



**Queensland University of Technology**  
Brisbane Australia

This may be the author's version of a work that was submitted/accepted for publication in the following source:

Gurrieri, Lauren, [Gordon, Ross](#), Barraket, Josephine, Joyce, Andrew, & Green, Celia  
(2018)  
Social marketing and social movements: creating inclusive social change coalitions.  
*Journal of Social Marketing*, 8(4), pp. 354-377.

This file was downloaded from: <https://eprints.qut.edu.au/123807/>

**© Consult author(s) regarding copyright matters**

This work is covered by copyright. Unless the document is being made available under a Creative Commons Licence, you must assume that re-use is limited to personal use and that permission from the copyright owner must be obtained for all other uses. If the document is available under a Creative Commons License (or other specified license) then refer to the Licence for details of permitted re-use. It is a condition of access that users recognise and abide by the legal requirements associated with these rights. If you believe that this work infringes copyright please provide details by email to [qut.copyright@qut.edu.au](mailto:qut.copyright@qut.edu.au)

**Notice:** *Please note that this document may not be the Version of Record (i.e. published version) of the work. Author manuscript versions (as Submitted for peer review or as Accepted for publication after peer review) can be identified by an absence of publisher branding and/or typeset appearance. If there is any doubt, please refer to the published source.*

<https://doi.org/10.1108/JSOCM-12-2016-0078>

## “Social marketing and social movements: Creating inclusive social change coalitions

### **Abstract**

*Purpose:* This paper contributes to emerging discourse about social movements in social marketing by examining how tensions, issues and challenges may arise in areas of social change that have attracted social movements and the ways actors can come together to drive inclusive social change agendas.

*Design/methodology/approach:* Through the lens of new social movement theory, a case study of the interactions and dynamics between fat activists and public health officials in the contested field of obesity is examined. This is undertaken through a multi-method qualitative analysis of interview and archival blog data of fat activists located in Australia which was compared with the campaign materials and formative and evaluative research related to two high profile Australian Government funded anti-obesity campaigns.

*Findings:* The case analysis highlights the disconnect between public health actors and the marginalized voices of those they are meant to be representing. Whilst public health actors characterise obesity as a social issue of individual responsibility, disease and rational-decision making, fat activists frame a competing collective identity across the axes of cognitions, relational ties and emotional investment that characterises obesity in terms of well-being, self-acceptance and care.

*Research Implications:* This research highlights how complexities arise but can potentially be overcome in creating inclusive social change coalitions that incorporate the voices of citizen groups whom have mobilised into social movements. Specifically, we highlight the importance of generating a common language around obesity, the significance of collaborative and supportive relations and the need to create common unity through emotional

investment and returns – a departure from the highly rational approaches taken by most social change programs.

*Practical implications:* Obesity is a complex social issue marked by conflict and contestation between those who are obese and the very actors working to support them. Our research contends that creating an inclusive social change coalition between these stakeholders will require a shift towards language anchored in well-being as opposed to disease, relations defined by support and acceptance as opposed to an emphasis on individual responsibility and emotional investments that work to reduce stigma and offer support in place of dictates of the ‘correct’ behaviours one should choose to engage in. Such steps will ensure social change program design is collaborative and incorporates the lived experiences of the very citizens such initiatives are targeted towards.

*Originality/value:* We contribute to wider discussions in social marketing about the development of holistic and progressive, multi-stakeholder, multi-level programs by advocating that inclusive social change coalitions united through the collective identity elements of cognitions and language, relational ties and emotional investment offer an important step forward in tackling the wicked problems that social marketers work to address.

*Keywords:* obesity, new social movements, stigma, critical social marketing; inclusion; social change coalitions

*Article classification:* Research paper

## **Introduction**

Given the complexity of many of the social problems to which social marketing is applied (e.g. obesity, climate change), and the often multi-stakeholder interactions found in the social change arena, there is increasing attention in the extant literature on how effective social change coalitions can be created (Gordon and Gurrieri, 2014; Wymer, 2011). One area that has garnered increasing attention is the role that social movements – a type of group actions that carry out, resist or undo social change – could play in social marketing (Hastings and Domegan, 2013). Daellenbach and Parkinson (2017) recently argued that ideas relating to collective action frames from social movement theory can help inform how social marketing problems are framed in a more socially cohesive and powerful way. However, they also point out that despite support for the idea of aligning social movements and social marketing, there is little conceptual or practical discussion on this in the existing social marketing literature.

The social movements literature and theoretical foundations are vast. This means that although Daellenbach and Parkinson (2017) make a welcome contribution by identifying how collective action frames from social movement theory can be integrated into social marketing, there remains a paucity of inquiry on how social movements and social marketing may inform one another and help achieve pro-social change. In particular, there is little consideration in extant social marketing literature from a critical perspective on some of the issues, challenges and tensions in mobilising and working with social movements. Given the increasingly collaborative approaches taken to social marketing program design efforts (Gordon *et al.*, 2017), those located in advocacy groups, such as social movements, are an important group of voices to include – especially if they constitute the very group at risk for a given ‘wicked problem’. Hence, if social marketing is to effectively utilise ideas from social movement theory, then an understanding of such issues will be important. This present study aims to

achieve this by critically focusing on tensions, issues and challenges that arise in areas of social change that have attracted social movements.

In doing so, this paper contributes to the conversation about social movements in social marketing by critically examining some of the key issues and challenges identified in the literature on social movement theory, and then illustrates these issues through a case study of interactions between fat activists and public health obesity actors in Australia. We note how complexities arise but can potentially be overcome in creating inclusive social change coalitions that incorporate the voices of citizen groups whom have mobilised into social movements. Specifically, we highlight the importance of generating a common language around obesity, the significance of collaborative and supportive relations and the need to create common unity through emotional investment and returns. The paper helps to identify conceptual understanding about the processes of mobilising and collaborating with social movements, which in turn hold important practical implications for how inclusive social marketing strategies for social change can be developed and implemented.

The remainder of this article is organised as followed. The first section provides a definition and explanation of social movements before charting a brief history of the concept in the social change space. The next section presents a critical discussion on new social movement theory, considering Melucci's (1996) conception of collective identity as a useful mechanism for studying the complexities and dynamics of social movements engaged in social change efforts. The following section presents the research methodology for a case study on the interactions between fat activists and public health officials concerning obesity – illustrating how complexities arise but can potentially be overcome when trying to collaborate towards inclusive social change. The discussion section then considers some key conceptual and

practical implications that emerge from the analysis and the article concludes with some recommendations for those interested in aligning social marketing and social movements through the creation of inclusive social change coalitions.

### **What are social movements?**

Social movements are a form of group action in which collectives seek to carry out, resist, or undo a social change. Social movements involve “organizational structures and strategies that may empower oppressed populations to mount effective challenges and resist the more powerful and advantaged elites” (Glasberg and Shannon, 2010). Therefore, social movements are often engaged in challenging existing power relations and social and political conflict (Touraine, 1981). Social movements can be formed around particular social issues such as anti-slavery, obesity, or climate change, or may relate to broader objectives such as workers’ rights, or anti-capitalism. Social movement theorists have historically distinguished between ‘old social movements’ - such as labour movements - focused on the retention of material privilege for particular social groups, and ‘new social movements’, such as the environment movement, which emphasise the intrinsic value of democratic consciousness and seek to direct broad processes of social change (Eyerman and Jamison, 1991). Although definitions can differ, Diani (1992) argues that there is some consensus that social movements always feature networks of informal interactions between individuals, groups and/or organisations, engage in political or cultural conflict and share a collective identity. Sociologists have argued that social movements are an important feature of democracy as they permit ordinary people to come together and participate in public politics (Tilly, 2004).

Tilly (2004) identifies that there are three major elements related to the practice of a social movement: campaigns, repertoire and worthiness, unity, numbers and commitment (WUNC)

displays. Campaigns involve sustained and organised public efforts to make collective claims towards target authorities and institutions such as the media or government. Repertoire involves the employment of political action including creating associations and coalitions, holding public meetings, vigils, processions, rallies, petitions, pamphleteering and media relations activity. WUNC displays involve members of a social movement consistently and publicly displaying the worthiness, unity, numbers, and commitment of the movement to their cause (Tilly, 2004). In a digital age, writers have observed that forms of collective action that underpin social movements are shifting towards practices of ‘connective action’ (Bennett and Segerberg, 2012), characterised by more fluid and ephemeral interactions of movement actors rather than the prolonged development of solidarity typical of past eras.

The initial history of social movements has been connected to rapid economic, social and political changes including enfranchisement, market capitalisation, urbanisation, and proletarianisation during the industrialisation of the United Kingdom from the early 18<sup>th</sup> century. One of the first social movements formed around the radical journalist and parliamentarian John Wilkes, who in an article in the North Britain newspaper, criticised the British Government for the terms of the 1763 Treaty of Paris which ended the Seven Years War (Tilly, 1985). Wilkes was subsequently charged with libel, subject to a general warrant, arrested and stripped of the right to sit in Parliament (Cash, 2008). Wilkes then challenged the ruling in the courts and the Lord Chief Justice eventually ruled in his favour. As a result, Wilkes became the figurehead for a growing social movement for popular sovereignty calling for ‘Wilkes and Liberty’ among the middle classes. The movement involved public meetings, demonstrations, the mass distribution of pamphlets, and a mass petition march (Cash, 2008). The force and influence of the movement was such that the authorities conceded to its

demands and Wilkes was returned to parliament, general warrants were declared unconstitutional, and press freedom was extended to the coverage of parliamentary debates.

Other social movements that emerged during the 18<sup>th</sup> century included the British abolitionist movement to abolish slavery that was led by William Wilberforce. Indeed, identifying synergies with social marketing, Hastings (2017) explains how the anti-slavery movement involved market research on attitudes towards slavery, analysis of competitors, mass media communications, and setting up of community abolition movements taking direct action such as fundraising, lobbying, and boycotts. In the 19<sup>th</sup> century, the Chartism movement was the world's first mass movement of the working classes – campaigning for political reform, universal suffrage, and introduction of the secret voting ballot from 1838 to 1848. This led to the German sociologist Lorenz von Stein introducing the term 'social movements' into academic discussion (von Stein, 1848). Major new social movements during the 20<sup>th</sup> century included the civil rights movement, second wave feminism and the environmental movement (Eskew, 1997; McCormick, 1995). More recently, there have been a series of social movements with an anti global capitalism focus, including the 1999 WTO protests and Occupy movement in 2011 (West, 2013).

Social movement practices have gained a lot of attention in the public health and health promotion fields as a mechanism to improve population health outcomes. In public health, social movements have led to improvements in workers' health and safety, tobacco control efforts, improved clinical interventions and health services design for women, and reduced stigma about mental health drawing on movement tactics such as community mobilisation, advocacy and mass media communications (Freudenberg *et al.*, 2011; Keefe *et al.*, 2006). Although the success of various social movements throughout history has differed, social



movements nevertheless have demonstrated the potential to effect transformative social and institutional change (West, 2013). Therefore, social movements are of strong relevance for social marketing scholarship and practice, given the shared focus on social change.

Furthermore, social movements have often involved the use of tactics that are also identified with social marketing such as market research, mass media communications, advocacy and lobbying. The following section more closely considers the relationship between social marketing and social movements.

### **Social marketing and social movements**

Social movements have increasingly garnered attention from consumer culture researchers and critical marketers. For example, Varman and Belk (2009) examine how Indian nationalism and the ideology of Swadeshi (essentially a preference for indigenous goods even if more expensive or inferior in quality to imported goods) has influenced an anti-consumption movement opposing Coca-Cola in India. Transformative consumer researchers have discussed how ideas from social movement theory including the framing of ideologies, deploying social capital and shaping the structural environment can have positive impacts on workplace wellness programs (Mirabito and Berry, 2015). Critical marketers have been encouraged to not only engage in critique but influence practice and take emancipatory social action, for example by considering critical social movements such as the World Social Forum (Tadajewski, 2010; Tadajewski *et al.*, 2014).

Yet, despite this increasing attention within marketing, social movement theory and practice has received little attention in the social marketing literature (Daellenbach and Parkinson, 2017). This is surprising given the aforementioned history of social movements and their use of what may be identified as social marketing tactics (Gordon, 2018; Hastings, 2017). Rather,

social movements have often been discussed as an alternative approach to social change and involving differentiated perspectives on framing social problems, social research and intervention tactics (Douglas, 2008), rather than something that may align or complement social marketing efforts (Brennan and Binney, 2008; Douglas, 2008). This is perhaps reflective of the arguments made by traditionalist social marketers (see Gordon & Gurrieri, 2014) who define social marketing through a narrow focus on individual voluntary behaviour change through marketing persuasion (e.g. Lee and Kotler, 2011). Indeed, some have argued that activities such as education, advocacy, activism, policy change, regulations and laws are not the purview of social marketing (Rothschild, 1999).

However, social marketing scholars interested in multi-level systems approaches to social change have argued that there is often a common focus on social problems such as climate change, public health and civil rights between social marketers and those involved in social movements, and therefore an integration of ideas and action may be possible (Wymer, 2011). Mirabito and Berry (2015) point out that social movement theory emphasises cultural and political transformation, and that this may provide a route through which the increasingly broader focus of social marketing beyond individual change to change of norms, cultural symbols and structural forces can be strengthened.

Indeed, researchers have identified how social marketing could help study, frame, and influence the practice of social movements such as environmental conservation (Fox and Kotler, 1980; Wong-Parodi *et al.*, 2011) and the affordable drugs movement in the USA (Holdford, 2005). This has led to calls for assimilation of ideas and a joining of forces between social marketing and social movements (Daellenbach and Parkinson, 2017; Wymer, 2011). Researchers working in public health have identified how the use of social marketing

tactics such as advertising and media advocacy can be used to raise awareness about health inequalities as a precursor to developing social movements to improve child health in the USA (see Rienks and Oliva, 2013). They note that awareness raising is an important step in building social movements (Tajfel and Turner, 1986). This further identifies the potential for integration of social marketing and social movements.

Drawing on ideas from social movement theory could involve building and deploying social capital, provision or changes to infrastructure and the environment in which people live and work or framing ideologies and messaging around particular social issues to encourage social cohesion and collective action towards pro-social change (Mirabito and Berry, 2015). Daellenbach and Parkinson (2017) advance understanding by examining how the concept of collective action frames from the social movement literature could be used in social marketing to motivate groups to act towards pro-social outcomes. They explain that collective action frames are schemas that guide and structure our use of language, transmit rhetoric, and shape the ideologies and action that language evokes. By examining examples of collective action frames for disaster preparation and obesity, Daellenbach and Parkinson (2017) provide some key questions and recommendations for social marketers to consider when framing social problems and attempting to mobilise group action.

Admittedly, some of these ideas have already been discussed in the social marketing literature outside the frame of social movement theory, for example: social capital (see: (Glenane-Antoniadis et al., 2003; Kamin and Anker, 2014) the framing of social problems (see Gordon and Gurrieri, 2014), and structural change (Goldberg, 1995; Hoek and Jones, 2011). Yet, understanding how social movement tactics can be adopted could help develop another powerful tool in the social marketing intervention toolkit. However, a major gap in

knowledge about how social marketing may draw upon social movement theory relates to understanding the tensions, issues and challenges inherent in mobilising social movements that lead to pro-social change. In the following section, we critically review ideas from social movement theory and discuss how an understanding of the complexities and dynamics of social movements engaged in social change efforts can help inform social marketing theory and practice.

### **New social movement theory**

As identified by Varman and Belk (2009), social movement theory has a long and rich history. Early understandings of social movements proposed by collective behavioural theorists saw social movements as irrational and potentially threatening to the existing social order, assuming that they occurred within a relatively stable frame or structure, with both the problem and the movement response being distinct, coherent and fixed (Magnusson, 1996). The emergence of student movements in North America and Europe in the 1960s challenged collective behavioralism's assumptions that movement actors were disenfranchised and pathological, and that social movements were principally concerned with the material needs of single social groups. These empirical changes and the inadequate power of collective behaviouralism to explain them gave rise to resource mobilisation (RM) theory in North America and new social movement (NSM) theory in Europe. RM theory is principally concerned with strategies by which social movement actors – typically operationalised as leaders of movements and movement organisations – access resources to achieve movement ends (Buechler, 1993). This school of thought challenges the assumed irrationality of movements posed by collective behaviouralists, positing movements as rational challenges for resource distribution that are typical of economic and social life.

While RM theory successfully challenged some of the inadequacies of collective behaviouralism, it has been critiqued for its strong focus on actor rationality, its analysis of only the ‘visible’ parts of movements embodied in leading movement organisations, and its focus on movement tactics to the exclusion of the underlying meanings and social contexts in which movement action occurs (Melucci, 1985; Touraine, 1985). NSM theory (cf Eyerman and Jamison, 1991; Melucci, 1996, 1985; Melucci and Keane, 1989; Touraine, 1985) sought to find new ways of speaking about social movements by focusing on the relationship between movement characteristics and post-industrial capitalism and thus emphasising the cultural formation of social movements and movement actors. In short, NSM theories focus on ‘why’ social movements come to be – and the complex networked nature of their formation – whereas RM theory concentrates on ‘how’ they are enacted, with a focus on the formalised aspects of movements.

While NSM theory has its own variations, we focus here on Melucci’s (1996) conception of collective identity as a useful mechanism for studying the complexities and dynamics of social movements. Feeling that ‘social movement’ was an increasingly inadequate and reductive term that inaccurately conveyed ideas of monolithic and unidirectional social change efforts, Melucci (1996) introduced the idea of collective identity as a dynamic process or system of relations and representations within a field of action. Melucci’s conception of collective identity emphasises the relational and intersubjective nature of identity formation, as a vehicle for symbolic (as distinct from material) co-production (Milan, 2015). Melucci identified that collective identity operates along three axes. The first of these is cognition, or common language about the movement’s means, ends and fields of action. This can manifest in movement songs or slogans – such as the environment movement’s ‘think global act local’ catch cry of the 1980s and 1990s – as well as the ways in which movement actors and their

opponents talk about their movement's characteristics and purposes. The second axis is relational ties. This is central to Melucci's conception of collective identity and refers to the meaning of social movements co-produced through relationships between actors, who are constantly negotiating, interacting and influencing each other. This may manifest in public debates that shift movement aims and actions, but also refers to the day-to-day negotiations – in meetings, campaign actions and online discussions – of establishing and enacting a sense of common purpose. Milan (2015) has observed that contemporary social media platforms expand cycles of exchange and negotiation, by enabling movement actors to tag, cite and mention others, thus extending relational negotiations of collective identity to bystanders. The third axis is emotional investment, which allows individuals to feel part of a common unity. Sense of belonging is a particularly important aspect of movement action, which is underpinned by emotional investment and emotional returns. Emotional investment also mediates the individual's self-categorization as part of a collective, fostering their sense of shared status and purpose (Futch, 2016). For marginalised or disadvantaged groups, this shared identity may also support emotional resilience, providing a buffer against the negative consequences of their circumstances (Haslam *et al.*, 2009).

By conceptualising collective identity as a social process operating along a plurality of axes, Melucci suggests that social movement action is not simply a reaction to social and environmental conditions, but a purposeful and sustained production of symbolic orientations and meanings that actors are able to recognise as historically significant. He is also arguing for a conception of movement action that is not linear, but dynamic, multi-layered and complex. For the purposes of this paper, we draw on Melucci's dimensions of collective identity formation in our analysis, as this is a useful construct for considering the complexity

of movement action, the symbolic nature of some movement tactics and the interplay between rational and emotional impulses that guide collective action for social change.

### **Methodology**

To understand the dynamics and complexities that arise between actors for complex social change issues in which social movements come to play an important role, this paper investigates the interactions between public health actors in obesity and the fat activism social movement. In many western nations and more recently developing countries, obesity is considered a significant public health problem both in regards to prevalence and impact. Historically, the main approach to addressing obesity-related concerns has been to employ downstream social marketing approaches that focus on medical intervention and individual behavior change (Baum, 2008). However in the last few decades, the limitations of such approaches have been recognized and greater consideration has been given to the complex and dynamic systems in which broad networks of actors, including social marketers, must collaborate and interact to foster meaningful solutions to such ‘wicked problems’ (Brennan *et al.*, 2016). One corollary of this has been problematising the concept of individual responsibility (Hoek and Jones, 2011) and placing greater importance on more holistic understandings of consumer relationships with food at both individual and societal levels that consider the intersections of consumer well-being (Block *et al.*, 2011) and mindfulness (Bahl *et al.*, 2013). Likewise, there has been greater consideration of the role that other actors in the wider societal environment play, such as food marketers (Goldberg and Gunasti, 2007). More recently, there have been recommendations that policy reform for obesity prevention requires a social movement approach (Institute of Medicine, 2014).

The social movement of fat activism aims to challenge commonly-held assumptions about fat bodies, critique the scientific rigor and moral crusading of the obesity discourse and offer counter-narratives that re-identify the fat body in positive and more empowering terms (Meleo-Erwin, 2012). Fat activists seek to reclaim fat from the deviant margins to be used as a neutral or even positive body descriptor as opposed to a site of judgment (Saguy and Ward, 2011). By shifting discussions from a moral panic about obesity to an engagement with fat embodiment and its lived experience, fat activists aim to expose how prejudice and discrimination against fat bodies has been legitimized and sanctioned through a rhetoric of 'health' (Campos, 2004; Gard *et al.*, 2005; Wann, 1998). By contesting fat's construction as an unsuccessful body project that should be repaired and restored to normality (Murray, 2005), fat activists engage in a process of 'coming out' and challenge the veneration of the slim body as beautiful, healthy, graceful, disciplined and good (Gurrieri and Cherrier, 2013). Through mobilizing as a collective, fat activists have sought inclusion and greater choice in markets (Scaraboto and Fischer, 2013) and to establish alternative models of health for people under the banner 'Health at Every Size' (Burgard, 2009). However, these efforts have little recognition within public health circles, particularly in how the complexities of the lived experience of obesity are recognised and possibly challenged. Hence, what differentiates the fat activist movement from other social movements in public health is the disconnect in goals between this community led movement and many public health professionals and agencies.

For the case study, six fat activists who play a significant role in the Australian fat activism movement were studied through a multi-method approach that incorporated interviews and archival data from blogs written by the activists across a period of 24 months. The corpus of data comprised 1387 blog posts and 20 hours of interviews, which combined offered rich insights into the activists' lived experiences in relation to discourses of obesity, health and



intervention. This data was compared with the materials related to two high profile national anti-obesity campaigns co-ordinated and funded by the Australian Department of Health and Ageing. The 'Measure Up' mass media campaign aimed to reduce lifestyle-related risks by associating waist circumference and chronic disease with obesity and was disseminated through a combination of television, press, radio and outdoor advertising, local community activities and a dedicated website. Building on this awareness, the 'Swap It Don't Stop It' mass media campaign aimed to illustrate how people can make small lifestyle changes to improve their health communicated via the same outlets as above with the addition of digital media. The materials included the campaigns themselves in addition to formative and evaluative research relevant to the campaigns (Australian National Audit Office, 2012; GFK Blue Moon, 2007, 2009; The Social Research Centre, 2010). The complete data set was coded using a procedure of open, axial and selective coding (Corbin and Strauss, 1990) in accordance with a hermeneutic 'part to whole' approach (Thompson, 1997), where data were considered first individually, then comparatively to identify patterns with a final stage of themes being connected to key concepts in new social movement theory. Guided by the question of what relations and complexities arise between public health and social movement actors in the obesity field of action, we sought to understand how obesity is represented through highly visible Government sponsored anti-obesity initiatives, how the collective identity of fat activism negotiates this and the opportunities and challenges that arise between actors as a consequence of these efforts. This resulted in the findings elaborated in the following section.

### **Research findings**

In regards to the 'wicked problem' of obesity, our analysis highlights how an impasse has arisen between those in the public health space for obesity and the citizen groups

subsequently targeted who have formed a social movement based on a collective identity that stands in opposition to such efforts. First, we describe three themes that characterise the obesity prevention approach for public health actors. Second, we outline how the collective identity of the fat activism movement is framed in relation to this across the axes of cognition, relational ties and emotional investment. Combined, a combative relationship marked by tensions is highlighted and we propose ways to move productively beyond this towards collaborative and cohesive action guided towards pro-social change in our discussion section.

#### *Public health and Australian anti-obesity campaigns*

Through the prism of the two mass media campaigns ‘Measure Up’ (MU) and ‘Swap It Don’t Stop It’ (SIDS) and relevant formative and evaluation data (Australian National Audit Office, 2012; GFK Blue Moon, 2007, 2009; The Social Research Centre, 2010), three key themes emerge as relevant to the way in which a public health perspective is formed in relation to both obesity and the audiences targeted by such efforts: individual responsibility, disease and rational decision making. Each of these themes will now be elaborated.

First, the theme of individual responsibility for obesity is strongly resonant through both campaigns. In MU, the campaign depicted individuals measuring their waist circumference whilst standing on a giant tape measure. The onus here is on the individual to take responsibility for their bodies and the weight they have gained. In the television commercial, this individual call to action is communicated through the final words: “*the more you gain, the more you have to lose*”. Similarly, the balloon character ‘Eric’ that featured in the SIDS campaign tells the audience, “*over the years my belly has ballooned and ballooned. It’s come time to do something about it*”. This emphasis on individual accountability is unsurprising given the formative research for the campaigns was designed around the notion that people

were unlikely to modify their lifestyle unless they have an appreciation of the ‘what’, ‘why’ and ‘how’ for changing behaviour.

Yet, underlying this position of individual responsibility is the belief that one is blameworthy if they become sick for failing to meet the responsibility for their health (Gurrieri *et al.*, 2014). However, messages about obesity that are perceived to blaming lead overweight and obese people to criticize, refuse to comply, and outright reject such messages (Lewis *et al.*, 2011; Puhl *et al.*, 2013; Thomas *et al.*, 2010). Hence, it is unsurprising that such an approach produced an ineffective outcome in the evaluation data, whereby “*just over half the primary audience does not appear to have much confidence in the sustainability of the lifestyle changes which they make*”. Although, the formative research did highlight that there was a need to avoid ‘victim blaming’, this nevertheless was portrayed in the MU campaigns. In the print advertisements, a man and woman are positioned hanging their heads in shame as they gaze downwards at the tape measurement of their waists whilst clothed only in underwear that both reveals their bodies and publicly shames them. In considering Melucci’s concept of collective identity, relational understandings are critical in elaborating how interactions between actors in a field of action help to establish a sense of common purpose for a social movement. The research findings here highlight how a focus on individual responsibility asserts a focus on the obese individual and ignores relationality with other societal actors, such as the food industry.

Second, the theme of disease features heavily in both campaigns, with fear of chronic disease leveraged as the key motivation to inspire lifestyle changes in the audiences. This was clear from the objectives outlined for both MU and SIDS to “*increase the likelihood that adults will reduce their risk of chronic disease by making positive changes to their levels of physical*

*activity and healthy eating in line with national, evidence-based guidelines*". To achieve this, the formative research states that the *"threat of chronic disease could be leveraged by enhancing people's appreciation of the severity of chronic diseases and their personal susceptibility to them"*. In the MU campaign, this was communicated through messaging that noted, *"for most people, waistlines of over 94cm for men and 80cm for women increase the risks of some cancers, heart disease and type 2 diabetes"*. Similarly, in SIDS 'Eric' notes, *"the last thing I want is to end up with diabetes, cancer or heart disease"*.

To reinforce this messaging, the formative research highlighted the potential to *"explore the opportunity to use graphic, unpleasant imagery that people find difficult to avoid"*. Such imagery was present in the MU campaign, where a man is depicted at the start of the television advertisement as young and slim, but as he begins to *"let yourself go a bit"* ends up aged, overweight and unable to playfully chase his young daughter. When he learns his growing waist circumference is associated with increased chronic disease risks he fearfully observes *"I got worried"*. This is reinforced through the colour of the measuring tape that he walks along, which changes from yellow to an alarming red. Similarly, the visual metaphor of a balloon to represent 'Eric' is an alarmist reference to 'ballooning weight' and the disease related panic this ensues. However, messages that signal feelings of fear and shame house the potential to make people feel worse about their bodies and themselves, generating lower self-esteem, increased depression and increased body dissatisfaction (Friedman *et al.*, 2005; Vartanian and Novak, 2011).

In the formative research this was clearly highlighted, with participants voicing concerns that *"people will think their condition is their fault. For them, there was a real potential of feeling shame and embarrassment"*. Weight stigma is demotivating, reduces the likelihood that

individuals will engage in healthy weight-management behaviours, negatively impacts weight loss outcomes and fosters feelings of shame and guilt (Carels *et al.*, 2010; Lin and McFerran, 2015; Pearl *et al.*, 2014; Puhl *et al.*, 2013; Sutin and Terracciano, 2013; Vartanian *et al.*, 2014). However, research for the campaigns maintained “*conveying the impact of lifestyle related diseases on quality of life seemed to be a rich territory for communications*” despite the fact evaluative research demonstrated the adopted approach “*demonstrated limited effect in terms of nudging behaviours*”. The emphasis on nudge theory highlights the ideological underpinnings behind the MU and SIDS I campaigns, whereby the onus of individual responsibility is reinforced through the behavioural economics approach embraced. In considering Melucci’s concept of collective identity, the findings illustrate how the notion of cognition is elaborated by public health actors to map out a common language about the field of obesity that is grounded in meanings of medicalization and disease, in turn heightening the possibilities for stigma and shame.

Third, the theme of rational decision-making is readily apparent throughout both campaigns. This was most clearly represented in MU through the opportunity costs that are presented for the man in the television advertisement as his weight increases: poorer health, less attractive appearance, decreased fitness and a detrimental impact on his relationships. The emphasis on logic and rationality is also conveyed through the emphasis on measurement (e.g. waist circumference), identification of ‘risk factors’ and the call to action for the audience “*to find out how you measure up*”. This was reinforced by formative research that recommended the campaigns “*use a direct, factual tone when expressing messages about the link between lifestyle and chronic disease, for maximum credibility*”. In SIDS I, rational decision-making was reinforced through the ‘simple, easy and doable’ behaviour change of making small nutrition and physical activity swaps in people’s daily lives that will benefit their health and

wellbeing. The emphasis here is on using reason and evidence to make informed choices, such as swapping fried for fresh or sitting for moving. As the character 'Eric' notes, "*it just means swapping some of the things I'm doing now for healthier choices. That way I can lose my belly, without losing all the things I love. It's easy!*"

This was reinforced through the availability of a digital app that both educated and reminded people about the ways that they could engage in swapping. The emphasis on measurement still prevailed, with the app also allowing people to measure their BMI or the calories associated with certain foods. However, audiences may consider such information as moralising and belittling, consequently turning to alternative sources for information and support about their health and well-being, such as online community groups or commercial weight loss companies (Lewis *et al.*, 2011). Moreover, evaluation documentation pointed to a range of barriers that worked against people engaging in the desired behavioural changes, such as time or money. This signals how the campaigns completely ignored a range of environmental conditions or personal vulnerabilities that may inhibit people from making the 'correct' choices. Indeed, the risk in reducing health decisions to rational choices is that by not complying with the acceptable choice, negative public attitudes such as stereotyping are justified (Brochu *et al.*, 2014). In iterating back to Melucci's concept of collective identity, these findings illustrate how such an emphasis is problematic when considering the role of emotional investment – building a sense of belonging to harness emotional resilience for those involved in a given social movement. Emphasising the rational decision-making required to 'solve' obesity inevitably sets up an opposition between 'experts' discussing citizens' bodies/health and the very people to whom such efforts are being directed. The lived experience of obesity is highly complex and it is problematic to reduce and simplify it in such a manner.

### *The social movement of fat activism in Australia*

The interview and blog data was analysed in iteration with Melucci's (1996) conception of collective identity as operating across three axes: cognition, relational ties and emotional investment. This collective identity negotiates and challenges the representations of obesity encapsulated through public health initiatives, such as the anti-obesity campaigns considered above.

First, cognition relates to a common language about the movement's means, ends and fields of action. For the fat activists, an important objective of the movement is to reframe discussions away from the medicalised language of obesity that pathologises the variation of certain bodies as aberrant. As Natalie states, "*fat acceptance is not about encouraging everyone to be fat. Fat acceptance recognises that people have different body shapes and fat people are vastly underprivileged and grossly pathologised when it comes to [their] health (including mental health)*" (blog post, 21<sup>st</sup> June). This is a clear stand against the theme of disease that is applied throughout populations via the public health perspective as a means of motivating behavioural change. Indeed, fat activists work to reclaim the word fat and disentangle it from the negative cultural associations it has accrued over time.

As Zoe notes, "*I internalised the message that being fat was bad ... calling someone fat was the harshest thing you could say to someone - especially a girl. It just gets imbued with all these negative meanings. If you're calling someone fat it's code for lazy or smelly or slothy, all these words - that above average amount of adipose tissue is technically what it means*" (interview). By simply using fat as a factually descriptive term, fat activists argue it is decoupled from the moral health-related panic that is linked to 'obese' bodies. Moreover, fat activists highlight how public discussions about health often manifest in stigma directed

towards fat people due to the scrutiny placed on their bodies. As Kath contends, *“When you refer to them, no us, as ‘the obese’, you dehumanise us. You reduce us to some kind of ‘other’ that isn’t of equal value to the rest of humanity ... We are human beings with lives, loves, emotions, needs, aspirations and value in society like any other human being. We deserve to be treated as such and allowed to advocate for ourselves”* (blog post, 16<sup>th</sup> July).

To counter this, fat activists argue that health related discourse should be anchored in notions of well-being, as opposed to measurements of weight or correlations to disease. As Kath questions, *“Do they care about your emotional health? Are they concerned that by making you feel ashamed about your body, they’re harming your self esteem and confidence? Do they care about the damage that the yo-yo dieting and exercise bingeing that many of us punish ourselves with to try to ‘not be fat’ does to us in the long run?”* (blog post, 28<sup>th</sup> April). In doing so, an alternative perspective on bodies and health is called for that addresses the potential harms that arise from a medicalised and disease focused position. This reflects the viewpoint of fat activism that there is a moral component to obesity prevention efforts and that government and health agencies take a very narrow perspective (Cooper, 2010). Hence, a clear tension is identified between campaigns that call for people to ‘take action’ to lose weight and reduce the risk of disease and fat activists who advocate against such an approach.

Second, relational ties refer to the connections between people and between organisations through which movement action is organised and what this stimulates by way of a sense of a ‘common we’. Fat activism is predominantly organised through online spaces, such as Facebook groups, Tumblr accounts, blogs, Livejournal accounts and Twitter interactions. Through these, fat activists share a variety of everyday tactics of resistance through which they challenge negative cultural assumptions about fat bodies and the ways in which they are



marginalized. For example, the activists share lists and recommendations about health professionals that adopt a 'health at every size' (HAES) philosophy as a means of both disengaging from the commercial weight loss company treadmill and learning mindful strategies for eating and nutrition. For Kath, adopting the HAES lifestyle that she learned about through fat activism has had a marked impact on her quality of life, *"I was far more a drain on society when I was trying to get thin than I am now that I live a HAES lifestyle. I've gone from suicidal, frequently unemployed due to depression and the damage I did with my eating disorder and constantly needing medical care. Now I have a successful career in a field that I am passionate about and contribute to society"* (blog post, 9<sup>th</sup> November).

Similarly, for Sonya HAES enabled her to redefine her relationship with food, *"I guess it's sort of made a more positive connection with food. And seeing it as fuel rather than I guess an enemy, having good and bad attached to it"* (interview). Challenging the notion of one's weight and health as an individual responsibility is fundamental to the shared ethos that underpins the fat activist social movement. Instead, health is recognized as a unique lived experience with an emphasis on encouraging self-confidence with one's body and a culture of bodily acceptance. For fat activists, this often comes as a revelation after years of unsuccessful cycles of dieting through which they have come to view their bodies as failures. For example, Zoe notes *"All these people I could see on the internet being really happy and not constantly thinking about food, which combined with exercise and the food seem to be just constantly on my mind, I couldn't stop thinking about it and it's been such a mental freeing sort of thing as well. You don't realise until you stop how much it totally clouds everything you do, everything you put in your mouth and you're constantly thinking about it and it takes all your mental energy to focus on that"* (interview).

As well as offering a space for ongoing support, the fat activism movement is structured by a series of rules that reinforce these values. For example, 'diet talk' is strongly discouraged. As Natalie notes, "*one of the main tenets within the movement is that dieting and the culture of encouraging disordered eating is harmful ... talk about diets and weight loss, [is] really triggering because so many fat people have this history of dieting over and over, and lots of failed attempts*" (interview). Similarly, activists share strategies about combatting 'fat talk', that is the ways in which fat bodies are shamed in everyday discussions between family members and friends. Combined, these values, rules and strategies work to establish a common sense of 'we' amongst fat activists that works against the guiding rationale of individual responsibility that underpins the social marketing campaigns analysed above. Instead, emphasis is placed on being part of a community defined by acceptance. Such a tension is reflected in ongoing academic discussions about the neoliberalist dimension of behavioural change programs that reinforce the moral imperative for individuals to be responsible for their own health, neglecting the inequalities often faced by more vulnerable groups (Gurrieri *et al.*, 2014).

Third, emotional investment relates to how individuals feel within movement action and allows members to feel part of a common unity with a sense of belonging. In the social movement of fat activism, the emphasis on both well-being and self-acceptance discussed above work as strategies to foster a community of allies defined by supportive and caring practices. In turn, this works to bolster the self-esteem and sense of worth felt by members of the movement by raising and addressing the range of vulnerabilities they experience. In turn, this contests the emphasis on 'simple, easy, doable' rational decision-making that defines the campaigns addressing obesity-related concerns previously considered. As Natalie notes, "*the internet has been powerful for my self acceptance and self awareness, and has inspired me in*

*my activism for size positivity and diversity. It's easy for people to come together online and discuss common interests [and] guide our education through discussion and even arguments! It's a place where people who've never heard of fat acceptance and activism to learn how to question dominant cultural messages ... having experienced the transformative nature of blogging and community myself I can attest to the power of discussion and support – and the benefits of being more visible as a fat person online”* (blog post 13<sup>th</sup> September). Natalie articulates the importance of fat activism in making fat bodies and people visible.

Being fat is paradoxically experienced as an invisible identity – precisely because of its very visibility. As Sonya observes, *“I think a lot of times fat bodies are ignored, they're desexualised, they're not seen as important or anything. Or, on the other spectrum they're ridiculed, but still ignored; they're talked about, rather than to”* (interview). Hence, working together towards gaining greater visibility is an important means of engendering both belonging and acceptance. As Kath states, *“It's so hard for society at large to believe that fat people have lives, loves, careers, hobbies, passions, style, intelligence, humour and value that I'm going to live my whole life doing all those things, having all those things, while being fat ... To be a visible fat person breaking the mold”* (interview). To create this unified sense of visibility, fat activists collaborate in ways that produce a counter narrative of fatness that challenges the ‘correct’ choices dictated by others. For example, activists meet together at public pools proudly wearing swimsuits in reaction to societal dictations that they should cover their body in shame. Such action refutes the imperative for fat people to restore their bodies to ‘normality’ by making correct and rational choices prescribed by others, instead promoting notions of acceptance and self-love through the solidarity of the movement. Fat activism borrows from a variety of established social movements, such as feminism and LGBTIQ, to advance bodily diversity as a social justice issue (Johnson and Taylor 2008). In

doing so, new ways of understanding fat embodiment are articulated that challenge stereotypes and stigma surrounding the lived experience of being fat and promote an inclusive movement environment.

**Discussion: What can social marketers learn from new social movements?**

Our analysis of recent anti-obesity campaigns and of the social movement of fat activism through the lens of NSM theory helps us identify some important conceptual and practical implications for social marketing. These insights can be informative for social marketing to play a role in helping to tackle issues surrounding obesity – particularly issues related to wellbeing, alternative approaches such as HAES and reducing the stigma and exclusion of people who identify as fat or are considered obese.

Our analysis identifies that cognition and common language around obesity differs vastly between current mass media anti-obesity campaigns in Australia and fat activists. If effective change coalitions are to be formed to tackle obesity in Australia, cognition and common language around the issues must be considered. Fat activists identify the damaging impact that negative, victim blaming language that puts the onus on individual responsibility for health/disease can have. **Such language shapes social norms relating to obesity that are not inclusive or representative of a broad range of stakeholders such as fat activists.** They contrast this with body positive language and inclusive activities that the fat activist movement offers. This identifies that cognition and common language about a social movement's means, ends and field of action are essential concepts for social marketers to grapple with to better understand the citizens whose lives they are working to ameliorate. These concepts must be understood in the social marketing realm in relation to social issues where there is a nexus with social movements on that topic.

Practically, this means that social marketers need to review, understand and possibly help transform the cognition and language regarding a social movement and associated activities, especially where there are oppositional forces such as between public health campaigns like MU and SIDS and fat activists in Australia. In the case of social marketing approaches to tackling obesity, the use of well-being, body positive and non-stigmatic language, and moving away from a neo-liberal framing of obesity through a medicalised and disease framed lens offer such pathways. This may involve fostering processes of critical reflexivity and altering the problematisation of social problems in which there are divergent cognitions and language used (Gordon and Gurrieri, 2014). These ideas align with the more focused ethical, critical, socio-cultural, and multi-systems perspectives on social marketing that have emerged in recent years (iSMA, AASM & ESMA, 2014; Brace-Govan, 2015; Spotswood and Tapp, 2013; Domegan *et al.*, 2016).

Turning to relational thinking that can help create a sense of collective identity (Melucci, 1996), we can see that in our case study there is a failure to achieve this. Australian mass media obesity campaigns and the stakeholders creating these – namely government departments and public health experts – have failed to engage fat activists in relationship building, or relational dialogue and negotiation around the key issues of obesity. This contrasts with the focus on relational thinking found in the social marketing literature (Gordon, 2012; Hastings and Saren, 2003). Conceptually, although NSM does not seem to offer something new to social marketing theory here, it reminds us that social marketing can bring an acknowledgement of the importance of relationality into the obesity domain. As Marques (2011) identifies, this requires reflexivity, self-criticism and a strong commitment to relationship building in social marketing. Possible social marketing issues, including obesity, therefore become a realm for messy, critical and reflexive dialogue and interaction between actors in which subjectivities and negotiated understandings are addressed (Gordon and

Gurrieri, 2014). This form of critically reflexive relational thinking is a common feature in social marketing discourse (Fry *et al.*, 2017; Gordon, 2012; Hastings and Saren, 2003).

The challenge for social marketers in the obesity space in Australia is to apply such relational thinking into practice. Practical suggestions for this include initiating engagement between fat activists, public health ‘experts’ and government departments to start dialogue and negotiation around key issues such as shared responsibilities that enable the foundation of supportive networks and relations, such as the environment of acceptance offered by HAES. Opening up relations that are inclusive, rather than simply echo chambers of experts who have decided and all agree on the answers to the obesity conundrum, will be important. Such conversations could take place in town halls and community centres around Australia as well as in online forums. And, as Milan (2015) identifies, social media platforms can be used to expand the reach of exchange and negotiation around obesity – helping to give voice to important stakeholders and build towards a more broadly collective identity as opposed to focusing on individual level responsibilities.

Another key concept that new social movement theory brings to the social marketing lexicon, and which is demonstrated in the case study in this paper, is emotional investment. Much of the existing social marketing literature is rational and instrumental – emotion receives less attention (Lefebvre, 2012). New social movement theory tells us that a sense of belonging, in which emotional investment is made and emotional returns are transmitted, are critical components of an effective social movement. Therefore, the concept of emotional investment deserves much more attention in social marketing literature to consider challenges to, practices of, and effects from, the creation of common unity through emotional investment and emotional returns in social change movements. The examples of recent anti-obesity

campaigns in Australia show social marketers how this should not be done – by stimulating negative emotional responses among fat activists.

In contrast, the fat activist movement creates online support communities and collective activities, such as wearing swimsuits together, to empower people, counter stereotypes and foster positive emotional investment and returns. Therefore, social marketers should pay attention to how positive emotional investment and emotional returns that create a sense of common unity can be achieved in social change spaces. Ideas here include collective activities such as community or social events that cut across different sections of society in terms of age, gender, ethnicity, health and weight. Or the creation of discussion, knowledge and support forums such as online communities in which different perspectives and emotional care are offered. For marginalised groups such as fat activists, such efforts should aim to foster emotional resilience and provide a buffer against the often negative lived experiences endured as a result of societal stigmas and the perceived ‘correct’ choices that one should be making (Haslam et al., 2009). Hence, there is an opportunity for social marketers to move away from rational-decision making framings focused on the individual and move instead towards creating inclusive spaces and programs that speak to lived experiences, counter stigmas and stereotypes and offer emotional support.

Examining the fat activist social movement in Australia, and contrasting this with recent mass media obesity campaigns in this context, we find tensions and misalignment in relation to the three axes of NSM: cognitions and language, relational ties and emotional investment (Melucci, 1996). Obesity campaigns like Measure Up and Swap It Don’t Stop It are cognitively framed through medicalised language that can be exclusionary and stigmatic for the very citizens they target (Thomas *et al.*, 2014) – including fat activists. Collective identity in any imagined obesity coalition in Australia is absent. Obesity campaigns, and the

stakeholders driving them (governments and public health professionals) do not appear to have formed relational ties and co-produced relationships with fat activists, that through a process of negotiating, interacting and influencing each other could help form a more representative and inclusive collective identity around obesity. The ideological framing of individual responsibility in a political context in which nudge theory and behavioural economics dominate the current social change landscape should be revisited to enable more supportive networks and relations to form between actors. The rational decision-making model and negative emotional language used by Measure Up and Swap It Don't Stop It have unsurprisingly failed to engage emotional investment with fat activists in a collective obesity coalition in Australia. These campaigns do not provide emotional support nor generate emotional investment from fat activists – rather fat activists must look elsewhere for emotional care and strategies to reduce stereotyping and stigma.

Using the lens of NSM, we can see that these recent obesity campaigns are doing the opposite of what is recommended to engage a movement around obesity in Australia. Furthermore, they failed to generate any behaviour change (O'Hara *et al.*, 2016). Examining the background of Measure Up and Swap It Don't Stop It, these failures are perhaps expected. Both campaigns do not take an inclusive, reflexive, program approach to tackling obesity. They are high visibility mass media campaigns, run by Government public health and communications Departments with input from public health 'experts', but seemingly little input from social marketers. Very few of the principles and practices of contemporary social marketing are incorporated into both campaigns. In Australia, there is a need to move away from such instrumental, narrow mass media campaigns that are framed through neoliberal individual responsibility ideology. As Marques (2011) states: "A sense of the whole is fundamental and it is not enough to be an expert in a specific area of implementation". This is



an important challenge for social marketers in Australia who are working in, or are interested in obesity. The imperative is to develop holistic and progressive, multi-stakeholder, multi-level programs that engage with reflexive dialogue to frame the issues, **draw upon appropriate language that can help shift the dominant social norms associated with obesity**, generate emotional investment and returns and facilitate relationship building to form likeminded coalitions.

### **Creating inclusive social change coalitions: the next step for social marketers**

The creation of inclusive social change coalitions situated across consumer groups, health professionals, public health organisations and social marketers is likely to be critical in supporting future policy agendas of health and wellbeing. Creating a social change agenda that both public health and fat activists desire requires that these disparate groups find common ground and develop clear and consistent language to act as united social change agents. To date, prominent obesity coalitions in Australia have been public health and industry coalitions with a much smaller role played by consumer advocacy groups (Patchett *et al.*, 2016; Payán *et al.*, 2017). The primary focus of government and industry communications has been individual responsibility around lifestyle choices and physical activity. In contrast, health advocacy associations attend to structural, environmental, obesogenic and industry causes of obesity such as food marketing and urban development (Patchett *et al.*, 2016). Thus, in Australia there is a divide between government run and funded public health organisations and public health advocacy groups around the attribution of causality for obesity. Nevertheless, what remains absent in such coalition groups is the voice of obese people themselves.

Currently in Australia, prominent public health obesity prevention media campaigns are run by government and government funded organisations, and focus on individualised responsibility for obesity which has the potential to stigmatise the very people they are targeting to help. Although there are a number of public health advocacy organisations that promote a focus on structural environment factors, their message may reach a smaller audience than the mass media campaigns run by government organisations. While the Ottawa Charter for health promotion emphasises the need to “accept the community as the essential voice in matters of its health, living conditions and well-being” (WHO, 1986), public health organisations do not routinely include the views and ideas of obese people in their policy, programmes, strategies and tactics around obesity prevention. This lack of a partnership approach combined with the medicalised, rational messaging used in government run obesity campaigns could help explain why at present many fat activists view obesity prevention and related public health campaigns as oppositional to their view point (Cooper, 2010). Indeed, at present it would seem that many public health campaigns are alienating the very groups required to form effective social change coalitions.

Successful social change coalitions united through the collective identity elements we have considered in this paper – cognitions and language, relational ties and emotional investment – offer an important step forward in tackling the wicked problems that beset social marketers.

The moralistic tone often taken by public health policy makers and program agents need to be rethought. In the obesity space, the concept of HAES could be considered and integrated into obesity efforts to alleviate stigma. Indeed, commercial firms such as Dove and WHO have long promoted body positive imaging with a HAES framing. However, for social marketing obesity initiatives this would require careful negotiation regarding appropriate framing and messaging so as not to work as a detriment to people’s health.

Commented [RG1]: Anyone else?

## **Future Research**

Our work generates some suggestions for future research. Fat activists are not a singular group but represent a diverse set of people with different perspectives and levels of acceptance and engagement with the ideas of being a fat activist and the concept of HAES. Therefore, research that explores these differences and what influences them, and how they shape fat activism would help add nuanced understanding. Furthermore, while our research suggests that some health professionals adopt a HEAS philosophy there is little research insight or public narrative about this. Studies that consider why and how health professionals who adopt a HEAS perspective do so, and how they become more recognised by the moralistic majority in public health would help advance the research field. And we suggest that research investigating the effects of emotional investment in obesity social movements has on people struggling with obesity is important as there may be risks attached to this. Such insight could help inform the need for appropriate support services.

## **Conclusion**

While there is a current misalignment between public health and fat activism, this paper has offered some possible future pathways to form common connections and overcome this impasse. Finding common points of connection may assist in forming the type of broad based coalitions required for effective social change to occur. This changes both the goals of many current obesity prevention campaigns and highlights the more active role that social marketing can play in the social movement process. Given the complexity of the issue of obesity, it is incumbent upon those designing social marketing programs to monitor for possible adverse outcomes and unintended consequences. An important step forward in this regard encompasses greater participation and inclusion in the development, implementation and evaluation of social marketing interventions by priority groups themselves (Gurrieri et al.,

2013). Not only will inclusive coalition engagement in this manner enable people to be empowered to participate in efforts related to their health status, it will ensure that more nuanced and meaningful understandings of effective and/or necessary support is provided. In turn, such participation will reduce the risk that misrepresentation or stigmatisation will occur and ensure social marketing efforts function to improve the well being of citizens.

## References

- Australian National Audit Office. (2012). *Administration of Commonwealth Responsibilities under the National Partnership Agreement on Preventive Health* (The Auditor-General Audit Report No. No.12). Canberra. Retrieved from <https://www.anao.gov.au/work/performance-audit/administration-commonwealth-responsibilities-under-national-partnership>
- Bahl, S., Milne, G. R., Ross, S. M., & Chan, K. (2013). Mindfulness: A Long-Term Solution for Mindless Eating by College Students. *Journal of Public Policy & Marketing*, 32(2), 173–184. <https://doi.org/10.1509/jppm.11.008>
- Baum, F. (2008). *The new public health* (3rd ed.). South Melbourne: Oxford University Press.
- Bennett, W. L., & Segerberg, A. (2012). The Logic of Connective Action. *Information, Communication & Society*, 15(5), 739–768. <https://doi.org/10.1080/1369118X.2012.670661>
- Block, L. G., Grier, S. A., Childers, T. L., Davis, B., Ebert, J. E. ., Kumanyika, S., ... van Ginkel Bieshaar, M. N. . (2011). From Nutrients to Nurturance: A Conceptual Introduction to Food Well-Being. *Journal of Public Policy & Marketing*, 30(1), 5–13. <https://doi.org/10.1509/jppm.30.1.5>
- Brennan, L., & Binney, W. (2008). Concepts in Conflict: Social Marketing and Sustainability. *Journal of Nonprofit & Public Sector Marketing*, 20(2), 261–281. <https://doi.org/10.1080/10495140802224951>
- Brennan, L., Previte, J., & Fry, M-L. (2016). Social marketing's consumer myopia: Applying a behavioural ecological model to address wicked problems. *Journal of Social Marketing*, 6(3), 219–239. <https://doi.org/10.1108/JSOCM-12-2015-0079>
- Brochu, P. M., Pearl, R. L., Puhl, R. M., & Brownell, K. D. (2014). Do media portrayals of obesity influence support for weight-related medical policy? *Health Psychology*:

*Official Journal of the Division of Health Psychology, American Psychological Association*, 33(2), 197–200. <https://doi.org/10.1037/a0032592>

Buechler, S. M. (1993). Beyond Resource Mobilization? *Sociological Quarterly*, 34(2), 217–235. <https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1533-8525.1993.tb00388.x>

Burgard, D. (2009). What is health at every size? In E. Rothblum & S. Solovay (Eds.), *The Fat Studies Reader* (pp. 41–53). New York: New York University Press.

Campos, P. (2004). *The Obesity Myth: Why America's Obsession with Weight is Hazardous to Your Health* (First Edition edition). New York: Gotham.

Carels, R. A., Wott, C. B., Young, K. M., Gumble, A., Koball, A., & Oehlhof, M. W. (2010). Implicit, explicit, and internalized weight bias and psychosocial maladjustment among treatment-seeking adults. *Eating Behaviors*, 11(3), 180–185. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.eatbeh.2010.03.002>

Cash, A. (2008). *John Wilkes: The Scandalous Father of Civil Liberty*. Yale University Press.

Cooper, C. (2010). Fat Studies: Mapping the Field. *Sociology Compass*, 4(12), 1020–1034. <https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1751-9020.2010.00336.x>

Corbin, J. M., & Strauss, A. (1990). Grounded theory research: Procedures, canons, and evaluative criteria. *Qualitative Sociology*, 13(1), 3–21. <https://doi.org/10.1007/BF00988593>

Daellenbach, K., & Parkinson, J. (2017). A useful shift in our perspective: integrating social movement framing into social marketing. *Journal of Social Marketing*, 7(2), 188–204. <https://doi.org/10.1108/JSOCM-04-2016-0013>

Diani, M. (1992). The Concept of Social Movement. *The Sociological Review*, 40(1), 1–25. <https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1467-954X.1992.tb02943.x>

- Douglas, H. (2008). Creating Knowledge: A Review of Research Methods in Three Societal Change Approaches. *Journal of Nonprofit & Public Sector Marketing*, 20(2), 141–163. <https://doi.org/10.1080/10495140802224787>
- Eskew, G. T. (1997). *But for Birmingham: The Local and National Movements in the Civil Rights Struggle*. Univ of North Carolina Press.
- Eyerman, R., & Jamison, A. (1991). *Social Movements: A Cognitive Approach*. Pennsylvania State University Press.
- Fox, K., & Kotler, P. (1980). The Marketing of Social Causes: The First 10 Years. *Journal of Marketing*, 44, 24–33. <https://doi.org/10.2307/1251226>
- Freudenberg, N., McDonough, J., & Tsui, E. (2011). Can a food justice movement improve nutrition and health? A case study of the emerging food movement in New York City. *Journal of Urban Health: Bulletin of the New York Academy of Medicine*, 88(4), 623–636. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s11524-011-9598-x>
- Friedman, K. E., Reichmann, S. K., Costanzo, P. R., Zelli, A., Ashmore, J. A., & Musante, G. J. (2005). Weight stigmatization and ideological beliefs: relation to psychological functioning in obese adults. *Obesity Research*, 13(5), 907–916. <https://doi.org/10.1038/oby.2005.105>
- Fry, M-L., Previte, J., & Brennan, L. (2017). Social change design: disrupting the benchmark template. *Journal of Social Marketing*, 7(2), 119–134. <https://doi.org/10.1108/JSOCM-10-2016-0064>
- Futch, V. A. (2016). Utilizing the Theoretical Framework of Collective Identity to Understand Processes in Youth Programs. *Youth & Society*, 48(5), 673–694. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0044118X13509288>
- Gard, M., Wright, J., & Campos, P. (2005). *The Obesity Epidemic: Science, Morality and Ideology* (1 edition). London ; New York: Routledge.

- GFK Blue Moon. (2007). "Australian Better Health Initiative Diet, Exercise and Weight", *Developmental Communications Research Report*. Sydney: GFK Blue Moon.
- GFK Blue Moon. (2009). "ABHI Segmentation." Sydney: GFK Blue Moon.
- Glasberg, D. S., & Shannon, D. (2010). *Political Sociology: Oppression, Resistance, and the State*. SAGE Publications.
- Glenane-Antoniadis, A., Whitwell, G., Bell, S. J., & Menguc, B. (2003). Extending the Vision of Social Marketing through Social Capital Theory: Marketing in the Context of Intricate Exchange and Market Failure. *Marketing Theory*, 3(3), 323–343.  
<https://doi.org/10.1177/147059310333002>
- Goldberg, M. E. (1995). Social Marketing: Are We Fiddling While Rome Burns? *Journal of Consumer Psychology*, 4(4), 347–370. [https://doi.org/10.1207/s15327663jcp0404\\_03](https://doi.org/10.1207/s15327663jcp0404_03)
- Goldberg, M. E., & Gunasti, K. (2007). Creating an Environment in Which Youths Are Encouraged to Eat a Healthier Diet. *Journal of Public Policy & Marketing*, 26(2), 162–181. <https://doi.org/10.1509/jppm.26.2.162>
- Gordon, R. (2018). Critical social marketing: Reflections, introspections and future directions. In M Tadjewski, M. Higgins, N. Dholakia, J. Denegri-Knott, & R. Varman (Eds.), *The Routledge companion to critical marketing*. London: Routledge.
- Gordon, R., & Gurrieri, L. (2014). Towards a reflexive turn: social marketing assemblages. *Journal of Social Marketing*, 4(3), 261–278. <https://doi.org/10.1108/JSOCM-02-2014-0015>
- Gordon, R, Waitt, G., & Cooper, P. (2017). A social marketer, a geographer, and an engineer walk into a bar: Reflections on energy + Illawarra and undertaking interdisciplinary projects. *Journal of Social Marketing*, 7. <https://doi.org/10.1108/JSOCM-04-2017-0029>



- Gordon, R. (2012). Re-thinking and re-tooling the social marketing mix. *Australasian Marketing Journal (AMJ)*, 20(2), 122–126.  
<https://doi.org/10.1016/j.ausmj.2011.10.005>
- Gurrieri, L., Brace-Govan, J., & Previte, J. (2014). Neoliberalism and Managed Health: Fallacies, Façades and Inadvertent Effects. *Journal of Macromarketing*, 34(4), 532–538. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0276146714542953>
- Gurrieri, L., & Cherrier, H. (2013). Queering beauty: fatshionistas in the fatosphere. *Qualitative Market Research: An International Journal*, 16(3), 276–295.  
<https://doi.org/10.1108/13522751311326107>
- Gurrieri, L., Previte, J., & Brace-Govan, J. (2013). Women's Bodies as Sites of Control: Inadvertent Stigma and Exclusion in Social Marketing. *Journal of Macromarketing*, 33(2), 128–143. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0276146712469971>
- Haslam, S. A., Jetten, J., Postmes, T., & Haslam, C. (2009). Social Identity, Health and Well-Being: An Emerging Agenda for Applied Psychology. *Applied Psychology*, 58(1), 1–23. <https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1464-0597.2008.00379.x>
- Hastings, G., & Domegan, C. (2013). *Social Marketing: From Tunes to Symphonies* (2 edition). Abingdon, Oxon: Routledge.
- Hastings, G. (2017). Rebels with a cause: the spiritual dimension of social marketing. *Journal of Social Marketing*, 7(2), 223–232. <https://doi.org/10.1108/JSOCM-02-2017-0010>
- Hastings, G., & Saren, M. (2003). The Critical Contribution of Social Marketing: Theory and Application. *Marketing Theory*, 3(3), 305–322.  
<https://doi.org/10.1177/147059310333005>
- Hoek, J., & Jones, S. C. (2011). Regulation, public health and social marketing: a behaviour change trinity. *Journal of Social Marketing*, 1(1), 32–44.  
<https://doi.org/10.1108/20426761111104419>

- Holdford, D. (2005). Understanding the dynamics of the pharmaceutical market using a social marketing framework. *Journal of Consumer Marketing*, 22(7), 388–396.  
<https://doi.org/10.1108/07363760510631129>
- Institute of Medicine. (2014). *Supporting a Movement for Health and Health Equity: Lessons from Social Movements: Workshop Summary*. <https://doi.org/10.17226/18751>
- Kamin, T., & Anker, T. (2014). Cultural capital and strategic social marketing orientations. *Journal of Social Marketing*, 4(2), 94–110. <https://doi.org/10.1108/JSOCM-08-2013-0057>
- Keefe, R. H., Lane, S. D., & Swarts, H. J. (2006). From the bottom up: tracing the impact of four health-based social movements on health and social policies. *Journal of Health & Social Policy*, 21(3), 55–69. [https://doi.org/10.1300/J045v21n03\\_04](https://doi.org/10.1300/J045v21n03_04)
- Lee, N. R., & Kotler, P. (2011). *Social Marketing: Influencing Behaviors for Good*. SAGE Publications.
- Lefebvre, R. C. (2012). Transformative social marketing: co-creating the social marketing discipline and brand. *Journal of Social Marketing*, 2(2), 118–129.  
<https://doi.org/10.1108/20426761211243955>
- Lewis, S., Thomas, S. L., Blood, R. W., Castle, D. J., Hyde, J., & Komesaroff, P. A. (2011). How do obese individuals perceive and respond to the different types of obesity stigma that they encounter in their daily lives? A qualitative study. *Social Science & Medicine (1982)*, 73(9), 1349–1356. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.socscimed.2011.08.021>
- Lin, L., & McFerran, B. (2015). The (Ironic) Dove Effect: Use of Acceptance Cues for Larger Body Types Increases Unhealthy Behaviors. *Journal of Public Policy & Marketing*, 35(1), 76–90. <https://doi.org/10.1509/jppm.14.020>
- Magnusson, W. (1996) *The search for political space: globalization, social movements, and the urban political experience*. University of Toronto

- Marques, S. (2011). New thinking for social marketing. In D. Contreras (Ed.), *Psychology of Thinking* (pp. 139–154). New York: Nova Science Publishers.
- McCormick, J. (1995). *The Global Environmental Movement*. John Wiley & Sons Incorporated.
- Meleo-Erwin, Z. (2012). 'I Just Couldn't Keep it in Control Anymore': Weight Loss Surgery, Food Addiction, and Anti-Fat Stigma. In *Critical Perspectives on Addiction* (Vol. 14, pp. 201–224). Emerald Group Publishing Limited.  
[https://doi.org/10.1108/S1057-6290\(2012\)0000014013](https://doi.org/10.1108/S1057-6290(2012)0000014013)
- Melucci, A. (1985). The Symbolic Challenge of Contemporary Movements. *Social Research*, 52(4), 789–816.
- Melucci, A. (1996). *Challenging Codes: Collective Action in the Information Age*. Cambridge University Press.
- Melucci, A. (1989). *Nomads of the Present: Social Movements and Individual Needs in Contemporary Society*. Philadelphia: Temple University Press.
- Milan, S. (2015). From social movements to cloud protesting: the evolution of collective identity. *Information, Communication & Society*, 18(8), 887–900.  
<https://doi.org/10.1080/1369118X.2015.1043135>
- Mirabito, A. M., & Berry, L. L. (2015). You Say You Want a Revolution? Drawing on Social Movement Theory to Motivate Transformative Change. *Journal of Service Research*, 18(3), 336–350. <https://doi.org/10.1177/1094670515582037>
- Murray, S. (2005). (Un/Be)Coming Out? Rethinking Fat Politics. *Social Semiotics*, 15(2), 153–163. <https://doi.org/10.1080/10350330500154667>
- O'Hara, B. J., Grunseit, A., Phongsavan, P., Bellew, W., Briggs, M., & Bauman, A. E. (2016). Impact of the Swap It, Don't Stop It Australian National Mass Media

- Campaign on Promoting Small Changes to Lifestyle Behaviors. *Journal of Health Communication*, 21(12), 1276–1285. <https://doi.org/10.1080/10810730.2016.1245803>
- Patchett, A. D., Yeatman, H. R., & Johnson, K. M. (2016). Obesity framing for health policy development in Australia, France and Switzerland. *Health Promotion International*, 31(1), 83–92. <https://doi.org/10.1093/heapro/dau066>
- Payán, D. D., Lewis, L. B., Cousineau, M. R., & Nichol, M. B. (2017). Advocacy coalitions involved in California's menu labeling policy debate: Exploring coalition structure, policy beliefs, resources, and strategies. *Social Science & Medicine*, 177(Supplement C), 78–86. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.socscimed.2017.01.036>
- Pearl, R. L., White, M. A., & Grilo, C. M. (2014). Weight bias internalization, depression, and self-reported health among overweight binge eating disorder patients. *Obesity (Silver Spring, Md.)*, 22(5), E142–148. <https://doi.org/10.1002/oby.20617>
- Puhl, R., Peterson, J. L., & Luedicke, J. (2013). Fighting obesity or obese persons? Public perceptions of obesity-related health messages. *International Journal of Obesity (2005)*, 37(6), 774–782. <https://doi.org/10.1038/ijo.2012.156>
- Rienks, J., & Oliva, G. (2013). Using social marketing to increase awareness of the African American infant mortality disparity. *Health Promotion Practice*, 14(3), 408–414. <https://doi.org/10.1177/1524839912458107>
- Rothschild, M. L. (1999). Carrots, Sticks, and Promises: A Conceptual Framework for the Management of Public Health and Social Issue Behaviors. *Journal of Marketing*, 63(4), 24–37. <https://doi.org/10.2307/1251972>
- Saguy, A. C., & Ward, A. (2011). Coming Out as Fat: Rethinking Stigma. *Social Psychology Quarterly*, 74(1), 53–75. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0190272511398190>

- Scaraboto, D., & Fischer, E. (2013). Frustrated Fatshionistas: An Institutional Theory Perspective on Consumer Quests for Greater Choice in Mainstream Markets. *Journal of Consumer Research*, 39(6), 1234–1257. <https://doi.org/10.1086/668298>
- Sutin, A. R., & Terracciano, A. (2013). Perceived Weight Discrimination and Obesity. *PLOS ONE*, 8(7), e70048. <https://doi.org/10.1371/journal.pone.0070048>
- Tadajewski, Mark. (2010). Towards a history of critical marketing studies. *Journal of Marketing Management*, 26(9–10), 773–824. <https://doi.org/10.1080/02672571003668954>
- Tadajewski, Mark, Chelekis, J., DeBerry-Spence, B., Figueiredo, B., Kravets, O., Nuttavuthisit, K., ... Moisander, J. (2014). The discourses of marketing and development: towards “critical transformative marketing research.” *Journal of Marketing Management*, 30(17–18), 1728–1771. <https://doi.org/10.1080/0267257X.2014.952660>
- Tajfel, H., & Turner, J. (1986). The social identity theory of intergroup behavior. In W. Austin & S. Worchel (Eds.), *The social psychology of intergroup relations* (pp. 7–24). Monterey, CA: Brooks/Cole.
- The Social Research Centre. (2010). “*Evaluation of the Australian Better Health Initiative Measure Up Social Marketing Campaign Phase 1.*” Sydney: The Social Research Centre.
- Thomas, S. L., Lewis, S., Hyde, J., Castle, D., & Komesaroff, P. (2010). “The solution needs to be complex.” Obese adults’ attitudes about the effectiveness of individual and population based interventions for obesity. *BMC Public Health*, 10, 420. <https://doi.org/10.1186/1471-2458-10-420>
- Thomas, S. L., Olds, T., Pettigrew, S., Yeatman, H., Hyde, J., & Dragovic, C. (2014). Parent and child interactions with two contrasting anti-obesity advertising campaigns: a

qualitative analysis. *BMC Public Health*, 14, 151. <https://doi.org/10.1186/1471-2458-14-151>

Thompson, C. J. (1997). Interpreting Consumers: A Hermeneutical Framework for Deriving Marketing Insights from the Texts of Consumers' Consumption Stories. *Journal of Marketing Research*, 34(4), 438–455. <https://doi.org/10.2307/3151963>

Tilly, C. (1985). War Making and State Making as Organized Crime. In P. Evans, D. Rueschemeyer, & T. Skocpol (Eds.), *Bringing the State Back In* (pp. 169–187). Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Tilly, C. (2004). *Social movements, 1768-2004*. Paradigm Publishers.

Touraine, A. (1981). *The Voice and the Eye: An Analysis of Social Movements*. Cambridge Cambridgeshire ; New York : Paris: Cambridge University Press.

Touraine, A. (1985). An Introduction to the Study of Social Movements. *Social Research*, 52.

Varman, R. & Belk, R. W. (2009). Nationalism and Ideology in an Anticonsumption Movement. *Journal of Consumer Research*, 36(4), 686–700. <https://doi.org/10.1086/600486>

Vartanian, L. R., & Novak, S. A. (2011). Internalized societal attitudes moderate the impact of weight stigma on avoidance of exercise. *Obesity (Silver Spring, Md.)*, 19(4), 757–762. <https://doi.org/10.1038/oby.2010.234>

Vartanian, L. R., Pinkus, R. T., & Smyth, J. M. (2014). The phenomenology of weight stigma in everyday life. *Journal of Contextual Behavioral Science*, 3(3), 196–202. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jcbs.2014.01.003>

von Stein, L. (1848). *Die sozialistischen und kommunistischen Bewegungen seit der 3. französischen Revolution: Anhang zu Steins Socialismus und Communismus des heutigen Frankreichs*. Olms.

- Wann, M. (1998). *FAT!SO? : Because You Don't Have to Apologize for Your Size*. Berkeley, California: Ten Speed Press.
- West, D. (2013). *Social Movements in Global Politics* (1 edition). Cambridge: Polity.
- WHO. (1986). The Ottawa Charter for Health Promotion. Geneva, Switzerland: WHO.
- Wong-Parodi, G., Dowlatabadi, H., McDaniels, T., & Ray, I. (2011). Influencing Attitudes toward Carbon Capture and Sequestration: A Social Marketing Approach. *Environmental Science & Technology*, 45(16), 6743–6751.  
<https://doi.org/10.1021/es201391g>
- Wymer, W. (2011). Developing more effective social marketing strategies. *Journal of Social Marketing*, 1(1), 17–31. <https://doi.org/10.1108/20426761111104400>