NEW SOCIAL MOVEMENTS, CLAUS OFFE, AND ENVIRONMENTAL GROUPS IN BRITISH COLUMBIA

by

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New Social Movement Theory characterizes post 1960’s protest movements such as the peace, environment and women’s movement as being distinctively different from older movements such as the workers movement. The salient differences are in the social bases from which the movements draw their participants, the types of issues which are addressed, and the methods used in their protest. New Social Movements are heralded as being the vanguard for social change by some and as a bourgeoise distraction from the "real" project of emancipation by others.

The objective of this thesis is to examine the congruence of the environmental movement in British Columbia with this concept of New Social Movements. Using the theoretical formulations of Claus Offe as a base, the thesis examines the social makeup of environmental groups in British Columbia, reviews the types of issues on which they are working, and identifies the methods which they employ in their protests. The results indicate that, while the leadership may be drawn from a more highly educated and service oriented new middle class, the general membership represents a broad social base. The issues addressed by the movement are perceived as being for the "benefit of all" rather than for a specific social class, and the methods of protest employed are primarily of a "working for change within the systems" approach as opposed to overthrowing any established political system. The thesis concludes that, while there may be elements of radicalism within the movement, it
is primarily characterized as reformist, with many small fragments working on specific issues, loosely networked, and dedicated to working with government and other sectors of the population to find solutions.
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Chapter 1

Introduction

"Like the old-growth forests preservationists are passionately committed to protect, the environmental movement is diverse and complex. The motivations of the tree-hugger, tree-planter, and tree-spiker, the woods manager, silviculture specialist and timber forester are profoundly different, yet each might claim to be an environmentalist." (1)

The objective of this thesis is to assess how helpful the theoretical framework of new social movements is in understanding and explaining the environmental movement in British Columbia - its composition, goals, methods and understanding of its role in influencing social change. This study was undertaken to determine whether the environmental movement in British Columbia is as diverse as sometimes described -- with representation from all "walks of life," or whether it has a set of characteristics predicted by the body of social science research which identifies, describes and characterizes new social movements.

Many social theorists (Anderson 1983; Gorz 1980, 1983; Habermas 1981a, 1981b; McAdam, McCarthy and Zald 1988; Melucci 1980; Offe 1984; Touraine 1981; Williams 1983) have described a new type of social protest -- one that arose in the post-1960

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period in Europe and North America. These new "post-material" movements -- as some refer to them -- are said to have a number of characteristic tendencies which contrast with classical social movements such as the labour or workers' movement.

Differences between old and new social movements are related to their composition, the issues they address and their methods of protest. In contrast to older social movements, as epitomized especially by the labour union movement, new social movements are characterized as follows:

1. Generally their membership is younger, caucasian, predominantly female, middle-class, well educated, urban, and located professionally in the service sector.

2. The types of issues they address relate to "quality of life" concerns rather than to the redistribution of wealth and power. These issues, such as minority rights, women's rights, peace and environmentalism are more likely to have the appearance of cross-class interests, promoting values and other changes supposedly benefitting the community as a whole, and not stemming simply from purely material, economic and distribution issues.

3. The methods of protest tend toward well-organized and professional lobbies, letter writing, boycotts, and education campaigns aimed at trying to influence politicians as compared to mass demonstrations or antagonistic conflicts of the "old" social movements.

Within the agreement on these tendencies, there are debates as to the role of these new social movements as agents of change
in "the transformation of society." In some leftist perspectives in the literature, new social movements are assigned the potential role of vanguard toward a new society, (i.e. with the potential of being able to form wide alliances, and to mobilize and direct wide-reaching social and economic change). (2)

Not all social scientists see new social movements as significant agents of social change. In particular, some, such as Enzensberger, discredit new social movements either as too disorganized, co-optable by the status quo, and naive; or as merely pursuing their own middle-class self interests. (3)

Context of Study and Questions

In 1990, public opinion polls indicated that the environment was the top issue for people in Canada. (4) Corporations have their "Vice-Presidents of Environment," retailers have their lines of "green products," and glossy national magazines such as New Environment are launched. It seems that one cannot escape hearing about "the environment."

Environmental issues are incorporated into all political platforms, the newspaper headlines and the evening news. Environmentalists are portrayed as left-leaning, leftover


peaceniks from the 60's, as well as "the ones who bought their summer house last year" - young, urban, middle-class professionals. (5)

With this growing environmental awareness and contrasting characterizations of environmentalists and their agendas, what can be made of it all? Who are the environmentalists; what do they want; and how do they propose to achieve their goals? What does the evidence reveal? In this thesis, the theoretical framework of new social movements is used to look for the answers to these questions.

The specific questions asked in this thesis are:

1. Is the environmental movement in British Columbia comprised primarily of young, educated, service sector members?

2. Are the issues addressed about classless concerns related to "quality of life," rather than about economics and the distribution of wealth and material resources?

3. Does the movement have well-organized, professionally managed programs and coalitions directed toward broad societal issues? Are they accommodated by any political party?

4. How do environmentalists see their role in society? Do they see themselves as "the vanguard" or do they define themselves in terms of other objectives?

5. How is the environmental movement integrated as a new social movement? What, if any, are the internal contradictions and cleavages?

Based on comments by Environment Canada personnel during a discussion in June 1988.
More generally, these questions lead to a more abstract question related to whether the environmental movement has the potential for being a significant social force or agent of change or whether it will be a short lived and passing social phenomenon of minor influence. Recall, for example, that environmental issues were prominent in the early 1970s, especially concerning acid rain, but after about four years, ecological worries were replaced by concerns over the economy, women's rights, racism, the oil crisis, and so forth.

Organization

Following this introductory chapter, Chapter Two opens by briefly describing the range of perspectives under the rubric of new social movement theory. The body of the chapter describes the concepts put forth by a leading European social scientist, Claus Offe, as related to the social and structural reasons for the emergence of new social movements and the rationale for their social composition, goals and methods. Specific characterizations of the so-called new social movements are contrasted with those of the working class movement which is the classic example of pre-1960's movements.

Chapter Three describes the public opinion research data as well as the interview schedule and questions used in this study. Background on the B.C. Environmental Network -- an organization which links over 400 environmental organizations -- is also provided as context for the sampling and interview methods chosen.
Chapter Four presents the results of the public opinion surveys including summaries of over 60 individual tables. Also, detailed results of personal interviews with over 20 environmental leaders are presented.

Chapter Five revisits the theory presented in Chapter Two, reflecting especially on how the results found in the interviews and the public opinion data fit or contradict the theoretical insights advanced by Offe. The initial questions posed in the study are reviewed and implications suggested. As well, areas for further research are identified.
Chapter 2

New Social Movement Theory

A prevalent theme in the study of the sociology of social movements is that there has been a significant change in the nature of protest movements since the 1970's. The new social movements are designated as "new" because of their different objectives, social base, issues, methods and perceived role in social change. These "new" characteristics are deemed sufficient by several sociologists (Anderson 1983; Gorz 1980, 1983; Habermas 1981a, 1981b; Offe 1984; Touraine 1981, Williams 1983) to justify the designation of "new social movements" as something quite different from "older" social movements such as the working class movement of the earlier part of the century.

This theme of "something new" in social protest is reflected in literature references to the emergence of a new type of politics, a new middle class and a new form of protest. While there is no consensus on the explanations or the interpretations for the change, the general theories of new organizations for social change cut across ideological and political perspectives, attacking Marxists and neo-Marxists, liberals and conservatives alike. Each perspective presents its own questions and explanations developed from its own values and basic assumptions. One of the major areas of controversy is related to the role of new social movements in social change. Conclusions range from discrediting the new movements as having
any major "transformative" significance to assigning to them the potential of leading the way to major societal transformation.

While acknowledging this range of perspectives, approaches and assessments of new social movements, the focus of this chapter is to first describe "what's new" about social movements -- an area where there is some agreement, and then to present the major explanations for the development of this new classification for social movements from the perspective of a leading post-Marxian social scientist Claus Offe. (6)

What Is New About New Social Movements?

By referring to new as contrasted to old social movements, sociologists generally make a distinction between movements of the earlier 1900's, in particular the workers movement, and post 1960's movements such as the student, peace, environmental, gay, or women's movements. While many of these so called new social movements may have historical roots in a pre-1960's period, they are referred to as new because of specific differences in form and purpose from so-called classical social movements. Terms used to describe this "different" type of social movement in the post 1960's include "post-industrial," "post- materialistic," or "post-modern." The differences are categorized, described and explained in terms of social bases, the types of issues addressed, the methods of protest used, political affiliation and perceived role in social change.

6 C. Offe, 63-105.
Social Bases

The old social movements were generally regarded as class-based with members of a specific protest coming from one class, working for the benefit of that class. One class, for example workers, against another class, owners. The new movements are also identified as being made up of people primarily from one class. Social class, while often defined by the Marxists solely in terms of the ownership, or not, of the means of production, is more frequently defined by strata or gradations based on income, education or occupational group in the new social movement literature. New social movements draw their membership primarily from members of a "new middle class" -- those who are young, educated, and employed in the service sector, and those outside the labour force or marginally employed.

Issues

The issues which the new social movements address cut across class lines and are often presented as benefitting society in general and not merely one class at the expense of another. The major issues or themes addressed in "old" social movements were related to the "here and now" distribution of material resources and wealth. This was historically manifest mainly in the form of the labour movement, organized to resist managers and owners, and to seek better rewards for workers. While some trade unionists struggled for wider social change, the main victories of unions relate to wage and fringe benefit increases.

While the earlier conflict was between opposing classes,
there seemed to be a consensus on values such as economic growth and security. Conflicts became contests between competing interests and the apportionment of wealth, not a questioning of the values of an industrial society and its use of resources. This, for example, is captured by the phrase "business unions" and is part and parcel of the economistic focus of the trade union movement. While this emphasis on material rewards has not been without critics, it does represent the central thrust of most union activity.

With the new social movements a different set of values further complicates and confounds the issues. Now the issues are not so much "who gets what percentage of profits" but rather what is the value of a resource or practice and whom does the resource or practice benefit. A major characteristic of the issues addressed by new social movements is that the protests are justified as benefitting all members of society rather than a specific class such as the ruling class in Marxist literature. Womens rights, gay rights and the peace movements illustrate this "cross-class" aspect of the new protests. A phrase which appears repeatedly in the literature to describe this variation from older class based movements is -- "of a class, but not on behalf of a class." (7)

Environmental debates about land or forest use illustrate the "value complication" very well. Conflicts are not only over who gets what percentage of profits from selling wood but over value dimensions such as the following. What is a forest's

7 Offe, 77.
value - dead or alive - and to whom? What are the rights of future generations, animals, birds or those who cannot represent themselves?

Methods of Protest

Protests of the new social movements are observed to be extra-governmental and extra-political. Actions, such as mass letter writing campaigns, demonstrations, well organized lobbies and coalition building focus on all political parties as well as the general public. In contrast to unions where effective action focused on specific employers, new social movements have emphasized mass actions which are far more diffuse than were the aims of early trade union initiatives.

Political Affiliation

New social movements have not been located in "party" politics to the extent of old social movement protest. The labour movement has been aligned with social democratic politics in almost all western industrial societies. In contrast, there has been little development of specific political parties dedicated to the politics of new social movement issues. Rather, with the exception of the Green Party (and then only in selected jurisdictions), the issues are more often accommodated by many political platforms.

Role

The role of the working class movement, in its most general political guise, was the transformation of society. Debate in the new social movement literature ranges from assigning to the movements the role as the new vanguard which will organize and
catalyse widespread societal transformation,(8) to acknowledging its role in influencing reform and supporting the integration of new values into society,(9) to an obscure and confused bourgeoisie distraction from "acute political controversy". (10)

Table 1, on the following page, summarizes the main characteristics of the old and new social movements. It has been modified from descriptions provided in Offe's essay. (11)

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9 Offe, 102.
10 Enzensberger, 27.
11 Offe, 73 and 83.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Old Social Movements</th>
<th>New Social Movements</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Issues</strong></td>
<td>economic growth and distribution, military and social security; social control</td>
<td>preservation of the environment, human rights, peace, and unalienated forms of work</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Values</strong></td>
<td>freedom and security of private consumption and material progress</td>
<td>personal autonomy and identity, as opposed to centralized control</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Modes of action</strong></td>
<td>internal; formal organization, large scale representative organizations</td>
<td>internal; informality, spontaneity, low degree of horizontal and vertical differentiation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>external; pluralist or corporatist interest intermediation, political party competition, majority rule</td>
<td>external; protest politics based on demands formulated in predominantly negative terms (ban, stop, etc.)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Actors</strong></td>
<td>socioeconomic groups acting as groups (in the group's interest) and involved in distributive conflict</td>
<td>socioeconomic groups acting not as such, but on behalf of ascriptive collectives</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Explanations for the Development of New Social Movements

General Approaches

New social movements and the explanations for their development are approached from two different analytical perspectives. The subjective approach examines individual actors and their psychological needs and values. The objective or structuralist approach investigates the social conditions, events and structural changes which may influence the rise of a new type of protest movement. (12)

This chapter, rather than taking the subjective approach which stresses the social psychological development of new values, needs and wants, focuses on Claus Offe's attempts to demonstrate the validity of a sociological interpretation for the rise of new social movements. He argues that the composition of new social movements and their style of political activity can be understood as rational responses to specific problem contexts.

The following sections describe how a number of characteristics ascribed to the new social movements are explained from this perspective. Specifically highlighted and explained are the changing nature of the state; the reasons for the concentration of younger, higher educated and service sector employed members; the "non-distributive" types of issues that are raised; and the methods of protest used.

12. Offe, 83.
Changing Nature of the State

Since we are describing the emergence of a new type of social movement from a structuralist perspective, it is important to first look at the changing circumstances -- the changes and events taking place "outside of the actors." These conditions are the unintended by-products of the actions and workings of private and public institutions. Offe identifies three major characteristics associated with institutions in post-industrial society which contribute to the emergence of the new social movements -- the broadening of institutions' negative side-effects, the deepening of social control, and the irreversibility of direction because of the lack of self-correcting capabilities. (13)

First, the negative side-effects of the economic and political systems are no longer concentrated and class-specific. The negative impacts are broadened -- dispersed in time, space and kind. Examples which easily illustrate this broadening effect include air and water pollution, unemployment and plant closures, the national debt and monetary crises. In these situations, virtually every member of society is affected in various ways by the event(s).

Second, the methods of domination in post-industrial society have deepened. Offe describes how there has been a qualitative change in the domination which results in a more comprehensive and inescapeable social control in explicit as well

13 Offe, 85.
as implicit ways. The scope of surveillance has expanded, the span of control systems widened. Radio, television, fashions, culture, education, entertainment, as well as formal extensions of regulations, play a role in deepening social control.

The third factor which Offe identifies as a characteristic of post-industrial society is that any self-correcting or self-limiting capacity of the institutions has been lost. Institutions are deemed to have the structural incapacity to perceive and deal effectively with the global risks and deprivations they cause. The political and economic institutions are caught in a vicious circle which Offe thinks can only be broken from outside the official political institutions.

Why Young, Educated, and Service Sector Members are Attracted

New social movements are characterized as attracting members from the new middle class - the young, educated, service sector population; elements of the old middle class -- the professions and owning class; and those outside the labour market -- homemakers, retired people and students.

Offe argues against the purely psychological explanation presented by writers such as Inglehart, which stresses the development of "new" values and needs in those who have had secure positions in their formative year and the influence this has on their affinity to new social movements. (14) As well, the

Maslow's "hierarchy of needs" explanations are criticized as inadequate in explaining the social makeup of the new social movements. (15) Different value sets may be held by different groups in society, but this type of explanation simply begs the question of why some hold different values than others.

Offe explains the concentration of younger people in new social movements as an outcome of the increased social and geographical mobility and a looseness of bonds to family, workplace, and so on. With greater individualization and highly mobile social situation, he suggests that younger people who are migrating through jobs, marriages, families, and friends still require some continuity in their lives and as a result tend to develop "bonds" with "issues." The issues become the only constants in their lives.

In structural explanations, the importance of higher education is attributed to the expectation that actors in the new social movements would be the ones who could best understand the nature of systematic irrationalities - or those most likely to be victims of cumulative deprivations. The cumulative effects of complicated decisions on issues such as the environment or the military are thought to be more readily recognized by those with a higher level of education. They in turn can explain the correlation of decisions and the consequences which may be felt by other sectors of society, not as readily seen in the original decisions. Since higher education leads to a perceived

15 Offe, 84.
competence to make judgements about complicated and abstract economic, military, legal, technical, and environmental matters, the more educated person would be expected to grasp the contradictions and irrationalities. A second explanation is that education increases the capacity to think and conceivably act independently as well as the preparedness to question received interpretations of the world. Education supports the development of "critical consciousness."

Concerning the vocations of new social movement members, an actor-centred approach emphasizes that the values of those working in the service sector are different from those in primary or secondary (manufacturing) work which is perceived to be more production dependent. However, the development of "new values" for those working in the service sector becomes a circular argument -- Do those in the service sector develop new values in their line of work or is there a selection factor related to who goes into service sector work? (16) Another actor centered explanation suggests that new middle class members "can afford" to protest because of their financial independence from production.

Offe offers a more structural explanation for the higher concentration of service sector members in new social movements. He suggests that cognitive access to systemic irrationalities is greatest for those in personal and social services or in administration because they are most immediately confronted

16 Offe, 88.
with the irrationalities. Their jobs can involve dealing with the victims of the post-industrial systems and they are able to identify the connections between the results (i.e. unemployment, family violence, pollution) and the contributing factors. Hence they are the most acutely aware of problems and contradictions.

As for the involvement of those peripherally employed such as homemakers, students, seniors, and unemployed, the structural explanation suggests that this group has a higher degree of personal autonomy. They also are less constrained by norms and institutions in society -- perhaps related to a shrinking proportion of the societal map being charted by the institutions.

**Why The Shift to Cross-Class Issues?**

The issues of the "older" social movements are identified as being primarily about economic growth and distribution, military and social security, and social control. The new social movements are concerned about issues concerning the preservation of the environment, protecting human rights, maintaining peace, and promoting unalienated forms of work.

Offe argues that the new social movements and their issues have developed as the result of the emergence of a new paradigm -- a paradigm which emerged and corresponds to a changing social structure associated with post-industrial society.(17) Specifically, he underscores the expansion of the functions of

17 Offe, 65.
the state and the blurring of boundaries between private and public society as the major factors. As the government expands and deepens its involvement in individuals' lives, it comes up against more conflict of opposing values. As the state tries to regulate what was previously controlled by the family, church or individual (eg. abortion, pesticide use, divorce), it consequently brings these contrasting values and practices to the foreground.

In earlier industrial society, the social structure consisted of relatively durable and distinctive collectives such as classes -- that is groupings of status, professional relationships and economic interest, or cultural communities and families. With the advanced industrial and welfare state and the blurring of the political and private, the social structures of the old collectives become less distinctive and less durable points of reference.

This blurring of class boundaries is illustrated in Offe's identification of what he sees as the most striking characterization of the actors in the new social movements. He claims that new social movement members do not rely on established political codes for self identification (eg left, right, liberal, conservative) or on partially corresponding socioeconomic codes such as working class, middle class, poor, wealthy, rural, urban. Instead, they classify the universe of political conflict in categories taken from their issues such as gender, age, locality, or in the case of the environmental and peace movements, the human race as a whole.
While the subjective explanations for the rise of "new issues" concentrate on Maslow's hierarchy of needs theories, and the self-actualization desires of an educated and secure new middle class, Offe brings in the variables of a rising urgency to defend existing needs whose conditions of fulfillment have deteriorated.

All major concerns of new social movements converge on the idea that life itself, and a minimal standard of "good life" (as defined and sanctioned by modern values), are threatened by the blind dynamics of military, economic, technological and political rationalization and that there are no sufficient and reliable barriers within the dominant political and economic institutions to prevent disaster. The purpose is to defend values and identities and to restore what is not yet entirely lost such as cultural symbols or ecological balance.

From the structuralist perspective, the issues are not defined as new. There is, however, a new emphasis on different values -- or rather a different urgency on certain values -- autonomy, identity, decentralization, self-government, as well as opposition to manipulation, control, dependence bureaucratization and regulation.

There is also a new champion of these issues. Offe explains this as an outcome of the configuration of class forces and class politics in post-industrial society. It can be interpreted as the outcome of a long process of divergence between what Parkin has called "working class conservatism" and middle class
radicalism.(18) This is the reverse side of the development of the welfare state in which the working class is granted institutionalized political and economic representation and some legal claim to security. The price of success is, however, to limit working class goals and to de-emphasize their interests as citizens, consumers, clients of state services, and human beings in general.

Issue areas which have been abandoned by the working class now are occupied by middle class radicals. Because of the development of the welfare state -- they are sufficiently numerous and economically secure to re-emphasize "forgotten" working class issues and revitalize some noninstitutional forms of politics used earlier by the working class movement itself.

Why the "Extra-Political" Methods?

The methods of the old social movements are identified as being primarily characterized by mediation between or among various corporate interest groups, political party competition and majority rule. The new social movements are characterized as using methods external to the political and social structures of critique, with demands formulated in predominantly negative terms.

With the expanding state and public policies exerting more direct and visible impact on citizens, citizens in turn try to win a more immediate and inclusive control of political elites.

18 Offe, 79.
Institutional channels of communication between citizens and the state are used more often by more people for a wider group of issues in the post-industrial state. However, their adequacy as a framework for political communication is being challenged.

As people face conflicts without having any satisfactory way of dealing with them through the institutional channels of post-industrial society, "external" action becomes a rational response. The issues and conflicts fall between the seams of regular political activity and relate to side effects of the actions of either private or institutional-political actors for which the actors cannot be held responsible or made responsible by available legal or institutional means.

Since it is believed that there are no sufficient and reliable barriers within dominant political and economic institutions to prevent disaster -- there is the adoption and legitimation of unconventional, extra institutional modes of action. In short, old institutions and their solutions are perceived as inadequate to the growing complex of advanced industrial society social problems.

Two reasons can be provided which justify external action. First, survival is at stake, therefore there is no formal faithfulness to "rules of the game." Second, if institutional mechanisms are too rigid to recognize or absorb problems of advanced industrial society, it is inconsistent to rely on them for a solution.

New social movements seek to politicize civil society in
ways that are not constrained by representative-bureaucratic political institutions and thereby reconstitute a civil society independent from increasing control and intervention. "To emancipate itself from the state," the new movements claim, civil society itself, its institutions and its very standards of rationality and progress must employ practices that belong to an intermediate sphere between private pursuits and concerns, and institutional, state-sanctioned modes of politics. (19)

New social movements have abandoned the idea of progress and perfection as a linear progression taken by social and political forces. Consequently, there is no theoretically construed project. The purpose is to defend values and identities, and to restore what is not yet entirely lost (cultural symbols, ecological balance). Hence actions may seem piecemeal, ad hoc, pluralist, and be seen as having a selective nature to demands and views.

Since the structures are seen as problematic, proponents of new social movements rely on structural changes for solutions. Pieces of knowledge and standards of legitimation are often provided by dissenting minorities within the ruling elites. Themes are often taken up by music, art, or other institutions which can provide legitimacy and institutional protection.

Summary

This chapter has focused on Claus Offe's theoretical

19 Offe, 65.

24
formulation of new social movements. In particular, he argues that in post-industrial society the nature of conflicts has given rise to a new form of protest which contrasts with the "older" movements such as the workers union movement. The issues addressed, the underlying values, the modes of action and the social makeup are, he contends, rational responses to specific problems of post 1960's society.

As noted in the introduction to this chapter, numerous social scientists have puzzled over the emergence of new social movements. Although this chapter focuses on Offe, he is not alone in the current theoretical quest to understand new social movements. His work is, however, one of the clearest formulations, having the distinct advantage of offering more empirical specificity than many other theorists. The purpose of this thesis is to examine the utility of his views in light of the environmental movement experiences in the Canadian province of British Columbia.
Chapter 3

Methodology

In order to assess Offe's version of new social movement theory in predicting and describing the socio-economic makeup of new social movements, as well as the types of issues addressed and the methods of protest used, the environmental movement in British Columbia was selected as a "test movement" to be studied. While the environmental movement certainly did not "begin" in the late 1960's and 1970's, and indeed, has its roots in much earlier times, most of the new social movement literature includes "the green movements" and "the environmentalists" as examples of new social movements. Certainly the intensity of environmentalism is "new" as witnessed by popular press accounts as well as by government and business environmental activity.

The following research questions guided the analysis:

1. Are the new social movements made up primarily of young, educated members employed in the service sector or marginally located?

2. Are the issues of a "cross-class" nature, rather than serving the interests of a particular class?

3. Are the protest methods used extra-political? That is, are they outside regulated political processes and party politics?

This study employed two research approaches -- analysis of public opinion data and personal interviews with key leaders in
the B.C. environmental movement. More specifically, Canadian Gallup Poll survey data were analysed to review environmental attitudes and behaviours over a number of years.\(^{(21)}\) As well, an Angus Reid Environment Poll, conducted in July 1989, was reviewed and analysed.\(^{(22)}\) Personal interviews were conducted with twenty-three people in leadership positions in the environmental movement in B.C. In addition, five interviews were conducted with selected leaders of environment organizations for more specific information on the members of their specific group.

Public Opinion Polls

Gallup Polls

Canadian Gallup Poll surveys from 1970 to the mid-1980's were reviewed and specific questions related to the following two categories were analysed: what people thought were the most important issues of the times and how serious they thought pollution was.

The results of a set of questions which had been repeated over a number of years -- 1970, 1975, 1985, and 1987, were analysed with controls for sex, age, education level, locale, union membership, and income. Gallup uses a nationally representative sampling design and has interviews with just over

\(^{21}\) Canadian Gallup Polls 1970-87 - selected questions related to the environment were analyzed

\(^{22}\) Angus Reid Study, The Vancouver Sun, October 2, 1989.
1,000 respondents per survey (the exact number varies by poll). Exactly the same question wording was repeated on each of the four surveys analysed. The specific questions analysed from the Canadian Gallup Polls were:

Table 2
Questions and possible responses asked of Canadians from 1970's to 1987

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>A. Is pollution a problem?</th>
<th>Yes, No, Can't say</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>B. If yes to A; is pollution a serious problem?</td>
<td>Not serious, Fairly serious, Very serious, Can't say, Not applicable</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C. Is pollution a problem in your area?</td>
<td>No, Yes</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The advantage that this methodology brings to the study is that trends over time could be evaluated. The awareness or perception of environmental problems in any specific social group could also be isolated. This data are therefore particularly important for the research question.

Angus Reid Polls

In July 1989, the Angus Reid polling consultants conducted a nationally representative sample survey on the Canadian public's environmental attitudes and behaviours. Personal interviews were conducted with 1,521 Canadian adults from across the country. A copy of the polling results, complete with questionnaire and codebook, was obtained.
From the listing of all survey questions, the following were selected as relevant to this project. The results were analysed, with controls for age, education level and income.

Table 3
Selected Questions Analysed from the Angus Reid Poll
July 1989

Would you support a new environment party?
Do you seek out biodegradable products?
Do you use environmentally sensitive transit?
Do you avoid styrofoam packages?
Do you separate garbage?
Have you joined an environmental group?
Have you given money to an environmental cause?
Have you written or lobbied the government on the environment?
Have you attended an environmental rally?
Would you support paying 5 cents more for environmentally friendly gas?
Would you support paying 10 cents more for environmentally friendly packaging?
Would you pay $1000 more for an environmentally friendly car?
Would you pay 50% more for safer garbage disposal?
Do you buy unbleached paper products?
Would you support paying $250 more for better sewage treatment?
Would you pay a 10% energy tax to promote conservation?
Would you support the government doubling park land?
Would you support a law requiring garbage separation?
This approach was used to develop an indication of the socio-economic makeup of people interested in environmental issues, those taking action on environmental issues, and those supporting "corporate/government" solutions. Again, like the Gallup data, this information is particularly relevant to the research questions.

Personal Interviews

The most visible components of the "environmental movement" in Canada are formally documented by an organization called the Canadian Environmental Network. This organization arose out of a federal government study which recommended seed funding to help establish a national network for environmental organizations. Also recommended was the establishment of provincial sub-networks. The government recognized a need to be in communication with this sector of society and concluded that an organized network would be the most effective and efficient way to establish two-way communication.
The national network includes over 3,000 formally organized groups (name, mailing address, telephone number, key people, etc.). The B.C. Environmental Network includes over 400 such organizations. From this population, 25 (6.25 per cent sample) organizations were selected for interviews. The 25 were selected based on the following criteria:

* size or influence (large and small)
* length of time in existence (old and young)
* nature of issues approach (single or broad focus)
* part of a federation or single organization
* rural or urban
* representing youth
* representing general public

The intention was to use a purposeful sampling strategy to ensure the broadest cross-section of environmental organizations. After selection, a letter of introduction (Appendix A) was sent to the designated contact and a telephone interview was conducted using the following issues (Table 4) to guide the interview.

23 British Columbia Environmental Directory, B. C. Environmental Network, April, 1990
The interviews, which lasted an average of 25 minutes, were conducted by telephone in May to August of 1991. Handwritten notes were taken during the telephone conversation. Subsequent to the first set of interviews with the 23 members of environmental groups, additional interviews were conducted with five other leaders of environmental organizations to discuss more specifically the socio-economic makeup (age, education, employment) of its membership, the group's understanding of who
would benefit from the issues it was working on, and the types of methods it employed. These additional five leaders were chosen because of their organization's size - one large and one small, their location - one urban and one rural, and their target audience - the general public and one specifically targeting youth. These were more detailed, more probing interviews that lasted an average of 40 minutes. Table 5 provides a brief summary of how each type of data relates to the specific hypotheses listed earlier.

Table 5
Summary of the Different Approaches and How They Help to Answer the Research Questions

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Indication of:</th>
<th>Interviews</th>
<th>Gallup</th>
<th>Reid</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>age</td>
<td>+</td>
<td>++</td>
<td>++</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>education</td>
<td>+</td>
<td>++</td>
<td>++</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>income</td>
<td>+</td>
<td>+</td>
<td>+</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>cross class issues</td>
<td>++</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>methods</td>
<td>++</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>+</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Key: + provides some data on research question;  
++ provides a good test of research question;  
- provides no data relevant to research question.
Chapter 4

Results

Public Opinion Polls

If the members of environmental groups (as an example of new social movements) are recruited mainly from specific groups in the population, then one would expect that on key environmental issues, certain groups would be more environmentally conscious than other groups. Pollution is one such issue. The Gallup Poll data provide evidence on who in the public sees this as a serious environmental issue. If the new social movements' environmental members come from only certain population groups, then those groups should be the most aware of pollution problems. Failure to find such evidence implies that new social movement members may not be recruited from specific groups, but may come from a cross-section of the population. To test this idea, Canadian Gallup Poll data was analyzed to see if there were differences between age groups, men and women, people with different levels of education, people from different regions of the country, and people who were or were not union members. A series of contingency tables were constructed for each of the four polling years to assess whether perceived pollution problems varied by social group (as defined immediately above).

Between the years 1970 and 1987, the percentage of those interviewed who thought that pollution was a serious problem increased from 87.2 to 95.7 percent. The following graph
Figure 1

Percentage of People Saying Pollution is a Serious Problem
(information taken from Gallup Poll results)

To determine whether there was a difference between men's and women's responses on the question of pollution a serious problem, male and female responses were compared. As well, responses from different age cohorts, education levels, union affiliation and locales were examined. The following tables indicate that education was associated with the greatest amount of variation. In 1970, there was a 4.3 percent difference between the lowest educated and highest educated group. This, however, reduced to a 0.8 percent difference in 1987. The following tables provide the results to the question concerning whether pollution is a serious problem.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>AGE</th>
<th>21-29</th>
<th>30-39</th>
<th>40-49</th>
<th>50+</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Pollution is:</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Serious problem</td>
<td>98.1</td>
<td>98.5</td>
<td>96.5</td>
<td>98.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Not serious</td>
<td>1.9</td>
<td>3.5</td>
<td>3.5</td>
<td>2.0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>AGE</th>
<th>21-29</th>
<th>30-39</th>
<th>40-49</th>
<th>50+</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Pollution is:</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Serious problem</td>
<td>98.8</td>
<td>98.7</td>
<td>98.3</td>
<td>98.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Not serious</td>
<td>1.2</td>
<td>1.3</td>
<td>1.7</td>
<td>1.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sex</td>
<td>Males</td>
<td>Females</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>---------------------------</td>
<td>-------</td>
<td>---------</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Pollution is:</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Serious problem</td>
<td>96.6</td>
<td>98.1</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Not serious</td>
<td>3.4</td>
<td>1.9</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Gallup Poll Results - 1987**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Sex</th>
<th>Males</th>
<th>Females</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Pollution is:</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Serious problem</td>
<td>98.7</td>
<td>98.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Not serious</td>
<td>1.2</td>
<td>1.6</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
### Table 8

**Education Groupings**

**Gallup Poll Results - 1970**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Education Level</th>
<th>less than Gr. 8</th>
<th>some H.S.</th>
<th>H.S.grad</th>
<th>Post 2nd</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Pollution is:</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Serious problem</td>
<td>95.7</td>
<td>96.4</td>
<td>97.8</td>
<td>100.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Not serious</td>
<td>4.4</td>
<td>3.6</td>
<td>2.2</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Gallup Poll Results - 1987**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Education Level</th>
<th>less than Gr. 8</th>
<th>some H.S.</th>
<th>H.S.grad</th>
<th>Post 2nd</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Pollution a serious problem</td>
<td>98.3</td>
<td>98.8</td>
<td>99.1</td>
<td>98.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Not serious</td>
<td>1.6</td>
<td>1.2</td>
<td>.8</td>
<td>1.8</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Table 9
Locale Groupings
Gallup Poll Results - 1970

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Locale</th>
<th>Farm</th>
<th>Rural</th>
<th>Urban</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Pollution is:</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Serious problem</td>
<td>96.1</td>
<td>94.8</td>
<td>98.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Not serious</td>
<td>3.9</td>
<td>5.2</td>
<td>2.0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Gallup Poll Results - 1987

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Locale</th>
<th>Farm</th>
<th>Rural</th>
<th>Urban</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Pollution is:</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Serious problem</td>
<td>94.0</td>
<td>95.6</td>
<td>96.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Not serious</td>
<td>6.1</td>
<td>4.4</td>
<td>4.0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Table 10
Union Affiliation Groupings
Gallup Poll Results - 1970

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Union Affiliation</th>
<th>Union</th>
<th>Non-union</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Pollution is:</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Serious problem</td>
<td>97.9</td>
<td>97.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Not serious</td>
<td>2.1</td>
<td>2.9</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Union Affiliation</th>
<th>Union</th>
<th>Non-union</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Pollution is:</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Serious problem</td>
<td>99.3</td>
<td>98.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Not serious</td>
<td>.7</td>
<td>1.5</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The time series data indicate that over the period from 1970 to the mid-1980's awareness or perception of environmental problems was not isolated in any specific grouping. Consciousness of the problem cut across social groups as defined by age, sex, education, locale and union membership. While this does not address the issue of social movements directly, it does imply that since the perception of environmental problems is not the preserve of any one group, then all groups are equally available as potential recruits for the new social movements.
Angus Reid Environmental Poll

The following table summarizes the data provided in sixty tables which were analysed from the 1989 Angus Reid poll.

Table 11
Angus Reid Survey Data

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Attitudes/Activities</th>
<th>Young</th>
<th>Educated</th>
<th>Higher Income</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Personal activities</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>seeks out eco purchases</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>+</td>
<td>+</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>eco transit</td>
<td>+</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>avoid styrofoam</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>+</td>
<td>+</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>separate garbage</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>+</td>
<td>+</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>buys unbleached paper</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>+</td>
<td>+</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Political activities</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>would support new party</td>
<td>+</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>joined eco group</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>+</td>
<td>+</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>donated money to eco causes</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>+</td>
<td>+</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>written letters</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>+</td>
<td>+</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>attended rallies</td>
<td>+</td>
<td>+</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Support for gov't initiatives</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2x park land</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>laws for garbage separation</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>tax breaks for eco products</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>control on packaging</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>jail terms for polluters</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>support pesticide ban</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Willing to pay for</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$250 for better sewage treatment</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>+</td>
<td>+</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10% energy tax</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>+10% for eco packaging</td>
<td>++</td>
<td>+</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>+$1000 for eco car</td>
<td>+</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>+</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>+50% for safer garbage disposal</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>+</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>+$.05 for eco gas</td>
<td>++</td>
<td>+</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Key: + small differences across independent variable (i.e., age, education, or income); ++ substantial difference across independent variable; - no difference between groups as defined by independent variable.
While no specific information was available on type of employment, income level was considered as a possible indicator of class. The key provided in the footnote to Table 11 explains how the data are summarized.

**Are the Environmentalists Drawn From Younger Cohorts?**

**Personal Activities**

Young people do not stand out as undertaking personal activities which favour the environment any more than do other age groups except in one case which is related to environmentally friendly travel. (The evidence for this is that only a single plus sign appears under the "Young" category of Table 11). It refers to ecologically friendly transit and suggests that young people are slightly more supportive of this than are older age groups.

Since the group -- 18 to 24 year olds -- is the group least likely to be able to afford other types of travel, it is difficult to suggest that this one result indicates more environmentally friendly choices compared to those made by other age groups. In other words, the decision may be economic rather than environmental.

**Political activities**

Young people (under 34) indicate a very slight inclination to support a new political party and to attend rallies. They were no more likely than other age categories to be involved in other activities such as joining environmental groups, donating
money, or writing letters. In fact, the 45 to 50 year olds were the most likely to write letters and lobby for change.

**Government initiatives**

No age group showed an increased tendency to support environmentally friendly government initiatives.

**Willingness to pay**

The young were more willing to pay for environmental solutions. They were in favour of doing this in 3 of the 6 areas questioned -- 10% increase for environmentally friendly packaging, increases of $1,000 for environmentally friendly cars, and $.05 more for safer gas. No age-related differences were shown for the other areas.

**Are The Environmentalists More Highly Educated?**

**Personal activities**

Education did standout as being higher for those undertaking more environmentally friendly activities in all areas except those related to environmentally friendly travel. This is evidence that some personal forms of environmental activism are related to schooling.

**Political activities**

Again, the more highly educated were more likely to take part in political activities such joining environmental groups, donating money, writing letters, and attending rallies. They were not, however, more likely to support a new political party.
Support of government initiatives

The higher educated were no more likely to support government initiative to "help the environment" than others with less education. In fact, all groups examined were in the high 70's and 80's as far as the percentage willing to support these initiatives. This high level of support shows one of the problems in using environmentally friendly attitude questions in making distinctions when looking at what are described as "motherhood" issues. Everyone is supportive.

Willingness to pay

In three of the six questions related to willingness to pay for environmental improvements, the more highly educated showed a slightly more favourable inclination to pay. No differences were shown for increases related to an energy tax, environmentally friendlier cars, or safer garbage disposal.

Are the Environmentalists Drawn From a Higher Income Group?

The original objective was to find an indicator of employment -- whether the person was in the production, service or marginally employed sector. Since there were no questions in this survey related to employment, we looked at income level to see if there was a relationship between more environmentally friendly leanings and income levels.

Personal activities

The results here were consistent with the education results. Higher income groups were more likely to make the more environmentally friendly choices in all areas but transportation.
Political activities

Again the results seem to follow those related to education with the higher income group more likely to join environmental groups, donate money, and write letters.

Support of government initiatives

No differences among income groups were apparent. All groups were strongly supportive of government initiatives.

Willingness to pay

The willingness to pay for environmental initiatives does not follow the education trends as closely as for other questions. Three areas receive more support -- better sewage treatment, $1,000 more for an environmentally friendly car, and 50% more for safer garbage disposal. No firm conclusions could be made about whether those who could pay more, would be more supportive of financial solutions.

Summary

In conclusion, these polling data do not provide strong support for the argument that environmentalism is an issue of only selected social groups. On both attitudinal and behavioural dimensions there are only minor differences between social groups. In the Angus Reid poll, highly educated respondents were more personally and politically involved in environmental issues, and were more willing to pay for ecological friendly practices, but the differences by education were not large.
Personal Interviews With Environmental Leaders

To learn more specific information about the makeup and goals of the environmental movement in B.C., telephone interviews were conducted with 23 people actively involved in different environmental organizations across the province (See Appendix 2). The results of these interviews are presented in four sections: composition of membership, types of issues addressed by organizations, methods of protest and types of activities engaged in, and the group's perceived role in environmental change.

Composition - Sex, Age, Education and Employment

Of the 23 completed interviews, 11 respondents thought that their organization's membership reflected the general makeup of society. "Covers/includes all sectors," "just as diverse as society," "some of everything" or "representative" were frequent responses to the question concerning the age, economic status, education, sex or professions of members. This "full representation" was highly valued, as reflected in statements such as "...that's one good thing about the organization -- it covers the whole range; rich to poor, young to old." This diversity was a feature which certain organizations actively attempted to encourage and promote. The B.C. Environmental Network was particularly concerned with the involvement of rural members and had built into its structure economic incentives to encourage members in outlying areas to participate in workshops, conferences and meetings. Of the fourteen persons on the B.C. Environmental Network Board of Directors, only two were from the
Lower Mainland, the most heavily populated area in B.C. The rest were from other areas in the province. A number people representing organizations said that they attracted couples and families as members and as such had a range of age and sex groups represented.

Sex

The four respondents who did have a sense of selectivity in membership said they might have slightly more women in their membership than men. An explanation offered by one person involved with a recycling group in Kamloops whose group was made up mostly of women (from "all walks of life") was that it is women who have the most influence on what comes into and out of homes. The Alliance Youth representative, an organization for high school students, thought that about 70% of its membership was young women. The explanation offered in this case was that the 16 to 17 year old males were perhaps more "into sports." One organization (Downtown Eastside Residents Association) mentioned a bias toward male membership and added that this was likely because of the demographic characteristics of the community which had a major proportion of people on fixed income and a large disabled population.

Age

Several organizations indicated that their group attracted certain age groups: 1 - under 20, 7 - 20 and 30's, 5 - over 40's, 3 - includes seniors. The Environmental Youth Alliance expectedly included high school students, mostly 16 and 17 year olds from across the country. Membership was expected to be
transient and this was seen as an opportunity for youth to move on as they aged to influence "society in general" in environmental issues.

The West Coast Environmental Law Association thought that their organization was mostly between 25 and 45 years of age. DERA, the downtown east side Vancouver residents association, had an average age over 50 which was explained as part of the demography of the area. Proterra's membership was mostly in their 30's, while Friends of Strathcona's core members were primarily over 40.

Education

Five of twenty-three interviewees responded that there might be a tendency toward higher education. SPEC, a Vancouver organization of 650 members, was described as mostly well educated and middle to high income, 50/50 men and women, students as well as professionals, and primarily between the ages of 20 to 50. Anawim, another Vancouver organization made up of mostly urban members (70% of their members were from the Lower Mainland), thought that their membership was "tilted toward higher education."

Of the 23 people interviewed who were in leadership positions, 20 had had some university education including law, medical, or doctoral degrees. This evidence would indicate that people associated with the environmental movement, the leadership specifically, have higher education levels than the general public.
Employment

While 11 of the 23 respondents thought that their organization's membership represented the general makeup of society, only 3 of those interviewed who were in leadership positions were or had been employed in the production sector. Their employment was primarily in the service sector or the arts.

Issues

The literature which supports the premise of a new type of social movement in the post-1960s period describes the issues addressed by new social movements as inclined toward quality of life concerns rather than distribution of wealth. As well, new social movements are said to have an emphasis on values -- values which have the appearance of cross-class concerns and the common good as contrasted to issues stemming from material, economic and distribution issues.

To determine how closely this characterizes the issues addressed by B.C. environmental organizations, questions related the reasons for the movement's start-up, as well questions on the ongoing concerns of the organization, were asked during interviews.

In the majority of cases the organizations were started as a result of a perceived threat which participants did not see any other way of addressing. The threats included such issues as the possible destruction of the West Coast Trail, mining in Strathcona Park, destruction of grizzly bear habitat, destruction
of the Amazon rain forests, the possible end of a moratorium on uranium mining, the launch of plastic milk bottles onto the market, expansion of a landfill site or the building of incinerators, the lack of recycling education and facilities, possible destruction of parks, planned nuclear testing, pesticide spraying without public notice, mining which would "populate" and bring roads to a wilderness river area, excessive pollution, and the energy shortage of the 1970's.

In several cases, the respondent described the "threat" in a very personal context. "The city sprayed my property without warning - and my child's wading pool was out front......even though they knew the chemicals became more toxic in water." "The Tat will no longer be the greatest wilderness river in North America"....from a river rafter. "I've seen what happened in Europe and there's no reason to make the same mistake here," from a wildlife photographer about forest practices. In these cases, the initial thrust was a personal threat to something they valued which then was viewed and expressed as a community issue related to the protection and preservation of natural values - water, food, wildlife, wilderness and/or forests.

Several organizations grew out of other pilot initiatives or were spinoffs from other groups. For example, Anawim - an organization targeting church audiences - grew out of a coffee house at the World Council of Churches held in Vancouver in 1984. The experience of working on the coffee house during an international conference encouraged the founders to continue to help networking within the churches with people interested in
justice, environment, and peace issues. West Coast Environmental Law also was an outgrowth from another initiative -- a law students association at UBC in the 1970's.

Two of the groups interviewed had their roots as initiatives of governments -- one federal, the other municipal. The British Columbia Environmental Network was established following a recommendation of a government study on how to best communicate (both ways) with environmental groups in Canada. A national network was recommended and established with federal funding. Subsequently, provincial networks were also established.

In no interview did the concept of distribution of resources come up. The verbs most often used to describe the goals and objectives were protect, conserve and preserve. These goals were seen as cutting across class lines. There was no sense that class was an organizing principle for any of the groups.

Activities and Methods of Protest

Public Education

During the interviews, people were asked about the activities of their organization as they related to the issues with which they were concerned. Without exception, all mentioned undertaking activities which were related to education. Reference was made to the education of the public, education of themselves (this was especially emphasized by most groups), and education of the politicians, government and industry. The specific ways which education and awareness were promoted were through research, publications, newsletters, teaching kits, speakers
bureaus, journals, press releases, mall displays, school talks, surveys, letters to editors, workshops and conferences.

A number of groups had full time research staff (West Coast Environmental Law, Western Canada Wilderness Committee, and Greenpeace) while others studied issues using part time employees or volunteers. A number of groups expressed a sense a pride in their "professionalism" or sophistication. Comments were made that when they called for meetings or telephoned officials, they were taken seriously because of their credible background. Several interviewees mentioned that it was important to try to be apolitical and "safe to talk to." For the West Coast Environmental Law Association it was crucial to have well founded and researched problem analysis with suggestions for viable alternatives and solutions.

Advocacy

A number of groups said that advocacy was definitely an aspect of their work. Lobbying, signing of petitions, and writing to politicians was one avenue they took. Others emphasized their desire to be "well placed" on various government committees or advisory councils. There was a perception that one criterion in achieving this was a well-researched and credible "professional" approach.

Different "within group" approaches to protesting were evident in the Sierra Club. Some of its "younger" members thought that sitting in front of a government minister's door was an appropriate way to get action while others thought that this was not a meaningful way to gain support for their views.
Greenpeace also included those who felt direct action and publicity "stunts" were appropriate, as well as those who took a more "working with" approach. A majority of organizations emphasized participation in the public consultation process and encouraged members to attend public meetings, write to their political representatives and talk to other members of their communities.

A few of the groups commented that recreational tours and events were major activities which they tried to promote. This was viewed as a means to educate people in the issues they were addressing. A number of people said that wilderness or outdoor experiences had been the triggers for their own change in values and world view (e.g. Youth Alliance).

Working with other environmental or citizen groups was emphasized by most groups. This networking was facilitated by formal and informal federations, coalitions, and alliances. Annual conferences, newsletters and computer linkages were a few of the means of communication. In the case of Greenpeace, it was emphasized that some issues did not lend themselves to "coalition work." For example, in certain cases where they have a non-negotiable "bottom line" (e.g. zero discharge), it would not be appropriate to work in a coalition settling for the "lowest common denominator."

Direct Action

When possible, most groups interviewed said they undertook direct action to assist in dealing problems they were concerned about. Examples of their actions included the setting up of
recycling depots, organizing hazardous waste pick ups, stream enhancement, and trail maintenance in park area.

The people interviewed were very action oriented as indicated by statements and slogans such as "For change to come ... we can't just sit back. We have to go out and actively make change" or "If not I, who? If not now, when?" Groups interviewed strongly attempted to reach the public and "working with the government" was positively valued.

Civil Disobedience

Two groups, Greenpeace and Friends of Strathcona, have used civil disobedience as a method of protest. In the case of the Strathcona Park blockade in 1989, it was decided that civil disobedience was the only thing left to do. Friends of Strathcona grew out of a 30 year struggle by the owner of the Strathcona Lodge to have mining stopped in Strathcona Park. In February 1986, he was dying of cancer and asked a couple of his friends to take over the fight. From the initial group of 10 who met regularly, the group peaked at a membership of about 2000 sympathizers during the blockade. The core group was made up of mostly over 40 year old well-placed professionals -- doctors, lawyers -- people who were not at all "fringe," as stated by the person interviewed, nor people who would consider breaking the law easily. The issue grew to become not merely a matter of mining in the park but one of the violation of human rights. After working "through the system" -- which involved obtaining support from all local councils for the government to follow through on their original commitment to undertake public
hearings. In January 1988, the government of B.C. signed an agreement with the mining company. The Friends of Strathcona concluded that the institution of government had failed and knew of no other action. Preparation for the blockade included studying civil disobedience methods and taking part in workshops which taught people how not to lose their tempers and how to respond to officials. Agreements were made on a very strict code of behaviour which would be followed during the blockade. In one workshop held three days before the actual blockade, RCMP were asked to participate. The role playing and a greater appreciation of the issues resulted in difficulties for the RCMP when they were called in to arrest the protesters later in the week. When called, many did not show up or were reported to be at a basketball game. As a result of the blockade, 64 people were arrested and ten people spent eight days in jail.

None of the groups interviewed condoned tree spiking and other such "sabotaging" or illegal activities. A number of people were quite critical of this approach and thought it hurt rather than helped the cause.

Roles in Environmental Change

Public Education and Influence

Of the 23 groups interviewed, all respondents included education as an important role they had in bringing about environmental changes. Many emphasized that their own education was of primary importance but that their activities spread out to include the education of the general public as well as government
and political officials. Education was seen as the crucial factor in bringing about change. A stated belief was that education of the public would mobilize them to demand changes from the politicians.

Part of Political Process or "Working With" Approach

About a quarter of the organizations took their role as educators further and saw themselves as an active part of the political process. For them, membership on commissions and advisory boards as well as participation in public hearings and various consultative processes was seen as their role.

Watchdog and Advocacy Roles

Several groups saw their role in society as a monitor, watchdog or critic of government and industry. Their responsibility was to expose and publicize the consequence of certain actions and to pressure politicians into making appropriate changes. Some saw themselves as the catalysts in any positive change.

"Emancipation project"

No group mentioned a particular political party affiliation. Three groups mentioned that many of their members were probably supporters of the New Democratic Party but that for them to be effective (as broad based as possible) they tried to remain apolitical in their arguments. Several groups lobbied politicians and carried on a dialogue with elected officials, but no groups expressed desire for a new political party.
In-Depth, Specifically Focused Interviews

Five members of different environmental groups were interviewed in depth to determine their perceptions of:

1. the age, education and employment profile of their membership,

2. which sector(s) of society would benefit from their activities, (i.e. whether they saw their activities as benefitting society as a whole or whether benefits would accrue to specific classes or sectors), and

3. whether they placed their activities as being outside regulated political process and party politics.

The people interviewed were key leaders from groups across the province of British Columbia. The target audience of the selected groups was the general public. Any group with an apparent bias toward a particular sector, eg. women, youth, seniors, or employment group, was not chosen.

Age

Only one of the five people interviewed described their organization as being made up of mostly young people (under thirty years old). This person was also quick to add that two of their most active members were in their late forties and sixties. The others interviewed described their membership as crossing a broad age spectrum including young people and students as well as seniors and retired people.

Education

Four of the five people interviewed described their
membership as being fairly well educated while the other person interviewed thought that their membership was drawn from all walks of life and could not possibly be categorized.

Employment

Three of the five people interviewed described their membership as having representation from various types of employment as well as those outside the labour market such as seniors, homemakers and students. One group was described as having lots of entrepreneurs, and lots of "government park workers," as well as retired people. Another said that they had "everything" -- fishermen, "forestry types," loggers, mill workers, and lots of people in the service sector. The other two organizations, which happened to be in more urban centres, described their membership as "tending" to more associated with the service sector, while the other organization, which required a lot of its member time, was said to have a higher proportion of unemployed, students and homemakers.

Cross-class nature of issues

Without exception the people interviewed described their struggles as being for the benefit of all, including future generations. One organization admitted to a perception in their geographical area that they were an "exclusive" group and remarked that they were developing strategies to try to overcome this perception and to get across their view that the issues they were addressing were of critical importance to all. Another qualified their answer by adding that they saw their issues as being for the benefit of all but that others had a different
One person interviewed, while describing the issues as cross-class, did add that if anything they would be more aligned with the labour movement. In fact, they saw the labour and environmental movements as moving closer together and being inseparable as it became more evident that some of their long term interests converged -- and seemed different from those of the owning class. Another talked about how labour was concerned just as much with health issues (eg. for the mill workers and their families who may also depend on healthy fisheries, clean air and water) as with jobs.

Protest methods

Each representative interviewed stressed public education, letter writing to newspapers and politicians, and talking to municipal, provincial and federal government representatives as the most important activities.

None of the groups indicated support for "one party" or supported "direct action" methods advocated by some groups. None of the groups condoned tree spiking. The consistent theme was to help to "change the system" through education, cooperation, and lobbying politicians. Indeed, they seemed dedicated to the consultative political process. While not without frustration. The underlying assumption was that the solutions were political and that a rational, widespread campaign would somehow help to bring about the necessary changes.
Chapter 5

Discussion and Conclusions

This study has attempted to determine whether evidence gathered from the British Columbia environmental movement supports the suggested profile of a new social movement as articulated by one of many new social movement theorists, Claus Offe. Rather than use empirical evidence to examine all of new social movement claims, he has been chosen to examine in detail. Offe continues as one of the leading European social theorists, and so focussing on his work is to address a central figure in contemporary social thought.

Specifically, the characteristics of new social movement members were examined - age, education level and type of employment; the "cross-class" nature of issues; and the methods of protest employed.

Age

The data do not support the idea that the movement is made up primarily of young people. However, most of the new social movement leaders interviewed, some paid and some unpaid, were in their thirties or forties, (with a few older and younger leaders). The data generally demonstrate typical population age distributions, with various age cohorts perhaps more active in selected aspects of environmental activities than in others. For example, the 35 to 45 year old group were the most active in letter writing while the under 30's were more likely to attend
rallies. Many groups targeted or attracted a certain age cohort (eg. youth groups, seniors groups, or families) so any age bias was inherent in the group and could not be extrapolated to the environmental movement as a whole.

School curricula at elementary and high school levels now incorporate more environmental programming, and practices such as recycling, environmentally friendly travel promotion, waste reduction, and tree planting have become commonly accepted. Survey questions posed and examined in this historical period may become "motherhood" issues and environmental attitudes may be so well integrated into formal structures that they would be poor indicators for differentiating between those affiliated or not affiliated with "the environmental movement."

Offe explains how, in a highly mobile society, the young develop bonds with issues in their lives which would be constant. The interview data in this study did not support this "tight and constant bond" idea. Many organizations described how members would be active for a certain time and then "burnout." Often there would be an "active core" of about 5% of the membership, and another 10% that could be counted on for assistance and help. Age was not particularly relevant in defining who would make up either of these two groups.

Education

The interview data, as well as the survey data, weakly support the characterization of a more highly educated person being more likely to be associated with the environmental movement. Offe's explanation that education provides people with
the ability to understand the systemic irrationalities and to formulate and articulate critiques, may be reasonable. However, the majority of those questioned about their own involvement noted that it was triggered by a perceived personal assault such as pesticide spraying in their family's yard or the threat to the wilderness that they valued and enjoyed. This concern then became generalized to society as a whole. However, it could be that education sensitizes people to issues more generally, and personal triggering may be more likely to "motivate" the better educated.

Those in management or leadership positions who were interviewed were drawn from a higher educated group, with several holding masters, doctoral, law, and medical degrees. This is consistent with data from a Dutch study, which found that while the Dutch new social movements were supported by broad segments of the population, their "inner circles are predominantly constituted by segments of the reconceptualized new class -- the young specialists in social and cultural services, and some young administrative specialists in public service."(24)

Employment

The data did not provide a lot of evidence to support the "service" sector argument for general membership. Members were from all sectors - labour, entrepreneurs, government workers, government workers,

teachers, lawyers, doctors, students, housewives and the unemployed and retired. As was the case for age, certain organizations, by nature of their location and mandate, attracted specific employment groups.

The arguments for the service sector imply a distance from dependency on the very practices being protested. However, the data gathered in this study show that many have an understanding that labour has, as some phrased it, "the most to lose from environmental destruction. They are caught between big business and government."

Leadership however, was primarily drawn from professions which were not directly related to the production sector. The majority of the leaders were from teaching, the arts, health care, and government. This finding is consistent with the work of Milbrath who reports that "they (the leadership) tend to be well-educated... and drawn from the upper-middle and upper classes (as is true of most organizations) but general membership of the organizations spreads across the full spectrum of socio-economic status." (25)

Cross-Class Nature of Issues

The data examined in this study most definitely support the characterization of new social movements issues as being about values, preservation and protection of rights for the benefit of all. Note that the "all" is interpreted in the movement as all

25 Milbrath, 72.
humans or even more frequently as the entire earth and its inhabitants and environs. The recurring and repeated comment of "We're all in this together. Let's find solutions now." certainly contrasts to the older social movement theme of "Workers of the world unite." The new concept of working with their "opponents" rather than against them is prevalent. The confrontational aspect of the workers movement with its "us against them" approach is replaced by a desire to work cooperatively and in consultation to find appropriate solutions.

The issues of distribution, when they did come up, were not so much about which people should get what profits from a particular resource, but that all should be able to benefit in the long term in a particular "eco-system." This did, however, necessitate changes which might not be easy for all in the short term. There was little if any analysis given to consequences.

The diversity within the environmental movement becomes most apparent when issues and values are considered. The more "mainstream" sector (as contrasted to the "deep ecologists") views resources as commodities for "sustainable or renewable" use. The environment is viewed as something to be managed or taken care of. The preservation of water quality (for example, the milfoil problem) is seen as a detriment to the tourist industry -- and an economic threat to the area affected. The Tatshenshini River is "the wildest wilderness river" in North America -- building roads for a proposed mine would change the tourist appeal and hurt the wilderness travel business in that area. Another branch, the so called "deep ecologists," are
opposed to this "use for humans," and reject economic arguments for the preservation and protection of nature. This approach does not put humans at the centre, and does not look to "growth" and advances in science for answers. This stream attempts to advance the belief that nature has intrinsic worth -- value which has nothing to do with people. Bio-regions, living more simply, "honouring the earth," these are among the themes promoted. These contrast very strongly with resource conservation and development, integrated resource management, and sustainable development approaches.

Offe's explanation that the by-products of the post-industrial system -- pollution, mass unemployment, and waste -- are not class specific, and as such require cross-class solutions, seems reasonable. However, a number of times the people interviewed indicated that the working class and the poorer classes had more to lose than the middle and upper classes. Several organizations were clearly aware that if there was any alignment, it was with labour that they would align. "If the forests are not protected and better cared for there will be no forests and no jobs." Another emphasized how labour had the "most to lose" since education could follow the jobs, and capital would just move wherever it had to, but the working class was much less mobile and had the biggest stake in the resource debates.

Methods of Protest

Cooperation as contrasted with confrontation was the emerging theme in the majority of "protest" methods. While it is
recognized that labour also works cooperatively with governments at times -- especially under corporatism, for the largest part of history, the labour movement has emphasized confrontation far more than the environment movement. Public education, letter writing, boycotts, and consultation were by far the methods of choice for the organizations studied. Civil disobedience was the final choice in one of the cases studied -- but it was used only when all other "systems" had failed. Tree spiking was criticized by most mainstream organizations and Greenpeace was extremely cautious of the implications of their so called "publicity stunts." People deemed "too radical" were generally asked to leave and were left to either start their own group or go it alone.

The government has also promoted and supported this "consultative" approach. While the government's activities are sometimes criticized as merely "public relations activities," they have provided the structure and framework for a consultative approach. This has served the purpose of defusing and managing conflict or educating the public about decisions that have already been made.

Suggestions for Future Research

Several directions for further research have developed from this study. These are suggested by the following questions.

1. There are over 400 environmental groups in British Columbia alone. Why so many? What do they have in common? Could their ends be achieved in another way? How is the apparent
proliferation of new social movement groups, around the general theme of environmentalism, to be explained?

2. While there is a loose network, why have attempts at broad coalitions come to nothing? One such attempt was made with the One Conference in October 1990 at Cultus Lake. No unified direction for future actions was established. Research could be undertaken to explain this result.

3. Where does the scientific community fit in and how is "science" used as a resource by new social movement groups? The government purports that science is the base of its environmental decisions, and yet the environmental movement also claims science as its base. Scientists in universities are supported by government contracts as well as by industry. What role do these scientists play in new social movements?

4. This study noted the cooperative, collaborative approach taken by most conventional environmental groups. How does the post-industrial, capitalist state control and manage protest?

5. The above-average economic status, employment and education of leaders of new social movements is a finding that bears further investigation. Detailed and focused questionnaires may be able to obtain more accurate information.

6. There are cleavages and different arms of environmentalism -- the deep ecologists as opposed to the shallow ecologists. How are these branches different or similar with respect to ideology, social composition, issues and methods?
Implications

The evidence does not lead one to expect that environmentalism is a social movement that is about to embark on a radical transformation of society. The evidence supports the view that the environmental movement is primarily reformist, not terribly concerned with "overthrowing the system." Linkages are primarily through communication networks as opposed to organization links. While "working together" is not the norm, coalitions are formed -- generally around specific issues such as the Georgia Strait Coalition. The major goal seems to be to influence changes within government. No particular party is identified as having the monopoly to do this.

Since much of the funding for environmental groups is undependable, sustained endeavours which require a lot of work are difficult. The cycle of extensive commitment and then burnout is not uncommon and also decreases effectiveness.

Protests are generally peaceful, well organized and supported by rational arguments. The basic assumption is that the political systems needs to integrate changes and the role of the movement is to help educate the public and politicians. Activities are, as Offe states, often seen as piecemeal, pluralist, and demands and views of individual organizations focus on very selective issues.

The evidence of this study concerning the infrastructure, composition, and goals of the environmental movement do not lead to the prediction that this movement has the potential of being
the vanguard in leading other new social movements in a united project for the transformation of society.
APPENDIX A

Introduction Letter Sent to Persons Interviewed

Dear

A research team at UBC is compiling a profile of the environmental movement in British Columbia to better understand its socio-economic makeup, its goals and methods, and its structure as a social movement. We are writing to you because information on your organization is required to complete this research.

The project has been initiated under the direction of Dr. Neil Guppy, Department of Sociology and Anthropology in collaboration with ......... and has the support of the university.

We would like to ask you a number of questions related to your organization and its members. It is estimated that the interview would take 15 to 20 minutes.

A member of the study team will be calling you soon to provide further information and answer any questions you may have. We look forward to your participation.

Yours truly,
## APPENDIX B

### Summary of Twenty Three Interviews:
Composition of Membership

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<thead>
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<th>Group</th>
<th>Same as society</th>
<th>Sex</th>
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<th>Economics</th>
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## APPENDIX B (continued)

**Summary of Twenty Three Interviews:**

**Composition of Membership**

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Bibliography


O'Riordan, T. Environmentalism. London: Pion, 1981.


