

Recombining individual, group and societal factors to understand how collective action can (fail to)  
change the world

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One of the primary ways that people change societies is by acting with others to engage in protest and other forms of collective action. Indeed, archival data suggest that there has been a dramatic increase in the emergence, spread and reach of popular, grassroots social movements. Alongside this rapid growth in popular protest, there has been an upsurge in research on collective action which has been both productive and fragmenting. We have an excellent understanding of the many factors that shape participation in collective action, but we lack a framework that explains how these factors fit together. In this talk I will extend upon the insights offered by the Social Identity Model of Collective Action and the Integrated Model of Personality and Social Psychological Theories of Collective Action to propose a higher-order theoretical integration, the MOBILISE model. MOBILISE draws on a systems meta-theory to propose that collective action engagement and outcomes are determined by a dynamic interaction between factors that shape people as individuals, members of groups, and societies. I will present data from cross-sectional, longitudinal and experimental studies demonstrating the group-level and interactive bases of commitment to change the world. Our work identifies how novel groups form through (online and offline) interactions in which people craft norms for action and, in doing so, become the change that they want to see in the world.