

Answer Key for In-Text Questions

Chapter 16

Title: Chapter 16 Questions for Review

Question/Prompt: 1. What are the characteristics of a social movement?

Correct Answer Example(s):

Social movement refers to an organized effort by one or more groups in society to promote or resist social change through various types of engagement. Sociologists have identified some key characteristics that are unique to social movements and help us understand what social movements are.

First, social movements are often characterized by collective action. For collective action to take place, groups of individuals need to be involved in achieving a common goal. Second, while the focus can be on social, economic, or political issues, the ultimate goal is to advocate for social change; this can mean altering people's attitudes as well as bringing about more fundamental changes in the social structure of society. Third, those participating in the social movement, referred to as movement actors, engage in a concerted effort to be perceived by others as worthy, unified, numerous, and committed. Fourth, social movements have an underlying organizational structure that helps mobilize resources, coordinate members, organize events, and share messages with the media and the public.

Question/Prompt: 2. How are the US civil rights movement and the South African Anti-Apartheid Movement related?

Correct Answer Example(s):

The American Civil Rights Movement fought for equal rights for Black citizens: for their freedom and the ability to participate in civil and political life without discrimination or repression. The Anti-Apartheid Movement (AAM) opposed the South African apartheid, which was a system of government, based on racism and colonial oppression, that violated human rights by forcibly separating people according to "race" and ethnicity. The AAM carefully followed events in the United States and learned some of its tactics from the civil rights movement, while at the same time the AAM served as motivation and inspiration for the civil rights movement.

Question/Prompt: 3. Describe three different social movement tactics.

Correct Answer Example(s):

Your answer should include or relate to the following points:

- **Petition:** Petitions are highly popular and consist of a formal written statement typically addressed to an authority figure, for example, a prime minister, member of Parliament, or president of an organization, regarding a particular cause.
- **Protest:** Protests generally revolve around a gathering of people and can vary in size and format. They must be distinguished from riots, which are chaotic collective protests that are undirected and emotional, and often turn violent.
- **Rebellion:** Rebellion is an act of defiance to authority with the goal of demonstrating the need for social change; it usually involves the use of arms and force. The term has been contentious, as the difference between a rebellion and a revolution is often determined by the winning side.
- **Letters, Postcards, Emails, and “Phone Zaps”:** Letter and postcard writing is a tried and true method of confronting different leaders and authority figures. Email is used along similar lines, though the use of email templates often results in these emails being caught by spam filters. Phone calls can also convey public interest in a particular issue. To encourage participation and amplify the effect of a call, groups sometimes organize a window of time in which everyone calls at once. This tactic, called a “phone zap,” can overwhelm office staff or a phone line, drawing more attention to the calls than perhaps would be achieved by the volume of calls alone.
- **Blockade:** A blockade is the act of obstructing entry into a specific place or area. They are usually made up of people or vehicles and take place in areas that are meaningful to the cause.
- **Digital Smart Mobs:** Digital smart mobs are protests that rely on digital media for coordination and communication in real time.
- **Hactivism:** Hactivism is part of a larger branch of cyberactivism, which manipulates and deploys information and communication technologies (ICTs) for a particular cause.

Question/Prompt: 4. What are some criticisms of social media activism discussed in the chapter?

Correct Answer Example(s):

Some social media activism has been dismissively termed as slacktivism or clicktivism, which refers to minimal involvement in a social movement through simplistic actions like clicking a “like” button on social media to show support. This type of online participation has received considerable criticism due to the fact that individuals feel they are social activists or they have contributed to a social cause by simply sharing, retweeting, or posting about a social issue on social media, rather than participating in more direct forms of collective action.

Question/Prompt: 5. What is new social movement theory?

Correct Answer Example(s):

New social movement (NSM) theory refers to the study of new types of social movements that differ from traditional social movements.

Question/Prompt: 6. Why do some social movements end?

Correct Answer Example(s):

Social movements decline for the following reasons:

- Success: The SMO achieves its goals and as a result dismantles.
- Organizational failure: The SMO fails in getting more people involved in the movement and fades away.
- Cooptation: Leaders of a SMO abandon the cause because they either change their values or are influenced by opposing views or groups.
- Repression: Authorities or those in power use various strategies and mechanisms to undermine and perhaps end the social movement.

Title: Chapter 16 Questions for Critical Thought

Question/Prompt: 1. Social activists are often described as radical and extremist, willing to take risks to achieve social change. What evidence refutes this argument? What are alternative ways of describing social activists?

Correct Answer Example(s):

Your answer should include or relate to the following points:

- While we may think that only individuals with a radical stance or strong sense of justice may get involved in activism, this is not always so. Most Canadians will at some point in their life be part of a social movement. Nearly two in three Canadians (65 per cent) are members of or participants in a group, organization, or association.
- Some online activism has received considerable criticism and has been dismissively termed slacktivism or clicktivism. The controversy around slacktivism arises from the fact that individuals feel they are social activists or they have contributed to a social cause by simply sharing, retweeting, or posting about a social issue on social media, rather than participating in more direct forms of collective.
- One characteristic of social movements is that those participating in the social movement engage in a concerted effort to be perceived by others as worthy, unified, numerous, and committed.
- Some people have chosen activism as a vocation.

- “Activist” is a negotiated identity that varies in terms of its focus. Alternative ways of describing social activists includes campaigners, reformers, advocates, protestors, and demonstrators.

Question/Prompt: 2. What is a protest? Does it have to take place in person, or can protest occur online?

Correct Answer Example(s):

A protest is an action that expresses disapproval or objection to something. Protests can occur in person or online. Indeed, in our digital society, information and communication technologies (ICTs) provide activists with new tools for spreading information at low cost to far-reaching audiences. Many social movements take advantage of the new possibilities afforded by ICTs and integrate them into their mobilization and communication strategies,

Question/Prompt: 3. How have demographic characteristics such as age, education, and income changed as predictors of involvement in social movements? What do you think will be the best predictor of social movement involvement in the future?

Correct Answer Example(s):

Your answer should include or relate to the following points:

- Researchers found that being asked to get involved was the single-most important predictor of individual participation in protests. Additionally, they found that younger, better educated individuals who are interested in politics and enjoy political debate and discussion are more likely to be asked to protest, as are students.
- Researchers also found that there is a group of individuals who become involved in social activism without ever being asked by their social networks. This group consists of politically liberal individuals who have high levels of civic skills and are interested in and knowledgeable about politics.
- Not all individuals are equally involved in social movements throughout their life course. Each individual experiences a unique trajectory of participation that can include phases of nonparticipation linked to work demands, starting a family, and other demands on time.
- New types of political and social engagement have emerged, particularly among young people, commonly referred to as new social movements (NSMs).
- Young people who face social and economic burdens can predict involvement in social movements. For example, the main aim of M-15 was to protest the economic crisis unfolding in Spain that affected ordinary citizens the most, in particular young people who were unable to obtain employment.
- Access to information and communication technologies (ICTs) might be the best predictor of social movement in the future. ICTs provide activists with new tools for spreading information at low cost to far-reaching audiences. Many social movements take

advantage of the new possibilities afforded by ICTs and integrate them into their mobilization and communication strategies.

Question/Prompt: 4. In your own words, explain the importance of individual and group identity for both new social movements and collective action more broadly. How does identity support group action? Are there any limitations to a cohesive group identity? If so, what are those?

Correct Answer Example(s):

Your answer should include or relate to the following points:

- Identity plays a critical role in the formation and functioning of social movements.
- Although the formation of a collective identity during collective action is not new, what is new is the centrality of that identity for new social movements.
- Individual identity is important for social movement organization (SMO) members to interact with key stakeholders including other members, members of other SMOs, and the public.
- Collective identities are formed by the opinions of small groups or cliques and are constantly changing because they are embedded in the everyday life experiences of the SMO members.
- When small groups can no longer agree on a common collective identity and its core tenets, they lose solidarity and the social movement starts declining.
- However, there is an emerging approach to understanding identity that opposes notions of collectivity. Some argue that collective identity can oversimplify complex internal differences and leave unchallenged the very processes at which many social movements take aim.

Question/Prompt: 5. Four trajectories of individuals' participation in social movements have been described. Why do you think people follow these trajectories? Could other trajectories also exist?

Correct Answer Example(s):

Not all individuals are equally involved in social movements throughout their life course. Each individual experiences a unique trajectory of participation that can include phases of nonparticipation linked to work demands, starting a family, and other demands on time.

Four typical trajectories of individuals' participation in social movements include:

- Persistence: Individuals remain in their initial SMO and/or continue participating in protest activities over time.
- Transfer: Individuals disengage from their SMO and its protest activities and become active in another cause. These individuals disengage from the original movement organization but not from contentious political participation.

- Individual abeyance: Individuals disengage from their SMO and protest activities and then return to participation in either that same cause or another later in life.
- Disengagement: Individuals permanently disengage from their SMO and from participation altogether. These individuals both leave their SMO and stop participating in collective action.

When we look at trajectories of participation it is also important to note that some people have chosen activism as a vocation. Other people may remain interested in their SMO but may not actively participate in it.

Question/Prompt: 6. In your opinion, what is the role of social media in facilitating participation in social movements? How do social media compare to traditional media?

Correct Answer Example(s):

Your answer should include or relate to the following points:

- Social media are changing the nature and scope of social movements by facilitating citizen involvement, the flow of information across boundaries, and the mobilization of resources.
- Social media allows social movement actors to come together virtually and crowdsource their tactics and approaches. For example, the “smart mob” refers to a network of digitally savvy citizens who engage with each via mobile technology and social media in an ad hoc and networked form of pop-up protest.
- SMOs draw heavily on social media and technical competency to disseminate their message, recruit new members, keep in touch with members, and mobilize members when needed.
- However, there are unexpected and sometimes negative ways in which ICTs are changing social movement involvement, as in the case of slacktivism and clicktivism. The term slacktivism derives its meaning from the laissez-faire attitude and simplistic actions required by online activists to show support for a campaign. The controversy around slacktivism arises from the fact that individuals feel they are social activists or they have contributed to a social cause by simply sharing, retweeting, or posting about a social issue on social media, rather than participating in more direct forms of collective action.
- Traditional media, such as like print newspapers and pamphlets, are limited in organizing a movement in real time and across space.