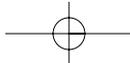
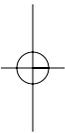
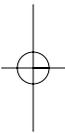


II

SPECIFIC CHALLENGES TO SOCIAL CHANGE PHILANTHROPY



5

Foundations and the Environmental Movement: Priorities, Strategies and Impact

Robert J. Brulle and J. Craig Jenkins

I think funders have a major role to play. And I know there are resentments in the (environmental) community toward funders doing that. And, too bad. We're players, they're players."

—Donald Ross, Director of the Rockefeller Family Fund
1992 Environmental Grantmakers Association Meeting¹

INTRODUCTION

Foundations have a long history of contributing to the environmental movement. As early as 1914, grants from Andrew Carnegie, Henry Ford, and George Eastman helped establish the Permanent Wildlife Protection Fund. In the post-World War II era, foundations have played a major role in the founding, maintenance, and development of U.S. environmental organizations. One of the earliest foundations to make systematic contributions for environmental issues was the Andrew W. Mellon Foundation. Its predecessor, the Old Dominion Foundation, established and funded the Conservation Foundation in 1948. The Ford Foundation joined in this effort in 1965, when its Resources and Environment Program became a major foundation activity. The Rockefeller Foundation embarked on its ecology program in 1969 when its trustees added the environment as one of six subjects of program interest.² Since that time, a large number of foundations have added environmental issues to their funding priorities. By 1999, it was estimated that there were more than 5,300 foundation grants over \$10,000 made to support environmental and animal welfare, including environmental advocacy organizations, animal shelter, zoos, museums, and educational institutions.³ These contributions total over \$555 million.

Our concern here is foundation funding for environmental movement organizations, which we estimate constitutes about a eighth of this total.

This level of financial support has had a major impact on the priorities and strategies of the U.S. environmental movement. These resources have been critical to founding new environmental movement organizations, strengthening formal political advocacy for environmental policies, and promoting public awareness of environmental issues. Foundation funding also has a broader societal and political impact. By encouraging specific environmental discourses and types of environmental movement organizations, foundation support has also limited the development of the environmental movement by channeling resources to specific environmental discourses and types of organization. Our underlying premise is that social movements with a strong membership base have greater staying power and potential impact. Such “strong movements” also contribute to a more vital and democratic civil society.⁴ This builds on the idea of civil society as an autonomous site outside of the imperatives of the market economy and formal state organizations in which citizens can freely associate with one-another, develop an ethical life and exercise their citizenship through the formation of social movements.⁵ The autonomy and democratic nature of environmental groups is thus ultimately important both for making the transition to an ecologically sustainable society and for the renewal of social and political institutions.

There is a fundamental paradox underlying foundation patronage. On the one hand, the short-term effectiveness of the environmental movement often depends on access to formal resources. Foundation support is vital in providing these. On the other hand, foundation support channels the environmental movement into specific discourses and organizational structures that limit the movement’s long-term impact. Many have noted the underlying tension and conflicts between foundations, which are committed to “doing good” within their own program definitions, and social movements, which are committed to bringing about social change.⁶ We argue that this is based on an underlying conflict over political visions as well as organizational conflict and competition. We start with a general discussion of the impact of foundation patronage on social movement strategy. Drawing on systematic data on foundation grants over the past three decades, we analyze the priorities of foundations and the impact of their funding on the environmental movement. We then conclude with some recommendations about how foundation funding could promote a stronger environmental movement and thus contribute to the transition to an ecologically sustainable society.

FOUNDATIONS AND CIVIL SOCIETY

Numerous scholars have raised general concerns about the viability of contemporary civil society as a site for effective citizenship and democratic ac-

tion. Civic associations have been increasingly transformed from traditional participatory and democratic forms into professional, oligarchic, and non-participatory organizations.⁷ One of the earliest recognitions of this shift was McCarthy and Zald's seminal 1973 essay on the rise of professional movement organizations.⁸ In contrast with "classic" membership-based movement organizations in which the direct beneficiaries provided the resources (largely volunteer labor), these new professional movement organizations were characterized by: (1) a salaried leadership devoted full-time to the movement; (2) a large proportion of resources originating outside the aggrieved group that the movement claims to represent; (3) a very small or nonexistent membership base or a nominal "paper" membership; (4) attempts to impart the image of 'speaking for a potential constituency'; and (5) attempts to influence policy toward that same constituency.

This argument has been elaborated with scholars discussing the development of "mass organizations"⁹ and "protest businesses"¹⁰ to refer to political advocacy organizations based on mass mailing appeals and the use of marketing techniques with no structures for membership participation. Allan Cigler and Burdett Loomis¹¹ distinguish between "grassroots" groups, which have genuine membership and are participatory, and "Astroturf" groups, which have the appearance of membership but are in fact run completely by the professional staff and view members strictly as financial contributors. In these professional movement organizations, there is not an organizational structure through which these so-called members can influence organizational policies and practices. The only mechanism by which the "membership" can influence the organization is to quit. While these organizations are often quite effective in securing incremental gains from formal political lobbying and litigation, they would be politically much stronger and make more of a contribution to ecological sustainability if they had greater citizen support and face-to-face participation that would foster changes in individual beliefs and practices. This would enhance their credibility as representatives of the general public and contribute to changes in the environmentally relevant activities of the general public. Thus, while professional movement organizations contribute to small incremental changes, they are limited as a vehicle for creating an ecologically sustainable society.¹²

Foundation patronage has been central to the rise of such professional or "Astroturf" organizations. In his study of national interest organizations, Jack Walker found that an overwhelming majority received foundation start-up money to hire a professional staff, secure a nonprofit charter, and initiate professional fund-raising.¹³ While some eventually developed a membership base (e.g., Common Cause), most relied on direct mail contributors and foundation grants to sustain their finances. Robert Brulle found that foundation grants make up between 22 and 29 percent of the total income of the major national environmental organizations, the majority of which had been in existence for a decade or more.¹⁴ Elizabeth Boris and Jeff Krehely found

that the same pattern prevails among political advocacy organizations in other issue areas as well, suggesting this is a societal trend.¹⁵

Several writers have argued that, as a result, foundation patronage steers social movements into specific discourses, organizational strategies, and tactics. A popular image is direct co-optation, in which foundations offer support in exchange for the moderation of movement goals and tactics. While some direct co-optation does occur, the general pattern is far more complex and is better described as “channeling.” Instead of explicit directives, foundations largely work indirectly by promoting organizational competition and selecting organizations that fit their priorities. A typical sequence is that citizens first mobilize around an environmental threat, which generates movement activity. This stimulates foundation interest in the problem and the creation of funding programs with conditions that require organizations to take up issues or engage in activities that they would otherwise not have done. Foundation priorities then come to the fore in terms of the movement discourses and styles of organizations that are viewed as more legitimate and worthy of support. Eventually, over time, foundation funding promotes the development of specific types of movement organizations and neglects others, in effect channeling the movement into specific discourses and organizational styles. As Dowie describes the process: “Foundations . . . have been meeting to decide where the environmental movement should be going. They create multimillion-dollar mega-projects and invite organizations to apply for grants to activate them.”¹⁶

Channeling operates on three major aspects of movements. The most important is discourse, that is, the general framing of the environmental issue and how to go about addressing it. As Roelofs argues, foundation support is generally premised on a liberal “individual rights” conception of citizenship that treats all contentious issues as resolvable by the political and legal representation of individual citizens.¹⁷ The redistribution of power, collective mobilization, and participatory democracy lie outside of this liberal discourse. Table 5.1 shows the major discourses in the contemporary environmental movement. In his study of the major environmental organizations, Brulle shows that the mainstream liberal environmental organizations—those working from the discourses of conservation, preservation, and liberal environmentalism—receive significant foundation support.¹⁸ The more radical organizations that emphasize change in the structure of power—those working from environmental justice, deep ecology, and ecofeminist viewpoints—receive little support. We examine this further below by looking at the distribution of foundation grants. By funding movement organizations with particular discourses, foundations in effect promote particular ideologies.

A second aspect is the type of governance structure that characterizes the movement organization. In general, foundations fund professional advocacy

Table 5.1. U.S. Environmental Movement Discourses

WILDLIFE MANAGEMENT: The scientific management of ecosystems can ensure stable populations of wildlife. This wildlife population can be seen as a crop from which excess populations can be sustainably harvested in accordance with the ecological limitations of a given area. This excess wildlife population can be used for human recreation in sport hunting.

CONSERVATION: Natural resources should be technically managed from a utilitarian perspective to realize the greatest good for the greatest number of people over the longest period of time.

PRESERVATION: Nature is an important component in supporting both the physical and spiritual life of humans. Hence the continued existence of wilderness and wildlife, undisturbed by human action, is necessary.

ENVIRONMENTALISM: Human health is linked to ecosystem conditions. To maintain a healthy human society, ecologically responsible actions are necessary. These actions can be developed and implemented through the use of natural sciences.

DEEP ECOLOGY: The richness and diversity of all life on earth has intrinsic value, and so human life is privileged only to the extent of satisfying vital needs. Maintenance of the diversity of life on earth mandates a decrease in human impacts on the natural environment and substantial increases in the wilderness areas of the globe.

ENVIRONMENTAL JUSTICE: Ecological problems occur because of the structure of society and the imperatives this structure creates for the continued exploitation of nature. Hence, the resolution of environmental problems requires fundamental social change.

ECOFEMINISM: Ecosystem abuse is rooted in androcentric concepts and institutions. Relations of complementarity rather than superiority between culture/nature, human/nonhuman, and male/female are needed to resolve the conflict between the human and natural worlds.

ECOTHEOLOGY: Nature is God's creation, and humanity has a moral obligation to keep and tend the Creation. Hence, natural and unpolluted ecosystems and biodiversity need to be preserved.

organizations, which are typically staff-dominated centralized organizations with little or no participatory structures. Craig Jenkins and Craig Eckert found that, although the civil rights movement originally developed out of the mobilization of churches and community organizations, foundation contributions to the movement went overwhelmingly to the professional movement organizations, such as the Urban League, the NAACP Legal Defense and Education Fund, and the Voter Education Project.¹⁹ Little of the money went to membership groups such as the Southern Christian Leadership Council. The major exception was the NAACP, which was internally divided between a moderate professional leadership and an often more militant membership. In this case, foundation patronage strengthened the professional staff of the

NAACP, encouraging it to become more involved in service delivery and formal political advocacy and to neglect membership organizing and activities.

A third aspect is movement tactics. By funding organizations that engage exclusively in institutional tactics, foundations channel movement activities into routine forms of political action. In his study of foundation funding for the civil rights movement, Herbert Haines coins the term “radical flank effect” to refer to the process by which “direct action” protest stimulated foundation funding of the nonmilitant organizations, thereby strengthening the political visibility and centrality of the moderates in the movement.²⁰

A central outcome of these processes is the rise of professional movement organizations as the dominant form of political representation. In response to popular mobilization, foundations fund professional organizers to launch new advocacy and technical support organizations to address issues raised by these mobilizations. Professional organizers use direct mail and mass publicity to solicit contributions from thousands of anonymous small donors, which may be necessary to meet the “public participation” requirement for securing more foundation grants. The direct mail donors in effect pay someone else to do the hard and difficult political work needed to bring about social change but otherwise have little direct involvement in the political process. The foundations gain the credit for addressing important public issues and promoting the use of professional, scientific methods for addressing problems. This new model of civic associations is a top-down civic world, oligarchic in structure, based on experts, and funded by foundations and mass mailing appeals. Summarizing these processes, Skocpol argues that this has created “a new civic America largely run by advocates and managers without members.”²¹

METHODS OF ANALYSIS

Do these dynamics apply to the interactions between foundations and the environmental movement? To answer this question, we examined patterns of foundation funding over the past three decades. Specifically, we analyzed all of the grants given by the foundations that are members of the National Network of Grantmakers, plus all foundations identified by movement leaders and other foundations as funding social movements. The National Network of Grantmakers (NNG) is a national association of progressive grant-giving foundations committed to social change and includes most of the private foundations and public charities involved in environmental funding. We supplemented this list with additional social change funders identified in interviews with foundation executives and movement leaders, creating a sample of over three hundred foundations that have funded environmental causes over the past thirty years. These foundations vary from small public

charities and small family foundations to large, well-endowed private foundations, corporate giving programs, community foundations, and a handful of operating foundations. Our grant estimates for 1970–1990 rely on a review of the annual reports and Annual Federal Information Returns (IRS 990) and, for 2000, the Foundation Center Data Base. Because the Foundation Center Data Base is limited to grants of \$10,000 or more, our figures for 2000 underestimate the smaller grants but, nonetheless, provide a suitable comparison base for change over time.

FOUNDATIONS AND THE FUNDING OF THE ENVIRONMENTAL MOVEMENT

As this analysis will show, there remains a vibrant and highly mobilized membership base in the environmental movement. However, it is also clear that foundation funding has strongly encouraged the growth of specific environmental discourses and professional forms of organization. Considering the environmental movement's potential and the changes needed to create an ecologically sustainable society, this funding has had little effect and has in fact blunted the movement's impact. At the same time, foundation funding is not monolithic. Some foundations have funded the more radical environmental discourses and membership associations. We begin the analysis by looking at the overall pattern of environmental philanthropy.

The results are as follows. Table 5.2 shows the number of environmental grants and the amount of these grants in current and constant dollars (i.e., adjusted for inflation) for 1970, 1980, 1990, and 2000 that these organizations made. From a tiny number of twenty grants that contributed \$1.3 million (in 2000 constant dollars) in 1970, funding by the foundations in the sample has grown on the order of four to five times every ten years.

What has been the impact of this funding? Foundation support has been critical to the founding of several of the major national environmental organizations. One key example of this dynamic is found in the activities of the Ford Foundation. In 1969–1970, the Ford Foundation provided the initial

Table 5.2. Growth of Foundation Support for the Environmental Movement, 1970–2000

Year	Number of Grants	Total Amount Given (Millions of Dollars)	Amount (In 2000 \$ - Millions)
1970	20	\$.75	\$1.33
1980	192	\$2.93	\$4.38
1990	652	\$17.62	\$21.07
2000	711	\$71.60	\$71.60

funding to create the Natural Resources Defense Council (NRDC), which was originally conceived by several New York University Law School faculty and students as a public interest law firm.²² In the next few years, Ford's Public Resources and the Environment Program provided support to transform the Environmental Defense Fund, which had been a small nonprofit organization of environmental scientists relying on a cantankerous pro bono attorney to file lawsuits to ban DDT sales on Long Island, into a national environmental law firm and to help the Sierra Club create its Legal Defense Fund, to legally challenge environmentally destructive public works projects in the West.²³ In his study of national advocacy organizations, Jack Walker found that over half received startup support from either foundations or wealthy individuals.²⁴

Foundation funding is also critical to the continued support and operation of existing environmental organizations.²⁵ In a 1992 national survey of environmental organization leaders, these leaders rated the importance of foundation funding as second only in importance to membership contributions.²⁶ Foundation support made up 21 percent of environmental organization funding, which was second only to membership dues, which provided 24 percent of environmental group income.²⁷ Similarly, Robert Brulle²⁸ found that foundation grants were the second largest source of income, making up between 22 and 29 percent of total organizational income. By providing approximately 20 percent of the total funding of the environmental movement, foundations thus play a key role in the maintenance of these organizations.²⁹

Foundation influence is considerably greater than this simple calculus might suggest. Foundations leverage their influence by providing funding for specific projects and monitoring the actions of the grantees. This means that environmental organizations need to develop fundable projects and then meet performance standards defined by the foundation. This can lead to numerous environmental organizations investing resources into the same or similar projects. Second, although membership financial support is often larger in the aggregate, it is typically diffuse, entails episodic contact, and is unlikely to influence organizational programs. Foundation donors are far more strategic in their interactions with environmental leaders, are more likely to intervene to express their preferences about specific projects and initiatives, and, by virtue of controlling larger blocks of money, are better positioned to steer movement programs.

The impact of this resource dependence is evident from the above-mentioned national survey of environmental leaders. Each leader was asked to either agree or disagree with a series of statements on foundations and environmental movement organizations. Almost two-thirds scored foundations as being "unresponsive" to their needs, while only a quarter saw foundations as being "blind" to their power.³⁰ The power of foundations to steer the environmental organizations was also evident in

Snow's focused interviews: "In the privacy of the interviews, many staff leaders were critical of foundations and of the restriction on activities that comes with heavy reliance on 'soft' funding. Some conservation leaders would reject foundation philanthropy entirely if they could figure out a way for their organizations to live without it."³¹ Even for environmental organizations that manage to reduce their financial dependence on foundations, foundations remain a critical source of support and influence over programs and activities. Thus, to ensure a continuing flow of foundation funds, the environmental organization is inclined to follow the expressed desires of a foundation representative. Finally, as noted by Mary Colwell, foundation board members are often on the boards of their major recipient organizations, giving them a direct say in the governance of the movement organization.³²

The foundation funding for the environmental movement is concentrated on its more moderate components. Organizations based in the moderate and reformist discourses of liberal environmentalism, preservation, and conservation received nearly 90 percent of foundation funding of the environmental movement. Table 5.3 shows the distribution of movement grant dollars and the number of grants for each of these environmental discourses in 2000. Liberal environmentalism received around 30 percent and preservation and conservationism together receiving around half. Forty percent of the preservationist funding is for creating land trusts, a capital-intensive method of preservation. The radical environmental discourses that put a priority on transforming the structure of power—the environmental justice and deep ecology movements—each receive less than 2 percent of the total grant money. Ecotheology and ecofeminism, which are the most recently developed discourses, receive a similarly small percentage. The mainstream discourses also receive larger grants, while the environmental justice and deep ecology movements receive the smallest average grants. The cumulative effect of this funding is to advance certain moderate forms of environmentalism

Table 5.3. Foundation Grants by Discourse of Recipient Organization, 2000.

<i>Discursive Frame</i>	<i>Amount of Grants (\$ in Millions)</i>	<i>Distribution of Grant by Amount</i>	<i>Number Grants</i>	<i>Distribution of Grants by Number</i>
Wildlife Management	\$3.63	5.1%	20	2.8%
Conservation	\$8.74	12.2%	61	8.6%
Preservation	\$27.57	38.5%	220	30.9%
Liberal Environmentalism	\$19.89	27.8%	222	31.2%
Environmental Justice	\$1.05	1.5%	43	6.0%
Deep Ecology	\$.84	1.2%	36	5.1%
Ecofeminism	\$.14	.2%	6	.8%
Ecotheology	\$.46	.6%	7	1.0%
Undetermined	\$9.26	12.9%	96	13.5%

and to restrict the development of alternative voices in this movement. As Eve Pell has argued, “by deciding which organizations get money, the grant-makers help set the agenda of the environmental movement and influence the programs that activists carry out.”³³

The foundations also strongly prefer professional movement organizations, which are centralized, based on professional expertise, use institutional tactics, and are seen as more accountable. At its founding, the Ford Foundation promoted the NRDC as “responsible militancy,”³⁴ testifying to its perceived virtues as a professionalized organization. By funding a public interest law firm with a distinctive agenda or a novel policy institute, foundations can also claim credit for contributing to something unique that is unlikely to be financed by other methods. Foundations often view membership organizations as not only difficult to control but also less deserving insofar as they are capable of mobilizing their own resources. These giving priorities are borne out by our analysis. Table 5.4 shows the percentage of foundation grants and funding that have gone to three major types of environmental organizations: (1) membership associations, like the Sierra Club and the National Wildlife Federation; (2) professional advocacy organizations, such as the NRDC and the Environmental Defense Fund, that are involved in litigation and formal political representation; and (3) technical support organizations, such as the Environmental Law Institute or the World Resources Institute, which conduct policy research, coordinate information and publicity, or provide managerial assistance for environmental groups. Membership associations fluctuate between as little as 2 percent up to 20 percent of total grant dollars. Professional advocacy and technical support centers receive the overwhelming majority of foundation grants, ranging between 50 and 90 percent of total foundation funding.

Finally, foundations tend to fund organizations that rely exclusively on institutional tactics. Although contentious protest is often critical to getting a burning issue onto the public agenda and pressuring elites, foundations strongly favor organizations that are “responsible militants.” In 1970, only 5 percent of all grants and 1 percent of all environmental grant money went to organizations that had a history of using protest tactics. By 1980, this increased to 19 percent of grants and 9 percent of grant amounts but then declined by 1990 to less than 9 percent of grants and 3 percent of grant amounts. We lack comparable measures for 2000, but there is no reason to expect this preference for institutional tactics to have changed. Foundations are far more comfortable with groups that engage in lobbying, litigation, and public educational work and shun protest tactics.

The selective use of providing funding to organizations based on their institutional tactics is one means that foundations can use to pressure movement organizations to moderate their political actions. As the forest activist,

Table 5.4. Percentage Distribution of Grants by Organizational Type, 1970–2000

	1970			1980			1990			2000		
	Percentage Grants by Amount	Percent of Grants by Number	Percent of Grants by Amount	Percent of Grants by Amount	Percent of Grants by Number	Percent of Grants by Amount	Percent of Grants by Amount	Percent of Grants by Number	Percent of Grants by Amount	Percent of Grants by Amount	Percent of Grants by Number	
Membership	1.9%	10.0%	16.3%	16.3%	25.5%	11.9%	18.7%	19.6%	20.3%	19.6%	20.3%	
Professional Advocacy	81.1%	60.0%	57.9%	57.9%	43.8%	77.0%	64.92%	32.0%	37.1%	32.0%	37.1%	
Technical Support	17.0%	30.0%	25.8%	25.8%	30.7%	11.1%	16.4%	18.0%	14.9%	18.0%	14.9%	

Tim Hermack, stated: "Foundation money behind a compromise position tempts nonprofits to moderate their hardline stance or risk being left out of the coalition."³⁵ One extreme example, which borders on co-optation, involved the NRDC and the Ford Foundation. In the early startup of the NRDC, the Ford Foundation pressured the organization to abandon an aggressive legal strategy of suing corporations, which resulted in the firing of several of the legal staff and the creation of a screening board controlled by the Ford Foundation for any lawsuits undertaken by the NRDC.³⁶

What is the long-term impact of this foundation funding on the structure of the environmental movement? In terms of the number of environmental organizations, foundation support has promoted steady organizational growth. In 1970, foundation funding was almost entirely concentrated among four major environmental organizations: the Environmental Defense Fund (EDF), which received 35 percent of all foundation funding; the Natural Resources Defense Council (NRDC), which received 10 percent; Scientists Institute for Public Education, which received 15 percent; and the Sierra Club Legal Defense Fund, which garnered 5 percent. By 1980, funding had become slightly more dispersed, with the NRDC receiving only 11 percent, EDF receiving 8.3 percent, Scientists Institute for Public Education 3.1 percent, and the Sierra Club LDF only 2.1 percent. By 1990, however, foundation funding had become more concentrated, with the NRDC picking up 34.1 percent, EDF 8.3 percent, and the Friends of the Earth 7.1 percent. The greatest dispersion of funding occurred between 1990 and 2000. With more than a fivefold increase in funding over that decade, over 427 environmental organizations received foundation grants. The Nature Conservancy was the largest single recipient, receiving 9.8 percent of all funding, followed by the Audubon Society (4.5 percent), the World Wildlife Fund (4.0 percent), Conservation International Foundation (3.4 percent), the Wildlife Conservation Society (3.2 percent), EDF (3.1 percent), and a host of other organizations.

As this analysis shows, the growth of foundation funding has allowed for the continued funding for the traditional recipient organizations, such as NRDC and EDF, while at the same time allowing for the growth of a number of other environmental organizations. Despite this apparent diversification, the distribution of funding continues to follow ideological lines, with organizations in the mainstream discourses and with professionalized structures continuing to receive almost all of the funding. This relationship has been verified through other analyses of the overall funding sources of environmental organizations.³⁷ Mainstream and conventional environmental organizations that use the moderate discourses of conservation, preservation, and environmentalism receive much larger and more numerous grants while, at the same time, the set of environmental funders is steadily growing.

FOUNDATION AGENDAS AND ENVIRONMENTAL FUNDING

Although the overall impact of foundation funding has been conservative, some foundations have funded radical discourses, membership groups, and militant activities. To understand why this occurs, we need to look further at the structure of foundations. In general, foundations are the products of surplus wealth, that is, of accumulated capital that is not needed for normal living or business investment. This surplus wealth is to be used to fund appropriate projects to realize a specific definition of the “public good,” which is given an institutionalized definition through the creation of a permanent bequest. Because the definition of the “public good” is based in the specific definition of the bequest, many argue that institutional philanthropy is based on the interests of the wealthy, and thus it is a vehicle of class domination.³⁸ Others emphasize the importance of expertise and institutional rules, including ideologies of political organization.³⁹ According to the first, the most conservative foundations should be those with the strongest ties to large corporations and wealthy families. According to the second, the more institutionalized foundations should strongly favor organizations that are like themselves in terms of being professionalized and hierarchically organized.

To further our understanding of the dynamics of foundation funding, we examine the organization of the environmental funders. According to the first argument, the most politically conservative funding patterns should exist among foundations that are controlled by wealthy families and that have strong links to the power elite. According to the second argument, the largest and most institutionalized foundations should have a strong preference for funding rationalized organizations. To tap these explanations, we examine six types of foundations: (1) family foundations in which the donor and/or family members control the board and therefore guide grant-giving; (2) institutional foundations in which the donor and family are not present and the board is dominated by corporate leaders, politicians, and social notables; (3) corporate foundations; (4) community foundations, which pool donations from numerous wealthy donors within a metropolitan community; (5) public charities, which accept donations from a broad cross section of the public; and (6) alternative foundations, which include representatives of the movement community on their boards, thereby attempting to reduce the power disparity between donor and donee within the grant-giving process.⁴⁰ The first four should have more conservative giving patterns. Family foundations will be somewhat heterogeneous insofar they respond to the views of wealthy donors and family members, some of whom have adopted particular “causes” as their focus. Corporate foundations should favor projects that fit company public relations needs.⁴¹ Given the influence of the professional staff in institutional foundations, they should favor professional movement organizations. Public charities and alternative foundations should be

the most innovative and willing to take risks by funding a wider variety of projects and activities.

We first look at the relative importance of these types of foundations in environmental grant-giving. Table 5.5 shows that institutional foundations were initially the most important in terms of total grants while family foundations gave more numerous grants. By 1980, the family foundations became more predominant and, by 1990, the public charities and alternative foundations more important. Table 5.6 examines the priorities of these foundations in terms of grant dollars going to environmental discourses in 2000. The alternative foundations are the only significant funders of the more radical discourses, investing almost three-fourths of their money in the environmental justice and deep ecology movements while all the other foundations invest almost exclusively in the moderate discourses. The public charities are somewhat more supportive of radical discourse. Institutional foundations are especially supportive of preservationism and liberal environmentalism, which reflects their commitment to a professionalized strategy. Corporate foundations, which constitute less than 1 percent of funding for environmental advocacy (Table 5.5), are reluctant to give to the environmental movement. In 2000, only one corporate foundation—Ben & Jerry's Foundation—gave to the environment. Its six grants went to multiple discourses. In other work, we have found that corporate foundations favor preservationism, which allows them to gain favorable publicity within the local community for setting aside nature reserves and may indirectly benefit their local business operations. Overall, the major division is between the handful of small alternative foundations and public charities that fund radical environmentalism and the rest of the foundation community, which supports moderate environmentalism.

What impact does this funding have on the organizational structures of environmental organizations? Foundations base their funding primarily on their discursive frame and tend to be less likely to prioritize in terms of the organizational structures they are supporting. Nonetheless, this is a critical issue with regard to the development of the environmental movement and the impact of foundation funding. Table 5.7 shows the distribution of year 2000 grant dollars to environmental organizations based on their organizational structure. All foundations favor professionalized advocacy, making it their largest or next-largest category. Family foundations are the most conservative, investing almost half of their resources on professional advocacy and technical support centers. Institutional foundations, a mainstay of technical support centers, are a way to rationalize support for a wide variety of environmental groups. Corporate foundations' apparently strong support of membership associations stems largely from the contributions of Ben and Jerry's Corporate Foundation. Because we were unable to classify the numerous small grants of the public charities and alternative foundations, we

Table 5.5. Distribution of Grants by Type of Foundation, 1970-2000

	1970		1980		1990		2000	
	Percentage Grants by Amount	Percent of Grant by Number	Percent of Grants by Amount	Percent of Grant by Number	Percent of Grants by Amount	Percent of Grant by Number	Percent of Grants by Amount	Percent of Grant by Number
Family Foundations	9.3%	60.0%	83.0%	61.5%	66.8%	62.1%	82.0%	64.1%
Institutional Foundations	90.5%	30.0%	10.1%	6.3%	18.1%	7.5%	12.6%	6.6%
Corporate Foundations	0.2%	10.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.4%	3.4%	<0.1%	0.8%
Community Foundations	0.0%	0.0%	1.9%	2.6%	4.9%	7.7%	2.4%	2.5%
Public Charities	0.0%	0.0%	3.1%	8.9%	8.9%	12.9%	2.9%	2.5%
Alternative Foundations	0.0%	0.0%	1.8%	20.8%	.4%	5.4%	<0.1%	1.1%

Table 5.6. Distribution of Funding Amounts by Discourse and Foundation Type, 2000

	Wildlife Management	Conservation	Preservation	Liberal Environmentalism	Environmental Justice	Deep Ecology	Ecofeminism	Ecotheology	Undetermined
Family Foundations	5.6%	14.1%	37.7%	25.1%	1.2%	1.0%	0.1%	0.8%	14.3%
Institutional Foundations	3.9%	3.9%	49.3%	35.4%	1.4%	1.6%	0.6%	0.0%	4.4%
Corporate Foundations	0.0%	0.0%	47.4%	0.0%	26.3%	26.3%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%
Community Foundations	0.0%	3.4%	19.2%	68.2%	0.0%	0.0%	1.5%	0.0%	7.9%
Public Charities	0.0%	4.1%	29.4%	37.9%	8.4%	4.8%	0.0%	0.1%	15.5%
Alternative Foundations	3.1%	0.0%	9.2%	12.2%	38.9%	36.6%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%

Table 5.7. Distribution of Funding Amounts by Foundation Type and Recipient Organization Type, 2000

	<i>Membership Associations</i>	<i>Professional Advocacy</i>	<i>Technical Assistance</i>	<i>Land Trusts</i>	<i>Undetermined</i>
Family Foundations	17.7%	32.3%	17.8%	13.8%	18.4%
Institutional Foundations	30.2%	26.6%	22.2%	14.8%	6.0%
Corporate Foundations	53.9%	46.1%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%
Community Foundations	28.5%	39.4%	12.3%	10.5%	9.3%
Public Charities	17.6%	41.0%	11.1%	3.8%	26.5%
Alternative Foundations	15.3%	21.4%	0.0%	0.0%	64.4%

may be underestimating their contributions to membership organizations, but they do not appear to be particularly distinctive on this aspect.

CONCLUSION

The overwhelming majority of foundation funding to the environmental movement goes to the moderate organizations that use the traditional discourses of conservation, preservation, and mainstream liberal environmentalism. Most are professional movement organizations with at most a "paper" membership of direct mail contributors who lack participatory mechanisms. The role of the so-called members is to be donors, not participants who actively guide organization programs and activities. Decision making is concentrated in the hands of the staff and board, who are largely self-selecting and autonomous from member control. Although the total pool of environmental funding has grown rapidly almost fivefold per decade since the 1970s, it has been concentrated on a relatively small number of large movement organizations involved in political advocacy work. It thus bypasses some of the most vital and innovative sectors of the environmental movement. Instead of investing in the environmental justice, deep ecology, ecofeminist, and ecotheological wings of the movement, foundations have focused their efforts on the environmental mainstream, making them more prominent and visible in the movement. The alternative foundations and public charities are the only foundations that significantly fund the more radical environmental discourses.

The impact of this funding has been to channel the environmental movement into more moderate discourses and conventional forms of action.

While there are notable cases of foundations attempting to directly control movement activities, the general pattern is a more indirect process of creating incentives for specific discourses, styles of organization, and tactics, thereby drawing the movement into the institutional system. Little of this environmental funding goes to participatory membership associations, meaning that instead of being governed by citizens, the environmental movement has become increasingly controlled by foundations that represent large corporate wealth and rationalized power in the American political economy. This serves to systematically limit the range of viewpoints represented in the public arena and to restrict the participation of citizens in their own governance.

The creation of movement organizations without a participatory base of citizens has major implications for the viability of social movements to act to create and maintain a democratic civil society, as well as for the ability of the environmental movement to foster the creation of an ecologically sustainable society. The ability of social movements to act as catalysts for the formation of effective political change depends on social movement organizations being based in the free and open discussion of citizens and not being controlled by the logic of either capital accumulation or the administrative state.⁴² However, if these social movement organizations are not authentic community representatives or if they are controlled by external organizations, such as the government or philanthropic foundations, this can restrict the flow of communication from citizens to the public sphere.

One hopeful sign is the emergence of alternative foundations that seek to engender a mutual dialogue between the foundation and recipient organization. The emergence of this different form of relationship between environmental organizations and foundations represents an important innovation that can enhance the ability of citizens to organize and participate in their own governance. One important recent result is a small increase in funding for membership-based organizations. These alternative foundations are also able to encourage the larger family and institutional foundations to fund innovative projects that rest on membership participation and democratic governance. The vitality of civil society is ultimately based on the creation of participatory and democratic movement organizations. By bringing representatives of the recipient movements into the grant-giving process, these alternative foundations have created a model for innovative grant-giving. To foster the development of more participatory and democratic types of organizations, foundations need to significantly alter the role they play in their relationship with movement organizations. They need to be more willing to fund membership associations that represent a wide array of environmental discourses. In addition, the internal governance structure of the recipient organization needs to be a criterion for foundation funding. Instead of favoring professionalized organizations because they are seen as more "responsible," foundations

need to take into account the participatory and democratic structure of recipients. They also need to be willing to experiment with funding groups with less conventional discourse and tactics.

Historically the rationale legalizing the existence of institutionalized philanthropy was the idea of “risk capital” giving. Early twentieth century proponents of institutional philanthropy promoted the idea of permanent endowments as a way of providing greater rationality and consistency to philanthropic giving. Foundations were seen as a more scientific and rationalized method for funding social innovation and avoiding the limitations of traditional charity that addressed only symptoms rather than underlying causes.⁴³ However, our evidence suggests that most contemporary foundation support for environmentalism is quite conventional and entails little social or political risk. Most funding goes to professional advocacy and technical support that strengthens mainstream environmental discourse. A significant share of environmental philanthropy is self-serving in the sense of subsidizing corporate public relations. By broadening their horizons and adapting some of the lessons from the alternative foundations, foundations could contribute to a stronger membership-directed environmental movement that would be more influential and responsive to general citizens’ concerns.

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