

# Social Movements and Educational Research: Toward a United Field of Scholarship

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If social movements are best conceived as temporary public spaces, as moments of collective creation that provide societies with ideas, identities, and even ideals, as Eyerman and Jamison (1991, p. 4) have argued, then educational researchers have much to learn from movements. Educational processes and contexts are crucial to the ways in which social movements' ideas, identities, and ideals are generated and promoted, taught and learned, contested and transformed. Indeed, movements themselves are educators, engaging participants in informal education (through participation in movement activity), non-formal education (through the educational initiatives of the movement), and even, sometimes, quasi-formal education (through special schools within movements).<sup>1</sup> Moreover, movements are producers of knowledge that, when successful, educate not only their adherents but also broader publics (Crowther & Shaw, 1997; Dykstra & Law, 1994; Eyerman & Jamison, 1991; Hall, 2006; Martin, 1988; Stromquist, 1998).

In addition to the education provided within a social movement and to the public through the ideas, understandings, and practices promoted in movement activity, a key target of collective action is often state-sanctioned formal education. In larger efforts for social transformation, influencing schools and universities is important as both tactic and end goal. Researchers who have examined education reform across a range of national and historical contexts have concluded that both fleeting trends and lasting change in state education have been responses to social movements (see Anyon, 2005, 2009; Apple, 1996, 2000a, 2001, 2003, 2007; Beyer & Liston, 1996; Dewees & Klees, 1995; Morrow & Torres, 2007). In fact, some have noted that movements are responsible for the very existence of state schooling (Boli, Ramirez, & Meyer, 1985; Morrow & Torres, 2007; Tyack & Hansot, 1980; Tyack, Kirst, & Hansot, 1980).

In short, education is fundamental to social movements, and movements are fundamental to education. The U.S. civil rights movement provides a powerful example. Education provided by the movement included myriad non-formal community-based education programs organized to support both immediate and long-term goals (see, e.g., Franklin, 1990; Oden & Casey, 2006; Perlstein, 1990, 2002; Smallwood, 2005), some of which attained an established presence (such as Freedom Schools and Black Panther Liberation Schools). Yet arguably the most profound education offered by the civil rights movement was that obtained through participating in or even merely witnessing movement activities

over time. Although the extent to which movement ideas and goals were embraced varied considerably by individual, group, and generation, even those who resisted and rejected them experienced learning as a result of the movement. Eventually, the civil rights movement generated change in public education through school desegregation mandates (Anyon, 2009; Donato, 1997); the development of Head Start (Anyon, 2009); Affirmative Action policies in higher education (Rhoads, Saenz, & Carducci, 2005); the introduction of multicultural curricula in schools (Carlson, 1995; Gay, 1983; Sleeter, 1996) and Black Studies/African American Studies in higher education (Eyerman & Jamison, 1991; Rhoads, 1998a; Rojas, 2007; Slaughter, 1997; Smallwood, 2005); among other reforms. With hindsight, of course, we can see that the lasting effects of the civil rights movement on American education have been mixed, as subsequent movements, such as the conservative restoration of the 1980s (Apple, 1996, 2001; Carlson, 1993; Miller, 2002; Rhoads et al., 2005; Slaughter, 1997), eroded many achievements through the promotion of alternative social, political, and educational ideas and goals. Nevertheless, the legacy of the civil rights movement continues to loom large in U.S. schools and universities.

Although few social movements have the reach and impact of the U.S. civil rights movement, all movements produce and promote particular understandings of aspects of the social world, educate their participants in one way or another, and have the potential to influence formal education outside of the movement. Given the importance of social movements to education and education to social movements, many have expressed dismay at the limited attention educational researchers have paid to movements historically. Even as this has changed through decades of steady growth in educational research focused explicitly on social movements, the resulting body of literature has not garnered an identity as a field of scholarship. Tellingly, no comprehensive statement of the nature of research on the educational dimensions and implications of social movements has been produced. What does this scholarship look like? In what fields and contexts does it take place? What has been learned?

Our interest in these questions inspired an extensive literature review guided by the research question, how have educational researchers addressed social movements in their scholarship? To answer this question, we examined the literature across myriad fields of educational research, including adult education, higher education, social foundations of education, and other fields addressing K 12 schooling. Despite the fact that, even fairly recently, quite a number of educational researchers have suggested that their field's attention to social movements is emerging, limited, or nonexistent, our review led us to a different conclusion. Having found several hundred publications on the topic, we argue that the issue is not a lack of research on social movements and education; the issue is that this scholarship emerges from myriad fields across the interdisciplinary landscape of

educational research, and these fields and their social movement researchers are not in conversation with one another.

In this article we take an initial step to address this by presenting a broad overview of social movement scholarship across these myriad fields of educational research. Promoting greater awareness of such scholarship across fields is a first step in moving toward a more ambitious goal: promoting a more united field of research on social movements and education. We ultimately argue that an interdisciplinary and multi-perspective field devoted to understanding the educational dimensions and implications of social movements would not only benefit researchers but also pose and answer new and important questions about formal, non-formal, and informal education linked to movements. The establishment of a field of inquiry focused on social movements and education would also raise the profile of this scholarship such that it could have greater influence on educational policy and practice, as well as on the work of social movements themselves.

In what follows, we first present the design and methods of the literature review. Then we briefly discuss the history and landscape of educational scholarship addressing social movements. Following that discussion, we offer overviews of the two primary categories of scholarship that we identified through the study: education and learning in movements and the influence of movements on formal education. Arguing that there are common interests that could draw researchers together across these largely separate categories of research, the subsequent section articulates a few of these. Finally, we conclude the article by advocating for a more united field of research on social movements and education that, through engaging educational researchers across multiple fields, could promote better understandings of the educational dimensions and implications of social movements.

## STUDY DESIGN AND METHODS

To select publications for the review, we first identified those that explicitly addressed social movements or social movement theory and could be considered scholarship in the field of education. We cast the widest net possible in our search of the database Education Research Complete (ERC), using root forms of the terms *social movement*, *movement*, *education*, *schooling*, and *learning* in multiple search fields. Once we completed our searches, we also examined the references of reviewed publications and our own personal collections to identify additional books, chapters, articles, and reports to add to the initial

literature pool. A major limitation was that our review was restricted to English-language publications. We recognize that this limitation led to the exclusion of many relevant studies, particularly given the scholarly interest in social movements in Latin America and Europe.

Our search process generated a large set of publications, many of which did not meet our criteria for inclusion in the study. We first limited the sample to educational scholarship which, for the purposes of the study, was defined as articles published in academic journals devoted to education, learning, teaching, or schooling/higher education and books, book chapters, reports, and articles written by scholars located in education-related academic fields or professions. Second, we winnowed the sample to those publications in which social movements were an explicit and substantive aspect of the study. We recognize that there is a substantial amount of research on movement-related educational phenomena that does not explicitly invoke the concept of social movement. However, we were interested in reviewing scholarship that was *deliberately conceptualized* as addressing social movements. For this reason, we eliminated publications in which social movements were mentioned in passing; were used only as historical, cultural, or political touchstones; or were discussed metaphorically or rhetorically rather than as a substantive focus of the piece. This process entailed the elimination of closely related but distinct areas of inquiry, including, for example, the growing body of research on youth and community organizing for educational change (e.g., Ginwright & James, 2002; Gold, Simon, & Brown, 2002; Kirshner, 2015; Kirshner & Ginwright, 2012; Kwon, 2008; Oakes, Rogers, & Lipton, 2006; Shirley, 1997, 2002; Warren, 2001, 2010).

Ultimately, the overarching sample for the study included more than 370 publications. These included journal articles, books, book chapters, and reports, which were published over an almost century-long period (1919–2016). This very broad sample was the basis for the qualitative analysis we discuss below. However, we also had a secondary goal of describing some broad-scale trends in publication across fields and over time. This more quantitative analysis required a more comprehensive and uniform subsample. For this reason, we developed a subsample of 228 journal articles that met the review criteria and were published during the quarter-century period, 1988–2012.<sup>2</sup> We limited the subsample to academic journal articles to facilitate an apples-to-apples comparison (eliminating books, book chapters, book reviews, practitioner journal articles, and reports from the quantitative calculations, although these sources were examined through qualitative analysis in the broader study). The time period of 1988–2012 was selected because it captures the period of substantial growth in social movement-oriented educational studies

and because, for reasons we discuss in the next section, the trajectory of proliferation of relevant publications made it unfeasible to review every article on the topic published from 2013 to the present.

Once we identified the publications for review, at least one of the authors read each piece; many were read by two of us. We documented our review of each publication in a memo that included bibliographic information, a description of the piece, its orientation to social movements, the field of inquiry, the level or type of education in focus, the social movement(s) addressed, notes of interest, and so forth. We also categorized each publication into one or more of several categories that reflected our emerging understanding of the literature (e.g., *influence of social movements on schooling, learning in movements, social movement analysis of educational trends, educators as social movement actors*, etc.). We developed the majority of these categories inductively from early reading for the study, although additional categories were added and categories were modified, combined, and reconceptualized as our analyses moved forward. The next step was to examine the publications within each of the categories, a process that promoted a more comprehensive understanding of the nature of literature. We also developed spreadsheets in which publications in the subsample were coded by year, field, social movement, national context, level/type of education, thematic categories, and so forth. These spreadsheets facilitated the development of quantitative descriptions of the literature and provided reference points for broader analyses and writing. In the next section, we begin to discuss our findings by providing a brief overview of the history and nature of social movement scholarship in education.

## THE HISTORY AND LANDSCAPE OF SOCIAL MOVEMENT SCHOLARSHIP IN EDUCATION

With some exceptions, scholarship on education and social movements suffers from a generally low profile across fields of educational research. One likely explanation is its history. Explicit reference to social movements was absent from much educational scholarship throughout most of the 20th century. This lacuna has been noted by educational researchers across myriad fields, including adult education (Choudry, 2014; Cunningham, 1998; Foley, 1998, 1999; Hall, 2006; Holford, 1995; Holst, 2002; Jarvis, 2002; Kilgore, 1999; Scandrett et al., 2010; Steele, 2003; Welton, 1995), higher education (Rhoads et al., 2005; Salinas & Fraser, 2012; Slaughter, 1997), and sociology of education (Davies, 1999; Morrow & Torres, 2007; Sultana, 1992; Weis, 1990; Wexler, 1983). Similarly, outside educational research, the broader field of social movement studies has

rarely addressed the role of education and learning in movements (Davies, 1999; Foley, 1998, 1999; Hall, 2006; Holford, 1995; Holst, 2002; Morrow & Torres, 2007; Stromquist & Hennessy, 2012; Tarlau, 2014).

Of course, many exceptions exist, the earliest of which were studies of the history of adult education in social movements. Dobbs, for example, published work exploring popular education in 18th and 19th century English social movements as early as 1919. The early 1960s saw treatments of adult education in working class movements, including those of Harrison (1962) and Silver (1965). Also during this period, E. P. Thompson's (1963) celebrated social history of the English working class featured numerous references to educational initiatives. Beyond historical studies, social movements had a presence in adult education scholarship as early as the 1970s. The early writings of Paulo Freire, whose history with social movements is well known, had been translated into English by then and had begun to influence adult education researchers outside of Latin America, including those in Europe and North America (e.g., Hall, 1978; Haviland, 1973; Lloyd, 1972).

Outside the fields of adult education and history of education, Paulston (1977, 1980a, 1980b; Paulston & Leroy, 1975) was among the first educational researchers to write about education and social movements (in his case, in the field of international and comparative education). Writing at the end of the 1970s, however, he proved overly optimistic in his prediction that students of educational change and policy studies will, no doubt, pay increasing attention to social movements in the years to come (1980a, p. 5). It was not until the mid-1990s that social movement scholarship began to proliferate across multiple fields of educational research. Several important forerunners writing in the 1980s can be identified, though, including Altbach (1989) in higher education, Carnoy and Levin (1986) in economics of education, Tyack and Hansot (1980) and Wrigley (1982) in the history of formal education, and Wexler (1983) and Weis (1990) in sociology of education.

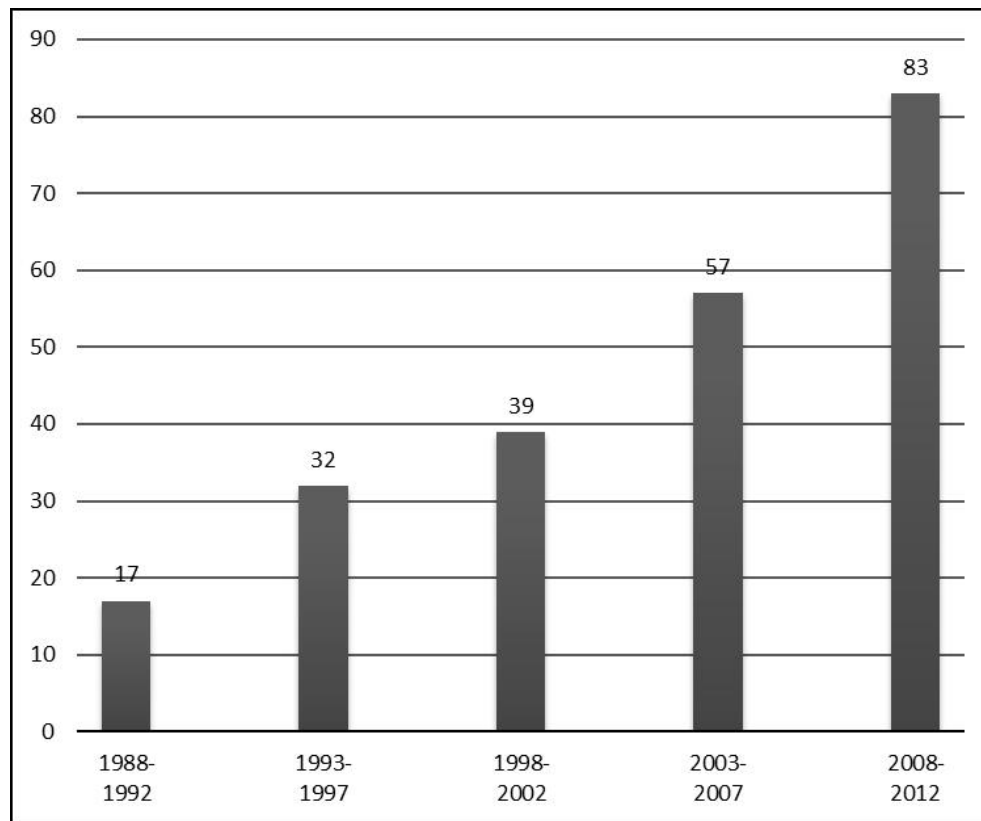
The explanations offered for the lack of attention to social movements across multiple fields of educational research bear a family resemblance to one another in the sense that, through most of the 20th century, theoretical frames across these fields seem to have been influenced by an ahistorical embrace of social order. In higher education, for example, Rhoads and colleagues (2005) have explained the neglect of social movement perspectives by pointing to the prominence of organizational theories in higher education scholarship. In adult education, a field that emerged from social movements, researchers have argued that the increasing professionalization of their field throughout the 20th century shifted focus to instrumental conceptualizations of education and away from movements

(Cunningham, 1998; Foley, 1998, 1999; Hall, 2006; Holford, 1995; Holst, 2002; Jarvis, 2002; Kilgore, 1999; Steele, 2003; Welton, 1995; Woodin, 2007). The historical absence that most surprised us, however, was that in sociology of education, a field that continues to be underrepresented despite its grounding in the primary discipline of social movement studies. Morrow and Torres (2007), Davies (1999), Sultana (1992), and Wexler (1983) have all commented on the neglect of social movements in sociology of education, with Morrow and Torres attributing it to the historical prominence of both functionalist theories and structuralist conflict theories, neither of which could easily explain new social movements. Interestingly, several of these authors note that even critical educational researchers overlooked social movements in the late 20th century, as they were preoccupied with studies of individual and group resistance contextualized by a fairly deterministic view of social reproduction (Morrow & Torres, 2007; Sultana, 1992; Wexler, 1983).

Despite this history, educational researchers' interest in social movements appears to have grown rapidly since the early 1990s, as indicated by Figure 1. Within our study's subsample of journal articles, almost five times as many articles were published between 2008 and 2012 (83) as between 1988 and 1992 (17). What explains such proliferation in social movement scholarship in education? Acknowledging the fact that the publication of journal articles in general has expanded dramatically during this period (Goel & Faria, 2007; Morris, 2007) and technological changes have made it easier to find publications of interest, we speculate that the more substantive explanation for such growth is the shifts that have taken place in theoretical influences, methodological options, and researchers' backgrounds. Theoretically, postmodern theoretical influences have loosened the grip of ahistorical, functionalist, and deterministic views of education in society that have been blamed for the paucity of social movement research in education. In addition, social movement theory appears to have caught the attention of today's educational researchers to a greater extent than in the past. Somewhat related, we have also seen decades of growth and variation in the research methodologies available to educational researchers, with qualitative and critical scholarly work in particular more prominent now than they were 30 years ago. This has set the context for the types of politically-engaged research we see in this literature. Indeed, researchers' own political support of and involvement in social movements may be a major factor in some of the growth of social movement scholarship in education. Later in the article we address the fact that much of the research on social movements in education is conducted by researchers with personal and political interests in the movements they study. Interestingly, decades ago, Wexler (1983) took critical researchers to task for ignoring social movements, arguing that, although their work was made possible by historical, collective social action, they failed to recognize the power of movements in their scholarship (p. 19; see also, Weis, 1990, pp. 4-5). With the theoretical, methodological, and political shifts that have influenced researchers across a range of fields

within the broad landscape educational research, the growing chorus of calls for more attention to social movements appears to have finally been heard (although certainly to a greater extent in some fields than in others).

**Figure 1. Number of articles in the subsample by 5-year period**



Today, the literature on social movements and education is dominated by qualitative, historical, and conceptual/theoretical inquiry. Only 6 of the 228 journal articles in our 25-year subsample report quantitative analyses (either survey-based studies or analyses of existing quantitative data). The subsample is diverse in terms of national contexts, with 32 countries represented. Considering the English-language bias of the sample among other factors, it is no surprise that three of the four national contexts most often represented in the subsample are that of the United States, the United Kingdom, and Canada. Perhaps equally unsurprising, given its rich history of social movement activism and popular education (Ghanem, 1998), Brazil is third in line, just behind the United Kingdom and before Canada.



We also found diversity in the movements explored in the literature. Although, predictably, the women's movement/feminist movements, the labor movement, and the U.S. civil rights movement are those featured most often, more than 85 movements are represented in the subsample (most with only one article). They range from the local (e.g., a Buddhist environmental movement in rural Thailand [Walter, 2007a]) to the transnational (e.g., anti-globalization and anti-neoliberalism movements [Rhoads, 2003; Torres, 2011]). The majority of publications feature a single movement, although some focus on two or more specific movements, and a high proportion discuss social movements (or social movement theory) generally or conceptually.

In terms of the areas of focus explored in the scholarship reviewed, we found that the literature falls largely into two broad categories: the study of education and learning in social movements, and the study of the influence of movements on formal education. The first category of scholarship, produced primarily (though not entirely) in the field of adult education, has the appearance of a research program, with researchers engaged in scholarly conversation with shared theoretical touchstones. The second category of scholarship, produced across a number of disparate fields, does not have the appearance of a research program. Instead, studies addressing movements' influence on both K-12 and higher education appear in pockets without a shared literature base and without scholarly conversation. We found very few signs of mutual awareness across these two large categories of scholarship, despite what we see as many common interests, perspectives, and goals. In the following sections, we introduce and overview each of these two broad categories of literature in order to discuss how educational researchers have addressed social movements in their scholarship and suggest some of what has been learned through this work.

## EDUCATION AND LEARNING WITHIN AND FOR SOCIAL MOVEMENTS

More than any other area of educational research, the field of adult education has embraced the study of social movements. In contrast to the spotty treatment of social movements across K-12 and higher education research, the field of adult education is home to a fairly coherent body of literature focused on education and learning in social movements. The field boasts edited volumes (e.g., Choudry & Kapoor, 2010; Crowther, Martin, & Shaw, 1999; Hall, Clover, & Crowther, 2012), at least one special issue of a journal (Hall, Clover, Crowther, & Scandrett, 2011), a state of the field report (Hall & Turay, 2006), and its own internal debates (most prominently, those between Marxists and so-called radical pluralists and postmodernists [see Holst, 2002; Sandlin & Walther,

2009; Walter, 2007a]). This attention is at least partly explained by the long history of radical adult education in the service of social movements. Indeed, many claim that adult education was born in the European working class movements of the late 18th and early 19th centuries, and that, for subsequent generations, it could be considered a social movement in its own right (e.g., Holford, 1995; Jarvis, 2002; Steele, 2003). Today, as in past generations, social movements are prime contexts for adult education worldwide. In the remainder of this section, we overview how adult educational researchers have studied education in and for movements, as well as the learning that takes place in movements

## EDUCATION IN AND FOR MOVEMENTS

Adult education researchers have made it clear that, through their very existence, social movements educate both their adherents and broader publics (Crowther & Shaw, 1997; Dykstra & Law, 1994; Elbaz, 1998; Ghanem, 1998; Hall, 2006; Holford, 1995; Martin, 1988; Stromquist, 1998; Walters, 2005). Their work has established that movements open new possibilities for social critique, counterhegemonic understandings, and the creation of alternative ways of living and being in the world (Sandlin & Walther, 2009, p. 314, following Dykstra & Law, 1994; see also Crowther & Shaw, 1997). Scholarship in the history of adult education in particular presents myriad fascinating and often innovative ways in which movements have incorporated education into their collective action. Additionally, contemporary educational initiatives of diverse movements have provided a backdrop for qualitative studies developed around varied questions about the form, practice, and experience of adult education in movements.

Although the questions guiding research on the educational activities of movements are too wide-ranging to discuss in any depth here, this body of literature does offer a picture of the diverse means by which movements engage in non-formal educational projects serving both participants and broader publics. Specific educational programming facilitated through community-based organizations, labor unions, and other social movement organizations includes training programs, courses, workshops, and so forth (see, e.g., Tarlau, 2011). Movements organize conferences, seminars, lectures, public debates, and teach-ins (Welton, 1995). More open-ended and dialogic educational activities associated with movements include consciousness-raising groups, mutual improvement groups (Steele, 2003), study clubs (Welton, 1995), writing and publishing groups (Woodin, 2005), and participatory action research (Kapoor, 2004; Vally & Spreen, 2008). To a lesser extent, researchers have also explored the educational role of media, such as bulletins, leaflets, and

newspapers (e.g., Welton, 1995); other movement-produced literature, resources, and propaganda (e.g., Martin, 1988; Meek, 2011); and art, including music, visual art (e.g., Mein, 2011; Walter, 2012), and films and documentaries (e.g., Flowers & Swan, 2011).

Popular education is perhaps the approach to education most closely associated with social movements, and it has been a major topic of research both within and outside adult education (e.g., in the fields of international and comparative education, history of education, sociology of education, anthropology of education, etc.). Popular education generally refers to the fostering of learning and social critique among the popular (working class and poor) classes through highly participatory pedagogical methods. Popular education in the Freirean tradition, for example, is well known for rejecting the transmission or banking model of education (Freire, 2000). Foley (1998) defined it as forms of education which involve people in processes of critical analysis so that they can act collectively to address inequalities and injustices (p. 140). Adult education scholarship often associates popular education with critical pedagogy (e.g., Crowther & Shaw, 1997; Cunningham, 1998; Dykstra & Law, 1994; Foley, 1998, 1999; 2001; Holford, 1995; Walter, 2007a, 2007b, 2012), and scholars of critical pedagogy have explored its use in popular education (e.g., Jaramillo, McLaren, & Lázaro, 2011; McLaren, 2012).

## LEARNING IN MOVEMENTS

Paulston is said to have coined the phrase social movement learning in his 1980 book about Northern European folk colleges (Hall & Turay, 2006). Since that time, studies of learning in social movements have grown tremendously. Although adult education researchers in this area often note that the study of social movement learning is still emerging (e.g., Foley, 1999; Gouin, 2009; Holst, 2002), it represents the most coherent body of literature we found in the review. By this we mean that authors consistently cited a recognized set of theories, authors, and classic texts in their scholarship. Studies in this area have focused primarily on how learning takes place through participation in social movements. As such, this highly international body of literature comprises qualitative case studies of (adult) learning in specific social movements as well as broader theoretical treatments of learning in movements.

One characteristic of this body of literature is its advocacy for a social and critical orientation to learning. Many scholars of social movement learning reject the overly individual, psychological, and instrumental assumptions about learning that dominate the

field of adult education (Cunningham, 1998; Foley, 1998, 1999; Holford, 1995; Holst, 2002; Jarvis, 2002; Kilgore, 1999; Steele, 2003; Welton, 1995). Foley (1998) referred to this orientation as a problem in adult education scholarship: its tendency to instrumentalism, psychological humanism, abstraction and idealism, and a general underdevelopment of sociological analysis (p. 142). In contrast, social movement learning researchers tend to view learning through social, political, and critical lenses, often drawing on critical theory or social movement theory in their work. Moreover, learning is not viewed as passive in this literature; active meaning making within social movement contexts is assumed (see, e.g., Cunningham, 1998; Rule, 2011).

Evidencing this rejection of instrumental views of learning, the dominant focus of this body of scholarship is not learning through movements deliberate educational initiatives but informal learning through participation in social movements. Stromquist (1998), for example, highlighted this focus, explaining that, Mobilization efforts always result in learning experiences, even when these are not recorded and consciously utilized by the organizations comprising a given social movement (p. 127). Scholarship in this area suggests that social movement actors learn through their participation in everything from informal conversations to massive protest actions.

Indeed, such research makes evident that what is learned in social movements is varied and diverse. Foley, who is frequently cited on the topic of informal and incidental learning in social movements, has described this variation as learning *in* struggle, learning *through* struggle, and learning *to* struggle (1999). Rule (2011) further captured the range of kinds of learning, noting

The dimensions of this learning are multiple, shifting and mutually constitutive, but include learning to be (identity construction), learning to know about issues pertinent to the movement, learning to do (engaging in action through enacting repertoires), learning to organise (finding appropriate ways of being together) and learning to analyse and critique (developing critical consciousness). (p. 222)

Foley (1998), however, emphasizes the point that both instrumental learning and critical learning may take place in social movements, which he illustrated with the example of an Australian rainforest campaign in which activists gained knowledge and skills in rainforest ecology, lobbying and advocacy. They also developed a more critical view of authority and expertise, and a recognition of their own ability to influence decision making (p. 143).

Through the review we identified five broad types of knowledge that researchers have articulated in studies of learning in social movements. Our list reflects a spectrum moving from more instrumental to more critical learning.

1.

*Scientific, expert, and movement-promoted knowledge about issues central to the social movement* (See, e.g., Endresen & von Kotze, 2005; Flowers & Swan, 2011; Foley, 1998, 1999; Martin, 1988; Rule, 2011; Stromquist, 1998). Movements promote certain scientific and expert knowledges, and further develop and promote their own knowledges related to the issues at the center of their goals. Environmental activists, for example, learn the science of climate change as well as the specific discourses related to climate change that circulate through movement spaces.

2.

*Skills and practices of organization, mobilization, and collective action* (See, e.g., Cunningham, 1998; Dykstra & Law, 1994; Foley, 1998, 1999; Rule, 2011; Tarlau, 2014). Movement actors learn the movement's orientation to organizing and collective action, as well as the specific skills and tactics required of the movement's approach to these activities.

3.

*The vision of the movement* (See, e.g., Cunningham, 1998; Dykstra & Law, 1994). Dykstra and Law (1994) have articulated the importance of learning the vision of the movement, which includes the movement's values (Larrabure, Vieta, & Schugurensky, 2011), its goals, and its conceptualization of a better future. This vision, they noted, allows social movement participants to construct an alternative map of reality (p. 123).

4.

*Individual and collective identity* (See, e.g., Finger, 1989; Kilgore, 1999; Rule, 2011; Sandlin & Walther, 2009). Movement actors learn who they are and who they are becoming through movement participation. Movement actions, movement understandings (explicit and implicit), and social relationships and interactions within movement communities contribute to the development of individual and collective identities.

5.

*Social critique and agency* (See, e.g., Crowther & Shaw, 1997; Dykstra & Law, 1994; Endresen & von Kotze, 2005; Foley, 1998, 1999; Kilgore, 1999; Larrabure et al., 2011; Rule, 2011; Stromquist, 1998; Tarlau, 2014; Walter, 2012). Finally, scholars of social movement learning have discussed the potential for critical learning, emancipatory learning, and learning to reject dominant ideologies. A number of these researchers have used Freire's (2000) term *conscientization* to refer to the potential of social movement participants to learn to read the world, understand the underlying political, economic and social structures of oppression (Walter, 2012, p. 115), analyze and critique the status quo, and develop critical consciousness. Furthermore, agency develops alongside social critique for some participants in social movements, and, indeed, becomes a basis for participation in collective action and other movement activity. Although this description may evoke images of progressive social movements, learning in conservative movements has the potential to generate its own brand of social critique and agency as well.

This overview illustrates the diversity in kinds of knowledge and kinds of learning to be found in social movements. Of course, a list like this is necessarily heuristic. As Rule (2011) has explained, the dimensions of learning in social movements are fluid and mutually constitutive; what is learned in any one of the above categories has implications for learning in others. Worldviews, identities, and practices (how we relate to others, engage in collective actions, and act in our everyday lives) may be informed by informal, experiential learning in movements in ways impossible to sort into neat categories like those we have listed. Indeed, the whole may be greater than the sum of its parts in the sense that learning in social movements has the potential to produce taken-as-shared meanings (Kilgore, 1999, p. 191) and interpretive frames (Walter, 2007b, p. 251) that integrate multiple kinds of knowledge.

Our list may evoke utopian images but should not suggest that social movement learning is always emancipatory and empowering. As Zielińska, Kowzan, and Prusinowska (2011) demonstrated, movements fail, and learning from the failure of movements can be disempowering; what is learned is that collective action does not work. Moreover, even in successful movements, the nature of what is learned is complex and unpredictable (Choudry, 2014; Foley, 1998, 1999). Foley has stressed this in his work, acknowledging the struggle between insurgent and dominant discourses as context for social movement learning (1999, p. 26).

Finally, it is important to point out that a primary emphasis in this literature is that movements not only provide contexts for learning new knowledge, they also generate this knowledge through movement activity (Choudry & Kapoor, 2010; Holford, 1995; B. Martin, 1988; I. Martin, 1999; Stromquist, 1998). As I. Martin (1999) explained, movements make and disseminate new knowledge and understanding through their activity. It is in this sense that they constitute epistemological communities, the creators and carriers of alternative kinds of knowledge and culture (p. 12). To be sure, popular knowledges are sometimes legitimated through movements (Crowther & Shaw, 1997), and expert and lay knowledges have important roles in many movements. Such pre-existing knowledges, however, are transformed through movement activity (B. Martin, 1988; Scandrett et al., 2010), and new knowledge is generated.

Thus far in the review, we have discussed the nature and contributions of literature focused on the education and learning generated by social movements. The second major category of scholarship addresses how movements have influenced formal education. Whereas the literature discussed above focuses on movement spaces and emanates primarily from the field of adult education, we now turn to the institutional, often state-sponsored, spaces of formal education explored by K 12 and higher education researchers.

## INFLUENCE OF SOCIAL MOVEMENTS ON FORMAL EDUCATION

Scholarship related to the influence of social movements on formal education has a considerably different profile than that on learning and education within movements. Whereas the latter has the appearance of a research program, with researchers linked by a common field and engaged in scholarly conversation with shared theoretical touchstones, research on movements and formal education does not. Instead, it is remarkably amorphous and lacks coherence as a body of scholarship. The primary reasons for this appear to be that higher education scholarship addressing social movements has been quite limited, and scholarship addressing the influence of movements on schooling has been produced in pockets, by researchers across several fields who are not in dialogue. There is little cross-citation across these small pockets of research and no sense of a body of scholarship or a network of researchers addressing the influence of movements on formal education.

Because of the disjointed state of this category of literature, we can provide only a rough sketch of this scholarship addressing the influence of social movements on formal

education. To do so, we first discuss the literature in terms of the fields from which it emerges. Second, we discuss the nature and some of the contributions of the scholarship on social movements and institutional change. Third, we address social movements and formal education actors, scholarship focused on participation in social movements by students, parents, and, especially, educators. Finally, we conclude this section with a brief discussion of how formal education has been conceptualized as contested terrain, a target for the interests of both social movements and the state.

## FIELDS OF INQUIRY

Although higher education is at least as prone to the influence of social movements as K 12 schooling is, the literature is uneven, with over five times as many articles in our subsample focusing solely on schooling than on higher education. Part of the reason for this could be simply that the field of higher education is a much smaller field when compared to the focus on K 12 education. Yet we would still argue that, considering the roles that colleges and universities have played in social movements, the field of higher education is sorely underrepresented in the literature we reviewed. Only 8.3% of our subsample comprises journal articles focused exclusively on higher education, and one quarter of these (5 of 19 articles) were authored or co-authored by a single scholar, Robert Rhoads. Rhoads and his colleagues (2005) have explained the lack of attention by contending that organizational theories have dominated analyses of higher education reform at the expense of social movement perspectives. Likewise, in 1997 Slaughter noted that social movement analyses had been largely missing from higher education s curriculum scholarship as well.

Today, however, interest in social movements appears to be on the rise in this field; we found more journal articles featuring higher education published in the last 5 years of the subsample than in the first 20. In terms of areas of inquiry, social movement scholarship in higher education has explored the social movement activism of college students and the role of universities and colleges as spaces for social movement activity (e.g., Altbach, 1989; Helferty & Clarke, 2009; Rhoads, 1998a, 1998b, 2003; Salinas & Fraser, 2012), social movement campaigns to influence higher education policy and practice (e.g., Rhoades & Rhoads, 2002; Rhoads et al., 2005), and how movements of the mid-20th century led to new academic disciplines such as Black Studies/African American Studies, Women s Studies, Ethnic Studies, and so forth (e.g., Rhoads, 1998a; Slaughter, 1997), among other topics.



Whereas higher education (like adult education) represents an academic field unto itself, the same cannot be said for scholarship addressing the education of young people, produced as it is by myriad fields that are not usually in conversation. Social movement-oriented research focused on K 12 schooling emerges from several of these, most of which are considered part of the social foundations of education. These fields include history of education, sociology of education, anthropology of education, policy studies, critical educational studies, gender studies, and, most prominently in this review, international and comparative education. Other fields represented with a relatively small number of publications each include educational leadership, health education, curriculum studies, teacher education, and learning disability studies.

As with other areas, interest in social movements appears to have grown significantly among researchers studying schooling, with three times more journal articles published in the second half of the quarter-decade examined (78 articles between 2001 and 2012) than in the first (25 articles between 1988 and 1999). Most prominent in this body of literature are studies related to social movements agitation for educational change and studies addressing the historical influence of social movements on myriad aspects of schooling. In addition, a growing number of publications issue calls for adopting social movement theory to analyze educational trends and for engaging a social movement model to promote educational change.

## MOVEMENTS AND INSTITUTIONAL CHANGE

Apple (2003) has argued that it is social movements that provide the engines of lasting educational transformation (p. 519). Although the institutions of schooling and higher education are conventionally thought to be highly resistant to change, researchers have identified many successful structural, curricular, and pedagogical transformations borne of social movements. Anyon (2009) listed several examples: Latino struggles produced Bilingual education; the 1970s women s movement yielded curricular change as well as increased entitlements in schools and districts; disabilities organizing also has prompted federal protections and entitlements (p. 198). These and other victories were the result of collective action that, over time, influenced state institutions. Yet, research has also shown us that movement goals are often highly contested, actions often fail, and compromises are forged (see, e.g., Binder, 2002).

Contemporary and historical studies addressing the influence of social movements on

schooling and higher education range from those focusing on large-scale national or transnational movements, such as the civil rights movement, women's movements, antiglobalization movements, and so forth, to smaller-scale local movements, such as a movement to educate squatters' children in Paris (Dutercq & Lafaye, 2007) and university-specific campus campaigns for multicultural education (Rhoads, 1998a, 1998b). As these examples suggest, smaller-scale movements featured in educational research are often outgrowths of much larger social movements. In other words, local actions to advocate change in formal education systems, as well as intellectual and professional movements within educational systems, are usually connected to broader social movements. Educational researchers most often treat these smaller outgrowth movements within and around formal education as social movements in their own right, as Rhoads et al. (2005) argued they should, explaining that these may be understood as a specific movement operating within the context of a general social movement (p. 192, citing Turner, 1994, p. 79).

Researchers studying both schooling and higher education have addressed movements' influence on myriad elements of formal education systems, including these systems' emergence, the laws guiding them, their structural organization, alternatives to existing systems, the groups of people permitted to participate in formal education, policies and practices of all kinds, and, of course, curriculum and pedagogy. These aspects of formal education have been direct targets of both successful and failed change efforts explored by researchers. Although the vast majority of publications in this large category of research focus on the more direct influence of movements and their actions on specific targets for reform, Davies (1999) suggested an additional way to understand movements' influence on formal education. He discussed the loose coupling between social movements and education reform, noting that educational change movements often simply reflect the social movement ethos of the times. He illustrated this point with the example of the Free Schools and Open Concept schools of the 1960s and 1970s, which were justified largely by ideals of unfettered individual development and grassroots community control that characterized the prevailing zeitgeist (p. 17).

Thus far, we have addressed historical and current studies of the influence of movements on formal education. There is also a growing body of research with a future orientation, one that advocates for the advancement of new social movements to reform schooling. Several well-known American and Canadian educational researchers have promoted a social movement model for educational change, arguing that those wishing to reform schooling should emulate social movements. These scholars have pointed out that movement models of educational change are underused, that reformers should borrow movement tactics like grassroots organizing and building coalitions with those outside

school communities, and that change efforts should be viewed and promoted as social movements (Anyon, 2005, 2009; Carlson, 1993; Hargreaves, 2000, 2001, 2002; Oakes & Lipton, 2002; Oakes & Rogers with Lipton, 2006; Oakes & Rogers, 2007; Oakes, Rogers, Blasi, & Lipton, 2008; Rincón-Gallardo & Elmore, 2012; Sleeter, 1996; Villenas, 2012; Warren, 2014; Wells, Anyon, & Oakes, 2011). Oakes and Rogers (2007), for example, writing specifically about equity-oriented reforms, noted that technical, professional, and organizational reforms run headlong into cultural and political dynamics that maintain the status quo (p. 196); achieving equity in schooling will require disrupting these social norms through social movement activism from coalitions of educators and community members. Along these lines, Rincón-Gallardo and Elmore (2012) explained that social movements act as forces for social innovation because they operate in fundamentally different ways from public agencies and work against certain fundamental patterns of culture and practice in mainstream, established organizations (p. 477). The growing chorus of prominent voices for engaging new social movements for educational change is one of the strongest indications that social movements are moving from the margins to the center in educational research.

## MOVEMENTS AND FORMAL EDUCATION ACTORS

Less often explored than movements' influence on institutional change is their influence on the ideas that circulate throughout formal education systems and the identities that are produced within these systems. In Gaskell's (2008) study of the influence of the women's movement on British Columbia schooling, for example, she noted that although the curriculum, guidelines for textbooks, and available professional development all changed in response to the movement, the feminist ideas that circulated through the school system were more lasting than any of the particular reforms. How such social movement ideas circulating through schools influence the identities of youth and adults has been a focus of sociological and anthropological scholarship in education. Weis's (1990) study of working class high school students in the wake of the women's movement, the decline of the labor movement, and rise of the New Right, and Trujillo's (1996) study of educators and youth in the midst of the Chicano civil rights movement are examples that explore the complex appropriation of movement discourses in the development and transformation of actors' identities.

The other side of that coin is scholarship addressing how formal educational actors influence schooling through their participation in social movements. Participation in social movements by students, their parents, and their educators has been at the center of many

studies, illustrating another way in which movements impact schooling and higher education. Simultaneously social movement actors and formal education actors, these individuals and groups circulate knowledge among movement spaces and sites of formal education.

In scholarship on schooling, we rarely find studies of students conceptualized explicitly as social movement actors. (The highly visible and growing literature on youth and community organizing for educational change features students engaging in advocacy and activism, but most of these works fell outside our sampling criteria.) In contrast, parents-as-social movement actors have been a focus of a few studies of K 12 education (e.g., Hargreaves, 2002; Nespor & Hicks, 2010; Pedroni, 2007). We do not see parents in the social movement-oriented higher education literature, but research addressing students-as-social-movement-actors is prevalent. This work has addressed college student participation in on-campus movements (e.g., Rhoads, 1998a, 1998b), national movements (e.g., Salinas & Fraser, 2012), and transnational movements (e.g., Rhoads, 2003).

The most prominent group of formal-education-actors-as-social-movement-actors in the studies reviewed is educators themselves. Although several references are made to higher education faculty informing and supporting students involved in student movements (e.g., Altbach, 1989; Rhoads, 1998a) and engaging in large-scale social movements themselves (e.g., Meek, 2015; Slocum & Rhoads, 2009), the phenomenon of educators-as-social-movement-actors has been explored to a greater extent in K 12 schooling contexts. Some of this work has focused on teachers unions as agents or outcomes of social movements (e.g., Finger & Gindin, 2015; Rottmann, 2012; Synott, 2007), but even more of what we found was outside the context of unions and depicted teachers as activists across a range of social movements. Notwithstanding a fairly robust group of studies addressing teachers-as-social-movement-actors (e.g., Binder, 2002; Gaskell, 2004, 2008; Gay, 1983; Grossman, 2010; Jennings & De Matta, 2009; Myers, 2007; Niesz & Krishnamurthy, 2014; Novelli, 2010; Skinner & Holland, 1996; Sultana, 1992; Trujillo, 1996), however, some have suggested that this area of inquiry is actually underexplored for theoretical reasons. Because movements have traditionally been positioned as challengers to the state, teachers and other insiders of educational systems are more often viewed as state agents than as social movement actors (Niesz & Krishnamurthy, 2013). Yet, they are often both, and several researchers have argued the importance of recognizing them as active, political, social movement actors (see Myers, 2007; Novelli, 2010; Sultana, 1992). Indeed, our review suggests that it is educators who often bridge social movements with the state.

## MOVEMENTS, THE STATE, AND CONTESTED TERRAIN

In our discussion of the varied ways in which social movements influence formal education, we are not intending to position the state as a perpetual opponent of social movements. The literature reviewed indicates that this is not always the case; when it comes to formal education initiatives, the state is sometimes a collaborator with social movements (Macias, 1996; Niesz & Krishnamurthy, 2013, 2014; Stromquist, 1998). O Cadiz and Torres (O Cadiz, 1998; O Cadiz & Torres, 1994; Torres, 1994), along with Mayo (1994, 1999), for example, have written extensively about the partnership between social movements and the state's formal education sector during Paulo Freire's tenure as secretary of education in São Paulo, Brazil. More recent state and social movement collaborations in Brazil have been explored as well, including those related to formal education in the Landless Workers Movement (Kane, 2000; Meek, 2015; Tarlau, 2015) and the Citizen School project in Porto Alegre (Gandin, 2007; Gandin & Apple, 2004, 2012). Generally, cooperation from the state ranges from the embrace of movement-sponsored initiatives by sympathetic or tolerant local school systems to more formalized partnerships between movements and government administrations (as in the examples from Brazil).

Although the literature makes evident that the state is not always an opponent of movements, it also illustrates that partnership projects between movements and the state bear the risk of cooption or more mundane incorporation into existing bureaucratic arrangements (Gaskell, 2004; Graham & Slee, 2008; Kane, 2000; Martin, 1988; Rincón-Gallardo & Elmore, 2012; Stromquist, 1998; Torres, 1994). Social movement knowledges that succeed in influencing formal education are transformed within school and university contexts, often depoliticized and stripped of more radical elements (see Martin, 1988). The fate of multicultural education as an outgrowth of the civil rights movement is an illuminating example (see Carlson, 1995; Gay, 1983; Sleeter, 1996). Carlson (1995), for instance, used the example of multicultural education to illustrate that reform initiatives and policies are compromises or settlements between movements and the state. In the realm of higher education, Arthur (2009) made a similar point about what she called New Knowledge Movements (NKMs) like women's studies, arguing that new disciplines that emerge as NKMs end in a way familiar to social movements scholars, transforming from movements into interest groups as they become institutionalized as academic fields and ultimately lose their ability to truly challenge the status quo (p. 76).

Moreover, movements successful in influencing formal education often inspire countermovements, some of which push back immediately (Binder, 2002, 2007) and others that become long-term countermovements (such as the conservative restoration of the 1980s [Apple, 1996, 2001; Carlson, 1993; Miller, 2002; Rhoads et al., 2005; Slaughter, 1997]). Ultimately, the long-term effects of social movements on systems of formal education are unpredictable and often bear little resemblance to activists' intentions.

## RECOGNIZING COMMON GROUND

As we have suggested, the two major categories of educational research addressing social movements, education and learning within movements and the influence of movements on formal education, are almost completely disconnected from each other. We saw almost no cross-citation across bodies of literature. Perhaps this is to be expected; the work emerges from different fields by researchers who attend to different phenomena, units of analysis, types of education, populations of learners, and so forth. Yet, despite these differences, we found that these researchers from various fields have more in common than they might expect. In this section we identify some of this common ground, which, we suggest, could draw together researchers interested in working toward a more united field of research on social movements and education, one that could build knowledge about social movements across spaces of formal, non-formal, and informal education and across generations of learners. The first area of common ground we discuss is the theoretical and political positioning of social movement researchers across diverse fields of inquiry. Then we discuss shared interests in social movement schools and questions related to pedagogy.

## THEORETICAL AND POLITICAL POSITIONING

Many of the researchers who explore education and social movements across this varied landscape often share theoretical influences and political positioning. Although more prominent in some than others, we found both social movement theory and critical theory throughout the social movement-oriented scholarship in most fields of inquiry. Since a fleshed-out discussion of the diverse theoretical influences of more than 370 publications is far outside the scope of this article, here we make only general observations about these prominent theoretical frames and political positions taken up across the scholarship reviewed.

Although social movement theory remains underrepresented in educational research generally, it is referenced frequently throughout both large categories of literature we reviewed, albeit often only in passing. Originating in sociology and political science, social movement theory refers to numerous and varied theoretical approaches to understanding social movements and related phenomena. The more in-depth engagements with social movement theory in the literature reviewed include the use of social movement theory to promote understanding or raise new questions about educational phenomena and trends, the use of social movement theory to interpret qualitative data generated in studies of social movements and education, discussion of theories of new social movements and their educational relevance and implications, attempts to reconcile social movement theory with theories of education and learning, and advocacy for the use of social movement theory in educational research. Again, we found these approaches across most of the fields represented in the review.

Critical theory is perhaps equal in influence to social movement theory across both categories of literature, and is often combined with social movement theory perspectives (see, e.g., Holst, 2002; Morrow & Torres, 2007; Walter, 2007b; Weis, 1990; Welton, 1993). More specifically, much social movement-oriented educational scholarship across varied fields is informed by the work of Freire and Gramsci, both of whom were not only theorists but also personally involved with education in social movements for significant periods of their lives. Freire's perspectives on conscientization and pedagogical methods linked to personal and social transformation, along with Gramsci's theories related to critical consciousness, organic intellectuals, counterhegemony, and the forming of hegemonic blocs, have been of great interest to educational researchers studying social movements across varied fields of inquiry (see Mayo's [1994, 1999] relevant work on synthesizing the theories of Gramsci and Freire as they relate to education for social action).

The critical orientation of many social movement researchers in education is also evident in their approaches to research. We have already noted that social movement scholarship across varied education fields is overwhelmingly qualitative and interpretive in nature, but much of it is also critical and marked by the political commitments of the researchers. The roles taken up by researchers in the studies reviewed can be positioned along a spectrum running from the ostensibly neutral academic to the supportive and sympathetic researcher to the research-oriented advocate for the movement to the embedded activist scholar. The tendency of much of this literature to fall into the latter three categories tells us much about the political positioning of the researchers and their work. Specifically, we found that scholars of education and social movements are often sympathetic to or engaged with the movements that they research, and that the movements they research are overwhelmingly progressive. There are, of course, major exceptions notably Apple's (1996, 2000a, 2000b,

2001, 2003, 2007; Apple et al., 2003; Apple & Oliver, 1999) extensive work on rightist movements. Other exceptions include Binder's (2002, 2007) study of creationist movements and Hill's (2002) study of a right-wing environmental education movement. Both Apple and Hill, however, study right-wing movements in order to critique them and fuel progressive causes.

Given these theoretical and political interests that transcend specific fields, it is not surprising that social movement researchers in education also share questions and contexts of interest. One example is the nature of the relationship between the tenets of a movement and the pedagogical approaches taken up in the movement's education projects. This question, among others, has been explored by researchers across fields in the context of social movement schools.

## SOCIAL MOVEMENT SCHOOLS AND QUESTIONS OF PEDAGOGY

Perhaps because of how they both mirror and critique state-sponsored formal education while remaining clearly situated within movements, social movement schools have been of interest to researchers with divergent interests, whether these be non-formal or formal education, youth or adults. Researchers from myriad fields have studied the history of movement schools serving adults, such as the American Labor Colleges of the 1920s and 1930s (Altenbaugh, 1990; Edwards & McCarthy, 1992) and the Highlander School (Edwards & McCarthy, 1992; Horton & Freire, 1990; Thayer-Bacon, 2004), and children, such as the British and American Socialist Sunday Schools of early 20th century (Gerrard, 2012, 2013; Teitelbaum, 1995). More recent examples of movement-sponsored schools featured in educational research include community schools for children living in Brazilian *favelas* (Jones de Almeida, 2003), Black supplementary schools for youth in the U.K. (Reay & Mirza, 1997), and the schools supporting the Landless Workers Movement in Brazil (which range from primary schools for children through graduate schools offering teacher education; Caldart, 2002; Diniz-Pereira, 2005; Kane, 2000; Knijnik, 1997, 2002). Although movement schools have served multiple and diverse purposes, ranging from the promotion of the movement's ideas, philosophies, and ideals to the achievement of concrete goals (as in the Freedom Schools' role in voter registration) to the direct training of potential activists (as with Labor Colleges), researchers have suggested that running through all is a critique of and response to state-sponsored schooling.

Not only do social movement schools draw researchers from multiple fields of educational



scholarship, questions about the approaches to pedagogy in these contexts do as well. One question, for example, which has been addressed most directly in discussions of social movement schools, is to what extent the political ideals of social movements inform the pedagogical philosophies and practices of its educational initiatives. In studies of many movement schools, including anarchist modern schools (Avrich, 2006), SNCC's freedom schools (Perlstein, 1990, 2002), Zapatista autonomous schools (Shenker, 2012), and Brazilian Landless Workers' schools (see Diniz-Pereira, 2005; Ghanem, 1998; Kane, 2000; Knijnik, 2002), pedagogical philosophies and practices were found to be extensions of movement goals and ideals. Yet we also see cases in which movement schools have been found to embrace methods more typically associated with state schooling. Reay and Mirza (1997), for example, discussed how the UK's Black supplementary school movement embraces certain traditional, formal aspects of education (such as a strong concentration on learning the 3Rs) as a means to the ends of displacing whiteness as normative, subverting mainstream discourse on black underachievement, and providing transformative possibilities for young people (p. 497). Perlstein (2002), in his exploration of the waxing and waning of progressive pedagogy in the Black Panthers' liberation schools, focused explicitly on the relationship of political analysis and vision to pedagogical values and illustrated how the political goals and intellectual assumptions during different stages of the Black Power Movement had profound implications for its educational initiatives (p. 268). Pedagogical philosophies of social movements are often informed by broader discourses outside the movement as well, as Teitelbaum (1995) found in his historical study of American Socialist Sunday Schools. He explained that activists in this movement were caught between the two driving forces of radical educational theory of their time, one focused on the creative development and self-expression of the child and the other committed to a more direct approach to teaching class consciousness and Socialist values (p. 178). Movement actors were divided on the issue, and pedagogy became the subject of heated debates.

Questions about the relationships between social movements' goals and principles and the pedagogical methods employed in their educational initiatives make up just one area of common ground that could begin to network social movement-focused educational researchers across fields. These, along with shared research approaches, common theoretical and political orientations, and mutual interests in movements, education, and social change, have the potential to bridge disparate research programs, which could lead to development a more coherent field of research in social movements and education. In the final section of this article, we sketch out our rationale for advocating such a move.

## TOWARD *EDUCATION AND SOCIAL MOVEMENTS* AS A UNITED FIELD OF SCHOLARSHIP

Those who seek to change society rely on myriad approaches to education informal, non-formal, and formal to influence others' thinking and actions, and to promote particular ideas and visions for a better future. In this way, education and social movements are bound together, yet mainstream educational scholarship has not always recognized this. In the last 30 years, however, this has changed, with educational research explicitly addressing social movements expanding in leaps and bounds. Theoretical, methodological, and political influences on educational researchers seem to have increasingly raised interest in social movements, and many are now heeding the decades-old calls for attention to the educational dimensions and implications of movements. Even so, this proliferation has gone largely unrecognized in mainstream discussions of educational research. The reason for this, we believe, is that research addressing social movements and education remains isolated within various pockets of educational scholarship, lacking the types of networks and broader profile required of a field of inquiry. The goal of this article was to begin to redress this by promoting greater awareness and understanding of the nature of social movement scholarship across these myriad fields of educational research in order to argue for the value of bridging these scholarly communities and moving toward a more coherent and cohesive field of inquiry. After summarizing our study, we provide our rationale for this argument.

In our attempt to develop an understanding of the nature and scope of educational research addressing social movements, we adopted a wide-angle lens. We ultimately reviewed more than 370 publications with particular focus on 228 journal articles published during the 25-year period from 1988 through 2012. As we have discussed, most of the educational literature addressing social movements can be grouped into one of two major categories, and there is little sign of mutual awareness across them.

The first category of scholarship, produced primarily (though not entirely) in the field of adult education, is work on education and learning in social movements. Within this body of literature, researchers generally engage in scholarly dialogue with shared theoretical touchstones, although many complain that too little has been done to explore social movements and adult education. Much of this literature explores a wide range of contexts of non-formal education for and by social movements, but it is especially robust on the topic of informal education, with many case studies and theoretical explorations of adult learning through participation in movements. Conceptualizing learning as taking place in

social activity, these studies have illustrated how social movement participants' learning is wide-ranging and potentially includes knowledge related to the goals of the movement, skills and practices of collective action, the vision of the movement, individual and collective identity, and social critique and agency. Some have emphasized that social movement learning is not always critical and empowering; sometimes it is instrumental and discouraging (Foley, 1998, 1999; Zielińska et al., 2011). Although not explored to the same extent as the learning and education of social movement actors, the adult education literature does address how movements educate not only their participants but also the public, as movement ideas and ideals are made accessible through collective action (including but not limited to explicitly educational forms). Finally, a number of researchers contributing to this body of literature have focused attention, theoretical and empirical, on how knowledge is generated in social movements.

The second category of scholarship, the influence of social movements on formal education, does not have the appearance of a research program, as studies addressing movements' influence on both K-12 and higher education are produced across a number of fields without a shared literature base or scholarly exchange. This large category of work, produced by researchers from higher education, social foundations of education, and other fields examining K-12 education, illustrates that movements sometimes influence formal education (or attempt to do so) through direct actions with targets including laws, policies, institutional organization, professional development, curriculum, pedagogy, and so forth. Direct action, however, is just one way in which movements influence formal education. Some have suggested that formal educational change also emerges from the zeitgeist of broad social changes brought on by successful social movements (see Davies, 1999). Moreover, the influence of movements on formal education is not limited to formalized policies and practices, as movement ideas and ideals also circulate through institutions through the people engaged within them. Indeed, an area of inquiry within this category of scholarship is research focused on formal education actors who are simultaneously social movement actors. Researchers have explored how the ideas promoted by social movements are taken up in the identity work of students and educators and how educators, students, and parents have engaged social movement activism, among other questions. Finally, a number of studies have examined the relationships among social movements, formal education, and the state. The state and social movements are sometimes partners in education reform and sometimes opponents. When social movements successfully spur change in formal education contexts, countermovements are often mounted to reverse the victories, and sometimes victories are simply eroded by bureaucratic institutional cultures.

Despite the current amorphous state of scholarship on education and social movements, our review convinced us of the potential for the development of a more united field of

research with its own identity and structured by networks that cross scholarly communities. We have argued that the common ground bridging many researchers across diverse fields goes beyond interests in social movements and education, and into more specific topics, such as social movement schools and questions related to pedagogy (e.g., the relationship between movements' goals and principles and the approach to pedagogy adopted in their educational initiatives). In addition, social movement researchers across fields of educational research also often embrace social movement theory and critical theory (and the work of Freire and Gramsci in particular), as well as a critical orientation to their social movement scholarship (with many studying movements to which they are personally and politically committed). Table 1 provides an overview of the categories of educational scholarship addressing social movements and their common ground.

**Table 1. Overview of Categories of Educational Scholarship Addressing Social Movements**

	<b>Education and learning within and for social movements</b>	<b>Influence of social movements on formal education</b>
<b>Primary fields of study</b>	Adult Education	Higher Education  Various fields addressing K12 schooling, especially the Social Foundations of Education
<b>Contexts of inquiry</b>	Non-formal educational initiatives of social movements  Social movements as informal learning contexts	K12 schooling  Higher education

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**Contributions  
to the  
scholarly  
literature**

Case studies, histories, and conceptual work exploring a wide range of non-formal and informal education contexts within social movements

Empirical and theoretical explorations of adult learning within movements

> Including work promoting understanding of the range of what is learned in movements, knowledge central to the goals of the movement, skills and practices of collective action, the vision of the movement, individual and collective identity, social critique and agency

Findings and theories related to the social nature of learning and to the generation of knowledge in social movements

Case studies, histories, and conceptual work exploring how social movements have influenced institutional change (directly or indirectly) in formal education, both historically and in contemporary contexts

> Including work focused various targets of social movement actions, instigation of formal education systems, laws, structural organization of formal education systems, accessibility of formal education, policies, curriculum, pedagogy.

> Including work advocating that researchers use social movement theory to analyze educational phenomena and work advocating that reformers adopt a social movement model for educational change

Case studies, histories, and conceptual work focused on formal education actors who are influenced by social movements or who are social movement actors themselves

Findings related to the relationships among social movements, formal education, and the state

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**Common Ground**

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**Theory and politics**

Social movement theory

Critical theory

Critical scholarship, engaged scholarship

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**Examples of contexts and questions**

Social movement schools

Questions related to pedagogy

Why is it important to build a more united and coherent field of inquiry around social movements and education? First, there are the obvious benefits of researchers learning from one another, exploring different types of scholarship related to diverse movements from around the world, and building knowledge across distinct perspectives, approaches, and types of movements. Research on social movements and education would benefit from cross-fertilization of ideas and resources, attempts to synthesize diverse research trajectories, and scholarly conversation and debate around issues of importance. We hope that this article has suggested the potential benefit of building scholarly networks among social movement researchers across the vast interdisciplinary landscape of educational scholarship.

Second, status and structure as a field of inquiry would provide researchers a more interdisciplinary context in which to situate their work; this in turn would provide diverse perspectives and approaches to research problems. Indeed, connecting social movement-oriented researchers across currently separate scholarly communities has the potential to raise and answer new questions that, today, seem to fall between fields. To illustrate, we provide just one example of such a question. We have described how existing research provides myriad insights at different stages in the lifespan of the promotion of a social movement's goals and vision. Within the movement, education and learning are mechanisms facilitating the development and propagation of ideas. Formal education outside the movement becomes one of several fields of contested terrain in which these movement ideas are further promoted, appropriated, modified, or turned back. But how do these ideas move between the movement and state-sponsored formal education? We found very few studies that explicitly traced the travel of movement ideas across time and space, between movement contexts and state institutions. Among the more explicit treatments of this phenomenon are Niesz and Krishnamurthy's (2014) discussion of how South Indian educators involved in both voluntary popular education movements and state schooling promoted the educational knowledges of their movements within successful government

school reform efforts, and Skinner and Hollands (1996) discussion of how Nepali teachers who were politicized via pro-democracy movements in college promoted the movement's more progressive social knowledges (about caste, gender, democracy, etc.) within their classrooms. Although these studies make initial forays into the travel of movement ideas and identities via educational processes, spaces, and institutions, they provide only sketches of phenomena that call for closer examination. This is just one example of the type of unanswered question that could benefit from a field of research that draws together researchers who explore education and learning within movements and those who explore the influence of movements on formal education.

Finally, a more coherent field of research on social movements and education, structured by scholarly networks organized through formal interest groups, conferences, special theme issues of journals, edited volumes, and, eventually, organizations and journals, would raise the profile of the work such that it could achieve a greater presence in academia and the public sphere. Such a field would have the potential to draw not only existing researchers of education and social movements but also new educational researchers interested in social change. Additionally, a higher profile for educational research addressing social movements could translate into applications for educational policy and practice, as well as a more accessible body of knowledge for social movements themselves.

Eyerman and Jamison (1991) have argued convincingly that the forms of consciousness that are articulated in social movements provide something crucial in the constitution of modern societies: public spaces for thinking new thoughts, activating new actors, generating new ideas (p. 161). We take this to mean that before social movements can move people, institutions, and culture in their fight to shape the future, they must move ideas. The educational implications of this statement are immense. Our scholarship as educational researchers ought to reflect this, and a first step is establishing *social movements and education* as an interdisciplinary field of scholarship.

## Notes

1. Formal education typically refers to credential-based education provided by schools, colleges, universities, and other educational institutions. Non-formal education signifies intentional educational efforts and programs organized outside of schools and other

credentialing institutions (such as adult literacy programs). Finally, informal education refers to the education received through participation in everyday life (without intentional educational intervention).

2. Although our original aim for the subsample was to include every relevant journal article published from 1988 to 2012, there are two fields in which social movements are a more established and prominent area of inquiry and, as such, did not require us to review every published article to generate an understanding of the scholarship in that area. These fields are history of education and adult education. In both cases, we aimed to review more than 50% of the articles we identified. In adult education, there were many frequently cited publications featuring education and learning in social movements, so we ensured that all of these were among those reviewed.

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