's mission less clear, or its association with other, discredited institutions (Archibald 2007, Moore 1999). They have also emphasized the role of organizational insiders, in some cases, as critical allies and, in others, as leading the movement (Binder 2002, Epstein 1995, Katzenstein 1999, Moore 2008). Because disruptive strategies risk activists' firing or expulsion, activists often toe a line between appealing to authorities and challenging them. In that vein, campus protesters demanding departments of African American Studies were more successful when they relied on rallies rather than riots because nondisruptive strategies allowed sympathetic administrators to work on their behalf (Rojas 2006). Activists campaigning for Women's Studies, Asian American Studies, and Queer/LGBT Studies on US campuses were successful when they adopted assertive tactics at universities where administrators were open to reform, allowing activists to be heard above the fray while not risking their expulsion (Arthur 2011).

Activists are more likely to be influential when they frame their protest in line with an institution's mission (Arthur 2011, Bell 2014, Katzenstein 1999, Moore 2008). Though executives and administrators are certainly sensitive to the reputational costs of being seen as hypocritical, they are also often genuinely committed to the issue in question (Arthur 2011, Bell 2014, Rojas 2006, Vasi 2011). On the other hand, even if administrators are committed in principle to the cause, their sense of how the organization and institution should operate may effectively block substantive change. For example, creationist and Afrocentric challengers to public school curricula won some reforms, but professional educators effectively minimized the reach of changes they saw as

potentially undermining their authority (Binder 2002). By contrast, AIDS activists' determination to educate themselves in the science of drug development won them legitimacy with scientists and greater success (Epstein 1995).

Institutional norms and frames may limit the content of a challenge as it gains purchase. Advocates for sexually abused children secured media coverage and eventually institutional reforms, but their critiques of patriarchal family structure were displaced by medical and criminal frames that focused attention on individual deviants (Whittier 2009). The fact that feminists in the military won early support from the courts discouraged them from pressing for equality understood in more than narrow, interest-group-based terms. In contrast, without any possibility for legal redress, feminists in the Catholic Church developed a more radical understanding of equality (Katzenstein 1999).

Rather than treating institutions as independent, future research should recognize that reforms won by protest in one institution often influence other institutions. By the same token, activists can exploit their position at the intersection of multiple institutions to bring about change, as was the case with environmental activists who drew on their networks in trade policy circles to win the concessions in the North American Free Trade Agreement that labor activists could not (Evans & Kay 2008) and with self-help organizations' ability to gain recognition from political, medical, and academic authorities (Archibald 2007). These dynamics deserve more attention. In addition, although scholars often cite the role of institutional mediators (Moore 1999) in translating movement goals into institutional changes, we need to know much more about these people. Are they typically marginal to the institution, as were gay doctors in responding to AIDS (Epstein 1995) and radical scientists in opposing the Vietnam war (Moore 1999), or are they central to it, as were the college administrators who pushed for African American Studies departments (Rojas 2006)? Do they occupy offices whose mission relates to the movement's goals, as was the case with the Environmental Affairs staffers in US companies who pushed for the adoption of wind energy (Vasi 2011) and the human resources managers who pushed for women-friendly policies in US corporations (Dobbin 2009)? Finally, scholars of corporate-targeted protest have begun to examine the conditions in which the secured reforms are less or more substantive. When it comes to institutions such as medicine, education, and science, in addition to determining what counts as substantive change (see Moore 1999), we also need to know more about the conditions for those changes.

POLITICAL INSTITUTIONS AND POLICY

Most research on the influence of movements has focused on political policymaking (see review in Amenta et al. 2010). However, scholarship in and outside sociology also suggests that movements may be important as carriers of the ideas, definitions, political identities, categories, and standards that figure importantly in the construction, implementation, and evolution of policies (Lamont 2012, Steensland 2006). In this respect, the policy literature has long identified the role of causal stories (Stone 1989), paradigms (Hall 1993), and ideas (Béland 2005) in shaping resultant policies. The US political system is often viewed as being more susceptible to ideas from policy entrepreneurs, given its accessible political parties and hesitant bureaucratic development (Weir 1993). Movements and allied advocacy organizations are sometimes the carriers of such ideas and stories. Perhaps the most successful have been antitax movements, which altered how taxes were talked about by all parties hoping to be taken seriously in policy debates (Martin 2013). Another example is the American Legislation Exchange Council, an organization of conservative legislators and business advocates that drafts model legislation, which has been adopted in many US states (Hertel-Fernandez 2019). But movement actors compete with other policy entrepreneurs (Jasper 2015), and ideas are often altered or replaced by elected officials and bureaucrats as they pass through the policy process.

In addition, once a policy commitment has been adopted, activists—acting more as experts than as challengers—may help to define vague concepts like equality or access. For example, Zippel (2006) argues that the legal regulatory path of anti–sexual harassment measures in the United States allowed laws to be shaped by the experiences of victims and feminist legal experts in a way that was not true in Germany, which pursued a corporatist-statutory path. The result was that sexual harassment policy in the United States is in some ways more feminist than that in Germany. Feminists in governments in Europe, Australia, Peru, and South Korea were effective only insofar as they were able to persuade policymakers to act on an understanding of women as both equal to men and more than mothers (Coe 2012, Eisenstein 1996, Jenson 2009, Suh 2011).

Movement groups may also play roles in defining the groups to whom policies apply. Research suggests, however, that movements may be more influential in defining the first group included than in defining those that are subsequently added. This was true of affirmative action, which was originally developed in response to the northern urban riots and targeted African Americans. Native Americans and Hispanics were added to the policy without any petitioning on their part, women were added only after two years' worth of advocacy, and white ethnics were never added despite advocacy on their behalf. Groups' inclusion depended less on their own actions than on how similar to African Americans they were perceived as being by federal bureaucrats (Skrentny 2006). When legislation against hate crimes was being crafted, movement groups initially and successfully pressed for the inclusion of religion, race, and color, while efforts by members of Congress to include union members and the elderly were rejected; later, the disabled were added without any direct demands by disability activists (Jenness & Grattet 2001). Women activists, inside and outside government, pressed for the inclusion of women in biomedical research studies, and they invited members of the Black Congressional Caucus to join them in proposing legislation, leading to the addition of racial minorities. Other ethnic groups were later included by administrative fiat as agencies adopted the census categories for reporting (Epstein 2007).

Activists may also target and alter the very logics that are used to include or exclude groups from policy. Advocates for research on diseases like breast cancer and autism not only secured federal funding but also changed the reigning view that the primary beneficiaries of funding were scientists and the public and that funding should go where scientists had the best chance of impact (Best 2012). In the new logic, diseases whose sufferers were more morally deserving were entitled to more funding.

The policy ideas behind a given program may determine the lines along which it will advance in the future as well as its vulnerability to retrenchment. Cognitively bounded path dependence may be as important as policies' bureaucratic backing and the provision of material incentives to recipients and related advocacy organizations (Adams et al. 2005, pp. 36–37). The ideas and justifications behind programs may aid in preventing their retrenchment, just as those administering and benefiting from a program will fight cutbacks. For example, the establishment of Social Security produced an adept bureaucracy and bolstered political interest organizations seeking to protect it (Béland 2005). But the program's symbolic legacy of security and insurance was also critical in preventing it from being associated with the "unworthy" poor at a time when other social programs were under attack as being welfare (Béland 2009).

Movements also help to create collective actors and political categories that must be accommodated afterward in routine political processes. Movements in the early twentieth century helped to create the consumer as a relevant political actor (Rao 1998). Mobilization around the Townsend Plan led to old age as a political issue and to the elderly becoming a new political category (Amenta 2006). LGBT movements created a diversified gay identity that could be unified to pursue interest group politics (Armstrong 2002). Other collective identities and entities identified by movements—including Christians, taxpayers, and the environment, to name a few—have affected

politics and policymaking in lasting ways (Baumgartner & Mahoney 2005, Martin 2013). In each case, the category was adopted by key political actors outside the movement and featured prominently in the media, in new policy, or both. Future research should identify the conditions in which movements' collective identities (Polletta & Jasper 2001) are adopted by national policymakers. Movements may also help to create new political forms, such as when workers, farmers, and women employed the forms of nonpolitical organizations to help create modern interest groups (Clemens 1997), or when European left parties adopted the participatory democratic forms favored by progressive movements (Bennett et al. 2018). In both cases, however, the new forms may not have benefited movement constituents in the long run.

Another big question is how similar the processes by which movements influence the cultural dimensions of policy are to the processes by which they influence the often-studied nuts-and-bolts aspects. One similarity is that movements almost never get exactly what they want, except on the rare occasions when they write and pass amendments or initiatives, as with Prohibition (Szymanski 2003) or California's Proposition 13 (Martin 2008). The final actors in the adoption of policy ideas and categories are typically legislators and bureaucrats. Political mediation arguments (Amenta 2006, King 2008, McAdam & Su 2002) hold that several conditions must coincide to effect extensive change, such as a favorable partisan context; the movement's issue already being on the agenda; favorable public opinion; and, on the part of the movement, high levels of organization and mobilization, credible claims-making, and assertive political action. The activists in the examples above operated largely in professionalized advocacy groups and were able to use targeted and assertive action, such as providing expert testimony, crafting legislation, and writing law review articles. In addition, it seems valuable for a movement group to have a foothold in a political party (Halfmann 2011, Martin 2013) in order to have its issues and claims amplified. In some of the instances described above, decisions about whether to recognize a category (say, Asians in affirmative action) were made by executive and legislative staffers working autonomously at lower levels of authority, suggesting that targeting those actors may be advantageous.

CONCLUSION

Rather than treating culture as a sphere of social life, one that lies outside the state and the economy, we have instead conceptualized culture as the meaning-making dimension of all policies and practices. The fact that ordinary people today experience themselves as living with rather than suffering from cancer is a movement impact, and so is the financial metric that the National Institutes of Health uses to allocate funding for different kinds of cancer research. Accordingly, we have addressed scholarship on movements' cultural impacts in four sites: public opinion and everyday interactions, media coverage and popular culture, nonpolitical institutions, and policy and political institutions.

We are struck by the imbalances in scholarship: There is far more work, for example, on movements' impacts on manufacturers than there is on movements' impact on the producers of popular culture. The vast literature on public opinion in political science rarely treats the role of activists in shaping public opinion. We know something about the collective identities that are constructed in and animate movements, but much less about when and how those collective identities become target populations in policy. Most of our knowledge has come from case studies of movements in the United States. Our understanding of movements' cultural impacts would be vastly strengthened by more studies making comparisons across social movements, over historical periods, and across countries, contrasting cases in which movements brought about cultural change with ones in which they might have done so but did not.

Our review of the existing scholarship does suggest that movements' cultural impacts are critically shaped by institutional dynamics. Knowing how institutions operate—whether media,

Congress, business, or medicine—is essential to grasping the points at which movement influence is likely to occur. For example, movement groups have gained favorable media coverage when they have been able to exploit reporters' concerns for novelty and for balance between two sides of a story. Universities' openness to student participation, corporations' vulnerability to the loss of reputation, book publishers' desire to capitalize on new genres, and television producers' investment in novelty present other distinct opportunities for influence.

An insight developed to account for the political impacts of social movements holds true for movements' cultural impacts as well. While movements' ability to effect change depends in part on how organized, resourced, and strategic they are, the real practical acumen comes in matching tactics to the institutional context in which movements operate. Whether the decision is to focus on raising consciousness or raising money, to lobby legislators or take to the streets, to tell stories or present statistics, the right choice depends both on features of the movement and on features of the institution. Accordingly, a valuable analytical strategy for scholars has been to begin with scholarship on the functioning of the institution in question and then hypothesize points at which movements might intervene.

Another analytical strategy is to begin with a broad cultural change, such as the decline of smoking, or Americans' use of seat belts, or the rightward shift of Congress, and try to isolate the role of social movements among other actors, events, and trends that together were responsible for the change. The research we have reviewed here suggests that movements' impacts have often depended on their capacity to leverage institutional processes that they did not set in motion, for example, by provoking additional or alternative media discussion of issues that are already in the news or by persuading television writers that their issue is on the cutting edge. At the same time, movements' impacts have often been magnified by a process of something like institutional contagion, where people in one institution have been inspired to reform policies and practices by changes that have been made in another.

The latter point brings us to changes that lie outside activists' strategic agendas, which deserve more attention. Ideas, values, language, and categories produced by movements sometimes gain a place in people's everyday talk, decision-making, and interaction. We need to know much more about how and when ideas diffuse by way of informal ties outside formal institutions. Recent work modeling the diffusion of items as varied as hashtags, farming techniques, and campaign donations via complex network processes may be useful here, especially if it can include the amplifying effect of media coverage (for a review, see Guilbeault et al. 2018). These approaches offer the opportunity to trace more systematically when and how the ideas and values nurtured within small communities of activists come to be embraced by much broader segments of the public.

If, as we acknowledge at the beginning of this article, movements' cultural impacts are often fuzzy, contributing to something like a cultural zeitgeist in ways that are difficult to isolate, that is no reason for giving up on the effort to study them. To the contrary, sociologists' freedom to draw theoretical insights from diverse disciplines while insisting on empirical rigor in assessing causes and effects makes them uniquely equipped to do so.

DISCLOSURE STATEMENT

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