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ABSTRACT

This paper offers a critical look at the theory of "new" social movements through an examination of a Liverpool (England) protest movement that occurred between 1980 and 1983. A history of the protest movement, which concerned the closing of a secondary school in a working-class community, is given. A review of the literature on new social movements is undertaken, with a focus on the contending theories that seek to describe these movements. New social movements are defined as social movements emerging since the 1960s that fundamentally differ from previous social movements. Finally, in the context of the literature review, the events of the Liverpool protest movement are re-examined and many of the assumptions of new social movement theorists are questioned. A 59-item bibliography is included. (DB)

WHAT'S NEW ABOUT 'NEW' SOCIAL MOVEMENTS?

Some Notes on a Liverool Protest Movement Over a School Closure

A Paper Prepared for the 1989 Annual Conference
of the
American Anthropological Association

November 1989, Washington D.C.

by Phil Carspecken

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What's new about 'new' social movements?
Some Notes on a Liverpool Protest Movement over a School Closure

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by Phil Carspecken, University of Houston

I: This paper takes a critical look at the theory of 'new' social movements through the careful examination of a Liverpool protest movement which occurred between 1980 and 1983. I will first give a brief history of the protest movement, which I studied ethnographically, then discuss theoretical issues raised by the literature on 'new' social movements, and finally return to the Liverpool movement in order to question some of the assumptions of that literature.

II The author conducted extensive ethnographic research between 1982 and 1984 on a protest movement by residents of Croxteth, a working class community on the northeast periphery of Liverpool. Croxteth is a council housing estate with a population of roughly 12,000 people. Racially it is nearly 100% Caucasian, most residents tracing ancestry back to white docker families which had for more than a century clustered alongside the Mersey River. Most Croxteth residents have histories of manual labor work, occupations such as roofing, brick laying, and assembly line factory work. In the early 1980s large numbers of these residents were out of work, the unemployment rate in Croxteth approaching 45%.

In 1981 the Liverpool Local Education Committee approved a plan to close down Croxteth Comprehensive School, the only non-religious secondary school on the Croxteth housing estate. Facing enormous financial pressures from the economic recession, the local government of Liverpool felt it could take advantage of the steep decline in school rolls caused by the wake of the baby boom to save money. Falling rolls meant that some schools could be closed down, their students then being able to find empty places in other locations. Croxteth Comprehensive school was chosen for closure largely due to political calculations: the community supported the political party which was not currently in office, and the school's teachers were organized by a much less militant union than the union which represented most teachers in Liverpool.

As soon as closure plans were announced a resident action committee called 'The Croxteth Community Action Committee' was organized to protest the decision. The campaign lasted nearly three years and passed through three phases distinguishable by the composition and leadership of the activist group, the goals of the movement, the arguments which were used to justify these goals, and the tactics employed to win back the school.

The first phase lasted one year: from November 1980 to November 1981. During this time the protest organization employed entirely legal and institutional tactics, such as

lobbying, letter writing, and the submission of alternate plans to the local government. This phase of the campaign failed absolutely.

The second phase was born with the addition of new blood to the action committee. A group of roughly ten formerly passive residents suddenly joined the campaign with calls for more militant activity. They were led by an experienced union organizer who lived on the estate. This person quickly became leader of the Croxteth Community Action Committee and radically altered its use of tactics. Activists began using civil disobedience to win media attention to their cause. They occupied government chambers in downtown Liverpool and blocked several major motorways which ran near the estate. They stormed into the city's two radio stations to talk live over the radio. Such tactics drew massive and sympathetic attention from both the local and national media. In March of 1982, only three months after the campaign had acquired its new leader, the local Liverpool council was swayed into reversing its decision on Croxteth Comprehensive, voting with a large majority to create a new school in the buildings of the old. Classes in Croxteth Comprehensive, meanwhile, had never been stopped because the official closure date had been set for July of the same year: 1982.

The national government of Britain, however, had already approved the original decision to close Croxteth Comprehensive and vetoed the new council vote. This event angered Croxteth activists enormously, sparked a new series of demonstrations, and finally spurred the Croxteth Community Action Committee to illegally occupy the school buildings in July. Activists then decided to run their own school, moving the campaign into its third and final phase. For the entire 1982-83 school year, some 30 local residents worked daily within their occupied school to run an educational program for youth on the estate. They were aided by volunteer teachers who devoted their time and energy to the occupation out of sympathy for its goals. In April of 1983 a newly elected Labor Party majority on the Liverpool City Council found ways to restore state support to Croxteth Comprehensive and the school continues to run to this day.

III Much contemporary literature on social movements recognizes three distinct bodies of theory on the subject: theories of collective behavior, the resource management school, and what I shall call the 'identity-oriented school', to borrow a phrase from Jean Cohen (see Cohen 1985). My own review of the literature suggests the addition of a fourth body of work, neo-marxist work on urban social movements.

The term 'new social movements' has been used by two of these schools: the neo-marxist school and the identity-oriented approach. However, it is the identity-oriented approach which has popularized this phrase and it is their usage of the term which the title of this paper refers to.

The collective behavior tradition was the most widely used framework in American studies of social movements for many decades of this century, while European theorists were divided between those adopting something like a collective behavior

paradigm and those who considered themselves marxists. The most fundamental distinction between these two approaches concerns their respective understanding of four concepts: 'interests', 'action', 'power', and social structure. To make a nutshell comparison, collective behavior used a normative theory of action to explain social movements in terms of a 'breakdown' in the cultural controls of certain populations experiencing urbanization and migration. Under general conditions of anomie, 'crowds' could 'sway' individuals into acting disruptively. Social structure was conceived along Durkheimian lines, as a general consensus to social norms. Power and interests were usually not specifically theorized.

Marxist theory, on the other hand, emphasized goal-rational responses of deprived populations. Their exploited position within a social structure of conflicting interest positions would automatically lead to social movements as long as the veil of ideology was penetrated and 'real interests' perceived. Social movements were thus viewed as a function of class consciousness. The tactics employed by movements were explained in terms of the asymmetrical distribution of power in society. Institutional means of acting upon one's socially determined interests favored the dominant classes in society. Subordinate classes had to build their power through illegal, non-institutional means.

The *neo*-marxist work referred to above was formulated by primarily European theorists during the 1970s (see bibliography). Its major difference with classical marxism had to do with its theory of social structure. Class oppositions were believed to have taken a new expression in the opposition of lower classes to the welfare state -- the supplier of such services as education, health, and social security. Because not only the working class but many segments of the middle class as well had come to depend upon such services during the post World War II period it was thought that social movements targeted at the state, rather than at employers, and formed over the issue of service provision, rather than over wages, working conditions and other factors directly associated with the point of production. Urban social movements were said to be 'new' for this reason -- they were directed towards the state and potentially united a number of class segments. The same concepts of interests, power, and action underlay this theoretical framework as those used in mainstream marxism.

During the 1960s a number of American social scientists developed the 'resource management' school of social movements in conscious opposition to the collective behavior approach (see bibliography). In this school action and power were conceived of in ways similar to classical marxism: action was goal-rational in nature and power was asymmetrically distributed, forcing protest groups to use non-institutional tactics. However, this school focussed its interest upon specific social movements and did not try to find any necessity in their formation through a theory of class structure. The work of this school produced useful 'mid-level' theory which could explain the rise, maintenance, and eventual fate of specific movements.

IV The identity-oriented school emerged at about the same time as the resource management school, but it is geographically located in Europe while the latter, as we've seen, is located primarily in the United States. 'Identity-oriented' is not a term, like resource management is, which the members of this group apply to themselves. There is more difference between the works of the authors in this group than the works of authors in the resource management school. But they share a general orientation, a common concern with linkages between personal identity and power relationships in society. Other members of this school include Alessandro Pizzorno (1978a, 1978b) and Alain Touraine (1977, 1981, 1985). Jurgen Habermas shares some of the interests of this school but should not be included within it because of his concern with social institutions and his use of a broader theory of action. Together these authors have made much of what they call 'New Social Movements' or NSMs -- social movements growing since the 1960s which fundamentally differ from previous social movements.

This paradigm differs from the marxist and resource management approaches through its emphasis on a mixture of normative and dramaturgical forms of action and through its theory of power. Power is conceived as control over the cultural milieu within which people express themselves and construct their identities. This orientation insists that the past three decades have produced a brand new type of social movement which aims to alter and control the milieu in which personal identities are constructed. Thus movements like the gay, feminist, peace, local autonomy, and ecological movements are pointed to as qualitatively new: -- 'radical breaks', to use Touraine's words, from 'old' social movements.

Alberto Melluci, a prominent representative of this approach, criticizes both the resource management school and studies of social movements which emphasize structural-institutional factors (such as some of the neo-marxist work mentioned above) in the following way. I quote:

> Structural theories, based on system analysis, explain *why* but not *how* a movement is set up and maintains its structure, that is, they only hypothesize about potential conflict without accounting for concrete collective action and actors. On the other hand, the resource mobilization approach regards such action as mere data and fails to examine its meaning and orientation. In this case, *how* but not *why* (Melucci 1985, p 790)

Melucci goes on to say that these two approaches don't complement each other either: you can't add the 'why' explanations provided by structural theories to the 'how' explanations of the resource management school to get a complete theory of social movements. This is largely because the 'why' of social movements isn't fully explained by structural theories. 'Structural theories', as Melucci uses the term, only explain certain aspects of why movements occur - very general conditions in which the participants' position is conceived of primarily in terms of their economic interests. While resource

management theory makes instrumental action an explicit feature of their work, structural theories make it an implicit one.

Melucci challenges the instrumental or goal-rational model of action altogether, arguing that the culture which is generated in social movements is an end in itself for participants. Thus Melucci states:

> The meaning of the action has to be found in the action itself more than in the pursued goals: movements are not qualified by what they do but by what they are.' (p 809).

And movements 'don't ask, they offer' (p 812). Although all movements have objective goals which they strive for, they provide at the same time a new cultural milieu for their participants which is an end itself:

> The new organizational form of contemporary movements is not just 'instrumental' for their goals. It is a goal in itself. Since the action is focused on cultural codes, the form of the movement is a message, a symbolic challenge to the dominant patterns... People are offered the possibility of another experience of time, space, interpersonal relations, which opposes the operational rationality of apparatuses. A different way of naming the world suddenly reverses the dominant codes (Melucci 1985, p 801)

Once again, note the use of the word 'new' in the above passage. Melucci's interest is not with social movements in general but with what he believes is a new type of social movement, common only in the last few decades. His theories about social movements are meant to apply mainly to them. Other authors in this school also insist that a new type of movement has arisen which, to use another phrase from Touraine, is 'radically discontinuous' with other types of social movement.

NSMs are considered 'new' for several reasons. They tend to be based in the grass roots, rather than in traditional trade unions and political parties. They tend to be reformist rather than revolutionary, their focus is on the institutions of civil society rather than on the state, the market or the dominant relations of production. The social backgrounds of their members is usually middle class, rather than working class, and 'class background does not determine the collective identities of the actors or the stakes of their action' (Cohen 1985, p 667). They usually push for the democratization of 'the structures of everyday life', the introduction of norms and values into realms which have become controlled by administrative rationality and processes of commodification.

I should note that many of these same issues have been noticed and studied by marxists concerned with questions of subjectivity, consciousness and ideology. This is especially

true in the case of British cultural marxists like E.P. Thompson and Raymond Williams. The Birmingham school of cultural studies, located at the University of Birmingham in England, also has worked on similar ideas. But Melucci, Touraine, Pizzorno and others in this group do not place their analysis within the marxist framework - they do not see movements as directly related to political or economic institutions. Touraine, whose work is the most developed of this school, attempts to avoid what he considers to be fundamental reifications involved in the concept of social structure or social-cultural order. Instead he stresses the continuous production of society by its members and conceives of social movements as battles to control 'the cultural field'. Hence this work differs from marxist work in important ways.

As mentioned already, the identity-oriented paradigm makes use of models of action which emphasize self-presentation and interpersonal communication, rather than the pursuit of goals. Pizzorno (1978a) sees social movements as the effort of groups of people to 'create a group identity within a general social identity whose interpretation they contest' (Cohen 1985, p 694). The central question is whether or not modern social movements are unique in the pursuit of this goal -- whether or not NSMs are in fact 'radically discontinuous' with older social movements.

The answer must be, I believe, 'no'. Certainly NSMs differ in some ways from more traditional social movements but I do not think the difference is a fundamental one. One reason why NSMs may appear to be so fundamentally different from other movements is the way social movements have been analyzed in the past. Early studies of social movements have emphasized either normative breakdowns or the rational pursuit of socially constructed interests. Melucci is absolutely right to find such analyses lacking. But many of his central objections to such studies have been anticipated by the British cultural marxists who have re-examined these movements to argue that questions of identity, culture, and values were just as important as economic interests in the development of social movements. As E.P. Thompson, writing about 19th century movements in England, says:

> ... some of the most bitter conflicts of these years turned on issues which are not encompassed by cost-of-living series. The issues which provoked the most intensity of feeling were very often ones in which such values as traditional customs, 'justice', 'independence', security, or family-economy were at stake, rather than straight-forward 'bread-and-butter' issues. The early years of the 1830s are aflame with agitations which turned on issues in which wages were of secondary importance (Thompson 1963, p 203).

The claim that fundamentally different kinds of social movements have arisen since the 1960s suggests that older movements could be explained in terms of the goal-rational model of action and a view of social structure which reduces it to an array of interest positions whereas new social movements require an alteration of these concepts. I will argue that, to the

contrary, our basic concepts of social structure and social action need to apply to society throughout history. What is especially enlightening about the development of the identity-oriented school is thus not its basically empirical claim that new social movements have begun to arise but rather its focus upon dimensions of action and their connection to social structure which have always existed but which have not been adequately theorized. The empirical question thus becomes more a matter of recognizing differences in degree between the extent to which social movements directly address issues of identity. The theoretical question is how we may use the theoretical insights of the identity-oriented paradigm to study social movements of all types.

V Theories of social movements which emphasized interests and rational action always had a central flaw. This flaw has been recognized in various ways by different commentators but probably its most poignant expression in terms of the 'free rider problem' noted by Mancur Olson. In *The Logic of Collective Action* (1968), Olson argues that purely goal-rational reasoning would lead individuals not to join social movements, because they would realize that their personal presence in the movement would make only an insignificant contribution to its success. Given the 'costs' in time and energy that participation entails, the (goal) rational decision would be to become a 'free rider', i.e. to let the movement run its course and hopefully win in favour of the individual's interests despite his or her lack of participation. But since all individuals could be expected to reason this way, social movements would never arise.

By contrast the authors of the identity oriented school reintroduce the concern of the collective behavior or breakdown school with features of social integration: norms, values and roles and find the reason for involvement in social movements to reside in the liberating effects which a new milieu will have on identity construction and personal expression. But unlike them it doesn't regard norms and values as properties of a social system which determine action - it sees them instead as implicated in power relations and contestable. Individuals act upon the societal bases of social integration, they are not its dupes, and they are capable of altering the relations of domination present in cultural media for identity construction.

Hence a major criticism of the identity-oriented approach to social movements is its insistence that a fundamentally new type of movement has emerged in modern times, rather than its emphasis on identity. Like E.P. Thompson I believe it is not possible to explain *any* social movement without reference to identities, the cultural grammars which delineate which identities are possible, and the relationship of such cultures to power relations in society. 'New' social movements may differ in the degree to which participants are *aware* of the social origins of norms and identities, and the degree to which

issues of identity have been made explicit goals, but these same processes occurred in earlier social movements and occur in contemporary movements which authors like Touraine tend to pass off as 'traditional'. There is no 'radical discontinuity' involved in contrasts between the old and the new movements, as historical studies providing rich descriptive material testify to.

It is also possible to criticize the identity-oriented school for failing to consider goal-rational and strategic action in their analysis. Examples of NSMs which often appear in these authors' works, movements like the feminist, peace and ecological movements, certainly have been aimed at changes in state policy even if aspects of identity have been importantly involved in them as well. Issues of identity and values go hand in hand with those of interests and strategy - they must be theorized and described together.

As a third criticism of the identity-oriented school, let me mention their underplay of institutional analysis. If previous notions of 'the state', 'social structure' and 'contradiction' have been reifications, as Touraine points out, this is partly because they have been used within analyses at an institutional level of social phenomena, i.e., they have been carried out at a high level of *abstraction*. There is nothing wrong about high levels of abstraction as long as what is being abstracted from isn't forgotten and as long as the constructs resulting are conceived of as highly general conditions in which action occurs. Reification is often a process of forgetting we can make use of theories of the state, for example, as long as we maintain conceptual linkages from the general terms such analyses employ to the many particular terms which must also be taken into account if specific activities are to be understood. Thus the problem isn't so much that some theories emphasize the state or class structure, it is rather that the meaning of these terms has been forgotten by many authors. These terms are abstractions which must ultimately come down to social action and its conditions.

VI It is with these comments in mind that I now return to my own study of the protest movement in Croxteth. Time limitations will force me to make a number of points in brief form:

1) First of all, the campaign to save Croxteth Comprehensive was not a 'new' social movement in the sense given to that expression by identity-oriented theorists. It was in many respects a traditional movement, composed of a class-conscious action group which pursued economic-like goals in a rational manner. It's 'newness' involved the target of the movement: state service provision, which meant that a large number of the activists were women and unemployed men rather than workers *per se*.

2) Secondly, the campaign must be studied at at least three levels of abstraction to fully understand it. On the highest level of abstraction we have the relationship of the Croxteth community to the state. The closure of Croxteth Comprehensive

is understandable only if the historical development of state welfare service provision in England is understood and only if the structural pressures on the British government during the 1970s recession is grasped. On this level of abstraction theory similar to that produced by the neo-marxist school mentioned earlier is adequate for explaining the general context of the struggle. Here we find structural pressures operating through economic relations which prioritized the cultural milieu of government employees and politicians in a goal-rational manner. Given the political agenda set by externally imposed economic constraints, Liverpool politicians virtually *had* to close schools. The structural context diminished the normative and dramaturgical dimensions of their action, so that it is entirely appropriate to stress interests and rationality when analyzing the closure of the school.

The second level of abstraction pertains to the Croxteth Community, as opposed to either the government or the individuals within that community, and its relationship to the government and school. Two things must be explained: *why* the community responded as it did, and *how* it conducted its response. The latter of these, the question of how, is best approached through something like the mid-level theory of the resource management school. The resources available to the community dictated the form of the response by once again prioritizing goal-rational, over dramaturgical and normative, forms of action. During the first phase of struggle the Croxteth Community Action committee was constrained by its membership to a purely institutional approach: an approach which did them little good in the end because the interests opposed to them had control over the informal decision making processes of local government. During the second and third phases of the campaign, however, new leaders managed to build the power base of the movement by attracting positive media attention and mobilizing public sentiments in their favor. 'How' questions focus the level of abstraction to community and protest group and draw attention to the field of possible goals, strategies, and tactics which available resources allow. Issues of identity, culture, personal expression and so on play some role in this level of explanation, but as objectifications secondary to goal-rational possibilities. 'How' questions place such issues in a means position, not an ends position. And 'how' questions must be answered.

However, the question of *why* Croxteth residents mobilized over their school closure and why they remained mobilized until the campaign goals had been achieved requires a different level of abstraction in which the individuals involved in the campaign and their interactions with each other become the object of study. The removal of the school came to represent a vast number of frustrations, worries, fears, and other negative subjective states daily experienced by the residents of Croxteth. Getting involved made sense only for dramaturgical and normative reasons. Involvement was a way to learn a new language in which these formerly private feelings could be legitimately expressed. It was to experience one's self in new

contexts, to play new roles, create new forms of interaction which were intrinsically rewarding. Women who had been housewives for years suddenly discovered that they could play leadership roles, help run a school, speak up at meetings.

4) It is therefore on this last level of abstraction, the level which least abstracts from direct perceptions of social activity, that I have found the theory developed by 'new' social theorists most helpful. Social action always involves goal-rational, normative and dramaturgical dimensions. Social movements will alter normative and identity-related features of the lifeworld simply by introducing a new organizational form within which members may become involved. The organizational form will be new because it must by its very nature alter traditional attitudes and beliefs in its challenge to employers, state officials, or status quo culture (depending upon what type of movement it is). Interviews repeatedly taken with all activists in the Croxteth campaign during the year of the school occupation consistently indicated the enormous liberation many residents felt in being part of the protest group, having a new identity, expressing grievances, generating together a new normative context. As one activist, a volunteer teacher, expressed it:

> I think the strongest source of inspiration that I had all along, and I got on the first day, and it's always been there, is the, how do you say?, the ordinary people here, the parents and other adults who help out. The sort of, the atmos (pause), the feeling that well we're all in this shit together we might as well make the best of it. The feeling of being together which I really miss; I miss on the street, I miss in public places. It's something which used to be prevalent in British society. It's something that we're losing as people become more and more alienated from each other or insecure (Neil Murtough, volunteer biology teacher).

And a local resident:

> Keith: I find myself in a curious situation right now because part of me says that I'm getting a tremendous amount out of the school, there're a lot days where, as I did last week, I'm coming in in the morning, the school finishes, and I'd still be here, I'd go through the night, getting along with the job, I was so into it. And the time would go nowhere. And there are days when I just don't want to go home. But that's, I'm over the top on that I've to calm myself down on that.
>
> P.C.: (Laughter)
>
> Keith: No, I have to because at one point I'm going to get fed up with it.
>
> P.C.: Oh I see.

Keith: And part of me says that I don't want the school to win for that, I want to keep on doing it as it is. But obviously the reason we're fighting is to reopen it as a school and then we'll have to take it from there.

P.C.: So if it is reopened you will feel like you've lost something?

Keith: Yeah. I really feel bad about it. I don't know if it's possible we'll get the jobs, but even then it wouldn't be the same.

P.C.: It wouldn't have as much meaning?

Keith: Yeah. I couldn't describe the way I felt the other week when Paul said to me, 'Well can you come along and run the lab for us?' Suddenly, after three months of puttering around, I was somebody all of a sudden. Oh, no, not somebody, but, everybody knew who I was and what I was here for.

P.C.: You had an identity and a purpose.

Keith: Yeah. I really feel that was important for me.

5) Yet it still remains important, when studying a social movement, to note the degree to which expressive and normative goals are formally articulated. In the gay and feminist movements, obviously, such goals are very conscious ones. In struggles for ethnic pride such goals are similarly conscious though they may not be articulated in as conscious and sophisticated a manner as they are within the feminist movement, with its consciousness raising groups and literature directly addressing the nature of self and social roles. With a traditional movement like the one in Croxteth we find activists rather stumbling upon expressive, identity related goals which they never made a part of their official objectives. The degree to which social movements articulate the identity-related stakes of their struggle will certainly influence the nature of the movement.

Such differences in degree are important. In Croxteth something like a contradiction actually arose between the formal campaign goals (winning back the school) and the informal cultural features of the movement. Running a school together was an experience of liberation for the majority of local residents and many privately reported, as did Keith in the passage quoted above, that they hoped the school wouldn't be won back so that they could remain working within it! Expressive, identity-oriented goals of a social movement must become articulated to prevent such contradictions between their formal and informal features. This may be taken as a central difference between new and old social movements, but it is a difference of degree, -- it is no 'radical break'.

VII The identity-ori nted approach to social movements, then,

is valuable for the attention it draws to issues of identity and the control of normative contexts. However, it errors in its insistence upon an empirically 'new' type of social movement which is 'radically discontinuous' with the social movements of earlier times. This paper took a case study, a working class campaign to win back a secondary school closed down by Liverpool City Council, to show that traditional movements also involve identity issues in important ways. The case study also demonstrated how levels of abstraction in the study of social movements will favor what have been different theoretical schools up to now. To understand the full context in which social movements occur, structural conditions in society as a whole will often have to be examined. In the case of this particular study, the government of Liverpool and its relationship to the British state and economy had to be examined in order to understand why Croxteth Comprehensive was closed down. At such levels of abstraction goal-rational action and economic interests become prioritized, not only analytically but substantially as well. This is because government decision makers, the people who closed down Croxteth Comprehensive, have an externally imposed agenda which must be addressed, dictated in this case by economic constraints. The normative and dramaturgical dimensions of their activities are suppressed in importance. Approaches criticized by 'new' social movement theorists have often made an appropriate analysis, but one limited to the most general and abstract features of the movements. They have also been guilty of reifying their abstractions, speaking only of 'the state', for example, when this term actually refers to structures conditioning the activities of state decision makers -- an important distinction.

This paper also examined the Croxteth protest movement at an intermediate level of abstraction, -- one which focussed upon the community and protest group and how they conducted their campaign. Once again goal-rational dimensions of action were found to be substantially prioritized through the structural relationship of the community to the local government and through the contingency of existing resources with which the activists could conduct their campaign. Normative and expressive dimensions of action were present, but subordinated to a structural field of possible strategies with which to conduct the campaign.

Lastly, on the level of analysis in which individuals and their interactions with others became the object of study, all three dimensions of action became equally important. In fact, there is no way to explain the reasons why people became involved in the Croxteth movement and remained involved within it without noting their gains in purely cultural contexts. The movement supplied a new 'code' or language through which activists could express themselves and construct expanded social identities. On this level the work of the identity-oriented school was invaluable to the study.

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