CHAPTER 1

Introduction: Active Voices

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> Discourse and system produce each other—and conjointly—only at the crest of this immense reserve. What are being analyzed here are certainly not the terminal states of discourse; they are the preterminal regularities in relation to which the ultimate state, far from constituting the birth-place of a system, is defined by its variants. Behind the completed system, what is discovered by analysis of formation is not the bubbling source of life itself, life in an as yet uncaptured state; it is an immense density of systematicities, a tight group of multiple relations. Moreover, these relations cannot be the very web of the text—they are not by nature foreign to discourse. . . . One is not seeking, therefore, to pass from the text to thought, from talk to silence, from the exterior to the interior, from spatial dispersion to the pure recollection of the moment, from superficial multiplicity to profound unity. One remains within the dimension of discourse.
> —Foucault (1972), *The Archaeology of Knowledge*

> Human experience is never just "discourse," and never just "acts," but is some inextricably interwoven fabric of images and practices, conceptions and actions in which history constructs both people and the games that they play, and in which people make history by enacting, reproducing, and transforming those games.
> —Sherry Ortner (1999), *Life and Death on Mt. Everest*

For those who study social change by interrogating the relationships between structure, culture, and agency, by analyzing the ways in which power is maintained and transformed, and by theorizing social movement

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activity and participation, post-9/11 America has resembled all-too-familiar wartime scenarios. In a climate of heightened national (in)security, individual freedoms and domestic conflicts often fade from focus while a nation and its citizens rally together to protect the values that define it. Examples of this are plenty. A presidential order signed in 2002 expanded the National Security Agency's authority to include what has now become the highly challenged "warrantless wiretapping surveillance program." Through this program, government officials have the authority to eavesdrop on transnational telephone and e-mail communications without obtaining court-sanctioned approval that traditionally outlines the case for overriding a citizen's civil rights. On August 1, 2006, video blogger and freelance journalist Josh Wolf spent a total of 225 days in "coercive custody" in a federal retention facility in California for refusing to turn over unedited footage that revealed the identity of protesters at an anti-G8 demonstration in San Francisco. Wolf's imprisonment, although much less publicized, followed on the heels of *New York Times* journalist Judith Miller's eighty-five day detention for refusing to reveal her source in the Valerie Plame leak investigation. Though controversy surrounds their retention, foreign combatants held since 2001 at the U.S. military compound in Guantanamo Bay, Cuba, have been denied protections of the Geneva Convention. Labeled by the U.S. military as "unlawful enemy combatants" rather than "prisoners of war," they are not guaranteed such protections.

In a democracy, however, enactments of government power like the ones listed above rarely go unnoticed and uncontested. When civil liberties and national security collide under a government bound to the will of "the people," friction invariably results. As the definition of "domestic terrorism" has expanded, it has come to include those acts of civil disobedience and advocacy work, areas of civic engagement usually protected under the Constitution. In December 2005, the American Civil Liberties Union (ACLU) released FBI documents confirming that the government organization's "counterterrorist" division had been "spying" on domestic advocacy groups by infiltrating organizations and community events, monitoring electronic communication, accessing bank records as well as tracing financial transactions, and collecting information about their members. Targeted "domestic terrorist" organizations included the animal rights group People for the Ethical Treatment of Animals (PETA); the environmental advocacy group Greenpeace; the peace, justice, and poverty-relief organization Catholic Workers Group; the civil rights organization American-Arab Anti-discrimination Committee; and countless local and less established groups and events. Amidst large blocks of white space, which are the result of the heavy editing of the pre-public disclosure, slivers of prose in the FBI documents released by the ACLU detail the extent of the FBI's activities. One document includes a blocked-out "contact list for

the 'Attendees of the Third National Organizing Conference on Iraq,' Stanford, CA: May 25–26, 2002." Another similarly edited document released from the "counterterrorist" division of the FBI speaks to

> general intelligence regarding [section blocked out] [the] upcoming "Vegan Community Project," scheduled to occur on 04/02/03 . . . on the Bloomington, In., campus at Indiana University Memorial Union, Maple Room, from 7–10 pm. A surveillance is planned [section blocked out] Occasional spot checks and surveillances are being conducted. (FBI as cited in ACLU n.d.)

As these documents illustrate, enactments of government power often illustrate the ways in which the public work of civic engagement and the less public, voluntarily assumed features of identity, such as what we choose to eat and why, are becoming increasingly less distinct from one another as indicators of nationalist allegiance.

These government-sanctioned "domestic spying" initiatives, and others like them, are not the only contributors to what is widely understood as "the end of privacy." After acquiring the popular social networking site "MySpace," Rupert Murdock "hired a high-tech ad firm to mine user profiles, blog posts, and bulletins to 'allow for highly refined audience segmentation and contextual microtargeting,'" a tactic already practiced regularly by corporations such as AOL and MSN, who run Web-based search engines (Schimke 2007:16). Beginning in January 2005, visitors to any of the Walt Disney World theme parks in Orlando, Florida, no longer need to show ID and bar-coded tickets upon entering. Instead, visitors are required to submit to a fingerprint scan that records patrons' "finger geometry," which is then uploaded into the Disney network and serves as each patron's "ticket tag" for entry and reentry into the parks. Universal Studios and SeaWorld in Orlando also plan to follow suit (Local6.com 2005).

Despite discomfort with this trend toward the dissolution of boundaries between public and private discourses and the actions that include them, the malevolence of this emerging reality is not guaranteed. Notions of "public" and "private" have long been understood as existing in a changing relationship to one another. Formed through "social action and dialogue even as collectively held conceptions of each shape the conditions of their emergence," such categories are fragile and bound to the agency of those who craft them (Asen and Brouwer 2001:10). Many scholars have long held the belief that these calculated delineations between private and public serve to further marginalize and disenfranchise subordinate populations. According to these scholars, designating discourses and subjects as "private" removes them from productive arenas of critique. Not surprisingly, then, these same scholars claim that "all struggles against oppression in the modern world begin by redefining what

has previously been considered 'private,' non-public and non-political issues as matters of public concern, as issues of justice, as sites of power which need discursive legitimation" (Benhabib as cited in Asen and Brouwer 2001:10). In the above examples, however, it is not the disenfranchised who are "publifying" the private to expose power imbalances and fight hegemonic reproduction. Rather, the dissolution of "the private" is being enacted by already dominant political and economic institutions that more likely benefit from inegalitarian norms than suffer from them.

Despite the oppressive potential of labeling content "private," evocations of the "private," when materialized from within a disempowered community, can also offer members of this community "freedom from official intrusion as well as decision-making autonomy," especially over constructions of identity (Asen and Brouwer 2001:11). According to Robert Asen and Daniel Brouwer (2001), in their synthesis of recent scholarship on the public sphere, calls for "privacy" can but should not be quickly dismissed despite the shifting and complicated relationship between "public," "publics," and "privacy." They highlight the recuperative nature of claiming privacy as "respite from the public glare" and as a space from which disparate, emerging, and fractured communities can craft the types of collective identities that are necessary to any sincere challenges to inequality (see also Fraser 1992). The phenomenon we now face, one in which notions of privacy and "publics" are morphing yet again, leaves us with important questions about how agency and agenda impact the degree to which dissolving public/private boundaries benefit or confine possibilities for social reconstruction, personal autonomy, and collective identity.

This metamorphosis, brought about as government agencies and corporations continue to mine areas of personal identity such as shopping habits, eating habits, and spiritual/ethical affiliations, is often understood by social theorists as a consequence of advanced capitalism (see Touraine 1981, 1995; Melucci 1980, 1985, 1989, 1994, 1996; Garner 1997), a facet of postindustrial society through which symbolic systems and information technologies join economic and material structures as vehicles for social reproduction. In this climate, characterized by postmodern fragmentation, nation-state distinctions fade in the shadow of growing globalized networks while boundaries between economic, political, and cultural structures lose rigidity. As these "social conflicts move from the traditional economic/industrial system to cultural ones," they are characterized by contestations about "personal identity, the time and the space in everyday life, the motivation and the cultural patterns of individual action" (Melucci 1985:795–96). Such changes in the ways that power and social/political/cultural norms are constructed, deconstructed, and reconstructed result from and evoke changes in the ways that structures of meaning-making are resisted. More importantly, perhaps, these changes affect *who* is doing the resisting and how we perceive these persons and communities. In our postindustrial

society, this dissolution of boundaries between *who we are*, *what we do*, and *how we make meaning* (especially when these differ from dominant social norms) requires activist academics to reconsider the way we theorize and participate in social change and the types of movements that manifest it. It is to this task that *Active Voices* attends by addressing academics as whole persons: as theorists, as researchers, as educators, as analysts, and as agents of change.

Though sociologists have primarily undertaken the study of social change and of the movements that evoke it, rhetoricians—those who study the art and practice of communication and persuasion—also have much to offer such inquiry. The authors and scholarship gathered in this collection represent what interdisciplinary, rhetorical approaches can contribute to the study of social movements. By studying interaction and communication as ingredients of change, these authors posit challenges to common perceptions of audience. They do so by interrogating the complexities of personal and collective agency and identity; by examining the transformative power of narrative and reflection; by contributing to and expanding our understanding of historical, familiar movements; and by offering a language and lens for analyzing contemporary, unconventional ones.

In order to understand what this collection offers that others have not, we call on rhetoric as a way of locating our language within a cross-disciplinary framework of meaning, which necessarily involves defining ourselves, our terms, and our audiences. It involves relinquishing disciplinary claims to knowledge and deconstructing the jargoned dialogues accompanying these claims. It involves crafting an analytical lens that is inclusive rather than exclusive, one that hunts for connections instead of fissures, welcomes critique as an organic part of evolution, and examines lifecycles of change against one another to prioritize in new ways postdisciplinary interaction and partnerships. To help orient readers to this type of community building and to ground the scholarly work that follows, we use this introduction to attend to the following questions: What is rhetoric and who studies it? What is a social movement? How are social movements usually studied and by whom? How and why is this changing? How can rhetorical approaches contribute meaningfully to the way we perceive, study, and teach social movements? Whom does such scholarship benefit? Ultimately, these questions are at the center of scholarly efforts to further our understanding of the relationship between social movements, identity, and social change.

Rhetoric as Action

Rhetoric has had many definitions throughout history. Aristotle's widely referenced version—the available means of persuasion—is bound by the scope of

classical democracy and its citizenry. Updating Aristotle's definition of rhetoric for modern and postmodern considerations, many contemporary rhetoricians emphasize the symbolic nature of rhetoric by more inclusively framing it as a product of and a force for situated, interactive meaning-making. This is most apparent in Kenneth Burke's (1950:41) definition of rhetoric as "the use of words by human agents to form attitudes or to induce actions in other human agents" and Lloyd Bitzer's (1968:4) characterization of rhetoric as "a mode of altering reality, not by the direct application of energy to objects, but by the creation of discourse which changes reality through the mediation of thought and action." By defining rhetoric in these ways, as symbolic and ultimately transformative action, Burke and Bitzer carve academic space for the study of rhetoric and for those who pursue it by shifting the contemporary focus away from what rhetoric is toward what it can do.

More recent definitions not only show the widespread impact of Burke's and Bitzer's contributions; they also illustrate the way contemporary rhetoricians are adapting them for interdisciplinary scholarship and analysis. Through his definition of rhetoric as "the study of how people use language and other symbols to realize human goals and carry out human activities," Charles Bazerman (1988:6) retains rhetoric's classical association with purposive activity. Historian George Kennedy (1992) likewise pulls from rhetoric's classical past to make sense of the present, but also indicates that, for him, rhetoric is a force that requires the investment of its users. He emphasizes the communicative aspect of rhetoric, defining it as "the energy inherent in communication: the emotional energy that impels the speaker to speak, the physical energy expended in the utterance, the energy level coded in the message, and the energy experienced by the recipient in decoding the message" (2). In contrast, Sonja Foss, Karen Foss, and Cindy Griffin (1999:11) link performance to communicative action, defining rhetoric as "an action human beings perform when they use symbols for the purpose of communicating with one another." Andrea Lunsford (2002:n.p.) takes an even more encompassing approach, defining rhetoric, simply, as "the art, practice, and study of human communication," suggesting that rhetoric is indistinguishable from interaction.

Broadening the scope of rhetoric to explicitly include social movements indicates that rhetoric is not only interactive and situated, but also transformative and material. Recognizing that rhetoric is ubiquitous, encompassing all manners of interactive praxis, emphasizes the materiality of rhetoric in a way that is tied to the many modern realities that melt divisions between our theory and our practice, our lives and our classrooms, our citizenry and our identity. For the purposes of this collection and the interdisciplinary conversations we hope it facilitates, we have developed a situated definition of rhetoric that, like those above, highlights the elements that make it useful for the study of social change—its symbolic value, its materiality, and its conse-

quences. To these emphases, however, we add another we think is especially important—the agency of its users. Like Gerard Hauser (1986), we believe that a definition of rhetoric includes not only what rhetoric is but also what it does and why it does it. In his *Introduction to Rhetorical Theory*, Hauser writes, "Rhetorical communication is explicitly pragmatic. Its goal is to influence human choices on specific matters that require immediate attention" (11). This *exigency* to which rhetoric attends is similar to that which motivates agents to form collectivities and intentionally participate in social movements aimed at evoking social change.

Any comprehensive definition of rhetoric, then, must speak to the agency of those who employ it, consciously or otherwise. It must also examine these agents in relation to their purposes, their audiences, and their contexts. In other words, the study of rhetoric, especially rhetoric aimed at social change, is really *the study of who is trying to do what to whom, with particular emphasis on how and why they are doing it*. A rhetorical approach to the study of social movements, then, asks and attempts to answer these questions as they pertain to the persuasive tactics of agents for change.

Such inquiry is comfortable for rhetoricians. As a tradition—or a network of related traditions—the study of rhetoric examines transformation. Social movements, as quantifiable and distinct patterns of transformation (albeit complicated ones), represent one possible area of scholarly inquiry that rhetoricians are poised to study. In the next section, we detail trends in social movements and the way they have been/are being studied. We infuse this discussion with visions of how rhetoricians can and are contributing to this growing body of knowledge. In doing so, we hope both to highlight synergistic insights and to complicate paradigmatic perceptions.

Social Movements as Theory and Practice

A variety of social actors and collectivities participate in the complex activity of defining social movements, each speaking from different subject positions with distinct motives and aims. Most noticeably, movement constituencies and their affiliated organizations engage in self-definition. Outsiders, such as media sources and countermovement participants, also craft visible and interactive definitions. As this happens, those who study movements attempt to define them theoretically, sometimes acting as ethnographers by attempting to navigate their murky identities as researcher-participants. These active forces—movement organizers/participants, outsiders, and scholars—may adjust their definitions according to the audiences they hope to reach so that they also indirectly influence how movements are understood and distinguished from one another. As scholars have attempted to unpack the evolution of influential

movements ranging from the civil rights movement to white pride counter-movements, from feminisms to The Promise Keepers, and preservationism to Wise Use, they have modified their definitions to attend to emerging variations in movement structures, participants, and aims.

For more than sixty years, scholars have attempted to understand contemporary social movements. Much of this work has been done by sociologists who employ social psychology to study collective behavior, its motives, its organization, and its consequences. These researchers have also explored how individual movements attempt to recruit and mobilize growing numbers of active participants in order to provoke political and social transformation. According to American sociologist Roberta Garner (1997), "social movements are usually defined as collectivities engaged in non-institutionalized discourses and practices aimed at changing the existing condition of society" (1). Italian sociologist and new social movement theorist Alberto Melucci (1985:795) emphasizes the disruptive qualities of movements when he writes that movements are "collective action[s] based on solidarity, carrying a conflict, and breaking the limits of the system in which action occurs." In order to understand the relationship between definitions of social movements—where they overlap, where they diverge, and why—we briefly detail the ways in which such movements have been studied historically and by whom.

Historically, social movement scholarship has been the domain of social psychology and sociology; the ways sociologists have approached social movement scholarship, however, has shifted dramatically over time. Garner (1997) traces the evolution of modern social movement theory as understood within sociology. She identifies major paradigm shifts, which she attributes to internal developments in the field, shifting intellectual currents in larger culture, and changes in the nature of movements themselves. Initially, according to Garner, theorists developed and employed theories of collective behavior and mass society to account for the seemingly irrational and unexpected movements that characterized modern social change prior to 1960. The *collective behavior* or *structural strain* approach, characterized in the post–World War II era scholarship of Adorno, Frenkel-Brunswick, Levinson, and Sanford, was used to interpret how cultural forces were transformed into individual motivations, predispositions, and propensities. Theorists developed this approach to account for the rise of Nazism in Europe and the willingness of German citizens to subscribe to it, the equally forceful communist revolution in Cuba, and the rise of fascist dictatorships around the globe.

During this time, scholars employed social psychology and psychoanalytic theory to argue that acts of collective behavior—ranging from crazed mobs to social movements—were relatively patternless, unpredictable, intoxicating, unexpected, and irrational psychological acts that responded to large-scale social breakdown and strain. As such, theorists argue, collective

behavior was extremely noninstitutional and separate from the "patterns and rhythms of normal daily life and caused by societal stress" that could not be contained by rational response (Buechler 2000:20). Because these forms of frustration and anxiety seemed to be located within the individual, social psychology and ideological analysis became the main tools for theorists examining and explaining "the translation of individual discontent into genuinely collective action" (Buechler 2000:20). In other words, theorists employed these analytical lenses to explain how fissures in mass society affected individual behavior and led groups to act in concert.

The limits of this model of analysis became apparent when the liberatory movements of the 1960s began to emerge. Many sociologists were sympathetic toward, and even participants in, these movements. They disagreed with the collective behavior model's presumption that movement participants were irrational, and they argued that the model could not explain goal-oriented, strategic, and ethically consistent movements, such as "rights" movements, that sought to transform the political system. As a result, social movement scholars developed a new approach that assumed movement participants were rational individuals making committed ethical choices. One consequence of this new assumption was that individual behavior was no longer problematic and, therefore, did not require explanation. Consequently, scholars replaced the study of individual psychology with the study of structure as "the patterning of activities and relationships, abstracted from and existing independently of individual motivation" that imposed "a set of limiting conditions on individual action" (Garner 1997:19). Scholars shifted their analysis from people to organizations, with the latter serving as tangible representations of the aims and means of a movement. Adherents to this new scholarly approach, dubbed the *resource mobilization paradigm*, focused on understanding how organizations recruit and mobilize members and utilize other resources (such as money, politicians, and media access) in order to challenge institutional norms. During this time, scholars also started studying the impact of particular movement tactics, often using statistical analyses to determine which organizational strategies are most effective at meeting movement goals under particular conditions. This shift away from individuals and toward organizational structure and action indicates a sea change in which scholars abandoned efforts to explain *why* movements came into being for the study of *how* they functioned once they existed. In this respect, resource mobilization scholars contribute greatly to how we understand the impact of large-scale, civic-centric movements that employ public displays of civil disobedience, such as boycotts and protests. They also help future movement organizers make decisions about which tactics to employ under what circumstances.

Though many American sociologists still adhere to the resource mobilization paradigm, others have begun to modify it in two substantial ways.

First, David Snow et al. (1986) launched an internal critique of resource mobilization, citing scholars' neglect of interpretation and meaning. Drawing on Erving Goffman (1974) and the associated symbolic interactionist tradition, these scholars proposed studying movement *frames*, which they define as "schemata of interpretation" that "organize experience and guide action, whether individual or collective," to account for how individuals come to align their often apparently divergent understandings into shared interpretations that can support collective action (Benford and Snow 2000:614). They also promote studying *framing processes* to understand how activists interpret experience as grievances (or exigencies for change), build responses to those grievances, and develop motives for action (Snow and Benford 1988). Because framing studies emphasize the importance of meaning to action, they offer an interdisciplinary portal through which rhetoricians can engage social movement scholarship (Stevens 2006; see also Jackson and Miller, this volume). Framing theorists' focus on meaning marks a return to the study of *why* movements form, not just *how* they pursue their goals.

Simultaneously, and independently of framing studies, several European scholars were developing another strand of social movement scholarship known as *new social movement studies.* These scholars—namely, Alberto Melucci, Alain Touraine, Jürgen Habermas, and Manuel Castells—prioritize the study of meaning, agency, and socially embedded actors over organizational structure. In mass, they tend to examine movements that are less inclined to agitate directly for political transformation than to challenge cultural norms and hegemonic practices that influence identity formation. On a practical level, scholars argue that movements based on class identity are giving way to the emergence of a "new" type of movement, exemplified by native pride movements, transgender movements, and vegetarian/vegan movements, in which participants are driven more and more by a desire to transform perceptions of identity and challenge cultural codes, rather than by (or in addition to) their fervor for political upheaval and public policy reformation. These new movements are also characterized by a shift in tactics that blur the boundaries between public collective action and interpersonal persuasion, between a priori and personally evoked (or chosen) claims to identity, and between civic and cultural arenas as targets of transformation. Attending specifically to concerns about *why* movements form as well as *how* they function, new social movement scholars have widened our understanding of what constitutes a social movement and retheorized identity as not simply a product of structural determination, but as fluid, voluntary, and flexible.[1] Because both new social movement and rhetorical studies attend to the interactive construction of politically consequential meanings and identities, scholars of rhetoric have productively engaged this branch of social movement studies (Hauser and Whalen 1997; see also Stevens, Cain, and DeGenaro, this volume).

Beginning in the late 1980s, amidst messy postmodern currents of fragmentation as a means of amalgamation, new social movement studies also began to influence sociologists in America. Although political and social differences in the historical realities of Europe and the United States undoubtedly complicated attempts to integrate and advance these competing paradigms,[2] productive hybridizations of resource mobilization, framing, and new social movement studies have begun to emerge (see, for example, Morris and Mueller 1992; Johnston and Klandermans 1995b). It is at this juncture that we still find ourselves as we ask what rhetoricians have contributed, and what they can and should contribute, to the inquiry into movement formation and persistence.

Rhetoricians as Activist Academics

These recent fusions indicate more than simply a shift in focus and scope; they also create new avenues for dialogue and discovery. As theorists' understandings of what actually constitutes a social movement evolve, the field of study, as a whole, is becoming more multidisciplinary. This trend has the potential to further splinter research into how and why social change happens as scholars face competing assumptions and struggle to translate jargoned, discipline-bound analytical approaches. But it also offers scholars a chance to look beyond familiar worldviews and identify commonalities across discourse communities. The study of rhetoric is well suited to such meta-inquiry, especially when this inquiry is distinctly grounded in persuasion, discourse, and interaction, as is the case with social movements. Despite this organic relationship between the study of social change and of persuasion, scholars of rhetoric have a spotty history of theorizing the former, with many of their most direct contributions residing in a strand of communication scholarship from the 1970s. During this time, several rhetoric scholars engaged one another in dialogue to understand the rhetorical attributes of organized movements and the interactive proclivities of participants who employ persuasive tactics.

To this end, scholars defined social movements as distinctly rhetorical by highlighting the importance of situated discourse and interaction as propellants of change. Following sociological norms of the time, communication scholar Herbert Simons (1970) focused on the rhetoric of movement leaders as he argued for a theory of persuasion for social movements. Of such persuasion, he writes:

> Any movement, it is argued, must fulfill the same functional requirements as more formal collectivities. These imperatives constitute *rhetorical requirements* for the leadership of the movement. Conflicts among requirements create *rhetorical problems* which in turn affect decisions on *rhetorical strategy*.

> *The primary rhetorical test of the leader—and, indirectly, of the strategies he [sic] employs—is his capacity to fulfill the requirements of his movement by resolving or reducing rhetorical problems.* (2, emphasis in the original)

For Simons, the primary task of social movement leaders (and other members aiming to mobilize future constituencies) is to create avenues for persuasion by being aware of and manipulating or reducing rhetorical constraints. Robert Cathcart (1978), a contemporary of Simons, expands this analysis to include not just movement leaders, but also movement participants of every ilk. Cathcart interprets movement discourses, both verbal and nonverbal, as forms of collective action that confront dominant cultural practices. He defines social movements as "primarily . . . symbolic or rhetorical act[s]" or "rhetorical trans-actions of a *special type*, distinguishable by the peculiar reciprocal rhetorical acts set off by the movement on one hand and the established system or controlling agency on the other" (233). For Cathcart, then, "to study a movement is to study its form" since meaning is inseparable from the form that embodies it (233).

Although scholars of rhetoric migrated away from theorizing social movement rhetorics as such in the 1980s—just as important breakthroughs were being made by sociologists—this act of defining social movements rhetorically to identify the distinctiveness of particular movements is especially important for our understanding of contemporary movements. According to Melucci (1989), such movements act more like "movement networks" that are less stable, more integrated with one another, more likely to share constituencies, and less civic-centric than the class- and race-based liberatory movements of the 1960s. In this contemporary landscape, theorists have become agents capable of, perhaps even responsible for—to some degree—crafting movement boundaries and articulating the distinct characteristics of participants as a way of defining movements theoretically and materially. The role of the scholar, then, is generative as well as analytical. Rhetorician Malcolm Sillars (1980:31, emphasis in the original) elaborates on the generative role of the movement scholar when he defines social movements as:

> *collective actions which are perceived by a critic. They are defined by that critic in terms of the most useful rhetorical events, conflicts, or strategies which will best explain the critic's view of the movement.* The critic may accept the limits of the movement provided by someone else or may "create" the movement.

This definition underscores the importance of studying the rhetoric of a movement as a heuristic that provides insight into the movement itself. It reinforces Michael McGee's earlier, unpublished claim that a movement is

defined not by innate qualities, but by a scholarly interpretation of it as rhetorically distinct (as cited in Sillars 1980). By determining the important defining features of a movement—its goals, constituency, scope, and methods of persuasion—scholars are better equipped to understand the intersections between these features and, ultimately, the nature of the movements themselves. They are also imbued with the spirit of activism. As an activity that rhetorically, interactively, and materially shapes a movement, the scholarly act of defining a movement advances it, making those who define it active participants in this process.

Emerging trends toward civic engagement suggest rhetoricians are indeed returning to the study of social movements. This work can inform and support the work of sociologists. One of these trends is the study of publics and counterpublics, which found foothold in communication in the 1990s. Grounded in the work of Jürgen Habermas and in Nancy Fraser's (1992) well-known critical response, public sphere theorists interrogate the formation and efficacy of nonpolitical communities, who, in varying degrees of capacity and suppression, struggle to disrupt, rearrange, or dismantle the civic and cultural norms of the nation-states to which they belong. Counterpublic studies are not bound exclusively to the study of social movements so much as to social change, for they often focus on coalitions and associations that engage in dialogue with political structures, adding to instead of confronting these structures. Yet this scholarship nonetheless provides one possible approach to social movement studies, and it is particularly well developed by rhetoricians in communications (see Hauser and mcclellan, this volume; see also Fraser 1992, 1997; Goodnight 1997; Hauser 1999). By broadening perceptions of what constitutes a forum for discursive deliberation and prioritizing the formation of personal and collective identity as public-minded endeavors, such scholarship intersects and overlaps with both traditional resource mobilization scholarship and new social movement studies, thereby offering up one potential way to overcome the rigid distinctions between them. In this respect, counterpublic studies serve as a key and productive intersection between rhetoric and sociology.

Drawing on cultural/performative, literary, and composition studies, scholars of rhetoric explicate the persuasive power of visual, virtual, and embodied rhetorics as well as that of narrative as important sites of social movement activity. Graffiti as dissent, transgender as transpersonal, flash mobs as a product of text messaging, wikis/blogging as interactive new media, and vegan conversion narratives as action-oriented testimonials all exemplify the ways we employ our rhetoric materially. More importantly, these examples—and the theoretical tools we use to illuminate their meaning—illustrate the importance of interaction and context. Whether we term them systemic vs. individual, structural vs. cultural, personal vs. political, public vs. private, or civic

vs. aesthetic, the decay of these already tenuous boundaries forces those who study them to think less in terms of specific events and actions as signifiers of individual movements and more in terms of the relationships between movements (and between the scholarly paradigms through which they are studied). In this regard, "the end of privacy" might rightly (and theoretically) be reframed as "the end of a priori." Twenty-first century scholars of meaning understand it as constantly fluctuating because the contexts from which meaning arises—perceptions and enactments of identity, agency, power, adversity, allegiance, alliance, possibility—are also in states of perpetual change. If we hope to give meaning to meaning, a desire that pollinates scholars of all persuasions, we need to focus our scholarly gaze on the rhetorical situations that momentarily and repeatedly shape understanding and action. Although historically peripheral to social movement studies, scholars of rhetoric ply their trade by doing such pointed inquiry, and they are valuable companions for others who seek to do the same.

These goals, of course, are politically interested, and vehemently attacked by the likes of Stanley Fish, David Horowitz, and others, sometimes including our students and their families. Though manifestations of this critique vary, it is based in the belief that learning can and should be apolitical, free from partisanship, and that academic knowledge can and should be neutral—distanced from immediate social and political action. In contrast, as activist educators, we claim that knowledge, and the ways we acquire it, is *always* interested and, as such, rhetorical. We further contend that participants in knowledge making who obscure their own rhetoricity, and those who defend them, are often those most emotionally and materially invested in the status quo with its structural, partisan inequities. By owning up to our desire for theory and praxis that are connected to and that matter in our world, we do not become *more* political or ideological; we simply expose our subjectivity so that we can become reflexive about the consequences of our scholarship and encourage more discussion about the transformative nature of learning.

As more academics engage in interdisciplinary social movement scholarship, we build a new collective that can incrementally change rhetoric's identity and aims. Rhetoric's classical association with elite pedagogy has been difficult to shake from its location within our ivory towers, but as academics engage in movements and allow movements to engage us, we develop new repertoires for democratic participation, inclusion, and transformation. By expanding our attention to varieties of civic, political, and cultural change, we become more capable of actively engaging with one another, with our readers, and with our students in ways that support the emergence of collectives that can build a more just society.

Until now, we have focused on what the study of rhetoric can bring to the study of social movements. We have yet to entertain an equally valuable

question: What can the study of social movements bring to rhetoric? Perhaps the most valuable aspect of the trend toward interdisciplinarity is that it not only encourages rhetoricians and sociologists to engage one another in dialogue; it also encourages rhetoricians in communication to reconnect with their doppelgangers in English and Composition Studies, and vice versa. This disconnect is evidenced by similar ones in the scholarly communities and the products of these communities—such as conferences, journals, professional organizations—with which each community aligns itself. Since rhetoricians in English often align themselves with the humanities while those in communication align themselves with social sciences, differences in disciplinary perceptions of canonical texts and scholars reflect tangential academic traditions rather than overlapping ones. Social movement studies, as it is beginning to emerge within rhetoric, has the power to bridge these chasms and reunite rhetoricians in both theory and praxis. The pieces in this collection encourage such cross-disciplinary community-building dialogues, which not only nourish our scholarship, but also attend to our whole identity as scholar/teachers. These dialogues also have powerful implications for student learning. In the next section, we examine these implications.

Teaching as Civic Praxis

One key aim of this collection is to fuse disciplinary divisions and highlight the relationship between our scholarship and our teaching as civic praxis. After all, the classroom is not unlike the world in which it is embedded. The classroom, and the inquiry that takes place there, simultaneously mirror and challenge the social structures that hold them in place. Like civic arenas, the classroom is a place of possibility and resistance, a place where conflict encourages transformation. It embodies the dialectical relationship between theory and practice—theory informs practice, practice restructures theory, and theory crafts future practice. As facilitators in the classroom, teacher/scholars have long held the charge of preparing students to assume agency in the challenges and realities they will face once they leave it. But, just as citizens do not always act in their own best interest and assert their agency productively, student resistance and the insecurities that underscore this resistance can interrupt learning. Sometimes, these disruptions take the form of passivity and disengagement as students find themselves in unfamiliar learning environments. Sometimes, these disruptions are more overt when the knowledge that students bring into the classroom begins to clash with the knowledge they invariably create as they reflect on their experiences through writing. Still other times, it moves from resignation to rage as students struggle with their dissolving and morphing notions of identity and ability. In the best of times, however, students and

teachers engage both struggles and resistance thoughtfully to create new ways of grounding learning in the situated experiences of our lives.

Like the social landscape both students and teachers encounter in other facets of their daily lives, the classroom is not always a safe place, or a comfortable one. Learning is often violent because it forces students to move out of their comfort zones and into a sort of philosophical upheaval. In this sense, the classroom can be an arena for intense confrontation; however, it should not be a place for conversion. As activist academics, our charge involves exposing students to their own potential agency and encouraging them to assert it by helping them learn to use intersecting tools of analysis, critique, and action. After all, if our students leave our classrooms unchanged, we have failed. However, if they leave our classrooms parroting our system of understanding instead of discovering and developing their own as a means of engaging in structural transformation, we have also failed.

In the classroom, as in society, communities and collectivities emerge as building blocks of power and knowledge. In her book *The Struggle for Pedagogies: Critical and Feminist Discourses as Regimes of Truth*, Jennifer Gore (1993) defines a critical pedagogy as one that includes both elements of instruction and social vision. For her, "how one teaches becomes inseparable from what is taught and how one learns" (14). Throughout her work, Gore encourages educators to promote dialogues with students that investigate conceptions of authority, power, and knowledge in order to redefine them and create spaces for voices that are often silenced by dominant ideology. By exploring these ideas with our students, the classroom becomes a place where learning is not only a means of empowerment, but of emancipation and liberation as well because students see themselves as contributors to knowledge rather than mere recipients of it. In this respect, classroom praxis incubates social, civic, and personal agency that in turn sponsors—creates space for—social change. In its simplest form, change is a product, albeit an unstable one. It is *enacted*. Our task as scholars is to work with others, whether they are colleagues, students, community members, lawmakers, or others, by creating spaces—both material and discursive—for transformative dialogue and action.

Rhetoricians as Activist Intellectuals

Each of the three parts of this collection attends to the various roles that rhetoricians play as social movement scholars—as theorists, as critics, and as teachers. Chapters in Part I, "A New Rhetoric for Social Change: Theories," draw on a range of movements to remake productively the way we develop core theories that guide critical and pedagogical practice. Chapters in Part II, "Public Rhetorics: Analyses," analyze particular social movements to elucidate

how social movement actors effectively develop and deploy rhetorical strategies that promote social change, reflexively charging readers to consider how they too might participate in the constitution of publics that promote more egalitarian social relationships. Chapters in Part III, "Changing Spaces for Learning: Actions," detail contemporary, movement-based learning situations to indicate how changing the way students learn can change society more broadly. Throughout, chapter authors consistently use their chosen research project to *pro*-ject rhetorically how readers might embody intellectual work through praxis in their teaching, scholarship, and citizenship.

In the opening chapter of Part I, Gerard Hauser and erin mcclellan develop a powerful analytic framework by fusing Hauser's (1999) concept *vernacular rhetoric* to Bakhtin's (1981) *dialogism* and *polyvocality* to correct a leader-centered bias in social movement studies. Next, by considering how social movements highlight the importance of collective action and the indeterminancy of the future, Sharon Stevens remakes Bitzer's (1968) concept of "the rhetorical situation" to alter student-teacher relations and support student agency.

Both chapters in Part I urge rhetoricians to actively reconstruct theory in response to the rhetorical practices of movement participants. As an exemplar of this sort of move, the first chapter of Part II offers a feminist reshaping of neoclassical rhetorical theory. In this chapter, Moira Amado-Miller examines the rhetoric of the early twentieth century's radical feminist activists (especially suffragettes) through the lens of the classical rhetorical trope *antistrephon*. She argues that activists can appropriate mainstream rhetorical strategies ("the master's tools") to introduce disorder into hegemonic ideologies and to articulate alternative views and social relations. Implicitly, Amado-Miller's argument participates in calls from cultural studies for academics to articulate alternatives to hegemonic understandings. In the next chapter, Brian Jackson and Thomas P. Miller are more explicit in their challenge to readers. These authors examine how the leadership of John Dewey and other university-based "experts" is in dialectic tension with the vernacular voices of the progressive movement, thereby exemplifying Hauser and mcclellan's call for a bottom-up movement analysis without losing the benefit of analyzing the rhetoric of movement leaders. As they draw conclusions from their analysis, Jackson and Miller call on readers to build coalitions that include teachers from all educational levels and to construct rhetorical frames that respond to a range of participant voices.

In the next chapter of Part II, Thomas Rosteck shows how Charles Mills, a paradigmatic public intellectual, uses a rhetorical letter to constitute an audience capable of acting for progressive social change. Rosteck's chapter highlights a decisive point in social movement history, for Mills's letter participates in a general historical turn from class-based movements to movements

grounded in other forms of collective identity. In the final chapter of Part II, Patricia Malesh advances our understanding of the relationship between personal and collective identity by examining how these are formed, supported, and reshaped over time through the practice of narrativity. She analyzes the conversation narratives or "stories of becoming" of vegetarians/vegans as "verisimilitudes" (J. Bruner 1991) that narrators use to give meaning to experience and sponsor social change. Ultimately, she argues that such narratives highlight personal agency as movement activity, evoke cultural norms as a prerequisite for dismantling them, and, in doing so, reenact and re-envision experience to justify and provoke transformation.

This emphasis on personal agency and in manifesting cultural change is further developed in Part III, in which contributors all write from the position that local and culture-oriented rhetorical action are indispensable components of broader systemic and historic change. These writers underscore the importance of interpersonal and transformative action, potentially including the transformation of classroom learning.

First, David Coogan discusses how students involved in a service learning project develop a new understanding of how prisoners are located within a disempowering system, yet these students also learn that local activism and interpersonal action have the potential to create more just social relations. Discussing another service learning project, Anne Marie Todd details some of the ways her students learn about particular relationships between local practice and global systems, as well as about the possibilities for changing both through activist rhetoric. Finally, Mary Ann Cain witnesses how a learning community based on an alternative black culture uses performative rhetoric to invite new participants into relationships that challenge hegemonic education practices, practices that are based on transience and the erasure of bodily presence within space. In a way that resonates with the premises of the progressive education movement, all these chapters indicate how the relationships we develop while learning inform the way we more broadly participate in society, the way we understand our own agency, and the way we envision possibilities for historical development.

As with most collections, these chapters offer readers the most insight when read in dialogue with one another. Rosteck's analysis of Mills's audience-evoking "Letter to the New Left," Jackson and Miller's rhetorical history of the progressive education movement, and Hauser and mcclellan's call for more emphasis on the transformative power of vernacular voices challenge one another with their different emphases on leaders and the rank-and-file in movement formation. Amado-Miller breaks down these distinctions between the rhetoric of the powerful and that of the masses by chronicling the spaces for dialogue created when advocates for change co-opt the language and logic of those against it. Stevens, Coogan, Todd, and Cain all argue we need to

employ our scholarly work in pedagogy if we hope to create avenues for our students to make learning material through civic engagement, and Malesh enacts such change in her praxis-oriented analysis of vegan rhetorics. In the collection's response chapter, William DeGenaro explores some of these convergences and tensions, challenging and extending other contributors' insights by considering the role of class and religion in the shifting politics of identity formation and solidarity building. In sum, contributors to *Active Voices* showcase what rhetorical scholarship can add to social movement studies. By asking us to recognize and engage the activist dimension of our teaching, criticism, and theory, however, they also evoke future action by calling for changes in what we *do*, not just how we *think*.

Conclusion

In 1991, European poli-sociologist Margit Mayer called for a more complicated and integrated approach to the study of social movements. She called for social movement theorists to develop an approach through which they:

> emphasiz[e] cultural and symbolic dimensions and the construction of meaning, thereby making it possible to also capture those current social movements or aspects of movements, which are not about participation in the American mainstream, either economically or politically, but rather challenge the validity and hegemony of the dominant power structures and cultural systems. (1991:49)

Her charge gives us much to think about. Our understanding of social movements is bound to our perceptions of civic participation, and these perceptions are changing as distinctions between cultural and political exertions of power and control collapse, prompting unexpected relationships to emerge and, in the process, throwing distinctions between individual movements into shadow. Since Mayer issued her charge, the ways in which power and culture are disseminated, digested, regurgitated, and challenged have responded to the ever-increasing pressures of globalizing forces as manifested in rapidly evolving information and production technologies.

In such a climate, our scholarship's value hinges on our willingness to entertain the instability of our work and accept how isolated insights are incomplete. Brenton Faber (2002) articulates this incompleteness as the tendency to divorce scholarly from community work. He recognizes that "although humanities scholars have a strong tradition of social and political critique, and although we have been able to build social awareness, community building, and critique into our teaching, we have thus far been less able

to form a theoretically rich tradition of research based on our community activism" (6). If we hope to attend to this deficit, we need to approach both scholarship and civic engagement in relation to one another. In other words, just as movements are becoming less distinct from one another, so must become the scholarship that analyzes them. And just as communities for social change continue to overlap, learn from one another, and draw power from this process, so must communities of scholars who study them.

Throughout this chapter, as an introduction to the philosophy of the collection as a whole, we have highlighted, complicated, and sought to reshape dialectics of discourse and action, theory and practice, publics and private, politics and culture, recipiency and agency, and others. We have done so to dissolve other distinctions—namely, those that create wedges between disciplines and disciplinary knowledge, those that isolate classroom praxis from scholarly inquiry, and those that obscure intersections between the various roles we occupy as activist intellectuals. We now encourage our readers to engage the following authors, and one another, in dialogues—and activities—that further this aim. For it is not solely in our parlors, where we dine on our assertions and satisfy our sweet tooth for reflection and critique, that our passion for participating in social change is sated. Nor will it be by this collection. Both are just a beginning.

Notes

1. Within social movement studies, debates remain unresolved as to whether the "newness" of "new social movements" speaks to: (1) a change in movements themselves—a dwindling of transparent class-based movements dependent on a priori acknowledgments of identity and solidarity combined with a surge in movements that understand identity as flexible and fluctuating and movements themselves as decentralized and overlapping; or (2) a shift in scholastic understanding, approaches, and foci in which scholars dedicate inquiry to theorizing and categorizing as movements existing phenomena that previous approaches precluded.

2. Margit Mayer (1991) claims America's longstanding tradition of civil disobedience illustrates a historical relationship between civic and cultural domains; this tradition did not exist in Europe where sharp distinctions between civic and cultural agendas encouraged the formation of political parties as opposed to cultural movements. According to Mayer, differences between European and U.S. political establishments have historically dictated differences in how social movements form as well as in how scholars theorize them, which explains why American scholars have repeatedly challenged the novelty of new social movements.