

Cambridge University Press

978-0-521-00377-3 - The Unfinished Revolution: Social Movement Theory and the Gay and Lesbian Movement

Stephen M. Engel

Frontmatter

[More information](#)

The Unfinished Revolution compares the post-Second World War histories of the American and British gay and lesbian movements with an eye toward understanding how distinct political institutional environments affect the development, strategies, goals, and outcomes of a social movement. Stephen M. Engel utilizes an eclectic mix of source materials ranging from the theories of Mancur Olson and Michel Foucault to Supreme Court rulings and film and television dialogue. The two case study chapters function as brief historical sketches to elucidate further the conclusions on theory and whilst being politically oriented, they also examine gay influence and expansion into mainstream popular culture. The book also includes an appendix that surveys and assesses the analytical potential of five critical understandings of social movements: the classical approach, rational choice, resource mobilization, new social movement theories, and political opportunity structures. It will be of value to academics and students of sociology, political science, and history.

STEPHEN M. ENGEL graduated from Wesleyan University's College of Social Studies in 1998 and is currently working on his interdisciplinary MA in Humanities and Social Thought at New York University. While this is his first book, he has also published in the *Journal of Graduate Liberal Studies* (Autumn 2000).

Cambridge University Press

978-0-521-00377-3 - The Unfinished Revolution: Social Movement Theory and the
Gay and Lesbian Movement

Stephen M. Engel

Frontmatter

[More information](#)

The Unfinished Revolution

Cambridge University Press
 978-0-521-00377-3 - The Unfinished Revolution: Social Movement Theory and the
 Gay and Lesbian Movement

Stephen M. Engel
 Frontmatter

[More information](#)

Cambridge Cultural Social Studies

Series editors: JEFFREY C. ALEXANDER, *Department of Sociology, University of California, Los Angeles*, and STEVEN SEIDMAN, *Department of Sociology, University at Albany, State University of New York*.

Titles in the series

- ILANA FRIEDRICH SILBER, *Virtuosity, Charisma, and Social Order*
 0 521 41397 4 Hardback
- LINDA NICHOLSON AND STEVEN SEIDMAN (eds.), *Social Postmodernism*
 0 521 47516 3 Hardback 0 521 47571 6 Paperback
- WILLIAM BOGARD, *The Simulation of Surveillance*
 0 521 55081 5 Hardback 0 521 55561 2 Paperback
- SUZANNE R. KIRSCHNER, *The Religious and Romantic Origins of Psychoanalysis*
 0 521 44401 2 Hardback 0 521 55560 4 Paperback
- PAUL LICHTERMAN, *The Search for Political Community*
 0 521 48286 0 Hardback 0 521 48343 3 Paperback
- ROGER FRIEDLAND AND RICHARD HECHT, *To Rule Jerusalem*
 0 521 44046 7 Hardback
- KENNETH H. TUCKER, JR., *French Revolutionary Syndicalism and the Public Sphere* 0 521 56359 3 Hardback
- ERIK RINGMAR, *Identity, Interest and Action* 0 521 56314 3 Hardback
- ALBERTO MELUCCI, *The Playing Self* 0 521 56401 8 Hardback
 0 521 56482 4 Paperback
- ALBERTO MELUCCI, *Challenging Codes* 0 521 57051 4 Hardback
 0 521 57843 4 Paperback
- SARAH M. CORSE, *Nationalism and Literature* 0 521 57002 6 Hardback
 0 521 57912 0 Paperback
- DARNELL M. HUNT, *Screening the Los Angeles "Riots"*
 0 521 57087 5 Hardback 0 521 57814 0 Paperback
- LYNETTE P. SPILLMAN, *Nation and Commemoration*
 0 521 57404 8 Hardback 0 521 57432 3 Paperback
- MICHAEL MULKAY, *The Embryo Research Debate*
 0 521 57180 4 Hardback 0 521 57683 0 Paperback
- LYNN RAPAPORT, *Jews in Germany after the Holocaust*
 0 521 58219 9 Hardback 0 521 58809 X Paperback
- CHANDRA MUKERJI, *Territorial Ambitions and the Gardens of Versailles*
 0 521 49675 6 Hardback 0 521 59959 8 Paperback
- LEON H. MAYHEW, *The New Public* 0 521 48146 5 Hardback
 0 521 48493 6 Paperback

Cambridge University Press
 978-0-521-00377-3 - The Unfinished Revolution: Social Movement Theory and the
 Gay and Lesbian Movement

Stephen M. Engel
 Frontmatter

[More information](#)

- VERA L. ZOLBERG AND JONI M. CHERBO (eds.), *Outsider Art*
 0 521 58111 7 Hardback 0 521 58921 5 Paperback
- SCOTT BRAVMANN, *Queer Fictions of the Past* 0 521 59101 5 Hardback
 0 521 59907 5 Paperback
- STEVEN SEIDMAN, *Difference Troubles* 0 521 59043 4 Hardback
 0 521 59970 9 Paperback
- RON EYERMAN AND ANDREW JAMISON, *Music and Social Movements*
 0 521 62045 7 Hardback 0 521 62966 7 Paperback
- MEYDA YEGENOGLU, *Colonial Fantasies* 0 521 48233 X Hardback
 0 521 62658 7 Paperback
- LAURA DESFOR EDLES, *Symbol and Ritual in the New Spain*
 0 521 62140 2 Hardback 0 521 62885 7 Paperback
- NINA ELIASOPH, *Avoiding Politics* 0 521 58293 8 Hardback
 0 521 58759 X Paperback
- BERNHARD GIESEN, *Intellectuals and the German Nation*
 0 521 62161 5 Hardback 0 521 63996 4 Paperback
- PHILIP SMITH (ed.), *The New American Cultural Sociology*
 0 521 58415 9 Hardback 0 521 58634 8 Paperback
- S. N. EISENSTADT, *Fundamentalism, Sectarianism and Revolution*
 0 521 64184 5 Hardback 0 521 64586 7 Paperback
- MARIAM FRASER, *Identity without Selfhood* 0 521 62357 X Hardback
 0 521 62579 3 Paperback
- LUC BOLTANSKI, *Distant Suffering* 0 521 57389 0 Hardback
 0 521 65953 1 Paperback
- PYOTR SZTOMPKA, *Trust* 0 521 59144 9 Hardback
 0 521 59850 8 Paperback
- SIMON J. CHARLESWORTH, *A Phenomenology of Working Class Culture*
 0 521 65066 6 Hardback 0 521 65915 9 Paperback
- ROBIN WAGNER-PACIFICI, *Theorizing the Standoff (2)*
 0 521 65244 8 Hardback 0 521 65915 9 Paperback
- RONALD N. JACOBS, *Race Media and the Crisis of Civil Society*
 0 521 62360 X Hardback 0 521 62578 5 Paperback
- ALI MIRSEPASSI, *Intellectual Discourse and the Politics of Modernization*
 0 521 65000 3 Hardback 0 521 65997 3 Paperback

Cambridge University Press

978-0-521-00377-3 - The Unfinished Revolution: Social Movement Theory and the
Gay and Lesbian Movement

Stephen M. Engel

Frontmatter

[More information](#)

The Unfinished Revolution

*Social Movement Theory and the Gay and
Lesbian Movement*

Stephen M. Engel



CAMBRIDGE
UNIVERSITY PRESS

Cambridge University Press
 978-0-521-00377-3 - The Unfinished Revolution: Social Movement Theory and the
 Gay and Lesbian Movement

Stephen M. Engel
 Frontmatter

[More information](#)

PUBLISHED BY THE PRESS SYNDICATE OF THE UNIVERSITY OF CAMBRIDGE
 The Pitt Building, Trumpington Street, Cambridge, United Kingdom

CAMBRIDGE UNIVERSITY PRESS
 The Edinburgh Building, Cambridge CB2 2RU, UK
 40 West 20th Street, New York NY 10011-4211, USA
 10 Stamford Road, Oakleigh, VIC 3166, Australia
 Ruiz de Alarcón 13, 28014 Madrid, Spain
 Dock House, The Waterfront, Cape Town 8001, South Africa

<http://www.cambridge.org>

© Stephen M. Engel 2001

This book is in copyright. Subject to statutory exception
 and to the provisions of relevant collective licensing agreements,
 no reproduction of any part may take place without
 the written permission of Cambridge University Press.

First published 2001

Printed in the United Kingdom at the University Press, Cambridge

Typeface Plantin 10/12 pt *System* 3b2 [CE]

A catalogue record for this book is available from the British Library

Library of Congress Cataloguing in Publication data

Engel, Stephen M.

The unfinished revolution: social movement theory and the gay and
 lesbian movement / by Stephen M. Engel.

p. cm. – (Cambridge cultural social studies)

Includes bibliographical references and index.

ISBN 0 521 80287 3 (hardback) – ISBN 0 521 00377 6 (paperback)

1. Gay liberation movement – History.

2. Lesbian feminism – History.

3. Social movements – Philosophy.

I. Title. II. Series.

HQ76.5.E5 2001

305.9'0664'09-dc21 00-067496

ISBN 0 521 80287 3 hardback

ISBN 0 521 00377 6 paperback

Cambridge University Press

978-0-521-00377-3 - The Unfinished Revolution: Social Movement Theory and the
Gay and Lesbian Movement

Stephen M. Engel

Frontmatter

[More information](#)

An Author, whether good or bad, or between both, is an Animal whom every body is privileged to attack; For though All are not able to write books, all conceive themselves able to judge them. A bad composition carries with it its own punishment, contempt and ridicule. A good one excites envy, and entails upon its Author a thousand mortifications. He finds himself assailed by partial and ill-humored Criticism: One Man finds fault with his plan, Another with the style, a Third with the precept, which it strives to inculcate; and they who cannot succeed in finding fault with the Book employ themselves in stigmatizing its Author. They maliciously rake out from obscurity every little circumstance, which may throw ridicule upon his private character or conduct, and aim at wounding the Man, since They cannot hurt the Writer. In short to enter the lists of literature is willfully to expose yourself to the arrows of neglect, ridicule, envy, and disappointment. Whether you write well or ill, be assured that you will not escape from blame . . . But I am conscious, that all these sage observations are thrown away upon you. Authorship is a mania to conquer which no reasons are sufficiently strong; and you might as easily persuade me not to love, as I persuade you not to write.

Matthew Lewis, *The Monk* (1796)

Cambridge University Press

978-0-521-00377-3 - The Unfinished Revolution: Social Movement Theory and the
Gay and Lesbian Movement

Stephen M. Engel

Frontmatter

[More information](#)

Contents

<i>Notes on language</i>	<i>page</i> xii
<i>Preface</i>	xv
Introduction	1
1 Asked and answered: how questions can condition conclusions in social movement theory	11
2 Tracing the rainbow: an historical sketch of the American gay and lesbian movement	19
3 Tracing the rainbow: an historical sketch of the British gay and lesbian movement	67
4 Where and how it comes to pass: interest group interaction with political institutions	99
5 Asking the unasked question: grappling with the culture variable	123
Conclusion	158
Appendix: a survey of social movement theories	167
<i>Notes</i>	187
<i>Bibliography</i>	214
<i>Index</i>	226

Cambridge University Press

978-0-521-00377-3 - The Unfinished Revolution: Social Movement Theory and the Gay and Lesbian Movement

Stephen M. Engel

Frontmatter

[More information](#)

Notes on language

What do I call you? Is it just gay? Or lesbians and gays? Or gay men and gay women? Or is it lesbians and gay men?

Senator Ted Kennedy to gay delegate Bill Kraus at the 1980 Democratic Convention Gay and Lesbian Caucus cocktail party (Randy Shilts, *And the Band Played On*)

Who makes up the gay and lesbian movement?

To use the phrase “gay and lesbian movement” to describe the current state of a social movement which includes gays and lesbians is a misnomer. Not only is this specific movement not a unified phenomenon, but instead a collection of smaller movements differing in ideology and political versus cultural aims, it is also not merely composed of gays and lesbians. Instead, the gay and lesbian movement has come to represent (or perhaps not represent depending on the critique) gay men, lesbians, bisexuals, transgenders, and queer-identified individuals.

No single term currently exists which is adequately inclusive of this diverse population. The label, “gay,” while it often refers to men and women, tends to connote a male identification. “Lesbian” has a restrictive female meaning. “Bisexual” refers to individuals who do not identify with a bipolar definition of sexual orientation as either heterosexual or homosexual, but fall somewhere in the middle of these extremes. “Transgender” is the newest term; it often refers to transvestites and transsexuals. It also reflects scholarship which suggests that gender is socially constructed. Transgenders recognize the social construction of their genders and thus do not fit neatly within societally prescribed gender roles determined by biological sex.

I have refrained from using the word “queer” to be generally a synonymous or umbrella term for the gay, lesbian, bisexual, and/or transgender community(ies) as has sometimes been in linguistic fashion. I feel that the term connotes a specific type of confrontational politics and identity theory that came into favor at a particular moment in gay and

Cambridge University Press

978-0-521-00377-3 - The Unfinished Revolution: Social Movement Theory and the
Gay and Lesbian Movement

Stephen M. Engel

Frontmatter

[More information](#)

Notes on language

xiii

lesbian politico-cultural history. When I have used the term, it has been limited to referring to this brand of political action and theory. By opting not to use “queer” as a general label for the movement, I am not judging the validity of queer ideology; rather, I am acknowledging both the term’s historical context and its ultimate failure to include the entire sexual minorities community.

Finally, this work, while mentioning the expansion of the movement to include bisexuals and the transgendered, concentrates on the history of gay men and lesbians and the movement that they inspired in the immediate post-war period. To include the terms, “bisexual” and “transgender” would only mislead the reader as to the focal point of this text. At times I have used the phrases “gay men and women,” “lesbians and gays,” or “sexual minorities” to refer to members of this community. I have done so consciously in order to avoid potentially monotonous labeling and to provide some linguistic variety.

Cambridge University Press

978-0-521-00377-3 - The Unfinished Revolution: Social Movement Theory and the Gay and Lesbian Movement

Stephen M. Engel

Frontmatter

[More information](#)

Preface

In the aftermath of a march

The San Francisco Gay Freedom Day Marching Band blared the opening notes of “California Here I Come,” and the Parade started its two-mile trek down Market Street toward City Hall. More than 30,000 people, grouped in 240 contingents, marched in the parade past 200,000 spectators. The parade was the best show in town, revealing the amazing diversity of gay life . . . Radical gay liberationists frowned at the carnival rides that had been introduced to the rally site. Parade organizers had decided that the event had grown “too political” in recent years, so the chest-pounding rhetoric that marked most rallies was given a backseat to the festive feeling of a state fair.

Randy Shilts, *And the Band Played On*

We want to give GLF demos a different role to straight demos. We want to have fun as well. We want our revolution to be enjoyable.

Unnamed London Gay Liberation Front activist

This morning I was able to catch a glimpse of *The Washington Post* before I boarded the train at Washington, DC’s Union Station heading back home to New York City. Sunburned and exhausted I stared at the front page trying to force my eyes to focus on the text. The article summarized the weekend’s events, rehashed the controversy surrounding the latest march on Washington, and estimated the number of participants: well into the hundreds of thousands. Yet, somehow the text and corresponding photo of marchers holding banners and placards advocating an end to hate crimes and equal rights now did not ring true with my own experience.

The Millennium March on Washington (MMOW) for Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, and Transgender Equality took place over the weekend of 29 April and 30 April 2000. It was the first such national civil rights event for the Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, and Transgender (LGBT) community and its allies of the new millennium, and the fourth such march – others occurred in 1979, 1987, and 1993 – that invoked the template of Martin

Cambridge University Press

978-0-521-00377-3 - The Unfinished Revolution: Social Movement Theory and the Gay and Lesbian Movement

Stephen M. Engel

Frontmatter

[More information](#)

xvi Preface

Luther King Jr.'s march on Washington in 1963. As the train pulled from the station and the newly bright May sun finally revealed some strength after an exceedingly gray April, I watched as other passengers clad in official MMOW t-shirts hoisted their suitcases into the overhead racks. I slipped my headphones on, closed my eyes, and attempted to gather my impressions of the last two days in Washington, DC.

The march had been shrouded in controversy. Opponents claimed that too few resources existed and that the march focused energy at the national level when the emphasis should be on local, municipal, and state-level reform. The Millennium March was accused of being a top-down operation, a spectacle manufactured and imposed upon this particular movement community by certain Washington-based organizations out of touch with the needs, strategies, and goals of more grassroots democratic action.

Having never before experienced a march of this magnitude – even if this one supposedly failed to draw the crowds of its 1993 predecessor – I cannot wholly agree with the assessments of the march's opponents. Many of the participants with whom I had an opportunity to talk were deeply impacted by the experience, especially those who were younger, who belonged to that new cohort of activism to whom the torch was being passed. Various speakers at the rally on Sunday afternoon stressed the possibilities of youth, of a new generation who would continue the struggle for real and total equality. Yet, there were other marchers and spectators. Some had been to the 1993 or 1987 march. Some claimed that there was something missing in this latest incarnation of marches on our nation's capital. It bordered too much on the carnivalesque perhaps; it was too reminiscent of a street fair. It somehow, in some way which is difficult at this moment to identify, lacked some degree of political import. It fell or, at least, felt flat.

Relying on caffeine and adrenaline to keep me energized after a raucous Saturday, I observed the march on Sunday morning as it proceeded down Constitution Avenue toward the Mall. Part of the weekend celebration included a Millennium Festival complete with vendors ranging from *Out Magazine* to the *Advocate* to *Instinct* to *Hero Magazine* to *Girlfriend* to *Curve* to *POZ* to *Gay.com* to *PlanetOut* to the Showtime Network to the Human Rights Campaign to the National Organization for Women to a gay rodeo and country dancing tent. Each vendor distributed piles of free merchandise, and volunteers were strategically placed to adhere Gore 2000 or HRC or Lesbian Rights stickers to anyone willing to serve as a walking advertisement. A rock concert to benefit the Human Rights Campaign Foundation, "Equality Rocks", was held that Saturday evening before the march. I was able to

Cambridge University Press

978-0-521-00377-3 - The Unfinished Revolution: Social Movement Theory and the Gay and Lesbian Movement

Stephen M. Engel

Frontmatter

[More information](#)

attend and, indeed, I marveled at the sheer vastness of the audience: 40,000 people. Forty thousand people had packed the seats of RFK Stadium to hear k.d. lang, Melissa Etheridge, Garth Brooks, George Michael, Nathan Lane, Ellen DeGeneres, Elizabeth Birch, Dennis and Judy Shepard, Kristen Johnson, Kathy Najimy, Tipper Gore, and others rally in support of full and real equality for the LGBT community. The potential future first lady of the United States even rocked out on the drums during the concert's finale to the great surprise and deafening applause of the entire stadium.

The rally on the following afternoon continued this trend of mixing celebrities and politicians, entertainment and politics. Did the march simply devolve into a capitalist commodification of identity politics or had the history of this community's political events always involved elements of fun, commercialism, and spectacle? Margaret Cho performed some standup. Corey Johnson recounted his experiences as a quarterback coming out to his teammates during his senior year of high school. President Clinton and Vice President Gore delivered taped messages both expressing support for the LGBT community and a commitment to the realization of equality in the United States. Ellen DeGeneres delivered some standup as her partner, Ann Heche, and her mom and spokesperson for the National Coming Out Project, Betty DeGeneres, offered their support and activism. Elizabeth Birch, Executive Director of the Human Rights Campaign, urged the hundreds of thousands of marchers to the polls in November, and DC mayor, Anthony Williams, welcomed the crowds to his city. Perhaps it was a cultural event sprinkled with politics or a political event broadened by culture. Much of the rhetoric focused on energizing a new generation of activists, recognizing the diversity within the LGBT community and the strength that emanates from that diversity, and a constant reminder to storm the polls in November.

Yet, as I heard these speeches, I could not help but notice that the crowd was predominantly white, and that the entire event just seemed to boil down to hanging out on the Mall on a beautiful spring day. Where was the energy? Where was the anger? Perhaps a sense of crisis was lacking. Things had changed. The LGBT community's status had no doubt improved since the 1993 march. Would there have been 40,000 people crowded in a stadium to celebrate LGBT equality with the support of the Vice President's wife twenty or even ten years ago? Would the President and the Vice President have extended at least a video-recorded message of support to this community even ten years ago? The political stage was set: the governor of Vermont had made civil unions an unprecedented reality just two days before the march, and arguments

Cambridge University Press

978-0-521-00377-3 - The Unfinished Revolution: Social Movement Theory and the Gay and Lesbian Movement

Stephen M. Engel

Frontmatter

[More information](#)

xviii Preface

regarding the rights of gays to participate in the Boy Scouts of America had been heard before the Supreme Court earlier in the week. Yet, there was an emptiness. Was something missing? Was there no sense of urgency? Maybe, for the first time, outrage did not have to be the predominant emotion. Maybe, for the first time, we could enjoy the spring day, just as we were. Hadn't that been what the fight was all about anyway. . . just to be able to live and love like everyone else?

The 2000 march was the first of its kind in this sense: it did not respond to anything in particular. The 1979 march reacted to the assassination of Harvey Milk and the rise and success of Anita Bryant's "Save Our Children" campaign; the 1987 March was a reaction against both the *Bowers v. Hardwick* decision, in which the Supreme Court (overruled the privacy of citizens and) upheld states' rights to enact and maintain sodomy laws, as well as the Reagan administration's inadequate response to the AIDS crisis; the 1993 march came on the heels of the installment of the "Don't Ask, Don't Tell" policy, Clinton's failure to issue an executive order banning discrimination against gays in the military, and it too focused on increasing funds for AIDS research, care, and prevention.

However, to what was the Millennium March responding? It came during the last year of the most gay and lesbian-accessible presidential administration in the history of the United States. It occurred only days after civil unions – the closest step toward gay marriage taken so far – became a reality in Vermont. It happened only four months after the end of 1999, a year that the National Gay and Lesbian Task Force notes was the first in which the number of bills brought forward in the state legislatures throughout the United States that were friendly to LGBT concerns outnumbered those that were not: 214 to 81.¹ Perhaps the Millennium March marks a strategic shift in gay and lesbian movement politics: a shift from reaction to pro-action, from fighting against a conservative reactionary tide to focusing more on progressive movement goals, to getting people motivated before an election rather than picking up the pieces after one. Yet, sometimes reaction is an easier sentiment to mobilize. It is clearer to grasp, more coherent to envision. Proactive measures are sometimes harder to ascertain, especially when those affected are already experiencing unprecedented levels of freedom. This assessment is in no way meant to suggest that equality has been achieved or that somehow we can roll down our sleeves, pat ourselves on the back, and go home secure in our equality – inequality abounds. Yet, when you are a white middle-class gay man or lesbian with a secure job and home, those inequalities somehow do not seem as readily apparent as maybe they once were.

Cambridge University Press

978-0-521-00377-3 - The Unfinished Revolution: Social Movement Theory and the Gay and Lesbian Movement

Stephen M. Engel

Frontmatter

[More information](#)

As I watched the greenery of Maryland become interrupted by the urban landscapes of Baltimore and Philadelphia on that train making its all-too-frequent stops between Union and Pennsylvania Stations, I was struck that the LGBT community may be in danger of falling victim to a misguided notion of its own success. The community faces the peculiar situation at this historical juncture of a disconnect between cultural and political achievements. Gays and lesbians are popping up endlessly on television. Every prime time show, it seems, whether it be an adolescent drama or a sitcom, whether it airs at 8 p.m. or 10 p.m., has its seemingly requisite gay or lesbian character. Indeed, most of these characters are white. Most are middle-class. Most are male. Most, in short, are not terribly threatening to the heterosexual majority, and most do not represent the varied and diverse scope of the LGBT community. Yet, the rally's speakers reminded the marchers that in thirty-nine states a person can be legally fired for being gay, lesbian, bisexual, or transgender. The rally's speakers reminded us that no national hate crimes legislation has been passed, and that gays are still banned from military service. Most states do not allow gays and lesbians to adopt children. Some ban the possibility of same-sex marriage. The possibility of being attacked, beaten, and killed for simply loving someone still lurks. Political reality lags far behind the televisual fantasy.

Did the march achieve its goals? Certainly there was coverage in *The Washington Post* and *The New York Times*. Certainly it was documented by C-Span and CNN. Certainly some of the participants left feeling energized and motivated to make greater strides towards activism and empowerment. Certainly it brought to the fore the vast achievements of the movement and the immense challenges that remain ahead. Certainly it enabled reflection on the visibility of the movement and the invisibilities within the movement. Yet, in the final analysis, the impact of the march remains, to a great extent, purely personal. And so I am left to ask myself, how did the march affect you?

I began this book with these rather brief and inconclusive remarks regarding the Millennium March on Washington for Equality because the circumstances and controversies swirling around that march encapsulate the myriad concerns and strategies that have marked the gay and lesbian movement throughout the post-war period. Does the movement attempt reform or revolutionary change? Who has the privilege of being a visible participant, and who remains invisible? How have the advances made in the cultural realms of television, film, theater, and literature kept apace, influenced, and/or been influenced by the advances and setbacks experienced within the political institutional environment?

Cambridge University Press

978-0-521-00377-3 - The Unfinished Revolution: Social Movement Theory and the Gay and Lesbian Movement

Stephen M. Engel

Frontmatter

[More information](#)

xx Preface

What is the impact of a national-level march? Would the resources have been better spent at the state or local level? Why are these institutional venues perceived to be in competition? In short, should there have been a national march? Is change achieved through a top-down manner? Should change derive from grassroots democratic action at the local level? This book attempts to analyze these inquiries in order to draw out their underlying complexities. It attempts to understand how the gay and lesbian movement community developed in a unique institutional environment that governed how, where, and when to target its resources to best effect change.

This book first took shape as a jumbled and only loosely comprehensible idea locked in the recesses of my brain in May of 1997. I am indebted to numerous individuals for helping me find both the voice and the language in which to bring those thoughts out into my word processing software. My editor Sarah Caro, perhaps finding a kernel of something worthwhile in these pages, took a chance on an unknown never-before-published twenty-three year old graduate student. She imparted to me an incredible opportunity, and it is now in the hands of my readers to deem whether that opportunity was fully realized, squandered, or fell somewhere in between. Steven Seidman, the editor of the series of which this text is part, offered me invaluable critique and support as the manuscript navigated its way through the maze of editors and readers and finally to the Syndicate of Cambridge University Press. His encouragement has been much appreciated throughout the process.

Thanks must also go to the sundry professors at Wesleyan University and New York University who guided my education and imparted the knowledge and skills which come to bear on this work. Foremost among them is Giulio Gallarotti. He has been a wonderful mentor and friend believing in me despite my best efforts to dissuade him. He forced me to struggle with concepts I sometimes would rather avoid and pushed me towards a degree of thought I never believed I could attain. He gave me the freedom to tackle this project on my own terms, but also the confidence to claim it as my own. Marc Eisner introduced me to concepts like political institutions, political culture, and social movements. He pointed me in directions I never considered, offering various texts and methodologies. If I pursue a formal career in the academy, I hope that my teaching embodies the ideals I have gained from these two scholars.

Thanks must go to other key players in both my overall intellectual development and the specific drafting of this text: Donald Moon, Cecilia Miller, David Titus, David Morgan, Nancy Schwartz, Gil Skilman, Richard Adelstein, Henry Abelow, Gary Comstock, Lisa

Cambridge University Press

978-0-521-00377-3 - The Unfinished Revolution: Social Movement Theory and the Gay and Lesbian Movement

Stephen M. Engel

Frontmatter

[More information](#)

Preface

xxi

Wedeen, Robin Nagle, and Britta Wheeler. Thanks are also extended to Sue Donnelly, the archivist at the Archive of Gay Organizations and Activists at the London School of Economics, who located hundreds of primary source documents regarding the history of the British gay and lesbian movement.

Innumerable friends scoured drafts and offered much needed support and well-timed distractions when the computer screen threatened blindness. My heartfelt appreciation to Becca Gerner, Blair Hanzlik, Jenna Minicucci, Brodie Welch, Maya Seiden, Kara Croughlio, Sarah Luchansky, Rob Finn, Matt Hunter, Audrey Goldenberg, Prana Topper, Dara Katz, Fawn Phelps, Aongus Burke, Aimee Dawson, Aaron Shield, Maureen Heacock, and Mike Whaley. Thanks to Candace Gingrich and the HRC Field Department of the summer of 1998 for introducing me to the possibilities of activism. Thanks also to Wesleyan University's College of Social Studies Class of 1998 for being fellow travelers and the CSS Class of 1999 for opening my mind to the possibilities of teaching and learning.

Finally, I have been blessed with a family whose love has exceeded all bounds and whose faith in each other has never wavered (or at least never for more than mere milliseconds). My parents, Mark and Barbara Engel, have provided me with innumerable opportunities, and, though it may seem like it, their love and care never went underappreciated. My older brother, Jarrett, has always looked out for me and inspired me more than he'll know. My sister-in-law, Jennifer, gave up much time to read and comment on numerous drafts of this work and has been a true friend throughout the many stages of bringing this text to press. My younger brother, David, has reminded me that life never really needs to be taken too seriously and that there is always time to play with Lego or show up his older brother on rollerblades. It is to these five individuals that I respectfully dedicate this book; without them, I would never have had the courage to be who I am or to make it as far as I have.

*New York City
1 May 2000*