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Individuals in Movements: A Social Psychology of Contention

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Jacqueline van Stekelenburg and Bert Klandermans

Abstract

This chapter is an update of our 2007 chapter *Individuals in movements: a social psychology of contention*. In that chapter we described fundamental social psychological processes—social identity, social cognition, emotions and motivation—as they were employed in the context of social movement participation. However, the world of protest has changed profoundly since 2007. Virtualization and individualization gave the world a new ‘virtual look’, and we observe as much protest as in the roaring ‘60s. It is therefore not surprising that the social psychology of protest has expanded since 2007; both theoretically and empirically. This chapter is an attempt to synthesize recent efforts, and update the assessment of where we are. To do so, we refreshed the whole chapter. Therewith the main section of this chapter focuses on social psychological approaches of movement participation—the *antecedent* of protest. A much smaller section deals with the *consequences* of protest. The central question in the section on antecedents is “Why do some people protest, while others don’t?” We will discuss how the social psychological processes of social identity, social cognition, emotions and motivation affect protest participation. The central question in the section on consequences is “Why do people keep on participating in protest although it does not often effectuate the demanded political claims?” We will discuss how such matters as disengagement, empowerment, and increased politicization help or hinder sustained participation. In doing so, we provide an overview of what social psychology has to offer to the study of antecedents and consequences of protest, where we stand and where we think the lacunas are. We end with the challenges a social psychology of movement participation faces.

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Introduction

In 2007 our chapter *Individuals in movements: a social psychology of contention* appeared (Van Stekelenburg and Klandermans 2007). It was an

attempt to describe fundamental social psychological processes—social identity, social cognition, emotions and motivation—as they were employed in the context of social movement participation. Additionally, we discussed such matters as what is movement participation; short-term versus sustained participation; and the dynamics of disengagement. However, since 2007, the world of protest has changed profoundly. Take the Internet, social media, e-mail, and cell phones, which gave the world a virtual ‘stratum’. In the 2007 chapter there is *no single* reference to Internet nor social media. This would be an inconceivable omission nowadays. Simultaneously, a new social fabric emerges, loosely coupled networks are more and more added to the organization and structure of society. These societal processes meant profound changes in protest dynamics that call for an update of empirics and theory.

Protest not only changed qualitatively, but also quantitatively. In 2011 *Times Magazine* even chose ‘the protestor’ as the *Person of the Year*. Virtually every day news media display streets and squares occupied by protesting crowds. Why do all these people protest? Why are people prepared to sacrifice wealth, a pleasant and carefree life, or sometimes even their lives for a common cause? These questions are not new, they have intrigued social scientists as long as they occur. We certainly live in contentious times and social psychologists try to understand the psychological aspects of this socio-political change. Hence, the social psychology of protest has expanded—theoretically and empirically—since 2007. One can see this chapter as an attempt to synthesize these recent efforts, and update the assessment of where we are.

A Social Psychology of Contention

Social psychology is interested in how social context influences individuals’ behavior. The prototypical social psychological question related to collective action is that of why some individuals participate in social movements while others do not, or for that matter, why some individuals

decide to quit while others stay involved. The social psychological answer to these questions is given in terms of typical psychological processes such as identity, cognition, motivation, and emotion. People—social psychologists never tire of asserting us—live in a perceived world. They respond to the world as they perceive and interpret it and if we want to understand their cognitions, motivations and emotions we need to know their perceptions and interpretations. Hence, social psychology focuses on subjective variables and takes the individual as its unit of analysis.

Taking the individual as the unit of analysis has important methodological implications. If one wants to explain individual behavior, one needs to collect data at the individual level: attitudes, beliefs, opinions, motives, affect and emotions, intended and actual behavior, and so on. Face-to-face interviews, survey questionnaires (paper and pencil or online), experiments, registration and observation of individual behavior are the typical devices applied in social psychological research. Whatever the method employed, the point of the matter is that answers, measures and observations must be unequivocally attributable to one and the same individual. This is important because the fundamental methodological principle in social psychological research is the coincidence of two observations in one individual. Such methodological individualism is not to say that people do not interact or identify with groups. Obviously, people *are* group members and *do* interact. In fact, group identification and interaction within groups is among the key-factors in any social psychological explanation. It only is a consequence of an approach that takes the individual as the unit of analysis.

Taking the individual as the unit of analysis has important epistemological implications as well. It implies, *inter alia*, that questions that take a unit of analysis other than the individual (f.i. a movement, a group, a region, or a country), require other disciplines than social psychology to formulate an answer to that question. Hence, social psychology should fare fine in explaining why individual members of a society participate

or fail to participate in a movement once it has emerged, but is not very helpful in explaining why social movements emerge or decline in a society or at a specific point in time. How individual decisions and choices accumulate and result in a more or less successful movement is the subject of other disciplines. The rise and fall of social movements and their impact on politics are topics that take the movement as the unit of analysis. Sociology, political science, and history are better suited for such analyses. Similarly, However, sociology and especially anthropology are better suited for a study of the collective identity of a group, where the group is the unit of analysis. Finally—to give a last example—social psychology is good in analyzing why specific beliefs and attitudes foster participation in a movement, but the question of how such beliefs and attitudes are distributed in a society is a study object that social geography and sociology are better equipped for.

Taking the individual as the unit of analysis alludes to the limits of structural explanations. Unless the unlikely event that all individuals who are in the same structural position display identical behavior, a shared position never provides sufficient explanation of individual behavior and even if people do display identical behavior the motivational background and the accompanying emotions may still be different. Indeed, this is exactly what a social psychology of protest is about—trying to understand why people who are seemingly in the same situation respond so different. Why feel some ashamed of their situation, while others take a pride in it; why are some aggrieved, while others are not; why do some define their situation as unjust, while others do not; why do some feel powerless, while others feel strong; why are some angry, while others are afraid. This is the kind of questions social psychology's students of movement participation seek to answer.

Before we move along, a remark must be made about the assumptions regarding individual behavior that underlie social movement studies. Although anthropology, sociology, political sciences, history, and social geography usually do their analyses at levels different than that of the

individual, they do build their reasoning on assumption about individual behavior. These assumptions are not necessarily in sync with state-of-the-art social psychological insights. This is not to say, that every social scientist must become a social psychologist first, but it *is* to say that it is worth the effort to specify the social psychological assumptions that underlie the analyses and to see whether they fit into what social psychologists know these days about individual behavior.

Back to the Past

For a long time social movement scholars outside social psychology tended to equate social psychology to relative deprivation theory, and indeed, relative deprivation is a key concept in any grievance theory (for a meta-analysis see Smith et al. 2012). Since Runciman's (1966) classical study relative deprivation has featured prominently in social movement literature as explanation of movement participation. Feelings of relative deprivation result from comparisons of one's situation with some standard of comparison—be it one's own past, someone else's situation, or some cognitive standard (Folger 1986). If such comparisons result in the conclusion than one is not receiving the rewards or recognition one deserves the feelings that accompany this assessment are referred to as relative deprivation. If the comparison concerns someone's personal situation Runciman proposed to use the concept of egoistic deprivation. If the comparison concerns the situation of a group someone belongs to he proposed the concept of fraternalistic deprivation. It was assumed that especially fraternalistic relative deprivation is relevant in the context of movement participation (Major 1994; Martin 1986).

However, while fraternalistic deprivation is regarded as the more valid explanation of collective action, the relationship between fraternalistic deprivation and collective action is moderate at best (Guimond and Dubé-Simard 1983). Indeed, while many minority group members recognize their group's discrimination,

relatively few are involved in collective action (Wright et al. 1990). Thus, the almost singular focus on fraternalistic deprivation does not appear to provide an adequate psychological explanation for collective action (Foster and Matheson 1999). Foster and Matheson argue that in order to capture the connection between individual (personal) and group (political) oppression it may be informative to consider the much ignored notion of *double relative deprivation*, the experience of both personal and group deprivation. It is suggested that people who experience both egoistic deprivation and fraternalistic deprivation may report a qualitatively different experience that may be more strongly associated with action-taking than the experience of either egoistic or fraternalistic deprivation alone. Foster and Matheson show that when the group experience becomes relevant for one's own experience, there is a greater motivation to take part in collective action.

Akin to relative deprivation theory but featuring less prominent in social movement literature has been frustration-aggression theory (Berkowitz 1972). The idea is that when the achievement of some goal is blocked by some external agency, this results in feelings of frustration. Among the possible reactions to such feelings of frustration are acts aiming at the external agency in order to lift the blockade or simply punish the agency for blocking goal achievement. Being a general theory about human behavior the frustration-aggression framework has been applied in the context of movement participation and political protest as well (Berkowitz 1972; see for a review of the literature on union participation Klandermans 1986).

Both relative deprivation theory and frustration-aggression theory are examples of grievance theories. In an attempt to develop a more systematic grievance theory Klandermans (1997) distinguished between illegitimate inequality, suddenly imposed grievances, and violated principles. Illegitimate inequality is what relative deprivation theory is about. The assessment of illegitimate inequality implies both comparison processes and legitimating

processes. The first processes concern the assessment of a treatment as unequal, the second of that inequality as illegitimate. Suddenly imposed grievances refer to an unexpected threat or inroad upon people's rights or circumstances (Walsh 1981). The third type of grievances refers to moral outrage because it is felt that important values or principles are violated. Klandermans takes the three types of grievances together as feelings of injustice, that he defines as "outrage about the way authorities are treating a social problem" (p. 38).

Since the appearance of resource mobilization theory, grievance theories lost the attention of many a movement scholar. Grievance theories were associated with so called 'breakdown theories', which were discredited for portraying social movements and movement participation as irrational responses to structural strain. Moreover, the resource mobilization approach took as its point of departure that grievances abound and that the question to be answered was not so much why people are aggrieved but why aggrieved people mobilize. As a consequence the social movement field lost its interest in grievance theory and because of the association of grievance theory with social psychology it lost its interest in social psychology as well.

Klandermans (1984) was among the first to observe that in doing so it had thrown the baby out with the bathwater. He began to systematically explore and disseminate what social psychology has to offer to students of social movements. He demonstrated that grievances are necessary but certainly not sufficient conditions for participation in social movements and proposed social psychological mechanisms that do add sufficient explanation. He argued and demonstrated that there is much more available in social psychology than grievances and relative deprivation. In 1984 he presented a *social-psychological expansion* of resource mobilization theory as explanation of why some aggrieved people participate in protest, while others don't. The model is a fusion of expectancy value theory and collective action theory.

Expectancy value theory explains the motivation for specific behavior by the value of the

expected outcomes of that behavior. The core of the social-psychological expansion of resource mobilization theory is the individual's expectation that specific outcomes will materialize, multiplied by the value of those outcomes for the individual. In line with expectancy-value approaches (Feather and Newton 1982) expectations and values stand in a multiplicative relationship. A goal might be valuable, but if it cannot be reached, it is unlikely to motivate behavior. If, on the other hand, a goal is within someone's reach, but it is of no value, it will not motivate behavior either (Klandermans 1984).

Expectancy-value theory, thus assumes a rational decision maker. However, collective action theory (Olson 1965) maintains that rational decision makers if they must decide to take part in collective action are faced with the collective action dilemma. Collective actions, if they succeed, tend to produce collective goods that are supplied to everybody irrespective of whether people have participated in the production of the collective good. Thus, if the collective good is produced people will reap the benefits anyway. Collective action theory predicts that under those circumstances rational actors will choose to take a free ride, unless selective incentives (i.e., those incentives that depend upon participation) motivate them to participate. However, if too many people conclude from that assessment that they can afford to take a free ride, the collective good will not be produced.

Klandermans (1984) argued that information about the behavior of others can help to overcome the dilemma. However, when the decision to participate must be taken it is usually not known what the others will do (but see Zhao 1998 for an interesting example of a mobilization campaign where people did have information about the behavior of others). In the absence of factual information people must rely on expectations about the behavior of others. Organizers will, therefore, try to make people believe that *their* participation does make a difference. Klandermans' model, therefore, contained expectations about the behavior of others. Collective action participation is explained by the following parameters: *collective benefits* and

social and *non-social selective incentives*. Collective benefits are a composite of the value of the action goal and the expectation that the goal will be reached. This expectation is broken down into expectations about the behaviors of others, expectations that the action goal will be reached if many others participate and the expectation that one's own participation will increase the likelihood of success.

Klandermans his example was followed by a small but growing number of social psychologists. This chapter takes stock of what they accomplished so far; of what we have and where we are today.

A Social Psychology of Movement Participation

Participation in social movements is a multifaceted phenomenon. Indeed, there are many different forms of movement participation. Two important dimensions to distinguish forms of participation are *time* and *effort* (Klandermans 1997). Some forms of participation are limited in time or of a once-only kind and involve little effort or risk—giving money, signing a petition, or taking part in a peaceful demonstration. Examples in the literature are the demonstration and petition against cruise missiles in the Netherlands (Klandermans and Oegema 1987; Oegema and Klandermans 1994). Other forms of participation are also short-lived but involve considerable effort or risk—a sit-in, a site occupation or a strike. Participation in the Mississippi Freedom Summer (McAdam 1988) and participation in the Sanctuary movement (Nepstad and Smith 1999) are cases in point. Participation can also be indefinite but little demanding—paying a membership fee to an organization or being on call for two nights a month. Pichardo et al. (1998) studied a variety of such forms of participation in the environmental movement. Finally, there are forms of participation that are both enduring and taxing like being a member on a committee or a volunteer in a movement organization. Examples are the members of neighborhood committees (Oliver 1984) and the

members of underground organizations (Della Porta 1992).

From a social psychological viewpoint taxonomies of participation are relevant because one may expect different forms of participation to involve different motivational dynamics. Let us give two illustrative examples. Long term, taxing forms of participation are typically of the kind that you need a few people for it who are willing to do the job. Once you have mobilized those few you do not really need more participants. Indeed, more participants might even create coordination problems. This is typically the situation where people can and in fact do take a free ride (Marwell and Oliver 1993). Oliver (1984) shows that the few who participate in these activities are usually fully aware of the fact that they are giving a free ride to most sympathizers, but it doesn't bother them. In fact, this is part of their motivation: 'if I do not do it nobody else will do it', they reason (Oliver 1984). Compare this to a strike. For a strike you need some minimal number of participants. As long as this threshold is not passed all effort is in vain. In terms of the motivation of participants, the problem to be solved is to make people believe that the threshold will be reached. This is walking a thin line. If someone expects that few will participate his motivation to take part will be low. If someone feels that many people participate he may conclude that he can afford to take a free ride.

Knowing that you are giving many others a free ride, or knowing that a threshold must be reached are two completely different cognitions. The two examples illustrate that different forms of participation imply different motivational dynamics. More obvious is the impact of costs. Higher costs will reduce participation. This is indeed what we found in studies of two campaigns of the Dutch peace movement (Klandermans and Oegema 1987; Oegema and Klandermans 1994). Although the number of sympathizers at the two points in time was the same, as was the proportion of the sympathizers that was targeted by mobilization attempts, the campaign for the petition resulted in the participation of more than 50% of the sympathizers

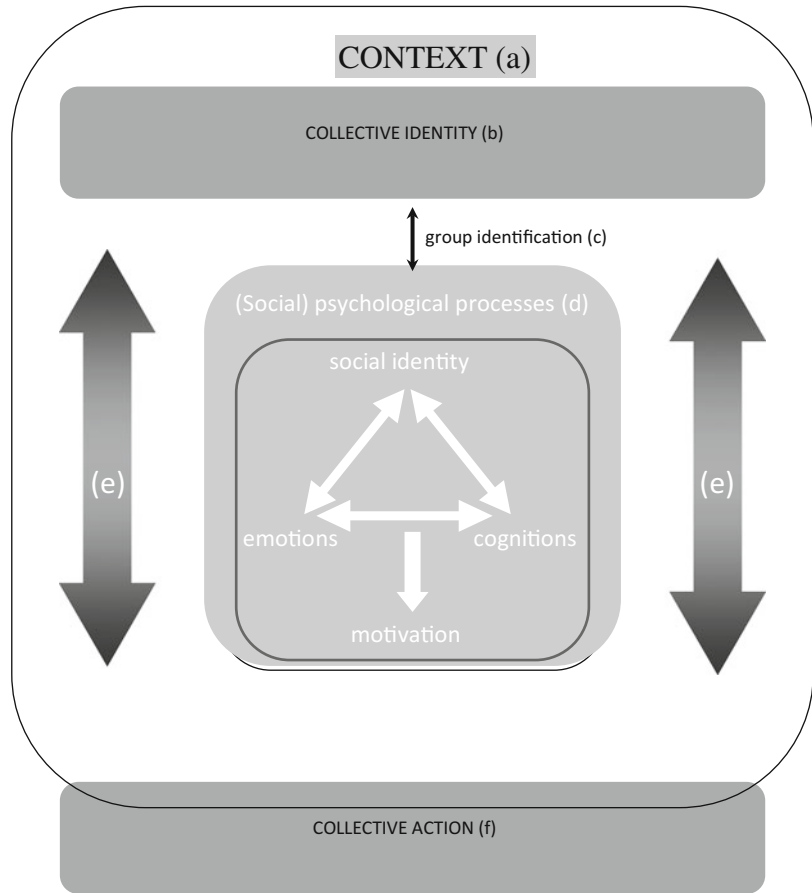
while that for a demonstration in not even 5%. In one of the rare comparative studies of types of movement participation Passy (2001) found indeed that the motivational dynamics of various forms of participation were different (see also Saunders 2014; Van Stekelenburg et al. 2016).

This Chapter

Movement participation is participation in collective action. Such collective action is generally assumed to root in collective identity. In the words of Wright (2001): "It is simply obvious that in order to engage in collective action the individual must recognize his or her membership in the relevant collective" (p. 413). This chapter on the social psychology of contention elaborates on four basic social psychological mechanisms—social identity, cognition, emotion and motivation—that mediate between collective identity and collective action. Figure 1 provides a schematic representation. The two arrows left and right (e) indicate that not only collective action roots in collective identity, but also that collective action influences collective identity. As the Elaborated Social Identity Model (Reicher 1996a, b) holds: "identities should be understood not simply as a set of cognitions but as practical projects. In this account, identities and practice are in reciprocal interaction, each mutually enabling and constraining the other" (Drury et al. 2005). In other words, collective identities are constantly "under construction" and collective action is one of the factors that shape collective identity.

Acting collectively requires some collective identity. Sociologists were among the first to emphasize the importance of collective identity in collective action participation. They argued that the generation of a collective identity is crucial for a movement to emerge (Melucci 1989; Taylor and Whittier 1992). Collective identity is conceived as an emergent phenomenon. In the words of Melucci, "Collective identity is an interactive, shared definition produced by several individuals that must be conceived as a process because it is constructed and negotiated by

Fig. 1 A dynamic social psychological route from collective identity to collective action and back



repeated activation of the relationships that link individuals to groups” (Melucci 1995).

Individuals engage in collective action, “any time that they are acting as a representative of the group and the action is directed at improving the conditions of the entire group” (Wright 2001). In the end, it is individuals who react to their socio-political environment as they perceive it and who are motivated (or not) to take part in collective action. Over the years social psychologists have proposed different motivational constellations to explain why the one is willing to protest, while the other wants to stay on the couch. In Fig. 1 they are depicted in the inner square (d).

Identification with the group involved appears to be a strong predictor of collective action participation (de Weerd and Klandermans 1999; Haslam 2001; Hercus 1999; Kelly 1993; Kelly

and Breinlinger 1996; Simon et al. 1998; Stürmer et al. 2003). Individuals think, act and feel like group members because they incorporate elements of a collective identity into their social identity. The mechanism in between is group identification. The black arrow (c) between collective identity and the small square in Fig. 1 reflects the role of group identification. Group identification influences what people feel, think and do. Collective identity, however, is also shaped by what people feel, think and do with regard to the collective. Therefore, the arrow points in both directions.

What makes the proposed social psychological mechanisms all pointing in the direction of a readiness for action? Indeed, group identification makes people sharing ideas, feelings, and interests, yet this does not necessarily imply readiness for action. Group members have to experience a

growing *awareness* of shared grievances and a clear idea of who or what is responsible for those grievances. Awareness refers to a set of political beliefs and action orientations arising out of this awareness of similarity (Gurin et al. 1980, p. 30). It involves identification in one's group or category and the location of that group in the social structure, as well as a recognition that one's group's interests are opposed to those of other groups. Tajfel (1974, cited by Gurin et al. 1980) stresses that the transformation of social categorization into a more developed state of consciousness is enhanced by conflict and structural factors. In his view, people will engage in a number of cognitive reinterpretations that provide the critical components of consciousness if mobility out of a socially devalued category is structurally constrained. This brings us to the context where the collective struggle is fought out.

The processes depicted in Fig. 1 do not operate in a social vacuum. Contrary to that, collective identities are created and constructed in a socio-political context and group interests and values are defended in intergroup situations (see (a) Fig. 1). Indeed, although the emphasis in social psychology is on the individual level, the dynamics of collective action participation do take place in a social and political context. Movement organizations, multiorganizational fields, political opportunities, and social and cultural cleavages affect the route that individual participants take towards or away from the movement (Klandermans 1997). The collective struggle is, by definition, fought out in the social or political intergroup context. Figure 1 can be read as if *one* of these group processes is placed under a magnifying glass, obviously, these processes take place in a wider social, cultural and political context. Thus, although we acknowledge the influence of this wider context, we will focus on the more social psychological mechanisms in the sections to come.

Figure 1 is so much as the roadmap for the sections to come. We will elaborate the separate constructs as they feature in social psychological research on movement participation and describe exemplary research taking these constructs as the

key explanatory factors. As such, the main section of this chapter focuses on social psychological approaches of movement participation—the *antecedent* of protest. A much smaller section will deal with the *consequences* of protest. Protest participation is social psychologists' cup of tea, yet surprisingly the social psychological consequences of protest are an untouched area in the literature (see for a similar observation, Louis 2009). However, precisely in this process of participation and its aftermath we may be able to find the answers to one of the most intriguing questions in protest participation: that is the paradox of persistent participation (Louis 2009). Indeed, activism frequently persists despite pessimism regarding the action's ostensible goals (Louis 2009). Why do people keep on participating in protest although it does not effectuate the demanded political claims? We will discuss how such matters as disengagement, empowerment, and increased politicization prevent or promote sustained participation. However, we start with our social psychological roadmap to contentious action on group identification, cognition, emotion and motivation.

Group Identification

Group identification seems to be the fundamental social psychological answer to the question of what drives people to engage in collective action. Identification with the group involved seems a powerful reason to participate in protest on behalf of that group, be it identification with women or workers (Kelly and Breinlinger 1995; Kelly and Kelly 1994), the elderly or gay (Simon et al. 1998; Stürmer et al. 2003; Stürmer and Simon 2004a, b) farmers (Klandermans et al. 2004), former East Germans (Mummendey et al. 1999), feminists (Liss, Crawford and Popp 2004) or obese (Stürmer et al. 2003). These studies report consistently that group identification and collective action participation are correlated. They report moderately positive correlations between the two variables (roughly between 0.20 and 0.30): the more people identify with the

group involved, the more they are motivated to participate in collective action. This relation proved meta-analytically also to be important (van Zomeren et al. 2008). In order to understand why, we need to elaborate the concept of identity.

Identity

The clearest definition of social identity that has been located in the social psychological literature is presented by Tajfel. According to Tajfel (1978: 63) identity is “that *part* of an individual’s self-concept which derives from his knowledge of his membership of a social group (or groups) together with the value and emotional significance attached to that membership”. The concept, thus, contains a cognitive (awareness of membership), an evaluative (the values associated with the membership), and an emotional/affective (feelings towards one’s group membership as well as others standing in relation to the group) element (see Tajfel 1978). Identity is our understanding of who we are and of who other people are, and, reciprocally other people’s understanding of themselves and others (Jenkins 2004). Hence, the notion of identity involves two criteria of comparison between people: same-ness and difference-ness. Important, though, identity is not a given fact, identity is a practical accomplishment, a process. Identifying ourselves or others is a matter of meaning, and meaning always involves interaction: agreement and disagreement, convention and innovation, communication and negotiation (Jenkins 2004).

At the psychological heart of social identity theory (Tajfel and Turner 1979) lays the assumption that people strive for a positive self-evaluation (Turner 1999, p. 8). This self-evaluation concerns two components: personal and social identity. *Personal identity* refers to self-definition in terms of personal attributes, whereas *social identity* refers to self-definition in terms of social category memberships. Social identity is seen as a cognitive entity; that is to say, if social identity becomes more salient than

personal identity, then people see themselves less as unique individuals and more as the prototypical representatives of their ingroup category. Indeed, people are inclined to define their personal self in terms of what makes them different from others, whereas they tend to define their social identities in terms of what makes them similar to others. In other words, it is the cognitive transition from an “I” into a “we” as a locus of self-definition that transforms personal identity into collective identity. When social identity becomes more salient than personal identity, people think, feel and act as members of their group (Turner 1999). In their striving for a positive self-evaluation it is important that the membership of groups has a positive influence on one’s self-evaluation. Therefore people want to be members of high status groups.

Because people strive for a positive self-evaluation, membership of a low group status spurs them to undertake action in order to acquire a higher group status by leaving the group or changing its status. Tajfel and Turner (1979) formulate social structural characteristics controlling intergroup behavior. The first characteristic is *permeability of the group boundaries*, that is, the possibilities perceived by the individual to attain membership of a higher status group. When people see membership of a higher status group as a possibility, they will try to leave the lower status group. As a consequence, their commitment to the lower status group declines. The second characteristic is *stability*. Stability refers the extent to which status positions are stable or variable. People who conceive of status positions as variable, perceive collective action as a possible strategy to realize higher group status. Which implies that they are inclined to participate in collective action on behalf of the group. Such inclination will be fostered when the low group status is perceived as *illegitimate*. To sum up, according to social identity theory, people will participate in collective action to improve group status if they are not able to leave the group, if they believe that this status position is variable and when the low status is perceived as illegitimate.

Group Identification: The Link Between Collective and Social Identity

Acting collectively requires some *collective* identity or consciousness (Klandermans and de Weerd 2000). Although collective identity and social identity are related concepts, they refer to different aspects of group life. Collective identity concerns cognitions shared by members of a single group (Taylor and Whittier 1992), whereas social identity concerns cognitions of a single individual about his or her membership in one or more groups (Tajfel and Turner 1979). *Group identification* forms the link between collective and social identity. Group identification can be seen as a product of *self-categorization*—a cognitive representation of the self as a representative of a more inclusive category (Brewer and Silver 2000). This cognitive representation is accompanied by an awareness of similarity, ingroup identity and shared fate with others who belong to the same category. Polletta and Jasper (2001), however, emphasize that group identification is more than a cognitive process, in their own words, “a collective identity is not simply the drawing of a cognitive boundary [...] most of all, it is an emotion” (p. 415). It is difficult to imagine that an identity is purely cognitive yet strongly held. The “strength” of an identity comes from its affective component. Thus where self-categorization theory emphasizes the cognitive side of identification, Polletta and Jasper remind us of the more affective side of group identification (see Ellemers 1993 for a similar argument).

Self-categorization theory proposes that people are more prepared to employ a social category in their social identity the more they identify with that category. Thus, the stronger the group identification, the more the shared beliefs and fate comprised in the group’s collective identity are incorporated in the individual’s social identity. However, individuals do not incorporate the complete picture but rather a selection of what a collective identity encompasses. These idiosyncratic remakes of collective beliefs at the individual level create a variety in the *content* of the social identity (Turner-Zwinkels et al. 2016).

Indeed, not all farmers, obese, workers, women, feminists or gays have identical social identities, yet they do feel like farmers, obese, and so on.

De Weerd and Klandermans (1999) broke group identification down into an affective and a behavioral component. The affective component refers to the degree of attachment to the group (farmers in this study) or category and the behavioral component refers to membership in identity organizations (being a member of a farmers’ organization). In a longitudinal study they investigated the causal relation between the affective and behavioral identity component and collective action participation. It should not come as a surprise anymore that identification with farmers stimulated collective action participation. While both the affective and the behavioral component impacted on people’s willingness to participate in political protest, only the behavioral component stimulated actual participation directly. According to de Weerd and Klandermans that makes sense: “Being organized implies communication networks, access to resources, interpersonal control, information about opportunities when, where and how to act, and all those other things that make it more likely that intentions materialize” (p. 1092).

The opposite assumption, that participation strengthens group identification, was confirmed for behavioral but not affective identification. These findings suggest that at least in the case of behavioral identification causality between identification and action participation goes in both directions (Klandermans et al. 2002). It remains a question why people who participated in collective action are more inclined to participate in farmers’ organizations than people who did not participate. A possible answer might be that actual participation enhances feelings of belonging, collective empowerment (Drury et al. 2005; Drury and Reicher 1999; van Leeuwen et al. 2016) or makes the shared grievances or claims more transparent. In other words, actual participating influences which aspects of collective identity are appropriated.

Group identification can be assessed in all kinds of ways, but any operationalization of

group identification will refer somehow to what it means to an individual to belong to the group in point and will thus implicitly or explicitly refer to the pride of being a member of the group, to the symbols, the values, the fate shared by the group members. Therefore group identification is akin to commitment to the group (Ellemers et al. 1999; Goslinga 2002). Huddy (2001) argues that it is not group identification per se but the strength of such identification that influences group members' readiness to view themselves and act in terms of their group membership. Huddy (2001) criticizes social identity literature for neglecting the fact that real-world identities vary in strength; identifying more or less strongly with a group, she argues, may make a real difference, especially in political contexts. Related to this point is the fact that identity strength is related to identity choice (Huddy 2003). Huddy distinguishes between *ascribed* and *acquired* group membership, according to Huddy ascribed identities are quite difficult to change, and acquired identities are adopted by choice. Group identification tends to increase in strength when it is voluntary. Membership of a social movement organization can be seen as a prototypical example of a voluntary acquired, hence strong, identity.

Identification affects collective action participation both *direct* and *indirect* (Stürmer 2000, cited by Klandermans and de Weerd 2000). Direct because group identification creates a shortcut to participation: participation stems not so much from the outcomes associated with participation but from identification and solidarity with other group members involved (Klandermans 2014). The indirect link is determined by depersonalization of the self: "Through depersonalization self-categorization effectively brings self-perception and behavior into line with the contextually relevant in-group prototype, and thus transforms individuals into group members and individuality into group behavior" (Hogg et al. 1995, p. 261). Group identification influences instrumental reasoning indirect; it makes it less attractive to take a free ride: high levels of group identification increase the costs of defection and the benefits of cooperation. Moreover, if

people identify strong with their group, their grievances are stronger (Kawakami and Dion 1993; Tropp and Wright 1999), instrumental reasoning becomes more influential (McCoy and Major 2003), threats to values are felt stronger (Branscombe et al. 1999), as are emotions (Yzerbyt et al. 2003), and, finally, they believe more in the collective efficacy of their group to organize and execute the courses of action required to produce given attainments, Kelly (1993).

Simon et al. (1998) describe identity as a place in society. A place is a metaphorical expression and concerns people's social embeddedness, that is the networks, the organizations, the associations, groups and the categories of which they are members. People are not randomly embedded in society. Social cleavages affect social embeddedness (Van Stekelenburg 2013a). People share interests and identify and associate almost exclusively with other members of 'their' group. Hence, cleavages create 'communities of shared fate' and 'sameness' within cleavages and 'distinctiveness' between cleavages, and as such create shared identities *and* opposing identities, referred to as in- and out-groups in social identity theory. Social cleavages may give rise to shared fate, because cleavages determine people's place in society. Social cleavages create a place shared with others, which leads to shared experiences, grievances and emotions and the creation of a collective identity.

González and Brown (2003) coined the term 'dual identity' to point to the concurrent workings of identities. These authors argue that identification with a subordinate entity (e.g. ethnic identity) does not necessarily exclude identification with a supraordinate entity (e.g. national identity). In fact, they hold that a 'dual identity' is the desirable configuration as it implies sufficient identification with one's own group to experience some basic security and sufficient identification with the overarching identity to preclude divisiveness (see also Huo et al. 1996). There is evidence that immigrants who display a dual identity are more inclined to take onto the streets on behalf of their group

(Simon and Ruhs 2008). This is further specified by Klandermans et al. (2008), who report that immigrants who display a dual identification tend to be more satisfied with their situation than those who do not display such identity, but *if* they are dissatisfied they will be more likely to participate in protest.

Indeed, politicized collective identities are dual identities (Klandermans 2014). Societal groups are embedded in the same superordinate political entity (e.g., the nation-state or society at large); identification with this entity or its inhabitants comes into play as a consequence of the process of politicization. Recent research by Simon (2011) suggests that holding a dual identity directs people to moderate action. When identification with a superordinate entity declines, discontent more likely results in radical action.

From Social Identity to Politicized Collective Identity

Awareness of a collective identity does not necessarily make that identity politically relevant; collective identity must politicize to become the engine of collective action. Politicization of collective identity and the underlying power struggle unfold as a sequence of politicizing events that gradually transform the group's relationship to its social environment. Typically, this process begins with the awareness of shared grievances. Next, an external enemy is blamed for the group's predicament, and claims for compensation are leveled against this enemy. Unless appropriate compensation is granted, the power struggle continues. If in the course of this struggle the group seeks to win the support of third parties such as more powerful authorities (e.g., the national government) or the general public, collective identity fully politicizes (Simon and Klandermans 2001).

What distinguishes politicized collective identity from collective identity? The first distinction is raised consciousness: "the growing awareness of shared grievances and a clearer idea of who or what is responsible for those

grievances reflect a distinct cognitive elaboration of one's worldview providing group members with a meaningful perspective on the social world and their place in it" (Simon and Klandermans 2001, p. 327). The second distinction is about the relation with other groups. A politicized identity provides antagonistic lenses through which the social world is interpreted. This intergroup polarization defines other groups in the social and political arena as 'pro' or 'con', thus as allies or opponents. The third distinction concerns the unique behavioral consequences of politicized collective identity, namely, politicized group members should be likely to engage in collective action directed at the government or the general public to force them to intervene or to take sides.

Stürmer et al. (e.g. 2004a) show that identification with a social movement (for instance the German Grey Panthers, the gay movement or the fat acceptance movement) is a better predictor of movement participation than identification with the broader recruitment category (old aged people, gays or fat people). These results underscore the importance of the more politicized form of collective identification with the social movement itself. They suggest that identification with a disadvantaged group increases group members' willingness to participate in collective action only to the extent that it is transformed into a more politicized form of activist identification (Simon and Klandermans 2001).

Identity: Where Do We Stand and How to Proceed

Foregoing demonstrated the role of identity in spurring collective action participation. Indeed, collective action is contingent upon seeing oneself as part of a group, while acting collectively requires some *collective* identity or consciousness (Klandermans and de Weerd 2000). It shows that the role of identification in spurring collective action participation is not simply a matter of an on/off switch. Indeed, the influence of identity strength, identity salience, and identity content changes over time, and it's politicization

reveal that the role of identity on collective action participation is dynamic and multifaceted.

There remains a lot to be explained regarding the role of identity in the context of movement participation. To be sure the basics are clear, but so far we have emphasized the direct effects of identification on collective action participation, but through its influence on values, interests, and emotions identification may also have an indirect effect on collective action participation (Hogg et al. 1995). The stronger someone's group identification, the more shared beliefs, grievances, emotions and fate comprised in the group's collective identity are incorporated in the individual's social identity. These indirect effects of group identification on participation are far from understood. Moreover, people have multiple social identities that can reinforce or work against each other in motivating people to take the streets (on intersectionality see Prins et al. 2015; on cross pressure see Vilas et al.).

Furthermore, to allude to yet another unsolved issues, little is known about the relation between collective identity and the idiosyncratic remake of this into someone's social identity. Swaab et al. (2008) suggest that there are two theoretically distinct pathways to the formation of a sense of shared identity. The classic perspective on shared identities is that they are inferred deductively from the broader social context within which the group members act. A shared identity can thus be deduced through recognition of superordinate similarities such as membership of the same organization or occupying the same 'place' in society. However, a sense of shared identity can also be induced by intragroup processes in which individuals get acquainted with one another on an interpersonal basis and form inductively a sense of shared identity. The authors show that both top-down and bottom-up processes lead to the formation of a sense of shared identity. The authors test their assumptions in the context of interaction within and between small groups, and we observed similar mechanisms at work within the much larger collectives that populate street demonstrations (Klandermans et al. 2014).

Finally, it might be of interest to examine these mechanisms in the context of contemporary collective identities created via Facebook, Whatsapp or other forms of social media. Digital networks strengthen collective identity because online anonymity and reduced social cues decrease perceived differences among members, fostering group's unity, identification and solidarity (e.g. Brunsting and Postmes 2002; Wojcieszak 2010). Social movement organizations, on the other hand, have the resources to shape collective identities for organizational recruits. Consequently, we found participants in a demonstration who deduced a collective identity in a top-down manner from their membership of an organization which staged the demonstration next to participants who induced a collective identity in a bottom-up manner from their interaction with like-minded people at the demonstration (Klandermans et al. 2014). Again, a whole lot of questions remain unanswered, for instance, what do these different mechanisms of identity construction mean for identity content?

Indeed, little is known about the dynamic processes of politicization of the collective identity and how this may change the content of the social identities. Just recently, Felicity Turner (2017) devoted a whole dissertation to this topic, and developed an innovative measure to assess changes in identity content due to politicization. We are confident that her research will yield results that will move the field forward, especially on the interlock between individual and context and dynamic changes over time.

Cognition

The political arena is a domain in which cognitions and the cognition formation are important phenomena. The social psychological study of how people make sense of the social world, or more precisely, of the way in which they interpret, analyze, store, and use information about the social and political world might shed light on how cognition and cognition formation are linked to collective action. Particularly, "because

social cognition emphasizes the cognitive processes that mediate between environmental stimuli and interpersonal responses and [...] links cognition to action” (Carlston 2001, p. 2). Take for example the previously described process of politicization of collective identity (Simon and Klandermans 2001). As mentioned, the process begins with the *awareness* of shared grievances. Next, an external enemy is *blamed* for the group’s predicament, and *claims* for compensation are leveled against this opponent. Group members’ *perception* that they share grievances is an important first step toward collective social and political action. These emphases make clear that there is an important *cognitive component* (in addition to a motivational and an emotional component) in how people react to their socio-political environment.

For more than two decades, social cognition and social psychology were almost synonyms, reflecting how the discipline was transformed by the cognitive revolution (Mischel 1998). The cognitive revolution has had a strong impact on political psychology as well (McGraw 2000). The cognitive approach in political psychology is characterized by the deceptively simple premise that information about the outside political world is organized in internal memory structures, and that these memory structures determine how people interpret and evaluate political events and make political decisions (McGraw 2000).

Despite the pervasive influence of cognition within social and political psychology, remarkable little is known about how cognition translates into collective action participation. Indeed, there is an abundance of cognitive approaches to voting behavior and leadership representation (see McGraw 2000 for an overview) but collective action participation got a raw deal. To be sure, people’s cognitions regarding their social environment were often—direct or indirect—subject of investigation of students of protest. Moral shocks (Jasper 1997), suddenly imposed grievances (Walsh 1981), frame alignment (Benford and Snow 2000), relative deprivation (Kawakami and Dion 1993), collective action frame (Gamson 1992), political knowledge (Verba et al. 1995) and justice judgments

(Tyler and Smith 1998), to only give a few examples, are all cognitive concepts shown to be related to engagement in collective action. However, *what* people know of social and political situations (the content) cannot be easily separated from *how* they process information (the cognitive process, Shweder and Bourne 1984). The processes of interpreting, analyzing, storing, and using information in the context of movement participation are understudied (but see Monsch 2014 on activists’ cognitions). Cognitive and social psychological information processing approaches, as we hope to be able to show, may introduce new methodologies and new theories to investigate information processing in the context of collective action participation.

Reality Construction

How do individuals make sense of their complex social environment? What are the underlying mechanisms that determine our understanding of the social world? And how does this understanding relate to action, specifically, collective action? Social cognition literature—the study of the cognitive processes that are involved when we think about the social world—attempts to answer these questions.

What kind of information do people pay attention to? When does political discourse raise enough above the abundance of messages for people to be noticed? Three broad types of information are identified that may be of special concern to people as they form opinions about their social and political environment: (1) the material interests that people see at stake, (2) the sympathies and resentments that people feel toward groups, and (3) commitment to the political principles that become entangled in public issues (Sears and Funk 1991; Taber 2003). Previous research also showed that attention is automatically allocated to negative information or information inconsistent with existing schemata (Stangor and Ruble 1989), unexpected events (Wyer and Srull 1986), or information that activates the (social) self (e.g. Bargh 1994). Moreover, people tend to base their inferences on

information from people they trust, interpersonal trust creates an information shortcut (Brewer and Steenbergen 2002).

So far these findings are not related to collective action participation. However, we may assume that individuals are more inclined to protest, if they receive information from a trustworthy source with unexpected negative consequences for their personal or social self. If social media has changed one thing profoundly, it is reality construction. Information search behavior has changed profoundly, as does the amount of information available and the algorithms that ‘steer’ the information that pops up on one’s screen. Take, for instance, the much debated ‘alternative facts’ and ‘fake news’ in the American presidential elections in 2016 and the first weeks of Trump’s term in office. It is too early for research into these new phenomena, but that’s just a matter of time.

Cognitive ability. Characterizing social cognition as learning what matters in the social world highlights the fact that social-cognitive principles exist because they are adaptive, even necessary, for human survival. They provide essential *benefits* to self-regulation and social regulation. But this is not the whole story. The principles come with *costs* by producing errors and biases in memory, judgments and decision-making (Higgins 2000). Taber (2003) relates these costs and benefits to information processing and political opinion and concludes that “there is little question that people use heuristics to simplify their information processing; there is considerable question that such short-cuts allow them to behave competently” (p. 459). Taber is one of those scholars who conclude that human beings are incapable of analytically interpreting, analyzing, storing, and using political information, and instead rely on a variety of heuristics, which reduce their competence. These scholars depart from the notion that people are cognitive misers.

Some other authors hold that people are very well capable of conducting political debates and employing political cognition. These authors reason that opinion formation is not only a

result of employing individual heuristics to interpret, store and remember social and political information, but that people are constantly and actively engaged in a complex and socially situated process of reality construction. Gamson (1992) is an example of the latter authors in the field of movement studies. He wonders how it is that so many people become active in social movements if people are so generally uninterested and badly informed about socio-political issues. Gamson designed a study to explore the construction of political understanding and how that may or may not support participation in collective action. He conceives of reality construction as a socially situated process therefore he collected data created in a socially situated setting: focus group discussions. He asked groups of friends and acquaintances to discuss such issues the Israeli-Arab conflict and affirmative action. One of his most interesting findings was that in these conversations people use any kind of information source available: newspapers, movies, advertisements, novels, rumors, their own and other experiences, and so on.

He claims that a mix of experiential knowledge, popular knowledge and media discourse develop into so-called collective action frames. In Gamson’s words (1992) a *collective action frame* is “a set of action-oriented beliefs and meanings that inspire and legitimate social movement activities and campaigns” (p. 7). They are comprised of three components, injustice, agency, and identity. The *injustice* component refers to moral indignation. It is not just a cognitive judgment, but also one that is laden with emotion (i.e. a hot cognition). The *agency* component refers to the awareness that it is possible to alter conditions or policies through collective action. The *identity* component refers to the process of defining a “we” and some “they” that have opposing interests and values. Combination of the datasets revealed that media discourse provides information about who is to be blamed for the situation. Experiential knowledge helped to connect the abstract cognition of unfairness with the emotion of moral indignation.

Cognition: Where Do We Stand and How to Proceed

Gamson has pioneered new approaches to the study of political understanding, developing new conceptual and methodological tools for thinking about how groups actually formulate political understandings. Instead of treating media content as a stimulus that leads to some change in attitude or cognition, it is treated as an important tool or resource that people in conversation have available, next to popular wisdom, and experiential knowledge. Gamson emphasizes both individual and social aspects of cognition in relation to collective action. However, this study mainly takes the *content*, in other words what people know about their social reality, as its starting point. Which leaves a lot of questions addressing the cognitive *process* in relation to collective action unanswered. These cognitive processes and how they relate to collective action participation are understudied.

The traditional *information-processing* approach focused on the individual, assuming that cognition was something that concerns the individual brain. However, it is more and more recognized that cognition forms within social groups, rather than individual brains (e.g. Gamson 1992; Smith and DeCoster 2000; Taber 2003). Indeed, people acquire “shared cognitions”. How do people come to share information, who do they trust as a source of information and who not? Individual members of a collectivity incorporate a smaller or larger proportion of the views supported by “their” organization; but there is an abundance of frames in our social and political environment, so why would people adopt certain frames while neglecting or paying less attention to others? And what role do contemporary social media play in this complex field of information reality construction? The challenge for collective action scholars will be to account for the social influence on individual cognition formation. Indeed, as the cognitive approach rests on methodological individualism (Fiske et al. 1998), it ignores the fact that many psychological processes are the result of social processes. Social networks, for example,

intervene by shaping the individual preferences or perceptions that form the decision making process and bring potential activists to collective action (Monsch 2014; Passy 2003). Moreover, social comparison theory tells us that “an opinion, a belief, an attitude is ‘correct’, ‘valid’, and ‘proper’ to the extent that it is anchored in a group of people with similar beliefs, opinions, and attitudes” (Festinger 1950, p. 272). In addition, social identification processes underlie the general finding that persuasive messages from ingroup sources are more effective than messages from an outgroup source (Brewer and Silver 2000). There also appears to be a clear link between the development of shared cognition and shared identity in that a social identity can be both the product of, and precursor to, the development of shared cognition (Swaab et al. 2007). Indeed, socially structured cognition is a new and inviting field in relation to collective action, which is a social phenomenon by nature.

Emotions

Politics—and especially politics of protest—are full of emotions. People are *fearful* about terrorism, *angry* about proposed budget cuts, *shocked* about senseless violence, and *proud* about their national identity. Clearly, there is an emotional component in how people react to their social and political environment. Yet, amazingly little is known about how emotions exactly influence movement participation. In collective action research emotions are a novice with a long history. In the first half of the previous century, emotions were at the centre of collective action studies. Collective action was seen as an irrational response to discontent and emotions were equated with irrationality. As a reaction to these approaches, the dominant academic analyses on collective action participation shifted to rationalistic, structural and organizational explanations. Such phenomena as moral shocks (Jasper 1997) or suddenly imposed grievances (Walsh 1981) were primarily approached from a cognitive point of view whereas few researchers paid attention to the complex

emotional processes that channel fear and anger into moral indignation and political activity. Frame alignment is yet another example of an approach that deals entirely with the cognitive components (but for an exception see Robnett 2004; Schrock et al. 2004). As a result, emotions as they accompany protest were neglected altogether. The rational trend has now been reversed and we see emotions back on the research agenda of collective action scholars (Goodwin et al. 2001, 2004; Jasper 1997, 1998; Van Troost et al. 2013; van Zomeren et al. 2004).

To understand engagement in collective action, one must understand emotions—what they are, how they work, and how they interact with motivation, identification and cognition. Over the past several decades, emotions have become an important topic for research in social psychology. Some of this research concerns the nature of emotion itself: types of emotions, their causes, and their properties. Other research concerns how emotions influence social phenomena: their effects on thought and behavior, their social functions.

The purpose of this section is to provide some background for the study of emotion and its importance in collective action. We will explain why emotions and protest are inextricable phenomena and summarize social psychological emotion theories and research on emotions that—in our view—might be of help by explaining protest behavior, and describe some exemplary studies of the influence of emotions on the dynamics of protest.

Emotions and Protest

Emotions permeate protest at all stages: recruitment, sustained participation and dropping out (Jasper 1998). Goodwin et al. (2001, p. 13) argue that “emotions are socially constructed, but that “some emotions are more [socially] constructed than others, involving more cognitive processes”. In their view, emotions that are politically relevant are more than other emotions at the social construction end of the scale. For these emotions, cultural and historical factors play an important

role in the interpretation (i.e. perception) of the state of affairs by which they are generated. Emotions, these authors hold, are important in the growth and unfolding of social movement and political protest. Obviously, emotions can be manipulated. Activists work hard to create moral outrage and anger and to provide a target against which these can be vented. They must weave together a moral, cognitive, and emotional package of attitudes. Also in the ongoing activities of the movements do emotions play an important role (Jasper 1997, 1998). People might be puzzled by some aspects of reality and try to understand what is going on (Marcus 2010). They may look for others with similar experiences and a social movement may provide an environment to exchange experiences, to tell their stories and to express their feelings.

Social Psychological Perspectives on Emotion

The study of emotions has become a popular research area in social psychology. Such was not always the case. As rational approaches were the state of the art, emotions were often regarded as some peripheral “error term” in motivational theories. But emotion states and their influence on motivation were not about to be so easily explained away. Indeed, emotions have the power to override even the most rational decisions.

Marcus and colleagues translated this line of thought into political psychology with the theory of affective intelligence that describes the role of emotions in the making of political judgments (Marcus et al. 2000; Marcus 2010). They believe that emotional responses to political candidates cannot be modeled simply by attaching an affective tag to cognition, they assume that emotions are the result of a dual process: a behavioral inhibition system (i.e. a surveillance system) and a behavioral approach system (i.e. a dispositional system, Marcus and MacKuen 1993).

The theory of affective intelligence adopts a dynamic view of judgment and, further, argues

that anxiety is the particular emotion that shifts people from one mode of judgment to the other (and back). When anxiety is low, the disposition system allows people to rely on existing “heuristics” or “predispositions” because low anxiety signals that the environment is safe, familiar, and predictable. On the other hand, when anxiety is high—signaling that the environment is in some fashion uncertain and unsettling—reliance on prior learning with its presumption of predictable continuity would not be a strategically sound course. In such situations, it would likely be potentially dangerous to ignore contemporary information and to rely thoughtlessly on preexisting courses of action. The surveillance system pushes people to eschew reliance on existing predispositions, turn to consideration of contemporary information, and make a judgment.

Marcus et al. (2000) tested these assumptions using evaluation of political candidates and National Election Studies data. Political candidates generate emotions, and in conditions where anxiety is generated, learning is enhanced. Enthusiasm, on the other hand, does not lead to greater learning or make individuals more careful in processing information. The authors did find, however, that enthusiasm led to greater campaign involvement. It would be worthwhile to investigate under what conditions anxiety or enthusiasm lead to collective action participation. Indeed, this dual system of emotion approach suggest a more complex set of relationships, with different emotion systems having different impacts not only on the expression of feelings but on various aspects of cognition and behavior (Marcus 2003).

People are continuously evaluating or “appraising” the relevance of their environment for their well being and appraisals help account for different emotions (Arnold 1960). Lazarus proposed the distinction between “primary appraisal” of an event’s implications for one’s well-being and “secondary appraisal” of one’s ability to cope with the situation (Lazarus 1966). After a fast and automatic evaluation of the first two appraisal dimensions that establishes the

impact of the event on the person’s general well being, the other appraisal dimensions are evaluated: How does the event influence my goals? Who or what caused the event? Do I have control and power over the consequences of the event? Are the consequences of the event compatible with my personal values and (societal) norms? Two persons can thus appraise the same event differently and have different emotional responses.

A growing body of appraisal theories of emotions has emerged, each specifying a set of appraisal dimensions in an attempt to better predict the elicitation and differentiation of emotions see (Roseman et al. 1996) for a theoretical overview and integration). Nerb and Spada (2001) conducted three experimental studies to investigate the relation between the cognitive appraisal of environmental problems, the development of distinct emotions (anger and sadness), and the resulting action tendencies. The participants in their studies read a fictitious but realistic newspaper report about an environmental problem (a tanker running aground in a severe storm and spilling oil into the North Sea). Different experimental conditions were realized: (a) the tanker did not fulfill the safety guidelines; the damage could have been avoided (high controllability); (b) the tanker did fulfill the safety guidelines; the damage could not have been avoided (low controllability). It turned out that the more controllable the event the more angry people were and, important for our discussion, the more willing to participate in a boycott. However, if the participants were to believe that the damage could not have been avoided, they were sad, which did not translate into action preparedness.

Van Zomeren et al. (2004) also took appraisal theory of emotion as their point of departure. Lazarus (2006) makes a distinction between problem-focused and emotion-focused coping. According to Lazarus (2006, p. 48) a person engages in problem-focused coping when he “obtains information on which to act and mobilizes actions for the purpose of changing the reality”, while “the emotion-focused function is

aimed at regulating the emotions tied to the situation.” Van Zomeren and colleagues show that people taking the instrumental pathway to collective action engage in problem-focused coping, while those taking the so-called group-based anger pathway engage in emotion-focused coping. In addition to emotional coping (i.e. emotion regulation) we emphasize another function in our work for how emotions impact on protest behavior. We hold that emotions function as *accelerators or amplifiers*. Accelerators make something move faster, and amplifiers make something sound louder. In the world of protest *accelerating* means that due to emotions motives to enter, stay or leave a social movement translate into action faster, while amplifying means that these motives are stronger.

Appraisal theory was developed to explain personal emotions experienced by individuals. Yet, “the self” implicated in emotion-relevant appraisals is clearly not only a personal or individual self. If group membership becomes part of the self, events that harm or favor an in-group by definition harm or favor the self, and the self might thus experience affect and emotions on behalf of the in-group. With such considerations in mind Smith (1993) developed a model of intergroup emotions that was predicated on social identification with the group. Since collective action is by definition a group phenomenon and group identification appears to be an important factor in determining collective action we will elaborate on the possible implications of group-based emotions on protest behavior.

The main postulate of intergroup emotion theory (as spelled out by Smith 1993) is that when a social identity is salient, situations are appraised in terms of their consequences for the in-group, eliciting specific intergroup emotions and behavioral intentions. In three studies Mackie et al. (2000) tested this idea. Participants’ group memberships were made salient and the collective support apparently enjoyed by the ingroup was measured or manipulated. The authors then measured anger and fear, anger and contempt, as well as the desire to move against or

away from the out-group. Participants who perceived the in-group as strong were more likely to experience anger toward the outgroup and to desire to take action against it. Participants who perceived the ingroup as weak on the other hand, were more likely to experience fear and to move away from the outgroup. The effects of perceived ingroup strength on offensive action tendencies were mediated by anger. Results confirm that when a social identity is salient, appraisals of events in terms of consequences for the salient ingroup lead to specific emotional responses and action tendencies towards the outgroup.

These studies suggest that the same emotion processes (i.e. appraisals, emotions and action tendencies) operating at the individual level and in interpersonal situations operate in intergroup situations. Moreover, people do experience emotions on behalf of their group membership. Since intergroup emotion theory is based on the presumption that the group is incorporated in the self (“the group is in me”, thus “I feel for us”) one would assume that the more the group is in me (i.e. the higher the group identification) the more people experience group-based emotions. Yzerbyt et al. (2003) showed that indeed emotional reactions fully mediated the impact of categorization context and identification on action tendencies. In other words, the salience of similarity was found to generate angry feelings among participants only to the extent that they strongly identified with the relevant category. Thus people will experience group-based emotions when the social category is salient *and* they identify with the group at stake (van Stekelenburg and Klandermans 2014).

Emotions: Where Do We Stand and How to Proceed

This brief overview suffices to demonstrate that emotions matter. They warn people of threats and challenges and propel (collective) behavior. Indeed, demands for change begin with discontent. Moreover, affective measures, such as affective commitment (Ellemers 1993) and

affective injustice (Smith and Ortiz 2002; van Zomeren et al. 2008) have the largest impact on someone's (collective) behavior. As mentioned previously, phenomena such as moral shocks (Jasper 1997) or suddenly imposed grievances (Walsh 1981) are primarily approached from a cognitive point of view. Indeed, few researchers have paid attention to the complex emotional processes that channel fear and anger into moral indignation and political activity.

In closing this section we want to allude a potentially interesting direction research is taking. Rahn (2004) has argued that people also experience mood as a result of group-membership. This so-called public mood "provides feedback to people about how the group (i.e., the political community) is faring". Research has demonstrated that people in a positive mood display more self-efficacy, are more optimistic, and show more associative cognitive processes, while a negative mood, on the other hand, is related to higher risk perception, pessimism, and more rule-based cognitive processes (Forgas 2001). In other words, the "emotional barometer" in a country might trigger different (risk) perceptions, cognitive styles and emotions. This suggests that public mood might influence the claims social movement organizations make, the way problems are framed, the emotions that are experienced and the motivations to participate in collective action.

Motivation

Motivation brings us to the *why* of participation. Motivation is the desire to achieve a goal, combined with the energy to work towards that goal. In the former sections we discussed instrumental motivations, identity and, and emotions. In this section we discuss approaches which combine these concepts into dual pathway models (see Klandermans et al. 2008 for empirical evidence combining these explanations; van Stekelenburg and Klandermans 2013 for a theoretical overview; and van Zomeren et al. 2008 for a meta-analytical overview).

Motivational Configurations

Gradually, social psychologists have explored more and more motives that stimulate people to engage in collective action. Initially the focus was on the perceived costs and benefits of participation. Indeed, it was demonstrated that instrumental reasoning controlled people's participation in collective action (Klandermans 1984). Participation was seen as an opportunity to change a state of affairs at affordable costs. It also became clear, however, that instrumental reasoning is certainly not a sufficient reason to participate in collective action. Gradually, the significance of collective identity as a protest participation motive was emphasized (De Weerd and Klandermans 1999; Kelly and Breinlinger 1996; Simon et al. 1998; Stryker et al. 2000). Lately, we see a growing interest in how emotions fuel protest participation (see Jasper 1997; 1998; Goodwin et al. 2001; van Zomeren et al. 2004). Each approach gives a different answer to the question of why people participate in protest campaigns, namely, people participate: (a) because they see it as an opportunity to change, at affordable costs, a state of affairs with which they are unhappy; (b) because they identify with the others involved; and (c) because they want to express their anger towards a target that has violated their values (Klandermans et al. 2004).

Simon et al. (1998) were the first to propose a *dual path model* to collective action participation. They distinguished between an instrumental pathway, guided by calculative reasoning that concentrates on the costs and benefits of participation and an identity pathway guided by processes of identification. The calculation pathway is represented by Klandermans' (1984) instrumental model. Identity is elaborated in the context of social identity theory and is conceived in terms of Tajfel's (1978: 63) definition of social identity: that is, the cognitive importance of the membership, the personal evaluation of the membership, and the emotional significance (Stürmer et al. 2003). Two levels of identification were measured. The first concerned the broader social category from which a social movement typically recruits its supporters, the second the

specific social movement organizations themselves. It was expected that identification with the social movement organization would be a better predictor than identification with the broader social category.

In a series of studies exploring participation motives for various movements, Simon and his collaborators find empirical support for their concept of a dual pathway to social movement participation (for an overview see Simon 2004; Stürmer and Simon 2004a). Be it in their previously mentioned studies of identification with the Fat Acceptance Movement (Stürmer et al. 2003), the older people's movement or the gay movement (Simon et al. 1998), both calculation and identification made unique contributions to the prediction of willingness to participate. Rather than replacing instrumentality as an explanatory paradigm, identity added to the explanation as a second pathway. The studies clearly confirmed the hypothesized role of both instrumental and identity motives (Simon et al. 1998).

Interestingly, the notion of a dual pathway was also proposed by van Zomeren et al. (2004) in their approach to collective action participation. These authors propose instrumentality and group-based anger as two pathways to protest participation. Central in their model are so called group-based appraisals. On the instrumental pathway *group efficacy* and *action support* play a central role. Group efficacy is the belief that group-related problems can be solved by collective efforts. When people take the instrumental path to political protest, they participate "for the purpose of changing reality" (Lazarus 2006: 48). Collective action is seen as an instrumental strategy to improve the situation of the group. Action support implies the perceived willingness of other group members to engage in collective action. That increases a sense of efficacy.

In the group-based anger pathway *unfairness* and *social opinion support* play a central role. In line with social psychological grievance literature, van Zomeren et al. hold that it are more often procedures deemed unfair, than outcomes deemed unfair that upset people. In addition to

perceived procedural unfairness, social opinion support is proposed as a mechanism that helps to define the experienced unfairness as shared. Social opinion support refers to the perception that fellow group members share the experienced unfairness. Appraisals such as unfairness and social opinion support are believed to promote collective action because they evoke emotions such as anger. Action participation allows people to regulate their emotions through action, which makes participating in collective action with a group-based anger motive a goal in itself.

In our own work we combined instrumental, identity, and expressive motives with emotions. Thereto we integrated the three pathways that were accepted by social psychologists those days (instrumentality, identity and emotions) into one single model. Moreover, we extended the model by adding an expressive pathway. This pathway refers to a longstanding theme in the social movement literature and to a recent development. In classic studies of social movements the distinction was made between instrumental and expressive movements or protest (cf. Gusfield 1963; Searles and Allen Williams 1962). In those days, instrumental movements were seen as movements that aimed at some external goal, for example, the implementation of citizenship rights. Expressive movements, on the other hand, were seen as a goal in and of itself, for example, the expression of anger in response to experienced injustice. Movement scholars felt increasingly uncomfortable with the distinction, because it was thought that most movements had both instrumental and expressive aspects and that the emphasis on the two could change over time. Therefore, the distinction lost its use.

Expressive motivation refers to people's values and the assessment that these values have been violated (Kutlaca et al. 2017; Van Stekelenburg et al. 2009). A fundamental assumption on which this motivation relies is that people's willingness to participate in political protest depends to a significant extent on their perception of a state of affairs as illegitimate (see van Zomeren et al. 2004), in the sense that it goes against fundamental values. An individual's personal set of values is

believed to strongly influence how, for example, a proposed policy, its ends and means, is perceived and evaluated. Values are matters about which people have strong feelings. They defend them and react strongly when their values are challenged (Feather and Newton 1982). Indeed, “values are standards employed to tell us which beliefs, attitudes, values, and actions of others are worth challenging, protesting, and arguing about, or worth trying to influence or change” (Rokeach 1973: 13). Participating in collective action is one of the possible reactions to a perceived violation of one’s values.

The model we developed assigns a central, integrating role to processes of identification (van Stekelenburg and Klandermans 2014; Van Stekelenburg et al. 2009; Van Stekelenburg et al. 2011). In order to develop the shared grievances and shared emotions a shared identity is needed (Fig. 2).

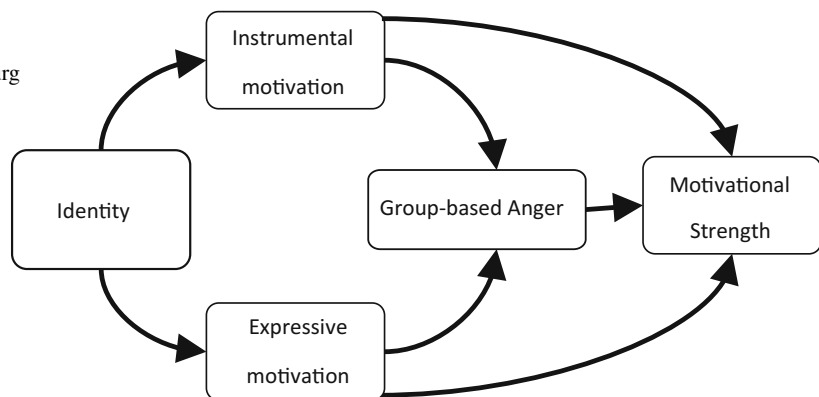
The dependent variable of the model (*the strength of the motivation to participate in protest*) results from emotions and grievances shared with a group that the individual participants identify with. The more people feel that interests of the group and/or principles that the group values are threatened, the angrier they feel and the more they are motivated to take part in protest to protect their interests and/or to express their indignation. The model reveals that people participate in protest because they see it as an opportunity to change a state of affairs they are unhappy with at affordable costs (*instrumental*

route), or because they identify with the others involved (*identification route*), or because they want to express their values and their anger with a target that violated their values (*expressive route*).

Motivations and Freeriders

In the beginning of this chapter, we discussed Klandermans’ social psychological expansion of resource mobilization theory, and within that context we referred to the debate about the free rider dilemma. Having discussed now the three other routes to participation we are in a position to reconcile the free rider debate. Within the instrumentality framework there are two ways to overcome the dilemma—selective incentives and optimistic but not too optimistic expectations about the behavior of others. The identity, expressive, and emotion framework implies additional ways to overcome the free riders dilemma. In all three frameworks the working of inner drives functions to neutralize the dilemma. In the case of identity, identification with others involved generates a felt inner obligation to behave as a ‘good’ group member (Stürmer et al. 2003). These authors show that, when self-definition changes from personal to social identity, the group norm of participation becomes salient; the more one identifies with the group, the more weight this group norm will carry and the more it will result in an “inner obligation” to

Fig. 2 Integrative model accounting for protest motivation (Van Stekelenburg et al. 2009, 2011)



participate on behalf of the group. expressive motives create a sense of inner *moral* obligation for reasons of moral integrity maintenance (Van Stekelenburg 2013b). Maintaining one's moral integrity incites an inner moral obligation to oneself, as compared to an inner social obligation to other group members incited by group identification. Group-based anger, finally, points to emotion regulation or catharsis as yet another mechanism to overcome free riding. After all, "the emotion-focused coping function is aimed at regulating the emotions tied to the situation" (Lazarus 2006: 48), and one way to regulate these personally experienced emotions is to participate in collective action. Therefore emotional-focused coping makes free riding less likely, because one might take a free ride on the production of a *collective* good, but one cannot take a free ride on regulating one's own *personal* emotions. The free rider literature tends to focus on external pull factors, such as goal achievement and selective benefits, but neglects the internal factors that push individuals toward participation.

Motivation: Where Do We Stand and How to Proceed

Research of the last three decennia has taught us a lot about the working of motivation. It showed that people have several motives to take part in collective action. It started of with instrumental motives followed by identity motives. Recently emotion regulation and expressive motives are added as reasons to take part.

The importance of these concepts in explaining protest participation is also demonstrated in a meta-analysis. Van Zomeren et al. (2008) conducted a meta-analysis of 172 independent studies. Three areas of subjective perception are deduced from the social psychological literature on protest: perceived injustice, perceived efficacy, and a sense of social identity. At least three important conclusions can be drawn from this meta-analysis. First of all; a sense of injustice,

efficacy and identity each has an independent, unique effect on collective action. Second, politicized measures of identity resulted in stronger effect sizes than non-politicized measures (cf. Simon and Klandermans 2001; Stürmer and Simon 2004a). The third conclusion is that the affective component of injustice is more predictive of collective action than the cognitive component of injustice. This relates to another important development in the social psychological injustice and relative deprivation literature that shows exactly the same, namely, that emotions play a crucial role in predicting collective action participation.

However, the current social psychological literature on protest participation has not elaborated on which of the participation motives proposed so far will prevail for whom, when, and why. In other words, for whom will what pathway to collective action prevail, and why? Why are people attracted to one social movement organization rather than another? Why are some people inclined to take the instrumental path whereas others take the expressive path? More generally, the combined working of the motives to participate is far from clear, let alone the way the motivational configuration might differ for different movements, in different contexts, or at different times (but see e.g. Gómez-Roman et al. 2017; van Stekelenburg and Klandermans 2014; Van Stekelenburg et al. 2011; Vilas et al.).

We also have pointed to the role of inner felt obligations. The social psychological importance of inner obligations is that one cannot take a free ride on inner felt obligations. This makes them important in the process of mobilization. But how such inner felt obligations are generated and how the various inner drives differ in their working or how they interact is not clear. Let alone, how they interact with group identification and consciousness-raising.

Instead of focusing on people who *are* motivated to participate, we might also learn a lot from people who do *not* participate (Klandermans and van Stekelenburg 2015). Does the motivational constellation of non-participants

differ from participants? And how about cognitions and experienced emotions? Is the identity content of participants different from those who do not participate? All this kind of questions are interesting and can learn us a lot about why (or why not) people take onto the streets (Khalil, van Stekelenburg and Klandermans).

Van Zomeren (2015) proposes to reconceptualize collective action as social interaction that regulates social relationships (i.e., which relationships are individuals regulating, and how?). He argues that this facilitates an integrative understanding of the different motivational profiles for activists and non-activists, and developed a new *relational hypothesis* about how non-activists become activists (namely through two specific changes in relational models with one's ingroup and outgroup, authority, or system, in response to taboo violations in social interaction). These promising ideas are just waiting to be tested.

We close this section on motivational constellations with consensual issues. Consensual issues root in suddenly imposed grievances which evoke a communal sense of repulsion and indignation. Examples in place are the death of a child caused by drunk driving (McCarthy and Wolfson 1996) or senseless violence (Lodewijkx et al. 2008; Walgrave and Manssens 2000). Such tragic events put consensual issues crude on top of public and political agendas, and discussions easily converge on a general standpoint. Who, after all, can be against safe traffic or safe societies? This raises the question why people would participate in so-called silent marches (for instance following incidents of senseless violence). Findings indicate dual pathways to such marches, all associated with reactive, angry empathic concerns (Lodewijkx et al. 2008). These angry empathic concerns, on their turn influence other-directed expressive motivation through (re-) establishing the belief in a just-world, or through more fearful, self-directed moral cleansing reactions. This notion of self-directed and other-directed motivation is very interesting, and might also apply to solidarity protests (Klandermans et al. 2015; Stewart et al. 2016; Subasiç et al. 2008).

Consciousness: The Interlock Between Individual and Context

We proposed that the social psychological concepts identification, emotions, cognitions and motivation mediate between two collective phenomena: collective identity and collective action. Social psychological research reveals that at least the combination of identity/emotions, identity/cognitions and cognitions/emotions work together to motivate collective action. But how do these concepts act together in concert such that they all create a nutritious breeding ground for motivation to engage in collective action? In other words, how do group affiliation, the meaning and related feelings that individuals give to a social situation become a shared definition implying collective action?

Following for example Gamson (1992), Foster and Matheson (1999), Duncan (1999) and Mansbridge and Morris (2001) we propose *consciousness* as a concept that connects individual and collective processes so that individual processes as identification, cognition and emotion all synthesize into a motivational constellation preparing people for action.¹ Political consciousness generally represents a shift from a victim perspective, through which people accept their status, to a sense of discontent and withdrawal of legitimacy from the present social or political situation. Consciousness is defined as politicized identification—that is an identification with a category coupled with a collective political ideology around issues concerning that category (Duncan 1999).

Meaning structures at the individual level can be investigated with concepts such as *heuristics*, *prototype*, *scripts* or *event schemas* and (*justice*) schemata and the meaning structures of the

¹The concept of consciousness is related to Tajfel's (1978) concept of *social change orientation* (solving group problems through group actions), in that it indicates the process of investing the self in the group and can be understood as a form of collective identity that underlies group members' explicit motivations to engage in such a power struggle. The same process is recently referred to as politicized collective identity (Simon & Klandermans, 2001). And cognitive liberation (McAdam 1982).

collective level can be examined with concepts such as beliefs, symbols, ideologies and rituals. Of course, we can learn something of value from work that focuses on a single level, but “neither is adequate by itself if we want to understand the kind of political consciousness that affects people’s willingness to be quiescent or to engage in collective action” (Morris 1992: 65). Taken alone, both the individual level approaches and the collective level approaches seem incomplete. As Gamson (1992: 67) puts it: “students of social movements need a social psychology that treats consciousness as the interplay between two levels—between individuals who operate actively in the construction of meaning and socio-cultural processes that offer meanings that are frequently contested”. He argues that the concept of *framing* offers the most useful way of bridging these levels of analysis (Benford and Snow 2000; Gamson 1992; Hercus 1999; Snow and Benford 1992).

Consciousness-Raising and Social Embeddedness

Consciousness-raising takes place within social networks. It is within these networks that individual processes as grievance formation, strengthening of efficacy, identification and group-based emotions all synthesize into a motivational constellation preparing people for action. Social networks function as communication channels, discursive processes take place to form consensus that makes up the symbolic resources in collective sense-making (Gamson 1992; Klandermans 1988). Moreover, people are informed of upcoming events and social capital as trust and loyalty accumulate in networks to provide individuals with the resources needed to invest in protest (Klandermans et al. 2008). Social embeddedness—the quantity and types of relationships with others—can have a form of formal relationships as in party membership or being a member of the labour union (cf. Klandermans et al. 2008), informal relationships, such as friends, family colleagues, and virtual

relationships such as active participation in blogs, social media etc. (Van Stekelenburg and Boekkooi 2013). The internet has created an additional public sphere; people are nowadays embedded in *virtual* networks in addition to formal and informal *physical* networks.

Social embeddedness plays a pivotal role in the context of contention, but why? The effect of interaction in networks on the propensity to participate in politics is contingent on the amount of political discussion that occurs in social networks and the information that people are able to gather about politics as a result (McClurg 2003). Klandermans et al. (2008) provide evidence for such mechanisms: immigrants who felt efficacious were more likely to participate in protest provided that they were embedded in social networks, especially ethnic networks, which offer an opportunity to discuss and learn about politics. Networks provide space for the creation and dissemination of discourse critical of authorities, and provide a way for active opposition to these authorities to grow (Paxton 2002). In other words, this is where people talk politics and thus where the factuality of the sociopolitical world is constructed and people are mobilized for protest. Being integrated in a network increases the chances that one will be targeted with a mobilizing message and that people are kept to their promises to participate (Klandermans and Oegema 1987). For example, people with friends or acquaintances that are already active within social movements are more likely to take part in movement actions than others (Gould 1993; Klandermans 1997).

Consciousness: Where Do We Stand and How to Proceed

Although Gurin came up with the concept of consciousness as an important prerequisite of collective action three decennia ago, not much collective action researchers took up this idea (for exceptions see Duncan 1999; Gamson 1992; Morris 1992). A focus on consciousness might shed a light on what connects cognitions,

emotions and motivation. Indeed, the politicization of both individual social and collective identities can be seen as a spiral process of consciousness raising by interpretation and reinterpretation in which cognitions and emotions all will act in concert to reinterpret social and political situations aimed at redressing a perceived social or political injustice. Hence, the politicisation of both collective and individual identities can be seen as a dynamic interwoven process in which the individual-based consciousness described by Gamson (1992) interacts with the more collectively-based consciousness mentioned by Morris (1992).

Should I Stay or Should I Go

Most research on protest concerns a comparison of participants and non-participants in a specific instance of participation at a specific point in time—be it a demonstration, a boycott, a sit in, a rally, or a petition. In terms of our typology of forms of participation this concerns short term, most of the time low risk or little effort participation, sometimes high risk or effort. We argued that such short-term activities have different motivational dynamics than sustained participation.

Sustained participation is absent in the social movement literature. Surprisingly, because long-term participants keep the movement going. A movement has only a limited number of core activists. For example, 5–10% of the membership of the Dutch labor unions are core activists. Empirical evidence suggests that most core activists are perfectly aware of the fact that they are giving 90 per cent or more of the movement's supporters a free ride, but do not care. On the contrary, this is what seems to motivate them to take the job (Oliver 1984). They are the true believers who care so much for the movement's cause that they are prepared to make that effort knowing that most others will not. Indeed, for 29% of the core activists within Dutch unions this was the single most important motivation for their sustained participation.

The Dynamics of Sustained Participation

Activism frequently persists despite pessimism regarding the action's ostensible goals (Louis 2009). Why do people continue participating in movements even if it does not effectuate their claims? Drury and Reicher (2009) suggests that participation generates a 'positive social-psychological transformation'. They argue that participation strengthens identification and induces collective empowerment. The emergence of an inclusive self-categorization as 'oppositional' leads to feelings of unity and expectations of support. This *empowers* people to oppose authorities. Such action creates *collective self-objectification*: defines the participant's identity opposite the dominant outgroup (Drury and Reicher 2009). Protest participation strengthens empowerment and politicization, paving the path to sustained participation. Sustained participation need not necessarily take the form of the same activity all the time. People often go from one activity to another sometimes from one movement to another and in so doing build activist careers.

Paths to sustained participation vary. *Biographical continuity* describes a life history whereby participation appears as the logical result of political socialization from someone's youth onwards, as a right-wing extremist who is raised in a xenophobic milieu (Roth 2003). *Conversion*, on the other hand, implies a break with the past, for instance after someone is fired, s/he decides to join a populist right organization. Critical events are supposed to play a crucial role in both situations. In the context of biographical continuity the event means the last push or pull in a direction in which the person is already going, whereas in the context of conversion the event means an experience that marks a change of mind. Obviously, such conversion does not come out of the blue. It is rooted in a growing dissatisfaction with life as it is. The critical event is the last push toward change. Teske (1997) describes the example of a journalist who ends

up in front of the gate of a nuclear weapons plant and whose experience with the authorities' suppressive response to that demonstration turns him into an activist. The story of this journalist made clear the importance of path-dependency—on the one hand it was no accident that he ended up at that gate, but on the other hand had the demonstration not taken that dramatic turn it would not have had this impact on his life.

Becoming a long term activist is to a large extent a matter of biographical availability. After all sustained participation requires discretionary time for an extended period. The concept of biographical availability was proposed by McAdam in his study of participation in the Mississippi Freedom Summer. This project was a campaign launched in June 1964 to attempt to register as many African American voters as possible in Mississippi which had historically excluded most blacks from voting. Well over 1000 students mostly from universities as Yale and Stanford participated in this project. McAdam shows that college students are uniquely free of life-course impediments to activism, the Freedom Summer applicants were freer still. And the actual volunteers were the freest of all (Goldstone and McAdam 2001). Indeed, participants in the Mississippi Freedom Summer Campaign were students who were biographically available.

The Dynamics of Disengagement

The dynamics of sustained participation in social movements have a clear counterpart, namely, the dynamics of disengagement. Why do people defect the movement they have worked for so very hard? Surprisingly little attention has been given to that question. Compared to the abundant literature on why people join movements, literature on why they exit is almost nonexistent. Guiding principle of our discussion of disengagement is the following simple model (Fig. 3).

Insufficient gratification in combination with declining commitment produces a growing intention to leave. Eventually, some critical event tips the balance and makes the person quit.

Obviously, the event itself only triggers the final step. Against that background its impact may be overestimated. After all, it was the decline in gratification and commitment that causes defection; the critical event only precipitated matters.

Insufficient Gratification

In the previous sections we distinguished three fundamental motives to participate: instrumental, identification and expressive motives. Social movements may provide the opportunity to fulfill these motives and the better they do, the more movement participation turns into a satisfying experience. However, movements may also fall short on each of these motives. Most likely it is for movements to fall short in terms of instrumentality. Although it is difficult to assess the effectiveness of social movements, it is obvious that for many a movement goal is never reached. Opp (1988) has argued that indeed people are very well aware of the fact that movement goals are not always easy to achieve, but that they reason that nothing happens in any event if nobody participates. Yet, sooner or later some success must be achieved for the instrumental motivation to continue to fuel participation. In addition to not being achieved, movement goals may lose their attraction to people. They may lose their urgency and end lower at the societal agenda. Finally, the individual costs or risks of participation may be too high compared to the attraction of the movement's goals. Repression adds to the costs and might make participation too costly for people (Tilly 1978).

Movements offer the opportunity to act on behalf of one's group. This is the most attractive if people identify strongly with their group. But the composition of a movement may change—for instance from self-help groups around battered women to radical feminist-ideology groups—and as a consequence people may feel less akin to the others in the movement (Whittier 1997). Schisms are another reason why movements fail to satisfy identity motives. Sani and Reicher (1998) demonstrate that schisms result from fights over the core identity of a

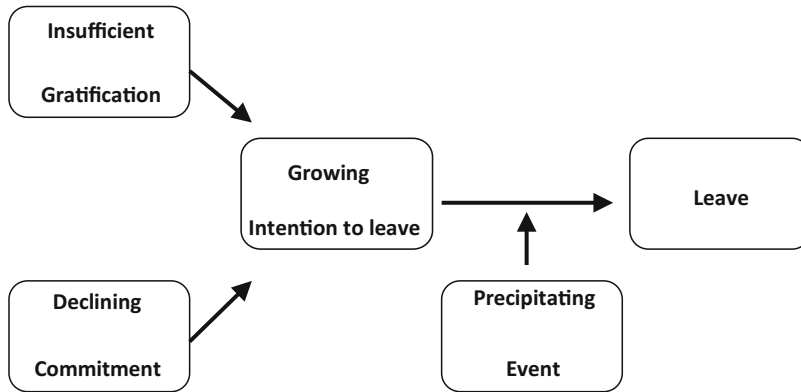


Fig. 3 The dynamics of disengagement (Klandermans 1997)

movement and that exiters no longer feel that they can identify with the movement. Finally, people occupy a variety of positions in society, and consequently identify with a variety of collectives. A change in context may make the one collective identity more and the others less salient and, therefore identification with a movement may wither. For example, in our study of farmers' protest in the Netherlands and Spain, Klandermans et al. (2002) observed that in Spain during a campaign for local and provincial elections the identification with other farmers declined. In the rural areas of Basque country, the farmers identity is a highly salient identity, however, in times of elections, the most important politicized identities in Spain—Partido Popular and PSOE—suppresses the farmers identity.

Social movements provide the opportunity to express one's views. This is not to say that they are always equally successful in that regard. Obviously, there is not always full synchrony between a movement's ideology and a person's beliefs. Indeed, many a movement organization ends in fights between ideological factions and schisms and defection as a consequence (Gamson 1975).

Declining Commitment

Movement commitment does not last by itself. It must be maintained via interaction with the movement and any measure that makes that

interaction less gratifying helps to undermine commitment. Downton and Wehr (1997) discuss mechanisms of social bonding which movements apply to maintain commitment. Leadership, ideology, organization, rituals, and social relations, which make up a social network each contribute to sustaining commitment and the most effective is, of course, a combination of all five. Although not all of them are equally well researched, each of these five mechanisms is known from movement literature as factors which foster people's attachment to movements. For example, it is known from research on union participation that involving members in decision-making processes increases commitment to a union (Klandermans 1992). Taylor and Whittier (1995) demonstrated how rituals in lesbian movement groups strengthen the membership's bond to the movement. Movement organizations have developed all kind of services for their members to make membership more attractive. Selective incentives may seldom be sufficient reasons to participate in a movement, but they do increase commitment.

The Role of Precipitating Events

When gratification falls short and commitment declines an intention to leave develops. Yet, this intention to leave does not necessarily turn into leaving. Many participants maintain a marginal level of participation for extended periods until

some event makes them quit. Goslinga (2002) calculated that a stable 25% of the membership of Dutch labor unions considered leaving. As the event is the immediate cause of disengagement it draws disproportionate attention as explanation of exit behavior, but note that the event only has this impact in the context of an already present readiness to leave. Such critical events can have many different appearances, sometimes even appear trivial. When some decades ago Dutch labor unions changed to a different system of dues collection and members had to sign to agree with the new system quite a few members choose not to sign. Changing address may be seized as an opportunity to leave the movement simply by not renewing contacts in the new place of residence. More substantial reasons might be a conflict with others in the organization, disappointing experiences in the movement, a failed protest, and so on. Such events function as the last drop that makes the cup run over.

Disengagement Versus Radicalization

When a movement is in decline many activists quit. But becoming inactive is not the only response to movement decline. Radicalization has been described as an alternative response to movement decline (Della Porta 1995). Although violence tends to appear from the very beginning of a protest cycle, the more dramatic forms of violence seem to occur when the mass phase of the protest cycle is over. Such violence as mobilization declines, is attributed to people's dissatisfaction with protest outcomes and their attempts to compensate for the 'reduction in numbers' with increased radicalism, reinforced by a repression apparatus which becomes more effective towards the end of a cycle. Take for instance the violent Black Panthers which played a short but important part in the civil rights movement. They believed that the non-violent campaign of Martin Luther King had failed and that any promised changes to their lifestyle via the 'traditional' civil rights movement would take too long to be implemented or simply not

introduced. Hence, in light of the declining civil right movement, both disengagement *and* radical sustained participation were observed.

Conclusion: Where Do We Stand and How to Proceed

In the previous sections we have discussed group identification, cognition, emotions, and motivation as explanatory frameworks of movement participation and presented a model that integrates these motivations. After we have discussed sustained activism and the dynamics of disengagement we have come full circle in terms of movement participation. Altogether they reveal that the social psychology of protest has become richer, more sophisticated, and more rooted in state of the art social psychology. This is not to say that the social psychological approach to social movements is without any flaws. On the contrary, in the next and final section we will go into some of the limitations and challenges of a social psychological approach to social movement participation.

Limitations of a Social Psychology of Contention

The most obvious limitation of a social psychological approach to social movements and collective action lies in its level of analysis and its methodological individualism as already mentioned in the introductory section. Social psychology is good in explaining individual behavior but not in explaining the rise and fall or the success of failure of social movements. Because of its universalistic theories it also tends to be a-historical. Social psychological theories are not always good in taking the context of individual behavior into account and in theorizing about how contextual factors impact on social psychological mechanisms. Nonetheless, also collective phenomena such as social movements, political protest are composed of individual behavior. One may quarrel about the

degrees of freedom individuals have when they chose to participate or not in protest activities, but in principle individuals do have a choice.

Challenges of a Social Psychology of Contention

We hope our ‘roadmap’ has been useful in exemplifying what social psychology has to offer to the study of social movements, where we stand and where we think the lacunas are. We end with the challenges a social psychology of movement participation faces. We will mention a few and there might be more. Probably, the most important challenge is to move from static to more dynamic explanations of protest participation. A more dynamic approach would provide the opportunity to study concepts like identification, participation motives, efficacy, emotions and feelings of injustice as consequence and antecedent of collective action. Studying protest participation in a more dynamic way would do more justice to the theoretical and empirical richness of the concepts and may be crucial to gain better insights into the processes at hand.

A second challenge we see in our ever more individualizing and virtualizing world. This changing form of connectivity affects dynamics of contention dramatically. Various social media such as LinkedIn, MySpace and FaceBook make it rather easy to be linked in a virtual network. Previously this was time-consuming and effortful and thus costly. Social media have given people a set of tools that allow them to create and find these groups. They reduce the costs of participation by lowering communication and coordination costs and facilitate group formation, recruitment, and retention. As such, they make organizing without organizations feasible (cf. Earl and Kimport 2011). They can also foster collective identity across a dispersed population; they encourage the perception among individuals that they are members of a larger community by virtue of the emotions, grievances, and the feelings of efficacy they share. And finally, they create networks. These sites—which have attracted millions of users worldwide since their

introduction—make it possible to be connected with hundreds of people who share interests and activities across political and geographic borders. What makes them unique is not that they allow individuals to virtually or in reality meet strangers, but rather that they enable users to publicly display their connections and make visible their social networks (Boyd and Ellison 2007). The internet and social media created a new virtual stratum; individuals move around in *virtual* networks in addition to (in)formal *physical* networks. This creates all kinds of new research questions for a social psychology of contention.

A third challenge brings us to the setting where studies are conducted. Studies on ‘real’ collective action behavior in natural settings are relatively rare in the social psychology of protest, where experiments prevail (Van Stekelenburg et al. 2013). These experiments have a high internal validity, and have the potential to make strong causal statements. However, researchers commonly apply laboratory experiments in ways which are detached from natural settings resulting in low ecological validity. Indeed, collective action researchers should ask themselves whether lab respondents—often students—are really willing to “take it onto the streets”. We cannot be sure about it because we do not know whether artificially-created grievances, identification, efficacy etc. are comparable to “real-life” indignation stemming from imperiled interests or violated principles. Contrary to a field study, where participants do not know that they are in a study or an experiment and naturally undertake the treatment or experimental conditions.

This is not to say that social psychologists don’t go to the field. A good example is Tausch and Becker’s (2013) study on students’ protests. These authors designed a two-wave longitudinal study in the context of student protests against tuition fees in Germany, which was conducted before and after collective action had resulted in both a success and a failure. They examined how emotional responses to success and failure of collective action relate to willingness to engage in future collective action. They seized the opportunity of successful and failed student protests to design a quasi-experimental ‘before’

and ‘after’ treatment field study. This design enabled them to examine how psychological reactions to the outcomes of collective action shape motivations to engage in future action.

A final example of field studies shows that the Internet can also figure as “a natural setting”, where “natural behaviour” is exhibited. Van Stekelenburg et al. (2010) examined polarizing public debates as they developed on the Internet over time. They employed automated content analysis to analyze postings of two opposing web forums used by native Dutch and Moroccan-Dutch youngsters between 2003 and 2005. This period encompassed several devastating intergroup incidents: the murder of Theo van Gogh and bomb attacks in Madrid and London, which functioned as “natural treatments”. Content analyses showed how the debates on the two web forums were shaped by the incidents and polarized over time. Collective identities politicized and radicalized, social judgments polarized, and emotions intensified, with hate and fear prominent. These two examples show how social psychologists of protest seize the opportunity of “real life” events to turn them into quasi-experimental study designs on ‘real’ collective disadvantages leading to “real” collective action. As such, these studies attempt to move from correlation to causation, while securing high ecological validity.

Worth mentioning in this context is the so-called opinion-based group method (McGarty et al. 2009). This method bridges experimental and field research. The method involves bringing groups of people together who are at least sympathizers of a cause, and asking them to engage in a planning session where they are to agree on strategies that can be used to further that cause. Their intentions to act in line with that cause are then measured and compared to people who did not engage in a group planning session. Through group-based interaction, processes of consensus and dissensus can be observed which are likely to resemble “talking politics” in everyday settings. This method is designed to observe and monitor how shared grievances, shared identity, and shared norms of action are created in social interaction rather than by surveying isolated

individuals. Obviously, this is of great importance in the context of collective action, which is by definition a collective process.

Finally, social psychological research has overlooked collective action in repressive contexts, where activists face substantial personal risks (but see Ayanian and Tausch 2016; Honari, Van Stekelenburg and Muis forthcoming; Khalil, van Stekelenburg and Klandermans). These papers examine the social psychological processes motivating activists to engage in collective action in risky contexts like Iran and Egypt. Indeed, while scholars in explaining the ebb and flow of online activities in repressive contexts have focused on state repression, these scholars focus on individuals’ decision in response to repression. This is not an easy task, how to acquire enough trust to make respondents feel safe to answer the posed questions? Yet, this kind of scholarly work helps the social psychology of contention to overcome its bias towards Western democratic contexts.

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