What might motivate you to take collective action for social change?

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Forces of Social Change

Jason Konefal

Societies change. The United States today compared with just 20 years ago, let alone 50 years ago, is quite different. Today, more people live in urban areas than ever before. People are living longer. The number of people getting college degrees is at an all-time high. Whereas people used to be farmers or work in manufacturing, today the majority of people work in the service sector. There is greater racial, ethnic, and gender equality in the United States today than ever before. New technologies such as cell phones, computers, and the Internet have changed how we work and live. Clearly, the society of today is different from the society of yesterday. And the society of tomorrow will be different from today's society.

Social change is usually thought of as a good thing. Indeed, many of the above changes have been positive in that they have led to improvements in the quality of life for people. However, sociologists argue that social change is more complex and varied. On the one hand, the benefits of social change may not be equally distributed in that some may benefit more than others. For example, since 1980, economic policies have led to greater class inequality in the United States. Thus, while wealthier Americans have benefited from such policies, the majority of the population has benefited very little if at all. On the other hand, social change may be negative. Take the case of nuclear weapons. The invention of nuclear weapons can be viewed as a negative development in that it has created the possibility for society's annihilation.

In fact, viewing social change as positive or negative oversimplifies the possibilities, as it often has both positive and negative effects. Genetic technologies are an excellent example of how new technologies have both benefits and drawbacks. Genetic technologies offer the promise to re-engineer plants and animals and thus, make it more possible to feed the world. However, such technologies also may create new environmental problems, have unknown health effects, and extend corporate control of food. Additionally, whether or not social change is positive or negative is often in the eye of the beholder. Returning to the above economic example, for a small handful, the economic developments of the last several decades are clearly a positive form of social change, whereas for the majority of others they are not.

The sociological imagination impels sociologists to examine the social and historical contexts that affect people's everyday lives. In this chapter, the

sociological imagination is used to help understand social change. Social change is the process through which culture, institutions, social structure, and how people interact are transformed. Specifically, this chapter addresses the following big sociological questions: (1) Why societies change, and (2) how societies change. These questions have been central to sociology since it's founding. And, as you will see below, sociologists do not always agree in answering these important questions.

How do sociologists study social change? By examining the actors involved and the processes by which social change takes place. To do this, sociologists use multiple methods and a variety of data. Qualitative, quantitative, and historical methods are all used to study social change. Data may come from interviews, observation, surveys, historical documents, and the media. For example, some sociologists examine historical documents to better understand earlier examples of social change, like the industrial revolution. Other sociologists conduct interviews with people today and partake in participant-observation to understand current processes of social change.

Why should you care about social change and how it takes place? Quite simply, because it affects you! If you are not white, male, and wealthy, partly, you are reading this book thanks to changes that took place in US society over the last 100 years. In other words, many of us have the opportunities we do today because of the efforts of previous generations. For example, social movements, such as the civil rights movement and feminist movement, have played integral roles in increasing racial and gender equality in the United States. Sometimes the effects of social change are felt directly and immediately. For instance, many of you may have felt the impacts of the current recession in the form of increases in your tuition and reductions in financial aid. In other cases, the effects may not be felt directly or until some future date. Whereas changes in public policies may not impact you now, they may affect your ability to get a job, buy a house, afford health care, and retire in the future. Lastly, there is one more important reason why you should care about social change and the way it takes place. Understanding how societies change is potentially empowering in that it demonstrates that actions by people can make a difference and that different orderings of society are possible.

The remaining portions of this lesson are organized as follows. First, two general sociological models of social change are presented. They are the evolutionary and dialectical models. Second, key insights from structural, interaction, and poststructural theories that pertain to social change are discussed. Third, those actors that bring about social change are examined. They include the state, corporations, experts, and social movements. Fourth, using nested analysis, examples of social change in action are provided. Lastly, discussion questions are presented that encourage you to consider the ideas and information provided in this lesson and social change generally.

TWO UNDERSTANDINGS OF SOCIAL CHANGE

There are two general models of social change in sociology. The first position conceptualizes social change as an evolutionary process. From this perspective, social change is understood as a continual process of adaptation to changes taking place in society and the environment. The second model of social change is the dialectical model. In this model, social change is the outcome of conflict between different actors and its resolution. Whereas social change functions to maintain the stability of society in the evolutionary model, in the dialectical model social change can either be adaptive or transformative. The main tenets of each of these models are briefly sketched out in the sections below.

Evolutionary Model

The **evolutionary model of social change** has its roots in the work of Emile Durkheim. At the core of Durkheim's sociology was the idea that society was a social organism. Just like the parts of bodies contribute to the healthiness of the body, Durkheim theorized that the parts of society contributed to the stability of society. For example, culture functions to provide people with common values, the economy to meet needs, and the government to provide security. Congruent with his understanding of society as a social organism, Durkheim conceptualized social change as an evolutionary process.

Durkheim most clearly developed a theory of social change in his work on the growing division of labor in society. In *The Division of Labor in Society*, Durkheim (1984 [1893]) theorized the increasing specialization of society as a response to changes in the social environment. Specifically, he presented specialization as beginning with population growth, which produced urbanization, which led to increased competition for jobs. Thus, specialization enabled society to accommodate changes resulting from population growth. In short, for Durkheim, the growing complexity of the division of labor was the result of society adapting to changes in its social environment. In this way, Durkheim theorized social change as a mechanism for the maintenance of social stability.

Durkheim's ideas became the basis of structural functional theory, which emerged in the United States in the 1950s. In brief, structural functionalism posited that the parts of society functioned to maintain the stability of society. For example, families functioned to ensure reproduction, the economy to provide people with incomes and the goods that they needed, and education to provide people with knowledge and skills. Similar to Durkheim, for functionalist, social change was also understood as a process of society adapting to changing conditions. On the one hand, society changed to eliminate things that were dysfunctional (i.e., things that undermined the stability of society), such as racial inequality. On the other hand, society changed to accommodate new needs, such as increasing ethnic and religious diversity.

Thus, for functionalists, the twin processes of "differentiation" and "integration" characterized social change. That is, new institutions were developed to accommodate new needs, and over time such new institutions would become integrated to the general values of the larger society. The outcome was the "adaptive upgrading" of society (Parsons 1971).

Take the example of racial inequality in the United States. Functionalists understood mid-twentieth century racial inequality as a problem of integration. The formation of civil rights groups represented the development of new institutions to meet the needs of African Americans. Racial equality was then a question of generalizing US values of equality to African Americans. For this to occur, the subsystems of society (e.g., political, economic, and social) would have to be brought into alignment with US cultural values. Among other things, this meant that such subsystems should be based on achieved and not ascribed characteristics. Put differently, racial equality entailed the extension of the rights of white citizens to African Americans, and the reforming of the institutions of society to recognize this.

In sum, the functionalist model postulates that social change is an evolutionary process that is characterized by differentiation and inclusion. Thus, for functionalists, social change is a process of integration, as opposed to transformation. The result is that social change functions to maintain the stability of society. Furthermore, social change is understood as a process of adaptive upgrading in that it leads to higher levels of development. Hence, social change entails a movement from "primitive" to "modern" societies.

While it provided a number of useful insights, structural functional theory has been widely critiqued and is no longer a prominent theory in sociology. As to its conceptualization of social change, three primary shortcomings have been identified. First, where are the actors? In the evolutionary model of social change, there is little role for people, groups, governments, corporations, and others. That is, functional theory does not account for **agency** (i.e., the ability for people to act). Second, the functionalist model of social change is normative in that it presupposes social change as positive. In other words, there is little room for analysis of the uneven impacts of social change and the ways that social change may have negative impacts for society. Lastly, the evolutionary model fails to examine changes that do not integrate, but transform. For example, there is no space in functionalist theory for such social movements as women and gay rights, economic justice, radical environmentalism, and white supremacy, which seek to transform society. Nevertheless, understanding functionalist theory and its model of evolutionary change is important because they continue to influence understandings of social change as well as public policy. In part, this is because the evolutionary model tends to justify the status quo and thus, it legitimates the current order of society.

Dialectical Model

The roots of critical understanding of social change are located in the theories of Karl Marx. Marx understood society as characterized by contradictions,

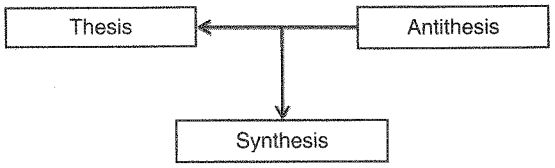

Figure 8–1 Dialectical Model of Social Change.

and it was in the working out of contradictions that society changed. Most notably, he theorized that the competitive forces in capitalism impelled owners to exploit workers. Over time, the result would be an increasingly small number of owners who controlled most of society's wealth, and a large number of workers who had very little. Marx theorized that a point would come where the workers would band together (i.e., form unions) to challenge both the owners and the larger system of capitalism. If successful, the outcome would be social change in the direction of a more egalitarian society (Marx and Engels 1998 [1848]).

In contrast to the functionalist model discussed above, Marx developed a **dialectical model of social change** (see Figure 8–1). A dialectical model of social change consists of three parts. The first is the thesis, which is the existing structure and relations in society. The second is the antithesis, which is an oppositional force that emerges to contest the thesis. The third component is the synthesis, which is the outcome of the conflict between the thesis and antithesis. The synthesis becomes the new thesis once the conflict is settled. A key insight of the dialectical model is that the synthesis is a combination of thesis and antithesis. In other words, neither side tends to get everything it wants.

Applying the dialectical model to the case of racial equality in mid-twentieth century America, the thesis would be the institutionalized system of racial inequality in the South. The antithesis would be the civil rights movement. The synthesis would be the elimination of formal racial inequality, but the continuation of many informal forms of racial discrimination. Thus, in contrast to the evolutionary model of social change, the outcome is not integration, but a transformation of society. Put differently, social change does not just involve the assimilation of marginalized groups into the dominant culture, but also changes the dominant culture and structure of society. Therefore, racial equality entails not just the inclusion of African Americans as equals, but also the inclusion of aspects of African American culture in the dominant culture and institutional restructuring to eliminate discriminatory practices.

In addition to conceptualizing social change as transformative, the dialectical model differs from the functionalist model in three additional ways. First, the dialectical model focuses attention on the process of social change. In other words, change does not just happen; it needs to be brought about by people and groups. Specifically, social change entails people and groups mobilizing, taking action, overcoming resistance, negotiating, and compromising.

In this way, the dialectical model also draws attention to how social change is often characterized by conflict, as it tends to entail changes in power relations and the distribution of resources. Second, the dialectal model has no normative component to it. Unlike the evolutionary model, social change is not assumed to be better than the previous ordering of society in the dialectical model. Third, the dialectical model does not conceptualize social change as deterministic. That is, there is no preset pattern by which society develops. Rather, social change is an emergent phenomenon, which is dependent on relations between actors.

THEORETICAL INSIGHTS

While the above models of social change are squarely situated in specific theoretical traditions, other sociological theories offer insights into the merits of each model as well as social change more generally. The sections below briefly review three sets of sociological theories as they pertain to social change: structural, interaction, and poststructural theories. Structural theories focus attention on how the structure of society influences social change. Interaction theories highlight the ways that people interacting can either maintain or change society and the importance of collective understanding. Lastly, poststructural theories draw attention to the ways that knowledge and its production affect social change.

Structural Theories

Structural theories are macro theories in that they focus on how the structure of society and institutions enable and constrain people and their actions. The roots of such theories date back to Marx (2000 [1852], 329), who observed that "men make their own history, but they do not make it just as they please." Marx simply meant that the structure of society affects people's options. For him, what was most important was a person's position in the economy. That is, whether they were workers or owners. For example, for workers, their ability to act was constrained by their position as wage-laborers. As wager-laborers, Marx theorized that workers only got paid enough to reproduce themselves, worked under alienating conditions, and were nearly powerless in the workplace. Consequently, without banding together, they had little power over their day-to-day lives or their work.

Writing not long after Marx, Max Weber extended many of Marx's insights to noneconomic domains. Specifically, he theorized that the increasing tendency of society to be organized in a rules-based manner (i.e., formal rationality) was creating an "iron cage" (Weber 2010 [1905]). In other words, society was becoming rationally ordered to the extent that there was increasingly less space for such things as creativity and originality. Recently, Ritzer (2010) has extended Weber's arguments with the idea of "McDonaldization." Ritzer argues that society is coming to resemble McDonalds in that it is more

and more organized according to the criteria of efficiency, predictability, and quantification. The effect is the dehumanization and depersonification of society. According to Ritzer, the outcome is a society where possibilities for social change are increasingly constrained, as there is little incentive for critical thought or creativity.

Interaction Theories

At the core of micro-level interactionist theories, such as symbolic interaction and ethnomethodology, is the notion that humans through interacting construct and maintain society (Blumer 1969; Garfinkel 1967). In other words, society is an outcome of interaction and only continues to exist as long as people continue to perform their roles. However, in many instances, people's performance and interactions are scripted. As such, they are performing the roles designated to them by society and its institutions. For example, Judith Butler (1990) argues that people tend to "do gender" in that for most men and women gender is a scripted performance in that they are simply adhering to predetermined gender roles. Consequently, most people do not question or even think about what it means to be masculine and feminine, they just do it. Thus, people's day-to-day interactions often function to maintain the status quo.

While they theorize that much of life is scripted, interactionist theories also focus attention on the power that people have to change society. If society is a performance that is maintained through interaction, this implies that people have the capability to change society. In other words, if people stopped following norms, this would lead to a break down in the current rules of society and the potential emergence of new rules. For example, in the American South prior to the passage of civil rights legislation, norms included African Americans riding at the back of the bus and eating at separate lunch counters. Crucial to the end of such segregation practices were people breaking the rules by not sitting and eating in their designated spots. Thus, interaction theories highlight the importance of **deviance** to social change. A person who is deviant is simply someone who breaks a norm. In breaking norms, people often are challenging a certain aspect of society and peoples' understanding of society. In doing so, they are creating opportunities for social change.

PostStructural Theories

Poststructural social theories extend the purview of sociology to include knowledge and language. Specifically, poststructural sociologists are interested in questions of how we know what we know, how knowledge is legitimated, and the ways that knowledge affects human action. Michel Foucault (1995) observed that power and knowledge are linked. On the one hand, actors who have power largely control knowledge and its production. On the other hand, actors who have knowledge tend to have more power. Thus,

laypeople are often excluded from scientific and technical decision making, as they are considered unqualified. At the same time, experts tend to be privileged in such processes because of their specialized knowledge.

For social change, the implications of Foucault's argument are twofold. First, knowledge and power give some actors privileged positions. Thus, marginalized groups who want to contest some aspect of society must either find ways to legitimate their knowledge or rely on experts to legitimate their position. Second, if current knowledge is utilized to formulate alternatives, then the kinds of changes that are achievable are limited. According to Foucault, this is because in using established knowledge they are using the ideas of the powerful, which function to maintain the status quo. Thus, from a poststructural perspective, individuals or groups that challenge the order of society, are not just contesting power relations, but also the knowledge on which those power relations rest.

SOCIAL CHANGE: THE ACTORS

In examining society, sociologists focus on the actors and the practices that they use to try and change society. While many actors affect social change, sociologists have identified four primary actors as drivers of social change. They are the state, corporations, social movements, and experts. The role each actor plays in social change is examined in the sections below.

State

The state, or government, is a key actor in social change. The most notable way that the state affects social change is through enacting laws. Historically, states have passed many laws that have resulted in social change. For example, the passage of the National Labor Relations Act in 1935 legalized collective bargaining by workers in the United States. This resulted in changes in the workplace, between workers and owners, and in the lives of many workers. The state can also affect social change through how they decide to implement and enforce certain policies. For instance, the state can support workers against hostile owners in their right to collectively bargain, or they can do nothing. Similarly, at times, the state has actively enforced environment environmental laws, and at other times has looked the other way. Lastly, the state may undertake actions that lead to social change, such as war.

Sociologists have shown that a key function of the state is for it to reproduce itself or maintain its authority. To do this, the state needs to fulfill two primary functions: accumulation and legitimation (Habermas 1973). Accumulation means that the state needs to create conditions that foster economic growth. In other words, a primary function of states is to implement policies and construct infrastructure that facilitate economic growth. Legitimation refers to the need for the state to ensure it has the general support of the people. For the state, this entails ensuring its citizens' benefit from economic

FOOD FOR THOUGHT

THE COALITION OF IMMOKALEE WORKERS: ORGANIZING FOR SOCIAL CHANGE

Justin Myers

There is a place where workers have not had real wage increases since the 1970s, where workers lack the right to overtime pay and the right to collectively bargain with their employees, where workers are kept as slaves. The place I am talking about is not in Russia, Cuba, Venezuela, or China, but the United States. Welcome to the agricultural fields of Southwest Florida, the birthplace of the Coalition of Immokalee Workers (CIW), a farmworker organization consisting of over 4,000 Latinos, Haitians and Mayan Indians.

Emerging in 1993 to counter the existence of modern-day slavery, the CIW initially utilized direct action in three community-wide work stoppages and a month-long hunger strike.to halt inhumane working conditions and declining real wages. The CIW then created the antislavery campaign to uncover, investigate and assist federal officials in stopping human rights violations and have been directly involved in prosecuting seven operations in the state of Florida that employed over 1,000 workers. These employers forced workers to pick crops under the watch of armed guards; assaulted, pistol-whipped, and shot those who refused to work or tried to escape; kept them under lock and key to prevent flight; and charged excessive prices for rent, food, drugs, cigarettes, and alcohol in order to keep them in perpetual servitude through indebtedness.

On the heels of this success the CIW launched the Campaign for Fair Food in 2001. This initiative focuses on the actors that exert tremendous power over agricultural practices—institutional food purchasers such as super markets, fast food companies, and the food service companies that supply public school systems and universities. These institutional food purchasers can either contribute to the exploitative working conditions of farmworkers through squeezing food growers for lower agricultural prices or create "best practice" policies that treat farmworkers with dignity and respect. In real wage terms tomato pickers earn about half of what they earned thirty years ago and must pick close to twice the amount a worker had to pick thirty years ago to earn the minimum wage. This is the direct outcome of agricultural workers not being covered by federal laws that guarantee workers overtime pay and the right to collective bargaining, an exclusion that employers have utilized to squeeze worker incomes. As a result, a central CIW demand is for a *penny-per-pound* increase for farmworkers. This may not sound like a lot, but it means thousands of dollars for each tomato picker who is paid not by the hour but by the piece. The going piece-rate is 50 cents for every 32-pound bucket of tomatoes, which translates into an annual income of less than $12,000.

The CIW's penny-per-pound demand is leveraged by a media-savvy strategy that builds on the work of the anti-sweatshop movement. First, CIW connects the brand image of institutional food purchasers with labor rights abuses; McDonald's doesn't want you thinking about slavery when you bite into their double-quarter pounder with cheese. Second, it formed the student/farmworker alliance, which has been critical in organizing and mobilizing awareness actions—tabling, flyering, protests, marches, and so on—against institutional food purchasers (like colleges). As of today, the CIW has

Food for Thought *continued*

been able to get Taco Bell, McDonald's, Burger King, and Subway, the world's four largest fast-food companies, to sign on to the penny-per-pound increase. They have also signed agreements with supermarkets (Whole Foods Market and Trader Joe's) and foodservice companies (Bon Appetit Management Co., Aramark, Sodexo, and Compass Group).

CIW's success displays the tangible gains that can be achieved through a combination of direct action, federal enforcement of existing laws, coalition building, and a brand-conscious mobilization strategy. As famous Spanish poet Antonio Machadow wrote, *Caminante, no hay camino. Se hace el camino al andar* ("Searcher, there is no road. We make the road by walking"), and right now CIW is expanding its Campaign for Fair Food to include major supermarkets (Kroger, Publix, and Ahold, which owns Stop & Shop, Giant, Peapod, Ukrop's, and Martin's) and the restaurant Chipotle Mexican Grill. The road to justice may be long, winding, and treacherous, but it is a road filled with dignity and respect.

Source

Coalition of Immokalee Workers.2010. "Coalition of Immokalee Workers." www.ciw-online.org.

growth, protecting basic rights, providing services (e.g., education), and regulating culture, among other things. In short, the legitimation function of the state entails ensuring the public good.

Sociologists have pointed out that these two functions—accumulation and legitimation—are often in conflict in contemporary society. That is, fostering accumulation often entails actions that may undermine a state's legitimation and vice versa. For example, beginning with the New Deal in the 1930s up until the late 1970s, the United States had what is referred to as a social welfare state. In a social welfare state, the government plays an active role in ensuring the public good. Consequently, it is during this era that considerable legislation favorable to workers, civil rights legislation, and environmental laws were passed. While this legislation reflected the interests of a majority of Americans and thus, functioned to legitimate the state, much of it also impinged on accumulation. For instance, both labor and environmental laws are often blamed for increasing the cost of doing business in the United States. As such, they are often portrayed as a driving force behind companies moving operations overseas. There has also been a concerted effort over the last 30 years by corporations to shift the state back toward policies that are more business-friendly. Hence, there has been a shift by the US government away from social welfare policies toward neoliberal policies, which promote less government intervention in society. Among other things, this has led to a recent revival of class-based politics in the United States. The most visible example is the Occupy Movement and its slogan of "the 99 percent vs. 1 percent," which has called attention to how the state has prioritized accumulation over the public good. Thus, while the state often enacts laws

and undertakes actions to preserve its authority, other actors are influential as to the content of such laws and actions.

Corporations

Today, the economy is one of the most important institutions in the United States and globally. Corporations are the most powerful economic actors, as they have significant resources and often operate across the world. For example, the top 10 US companies—all of which have operations in multiple countries—had revenues of over 2.9 trillion dollars in 2009 (see Table 8–1). Additionally, examining the profitability of these companies, it becomes clear that they have tremendous resources at their disposal, more than most other actors and even many governments. Corporations use these resources to increase their profitability, and in doing so often drive social change. Thus, whereas corporations are primarily concerned with the economy, their actions often affect other parts of society as well.

Corporations can bring about social change in a myriad of ways. On the one hand, corporations have developed a plethora of products and services that have changed society. For example, information technologies, such as phones, computers, and the Internet have changed how people interact. Medical technologies have changed the process of aging. Changes in food products have affected eating and have had numerous implications, which include increasing rates of obesity. On the other hand, corporations have developed new production practices, which have resulted in social change. Perhaps most notable is the advent of mass production techniques, such as the assembly line, which significantly affected how people worked and lived. In terms of work, mass production led to a general deskilling and the creation of alienating work experiences. However, such production practices also enabled the production of more products at cheaper costs. This made it possible for a greater portion of people to afford many kinds of goods.

Table 8–1 10 Largest US Companies (CNNMoney.com 2011)

Company	Revenues ($ millions)	Profit ($ millions)
Walmart	408,214	14,335
Exxon-Mobil	284,650	19,280
Chevron	163,527	10,483
General Electric	156,779	11,025
Bank of America	150,450	6,276
ConcoPhillips	139,515	4,858
AT&T	123,018	12,535
Ford	118,308	2,717
J.P. Morgan & Chase	115,632	11,728
Hewlett-Packard	114,555	7,660

In capitalist economies, sociologists and economists agree that the primary objective of corporations is to make money. This means that most actions undertaken by corporations are designed to increase their profitability. In many instances, such actions may lead to social change that benefits society. As noted above, the drive to increase profitability has resulted in innovations that lower the costs of goods and new kinds of products that increase the quality of life. However, corporate practices can also lead to social change that undermines the public good or is harmful to a part of society.

Beginning with Marx, sociologists have noted the conflictual relationship between labor and business. That is, corporations tend to increase profitability through increased exploitation of workers. Among other things, this has led to significant gaps in pay between managers and workers, efforts by corporations to limit worker benefits, and has contributed to the growth in class inequality in the United States over the past three decades. For example, for large corporations, CEO compensation has increased from 42 times the average worker pay in 1980 to approximately 343 times in 2010 (AFL-CIO 2011). Thus, while good for corporate profitability, workplace innovations and corporate restructuring (e.g., moving manufacturing operations to other countries) have largely not benefited American workers, whose wages have been mostly stagnant for the past three decades. Similarly, sociologists have noted that the drive by corporations to increase profitability tends to lead to increased environmental degradation (Schnaiberg and Gould 1994). In short, while corporations have been and continue to be important drivers of social change, they are driven by a narrow objective: making money.

Corporations have sought to exert their influence on society in a variety of ways. First, they seek to influence electoral politics and government policy through financing campaigns and lobbying. As the amount spent on lobbying indicates (see Tables 8–2 and 8–3), corporations clearly devote a significant amount of resources to influencing the state. Furthermore, with the 2010 Supreme Court ruling in the *Citizens United* case, corporate funding of electoral politics is now at an all-time high.

Second, corporations have established their own interest groups to promote their interests. The most prominent of which is the Chamber of Commerce, which promotes business interests generally. Additionally, corporations have created sector specific interests groups, such as the

Table 8–2 Lobbying Spending by Industry from 1998-2010: Top 5 (Center for Responsive Politics 2011)

Industry	$ Spent on Lobbying
Pharmaceuticals/Health Products	2,081,240,642
Insurance	1,499,821,977
Electric Utilities	1,417,711,382
Business Associations	1,178,912,881
Computers/Internet	1,142,417,417

Table 8–3 Lobbying Spending by Company from 1998-2010: Top 5 (Center for Responsive Politics 2011)

Company	$ Spent on Lobbying
General Electric	236,580,000
Blue Cross/Blue Shield	159,178,718
Northup Grumman	159,175,253
Exxon Mobil	156,692,742
AT&T	150,164,621

National Petroleum Council and the Pharmaceutical Research and Manufacturers of America. Third, corporations often provide funding to interests groups and think tanks that advocate for specific issues. For instance, over the past two decades a diverse array of corporations have provided funding to organizations opposed to the idea of global climate change. ExxonMobil alone has provided funding to over 100 organizations that deny human-caused global climate change (Monbiot 2007). Fourth, some corporations have established their own interests groups or think tanks. One form this has taken has been the creation of "Astroturf" organizations. This is the creation of what appear to be spontaneous grassroots organizations or disinterested think tanks. This strategy has been widely used by corporations to counter the environmental movement. For example, research shows that the "wise use" movement, which emerged in the American west in the 1980s and advocated for the opening of public lands to development, was largely created and funded by corporations (Beder 1997). Lastly, corporations often enroll or hire experts to advocate on behalf of them.

Social Movements

Social movements have been a leading driver of social change in modern society. Typically, they emerge when concerns are not being addressed by the state. A social movement is defined by three characteristics (Diani 1992). First, it consists of networks of individuals and organizations. A social movement can vary in size from very large, such as the US environmental movement, which consists of a large number of organizations, to quite small. An example of a smaller social movement would be the white supremacy movement. Second, the organizations in the movement are involved in a conflict regarding part of society and thus, want to change some aspect of society. The kinds of conflicts social movements can be engaged in can be political, economic, social, and cultural. Third, the individuals and organizations that are part of a social movement have a **shared identity**. This means that they are linked together by a common understanding of the problem or injustice, its causes, and the kinds of changes necessary. The process by which social movements define the problem and its solution is what researchers refer to as "framing" (Benford and Snow 2000).

Today, there are a plethora of social movements that address nearly every social issue and problem. This includes, economic, political, social, and cultural focused movements. A long-running concern of social movements has been economic issues, most notably the distribution of resources. Economic-oriented social movements tend to be class-based in that they represent the poor and working classes and tend to advocate for changes in the distribution of resources. Today, with increases in economic inequality in the United States, and economic survival remaining a paramount issue for many people in less industrialized countries, economic-oriented social movements continue to be widely found. For example, the Occupy Movement is a spontaneous movement that began with a single protest in New York City on September 17, 2011 and spread to more than 1,400 US cities by the end of the fall. Under the banner of the "99 percent," the movement is a response to variety of class-based issues, including wage stagnation, corporate greed, crony capitalism, lack of job opportunities, and crippling personal debt.

A second kind of social movement with a long history is movements focused on political rights and democratization. There have been and continue to be social movements by oppressed groups for control over their political rights. For example, during the colonial period, in many colonized nations, social movements played a key role in decolonization. More recently, many Arab nations have had massive popular uprisings calling for democratization, with dictators in Egypt, Tunisia, and Yemen being forced to relinquish power. Additionally, within democratic countries, political rights and democratization continue to be important issues. In the United States today, there are a plethora of movements focused on issues of campaign finance and voting practices (e.g., voter requirements, redistricting, and voting machines).

Following World War II, social movements concerned with social issues, culture, and minority rights began to emerge. Some of the more prominent examples of such movements include the civil rights movement, women's movement, gay rights movement, and environmental movement. Today, cultural issues and rights, such as gay, gun, and reproductive rights, are among the most controversial, debated, and contested issues in the United States. Consequently, there are numerous social movements organized around such issues, both in favor and against changes in such rights. Lastly, an increasing number of contemporary movements are multifaceted in that they simultaneously focus on a combination of economic, cultural, political, or environmental issues. The economic justice movement, which emerged in the 1990s in responses to globalization, exemplifies such a movement in that its aim is a world that is more economically just, environmental sustainable, democratic, and multicultural.

Two organizational models have developed among social movements: professional and participation. Each model tends to use different practices to frame problems and their solutions, mobilize people, and undertake actions. Additionally, to accomplish these tasks social movements need resources, most notably money, people's time, and expertise. Thus, a key task of social movements is procuring resources, which also varies between the two models

(McCarthy and Zald 1977). In the professional model, social movement organizations are managed by professional staff, which consists of paid employees. Such organizations tend to procure resources through donations, membership dues, and foundation funding. Professional organizations tend to have passive memberships in that members are not involved in day-to-day activities or movement actions. In some instances, professional organizations will have no memberships. Social movements organizations that focus on national or global issues tend to be organized according to the professional model. Examples of professional social movement organizations include large unions like the American Federation of Labor and Congress of Industrial Organizations (AFL-CIO), and many large environmental groups, such as the World Wildlife Fund and Environmental Defense.

The second model is the participant model. In this model, organizations are primarily made-up of volunteers who donate their time. While participant-modeled organizations often engage in fundraising, it tends to include more personalized activities, such as door-to-door canvassing. The participant model tends to apply more to local and grassroots groups. Additionally, where professional organizations tend to rely on money to fund paid staff, for local and grassroots organizations people's time is often a more important resource. Examples of participant modeled groups include the Occupy Movement and most college-based advocacy organizations, such as campus environmental organizations, chapters of United Students Against Sweatshops, and lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgender (LGBT) student organizations.

It needs to be noted that these models are ideal types in that many social movement organizations encompass characteristics of both the professional and participant models. On the one hand, large global or national professional organizations may have local chapters that are primarily participant-based. On the other hand, local groups may have small paid staff and use direct mailings to raise funds.

Social movement organizations use three kinds of tactics to try and achieve their goals: **routine politics, contentious politics**, and **market politics**. Routine politics is the use of legitimate political practices, such as voting and lobbying. In using routine politics, social movement organizations are trying to pressure the state to enact legislation. Historically, routine politics has been a key strategy used by social movements in the United States and today, most social movements continue to devote significant resources to such strategies. Contentious politics refers to the use of tactics that are not sanctioned by the state. Such tactics includes forms of civil disobedience (e.g., marches, sit-ins, and blockades), advertising, monkey wrenching (e.g., property destruction), and violent actions (e.g., armed conflict and bombings). Typically, social movements turn to contentious politics when routine politics is closed off to them or they are unsuccessful in the use of routine politics. The use of contentious tactics by social movements has been quite common. For example, a central strategy of the civil rights movement was civil disobedience, while the Occupy Movement has used "encampments" in which they re-claim public spaces.

The third tactic used by social movements is market politics. Market politics is where social movement organizations use the marketplace to try to pressure corporations. While social movements have used market politics, such as boycotts, for quite some time, its use has become more common in the past decade. In addition to the use of boycotts, social movements are now using buycotts (i.e., promoting the purchase of certain products), pressuring larger buyers to carry or not carry certain products or implement certain standards, the creation of private labels (e.g., fair trade and sustainable), and the targeting of branded companies, such as Nike.

Most movements use some combination of the three tactics. For example, the antiabortion or pro-life movement uses routine politics in that it pressures government to pass legislation limiting abortions. It engages in contentious politics in that it holds protests in front of abortion clinics. Lastly, it has also utilized violent tactics in that some of its activists have bombed abortion clinics and shot doctors that provide abortions. Social movements will pick and choose from the repertoire of possible tactics and strategically use those that they think gives them the best chance of achieving their goals. Additionally, with time, movement organizations may shift their choice of tactics depending on a variety of factors. Specifically, the opportunities approach in social movement research examines how external factors, such as the structure and practices of the political system and economy influence the choice of strategies by movement organizations (McAdam 1999).

Experts

Experts have been important actors in social change. An expert is someone who possesses specialized knowledge that the ordinary person does not have. Some of the more prominent experts in contemporary society include scientists, religious leaders, and professionals, such as doctors and lawyers. Experts change society in two ways. First, experts, particularly scientists, often develop new ideas as to how parts of society should function. For instance, new economic theories by economists have led to changes in the structure and practices of economies. Similarly, new findings by scientists often lead to new understandings of society, which may lead to social change. For example, the publication of *Silent Spring* in 1962 by Rachel Carson (2002) is commonly considered one of the formative events of the US environmental movement. Carson was a zoologist by training who was long interested in issues of nature and conservation. In *Silent Spring*, Carson linked DDT, which at the time was a pesticide widely used in agriculture and to control insects more generally, to disease and death in animals and possible human health complications. Despite a strong countercampaign by industry, *Silent Spring* raised public awareness regarding chemical use and helped to expand environmentalism from a handful of organizations to a full-fledged movement.

Second, during controversies, experts are often called upon to provide input. On the one hand, as they have specialized knowledge, it is assumed that they can provide information that may help resolve controversies.

On the other hand, experts are often viewed as disinterested observers. As such, they are viewed as having the ability to objectively evaluate a controversy, unlike those who are involved. Consequently, experts are often called before Congress to testify and commonly serve as key witnesses in judicial hearings. The result is that experts often have more input in decision making and thus, they play an influential role in social change.

SOCIAL CHANGE IN ACTION

This section examines social change in action. That is, it presents examples of social change and how it came about. Using nested analysis, social change is examined at different sociospatial scales beginning with the local and working through the global. As will become clear below, nested analysis of social change is somewhat difficult, because social change often simultaneously involves actions at multiple levels. Thus, while each section focus on a particular sociospatial scale, it is important to note that complementary processes are often occurring at other scales.

THE INDIVIDUAL LEVEL

Individuals are important actors in social change. As interactionist theories note, individuals have the ability to change society through their actions. However, for sociologists, while individuals are integral to social change, they do not change society by themselves. Rather, it is the role that individuals play in groups and organizations and how individuals may influence groups and organizations that is of interest to sociologists. For example, while politicians can affect social change, they primarily can do this because of the institution that they are part of, namely the state. To illustrate how individuals can affect social change, the options that individuals have when faced with injustices or when they want to support specific causes are examined. Two options in particular are highlighted. First, people can participate in a social movement. Second, in some instances, people can express their views through their consumption habits. Each of these is discussed below.

Individuals and Social Movements

People are a vital component of social movements. Ultimately, the power of social movements rests on their ability to get people to act. People can play two roles in movements: leaders and participants. In some instances, such as the Occupy Movement and anarchist movements, social movements are leaderless and decision making is a collective practice. However, in most movements leaders are quite important: "They inspire commitment, mobilize resources, create and recognize opportunities, devise strategies, frame demands, and influence outcomes" (Morris and Staggenborg 2004, 171). Key to the early

SOCIOLOGY AT WORK

WORK AND SOCIAL CHANGE: FROM MANUFACTURING TO SERVICES

Arne L. Kalleberg

IBM, the International Business Machines Company is one of the largest corporations based in the United States. Founded in the nineteenth century, IBM is best known for manufacturing and selling mainframe computers, electric typewriters, and personal computers. In the early 1990s, however, IBM shifted from a hardware company to a software company; it now makes most of its profits from selling software and computer services. Similarly, GE, the General Electric Company, founded by Thomas Alva Edison, the inventor of the light bulb and many other things, used to manufacture a wide range of products from engines to medical equipment. Now it earns most of its profits from financial and other services.

These shifts in IBM's and GE's corporate strategies reflects a fundamental social change in the evolution of work in modern societies, the shift from manufacturing to service industries. In 1960, almost a third (28%) of the US labor force worked in manufacturing; in 2010, manufacturing employed only about 10 percent of the labor force (see "The iPhone Economy"). The biggest private company in the United States in 1960 was General Motors, which manufactured automobiles and employed nearly 600,000 workers. In 2010, the biggest private US-based company was Walmart, the retail giant that employed over 2,000,000 workers. The second largest company in 2010 was Kelly Services, the temporary help agency.

Manufacturing industries involve making tangible things of various kinds, both durable goods such as automobiles and refrigerators and nondurable (or consumable) goods such as food. By contrast, service industries create a wide variety of things that are done in return for payment, such as educational experiences, musical concerts, medical care, or tax advice. Nations that are dominated by manufacturing industries are called "industrial" countries, while those dominated by service industries are referred to as "postindustrial" societies. Technological advances such as automation make it possible for companies to produce goods more efficiently and with fewer workers, which leads to a decline in the percentage of people who work in manufacturing industries. For example, there are fewer automobile workers now because robots play an increasingly important role in putting together cars on the assembly line.

The shift from an industrial or manufacturing-dominated to a postindustrial society or service-dominated economy has important implications for the kinds of jobs that people have in these societies. Blue-collar workers who work with machines dominate manufacturing industries; such occupations typically do not require college degrees, as the skills they need are often learned in vocational schools or on-the-job. Service industries, by contrast, involve *both* very highly skilled workers (those in professional occupations such as teachers, lawyers, and doctors, who have a lot of education and knowledge) as well as low-skilled workers (those who work in retail stores such as Walmart or as temporary workers in clerical jobs). This distinction between high- and low-skilled jobs in service economies underscores the importance of education as a way of obtaining good jobs and avoiding bad jobs.

Sources

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success of the farm workers movement was Caesar Chavez's charismatic character and his consequent ability to mobilize farm workers. Similarly, a key contribution of Martin Luther King, Jr. was his ability to powerfully articulate the experiences, feelings, and injustices of African Americans. In addition to such public faces, social movements also tend to have behind the scene leaders. One example is emotional leaders, which are integral in providing day-to-day support to movement participants (Robnett 1997).

The other role of individuals in social movements is that of participants. While leaders are crucial, everyday individuals also play vital roles in social movements, particularly those movements where the participant model is more common. In participant organizations, such as local and grassroots organizations, it is typically volunteers who keep the organization running day-to-day and undertake movement actions (e.g., protests, marches, and gathering petition signatures). For national or global focused movements, individual participation is also important. In particular, movement organizations need to be able to mobilize supporters to partake in actions. Thus, participation by individuals is crucial to the success of social movements.

Lastly, it needs to be noted that for people, participation in a social movement can be a transformative experience in itself. William Gamson (1992, 56) observes "participation in social movements frequently involves an enlargement of personal identity for participants and offers fulfillment and realization of self." In short, participation in a movement is often transformative, liberating, and empowering. In the section below on local action, this is seen in the example of Lois Gibbs, who was transformed from a housewife to political activist as a result of her participation in trying to get herself and her neighbors relocated from a toxic environment. In this way, even if they are not successful in achieving their immediate objectives, social movements can generate forces of social change through creating an empowered citizenry.

Social Change and Shopping

Today, walk into almost any supermarket in America and you will find organic milk prominently featured in the dairy section. Not all that long ago this would not be the case. What happened? How did organic milk go from almost nonexistent to among the best-selling organic foods in just over a decade? DuPuis (2000, 286) notes that "consumer demand for organic milk arose without the significant social and political organizing that created the organic food system over the last few decades." In short, it appears that organic milk is the outcome of consumer demand. More explicitly, organic milk is in nearly every supermarket because individuals, reacting to the perceived riskiness of conventional milk, demanded it. The implication is that individuals are capable of producing social change through their shopping practices.

However, can we really shop our way to social change? Currently, there is significant debate in sociology regarding the power of consumption to change society. On the one hand, some sociologist see consumption as a powerful practice by which people can express their preferences and values.

Proponents of **political consumerism** argue that consumption is "an organizing relation" in that it potentially can be used to change society (Micheletti 2004). If one examines the increasing array of products with social and ethical attributes, such as "fair trade," "organic," "sustainable," "sweatshop free," and "local" among many others, it appears that consumers are affecting the market and how things are produced.

On the other hand, some sociologists view the ability of individuals to change society through consumption as quite limited. There are two general concerns. First, there is the question of the power of consumers compared to corporations. In other words, consumers, who tend to be relatively unorganized, are often viewed as less powerful than corporations, which have more resources. For example, DuPuis notes that organic milk is also so prevalent because producers and retailers realized it was profitable. In other words, did organic milk emerge because consumers demanded it, or corporations viewed it as profitable?

Second, some sociologists have begun to question the kinds of social change that may result from political consumerism. In *Shopping Our Way to Safety*, Andrew Szasz (2007, 4) observes:

> *A person who, say, drinks bottled water or uses natural deodorant or buys only clothing made of natural fiber is not trying to change anything. All they are doing is trying to barricade themselves, individually, from toxic threat, trying to shield themselves from it. Act jointly with others? Try to change things? Make history? No, no.*

In other words, Szasz argues that consumption is not a collective activity, and while it may lead to more options, it does not produce social change. Using the example of unsafe drinking water, Szasz argues that people can either organize and partake in collective action to reform the public water system or buy bottled water. The former, Szasz contends, leads to social change as the public water system is reformed and thus, all users benefit. The latter does not lead to social change, as the substandard public water system remains and those that cannot afford bottled water have to continue to rely on it. Put differently, people can make water into what Mill's referred to as a "public issue" by organizing collectively, or treat it as a "personal trouble" by responding individually. The latter, Szasz contends, potentially may produce socially regressive forms of social change in that access to public goods such as clean water may become increasingly class-based.

THE LOCAL LEVEL

The local level is where the effects of injustice or problems are often first felt. Hence, demands for social change often emanate from the local or community level. One of the richest areas of local action in recent decades has been community-based environmentalism. Industrial and agriculture processes have created significant pollution. For example, since World War II 70,000 new chemical products have been developed in the United States, and total

US production of chemicals exceeds 300 million tons annually (Tesh 2000). The question of what do with such pollution has been and continues to be a vexing question for America. At the same time, a lack of environmental laws and weak enforcement have often allowed for disposal practices that degrade the environment and threaten human health. This is evident in that many communities continue to have air quality that does not consistently meet government regulations and water systems with elevated levels of containments. The pollution of many communities and the lack of government protection from such pollution spurred the emergence of community-based environmentalism across much of the United States beginning in the 1970s. The case of Love Canal is presented to illustrate how community activism works and how it can drive social change.

At first glance, Love Canal was a typical middle-class suburban neighborhood of approximately 500 families that was located near Niagara Falls in Western, New, York. However, it was built on a site previously owned by Hooker Chemicals, which had dumped more than 21,000 tons of chemical waste into the ground decades earlier. In 1952, Hooker covered the waste canal and sold the site to the town of Niagara Falls for one dollar. Soon thereafter a neighborhood was constructed on and around the site. The 99th street elementary school was constructed almost directly over the waste canal where Hooker had disposed the bulk of their chemicals.

In the 1960s and 1970s, residents began to notice a black oily substance seeping into their basements, strong chemical odors, yards where grass and plants did not grow well, and what seemed to be an abnormal number of children with birth defects (Cable and Benson 1993). However, it was not until a previously nonpolitically active stay at home mom, Lois Gibbs, became alarmed enough to start asking questions, mobilizing neighbors, confronting politicians that something happened (Gibbs 2011). Her son Michael had just started attending kindergarten at the 99th school when a series of articles was published in the Niagara Falls *Gazette* on how the school and neighborhood had been built on a site where potentially toxic chemicals were previously disposed. In fact, it was later discovered by residents of Love Canal that the original building plans of the school had to be modified when the contractors ran into chemicals while digging the foundation. These articles "panicked" Gibbs, as her son had started having seizures and his white blood cell count had fallen since starting school. She requested that her son be allowed to transfer schools at the start of the next school year, but the superintendent denied the request. Angry she decided to go door-to-door in the area with a petition to allow parents to send their children to other schools. Reflecting back, she recalls being nervous, thinking to herself, "What am I doing here? I must be crazy. People are going to think I am" (Gibbs 2011, 30). Rather, she discovered that many of the people had similar concerns about the school and the neighborhood, and many related their own personal experiences of health problems.

An important event for the formation of a social movement response to the contamination of Love Canal was the recommendation by the New York State government that pregnant women and children under the age of two move out of the area. This led to significant outrage by many citizens, as the

state did not commit to helping people relocate, and if the neighborhood was not safe for pregnant women and infants, how could it be safe for anyone else. In response, Gibbs and other concerned citizens decided to form the Love Canal Homeowners Association. At its initial meeting, which had over 550 people sign on as members, four goals were identified: (1) evacuation and relocation of all residents, (2) protecting property values, (3) properly fixing the canal, (4) and testing to determine the degree of pollution. The Homeowners Association quickly became the leading advocate for relocation and cleaning up Love Canal.

Receiving little cooperation from the state or federal government—and often hostility—the Homeowners Association—undertook a variety of actions to achieve their goals. Aided by an independent scientist, residents collected their own data on contamination and its health effects in the area. While initially rejected because it was "put together by a bunch of housewives with an interest in the outcome" (Gibbs, 2011, 105), future data supported their findings. To raise public awareness and pressure public officials, the homeowners used symbolic and contentious tactics, including picketing the closed-off Hooker site, protests at public official visits to the area, speaking tours, and public demonstrations. One particularly effective example was the 1980 Democratic presidential election in which the Homeowners Association sent a busload of members to New York City as the "Love Canal Boat People." Referencing the Carter Administration's aid to Cuban Refugees, their signs and slogans stated: "President Carter, hear our plea—Set the Love Canal people free!" (Gibbs, 2011, 191).

Another particularly powerful action by the Homeowners Association was the spontaneous kidnapping of two EPA officials. On May 19, 1980, the White House announced that it was not going to relocate the residents of Love Canal. Hundreds of residents began gathering in front of the Homeowners Association building in frustration and anger. With the group teetering on the edge of violence, Gibbs and the Homeowners Association held two Environmental Protection Agency officials hostage for the course of the day, until threatened by an FBI raid. The Homeowners persistence and effort paid off when on October 1, 1980—nearly four years after Gibbs first went door-to-door—President Carter signed a bill to evacuate all families from Love Canal. Over the next few years, over 1,500 families were relocated and a 350-acre area was closed off.

The case of Love Canal indicates several general characteristics of social change at the local level. First, social change that contests established processes often has to begin with everyday people. That is, every day people have to initiate the process of identifying the problem, its causes, and undertaking actions. For example, typically people cannot wait for scientists to tell them that environments are contaminated and that this is negatively impacting their health, because this may never happen. Rather, they have to first deduce this from their everyday experiences and then enroll experts to support their position. Second, the above examples indicate that people cannot always count on the state to protect them. Consequently,

community-based environmentalism has devoted considerable effort to just trying to get the state to enforce laws. Lastly, Love Canal and other instances of local action fostered the development of a national and global environmental health and justice movement. In other words, local actions can give rise to larger movements and more general concerns.

THE NATIONAL LEVEL: THE CASE OF BIOTECHNOLOGY

Social change often takes place at the national level. As national governments have considerable authority, social movements and corporations have focused considerable effort on trying to persuade them. National governments also undertake projects that significantly affect the people living within their borders. This section uses the example of agricultural biotechnology to examine social change at the national level and the ways that social change can take different paths in different nations.

Scientists, corporations, and governments have all played a significant role in the development of agricultural biotechnologies. The history of biotechnology begins in 1953 when two scientists, James Watson and Francis Crick, developed a model of DNA. Then in 1972 a set of scientists successfully spliced DNA for the first time, which enabled the possibility of genetic engineering. The United States and other governments aided the scientists by providing funding. However, they also played an important role in making possible the development of biotechnologies by reforming property laws to enable the patenting of genetic transformations and constructing regulatory frameworks conducive to the development of biotechnology products. Lastly, realizing the potential opportunities for a whole new set of products and services, corporations soon started investing in biotechnology. For example, the "biotech boom" was a key driver of economic growth in the United States during the 1990s as venture capital flowed into start-up biotech companies.

One area in which biotechnology is affecting society is the development of genetically modified crops. Genetically modified (GM) crops are one of the most successful agricultural innovations in history. For example, since they were approved for commercial use in the United States in 1996, the total global acreage has increased approximately sixty-seven-fold. The result is that 114.3 million hectares in 23 nations were planted with GM crop varieties (primarily soy and corn) as of 2007 (Konefal and Busch 2010). The push to expand the use of agricultural biotechnologies has been led by two actors. First, a small handful of corporations have developed and control the majority of genetically modified crops. For example, nearly all genetically modified soybeans—the genetically modified crop with the most acreage—are Monsanto's RoundUp Ready variety. In addition to promoting the virtues of genetically modified crop varieties to farmers, agricultural biotechnology companies have pressured government's to enact friendly regulatory frameworks and promoted the use of genetically modified varieties. For example,

from 1998 to 2010, Monsanto alone spent 8 million dollars lobbying just the US government (Center for Responsive Politics 2011) and has run advertising campaigns in Europe aimed at convincing the public of the benefits of genetically modified crops (Schurman 2004).

Second, the US government has played an active role in promoting the development and use of agricultural biotechnologies. In the United States, agricultural biotechnologies are considered "substantially equivalent." This means they are to be treated the same as conventional crops unless proven otherwise. Additionally, the United States has actively sought to promote its regulatory approach globally. In part, because of the influence of the US government and pressure from biotechnology companies, regulatory acceptance of biotechnologies is increasing. As of 2007, 52 countries allowed the import of GM crops (Konefal and Busch 2010). The development of genetically modified crops has the potential to produce significant social change. For example, they have the potential to change the food we eat, how food is produced, and the environment.

Given the transformative potential of agricultural biotechnologies, they have faced social movement resistance since their inception. Concerns include the potential health and environmental effects of genetically modified crops, as well as the economic impacts they may have for farmers. While there is significant resistance to agricultural biotechnologies in many nations, resistance has been greatest in Europe. Initially, antibiotech activists had little success in Europe, and European governments tended to follow a similar regulatory approach to the United States. However, coinciding with the arrival of genetically modified soy shipments from the United States to Europe in 1996, European antibiotech activists extended their repertoire of actions from routine politics to contentious and market politics. First, using symbolic contentious politics, such as blockading the arrival of shipments of genetically modified crops, and activists dressing up as 'Super Heroes Against Genetics' and taking over the headquarters of Monsanto's British headquarters, environmental and other antibiotech organizations were able to bring significant public attention to genetically modified foods. Second, movement organizations undertook campaigns to educate consumers as to the potential risks of genetically modified foods and launched market campaigns targeting several larger processors and retailers. Lastly, several external events aided the antibiotech movement by making people and politicians more receptive to critical framing of genetically modified foods. Most notable was the outbreak of several food crises in Europe, with Mad Cow Disease being the most significant, which generated significant skepticism regarding industrial agriculture (Schurman 2004).

The antibiotech movement has been successful in that it has closed much of the European market to foods containing genetically modified crops. For example, between 1998 and 1999, eight of Europe's largest supermarkets announced that they would stop using genetically modified ingredients in their own brand products, and six major food processors agreed to stop using genetically modified ingredients in, at least, their European products (Schurman 2004). The pressure exerted by the consumer and market

campaigns was a key driving force behind such decisions. For example, the president and CEO of Gerber baby food—which was owned at the time by the biotech company Novartis—explained that they eliminated all genetically modified ingredients because "I have got to listen to my customers" (Schurman 2004, 259). Public opinion also became more critical of genetically modified foods. A 2005 survey found 54 percent of the European Union's (EU) population considered GM foods to be dangerous and 62 percent were worried about GM foods (Konefal and Busch 2010). Additionally, the EU also established a more stringent regulatory framework where genetically modified crops had to be first proven safe and labeled. In sum, through the use of contentious and market politics, antibiotech groups were able to change genetically modified food from a nonissue to something largely rejected throughout much of Europe.

THE GLOBAL LEVEL: CONSERVING RAINFORESTS

Increasingly, we live in a globalized world. For social change, a globalized world means that things that happen in one location, can affect people in other locations. For instance, while a small number of industrialized nations have emitted the overwhelming majority of carbon into the environment, climate change threatens people across the world. Globalization also means that people in one part of the world can influence events and practices in another part of the world. For example, today, people and organizations concerned with environmental degradation, human rights, and gender equality are often not only concerned with these issues in their home countries, but across the world.

Governments, corporations, and experts have long been active in parts of the world besides their home countries. Governments have long sought to affect the policies and practices of other countries through war, colonization, foreign aid, and supranational political organizations (e.g., the United Nations and World Bank). Corporations have long operated internationally, and today nearly every major corporation is multinational in that it has operations in multiple countries. Since the beginning of modern science, experts have disseminated their findings internationally, and have long advised foreign countries. More recently, the increase of global problems and global concerns has given rise to transnational social movements. One prominent form that global social movements have taken is transnational advocacy networks (TANs). Keck and Sikkink (1998, 2) define a TAN as characterized by "the centrality of valued or principled ideas, the belief that people can make a difference, the creative use of information, and the employment of nongovernmental actors of sophisticated political strategies."

One early prominent example of transnational activism is concern with tropical deforestation. Beginning in the 1970s, a small network of scientists and environmentalists began to be alarmed by tropical deforestation and call attention to it. Whereas "tropical deforestation" was not a concern as of the late 1960s, by 1974 leading environmental organizations were calling tropical

rainforests "the most important nature conservation programme of the decade" (Keck and Sikkink 1998, 134). Beginning in the 1980s, a TAN began to coalesce around tropical deforestation when additional environmental and development organizations, as well as local actors from the Amazon region, joined the initial collection of scientists and environmental organizations. The formation of a TAN both diversified the actors involved in fighting against tropical deforestation as well as the kinds of strategies and tactics being used.

The initial efforts of tropical forest advocates in the 1970s focused on gathering data and providing information to policymakers in the hope that more rational forest policy plans would be enacted. In the 1980s, recognizing that the Brazilian government was unlikely to stem deforestation without external pressure, the TAN expanded their repertoire of approaches. First, deforestation was linked to development and movement organizations began to pressure the World Bank to take environmental considerations into their project planning. Campaigns directly targeting the bank and efforts to pressure the primary funders of the World Bank (i.e., industrialized countries) were used. For example, movement organizations lobbied the US Congress to attach environmental stipulations to its funding of the World Bank. One outcome of such actions was the creation of an environmental department in the World Bank that would evaluate the environmental impacts of World Bank-sponsored projects.

A second strategy of the tropical deforestation TAN was to politicize tropical deforestation. Movement actors used media campaigns and symbolic actions to draw the public's attention to tropical deforestation. A stirring image from television and magazine covers in the 1980s was huge swaths of the Amazon rainforest—the earth's "garden of Eden"—either burning or completely deforested. Movement organizations also sought to connect rainforest deforestation to people's everyday practices and particular corporations in the United States and Europe. The "hamburger connection" is an example of such a strategy. In this case, the consumption of beef, particularly hamburgers in fast food restaurants, was framed as a driving force behind the clearing of the Amazon rainforest.

A third, and particularly important, aspect of the tropical deforestation TAN was the development of alliances with the rubber tappers and indigenous groups in the Amazon who were losing their livelihoods as a result of deforestation. One of the leaders of the rubber tappers was Chico Mendes. Beginning in the mid 1970s, Mendes and his fellow rubber tappers began to fight against the clearing of the Amazon and the loss of their livelihood through "empates," or stand-offs. In an interview years later, Mendes reflects on the first empate in 1976:

> *I remember very well that day in 1976, when three rubber tappers came racing into town in great consternation because a hundred-man crew guarded by gunmen had started to clear their area of trees. For the first time ever we got together seventy men and women. We marched to the forest and joined hands to stop them from clearing (Hecht and Cockburn, 1989, 169).*

The inclusion of the rubber tappers helped to legitimate the tropical deforestation TAN by countering the claim that "rainforest destruction was simply a concern of privileged northerners" (Keck and Sikkink 1998, 141). In other words, the plight of the rubber tappers put a human face on deforestation in that it connected environmental degradation and the loss of people's livelihoods. In December 1988, worldwide attention was focused on the Amazon and deforestation when a cattle rancher assassinated Chico Mendes.

Lastly, frustrated with the lack of progress in trying to get regulations enacted, the tropical deforestation TAN began to use market-based approaches in the late 1980s. Specifically, movement organizations began to pressure retailers that sold large quantities of tropical hardwoods. For example, they would try to expose Home Depot's role in tropical deforestation by filling their parking lots with inflatable chainsaws (Bartley 2003). These market campaigns created incentives for large retailers, such as Home Depot, to seek sustainable sources of tropical timber. Thus, in part, such campaigns made possible partnerships between environmentalists, retailers, and timber companies, which led to the establishment of the Forest Stewardship Council (FSC). The FSC is an independent organization that was founded in 1993 that develops standards for sustainable forestry, which forests can be certified as complying with. Today, market-based approaches have become a leading strategy for trying to conserve the Amazon and other tropical forests.

The tropical deforestation TAN has had mixed results. Tropical deforestation continues at fairly significant rates in the Amazon, as well as in tropical forests in other parts of the world. However, the tropical deforestation TAN has led to institutional changes in development policies, the development of extractive and nature preserves, and the formation of private governance mechanisms to regulate forestry practices. Thus, while substantive changes have been limited, institutional changes have taken place, which may lead to greater conservation of tropical forests in the future. Lastly, the tropical deforestation TAN indicates that global social change requires cooperation among a diverse set of actors from local to global, entails building coalitions among groups with different framings of the problem, its causes, and its solutions, and is influenced by the political practices of many nations and organizations.

DISCUSSION

Societies are always changing. The key questions for sociologists are who drives social change, how do societies change, and what are the implications of social change. Building on the ideas, concepts, and examples presented in the reading, a set of questions are presented below to stimulate your further thinking on social change.

In sociology, there are two historical models of social change: the evolutionary and dialectic model. In the evolutionary model, social change is conceptualized as a process of adaptation that functions to maintain the stability of society. In contrast, the dialectical model views social change as a process

characterized by conflict, negotiation, and compromise among different groups. Does one model more accurately theorize social change? Do both models tell us something about social change? Can social change sometimes correspond to the evolutionary model, and other times the dialectical model?

The theoretical frameworks of sociology may also help in thinking about how social change takes place. For example, structural theories highlight the ways that the structure of society affects the ability for people and groups to act. As Marx originally argued, does the structure of society and a person's position in it affect their ability to change society? If Ritzer is correct and the world is becoming increasingly McDonaldized, what are the implications for social change? Applying interaction theories to social change, can small actions in our everyday lives make a difference? For instance, can deviant acts, such as biking and walking instead of driving, growing your own food, and breaking gender and sexuality norms make a difference? Lastly, poststructural theories point to the role that knowledge and language play in social change. Important questions raised by such theories include, do we need new ideas to stimulate social change? What are the consequences of increased corporate control over the media for social change? Is the Internet a tool that social movement groups can use to communicate and spread alternative forms of knowledge? How does growing corporate funding of universities affect knowledge and hence, social change?

A key insight of sociology is that it tends to take groups or organizations to bring about social change. However, such groups require the participation and support of people. Why do people become involved in a social movement? Under what circumstances do they partake in dangerous activities, such as civil disobedience? Sociologists have identified four actors as key drivers of social change: the state, corporations, social movements, and experts. While all play key roles in social change, are certain actors more important than others in bringing about change? Similarly, are some actors able to influence social change more so than others? If yes, why? What might enable some actors to have more influence than others?

In the last section, social change in action, actual examples of how social change takes place were presented. The three examples—Love Canal, biotechnology, and tropical deforestation—illustrate that social change is often a contested and lengthy process. However, they also demonstrate that people, if they mobilize and take action, can bring about change. In all three cases, every day people and social movement organizations challenge powerful actors in society—states and corporations—and are able to change society to different degrees.

Discussion Questions

1. Think about your life. Consider your social location: class, race, ethnicity, religion, gender, and sexuality. Think about the things you use: technology, clothes, food, and transportation. Ask yourself: how much control over these do you have? If you wanted to make changes in who you are and what you use can you? Why or why not?

2. Why are so many young American adults not politically active or involved in social movements? What is necessary to get more people involved in social issues and social change?
3. How do you view social change? Do you agree with the evolutionary model, the dialectical model, or both? Who do you see as influencing social change the most: the state, corporations, social movements, or experts? Why?

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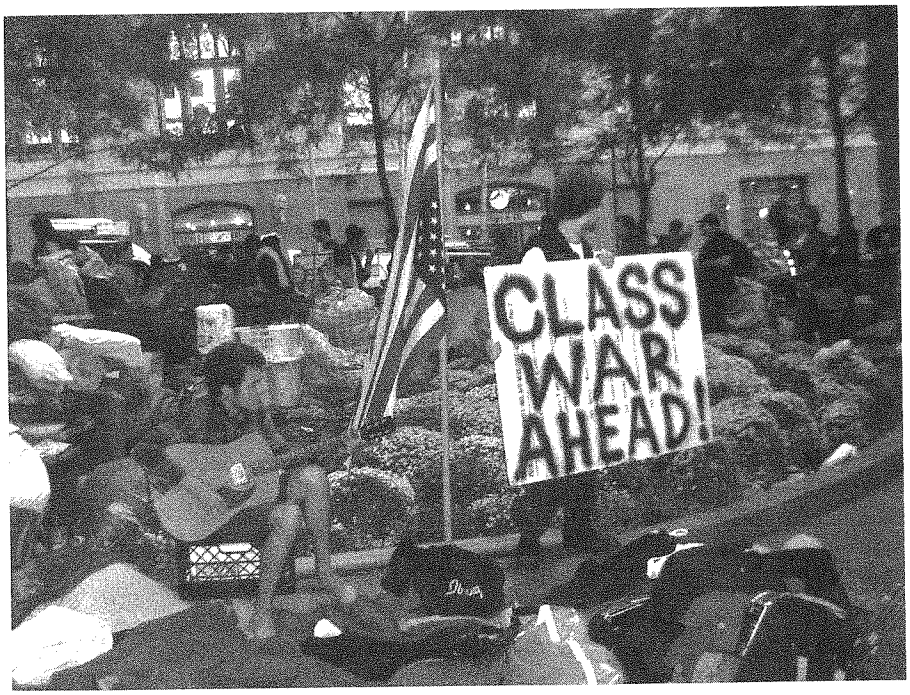
Related Websites

Center for Media and Democracy: www.prwatch.org
Center for Responsive Politics: www.opensecrets.org
Highlander Research and Education Center: www.highlandercenter.org/index.html
International Labor Organization: www.ilo.org/global/lang--en/index.htm
National Research Council: www.nationalacademies.org/nrc

Southern Poverty Law Center: www.splcenter.org
Union for Concerned Scientists: www.ucsusa.org
World Economic Forum: www.weforum.org

LESSON 8, PHOTO REFLECTION:



Occupy Wall Street protestors in Zuccotti Park, New York City.
Photo by Tammy Lewis.

Whatever you think about the Occupy Wall Street movement, it effectively put the issue of economic inequality on the public agenda in the United States in a way that it hadn't been since the Great Depression. The ability of social movements to focus public attention on social problems such as racial discrimination, gender inequality, the AIDS epidemic, environmental issues, and economic inequality is a key factor in generating social change. Social movements often take problems that people experience as individual troubles (hate crimes, HIV infection, environmental illness, limited access to employment or housing, etc.) and reframe them as social problems that must be addressed by public policy. We chose this photo because it represents a recent, high-profile collective effort at generating social change, while also taunting its detractors from Fox News. If you were the photographer, what picture would you take to represent the forces of social change?