

Very Much of a Draft – Comments Welcome

Women's Movements and Women in Movements: Influencing American Democracy
from the "Outside"?

Lee Ann Banaszak
Department of Political Science,
The Pennsylvania State University
232 Pond Lab
University Park, PA 16802
LAB14@PSU.EDU
814/865-6573

Abstract. In this paper, I discuss the current state of U.S. women's movement research. I begin by redefining women's movements, pointing out that multiple women's movements exist and that it is important to study the less recognized women's movements. Second, I examine what we know about the long term political development of women's movements, and how they have influenced American political development. A third section explores our knowledge of women's movements focusing on recent research that shows activism occurring at multiple levels and in a variety of arenas. Finally, I focus on what we know about how U.S. women's movements influence social change. In all of these sections, I discuss how women's movement research has contributed to the larger field of social movement research, specifically through its focus on the uniqueness of women's movements and the gendered institutions and culture, and through its recognition of the intersecting nature of traditional social movement concepts. I conclude with suggestions for further research.

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Introduction

Social movements form when outsiders to the political process mobilize to achieve social change. In democracies like America, social movements represent a major means by which un- or under-represented groups gain access to decision-making. Women are among the many groups that have stood on the outside and have needed social movements to acquire change. While women have faced all the problems that other outsiders to the political system have faced, the nature of gendered politics and of women's oppression also create problems unique to women. In this paper I examine what we know (and what we have left to find out) about the role of U.S. women's movements in American democracy. How have U.S. women's movements contributed to the representation of women's interests and shaped American democracy? What factors shape their mobilization, actions, and outcomes? These are the fundamental questions that I take on in this paper. Since the study of U.S. women's movements has occurred within the larger field of social movements, I will also discuss how the analysis of U.S. women's movements have shaped concepts and analyses used to explain the development, activities and outcomes of social movements in general.

I conclude by exploring where the future of women's movement research should lead us. Here I will highlight two arguments that reoccur throughout this paper. One of the arguments is that some of the most exciting work in the area of women's movements examines the unique ways that gendered institutions and gendered interactions influence women's movements mobilization, actions, and outcomes, and that the importance of these factors extends to our understanding of all social movements. Second, I will argue that women's movement scholarship has been at its most innovative where it has questioned

accepted knowledge both about the women's movement and about the larger social movement concepts used to analyze social movements. Recent examinations of the intersections between central concepts in the social movement literature or among different women's movements have contributed to more compelling analyses of women's movements. These studies of women's movements have also enhanced our understanding of social movements. But there is still much work to be done in these areas.

To develop this argument, I begin by critically analyzing the definition of movements. I discuss the way that the women's movement have typically been defined, showing both the problems with the conceptualization of the movement and thereby the inherent contradictions in the conceptualization of social movements within the wider field. In a second section, I provide a short description of the major concepts in the study of social movements as background for the discussion to follow. I then turn in a third section to a discussion of the political development of women's movements, focusing on both the conditions that help foster women's movements and the historical ebb and flow that occurs to these movements. A fourth section examines the nature of activism noting how our understanding of activism has been complicated by recent research that shows activism occurring at multiple levels and in a variety of arenas. A fifth section focuses on what we know about how U.S. women's movements influence social change. I conclude with suggestions for further research.

Defining women's movements

Social movements are usually defined as a mixture of informal networks and organizations that make clear "claims" that demand fundamental changes in the political,

economic or social system, *and* are “outsiders” with respect to conventional politics, *and* utilize unconventional or protest tactics (Diani 1992). When we study women’s movements, we are therefore not analyzing clearly defined groups but rather a diffuse set of individuals, organizations and other informal groups. The study of women’s movements focuses on multiple levels of a movement: 1) the micro level explores individual activists and their interactions 2) the meso level examines groups and institutions, whether organized or spontaneous, and their interactions and 3) the macro level looks at the eclectic mix of challengers as a coherent whole often to examine over time trends or look comparatively across movements¹. The diffuse nature of social movements makes defining the boundaries of movements difficult, and increasingly movement scholars focus on these boundaries in interesting light.

Traditionally in the United States we have used the term women’s movement when we have meant the feminist movement. Yet in point of fact the true meaning of the term women’s movement is wider than the feminist movement (Beckwith 2000; Ferree and Mueller 2005). The feminist movement entails the movement that has fought for the elimination of women’s inequality with and subordination to men; for many feminists this entails not just seeking formal equality within the law but also the desire to eliminate the hidden forms of oppression that are built into existing institutions and norms. Yet, the larger category of women’s movements includes a number of other movements that mobilize women as a group with the articulated interests of the movement focusing on women. For example, conservative women’s groups like Concerned Women for America and the Independent Women’s Forum, which oppose feminist goals of equality,

¹ See Gerhardt and Rucht (1992) and Staggenborg (2002) for a better explanation of the micro, meso, and macro distinction.

are also part of a conservative women's movement since they are organizing women as women around the interests of women as they see them (see Klatch 1987; Schreiber 2002, 2002a). In this paper I utilize this distinction between the women's movement and the feminist movement; I will preserve the term women's movement for theoretical discussions that are appropriate to more than just the feminist movement.

Equally important has been recent recognition that women's movement activism occurs within institutions as well as in opposition to institutions. Here recent work has focused on women's movements within universities (Staggenborg 2001), corporations (Raeburn 2004), the church and military (Katzenstein 1998), and even within the state (Banaszak 2004, 2005). Women's movements scholarship, inspired as it is by feminist theory, has always been exceedingly good at recognizing activism in the realm of the private sphere. Public sphere movement activism – particularly that focused against the state--has always been acknowledged (if overemphasized) in scholarship on the women's movement (see van Dyke, Soule and Taylor 2004). Yet, until recently we have tended to ignore women's movements activism within institutions particularly social institutions because of our sense that women's movements are in conflict with (especially patriarchal) institutions; this has been interpreted as meaning that activists cannot be institutional members.

A different problem arises with the tendency to focus on *the* women's movement (or even *the* feminist movement) as such a label does not recognize the multiple intersecting movements that are incorporated under this category. For one thing, specific issues of the women's movement often take on the characteristics of movements on their own. Thus, a number of women's movement scholars have studied feminist movements

around a more narrowly defined set of interests including the pro-choice movement (Staggenborg 1991), battered women's movement (Elman 1996; Weldon 2002), and the women's health movement (Taylor 1996; Morgen 2002) to name but a few. Moreover, increasingly social movement scholars have recognized that social movements can exist at different geopolitical levels. Thus, while most works have focused on the U.S. women's movement at the national level (Freeman 1979; Ferree and Hess 1985; Costain 1992; Ryan 1992), increasingly there are also analyses of the transnational women's movements in which U.S. women's movements play an active role (Keck and Sikkink 1998; Rupp 1997), and studies of grassroots, or local movements which may act very differently from their national counterparts (Staggenborg 2001; Naples 1998).

The number of feminist movements also multiply as we recognize that feminist movements can exist at the intersection of other movements (Ferree and Mueller 2004; 578). For example, Benita Roth's (2004) book, Separate Roads to Feminism, chronicles the development of African-American, Latina, and white feminists in the 1960s (see also Springer 2005). Roth's book argued that the specific character of gender oppression (and its connection to race oppression) for black and Chicana women required that they organize their feminist movements separately from their white counterparts. Indeed, as Roth argues the discrimination they experienced as a result of their gender was inseparable from their racial and class background. Since the white feminist organizations most commonly identified with the feminist movement did not address their needs, African American and Hispanic women organized independently, allowing them to address both the sexism they experienced but also to engage critically the white feminist movement (see also Springer 2005).

Finally, I have focused here on the wide definition of the women's movement and on the multiple types of movements that exist within the more narrow definition of feminist movement. While my charge here is to write about women's movements, equally important are the role of women in movements. As Beckwith (2000) notes women also participate in other movements as women; while the goals of these movements do not necessarily focus on women's interests, I will argue below that many of the advances we have made in understanding women's movements explain how women act and organize within other movements.

The existence of multiple feminist movements, the broad character of the wider women's movement, and the importance of understanding women in other movements are important themes that permeate my discussion of women's movements below. I will examine how various women's movements have differential access to the machinery of political change, and how their different goals and tactics can provide new insight into the power of women's movements. A second theme as we shall see, in the sections which follow, is the extent to which research on women's movements has called into question our understanding of larger theories of American politics. Current research on women's movements have altered our understanding of social movements, particularly of the central theoretical concepts – mobilizing structures, political opportunities and ideational elements – in the social movement literature. In order understand how the study of U.S. women's movements has altered these core concepts, we need first to introduce them.

A Brief Introduction to Central Social Movement Concepts

In analyzing the mobilization, activities, identity, and outcomes of women's movements, scholars often employ the three theoretical perspectives that dominate social

movement research: *mobilizing structures, political opportunities, and ideational aspects*.

Mobilizing structures are the formal and informal forms that social movements acquire as they develop (McAdam, McCarthy and Zald 1996: 3). Formal mobilizing structures within a movement include such things as the rules, norms and forms of organization within the movement. Informal structures include networks and the action repertoires that contribute to movement action. Social movement scholars have long realized that issues of the group structure and the resources available to movements influence whether and how movements mobilize, develop, and act as well as what they can achieve (McCarthy and Zald 1977; Oberschall 1973; etc.)

Political opportunities consist of the larger political environment; different aspects of this environment may provide spaces for women to mobilize or open targets that encourage the movement to act in certain ways, or windows of opportunity where the movement might be able to achieve certain action. On the other hand, political opportunities can also constrain women's movements. While the political environment has almost limitless characteristics that we can focus on, social movement scholars have tended to focus on political rules and institutions (both formal and informal), the characteristics of elites, alliances or political coalitions that act in the political sphere, and police brutality and repression. Political opportunities change over time but also differ depending on the local or national political system, leading to both dynamic and comparative analyses.

The third theoretical focus of scholars has been on the social movement's *ideational elements* (or what Ferree and Mueller (2005: 597) call "meaning work"). Ideational elements are those aspects of ideology, values, norms and beliefs that influence

the social movement or its actions. Within the social movement itself, ideational elements particularly play key roles in two related processes. First, a central part of the mobilization and action of social movements involves the creation and maintenance of a movement *collective identity*, which occurs largely through ideational processes. Social movement identity is created by developing common ideas, norms and values that define the movement (Bernstein 1997); important aspects of this process include demarking the goals and underlying ideology of the movement, delineating the source of the problems, and defining the difference between the movement and “the other.” The second ideological process involves the often strategic way that movements and their opponents or the wider public *frame* arguments and events (Ferree 2003; Snow and Benford 1988, 1992; Snow et al. 1986.). These two processes occur within wider national or localized *cultures*² – that is, wider beliefs, rituals, and language which may limit social movements’ abilities to engage in framing and identity processes (Banaszak 1996a; Ferree et al. 2002; Ferree 2003; Swidler 1986).

While these three concepts were each developed separately to explain different aspects of social movements, early empirical literature assessed the relative merits of each concept compared to the other. Current literature on social movements, on the other hand, recognizes that all three influence social movement development and outcomes although often in unique ways (McAdam, McCarthy and Zald 1996; McAdam, Tarrow and Tilly 2001; Tarrow 1998). One important contribution of the literature on US women’s movements has been to examine empirically and develop theoretically the intersection of

² Several authors have written about national culture influencing movement development, but cultures may also be more localized – limited to a particular group of individuals defined by ethnic, racial or class or by geographic location. Hence in any one arena there may be both a national culture and multiple subcultures within which movements create their own identity and frame their arguments.

these concepts. Thus, recent literature on US women's movements has shown how these concepts intersect in causing women's mobilization and in influencing the (often unexpected) outcomes of the women's movement.

A second contribution to the literature on social movements that derives from the work on the U.S. women's movement has been the importance of gender in understanding all movements. One major argument of this paper is that recent work on women's movements has highlighted the gendered aspects of social movement concepts. Both of these advances in social movement theory have significant implications for our understanding of U.S. women's movements, and, indeed, of all social movements.

The development of American politics and the women's movement

Meso-level analyses have examined the ebb and flow of the feminist movement using the terminology of waves. Analyses of the feminist movement have tended to start in the 1960s, and differentiate it analytically from the suffrage movement or the "first wave". In this sense, different waves are considered essentially separate movements where the waves refer to increased contention and mobilization. In this section we examine the literature on movement waves, noting both dynamic changes between and among the waves and examining the role that earlier waves have had on the development of politics in the United States.

Continuity between waves. In recent years studies of the second wave of activism have been supplemented by a rich literature in sociology and political science that examines both the causes and consequences of the first wave (see Banaszak 1996; Clemens 1993; Jeydel 2004; King, Cornwall and Dahlin 2004; McCammon 2002, 2003;

McCammon et al. 2001; Szymanski 2003). One conclusion of this literature was to connect the feminist movement of the 1960s to the first wave, and to recognize that movements continue to operate even when they appear dormant. Since movement scholars tend to focus largely on the mobilization process, these studies of the feminist movement in “abeyance” are important to understanding the long term dynamics of women’s movements as they show the feminist movement continued to exist and act long after many presumed its death (see Banaszak 1996b; Harrison 1988; Rupp and Taylor 1987 and Ware 1981). Recently, Staggonberg and Taylor (2005) have even argued that rather than examining rises and declines in women’s movements as evidenced by overall mobilization, we should focus specifically on the dynamic changes in organization, culture, and tactics.

Dynamic changes in the first wave. Indeed, in the study of the development of the early women’s movements, scholars have already focused heavily on dynamic changes in organizations, tactics and cultures from the perspective of political opportunities, resource mobilization and framing (Buechler 1986; Jeydel 2004; McCammon 2001). Yet, in understanding the first wave and the period after 1920, the most interesting work in my opinion has focused on the intersections between the core concepts in social movement theory. These newly developed theories best help us understand the development (and as we shall see below the outcomes) of first wave women’s movements.

One of the most interesting aspects of early women’s movements was that they underwent significant tactical innovation over time, incorporating in the later years very different strategies and organization forms. Traditionally within the social movement literature tactics are seen as a response to political opportunities -- movements seeing opportunities for action react with the appropriate tactics. Yet, such an analysis begs the

question of where such tactical innovations come from. Clemens (1993), in discussing the Women's Trade Union League finds that organizational forms developed from particular opportunity structures. Working women, searching for an effective model of activism, moved from adopting the trade union model to the model of middle class women's clubs after a number of years. Although such structures increasingly alienated the WTUL from trade unions, it improved cooperation of working class women with their middle class counterparts leading to usage of these organizations' tactical strategies as well.

Another explanation for the large scale tactical changes in the first wave is the role that culture plays in political opportunities. A major innovation in the woman's suffrage movement was the introduction of the suffrage parade – large scale protest marches where suffrage activists carried signs demanding the vote (Banaszak 1996a; McCammon 2003). How did large scale protest demonstrations enter the repertoire of women's movements when they had not been used in the past? Banaszak (1996a) argues that such tactics developed partially from allies who bring new tactics to the fore and more importantly from a movement culture cultivated through specific organizational structures that encouraged innovation³. Here changes in tactics develop from political opportunities, which create a movement subculture which in turn helps the movement take advantage of other political opportunities.

Analyses of the first wave have also resulted in a reevaluation of political opportunities to include understandings of gender. McCammon et al. (2001) argue that gender roles and norms inherent in society themselves represent a form of opportunities that influenced the success of the woman suffrage movement. First wave women's

³ An alternative view is presented by McCammon (2003) who argues that the source of tactical innovation arose from the diversity of the women's movement itself. This view is in many ways similar to Clemens who sees the source of innovation within the movement itself.

movements succeeded in part because of large shifts in gender roles that occurred as women entered institutions of higher education, professions, and politics. McCammon et al. conclude that the importance of gendered opportunities for the women's suffrage movement implies the need for other types of social movements to recognize their specific cultural opportunities. I will argue below that gendered opportunities --as developed by McCammon et al. -- influence women's participation in any movement (Beckwith 1996, 1998; Robnett 1996, 2000), although the nature of gender opportunities may be highly class, race and movement specific. Hence, the exploration of gendered opportunities and their influence on women in other movements requires extensive study.

Even as scholars have recognized the continual existence of women's movements after 1920, surprisingly little research has focused on periods of decline and abeyance⁴. The decline in mobilization of the early women's movement in the late 1920s represents a continuing puzzle given that various women's movements of the period continued to have extensive goals and were highly mobilized (Skocpol 1992). Much of the work on this period of demobilization has focused on the woman's rights movement (an exception here is Skocpol 1992) with little attempt to examine this period between "waves" among other women's movements or to examine different U.S. women's movements comparatively to study the timing and causes of demobilization. Thus, although we know much about the causes of the rise and success of the early women's movements, we remain in the infant stages of understanding what happened to these movements after maturity⁵.

Analyses of the decline of women's movements though sparse differ greatly in their explanations for demobilization. For Skocpol (1992), the realization among party

⁴ This is also true of the literature on later women's movements.

⁵ One recent movement in this direction is Mathews-Gardner's (2003) work, which examines religious women's movements during the 1940s and 1950s.

elites and progressive opponents that the enfranchisement of women did not create a woman's voting block effectively eliminated the power of women's organizations lobbying efforts. While women's movements continued to mobilize well into the late 1920s, elected officials were simply less receptive and opponents grew more vocal. Others argue that divisions within the movement – particularly between those seeking protective legislation for women and those seeking an Equal Rights Amendment -- led to demobilization (Rupp and Taylor 1987; Banaszak 1998). Yet, a decisive attempt to examine these differing explanations remains to be done.

The consequences of the movement. If gendered and nuanced theoretical concepts have helped us gain leverage in understanding the development of early U.S. women's movements, other work demonstrates that these movements have had a lasting impact on American parties and politics. One of the most fundamental findings has been that the consequences of the early women's movements extend far beyond their goals, altering the political process in multiple ways.

As Clemens (1993) notes first wave women's movements were a major contributor to the development of interest group politics in the modern era. While previous lobbying had been associated with traditional backroom party politics, women's groups served as the model of the public interest lobby (characterized by the idea of the Front Door Lobby) by changing the locus of lobbying from personalistic connections to party organizations to the pursuit of legislation through open petition and organizations that mobilized the public. As such they helped to herald in a new era of politics in American politics (see also Cott 1987; Andersen 1996).

Early women's movements effects on policy especially after 1920 have been more hotly debated. Beyond suffrage where the effect of the women's movement is well documented both historically and through quantitative analysis (Banaszak 1996; McCammon et al 2001; King Cornwall and Dahlin 2005), women's movements sought a wide array of new legislation including social policy; social health legislation, education laws and government reforms (Andersen 1996: 154). However, scholars come to different conclusions about the effect of women's movements. Skocpol (1992) emphasizes the inability of women's movements to hold on to the benefits for mothers in the Shepard-Towner Act. On the other hand, Andersen (1996) claims a wide range of legislation that was implemented through women's mobilization after suffrage, even though many policies, like the Child Labor Amendment, failed in the arduous route to passage⁶. As women's movement activists have long realized, the greatest consequences of women's movements lie in their ability to create social change away from the court houses and legislatures. Andersen (1996) chronicles the many social changes that resulted from the early wave of women's movements from our understandings of women's citizenship, to the degendering of the electoral process that occurred as voting and campaigning disappeared from bars and other spaces associated with men. Andersen argues that these social changes set the stage for the second wave of the women's movement. In this sense, first wave women's movements helped to gender the opportunities for the second wave.

Before we move to more recent waves of the movement, I need also stress that even at this early period, U.S. women's movements operated at multiple geographical levels

⁶ King, Cornwall and Dahlin (2005) provide one potential explanation for the differing assessments of women's movements policy successes. Although looking only at the adoption of woman suffrage on the state level, they argue that the women's movements' policy influence came mainly in the form of introducing legislation, and that their affect on policy weakened as bills were further into the policy process.

including the transnational. U.S. women's movement activists saw themselves as part of a global movement and many famous activists devoted years to the early transnational feminist movement that arose in the late 1880s and early 1900s. For example, Elizabeth Cady Stanton and Susan B. Anthony helped to found two international women's organizations – the International Council of Women and the International Woman Suffrage Alliance (later the International Alliance of Women). Both Carrie Chapman Catt and Alice Paul – feminists who were more often opponents than allies – spent years building international women's organizations (Rupp 1997; Rupp and Taylor 1987). Feminist scholars have been particularly cognizant of the historical legacies of their international feminism, particularly on the League of Nations and U.N. (Rupp 1997; Daley and Nolan 1994; Keck and Sikkink 1998 51-58).

Scholars focusing on the early transnational movements raise several important issues which have only begun to be addressed. Moreover, there has been little analysis of how ideas and tactics developed at different levels (i.e. local, national, and international) cross fertilize the different movements. Activists working at both the national level and international level also developed collective identities as part of the transnational and national women's movements, raising issues of how activists negotiated their national and international identity (Rupp 1987). I turn to these issues of multiple activism and multiple identities in the next section as I focus on more recent periods.

As we move from the first wave to the second (and perhaps the third), it is worth noting that US women's movements scholars have observed that the upturn in movement activism that occurred in the 1960s has continued in a wide array of locations, even as the American politics literature has increasingly argued for the decline of participatory life in

the United States (Putnam 2000; Skocpol 2003). One reason may be that the multiple venues for activism – at different geographical levels and inside institutions -- suggest that much activism is hidden. Perhaps the wider view of activism adopted by women’s movements’ scholars would prove these negative forecasts of decreasing participation wrong. Indeed, studies of current women’s movements suggest little or no decline in women’s movements activism since its advent of the 1960s although the form and the actors have changed dramatically (Whittier 2005; Reger 2005; Barakso 2005).

Multiple Activisms, multiple identities, and intersecting causes

This section examines the literature on more recent U.S. women’s movements exploring what we know about these movements. Three themes already described in previous sections organize this section: the multiple locations where women’s movements act; the intersection of race, class and sexual orientation with women’s movements; and the interconnection of theoretical concepts used to explain movement development. I start by talking about the implication of multiple women’s movements for our understanding of activism. Related to the multiple activisms is the central issue of collective identity—the subject of the second part of this section. The third part explores the ways that social movement concepts have intersected to explain women’s movements development.

Multiple activisms. Studies of second wave women’s movements have focused not only on national developments but also transnational (see for example Moghadam 2005; Keck and Sikkink 1998) and local level activism (see for example the excellent volumes by Naples 1998; and Cohen, Jones, and Tronto 1997). While many focus on a single level of activity, increasingly scholars have begun to look at how these levels of activism

intersect with each other. Individuals do not solely work at a single level nor does activism always follow a continuum from local to national and then to transnational. Indeed, Naples and Desai (2002) recently showed how local groups may bypass the national level to work directly within the transnational movement. A range of interesting questions are raised as we begin to examine how activism at different levels interrelates. Several recent studies have examined how activities at the national level of movement organizations influence grassroots activism (Barakso 2004, 2005; Reger and Staggenborg 2005). Barakso, for example, finds that the national level National Organization for Women had had a long-term influence on grassroots activism by local sections.

Moreover, individual activists often undertake activism at multiple levels simultaneously. How do activists themselves negotiate action on different levels at the same time? This question is not just one of time allocation as action on one level may contradict or conflict with action on another level. Rohlinger and Meyer (2005) analyzing the framing of pro- and anti-abortion rights groups at the transnational and national level find that the transnational groups framing of the issue often conflicted with the way member national groups were framing the issue. Activists engaged on both levels must then decide how to deal with conflict between activism on the national and transnational level.

A different issue arises in studying activists within institutions, where scholars have tended to presuppose a “linkage of location, form, and content” (Katzenstein 1998: 195). Here scholars of women’s movements have tended to assume a lack of multiple activisms of women in institutions. These women if they are active are assumed to be coopted by the institution to which they belong. The form their activism takes is, thus, predetermined by

the institution within which it occurred. Katzenstein's (1998) work has called these assumptions into question by identifying the Catholic church as an institution open to feminist activism and by acknowledging activism within the highly structured military. Yet, here we need more and better theory about how and when institutions determine the form and content of activism.

Intersecting identities. How women view themselves and their movements, and how movement groups frame themselves (both elements of collective identity) have long influenced women's organizational efforts (see, e.g., Freeman 1975). One recent advance in our understanding of U.S. women's movements has been the studies of the diverse collective identities within them. Women activists may belong to multiple women's movements and women in a particular women's movement may also belong to other (non-women's) movements. Even within a single women's movement (however narrowly defined), different collective identities may exist (Bernstein 2002; Reger 2002a).

When issues of collective identity were first discussed, different identities within a single movement (or movement group) were found to lead to discord, factionalism and eventually decline (see for example Freeman 1975; Ryan 1992). However, in recent years a number of authors have begun noting that diversity of identity can benefit movement groups. Thus, Nancy Whittier (1995) finds that feminist activists from different time periods differed significantly in how they viewed themselves and the movement, allowing for the movement's collective identity to shift with the times. Bernstein (2002) finds very different collective identities among activists in the lesbian movement in Vermont, and Reger (2002a) identifies two different long-standing identities within New York City's National Organization for Women (NOW). In both cases, these differences strengthen the

movements by mobilizing a wider population into the movement and by providing multiple faces to outsiders.

Recent scholars have focused on the relationship of organizational structures to identity in order to explain how movements can support multiple collective identities. Thus, both Springer (2005) in examining black feminist organizations and Reger (2002a) in looking at New York's NOW note that organizational structures facilitate the maintenance of these groups by permitting multiple identities. Barakso (2002, 2005b) shows how organizing structures adapt over time, even as they continue to maintain continuity in values, taking on new purposes and allowing multiple identities to exist. In the case of NOW, the federalized statutes and organizational form allow for a variety of grassroots actions even when they differ from that performed at the national level. This allows separate collective identities to flourish under a single organizational umbrella.

Another important strand within the U.S. women's movements literature has focused on how movements define collective identity, particularly where activists are also members in other movements (see Beckwith 1998 on women in mining unions; Klatch 2002, 1987 and Schreiber 2002 on women in conservative movements; Roth 2004 and Springer 2005 on women in African-American and Hispanic movements; and Faderman 1991, Bernstein 1997, 2002, Cavin 1990 and Taylor and Whittier 1992 on lesbians in gay rights movements). Here U.S. women's movements scholars have sought to understand the effect of those other movements on women's collective identity. While the literature recognizes that in such cases collective identity is defined at the intersection of the two movements, more recent work has developed in two countervailing trends. The first identifies a strategic decision in the creation of collective identity (Bernstein 1997);

identities are chosen in part to make an argument or counter specific oppositional forces. On the other hand, increasingly we recognize that collective identity is limited by the political and gender context (Beckwith 1998; Katzenstein 1998). As Bernstein (2002) notes, these two processes are not necessarily contradictory; in her analysis of lesbian-gay activists in Vermont she notes that movement activists consciously defined collective identity in response to the opposition and other contextual factors.

One thing that is clear in analyzing the intersecting identities and the multiple types of activism characterizing women's movements is that theoretical explanations of these phenomena require more nuanced concepts than the standard bag of tools of social movement theory. Below I discuss how these more intricate descriptions of women's movements have also led to a flowering of new causal discussions often involving the intersection of one or more of the "standard" variables in social movement research.

Intersecting Causes. In recent years, one of the contributions that the study of US women's movements has made to social movement theory is to help define and elaborate the intersection of what have been up till now been considered separate theoretical factors. Women's movements scholars have made a particularly distinct contribution through their analysis of how organizations and political opportunities are imbued with culture, which has also led to analyses of the role of gender in organizations, opportunities and ideational elements. Let me examine each of these ties in turn.

While scholars of the US feminist movement have long discussed culture (see for example Ferree and Hess 1985; Ryan 1992), the rise of culture as a core concept (separate from mobilizing structures or political opportunities) in social movement theory (see for example Johnston and Klandermans 1995) is more recent. Recent work by Barakso

(2004) and Staggenborg (2001, 2002), however, has begun to tie culture to organizations, although in slightly different ways.

Staggenborg (2001) sees women's movements as engaging in the creation of culture alongside the more typical political actions we usually associate with women's movements. Without the creation of culture, women's movements could not mobilize. We observe periods of "cultural feminism" in the history of the U.S. feminist movement, she argues, in those periods when political opportunities discourage other forms of political action⁷. Thus, groups are tied to culture through their activism. Barakso, on the other hand, examines the cultural values embodied in organizational structures of formal feminist groups. Cultures (particularly founding values and norms) are, for her, intertwined in organizational structure and therefore when we study mobilizing structures we are by definition also studying culture. For both authors, culture is not merely a contextual phenomenon but movements or movement groups generate their own subcultures in opposition to established cultures (see also Banaszak 1996). Indeed, as Staggenborg (2002) notes, understanding culture at the group or movement level may strengthen our ability to theorize across levels – from individual level perceptions of activists, to organizations and their collective identity, and to the societal cultural level.

If these authors have noted the inherent culture in organizations and actions, others have focused on the intersection of political opportunities and culture. Culture has long been recognized as a societal level phenomenon that may influence the actions of movements (Jenson 1987; Gamson and Meyer 1996; Ferree 2003). Yet, political opportunities as classically defined also include other actors in the political system,

⁷ Cultural feminism is often considered a period of the U.S. feminist movement that occurred in the late 1970s when the focus of many local feminist groups was on advocating radical change in society and politics and creating autonomous communities which would allow radical individual transformation.

particularly allies and opponents. The recognition that movements and movement groups create culture has led to the realization that another level of cultural opportunity exists -- one that is wielded by specific groups for or against the movement. Myra Marx Ferree (2004), for example, argues that cultural repression, through the use of ridicule, stigma and silencing, is often utilized to silence the U.S. women's movement. In this sense, cultural opportunities (or as she suggests constraints) are not just part of societal context but also the result of activity (if not volition) by other political actors.

Ferree's (2004) work raises the issue that movement groups can and do act outside of the opportunities presented to them (although such behavior and discourse is less likely to be recorded). Women's movement groups have the freedom to choose to ignore political opportunities and she notes there may be very good reasons to choose this path. Women's movement groups may choose to frame issues in culturally unresonant ways in order to maintain a vision of the possible that would otherwise not exist. Such groups trade off remaining unnoticed and being on the outskirts of society in order to maintain radical ideas. Her works suggests the limitations of both framing and opportunity literature.

Finally, the previous discussion of culture in organizations and opportunities makes no specific mention of gender. Yet, cultural aspects of gender also permeate all aspects of women's movements and, indeed, all movements. As McCammon et al. (2001) have noted the existence of gendered opportunities in the suffrage era, so have others observed that gendered opportunities affected the second wave in the United States as well (Baldez and Montoya Kirk 2005). But gender also provides an added dimension to ideational elements such as framing and culture as we have already suggested (Beckwith 2001;

Ferree 2003). Robnett (1996, 2000) in examining women's participation in the civil rights movement also shows us that organizations are gendered. Interestingly much of the work on gendered organizations and framing has developed from explorations of women in other movements rather than women's movements per se. Yet, gender plays a role even as we look at differences between women's movements – even different feminist movements. Diverse gender roles exist for women of different class, race, and sexual orientation, not to mention men and women in the various types of women's movements. For example, while women garment workers and women miners may both be part of a women's union movement, the gender roles associated with their particular economic sectors may lead to widely differing organizational structures, framing, and opportunities. Women's movements groups may also choose to adopt different gender roles and framing as their own, leading to great differentiation within the community of women's movements. Much about how gender should be incorporated into social movement concepts remains to be explored⁸.

Affecting the democratic process

In examining the historical development of women's movements, I noted numerous outcomes that developed out of the first wave of activism. In this section, I extend that discussion by looking at more contemporary women's movements and their effect on the democratic process. Much of the work that looks at outcomes has focused specifically on policy outcomes, noting that these reflect the goals of women's movements. Yet, women's movements goals envelop general social change as well as state policy, and the

⁸ I would also argue that gendered analyses need to be applied more to other social movements especially when women's participation is not the focus. Here Beckwith (2001) is a great example of the power of gender analysis to other movements.

outcomes of a period of struggle are wider than whether those policy goals are achieved or not. Here I focus on both the internal and external effects of US women's movements, focusing particularly on non-policy effects.

External effects. One of the primary questions that remain within the study of women's movements is the relationship of movements to large-scale social change. Women's movements developed in part in reaction to the large scale social and demographic changes that have occurred since the beginning of the century including the increasing educational level of women, the migration of women into the labor force, and decreasing family size (Klein 1984; Ryan 1992). However, women's movements also elicited additional changes in these very factors: women's movements' mobilization changed attitudes about appropriate roles for women as they also created policy changes that altered the character of society. Because many of these changes were already occurring as the movement arose, it is difficult to distinguish the effects of women's movements in this area. Similarly, opinion change has also been difficult to document in part because most measures of gender attitudes follow the rise of the women's movement. Sanbonmatsu (2002) in looking at party change notes that there is still ambivalence among the public about feminist policies, laying open the question of how much attitudinal change the feminist movement really wrought. Here as I note in the conclusion remains one of the unanswered questions in the area of women's movements.

If it is difficult to track movement effects on opinion and social change, there has been considerable work done analyzing the effect of women's movements on the political agenda (Costain 1992; Wolbrecht 2000; Sanbonmatsu 2002; Young 2000). Attention to women's rights issues increased substantially after the advent of the women's movement,

and the mounting attention was accompanied by a rise in the number and types of issues that comprised the political agenda (Wolbrecht 2000). Changes in the policy agenda in turn influenced the women's movement itself, diversifying and expanding the number of women's groups (Wolbrecht 2000, 126).

Changes in the political agenda wrought by the feminist movement had in turn some effect on political parties, although scholars disagree on the strength of this effect and on the root causes. While several scholars have found that the women's rights agenda increasingly divided the political parties (Freeman 1989; Wolbrecht 2002; Young 2000), Sanbonmatsu (2002) argues that there is less polarization than commonly found because gender issues are still marginalized by both parties. While all of the authors recognize that women's movements play a role in party position change (however small), they differ on the reasons this occurs. For Freeman (1987, 1993) characteristics of the Democratic party allowed organized interests (like the feminist movement) to play a role. Young (2000), on the other hand, argues that the feminist movement intervention into electoral politics was central to the changes that occurred in political parties, while Wolbrecht (2000) finds party elites and changes in the nature of women's issues also played an important role.

Similarly, some scholars have chronicled the role that women's movements played in changing women's representation in government (Young 2000; Day, Hadley and Duffy 2001). Movement groups began working from the early 1970s in both nonpartisan and partisan efforts to increase women's representation in elected office. Such activities have continued to increase particularly within the Democratic party to the point where women's movements' funding for (especially through Emily's List) has become some of the most significant contributions for Democratic women candidates. Women's movement activists

early on pushed for greater representation of women in appointed positions as well (Harrison 1988); however over time mobilization around this issue has lessened. In part, that reflects the differential success in elected vs. appointed office, but it also reflects the reduced opportunities for influencing appointments in the 1980s and since 2000.

If the feminist movement has helped to polarize the political parties, it is in part because one concrete effect of feminist mobilization has been to inspire those opposed to feminist beliefs and policies to mobilize as well. Phyllis Schafely's Eagle Forum (Stop ERA) and Concerned Women of America mobilized first in opposition to the ERA ratification campaign (Sanbonmatsu 2002; Schreiber 2002; Mansbridge 1986). Similarly, anti-abortion rights groups developed in the wake of abortion rights victories of the feminist movement (Staggenborg 1991), which in turn helped to mobilize the feminist movement in response to the threat on these policies. While Suzanne Staggenborg has explored the interaction between the pro-Choice and pro-Life movement in a series of works (1989, 1991 1996), there have been otherwise no attempts to tease out the interactions between oppositional women's movements despite universal agreement that their cycles are intricately linked.

Finally, analysts of the feminist movement generally recognize that it was able to affect the political agenda, despite the failure of the Equal Rights Amendment (Boles 1979; Berry 1988; Mansbridge 1986), although largely only for a limited period of time in the 1970s (Costain 1992; Young 2000). Both political parties have been less willing to adopt feminist policies since the 1980s, and existing policies have continued to be under attack. On the other hand, equal opportunity of women continues to be important in both

parties and in both (although more so in the Democratic party) there has been a strong increase in the representation of women (Young 2000).

The changes in social characteristics, political agenda, political parties, countermovements, and policies wrought by the women's movement are all indicative of the ability of movements to influence the political opportunity structure. Since many works focus more on the ability of political opportunities to influence movements, the discussion above suggests the importance of examining the continued interaction between movements and political opportunities.

Internal Effects. While the women's movement literature tends to look at external outcomes like those discussed above, U.S. women's movements also had a direct effect on their own future. Decisions by women's movements groups early on affect in both positive and negative ways the future development of those movements.

One clear effect comes from decisions to advocate for radical change of the system versus those who advocate step-wise change in politics without large changes in existing institutions. From a comparative perspective, U.S. women's movements are overwhelmingly liberal feminist in their ideology of advocating more incremental change⁹, although they also have radical elements as well. Some U.S. women's movement scholars have advocated that a focus on radical change may be very important for maintaining the movement over the long term. Springer (2005), for example, argues that building alternative communities and visions of the future were crucial to black feminist organizations of the late 1960s and 1970s simply because this ideology preserved a sense of the possible.

⁹ Working for incremental change is also seen as synonymous with working inside the political system. I argue elsewhere that these elements need to be separated in part because some working within the system may have had more radical views of change (Banaszak 2004).

A similar argument might be made for the decision of movement groups to focus its tactics on advocacy versus building movement community. Rupp and Taylor's analysis of the National Women's Party during the 1940s and 1950s suggests that community building strategies were important for the continued existence of the group during years of movement abeyance. Minkoff (1997a) analyzing groups in the Encyclopedia of Associations notes that organizations run by and for women of color focus more on issues of collective empowerment than those run by white women. She argues that while in the short term such strategies may give women of color organizations less influence, they create the ability to survive hostile political contexts and in the end greater institutional change.

A second internal effect has to do with progressive change in women's movement groups over time. The social movement literature has long debated the degree to which social movements "institutionalize". In its earliest manifestations institutionalization was seen as a combination of deradicalization of goals, bureaucratization and formalization of movement groups, and increasing use of cooperative, insider strategies (see for example Zald and Ash 1966). One major contribution of the literature on U.S. women's movements has been to debunk the idea of institutionalization as a universal process. Thus, several analysts of women's movements within institutions note that the three characteristics do not go hand in hand (Banaszak 2004; Katzenstein 1998). Similarly, Minkoff (1999: 1681) notes that formal organizations also move from insider to outsider tactics. Indeed, she argues that they have more flexibility in choosing tactics than less formal groups, although large shifts in tactics are associated with higher chances that the organization will disband.

Together, these works suggest that there is considerable path dependency within US women's movements. Earlier decisions create internal contexts that may encourage and define future mobilization, although not only in the conservative ways that early scholars of social movements assumed. Similarly, the external effects that U.S. women's movements have had – on the political agenda and policies as well as on the character and strength of allies and opponents – all in turn influence the future ability of the movement to mobilize and to influence the political process.

Conclusions: The Agenda for Tomorrow

In the preceding sections I have examined what we know about women's movements in the United States with a particularly critical perspective on how we define women's movements, how these multiple movements influence mobilization, tactics, identity and outcomes; and how the literature on the U.S. women's movement has informed the study of social movements through the reconceptualization of core concepts and the development of gendered analyses. Below, I discuss some agendas for future research: what questions still need to be addressed.

One item ripe for future research is to explore the relationship of different women's movements in the United States in greater and more systematic detail. The strongest work in this area has been in the areas of women of color movement organizations (Springer 2005; Roth 2004), lesbian organizations, and movement-counter-movement relations. Yet, if my conceptualization of women's movements as nested within one another and operating at multiple geographic levels is correct, we need to explore the interconnection of women's movements more systematically. For example, we recognize the feminist

movement as a whole has many submovements such as the movements for abortion rights and against violence against women. In some senses, the feminist movement subsumes these other movements, and these movements also overlap in the activists and organizations involved, and occasionally in common agendas or events. Yet, the internal dynamics and political opportunities differ for each of these movements, while we also need to analyze the relationships among these movements on a macro level to understand how they combine to create general trends in “the U.S. women’s movement.” Thus, there is much work to be done examining the interconnections of women’s movements. In examining these questions, we should examine U.S. women’s movements in comparison to other U.S. social movements. Do other movements have similar nested qualities or is this an issue specific to women’s movements?

Important to our understanding of the multiple types of U.S. women’s movements is articulating the different movements that exist. Scholars have tended to study some women’s movements more carefully than others; there is still much work to be done in examining women’s movements and movement groups inside institutions as well as conservative women’s movements, and other women’s movements that fall outside of the traditional feminist definition.

A second major contribution of the study of women’s movements has been the development of our understanding of how the intersection of activists within the U.S. women’s movements and other movements. We increasingly have a better sense of how collective identity in such cases develops and of how the intersections of the women’s movement with other movements influence tactics and outcomes. In the case of collective identity studies however, these issues have largely been single movement studies that have

focused on short periods of time. One missing link in our understanding of collective identity has been a focus on the long term dynamics. Examining only short time periods of particular women's movements makes it difficult to discern how collective identity is limited by historical constraints and how much freedom movements have to define their own identity. Even if identities are strategically crafted within the confines of particular contexts, long term studies will help us understand how earlier identities impinge on later ones. In short, missing from our current understandings of the women's movement is a long term study of collective identity dynamics.

A third major development in the study of U.S. women's movements has been the increasing focus on the gendered nature of culture and institutions which compose the context for U.S. women's movements, and of the organizations and groups that comprise the movements. Although all movements are by definition outsiders to the political process, the recognition of gendered processes helps us understand the continued impenetrability of political institutions to U.S. women's movements. However, here much more work needs to be done because gender itself differs by race, class, and sexual orientation, suggesting that the gendered nature of opportunity structures or culture differs significantly for different types of women's movements. Moreover, the work on the gendered nature of organizations, opportunities, framing, collective identity and culture also has important implications for the study of other types of social movements as well. There is much room for additional analyses of women in movements along the lines of Beckwith (2002, 1998, 1996) and Robnett (2000, 1996).

As I have argued above, the study of U.S. women's movements has also contributed to extensive revisions of the traditional social movement perspectives of

mobilizing structures, political opportunities and the ideational concepts of framing, culture and collective identity. Much of the work in recent years on U.S. women's movements, including research on cultural opportunities and the collective identity inherent in organizational structures, has recognized the overlapping nature of these concepts. Yet, much of the work to date has been on defining and delineating the intersections of these concepts in close case studies or empirical analyses of single institutions. To better develop this theoretical work and to test existing concepts, we are also in need of more comparative studies both across countries but also within the United States across different movements or across time.

This brings me to a subject not discussed within the paper but important nonetheless. The study of U.S. women's movements has always benefited from a combination of close qualitative case studies and quantitative statistical work. Yet, much of the delineation of multiple activisms, multiple identities and intersecting causes rests most heavily on qualitative case studies in part because developing these new theoretical ideas requires such a methodology and in part because quantitative work is much more difficult here. Nonetheless, there is much room for good quantitative work that can help test alternate theories and provide wider analyses of some of these important new concepts. Here new statistical methods such as those that allow for nested cases like hierarchical linear models or for the analysis of political rhetoric such as that being developed by Monroe and Maeda (2004) may be particularly helpful. For example, earlier I noted that we had not really sorted out how much social change resulted from women's movements mobilization and how much women's movements were affected by social change. Here statistical methods in time series like Granger causality that allow us to disentangle causal

relationships would be very helpful. Similarly, the use of alternative measures to capture things such as public opinion over longer periods of time (cf. Lee 2002) might provide better time series data on a range of attitudes towards women, allowing us to examine the relationship between public opinion and movement mobilization. All of these may help provide new means of analyzing women's movements in the years to come.

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