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A Model of Participation

IF IT IS TRUE, AS AMOS OZ SAID, that “activism is a way of life,” how do people come to embrace this lifestyle? Dorothy typifies one pathway to participation. She was born in Brooklyn, New York, and at the age of ten, she moved with her family to a tenement flat on Chicago’s South Side when her father lost his job. After graduating from high school, she received a scholarship to attend the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign, where she became politically radicalized. After two turbulent years on campus, Dorothy dropped out and moved back to New York. She settled on the Lower East Side and took a job as a journalist for a socialist newspaper. During this period, she spent many weekends protesting against war and campaigning for women’s rights. While attending one such rally outside the White House, she was arrested and went on a hunger strike with her fellow activists in prison until they were released. When her daughter was born ten years later, Dorothy began an intense period of spiritual awakening, which ultimately led her to embrace Catholicism. Her new involvement with the Catholic Church inspired her to write for Catholic publications and to work for social justice through her congregation. Her support for the peace movement remained strong and she also became actively involved in programs to feed and house the homeless. Throughout her life, Dorothy stayed fully committed to these causes—she was last arrested only five years before her death at the age of 75 for taking part in a picket line in support of striking workers.

Dolores also came to embrace activism as a way of life. She was born in New Mexico and raised in California by a single mother. Inspired by her politically active family, especially her grandfather, Dolores became engaged in

a variety of causes at an early age: gathering food donations for the poor, protesting for women's rights, and organizing Mexican Independence Day celebrations and other cultural events. After earning a degree in education at a local community college, she embarked on a short-lived teaching career. Years later, Dolores reminisced that she "couldn't stand seeing kids come to class hungry and needing shoes. I thought I could do more by organizing . . . workers than by trying to teach their hungry children." Over the course of her adult life, she was married twice and had 11 children. Despite the intense demands made on her by her large family, she maintained a passionate commitment to social and political change throughout her life. To date, she has been arrested 22 times and has on many occasions been the victim of police violence.

For many, Dorothy and Dolores are the quintessential activists, showing the exceptional dedication and perseverance often associated with contentious political engagement.¹ Their biographies illustrate what some might call the nobility, and others might call the insanity, of activists. Indeed, they seem to be different from "regular people," who might care deeply about social and political issues but fail to dedicate their entire lives to a cause.

Popular accounts of activism as well as scholarly studies often focus on the actions of a few inspirational individuals like Dorothy and Dolores, who are in fact Dorothy Day (1897–1980), the founder of the Catholic Worker movement, and Dolores Huerta (born in 1930), the cofounder of the United Farm Workers with Cesar Chavez. In fact, examining the number of books written about these inspiring individuals shows that interest in charismatic leaders far outstrips attention to their movements as a whole.² The focus on the lives and work of this type of inspiring activist is clearly far greater than the attention given to the movements as a whole in which they engaged.

The problem with this focus on long-term, committed activists such as Dorothy and Dolores is that it misses the true story of social movement participation, substituting a charismatic leader for the movement and minimizing the significance of the vast majority of social movement participants. This clouds our larger understanding of contentious political activity and the mechanisms of social change because it implies that change results primarily from the actions of a small, homogeneous cadre instead of from a large, diverse group of individuals.

In this book I show that social movement participants are not just the dedicated few. Approximately two-thirds of the respondents from the nationally representative longitudinal study of Americans used in the analyses

presented in this book have belonged to a social movement organization, attended a protest, or engaged in other forms of contentious political activity at some point in their lives. Activism, in other words, is the realm of the many. In addition, and contrary to what is sometimes assumed, social movements are not populated solely by lifelong activists. Many participants engage for only a short time and then leave altogether. Others move from group to group or reengage after a lull in participation. This is the real picture of activism, one in which many people engage, in a multitude of ways, and with varying degrees of continuity.

Karen exemplifies this type of contentious political participation. In 1974, Karen joined a student group at her high school that helped organize a march for disarmament. While working on this project, she met volunteers in the United Farm Workers, a group she would later formally join after high school in 1978. In 1982, Karen moved to Florida to help establish a National Farm Worker Ministry. However, starting in 1986, she took a long break from activism. In fact, she did not participate in social movements or contentious politics at all for 14 years. During this period, she moved to Europe, started a family, and began raising three children. Upon her return to the United States in 2000, Karen again took up the cause of social justice: she founded a Farm Worker Ministry in her church, which she still leads today.

Amy's experience is similar. In 1981, she joined a homeowners association in Santa Monica, California. This group was fighting for stricter regulation of a large homeless population in the city. Amy was on the group's board of directors and also wrote and distributed its newsletter. In 1996, she left the association after a dispute with another board member. Although there are several other similarly oriented groups in the city that she could have joined, Amy never formally returned to this cause despite her continuing concern with the large homeless population in Santa Monica. She did, however, become active in another local group that lobbies for increased funding for local schools. She continues to participate in the educational group today and also volunteers in the office of an elected state official.³

The biographies of Karen and Amy give a picture of activism that is very different from that portrayed by the narratives of Dorothy and Dolores. More important, Karen and Amy are much more typical activists—as the results presented in this book show, it is far more common to follow an episodic and intermittent trajectory of engagement in contentious politics than to persist over time. Like Karen and Amy, most participants move from one group to another or disengage temporarily from participation only to return later in

life. Individuals follow these more intermittent trajectories as a result of both their personal characteristics and the structure and nature of the organization in which they are involved.

Thinking of activism as a process whereby people participate with varying degrees of continuity, it becomes clear that social movements and contentious political activity are part of the lives of many ordinary people. This view of social movements represents a more engaged and participatory model of democracy, one in which many individuals actively construct social change. By examining individuals who follow varying trajectories of participation, moving in and out of groups and organizations, this view also helps us to understand the rise and fall of large-scale movements over time.

Yet this type of episodic engagement is rarely the focus of studies of social movements and contentious politics. The current study reconceptualizes contentious political participation as following one of four main trajectories. Past research has identified two main trajectories of participation, which I term *persistence* and *disengagement*. Since these two trajectories are extreme opposites, they fail to capture the behavior of most participants. Therefore, I propose that there are two additional, intermediate trajectories of participation that individuals can follow: *individual abeyance*⁴ and *transfer*. These two trajectories are exemplified by Karen, whose political participation was episodic, and Amy, who transferred from group to group.

An individual's trajectory of participation is the result of her ideology, resources, and biography. In addition, that trajectory is affected by the nature and structure of the social movement organization in which she is involved, which works to shape an individual's participation and the continuity of her involvement. To assess the effect of organizational structure on individual involvement, I examine three elements of organizational context: level of hierarchy, issue scope, and intensity of social interaction. Some groups are very hierarchical, while others are more egalitarian. In addition, while some groups focus on a single issue, others are based on a larger ideology that brings together a number of specific issues of concern. Finally, groups vary in the level of interaction they require; while some are based on frequent and intensive interactions, others involve only irregular and casual social contact. These three elements of organizational structure are critical for shaping the social ties and identities of participants. In turn, these ties and identities affect the length and continuity of an individual's participation.

In this book I develop and test a model that explains who will follow each of these four pathways of engagement: persistence, transfer, abeyance, and

disengagement.⁵ I examine this model through the use of two complementary data sources. In the first half of the book, I provide quantitative analyses of panel data originally collected by Jennings and Stoker (2004) on participation over the life course. This survey follows a nationally representative sample of high school seniors from 1965 to 1997. Through the use of these data, I examine broad predictors of initial engagement and trajectory of participation in contentious politics. In addition, I conducted 60 intensive life-history interviews with participants in four social movement organizations: a Catholic Worker group, Concerned Women for America, the United Farm Workers, and a homeowners association. These interviews allow me to examine, in greater breadth and depth than would otherwise be possible, how organizational and relational context leads individuals to follow different trajectories. These organizations and interviews are the focus of the second half of the book.

The State of Research on Participation

Scholars have consistently found that social movement participation has long-term transformative effects for individuals. Compared to nonparticipants, individuals who join social movements are likely to continue to engage in political organizations and remain consistent in their ideology over time (Downton and Wehr 1997; Giugni 2004; Klatch 1999). Previous studies, however, have largely focused on high-risk, high-cost movements and the participants who populate them, and therefore this research may not be representative of all types of engagement.⁶ Given that high-risk, high-cost activism constitutes only a small fraction of all social movement organizations and activities, it is questionable whether these findings generalize to participation as a whole. In addition, while past studies have compared individuals at two points in time, once at initial engagement and once at the time of the study, they have yet to trace trajectories of participation over the life course.⁷

While research on the consequences of social movement engagement points to the potentially transformative, long-term consequences of engagement, popular opinion continues to regard social movement participation as an activity confined largely to the young. Adolescents and young adults are thought to hold more radical beliefs and to be more likely to engage in elite-challenging behavior, including joining social movements. These “radical youth” eventually develop more moderate views and leave movements as they grow older (for discussions of this popular hypothesis, see Fendrich 1993; Jen-

nings 1987; McAdam 1988). According to this perspective, contentious participation is the result of biographical availability, and individuals are expected to move beyond this life stage as they age.

A weakness in much of the established literature is the tendency to emphasize only one phase of participation—initial engagement. This occurs despite the fact that various scholars recognize at least three stages of engagement in social movements—initial engagement, sustained participation, and disengagement (Klandermans 1997). There is, however, little research that systematically examines how and why individuals reduce their involvement in social movement organizations and protest activities.⁸ Moreover, the leaving process is simply treated as identical to the joining process, only in reverse. For example, Sandell (1999, 3) states that “the decision processes concerning leaving and joining organizations are mirror images” (see also Toch 1965; Vall 1963).

This hypothesis is questionable. While there are similarities between joining and leaving a social movement organization, there are also important differences. As Veen and Klandermans (1989, 184) state, “During the period that people are associated with a movement, qualitatively new dimensions are added to being a member, so that the reasons for quitting are not the same as those for joining.” Analogous situations make this point clear. For example, leaving a job is not simply the reverse of starting a job, and getting divorced is not the reverse of getting married. The emotions, relationships, and material changes associated with each transition are fundamentally different. In the same vein, increasing and decreasing one’s participation in contentious politics are not mirror experiences. Hence, merely applying what we have learned about the joining process to the leaving process obscures important elements of the latter.

Rethinking Engagement: Four Trajectories of Participation

Work on the biographical consequences of participation suggests that some individuals remain active and engaged over the life course, while others leave after one episode. In this book, I present the following four prototypical trajectories that individual participants can follow after their initial engagement in contentious politics.

1. *Persistence*: Individuals remain in their initial social movement organization (SMO) and/or continue participating in protest activities over time.

2. *Transfer*: Individuals disengage from their SMO or protest activities but become active in another SMO or cause. These individuals disengage from the original movement organization but not from contentious political participation.
3. *Individual abeyance*: Individuals disengage from their SMO or protest activities but return to participation later in life.
4. *Disengagement*: Individuals permanently disengage from their SMO and from participation altogether. These individuals both leave their SMO and stop participating in collective action.

Persistence and *transfer* are similar to the processes described by McAdam (1988) in his influential study of the Freedom Summer campaign. In this campaign, mainly elite white American college students traveled from the northern states to Mississippi to register African Americans to vote during the summer of 1964. This was a transformative experience, inspiring many of the volunteers to remain politically active over the course of their lives. It is difficult, however, to assess the extent to which this experience is representative of social movement participation more generally. This campaign was extremely high in cost and risk; many volunteers experienced threats, beatings, and harassment. Three volunteers were murdered. The unusually high intensity, cost, and risk associated with this campaign suggest that it is not typical.

While the term *persistence* refers to the process of staying in the same SMO over time, the *transfer* trajectory describes moving from one social movement to another.⁹ There are many reasons an individual might do this, which fall into three categories: the group may change, the individual and his interests may change, or the context may change. For example, a group may disband or begin focusing on different issues. Alternatively, an individual may move to a new city or, because of changing circumstances or maturation, may develop interests in new groups or activities. Finally, the political and social context may change, making certain issues and groups more or less salient.

The concept of social movement “spillover” is partly based on the observation that individuals often transfer their participation from group to group. Different movements and organizations within movements share personnel, and these shared personnel can move from one group to another or cooperate across groups. One result of these shifting involvements and cooperative coalitions is that a range of movement characteristics, including frames, collective identities, tactics, and elements of movement culture, can “spill over” from one group or campaign to another (Meyer and Whittier 1994).¹⁰

Disengagement refers to the process of permanently ceasing participation in contentious political activities. Klandermans's (1997) theoretical model of engagement in social movement organizations includes three stages of engagement: initial engagement, sustained engagement, and disengagement. These three stages, however, are intended to characterize the processes whereby individuals join and leave specific movement organizations. Through positive or negative group experiences, individuals decide to stay in or leave an organization. Many go through this process several times over the course of their lives, however, joining and leaving a range of different groups or campaigns. Here, I use the term *disengagement* to capture a permanent withdrawal from activism rather than from a particular social movement organization.

To these possibilities I add the concept of *individual abeyance*, which is intended to capture the often intermittent and fluctuating nature of contentious political participation across time. Taylor (1989) offers the concept of *movement abeyance structures* in order to highlight the continuity in SMOs and movements as a whole. In the women's movement, for example, the push for suffrage, the Equal Rights Amendment, and pay equity are often seen as distinct movements. Taylor argues, however, that these initiatives were not discrete or isolated movements; rather, they were tied together by overlapping networks of individuals, ideologies, goals, and tactics—that is, movement abeyance structures. These structures work to sustain movements under circumstances that are unfavorable to mass mobilization, as well as providing continuity from one stage of mobilization to another (Taylor 1989). Melucci et al.'s (1989) concept of submerged networks is based on a similar observation. They argue that the massive peace mobilizations of the 1980s were based on submerged networks of women, young people, ecologists, and alternative cultures. These submerged networks demonstrate that there are latent and visible poles of collective action or, more simply, moments of mass mobilization and lulls in activity.

In a similar way, episodes of participation for individuals are not discrete or isolated; they are tied together by *individual abeyance structures* over the life course.¹¹ Consider the participation career of Susan Brownmiller, a long-time journalist for ABC News. She initially began her activist trajectory as a volunteer for the Freedom Summer civil rights campaign. After that summer, she returned from the South and began her career in journalism; during this period, she did very little in the way of activism. Yet a number of years later she returned to social movement participation and joined the women's liberation movement (Brownmiller 1999).

I posit that these two episodes of participation by Brownmiller are not discrete and separate but instead are tied together by an individual abeyance structure that consists of networks of friends, repertoires of tactics, and ideological commitments. Brownmiller's social ties to other Freedom Summer volunteers and her leftist ideology, elements that were cultivated during her earlier participation, facilitated her subsequent reengagement. Her experience is not unique. As I argue throughout this book, many people engage episodically in this way. At a general level, examining participation over the life course can help to illuminate the ways in which individuals disengage from a particular social movement organization but not necessarily from participation as a whole, and how episodes of participation are related to one another.

A Trajectory Model of Participation

This study outlines and develops a new model of participation in social movements and contentious politics over the life course. This *trajectory model* explains participation from initial engagement through the four possible trajectories previously outlined: persistence, transfer, abeyance, and disengagement (see Figure 1 for a graphic depiction of this model).¹² The trajectory model outlines how individuals' personal characteristics lead them to initially participate in contentious politics and, once involved, how they engage within a relational and organizational context. This context shapes the identities and social ties that individuals develop in the course of engagement, which then lead them to follow different trajectories of participation.

The extensive research on initial engagement in social movements and contentious politics demonstrates that individual decisions to join organizations and participate in protest activities are the result of four sets of individual-level factors: ideology, resources, biographical availability, and social networks. Ideological factors, such as religiosity, partisanship, and efficacy, prime some individuals to participate in contentious politics. Once individuals are ideologically predisposed, however, they must have sufficient resources to allow them to translate their concern into action. Resources may be financial, such as income or wealth, or cultural, such as education or knowledge. Biographical factors can also facilitate or inhibit an individual's participation; for example, marriage, child rearing, employment, and aging may all act as barriers to participation. Finally, social networks are an important means of recruiting new members to contentious political activity. Examining all of these factors in combination enables us to understand who is most likely to engage in contentious political action. For example, are individuals who are

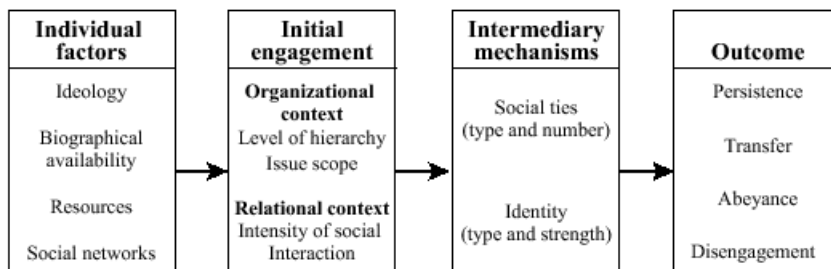


Figure 1 A trajectory model of participation

married, highly efficacious, and high income more likely than other people to participate in a social movement or protest event? How do changes in these characteristics predict an individual's shifting engagement over time?

When individuals engage in social movements or contentious politics, they do so within a specific organizational and relational context that affects their experience of participation. Clearly, not all forms of participation are equivalent. People who engage in groups where they attend a meeting once a month for an hour, who do not have friends in the organization, or who do not see the group as an important part of their overall sense of self will not experience participation in the same way as those who engage in groups where participants live communally and work for long hours each day on social movement activities.

In this study, I examine the effect of this relational and organizational context on the participation of individuals. Social movement groups vary in their relational context; some organizations require high levels of intensive social interaction among members while others require very little interaction, much of which is relatively superficial. The importance of the relational context in which individuals engage is that it influences the number and type of social ties created. In groups where members have more frequent and intensive social interaction, individuals are more likely to create strong and persistent ties. In groups where members do not interact in this way, there is a reduced chance of members bonding. A social movement that is based on strong ties, fosters those ties over the course of participation, and helps to maintain those ties after disengagement facilitates longer participation and increases the chance that an individual will reengage after a lull in engagement. Moreover, the relational context affects the types of identities that individuals create in the course of participation, as well as the salience of those

identities; that is, constant and significant interaction with other group members can help to solidify relevant identities for participants.

In addition, I assess two elements of organizational context: level of hierarchy and issue scope. Groups range in their degree of hierarchy, with some being very hierarchical and others more egalitarian. In addition, while some groups focus on a single issue, others are based on a larger ideology that synthesizes a number of specific issues areas. The level of hierarchy and issue scope are critical factors affecting the development of identities among participants, and these organizational characteristics shape the identities that individuals develop in the course of participation.

I examine the variety of ways in which individuals can identify once they are involved in a social movement. They may see themselves as activists or not, as part of a particular organization or many organizations, or as proponents of different sets of values. I show that individuals who engage in the same social movement activities, such as protesting, meeting, and petitioning, may identify in very different ways, depending on their biographical characteristics and the organizational context in which their engagement takes place. The comparison of four social movement organizations in the second half of this book illustrates how the organizational and relational contexts interact with individual factors to create social ties and identities. I also examine how these ties and identities affect members' social movement and protest participation over their life course.

Data and Methods

Youth Socialization Panel Data

The Jennings and Stoker data set (2004) used in the first half of this book is an American panel study comprising a series of surveys concerning political behaviors and attitudes. A nationally representative sample of high school seniors were initially interviewed in 1965 ($N = 1669$). Subsequent surveys of the same individuals were conducted in 1973, 1982, and 1997 ($N = 934$, 56% of original sample).¹³ Most important for my purposes, the survey asked individuals about their participation in both civic and community social movement organizations and activities, including demonstrating, rallying, marching, and protesting. I assess the predictors of participation by comparing individuals who have participated in a social movement group or activity with those who have not done so. These data allow me to determine the key factors that correlate with whether or not an individual has ever engaged in contentious pol-

itics, as well as to assess the predictors of shifting involvement and trajectory of participation.

Although the data are ideal for examining participation at a general level, they cannot be used to assess the role of the organizational or relational context in which participation occurs. This is because the survey did not ask about participation in specific named groups or about the structure of the group in which the respondent was involved. Yet my model of participation (Figure 1) suggests that elements of the organizational and relational context, such as issue scope, level of hierarchy, and amount of interaction in the group, play a critical role in an individual's experience of participation. Social psychological factors, such as social ties and identity, also affect an individual's decision to join¹⁴ and, I argue, to remain in a social movement. To examine these factors, I therefore turn to intensive life-history interviews of past movement participants. The interviews demonstrate how social ties and identity act as intermediaries between organizational and relational context, on the one hand, and the trajectory of an individual's participation, on the other.

Interview Data

For the interview data used in these analyses, I recruited individuals from four social movement organizations: the United Farm Workers, a Catholic Worker group, the Concerned Women for America, and a homeowners association. Since random selection of subjects in comparative case studies can cause serious biases (Glaser and Strauss 1967; see also King et al. 1994), I selected a dimensional sample (Arnold 1970; see also Johnson 1990) of four SMOs that vary along two key dimensions: issue scope and intensity of social interaction. This approach is well suited for assessing the influence that these organizational and relational variables have on an individual's trajectory of participation.

I examine organizational scope by comparing what can be termed *multi-issue groups* with *single-issue groups*. Multi-issue groups are those that work on at least two issues that members see as connected to a larger, overarching ideology. Single-issue groups focus on one specific cause and do not explicitly tie that cause to other issues. The issue scope of a social movement organization affects the identities that participants develop and the continuity of their participation over time. I also assess the role of interaction and compare groups that have regular, intensive interactions among members with groups whose members have infrequent and less intensive interactions.

In order to examine whether these organizational factors lead individuals to take different pathways of participation, the groups represent the four possible combinations of these two variables and cover the same time period as the Jennings data. In each group, I selected 15 participants who were active in either 1970 (for the United Farm Workers and Catholic Workers) or 1980 (for the Concerned Women for America and the homeowners association).¹⁵ I interviewed these individuals in 2005 about their participation, from their initial foray into contentious politics to the present day.¹⁶ This research design allows me to compare individuals who remained active with those who disengaged, transferred, or had an abeyance trajectory. The demographic profile of the interview sample is similar in age and background to the quantitative panel sample and to the national population of the United States in this period.¹⁷

First, I examine a Catholic Worker (CW) community founded in the late 1960s and located in a large midwestern city in the United States. The Catholic Workers are involved in a variety of issues on the political left. These issues include working to resist war and imperialism abroad, as well as helping the homeless, dealing with poverty, assisting immigrants, and creating shelters for battered women in their local communities. These issues are diverse but are tied together by an overarching social justice ideology. Members engage in a high level of intensive interaction, because they live communally and tend to work six or more hours a day on volunteer activity within the group.

The second group, Concerned Women for America (CWA), is a multi-issue women's group. The participants work on a set of core issues that are connected to a more general ideology of conservative Protestant Christianity. They advocate restricting sex education in schools and promoting school prayer, protecting a traditional definition of marriage and the family and opposing gay marriage, supporting pro-life campaigns against abortion and stem-cell research, and limiting violence and sexual content in the media. There is very little interaction among members of this group, and most of the women I contacted from this organization did not know other women who were also involved in the organization. Those women who did know other members did not socialize with them or develop strong ties.

The third group, the United Farm Workers (UFW), promotes collective-bargaining rights for migrant farm workers. While many members of the UFW surely see their participation in the farm workers' struggle as part of a larger fight against inequality, the UFW is a single-issue group that works primarily on farm worker issues. Individuals in this group tend to restrict

their participation to farm workers' causes, as opposed to more general leftist issues. The group of UFW members examined in this study lived communally at the union headquarters, La Paz, in California. La Paz is a physically isolated community where members interact regularly and intensively. The volunteers work on union business, up to 14 hours a day, six days a week.

The fourth group is a local community homeowners association (Homeowners Association [HA]) in Santa Monica, California,¹⁸ established in 1981 in reaction to the perceived success of a renters' rights group in the region. The HA seeks to limit low-income housing in the area and to control what they see as a burgeoning homeless population. This single-issue group focuses mainly on protecting property values in their community through restricting the activities of the homeless.

In light of the important role of the political and social context, I also supplement the intensive interview data with historical research. Specifically, I examine newspaper accounts of the organizations, organizational publications, and biographies and autobiographies¹⁹ of participants. Clemens and Hughes (2002) note that historical research offers distinctive advantages by allowing researchers to explore the impact of movement involvement on individual lives. The historical sources contextualize the movements politically and culturally and supplement the information provided in the interviews.

Overview of the Book

In Chapter 2, I use the panel data to examine the factors that predict whether or not a person will ever participate in a social movement organization or activity of protest, and how these factors account for shifting engagement over time. Participation in contentious politics can take a number of forms; my model assesses participation in protest activities, such as protesting, rallying, demonstrating, and marching, together with involvement in civic and community groups. Specifically, I test the role of ideology (religiosity, efficacy, and partisanship), resources (income, education, and knowledge), and biographical availability (marriage, child rearing, employment, and age), as well as a set of control variables (gender, ethnicity, and religion) in predicting engagement and shifting participation in social movements and protest over the life course.

Chapter 3 also uses the panel data, focusing more specifically on the trajectories of movement participation. I categorize all individuals who have ever participated in a social movement group or activity into one of the tra-

jectories of participation outlined above in the trajectory model.²⁰ Using the trajectories as my dependent variable, I test how well the same factors that have been used to account for initial and shifting participation (from Chapter 2) explain the pattern or trajectory of participation once individuals are engaged.

The second half of the book analyzes the life-history interviews with members of the four social movement organizations. Social movement participation occurs in a relational and organizational context. This context is often impossible to examine through either large survey instruments or case studies of individual movement organizations. The importance of this context is discussed in Chapter 4 and the specific history of each of the four movement organizations is outlined in order to contextualize the respondents' participation.

In Chapter 5, I draw on the interviews to assess the role of social ties and interaction in predicting an individual's participation trajectory. The effects of ties prior to, during, and after participation in social movements are assessed as they relate to people's propensities to remain active in such groups over time. Chapter 6 focuses on the role of identity in social movement participation and the continuity of that participation over time. While past work has emphasized the development of an activist identity among individuals who participate in social movements, I show that not all individuals who engage in social movements come to define themselves as activists. In fact, individuals engaging in the same social movement activities have a variety of identity options. For example, some individuals identify with the specific movement organization in which they engage, while others more closely identify with overarching values. In this chapter, I show how organizational context and an individual's biography can lead to a variety of different identifications, and how these different identities relate to the length and continuity of participation in social movements over time.

Finally, in Chapter 7, I discuss the implications of the trajectory model of participation at the micro and macro levels. In addition, I examine how the changing nature of protest and larger cycles of protest have affected the experiences of the cohort of participants examined in this study, and how future generations of young people might experience different patterns of engagement.