

## Tactics and Practice

*Culture and Tactics* focuses on the racial determinants and racialization processes through which Antonio Gramsci was able to mobilize an ethnically, culturally, and linguistically diverse group of workers. It theorizes the role of tactics as a substantive and articulatory form of practice and, in doing so, positions Gramsci as a theorist of race. *Culture and Tactics* links an original organizational and ideological theory of tactical practices to contemporary analyses of race and power in cultural studies and critical race theory. The mediations that produce connections between race, and the tactical practices that are involved in mobilization efforts, give rise to new concepts through which to analyze the intersections of race and power.

The book begins by demonstrating how tactics can be understood more broadly as interventions into social forces. It intercedes into the predominant view of tactical effectiveness in contemporary social science research. In this book, I argue that tactics should and must be considered as more than the means through which specific goals are achieved. In a more expansive and concrete framework, tactics must be viewed as a form of practice. Tactics are what set social movement participants on a path of collective action; they also represent an active declaration of grievances and demands. The tactical, public demonstration of grievances point out injustices to others and, in turn, make just demands. *Tactics are transformative practices*, they convert ideas into actions and, sometimes, actions into broad mobilizations, *and yet, tactics have not been analyzed as a transformative practice*. *Culture and Tactics* is a work of social, cultural, and

political theory that aims to demonstrate how tactics effect movement organizational structures, strategic programs, and political ideologies; it also shows how tactics in turn are affected by them. It demonstrates that regardless of whether a specific goal or set of goals are achieved or whether movements rise or fall, tactical successes are broadly and collectively resonant beyond the movement and its specific purposes. In specific, *Culture and Tactics* interprets, across several historical and contemporary contexts, Gramsci's use of an innovative repertoire of tactics to bridge perceptions of racial differences between factory workers and subaltern groups, the latter denigrated into a position of subhumanity by a complex Italian national racial economy. It discusses the organizational and developmental context in which Gramsci was embedded in order to both understand and develop a tactical framework through which he was able to intervene in and affect the trajectory of society and history during the time that he lived through broad-based mobilizations of racialized groups in a context of class struggle.

In the work that follows, I show that Gramsci consciously mobilized against both class exploitation and racial domination. However, with regard to the latter, Gramsci's legacy as a theorist of race has not been fully taken into account. Through an examination of his efforts to mobilize veterans, peasants, and industrial workers, I demonstrate that Gramsci both understood the racial, national, and pseudoscientific context in which he was engaged in mobilization efforts, and through an analysis of those mobilization efforts, *traces of a racial-theoretical perspective emerge and beg both interpretation and connection to contemporary theoretical frameworks on race, culture, and politics*. *Culture and Tactics* offers both a substantive set of theoretical perspectives on tactics as a practice (in the framework of political subjectivity, organizational structures, ideology, and collective memory) and an interpretation of Gramsci as a theorist of race, articulating connections between Gramsci's perspectives and contemporary theoretical approaches to race through new concepts. The focal point for this book requires situating tactical practices that articulate twin responses to class exploitation and racial domination in historical, social, cultural, and conceptual contexts. To establish this framework and the methodology it depends upon, it is necessary to briefly review the positioning of the concept of practice as it relates to the concept of culture in the humanities and the social sciences.

## Establishing Methods, Defining Culture, and Practice

### **Culture and Method**

Culture is the mediations between the ideational and concrete; it is a potentially transformative medium and, in turn, a medium that is transformed by its political articulations and societal concretizations. In each of the subsequent chapters, I specify, through analysis, the political direction, intensity, and the role of tactics in both reproducing and transforming cultural forms and social relations. I contextualize specific mediations and derive theoretical and conceptual insights from each of them. These insights pertain, specifically, to social determinations that concretize race and class and, also, the political interventions and mobilizations that upset these determinations to produce social interventions that concretize class struggle and struggles against racial oppression and domination. In order to derive theoretical insights from inquiry into historical events that illustrate the dynamism of these struggles, I rely on two approaches. The first is sociological and the second is a cultural studies approach. I will explain them and how they connect to one another.

However, first, it is important to explain that what is predominant in both approaches is the centrality of theory in cultural studies. It is quite literally textbook to claim, as Barker and Jane (2016) do, that “a significant work in cultural studies is not empirical but theoretical” (42). However, it is important to add that cultural studies approaches are neither crudely empiricist nor purely theoreticist but, rather, recognize that theoretical categories are always already implied in empirical research and that such a recognition needs to be a part of the framework through which a study is approached. A cultural studies approach, then, relies on reflexivity to frame and consider the ways that theories derived from careful scholarship and analysis are, in fact, narratives “with implications for action and judgement about consequences” (Barker and Jane 2016: 42).

It is also, at this juncture, necessary to add that the way in which a significant work in cultural studies is theoretical is not only a product of its reflexivity (which is an ethical injunction that indicates a sensitivity to the positionality of the researcher and to their intervention into the phenomenological webs that constitute our understanding of culture, which might also be shared by cultural anthropologists and sociologists) but, rather, is a product of cultural studies’ approach to analysis. A significant work in

cultural studies is theoretical to the extent that the analysis of empirical examples, which may be texts, results in a broader transformation of theoretical perspectives, the genesis of theories and concepts that are both appropriate to what is being analyzed and, at the same time, indicate and demonstrate a reorganization of the transdisciplinary theories and concepts that have contributed to what has become over the course of analysis a changed theoretical perspective. Analysis should transform theory; a transformed theory, dependent on analysis, transdisciplinary interpretations, and mediations between these disciplines is precisely what is theoretically significant in a work of cultural studies. Stuart Hall is clear about what these implications, for both ethics and epistemology, mean and how they work. For him, the uses of theory in cultural studies are central to the project in the way that they relate to empirical examples. Responsibility for concepts, quoted as follows, indicates both reflexivity and the process of producing knowledge. Hall states:

[O]ne can only begin to theorize phenomena by breaking into this apparently seamless phenomenological web . . . with concepts which are clearly formulated and which belong to a theoretical paradigm. One has to take responsibility for the concepts one is generating in relation to that empirical material. Only in that way can one break down the material into forms amenable to proper conceptualization and theorization. (Hall 2016: 112–113)

Reflexivity in cultural studies then requires not only that one cleave to the way that a specific theoretical paradigm is essential to the production of knowledge about phenomena, but also that one take responsibility for how one's study is positioned within the broader theoretical and discursive frameworks that are constitutive of one's meanings. The ethics of a cultural studies approach depend upon recognizing the politics of knowledge and one's participation within it. It also requires generating concepts and theories, the reinterpretation of knowledge and its positioning, and this, in short, is the process that marks a contribution to cultural studies. So, the proper organization of empirical examples, conceptualization, and theorization depends, in this book, on selecting a sociological approach, to demonstrate a transdisciplinary relationship. It must be an approach that is designed in such a way that it incorporates secondary sources—that are both analytical and historiographical—and, also, theoretical frameworks alongside of empirical examples into the theoretical insights that drive the originality and the ethics

of developing cultural theories that are—in the case of *Culture and Tactics*—antiracist and anticapitalist.

The sociological method that I rely on in this book is a “limited-depth case study” approach because it simultaneously establishes the centrality of theory to the study and produces the potential for the empirical material that comprises the case study to be generalizable beyond the boundaries of the study (Mills, Durepos, and Wiebe 2010). It is a sociological method that is the best fit with a cultural studies approach. The advantage of this approach is based in its intended design, which is predicated upon the illustration of a new theory by focusing on the relations, processes, and dynamics that are the most important for the determination of analyses and theoretical inquiry. Reinharz explains that limited-depth case studies are designed “to illustrate an idea, to explain the process of development over time . . . to explore uncharted issues . . . and to pose provocative questions” (1992: 167). Broadly situated within other research, by relying on materials “like documentation of events, quotes, samples and artifacts” (Wilson 1979: 448), the limited-depth case study approach provides a means to organize a depth of context in such a way that it is *self-consciously* directed toward what is most significant for analysis and most important to theorization and conceptualization. Mills, Durepos, and Wiebe (2010) describe limited-depth cases as “draw[ing] upon existing analytical accounts of key social processes to illuminate key features of the case.” They continue by explaining the sociological impact and contribution that comes from using this method: “On these bases it is possible to envisage that limited-depth but theoretically directed case studies could sometimes meet the criteria for effective case study research” (2010: 531–532). In this way, *Culture and Tactics* is intended as a contribution to the study of society, specifically, to social theory, social movement studies, and critical race theory.

The cultural studies approach that I use in this book is developed from Stuart Hall’s discussions of the concept of articulation.<sup>1</sup> I claim that Gramsci’s tactics are predicated on the articulation of race to class across various contexts or moments that occur between 1916 and 1925. Positioning race in historical and social contexts and Gramsci’s organizational, strategic, and tactical responses to them are the bases for my entire theoretical and conceptual framework in *Culture and Tactics*. The discussion of tactical practices in this book fall within traditions of Marxist theory. Cultural studies’ or Hall’s interpretation of Marxist theory is, in part, consonant with my approach in *Culture and Tactics* and also a part of the Marxist tradition. In a series of foundational lectures

delivered in 1983 at the University of Illinois at Urbana–Champaign entitled “Marxism and the Interpretation of Culture: Limits, Frontiers, Boundaries” and collected in the recently published book *Cultural Studies 1983: A Theoretical History* (2016), Hall states in his concluding lecture, “Lecture 8,” that in order for cultural studies to effectively theorize multiple societal contradictions, especially, those pertaining to race, capital, and class struggle:

The only alternative is a Marxist politics which recognizes the necessary differentiation of different struggles and the importance of those struggles on different fronts, that is to say, a Marxist politics which understands the nature of a hegemonic politics, in which different struggles take the leading position on a range of different fronts. Such an understanding does not suppress the autonomy and specificity of particular political struggles, and it rejects reductionism in favor of an understanding of complexity in unity or unity through complexity. The reality of this complexity is not merely a local problem of organizing but the theoretical problem of the noncorrespondence of the mode of production and the necessary relative autonomy of different political and ideological formations. . . . This is, after all, the site of the emergence of cultural studies . . . (Hall 2016: 185)

The theoretical problematic that cultural studies addresses is precisely related to articulation: determining in an analytically derived and specified conjuncture the strategic connection between the contradictions manifest within the structural organization of capitalist social relations and the autonomy and plurality of struggles that emerge in the space of that contradiction. It is only then that, through identifying articulatory dynamics, a hegemonic project for class struggle and within the framework of resistance to racial domination and oppression might be identified as the democratic impulse for any future politics.

Peter Thomas’s groundbreaking philological investigations into the concept of hegemony beginning in *The Gramscian Moment* (2009) and his explicit focus on subaltern groups serve, in this context, to specify the role of subaltern groups as the broader base of progressive elements involved in political struggle. They echo aspects of my positioning of articulation in *Culture and Tactics*. Thomas states:

Gramsci posed the question of how a hegemonic project could be constructed out of the immense richness of all the different interest

groups—sometimes even conflicting interest groups—that constitute what he came to call the ‘subaltern social groups’, or popular classes in the broadest sense; that is, all the groups or classes that are oppressed and exploited by the current organization of society. . . . Political actors aiming to build a hegemonic project must continually make propositions, test them in practice, correct and revise them and test their modified theses once again in concrete political struggles. This process results in an ongoing dialectical exchange and interchange between the existing political conjuncture and attempts to transform it, and even more crucially, between leaders of a political movement and those who participate in them. A political project of hegemonic politics thus comes to represent a type of ‘pedagogical laboratory’ for the development of new forms of democratic and emancipatory political practice. (Thomas 2013: 27)

Gramsci’s organizational and mobilization efforts were designed to stretch the boundaries that constituted party cadres and affiliated trade unions by listening to and working directly with subaltern groups that had been excluded or instrumentalized by other political organizations. These organizations had accepted the racial construction of various subaltern groups in the framework of Italian nationalism and politics. *Culture and Tactics* demonstrates the dynamics of racialization, subaltern political participation, and the indefatigable strategic, organizational, and ideological efforts made on the part of Gramsci and others to build political-organizational structures that challenged both racial domination and labor exploitation by focusing on, supporting, and developing the tactical activity and political participation of the subaltern classes. In short, if the central theoretical problematic that cultural studies addresses is precisely related to articulation, *Culture and Tactics* places itself squarely within this problematic; it is a work of cultural studies as much as it is a work of social and cultural theory. To specify, articulation and elaboration are forms of mediation. But, how this functions in the framework of political organization requires taking the following perspectives: First are theorizations that take account of the social determinates that political and social organizations introduce. These determinants include a reconstructed conception of ideology (that is built from Gramsci’s conception of ideologies as historically organic and, furthermore, W. F. Haug’s concept of societalization—a historically robust interrogation of the concept of “ideological powers” that originates in Engels’s work) as well as a structural analysis of the various ways that social movement organizations are composed. Second, the concept of articulation must be reconceived, at the

political level, through a tactics of articulation based on Gramsci's project and concept of hegemony in relation to subaltern classes.

In summary, if culture is the mediation between the ideational and the concrete, articulation is a concept that specifies how mediation works, how it may be understood as developmental and transformative.<sup>2</sup> Articulation, the elaborate relational connection between a possibility and the means to act upon it, is an essential cultural dynamic in the context of this book. This dynamic is demonstrated in chapter 1, "The Epistemological Status of Tactics," through the development of a transdisciplinary theoretical framework of tactics that shows the ways that it functions as the concrete mediation between cultural traditions, values, and sentiments and their transformation. Gramsci's organizational efforts demonstrate that in the politicized crucible of national class struggles that depended on mobilizing peasants, veterans, and tertiary workers from the southern regions of Italy along with an industrial proletariat affiliated with various trade unions, factory councils, and political parties, tactics can work to articulate a durable connection between these struggles. The role of tactics is explored, further, in theoretical and conceptual detail in chapter 2, "Ideological Contention," which specifies the role of tactical practices into a theoretical-articulatory framework that includes organizational structure, strategic plans, and the unique conception of ideology as a generative and concrete force that catalyzes disparate groups into waves of struggle and contention. In chapter 3, "Expanding Ideological Contention Theory," I explore the conceptual frameworks that contribute to rethinking the role of ideology in the framework of social and political organizations that are organic to the contexts within which capitalist social relations produce a myriad of contradictions, contradictions that cannot be resolved through normative political means. Here, "ideological contention" provides the basis through which social and political organizations generate and regenerate structural durability, organizational and coalition-based continuities, and communicative frameworks. Across all of these chapters, culture is provisional to both the means for political mobilization and the act of articulation. The concept of articulation is explored both within theoretical discourse and as a part of the political process within society and history in chapter 4, "Agile Materialisms." Here, articulation is the act of rendering the material necessity of a set of political strategies so that a strategic plan is more than merely intelligible or resonant but, rather, affirms, as the end of the second chapter shows, the substantive, material, and historical struggles of groups that already comprise the necessary front in a broader political project. At the same time the persistent strategic deployment of articulations in specific strategic contexts advances various

fronts in a struggle collectively. Chapter 4 looks, specifically, at Gramsci's perspective on peasant struggles in 1925 and the problems that peasant organization encountered in the context of the Catholic modernization movement; it also includes a discussion of the role of the Popular Party in the South of Italy. It demonstrates, in Gramsci's work, how his specific concerns about how to develop connections between the Communist Party framework and peasant struggles in the South of Italy are based on fomenting concrete connections by articulating the cultural foundations of peasant struggles along with the goals of the Italian Communist Party. Chapter 5, "Conceptualizing *Aporetic Governmentality*," the concluding chapter of the book, uses critical race theory centered on the concept of colorblind racism to expose some of the limits of the concept of institutional racism, specifically, how race and power work at the level of the state and governance. It rethinks the conceptual positioning of practices when the potential for producing political subjectivity for race resides in a societal lacuna or aporia—an irresolvable contradiction internal to theories of subjectivity and self-governance—that reappears through the reproduction of racialization as modalities of exclusion in the framework of the US state. Critiquing and working with Foucault's conceptions of power and subjectivity, I rely on various theoretical perspectives on race and Marxist perspectives on class to argue that there is a productive asymmetry to the theorization of class exploitation and racial oppression and domination that exposes the way that exploitation and domination get reproduced, as limits to collective subjectivity, through ideology in order to lay bare what is at stake in the development of black subjectivity in a context where the most antihuman forms of racist practice emerge within a context of colorblind postracialism.

Articulation becomes an indispensable part of the process and the development and structuration of a political project.<sup>3</sup> In relationship to politics, the function of culture, the function of *articulating* an effective political strategy precisely presumes modes of exchange must be *inclusive of diverse and, in some cases, divergent groups* within the framework of a broader political project.<sup>4</sup> At the same time, the meditative cultural processes require the cultural foundations of these groups to remain intact to allow for the development of their understandings and justifications—upon which mass solidarities are built—for action, intelligibility, expressive qualities, or a "voice." Then strategy, built through the twin rubrics of culture and politics, opens the gateway, broadly, to transformative mass mobilizations.<sup>5</sup> Reciprocally, tactics bridge the politically manifest cultural desires with the attempts toward a societal concretization of that desire. The concrete realization and implantation

of that desire into society necessarily transforms the structure of power (that organizes certain aspects of culture outside of itself into marginal, liminal, or invisible spaces) such that what was, at one point in time, marginalized, liminal, or invisible culture has seized social space through political means.

In *Culture and Tactics*, both the political articulations and societal concretizations that lead culture into a range of transformative configurations culminate in tactical practices. In chapter 1, “The Epistemological Status of Tactics,” I excavate the roots of the theoretical framework that comprises the meditative dynamics of ideational and material culture through a critical analysis of various disciplinary approaches—culminating in Gramsci’s singular approach—to the relationship between culture and tactics. Across the analyses and theoretical framings in each of the subsequent chapters, culture involves the *communicative* development of experiential, phenomenal, linguistic, and sentimental aspects of perspectives, shared collectively, into a broader critical, social, and materialist perspective that is active, systemic, and that can form the expressive basis for politics; the prolegomenon for any collective constitution of a new society. Gramsci clearly draws each of the threads mentioned in the previous sentence into a developmental definition of culture where the production of culture, or the reorganization of these threads, is necessary to the metaphysics, or theory, of positioning the subaltern classes within politics—within hegemonic struggle. The transformation of these metaphysics into a philosophical fact—a thing that can be realized by tactical means or through vital action—is the impetus toward class struggle; the democratic ideals that were once the provenance of a small group of intellectuals and ultimately reflect a limited scope are rearticulated and necessarily expanded through the sundering of the class structure. According to Gramsci:

Creating a new culture does not only mean one’s own individual “original” discoveries. It also, and most particularly, means the diffusion in a critical form of truths already discovered, their “socialization” as it were, and even making them the basis of vital action. . . . For a mass of people to be led to think coherently and in the same coherent fashion about the real present world, is a “philosophical” event far more important and “original” than the discovery by some philosophical “genius” of a truth which remains the property of small groups of intellectuals. (Notebook 11, §12; Gramsci 1971: 325)

Tactical practices concretize the transformations that are expressed culturally, hence, it is important to describe the positioning of practice within the cultural theoretical perspective that informs this book.

## Practice

Practice is a concept that does not travel easily across disciplinary boundaries. Positioning a practice as an object of inquiry within a specific field of knowledge introduces constraints on how it is conceptualized. These constraints vary from field to field. They are a product of the epistemological configurations that have been introduced through the disciplinary scope and framework within which the concept of practice is embedded. The disciplinary combinations and classifications include the social sciences (specifically, the study of politics, culture and society in political science, sociology, anthropology, and in some cases, communications and geography); humanistic fields of inquiry (which also include areas of cultural anthropology, cultural sociology, and sociological theory along with literary studies, continental philosophy, and, also, media studies, communications, and critical and cultural geography); the study of aesthetics (which includes performance studies, literary studies, art history—any field that focuses on cultural objects, texts, and performances).

Although there are obvious overlaps from one disciplinary framework to the next and, also, strong similarities between concepts of practice—for instance, cultural and social forms of practice and aesthetic and cultural forms of practice—there remain distinctions between social practices, cultural practices, and aesthetic practices that can be located in the field within which the practice is theorized and analyzed, in some cases, the object to which the practice is oriented, and differences among the enactments of practices. In the introduction to *The Practice Turn in Contemporary Theory* (2001), Theodore R. Schatzki explains that despite overlaps in the approach to practice distinctions remain; in this case, “it is not surprising that there is no unified practice approach” (11). In “Two Concepts of Practice” (2001), Joseph Rouse notes that with regard to the politicization of knowledge around the concept of practice, disciplinary boundaries work to justify and specify the concept of practice. He states: “There will always be conflicting interpretations of ascendant scientific disciplines, as well as marginal and alternative ways of knowing, which have at least the potential to support critical perspectives upon dominant practices . . .” (207). Despite similarities in the concept of practice across areas and disciplines of study, there

remains a lack of reflection on the concept's multidisciplinary presence and an equal lack of an articulatory framework to produce an interdisciplinary and reflective perspective on the concept itself. Although this book is not an abstract treatise about the concept of practice, it does seek to demonstrate how an interdisciplinary perspective on practice might enliven how we approach tactics. To articulate the concept of practice across disciplinary limits, the constraints expressed in the various theories of practice must be placed in relation to one another. These concepts and theories must be pointed at a particular practice. It is from out of the arrangement of productive conceptual and theoretical relationships between different disciplines—by placing the concept of tactics as a practice into specific points of contact with one another—that interdisciplinary theories and concepts emerge.

In its broadest conceptual formation, a practice is something that someone does. In each of the fields of study mentioned earlier, a practice implies *a community of influence* that may be relatively strong or weak, structured or unstructured, formal or informal, direct or indirect, present or absent. Practices may be enacted or performed individually but they are not individual acts (i.e., not spontaneous). Although, a practice may be creative both within and also beyond the community that influences it (e.g., Raymond Williams's [1977] practices may be emergent from out of and not a reaction to a dominant cultural framework). Finally, practices may be designed (conceived of by someone) as destructive, as an intervention within a field of practice. They may be intended to be disruptive or negative (i.e., negation).

Tactics, as a form of practice, are destructive, creative, and performative. Destruction, negation, and conflict is a precondition of the performative and generative quality of tactical practices but these forces, when expressed, are compounded—they combine and overlap—within the enactment or demonstration of a specific tactical practice. Effective tactical practices are a part of an analytical and deliberative process that entails the establishment of a strategic program and specific articulations of strategies in contexts where a range or “repertoire” of tactical practices would be most appropriate. The analytical and strategic determination of tactical practices and the establishment and maintenance of an effective strategic program requires an organizational form, a community of influence. The communal organizational body is composed of individuals engaged in deliberation and debate. The stakes entail agreeing on a program that contains pointed strategies that will take the form of tactical practices every member is expected to

perform. At a minimum, each person has a direct stake in the community of influence that results in what they will do: their commitment to act through a range of tactical practices. Tactics, in turn, *impact upon the community of influence*, whatever organizational form that this may take; they also impact upon the political or ideological expression that represents the communities' social-organizational position.

These claims are explored throughout *Culture and Tactics* but, for now, can be illustrated by three examples: the Black Bloc formation in the contemporary alter-globalization movement and current antifascist mobilizations; the "Love-in," popular in the protests against the Vietnam War in the mid-to-late 1960s and into the 1970s; and the "Sit-in" especially popular during the civil rights movement. I follow these examples with a brief overview of the book describing the intervention that it makes in the study of social movements, its focus on the unique contribution that Gramsci offers to our understanding of tactics, and, specifically, the relationship between race and mobilization that can be derived from an analysis of Gramsci's writing and political activity.

## Demonstrating Tactical Practices

### **The Black Bloc Tactic**

Participants in and commentators on the Black Bloc formation have linked its origins to the Europe-wide (especially German) expression of Marxist and anarchist-based autonomy movements (e.g., *Autonomia* in Italy and *Autonomen* in Germany) in the 1980s (Douglas-Bowers 2014; Dupuis-Déri 2013). Since then, the Black Bloc formation has appeared in Brazil, Canada, the United Kingdom, Italy, France, across the United States, Egypt (against the Muslim Brotherhood), and, again in Germany. Black Bloc formations often appear in anticapitalist, antitotalitarian, and antifascist contexts protesting against the G8 and G20 Summits, the World Trade Organization meetings, the Universal Exposition in Milan, the London anti-cuts protest, and, more recently, appearing alongside students and in antifascist protests (Andersen 1999; Bacchi, Iaccino, and Mezzofiore 2015; Byrne 2010; Fernandez 2008; Kettley 2017; Mackey et al. 2013; Mason 2012; Moynihan 2013; Waldram 2013). Print news media like the *Washington Post* and *USA Today* have described the Black Bloc as a tactic echoing participants' accounts.

The Black Bloc tactic illustrates the conception of tactics as a form of practice. It is undeniably expressive: participants in Black Bloc tactical actions dress in black from head-to-toe. The phenomenal appearance expresses solidarity in the unity of a tactical force. In the framework of a protest action that contains a range of groups—social movement organizations, political party members, and groups and individuals expressing an alliance with these groups or an affinity toward the issues driving mobilization efforts—the Black Bloc stands apart. The notoriety that the Black Bloc has established as tactically aggressive, within a demonstration that exhibits a range of tactics that are often not physically confrontational, is exhibited both sartorially and through demonstrating in a formation. It allows demonstrators to put physical distance between themselves and the Black Bloc formation where the latter is easily identifiable. A further implication of the sartorial presentation and physical grouping together of Black Bloc participants is that the Black Bloc also identifies itself in advance to the police; it draws policing efforts toward itself within a broad demonstration, taking responsibility for confrontational tactics in a mobilization framework that is variegated in how it expresses grievances and demands. The Black Bloc formation, then, gives allies and others who are a part of the demonstration and the social forces monitoring and policing the demonstration a means by which they may identify Black Bloc participants. The sartorial representation of the Black Bloc tactic contains an ethic of responsibility in the framework of a broader movement engaged in a differentiated set of tactical practices.

The tactical practice itself, though, contains an explicit relationship to a complex strategy, strategic program, and ideological framework. The strategic framework for the Black Bloc tactic necessitates an agreement among participants. Often in a meeting prior to a protest action, participants agree, in advance, to a select group of targets and actions appropriate to those targets. By strategically limiting the scope of the tactical practices and coordinating actions, the Black Bloc tactic effectively maximizes individual actions as long as those actions conform to the strategy agreed upon in advance (Van Deusen and Massot 2010). Regarding the broader strategic program of Black Bloc tactics, participants can come from any organization as long as they agree to the guidelines established, in conversation, in advance of a protest action. A strategic program that is open to alliances across organizations (on the left, in this case) represents a United Front strategy catalyzed in the collective protest actions around a tactical practice. This builds capacity for a coalition of social movement organizations—or for a larger organizational

framework—that may be heterogeneous in their ideological perspectives but that can accommodate a specific strategic program, plan, and tactical practice. As I have argued elsewhere, the demonstration of the Black Bloc tactic also builds momentum, or extends a cycle of contention, through the adaptation, escalation, and transformation of its tactical practices in new contexts (Carley 2019b). Finally, the Black Bloc formation demonstrates, visually and sartorially, solidarity as well as a coordination of efforts, however the agreement with regard to select actions maximizes the individual autonomy of participants during a demonstration. Black Bloc tactical actions maximize the mobility and autonomy of individual participants while framing their creative responses to contextual conditions within a broader strategic plan and program; arguably an embodiment of an anarchic ideology (Carley 2019b).

By way of a transition to my next example, A. K. Thompson (2017) links Black Bloc tactical practices, like property destruction, to Herbert Marcuse's discussion of "one-dimensionality." He states:

[I]t is necessary to first highlight and then foster those pedagogical moments when protest turns violent and when violence tears at the representational screen that envelopes us all. Through these tears, it is sometimes possible to glimpse another politics and, in turn, another world. (Thompson 2017: 166)

Later, specifically regarding Black Bloc tactics, he states: "Nevertheless, by its [the Black Bloc's] ability to point out *the possibility* of an outside to this 'comfortable, smooth, reasonable, democratic unfreedom,' it has already proven felicitous" (167). As Peter Marcuse (2016) notes, Herbert Marcuse had a complex relationship to violent protest tactics. However, he did not rule them out, explaining that they were a part of the right to resistance in certain circumstances despite what he thought were almost inevitably problematic repercussions (due to the distribution and imbalance of legitimate violent force in society). Marcuse also thought that violence ought to comprise a part of the left's political tolerance of tactics (Marcuse 1965, 1970). However, Thompson's previous larger point specifies that, as a transformative practice, tactics are often violent and certainly confrontational. Tactics transformative qualities draw upon violent reprisals from opponents; they indicate the limitations to the political expression of specific social issues as a part of the broader dynamic of an emancipatory politics.

## The Hippie Love-In and the Greensboro Four

In “The Problem of Violence and the Radical Opposition” (1970), Herbert Marcuse discusses hippies participating in an antiwar protest in Berkeley, California, where students—who were permitted by the police to demonstrate—went off course to a military railroad station. The antiwar protest targeted the station for obvious reasons—the deployment of munitions and wartime tools, technologies, and so forth. However, the moment they entered state (military) property they became legitimately subject to state violence, in this case, “10 rows of heavily armed policemen outfitted in black uniforms and steel helmets” (1970: 92). Marcuse then describes a creative tactic: student marchers approach the rows of police in riot gear; they form their own echelon that cordons off the protesters willing to engage with police. After tensions heighten, protesters sit in the street, occupy the space, and perform a “love-in.”

What was important about this tactical shift is that it took on the tactical quality of a *feint*; it began as the implication of aggressive confrontation and turned into a deliberately nonviolent protest tactic. This specific love-in creatively combined direct confrontation with a relatively new form of social protest expressing two nonallied tactical approaches simultaneously. It was also creative in its apparent spontaneity; it represented an adaptation of tactical approaches to a contentious and potentially violent context. Finally, and most significantly, faced with state violence, protesters chose to literally demonstrate the society as they wished it as opposed to the society they were confronting, exhibiting two very different spirits of “democracy.” The love-in presented the polar opposite of the violence suggested, given the contemporaneous context as well as the location. In short, protesters performed an immanent critique in the streets dramatizing the extraordinary contradiction, or gulf, between the abstract *de jure* democratic society that needs to be viciously protected, that is, held in place and extended militarily, and the *de facto* democratic society that the wave of protest actions (this, a part of that wave) seeks to bring into being.

As a tactical practice, the love-in represents a demonstration that is both unique to the hippie subculture (its community of influence) and the context of protests against militarization, specifically the Vietnam War. In short, the love-in is a unique tactical practice; it represents a direct expression of a sub-cultural group and it is the extension of a cultural practice into a political and tactical context. Though a unique and emergent practice, as a tactic, it signifies more broadly with the “sit-in” tactic. There are however significant

differences between practicing, or demonstrating, a love-in and a sit-in. These differences are organizational, strategic, and contextual. They demonstrate the necessary and sufficient conditions for variance in tactical practices. For example, the Greensboro lunch counter sit-in at Woolworth's in North Carolina in 1960 was designed to disrupt an unjust social practice—racial segregation—still prevalent in parts of the Southern United States. Formally, these sit-in protest tactics were a social practice; they can be understood as what sociologists refer to as a “breaching experiment.” However, not an experiment, the strategic plan of the Greensboro Four involved a direct personal risk of violence not only in the form of state (police) reprisal but, rather, a broader violent public response by Southern whites. The tactic was designed to demonstrate that racial segregation and racial violence was a broadly accepted social practice. It was the demonstration of an injustice and a demand for justice: leveraging pressure on Woolworth's to desegregate its lunch counter and inspiring others to engage in similar tactical practices to do the same in segregated spaces. It was successful. Since this was the first sit-in of this kind that led to a “sit-in movement,” it was not expressive of a cultural practice but, rather, was designed as a specific social response to unjust laws. Also, it was not the organizational response of a political movement or party but, rather, was linked more loosely to the civil rights movement; it had been inspired by Dr. Martin Luther King's practice of nonviolence protest tactics. The sit-in, in this case, was experimental and strategic.

A cursory discussion of tactical practices based on the previous examples demonstrate some analytical distinctions as well as an overlap among cultural, social, and political practices. Black Bloc tactical interventions have an expressed political intention and design. Yet, the phenomenology of the Black Bloc tactic relies on classical cultural practices like sartorial and ideological expressions of tactical purpose. The example of the “love-in” from Marcuse's (1970) observations appear to be the translation of a specific and unique cultural practice into a political context where the demonstration of a love-in as an expression of a desired society deeply troubles the context where the supposed defense of democracy is a defense of the expression of militarism and imperialism in the framework of national self-interest. The contradictions of American democracy are laid bare at home, where the democratically constituted “people” are prevented from expressing opposition to the institutional and proprietary presence of state frameworks that their tax monies engender and that they wish to take back. It also expresses the contradiction that for American democracy to flourish, at home, the national

right to self-determination of other nations must be prevented with grave costs to human life, the environment, and democratic free expression. The physical and emotional expression of love through a tactical practice, or in the context of political expression, takes on a range of different characteristics and meanings external to the framework of hippie subculture. Finally, the Greensboro Four insert their bodies into a social space that is regulated through both laws and customs. They design a tactic that, as a social practice, draws out a history of racist social practices from behind the law, a law that conceals the persistent historical legitimation of racial violence in the United States behind what is a barely democratic “separate but equal” facade. The Greensboro Four produce a context that belies the US conception of “separate but equal” as the democratic justification for racial segregation (and the abeyance of seething racial hatred) in the South.

## Overview of the Book

Each aforementioned example also alludes to both communities and means of influence upon tactical practices that differ in their constitution, implementation, and effects. These examples illustrate tactical practices, but they fail to fully capture the relationship between organizational and ideological frameworks, and tactical practices, as well as the resonant qualities of tactical successes and failures. The goal of *Culture and Tactics* is to capture and explain this specific dynamic, which frames the conception of what a tactical practice is. In the literature on social movements, tactics have been placed in relationship to the tangible goals or the results of social movement activity. Tactics have been analyzed, primarily, for their relative strengths and weaknesses in achieving outcomes. Tactics have been viewed as effective or ineffective, radical or pragmatic, sustainable or untenable, and incendiary or reconciliatory as they relate, more broadly, to the polity. However, *tactics have not been analyzed* as an event out of which a social movement organizations’ ideology is shaped, reshaped, and changed. *Tactics have not been understood* as impacting the organizational structure of social movements. *Tactics have not been viewed* as a variant of transformative social, cultural, or political practice. But as I will show, tactics are an expressive practice. Tactics are what social movements do; they are a collective form of public expression. They draw in bystanders based on how a social movement frames and demonstrates injustices and makes demands for justice through the tactical repertoires that they develop and use.

*Culture and Tactics* offers an analysis of the importance of tactics going beyond the sociological study of tactical effectiveness or the ability of tactics to produce tangible goals. Specifically, it identifies, interprets, and analyzes the tactically mediated relationship between race and mobilization in Gramsci's work to establish the conceptual basis of tactics as a practice across a range of disciplines in the social sciences and humanities. *Culture and Tactics* investigates Gramsci's innovative use of specific tactics and, through these investigations, produces new concepts and theories that explain race, class, and mobilization through organizational, ideological, and strategic frameworks. By articulating the relationship between racial domination and class exploitation to peasants and veterans from Southern Italy, in the context of a wave of protest actions against manufacturing firms in Northern Italy and the postwar Italian state, this book provides an interpretation of how Gramsci successfully mobilized subaltern groups alongside of trade unionists, socialists, and various fractions of the Italian left and builds upon these interpretations through new concepts and theories. It is the broader theoretical goal of this book to connect Gramsci's insights about the political mobilizations of racialized subaltern groups to contemporary critical race theory and cultural studies of racialization and racism through an interpretation of how Gramsci's work influenced Stuart Hall's concept of culture, hegemony, and race and, also, a by introducing an original conception of the role that ideologies play in the reproduction of racism in the framework of critical race theory.

In short, *Culture and Tactics* breaks new ground by envisioning Gramsci as an early and salient theorist of race in a broader context of social struggle. The following chapters demonstrate Gramsci's attention to race in at least two ways. First, in 1919, Gramsci uses language, as a tactic, to articulate and broadly mobilize common demands between Sardinian veterans from World War I, industrial workers of Southern peasant origin and Northern industrial workers in the Piedmont region. Gramsci skillfully code-switches between a subaltern peasant imaginary and the ideological expressions of the Italian Socialists, for whom he was engaging in organizational activity, linking racialized expressions of peasant injustice to contemporary socialist political strategies for fighting labor exploitation. Second, Gramsci creates an organizational framework, "ward councils," to connect workers from the Southern, racialized, regions of Italy to trade unionists and Italian Socialist Party members, giving subaltern groups an organizational basis through which to participate in strike actions and, more broadly, in politics.

In a broad interdisciplinary conversation with contemporary social theory, social movement studies, and theories of race in sociology and cultural studies, *Culture and Tactics* offers a range of original concepts to assist in the interpretation and analysis of the tactical practices associated with protest activity where race is a central factor in both mobilization and state violence. In this book, I begin by examining Gramsci's approach to creating innovative tactical practices and organizational structures to link industrial workers and racialized subaltern groups together in common struggle. Based on the examination of Gramsci's development of tactical approaches, innovative organizational frameworks, and the articulation of common struggles, I develop a broader theoretical framework to explain the relationship between organizational structures, strategic programs, political ideologies, and the collective memory of participants and allies involved in social movements. I demonstrate how tactical practices impact the organizational structure of social movements and, also, shape, reshape, and shift the ideological framework that informs social movement politics. I end the book by placing specific interpretations that emerge from new insights into Gramsci's work in conversation with contemporary theoretical inquiries into the racialization process and racism in the fields of cultural studies and critical race theory.

In the field of cultural studies, Stuart Hall is responsible for a significant essay on Gramsci's relevance for the contemporary study of race and ethnicity. Hall's essay represents an intervention into the theoretical grounding of contemporary cultural studies. In it, Hall describes Gramsci's epistemological position as both Marxist and nonreductionist. During the time that Hall wrote this piece, he, along with other notable scholars connected to cultural studies, was attempting to establish a plurality of theoretical and methodological perspectives that would set cultural studies apart from contemporary interpretive disciplines and, also, the social sciences. Hall, also, was writing about the different ways that race had been studied and the problems that arose from nonaligned methodological and theoretical approaches to race. Gramsci, for Hall, not only offered a way to analyze race, racialization, and racism in contemporary society, he also provided a way to bridge nonaligned approaches to the study of race. Hall demonstrates *how* Gramsci is relevant to the contemporary analysis of race and ethnicity. I demonstrate *why* Gramsci is relevant. By analyzing Gramsci's perspectives on the social forces that were attempting to constitute typologies of racial characteristics, I show that Gramsci not only attacked the reductionist—in this case, Catholic humanist and sociobiological—classifications and