

1. Background to Collective Behavior

- Collective behavior is action of people in groups or crowds, usually as a reaction to an event or to express a common sentiment
- This behavior typically includes situations in which individuals act differently in group contexts than they would otherwise
- Collective behavior can take the form of protests, riots, or panics, among other things

2. Differentiating Collective Behavior, Action, and Social Movements

- Sociologists have historically used the expression collective behavior to refer to most collective events
- By the 1980s, sociologists generally began to use the term collective action to reflect the seemingly purposive nature of people's behavior
- Another concept related to collective behavior and action is social movements, collective action designed to produce new social orders

3. SI: Constructing Collective Behavior

- Some of the earliest work in collective behavior emphasized the emotional side of large crowds with examples from the French Revolution
- Interactionists emphasize both emotional and rational ways that collective events are constructed

4. SI: Mass Hysteria Theory

- Gustave LeBon probed the workings of crowds and wrote that all crowds exert an inherently negative influence on people
- This thinking is the basis of mass hysteria theory in which individuals in crowds lose their ability to think and act rationally
- LeBon describes groups' influence on their members as a rapidly transmitted, contagious mental unity, a sense of a shared emotional bond that emerges whenever people interact in a group
- **LeBon's "age of crowds" – WHAT ARE THE IMPLICATIONS? (p. 283)**

5. SI: Ingredients of Contagion

- The three main ingredients that lead to contagion include:
 - Intensity of behavior
 - Homogeneity of mood and action
 - Irrational behavior
- With these three ingredients, the crowd is unable to sustain focus and moves rapidly from one object or idea to another, making it easy to produce almost any behavior

6. SI: Circular Reaction

- Herbert Blumer proposed that remarkable events dispose people to gather together and then to anxiously move about in a seemingly aimless and random fashion, a process called milling
- Intense milling can transform human interaction as people enter an interpretive phase
- If the interpretive phase of interaction is interrupted, people become suggestible and irrational, producing a circular reaction

7. SI: Collective Identity

- Collective identity refers to an individual's sense of connection with a larger community or group
- Collective identity is important in every stage of collective behavior
- Movements may emerge because individuals from varying backgrounds develop a sense of connection resulting from shared frustration over an issue – see: New Social Movements (NSM)

8. SI: Rational Choice in Collective Behavior

- Most sociological studies or accounts of mass hysteria turn out to be reports of events that were first identified as hysteria by police, firefighters, and others
- Only a small minority of participants in collective events typically report any hysterical symptoms

- As a result, other perspectives and theories have emphasized the rational behaviors among group members

9. SI: Emergent Norm Theory

- The emergent norm theory of collective behavior focuses on how individuals come to accept the restraints imposed by a group during an event
- This perspective also assumes that individuals enter groups with unique attitudes and perspectives a feature of the crowd called differential expression
- Individuals may change their attitudes over time but this is a relatively rational process

10. SI: Types of Event Participants (p. 289-90)

- Behavior in collective events, depends, in part, on the type of participants at the event
- There are several different types of participants involved in most collective events:
 - Ego-involved participant
 - Concerned participant
 - Insecure participant
 - Curiosity seeker

11. SI: Value-Added Theory (Theory based on the notion that to fully understand the causes of collective events, you need to distinguish the type of collective behavior in question and the social conditions surrounding it. In other words, you need to understand the cause, you need to understand the context.)

- Another major theoretical perspective in the study of collective behavior is value added theory
- From this perspective, there are different types of collective behavior
- Types of events include:
 - Panics
 - Crazes
 - Hostile outbursts
 - Norm-oriented social movements
 - Value-oriented social movements

12. SI: Determinants of Collective Behavior

- According to value-added theory, there are five determinants of collective behavior:
 - Structural conduciveness
 - Structural strain
 - Generalized belief
 - Mobilization for action
 - Action of social control
- Each determinant of collective behavior must be present for collective action to take place

13. SI: Perception Control Theory

- Perception control theory is based on the premise that people must be able to monitor and interpret one another's behavior for collective action to occur
- There are three sources of perception control input:
 - Independent instructions
 - Interdependent instruction
 - Organizational instruction
- Each form of instruction occurs naturally in different types and stages of collective behavior

Haenfler: Key points to consider/discuss:

- Distinguish "New Social Movements" (NSMs) from traditional political mobilizations
- Haenfler examines identification with an identity rather than a goal (sXe)
- Understand the role of diffuse structure, commitment, participation
- From Ch. 11 and from Haenfler: How does "collective identity" develop?