The U.S. Environmental Movement: Crisis or Transition?

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Abstract

We address the debate surrounding the current status of the U.S. environmental movement. Using measures of ecological and public policy impact, we show that the U.S. environmental movement has failed to prevent the continuing negative growth of the U.S. ecological footprint and, since the early 1990s, has been blocked in its national legislative agenda. We trace this failure to the dominance within the U.S. environmental movement of a piecemeal technicist discourse, the diversion of resources due to oligarchic structures and an overemphasis on professionalization within the movement, and the rise of a powerful anti-environmental movement centered in the neo-conservative movement and the religious right. We conclude with recommendations about how to revitalize the environmental movement by making it more participatory and responsive to a broader political vision.

Key Words: Environmental Movement, Social Movements, Resource Mobilization, Discourse Analysis, Political Opportunity Structure, Anti-environmental Movement

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We believe that the environmental movement's foundational concepts, its method for framing legislative proposals, and its very institutions are outmoded…..Evidence for this can be found in its concepts, its proposals, and its reasoning.

Michael Shellenberger and Ted Nordhaus
The Death of Environmentalism (2004: 8)

In the fall of 2004, two young environmental writers presented a blistering critique of the U.S. environmental movement at the annual meeting of its financial patron - the Environmental Grantmakers Association. Reviewing the failure of the U.S. environmental movement to achieve any meaningful results on global warming, the two authors argued that "What the environmental movement needs more than anything else right now is to take a collective step back to rethink everything (Shellenberger and Nordhaus 2004: 7)." Although the denials from the existing leaders of major environmental groups were long and vociferous, the essay has struck a deep nerve within the U.S. environmental movement. As a consequence, there is an every expanding dialogue regarding whether or not the U.S. environmental movement is dead, or in transition.

This viewpoint is not new or unique. Seventeen years ago, Barry Commoner, the dean of the U.S. environmental movement, recognized that the environmental movement was failing to realize its promise. At that time, he noted that the original intent of the U.S. Environmental Movement was to create a situation in which the environment was free of mindless assaults, not just make it a little less polluted. Noting the vast discrepancy between the intent and its outcome, he argued that a "different course must be followed. (Commoner 1987:55-56). Yet despite Dr. Commoner's clear message, the environmental movement has not developed a coherent strategy to initiate a process of change toward a sustainable society. Hence we have a repeat of his critique of the environmental movement.

Environmental degradation continues on apace. Now, at the beginning of the twenty first century, it is clear that we are moving beyond the carrying capacity of the earth's ecosystem. Through the spread of air and water pollution, the disposal of toxic and solid wastes, and the ubiquitous presence of pesticides and hormone disrupters throughout global ecosystems, we are exceeding the capacity of the natural environment to absorb our waste products. We are also depleting the ability of the earth's biosystems to provide us with the resources necessary for life (Vitousek et. al. 1997). The transformation of increasing portions of the natural world to serve human needs is leading to a vast loss of global biodiversity. Finally, human activities are disrupting the global climate that will have significant impacts that will last thousands of years into the future (IPCC 2001). The nature and extent of environmental degradation seems to go on indefinitely and new problems constantly arise. The overall result of this process is projected to be the overall irreversible degradation of many of the global ecosystems, and the extinction of many species of plants and animals.

These ecological problems lead to a severe cumulative adverse effect, not only for the other beings which we share the earth, but also for human health (Chivan et. al. 1993, McCally 2002). For example, the release of toxic chemicals has created a dramatic rise in the probability of being detected with cancer (Buell 2004:116)[1]. One increasingly evident response to global environmental degradation is the segregation of the population based on exposure to environmental risks. While it is true that environmental risks are global, "pollution follows the poor" (Beck 1999: 5). Resource shortages are experienced as increasing prices for basic commodities, such as housing, food, or energy. The affluent can better absorb these price increases than can the poor, people of color, and immigrant populations. Also, affluent nations and neighborhoods can use their superior economic and political power to resist the siting of polluting facilities in their neighborhood, and thus reduce their exposures. Thus environmental risks are thus first and most directly experienced by the less powerful of the earth. The "other" of society-- those outside of the dominant cultural, political, and economic elites--experience the brunt of the "bads" of industrial production and the limits to growth.

Not only is our ecological condition deteriorating, we are failing to take meaningful action to deal with this situation. The changes required to just stop, much less reverse, the process of ecological degradation are immense. For example, in order to stabilize greenhouse gas emissions at current levels

requires a five to six fold reduction in worldwide CO_2 emissions (Holdren 1997). This would require major transformations in both our energy and transportation infrastructure. We have not addressed this problem in any meaningful way. In fact, the U.S. has great political difficulty in even developing and enforcing minimum fuel efficiency standards for automobiles. Reviewing the past quarter century of attempts to set up an international set of treaties, Speth (2004:2) argues that the rates of environmental deterioration that led to these attempts continue unabated, and have deepened. His analysis is that "the climate convention is not protecting climate, the biodiversity convention is not protecting biodiversity, the desertification convention is not preventing desertification, and even the older and stronger Convention on the Law of the Sea is not protecting fisheries" (Speth 2004:96).

In this paper, we seek to examine the state of the U.S. environmental movement. In the first part of the paper, we discuss the role of social movements, in fostering a process of social learning that might lead to an ecologically sustainable society. We then turn to an assessment of the impact of the U.S. environmental movement, regarding both its ecological impacts, and its political status. Using measures of ecological and public policy impact, we show that the U.S. environmental movement has failed to prevent the continuing negative growth of the U.S. ecological footprint and, since the early 1990s, has been blocked in its national legislative agenda. In the third section we utilize social movement theory to develop a partial understanding of why this situation has developed. Specifically, we trace this failure to the dominance within the U.S. environmental movement of a piecemeal technicist discourse, the diversion of resources due to oligarchic structures and an overemphasis on professionalization within the movement, and the rise of a powerful anti-environmental movement centered in the neo-conservative movement and the religious right. We conclude with recommendations about how to revitalize the environmental movement by making it more participatory and responsive to a broader political vision.

SOCIAL LEARNING FOR SUSTAINABILITY

The creation of a n ecologically sustainable society involves the successful implementation of a program of intentional social change. This leads many scholars to look to civil society at the locus of such change. The basic idea is that civil society forms an autonomous site independent of the market economy and the state, providing citizens with the opportunity to freely associate, develop an ethical life and exercise their citizenship (Cohen 1985; Calhoun 1993; Habermas 1987, 1991). This puts social movements at the center of the renewal and transformation of social institutions, including the transition to an ecologically sustainable society (Brulle 2000).

The linkage of civil society, democracy and intentional social change is based on the theoretical formulation developed by Jürgen Habermas. For Habermas, a rational social order is based on providing good reasons for accepting a particular discourse through democratic dialogue (Habermas 1984:22). This dialogue forms the basis for rational action by establishing an intersubjective consensus for which valid arguments can be made. Habermas argues that such open and participatory communicative action is vital to the renewal of institutions to meet new circumstances. If this process is blocked, the institutions are unable to adjust to new circumstances. Habermas maintains that our society's capability for self correction is systematically blocked by the institutions of the capitalist world economy and the bureaucratic state. Specifically, the learning capability of our society is hindered by the dominance of decision-making criteria based in the institutions of the market and state administrative agencies. The market bases its decisions on the profitability of a given activity, without regard to either its social or environmental costs. The decision-making process of the state is based on the political calculus of the governing party, and its attempt to retain power. Both of these institutions are thus based on a limited notion of instrumental reason, and unable to effectively generate creative alternatives. This systematic restriction of communicative action has created a society that is unable to hold these institutions accountable for their actions. One result of this dynamic is the creation of the ecological crisis (Habermas 1984, 1987, Dunlap 1992, Brulle 2000).

Habermas thus sees social movement organizations, being based in civil society, as the agents of rational control over the market and the state. These institutions, since they are based in communicative action, offer a possible means to restore democratic control over the political and economic systems (Habermas 1987:142). Accordingly, these organizations provide an arena in which an

ethical life can be developed and citizenship exercised (Offe 1990:76, Habermas 1987). This links the resolution of ecological problems to the development of a strong civil society, and thus a strong environmental movement.

The effort to address environmental problems has spawned a significant environmental establishment with numerous international, national, and local government agencies, scientific research programs, university institutes, think tanks, foundations, and thousands of social movement organizations. In our recent research, we have compiled a detailed inventory of the foundings of National and Regional U.S. Environmental organizations. The results are shown below in Figure 1.
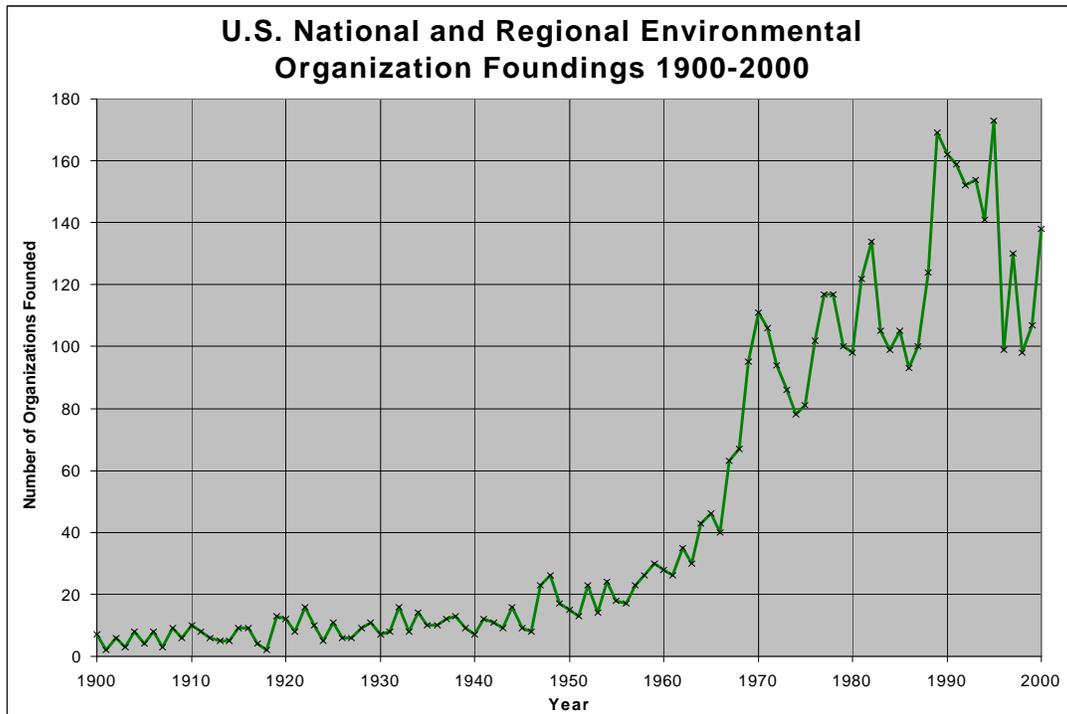

Figure 1

As this graph clearly shows, the organizational component of the U.S. Environmental Movement continues to grow over the last two decades. From this viewpoint, one would expect that the political power of the environmental movement would be increasing, and that the U.S. would be moving increasingly toward ecological sustainability.

THE DECLINE OF U.S. ENVIRONMENTALISM

An examination of the results of the U.S. environmental movement show a quite different trend. Domestic U.S. programs for environmental restoration are failing to reverse the overall trend toward ecological deterioration. Since the first Earth Day, the United States has undertaken a number of actions to deal with the problem of environmental destruction. While there has been incremental progress in reducing some of the worst forms of visible pollution, these efforts pale in comparison to the changes necessary to halt this destruction. Surveying our environmental efforts fourteen years ago, Pointing (1991: 400) concluded that "compared with the scale of the problems, many measures are little more than cosmetic." Little has changed since then.

This failure to address the ecological impact of U.S. society is evidenced in the continued rise in the ecological footprint of the U.S. (Wackernagel and Rees 1996). As Figure 2 shows, the U.S. use of renewable resources exceeded its overall capacity in 1968. Also, the trend continues to increase. Overall, the ecological footprint of the U.S. has increased 270% in the 40 years from 1961.
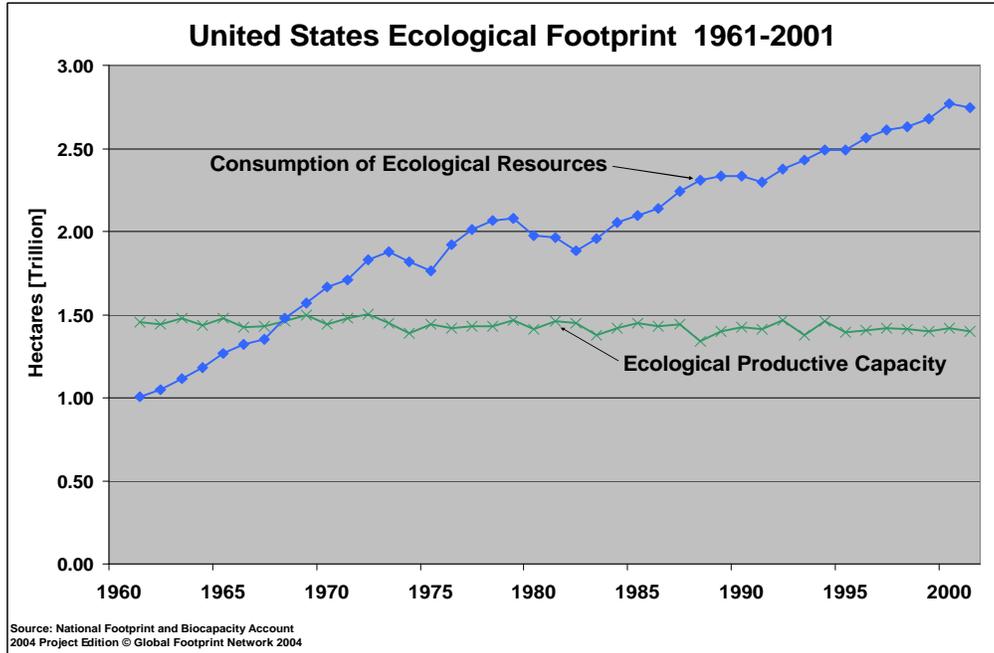
United States Ecological Footprint 1961-2001

Source: National Footprint and Biocapacity Account
2004 Project Edition © Global Footprint Network 2004

Figure 2

Examining more closely the changes in the footprint (Figure 3), we see that over the 40 years from 1961-2001, the ecological footprint of the U.S. declined in only six years. All were associated with economic recessions and five with internationally imposed "oil shocks" that forced major reductions in energy use. It would seem that external shocks are the only way in which the U.S. can move actually towards a more ecologically sustainable society.
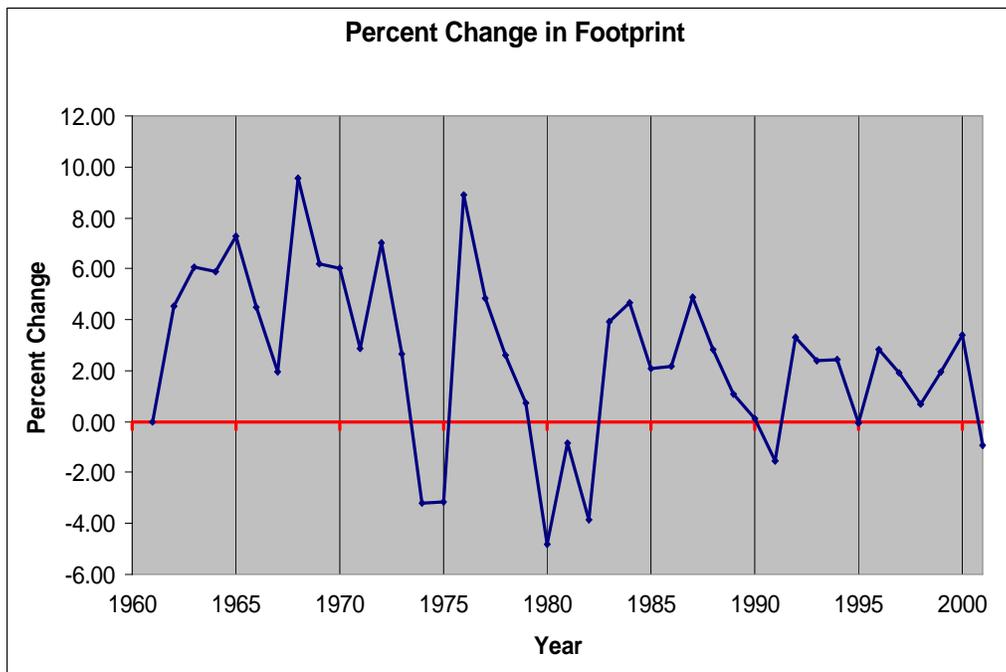

Percent Change in Footprint

Figure 3

What this indicates is that the institutions that are tasked to address environmental problems are failing. Yet, despite these well-intentioned and hard fought efforts, both the scope and severity of ecological problems continues to increase. This has been called the "Paradox of Environmentalism": "the global ecocrisis continues to worsen despite people's efforts to respond" (Oelschlaeger 1994: 4). The environmental establishment, including the environmental movement, is largely a reactive crisis-driven response rather than a proactive attempt to guide us to an ecologically sustainable society.

League of Conservation Voters
U.S. House of Representatives Vote Analysis
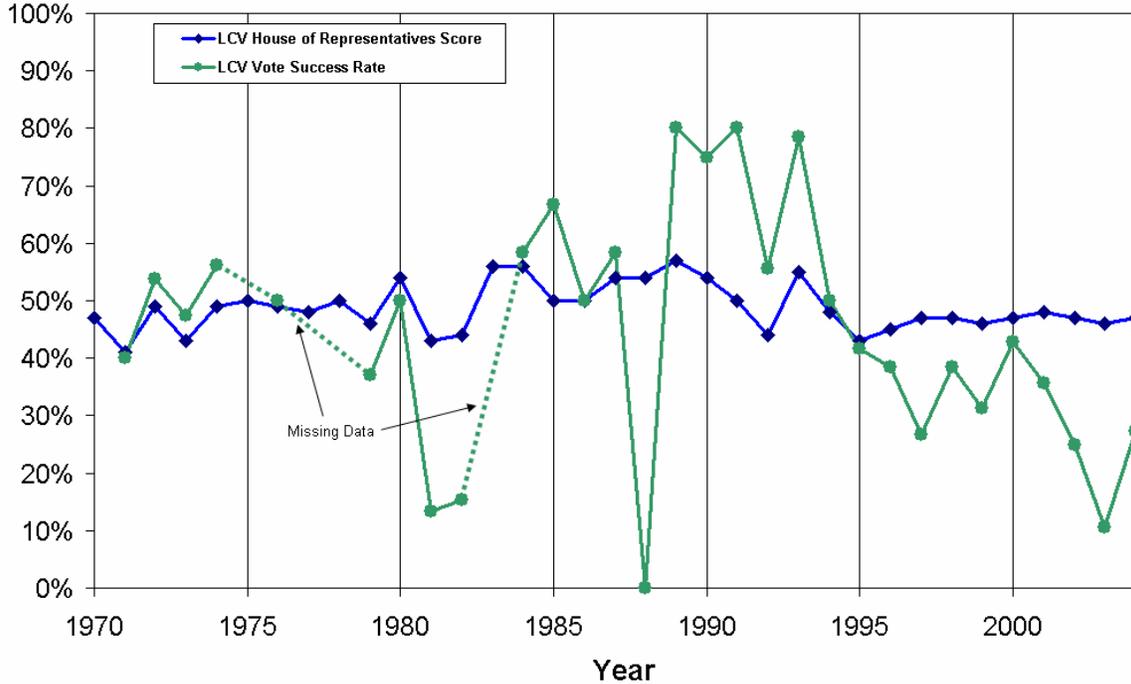
Figure 4

The political strength of the environmental movement also shows a continuing decline. Using the League of Conservation Voters annual tallies of environmental votes in the U.S. House of Representatives, the late 1980s and early 1990s represent the peak in pro-environmental House voting. This has eroded dramatically since the Republican takeover in 1995. As Figure 4 shows, while the overall score of the House has declined less significantly, the environmental lobby is winning votes on significant environmental issues less than 30 percent of the time.

Figure 5 shows that these votes are overwhelmingly attempts to block undesired legislation, not attempts to advance new environmental protections. The League of Conservation Voters codes whether the proposed bill benefits the environment, and thus merits political support, or if it degrades the environment, and should be opposed. Over the time period from 1971-1994, the ratio of support and opposition of bills average around 50%. However, after the Republican takeover of the house in the 1994 elections, the bills that were introduced in the area of the environment were overwhelmingly considered "bad" for the environment, and thus merited political opposition. Taken together, the analysis of the House of Representatives actions on the environment show that the U.S. environmental movement is spending most of its time opposing environmentally undesirable laws, and that they are increasingly loosing in this endeavor.
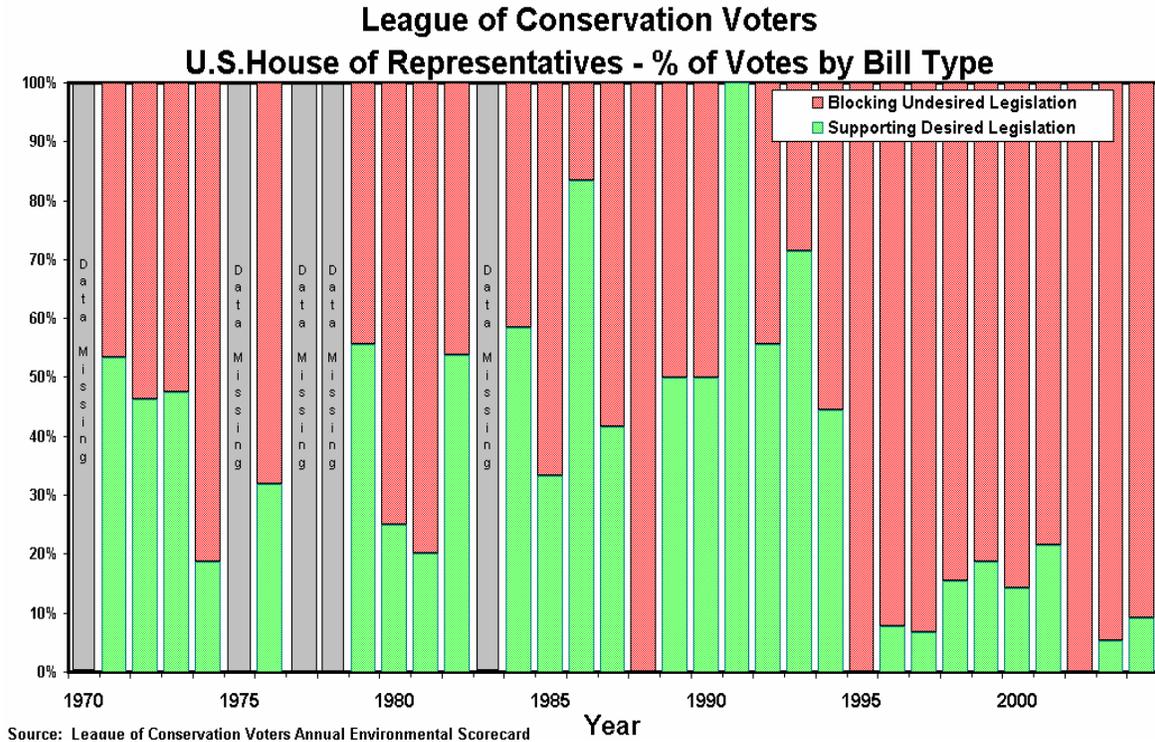
League of Conservation Voters
U.S.House of Representatives - % of Votes by Bill Type

Source: League of Conservation Voters Annual Environmental Scorecard

Figure 5

The declining political influence and results of the U.S. Environmental Movement has spawned a vigorous debate over "The Death of Environmentalism".[2] In their previously mentioned essay, Shellenberger and Nordhous (2004) argue for an "Death" to environmentalism as a separate social movement. They argue that the environmental movement has failed to change the powerful social institutions that are systematically creating environmental degradation. The reason for this failure is the technicist and piecemeal framing of environmental issues. They argue that as currently framed, environmentalism is unable to inspire broadly and vigorously supported social movements to act on the types of large scale social changes needed to lead to environmental improvement. What is needed, in their viewpoint, is a rebirth of a new frame for progressive social causes in which environmental concerns are part of a larger political vision.

This is neither the first nor most eloquent critique of mainstream environmentalism. Throughout the environmental movement, periodic critiques of the environmental movement have erupted. John Muir was so frustrated with the Sierra Club during the Hetch Hetchy battle that he formed a separate organization to press his political concerns. In the late 1920s, Rosalie Edge struggled against the complacency and co-optation of the Audubon Society. She formed the "Emergency Conservation Committee", which lasted till her death in 1962. In the Sierra Club, a group of "Young Turks" led by David Brower and Ansel Adams revitalized this organization following World War II. In the early 1980s, a number of new discursive frames and environmental movement organizations developed out of the apparent failure of the mainstream environmental movement to deal with certain issues. This includes the rise of the environmental justice and health movements, the development of deep ecology, and, more recently, the development of various eco-spiritualist efforts and attempts to link feminism with environmental thinking.

Others have voiced critiques of mainstream environmentalism. As early as 1972, Herbert Marcuse (1972) noted that environmentalism was already being co-opted by advertisers. Perhaps the most eloquent critique of mainstream environmentalism appeared in a 1987 New Yorker magazine article by Dr. Barry Commoner (Commoner 1987). Commoner argued that the mainstream environmental

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organizations had not addressed the fundamental causes of environmental degradation. Rather than confront the social and economic sources of environmental degradation, the environmental movement had taken the "soft" political road. By basing their arguments on narrow technical problems and failing to link it broader political visions, the movement blunted its impact and neglected the role of corporate decisions over technology that are fundamental to contemporary environmental degradation. This makes environmental organizations appear as "special interest" organizations addressing narrow environmental problems. To move beyond this impasse, Commoner advocated an explicitly political approach centering on the power of corporations to develop and utilize technologies without regard to their environmental consequences. This would link the environmental movement to a whole range of social and economic justice issues and a broad and inclusive social justice agenda.

For all of its strength, this essay by Commoner provoked little, if any response from the mainstream environmental organizations. However, the Shellenberger and Nordhous essay has gained extraordinary prominence. Why was Commoner's earlier essay ignored, and the recent Shellenberger and Nordhous essay taken so seriously? We think two factors are responsible. First, the sense of urgency in dealing with environmental issues that characterized the environmental movement around the first Earth Day has long since passed. The strategy of providing scientifically inspired apocalyptic projections of environmental disasters in the hopes of motivating action has failed. "The old faith - a faith that public revelation of unacceptable risks will yield appropriate action to solve the underlying problems - is gone" (Buell 2004:197). As environmental risks have become more constant and pervasive and attempts to deal with them appear increasingly futile, there have been two responses. First, aided by a vigorous industry funded effort, the reality of environmental degradation is denied, and environmentalists are blamed as being unrealistic or extremist. The second is to accommodate environmental degradation by adapting to the circumstances as best as possible. As individuals become used to a degraded environment, their standards of environmental health and integrity decline, and environmental problems become part of an everyday normality (Buell 2004:76, 166).

A second explanation is that, shortly after the Commoner essay appeared, the mainstream environmental organizations experienced a major success in removing James Watt as Secretary of the Interior. As we will see, the environmental lobby in Congress had a respectable success rate with its initiatives in this time period, making it seem that the future was open to progressive incremental changes. But by the fall of 2004, when the Shellenberger and Nordhous essay appeared, the environmental movement had experienced 10 years in which the environmental movement was fighting a rearguard effort, attempting to block rollbacks in environmental regulation and failing to advance proactive new initiatives. Coupled with the extreme anti-environmental Bush II administration, the mainstream environmental community had suffered enough failure to take the charge of the "Death of Environmentalism" seriously.

THE POLITICAL MARGINALIZATION OF U.S. ENVIRONMENTALISM

Why is there such a disconnect between the healthy growth of the U.S. Environmental Movement and its results, both politically and ecologically? Why has the environmental movement failed to muster the capacity to successfully initiate actions towards an ecologically sustainable world? These are critical concerns in view of the enormous size of the global environmental establishment, and its potential to foster social learning. There are many potential explanations. IDrawing on the social movement theory perspectives of discursive frame analysis, resource mobilization, and political opportunity structures, we focus on three critical explanations: (1) Limitations of mainstream environmental discourses, (2) diversionary resource mobilization, and (3) unfavorable political opportunities.

Limitations of Mainstream Environmental Discourses

Our analysis of the limitations uses the perspective of discursive frame analysis. Language and cultural beliefs play an important role in shaping the practices of social movement organizations. The study of social movements from such a linguistic perspective has been formally developed as "frame analysis". This approach focuses on the creation and maintenance of the common beliefs that define the reality in which a social movement exists (Benford and Snow 2000; Brulle 1994). As Zald (2000) and

others (Rochon 1998; Garner 1996; Wilson 1973) argue, movements must first be understood in terms of the world view that defines the taken-for-granted reality in which a social movement exists, provides a history of the origins of the movement, its development, and its future agenda, as well as a collective identity for movement activists and guidelines for collective action.

Research has shown that for the environmental movement, discursive frames are more critical to the activity of environmental groups than their resources or political alliances (Dalton 1994, Carmon and Balser 2002). In fact, frames structure and make meaningful the strategic decisions that movement leaders make about the nature of the problems they address and how they go about this. Within any social movement, there are generally multiple frames, which diverge in terms of their definition of problems, strategies and methods of organization. As Laclau and Mouffe (1985: 140) state: "plurality is not the phenomena to be explained, but the starting point of the analysis."

The U.S. environmental movement is largely organized around three dominant discourses: (1) Conservationism; (2) Preservationism; and (3) Reform Environmentalism. Each developed in opposition to the 19th century idea of Manifest Destiny, which justified and even celebrated the aggressive transformation of nature. While there are alternative discourses of deep ecology, environmental justice, ecofeminism and ecospirituality, these are primarily marginal viewpoints. As discussed below, each of these three discursive frames has significant limitations.

<u>Conservation</u> is a well defined and long standing frame that started with George Perkins Marsh, and later refined by Giffort Pinchot (Brulle 2000, Taylor 1992 15-27, Oelschlaeger 1991: 286-289). In this discourse, nature is a resource to be used by human society to meet human needs. The aim is to use nature to achieve the greatest good for the greatest number of humans for the longest period of time. Collective action is designed to ensure that natural resources are used rationality and efficiently to achieve maximum social utility. Government action is necessary, since corporations, driven by market considerations, will systematically exploit and degrade the environment. The state is the arbiter of the public good by assuming overall scientific management and safeguarding of natural resources (Taylor 1992:20, Brulle 2000: 145-161). This discourse was part of the larger progressive movement, which promoted governmental regulation of markets to provide social justice.

In the 1960s, conservationism was supplanted by liberal environmentalism. But it enjoyed a resurgence in the 1980s with the idea of "sustainable development" embodied in the Bruntland Report (WCED 1985). Sustainable development means managing our natural resources "to ensure that it meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability for future generations to meet their own needs" (WCED 1985:188). There are many different definitions, none of which has achieved ascendancy, and hence it represents a multivocal and ill-defined political goal (Goulet 1995:44-59). At its core, the idea is that economic growth and environmental sustainability can be reconciled by the application of scientific management. As Evernden (1992: 76) argues, "The break-through of the much-touted Brundtland Commission is little more than Gifford Pinchot recycled for the nineties."

It has several limitations. First, conservation has lost its connection to the larger progressive political tradition from which it originated. Lacking this connection to a larger idea of social justice, conservation becomes a method for scientific management of natural resources in service of the existing social structure. This does not provide a vision of an alternative social order that could provide the basis for environmental sustainability (Taylor 1992:136). Second, it is anthropocentric. The natural world is valued only by humans. Other beings are not worthy of consideration on their own right. Thus it advances a strictly utilitarian calculus for biodiversity (Taylor 1992:57). Finally, it has failed the test of time (Taylor 1992: xi). Conservation has been a dominant environmental discourse for over one hundred years. Yet during the period, environmental change and ecological degradation have accelerated. As Everden (1992: 76) argues: "having tried the Pinchot experiment for the better part of a century, and having during that period sunk deeper and deeper into environmental despair, we still are not ready to conceded that perhaps the experiment has failed. How much longer must it be tested before we conclude that it is not enough?"

Preservation focuses on the protection of wilderness and biodiversity. Henry David Thoreau is commonly cited as the first American voice for preservation, which was later revised by John Muir and Aldo Leopold (Brulle 2000: 161-172, Taylor 1992: 4-15, Oelschlaeger 1991: 289-292). It defines both a moral and an aesthetic relationship between humans and the environment. Nature has intrinsic worth and serves as a source of human self-renewal. It also provides an extra-human vantage point for developing a vision of a just and sustainable society (Taylor 1992: 131). From his experience in nature, Thoreau developed a powerful political message involving a radical critique of industrial civilization and the development of an alternative vision of the good life. Thus Preservation was founded as a vision of human's existing in harmony with both each other and with the natural world.

This discourse has lost its original political insight and thus has only a limited impact (Taylor 1992: 131). Muir, Leopold, and contemporary preservationists have translated this discourse into an exclusive concern for the protection of biodiversity and wilderness without any connection to larger social concerns (Taylor 1992 81-132). This limits the range of issues and concerns addressed and abandons preservation's utility as an alternative cultural model that could inform the creation of a just and ecologically sustainable society. As noted by Taylor (1992: 136): "contemporary pastoralists have largely been unable to derive a coherent alternative politics and social vision from their deep respect for nature." This limits its resonance. Lacking a connection to a broader social justice vision, it is seen as appealing only to the recreational needs and aesthetic values of middle and upper class whites.

Reform Environmentalism. Originating in the late 1950s and early 1960s, this discourse is based on the insight that humanity is part of the earth's ecosystems, and thus human health is linked to the condition of the natural environment (Brulle 2000: 173-193). It replaces conservationism's limited utilitarian view of nature with the idea that nature had an intrinsic value of its own (Taylor 1992: 51-59). It also critiques the idea of dominating nature for the sake of profits by arguing for governmental action to protect the environment (Oelschlaeger 1991: 292-301). Echoing earlier ideas of Carson (1963) and others, Commoner (1971) advanced an environmental program combining democratic practice and social justice concerns with protecting the environment (Pepper 1996: 137).

This progressive political tradition was replaced by a technicist discourse in the early 1970s (Kroll 2004). Environmentalism became identified with the scientific analysis of specific environmental problems, which were to be addressed by legal reforms and economic incentives (Taylor 1992: 27-50, Evernden 1992). Scientific experts became central in the "scientific management of the environment" (Taylor 1992: 50), mediating between science and politics, advising and convincing the public and decision-makers in government and industry of the need for remedial action (Diesing 1982: 243). In the early 1980s, a number of leading environmental organizations adopted the idea of ecological modernization through market mechanisms (Bernstein 2001). The basic idea is that as industrial processes develop, their ecological impacts can be reduced by market mechanisms (York et. al. 2003: 285). Instead of a bureaucratic "command and control" approach, markets can provide more efficient and effective responses. Emissions trading and similar market solutions are the preferred method of environmental regulation.

Reform environmentalism is limited in addressing environmental problems in terms of piecemeal reforms. Rather than engaging the broader public, it focuses debates among professionals in the scientific, legal, and economic communities. This may provide technical solutions to specific problems but neglects the larger system, which lies behind the problem (see C. Wright Mills' critique of professional pathologies [1943:168-169]). This hinders the creation of joint strategies and large-scale collective action.

Second, this discourse has an unrealistic conception of information in the decision-making process. It assumes that providing information will automatically lead to changes in public opinion and, as a result, significant efforts toward environmental improvement. The core function of the environmental movement is education. This ignores the reality of corporate power. It also premises a naïve and unrealistic conception of public opinion. It assumes that neutral facts and scientific evidence will carry the debate of the day without taking into account the systematic distortion of public discourse. It assumes that education can automatically outweigh vested interests, economic pressures and the extensive

ideological power of corporate interests (Deising 1982:239-248, Blühdorn 2000:4). The result is that "modern environmentalism – is politically naive and perhaps, irrelevant" (Taylor 1992:136).

Third, reform environmentalism fosters an elite practice that limits public participation and the movement's mobilization capacity. Framed by technical narratives, the social and normative issues involved in creation and solution of environmental degradation are subordinated to technical discussions (Backstrand 2004:101). Hence both citizens and decision makers play only bit parts, heeding the advice of the scientist. By creating a technocratic value-neutral discourse, it removes moral considerations from public policy, and limits public input. This "scientization of politics" (Habermas 1970:68) serves to delegitimate the voices of those who do not speak these specialized languages. Citizens are reduced to the status of a population to be managed, and there is no requirement for their involvement except to obtain their support. The political implications amounts to "authoritarian management of the environment and society" (Taylor 1992: 27-50, 49). Almost all liberal environmental organizations oligarchic structures and few have significant citizen participation (Brulle 2000). As discussed earlier, this significantly limits the mobilization capacity of these movement organizations.

Fourth, the idea of ecological modernization is highly problematic. The adoption of market-based mechanisms has to date been limited to creating emissions trading markets, certification of industrial processes, performance based standards, and an end to subsidies to ecologically destructive practices. However, as noted by Bernstein (2001: 233), environmentalism "has yet to embrace the more radical proposals that might have the largest payoffs for the environment, such as changing accounting practices, large-scale shifts to environmental taxation, or truly integrating environmental considerations into conceptions of social welfare." Moreover, there is little evidence that ecological modernization is better able to achieve environmental goals than "command and control" mechanisms (Bernstein 2001: 230). In a recent comprehensive study of the impacts of ecological modernization, the authors concluded that: "The expectations of the modernization (perspective) are clearly contradicted" (York et. al. 2003:294). Several argue that ecological modernization is essentially a discourse to ensure economic growth and to co-opt industrialism's environmental critics. Blühdorn (2005) notes that ecological thinking had emerged as the most important challenge to economic rationality in the 1960s. However, ecological modernization has been increasingly successful in "repackaging ecological issues as economic, technical and managerial issues, thereby overcoming the assumed incompatibility between ecological and economic thinking" (Blühdorn 2005: 5). Rather than adjusting the market to its ecological limitations, liberal environmental discourse adapts its political program to fit within market limitations (Torgerson 1995:15, Bernstein 2001:178-179, Blühdorn 2000: 30).

All three mainstream environmental discourses have major limitations. As they have developed, they have moved towards technocratic forms of discourse and lost their mobilization capacity. Taylor (1992: 137) argues that "the story of American environmental theory in the twentieth century is primarily the story of an increasingly obscured political vision." While scientific analyses of environmental problems have defined ecological impacts of our current social order, this alone is not sufficient to develop an alternative vision for an ecologically sustainable society. With a few notable exceptions, the vast majority of analyses of environmental degradation do not address the social, political, or cultural roots of environmental degradation (Taylor 1992:133-151). While environmental scientists have great technical competence and their work has helped define environmental problems, their work lacks a broader vision of the whole and a plausible theory of transition to an ecologically sustainable society (Dobson 1993:192). The end result is that "contemporary ecology movements have yet to find the public idiom and institutional format in which that argument, in the face of structural resistance and public apathy, becomes utterly compelling" (Goldblatt 1996: 202).

While there have been several discursive innovations over the past twenty years, including environmental justice, environmental health, deep ecology, and ecospirituality, none of these frames has been met with widespread acceptance. Thus they constitute only a small portion of the overall environmental movement. Whether they will continue to occupy a marginal role in the future is an open question.

Diversionary Resource Mobilization

Our second explanation for the decline of the U.S. Environmental Movement is the mechanisms that the movement uses to create and maintain organizations capable of carrying out collective actions. The social movement perspective of Resource Mobilization Examines the processes of obtaining and maintaining sufficient membership and financial resources to maintain organized efforts for social change. These processes include Membership recruiting and retention, Acquisition of funds for organizational activities, and the characteristics of movement organizational structure (Tilly 1978; Gamson 1975)

The rise of environmentalism was critically based on an outpouring of liberal philanthropy. A growing number of foundations, including notable oil-based corporate foundations such as Arco and Exxon Educational Foundation, funded environmental advocacy. As Table I below shows, the vast majority of foundation funding goes to organizations with the discursive frames of Conservation, Preservation, and Reform Environmentalism (Brulle and Jenkins 2005).

Foundation Grants by Discourse of Recipient Organization - 2000

Discursive Frame	Amount of Grants ($ in Millions)	Distribution of Grant by Amount	Number of Grants	Distribution of Grants by Number
Wildlife Management	$4.34	2.7%	39	2.4%
Conservation	$19.64	12.5%	177	10.8%
Preservation	$42.97	27.3%	456	27.9%
Reform Environmentalism	$61.46	39.1%	547	33.5%
Environmental Justice	$2.79	1.8%	79	4.8%
Deep Ecology	$1.84	1.1%	84	5.1%
Ecofeminism	$2.26	1.4%	13	.8%
Ecotheology	$1.89	1.2%	21	1.3%
Undetermined	$20.06	12.8%	219	13.4%

Table I

The outgrowth was the growth of professionalized "protest businesses" (Jordan and Maloney 1997) and "astroturf organizations" (Loomis and Cigler 1998) which raise funds from institutional elites and isolated individual sympathizers and, rather than mobilizing them collectively, "speaks on their behalf." To reach potential contributors, the environmental movement developed individually targeted mail campaigns which "involves narrowly crafted messages delivered to narrowly targeted slices of the population in impersonal ways" (Skocpol 2003:232). This focus on "designer issues" atomizes the environmental movement's appeal into a series of unrelated issue campaigns, thus undercutting attempts to build a larger movement based on a unified viewpoint. This has accelerated the decline in national civic participation by providing an alternative to direct participation (Skocpol 1999, 2003, Putnam 2000). Instead of the hard work of lobbying your representative or organizing civic projects, one can behave like an intelligent consumer by checkbook donations to your favorite environmental advocate.

Additionally, professionalized advocacy undermines the participation skills and leadership capacity of a social movement organization. Participatory structures facilitate the development of indigenous leadership capabilities, and increase the membership's ability to meaningfully participate in organizational governance. However, the oligarchic structure of most environmental movement organizations creates a situation in which the initiation, decision making and implementation of the organization's activities are dominated by the professional staff, and thus fails to cultivate the initiative or leadership skills of the membership (Rochon 1998:137). Thus as a consequence of this type of professionalization, the mobilization capacity of the environmental movement has declined, and concomitantly, their political power.

Finally, this funding has channeled the environmental movement into more moderate discourses and conventional forms of action. A recent examination of foundation grants to the environmental movement for 1970-2000 (Brulle and Jenkins 2005) shows that the overwhelming majority of foundation funding to the environmental movement goes to the most moderate and professionalized environmental organizations. While total environmental funding has grown by almost five-fold per decade since 1970, this growth has been confined to a relatively small number of large environmental organizations involved in professional advocacy. Most goes to conservation land trusts and staff-dominated advocacy and technical support organizations. It thus bypasses the most vital, democratic and innovative sectors of the environmental movement. Rather than investing in environmental justice or environmental health, foundations have focused on technicist liberal environmentalism, precisely at the time that liberal environmentalism has become increasingly ineffective. A small number of alternative foundations and public charities are only the funders of more diverse and grassroots based environmental mobilization.

While there are notable cases of foundations attempting to directly control movement activities (e.g. Snow 1992), the general pattern is a more indirect process of creating incentives for specific discourses, styles of organization, and tactics. Little funding goes to participatory membership associations, leaving the environmental movement ever more dependent on institutional philanthropy. This limits the range of viewpoints represented in the public arena, and discourages direct civic participation in environmental problem-solving (see also Brulle 2000, Brulle and Essoka 2005, Brulle and Jenkins 2005; Jenkins 2005). It fosters "a new civic America largely run by advocates and managers without members" (Skocpol 1999: 462), which is especially prominent in the U.S. environmental movement (Brulle 2000, 2005, Shaiko 1999, Skocpol 2003: 222). These organizations are run as benign oligarchies with self-selecting boards, staff dominance and little or no membership participation (Brulle 2000). Membership takes the form of "checkbook" membership. Members are financial contributors, not participants that guide programs and activities.

The result has been a neo-corporatist type of decision making in which foundation elites effectively pick the legitimate advocates. The reform environmental advocates are limited in their action and unable to directly mobilize constituents. A small network of foundations, corporations, environmental organizations and government agencies are central to environmental policy making. Environmental advocates have to adopt "reasonable" positions, and predictable orderly behavior, creating a top-down control over environmental advocacy (Manes 1990:60, Szasz 1992:524). This blunts the impact of the movement, contributing to the current rearguard campaign to protect older environmental policies.

Professionalization is not incompatible with grassroots mobilization. It needs to be harnessed to a broader political vision and networked with a variety of grassroots organizations. In its heyday, the civil rights movement exemplified a productive coalition between direct action protestors, local community campaigns, and national advocacy organizations (McAdam 1982 [1999]; Jenkins 1987, 2005). Likewise, the women's movement has built interorganizational coalitions between professional advocates and grassroots groups (Staggenborg 1990; Gelb and Palley 1996), including the development of hybrid forms of organization that combine centralized with decentralized structures (Bordt 1997; Minkoff 1995, 2002). The modern environmental movement has displayed little of this type of interorganizational coordination and minimal use of hybrid forms of organization. The dominant model is a top-down centralized structure driven by the staff with minimal participation mechanisms or grassroots linkages.

Unfavorable Political Opportunities

Our third explanation of the decline of the environmental movement's influence focuses on the shifts in the U.S. political opportunity structure. Social movements and their impacts on public policies are heavily conditioned by the external political and economic situation in which they exist. These external conditions create the political opportunity structure in which a movement operates. This is defined as "the (perceived) probability that actions will lead to success in achieving a desired outcome" (Goldstone and Tilly 2001: 182). Within a single country, with a continuous government structure, the political opportunity structure varies based upon two factors. First is the extent of cohesion or division within elites. Tilly (1978: 213-14) argues that closely divided and competitive political situations create opportunities for collective action by political challengers. A second "political ally" thesis advances the contrary claim that the greater the power of political allies, the greater the opportunities for action. A compliment to influential allies or external support is the extent of opposition encountered by a social movement.

From the perspective of Political Opportunity Structures analysis, the fate of modern environmentalism cannot be separated from the fate of progressive politics in America. Most of the environmental legislative successes were a product of the ascendancy of modern liberalism in the 1960s. The environmental movement emerged in a climate rife with other powerful social movements, including the anti-war, feminist, civil rights, and poverty rights movements. Elites were favorable to these movements and their mobilization and reinforcing pressures often created a favorable context for passing environmental legislation and securing important court victories. Government was seen as a neutral arbiter capable of addressing a wide variety of social problems. With high level of public trust in government, government was seen as an appropriate vehicle for addressing environmental problems. Although Figure 3 does not indicate a major increase in proactive House votes, this was the period in which the major features of modern environmental regulation were established (Andrews 1999). The expansion of environmental laws followed other major expansions in federal, state and local government activities based on the idea of a liberal interventionist state (Diesing 1982:213).

Liberal government interventions, however, became discredited due to a number of factors (Diesing 1982: 215-217). There were also major shifts in electoral and interest group politics, notably a decline in unions, the shift of the once solid Democratic South to the Republican column, and the rise of the neo-conservative and new religious right movements. Inspired by a memo by Lewis Powell in 1971 (NCRP 2004c:9), the neo-conservatives reinforced by their conservative religious allies launched a sustained and largely successful campaign against liberal environmentalism and the welfare state by promoting free market ideology. Over the next two decades, the neo-conservatives created a new network of think tanks, policy institutes and academic centers organized around a sustained and ideologically coherent program (Stefancic and Delgado 1996, NCRP 1999, 2004a, 2004b, 2004c). The key point in this program is to reestablish the dominance of market freedoms in U.S. social life. In specific, the goals are to: (1) redistribute wealth and income to investors who will stimulate capital accumulation; (2) reduce the welfare state and expand the market sector by privatizing governmental programs; and (3) reestablish social control by attacking ideas that support democratic solutions over market outcomes and reinforcing traditional religious, patriarchal and patriotic authority (Habermas 1989: 60-61). Neo-conservative ideas currently dominate the political process. Recent analyses of environmental beliefs (Dunlap, Xiao, and McCright 2001) have conclusively shown that environmentalism is closely tied to liberal political beliefs, and adherents to conservative viewpoints are highly likely to be opposed to the environmental movement. As a result, liberal environmentalists are in a defensive posture, trying to retain their historic achievements (Thompson 2004:2). Lacking a mobilized political base and facing unfavorable political elites, the environmental movement has been marginalized (Buell 2004:6).

The environmental movement has encountered two manifestations of neo-conservative opposition. First has been the rise of conservative think tanks in the environmental policy arena (NCRP 1999: 15-16, 24, Stefanicic and Delgado 1996). These think tanks either seek to discredit the scientific basis of environmental diagnoses, or, where this is not possible, promote market solutions. Second has been the rise of the anti-environmental movement. This countermovement emerged in the late 1970s

and first achieved power in the Reagan administration with the appointment of James Watt as Secretary of the Interior (Shabercoff 1993: 164). This countermovement expanded in the late 1980's into the "Wise Use Movement" (Helvarg 1994, Austin 2002, Buell 2004). With the election of G.W. Bush in 2000, it has assumed control over the management of federal environmental agencies. As a result, the environmental movement has been forced into a defensive posture, and has been unable to pursue an agenda to move forward in dealing with environmental issues (Buell 2004).

TOWARD A REVITALIZED ENVIRONMENTAL MOVEMENT

Since environmental problems originate in the social order, their resolution requires social change. Despite numerous calls for change to an ecologically sustainable society, how this could be advanced remains vague. As Dobson (1993: 192) argues, "the issue of social change is undertheorized in green politics." In essence, there is no plausible theory of transition to an ecologically sustainable society. Beck (1995) sees social change originating from multiple agents struggle at a number of locations both within and between institutions and the development of institutional self-criticism through fostering whistleblowers and debates among experts. Yet this is vulnerable to the criticisms of liberal environmentalism raised above. What is needed is a political theory of transition that can define alternatives and address the problem of ecological degradation. Such a theory needs to not only explain how technically we can alter our industrial and energy systems but how to develop the political will to bring about these changes. We can only sketch below the outlines of such a theory, focusing on both cultural and structural factors that influence social change and how this can inform the practices of the environmental movement.

The Struggle for Cultural Hegemony

Social change involves struggles in the cultural arena. Gramsci (1971) provides several important insights into the cultural dynamics of social change. First, social order is based on the acceptance of a common worldview. Changes in social structures are brought about through a redefinition of what constitutes the common sense embodied in the everyday practices of society. Accordingly, the maintenance and change of cultural systems is a key locus of political struggle (Bourdieu 1985:729). The political community should be seen as organized around the interaction between the dominant worldview and alternative challengers. This competition between the dominant and alternative worldviews is best described by the notion of cultural hegemony. The successful mobilization and reproduction of the active consent of the dominated groups by the ruling class is made possible through the ruling class' exercise of intellectual, moral and political leadership (Mann 1970). These hegemonic ideas form a collective will that unifies a political alliance. This process of the promulgation, development, and conflict over ideas creates a "war of position" or what we call today a "culture war." Based on cultural developments, there is also a political struggle between different political alliances. This struggle takes the form of a "war of position" where the different alliances face off against each other in elections and in other political confrontations. It is at this point that the struggle over political actions takes the form of social movement actions carried out by committed populations in identifiable organizations (Touraine 1977:25-26).

Social change involves both the creation and advocacy of alternative worldviews. This involves two distinct social groups. The first consists of a self-aware, mutually interacting "critical communities," i.e. "people whose experiences, reading, and interaction with each other help them to develop a set of cultural values that is out of step with the larger society" (Rochon 1998:8). These critical communities create alternative worldviews. Social movements then play a critical role in the advocacy and acceptance of these alternative discourses, eventually creating political pressure to implement changes (Rochon 1998: 51).

What does this mean for the environmental movement? A first step in revitalizing the environmental movement is the restoration of political vision. There is a critical need for the environmental movement to reformulate itself as a substantive challenge to the cultural hegemony of the neo-conservatives and their religious conservative allies. The dominant discursive frames that have defined the environmental movement are limited and fail to connect to a larger political vision

(Killingsworth and Palmer 1992:79, Evernden 1992:72). There is a need to substantially rethink and develop a cogent discourse for the environmental movement. It is well beyond one person's capacity to articulate this frame. A revitalized environmental discourse needs to move beyond the traditional discourses and deal with the root causes of environmental degradation. This means shifting from a "scientifically inspired policy of revealing horror scenarios to a social-science based redirection of accountability" (Beck 1995:16). Holding social institutions accountable for the environmental consequences of their actions involves changing the social conditions in which decisions about the natural environment are made, including notions of private property rights. The movement also needs to bridge the divide between addressing localized problems and those that lack site-specific effects, such as global warming and the loss of biodiversity. While is partially a question of immediacy, it also speaks to the need to link environmentalism to a larger vision of a just and sustainable society and a return to the environmentalism of Thoreau, Carson and Commoner.

At its core, the restoration of a political vision to the environmental movement involves the revitalization of the enlightenment project (Habermas 1998). The enlightenment project has as its central objective the self determination of human communities based on reasoned public deliberations. It is clear that to address environmental issues, we need to be able to have a broad based democratic discussion to establish universal and common goals, including environmental protection (Minteer 2002: Bowersox 2002: 84-86). Thus the enlightenment project today consists in developing the capacity to exercise effective guidance of our economic and administrative systems by democratic action. Bronner (2004: 29) argues that this entails "fostering the will to know and fight against prejudice, the insistence upon tolerance and reciprocity, the demand for a democratic public sphere, and the accountability of institutions" (Bronner 2004:29).

This process needs to be seen as an incremental, and democratic process. Constructing an ecologically sustainable society has never been accomplished before, and so we do not know in advance what will or will not work, including ethics, institutions, or individual personality characteristics. Thus any efforts to create this society should proceed through a practice of trial and error in a "logic of justified hope and controlled experiment (Habermas 1971:283-284). This restored political vision can then form part of a post-liberal unified progressive effort to enable democratic guidance of social institutions. "The ability to provide such a vision could in fact emerge as environmentalism's most important challenge , and, if successful, most valuable potential contribution to the development of an integrated alternative politics in the twenty-first century" (Gottlieb 2001:280)."

Second, the movement needs to engage in a sustained struggle for cultural hegemony. This means building cultural institutions that counter the current dominance of corporate interests in the mass media (Artz and Murphy 2000). It means moving beyond simply "getting the facts out" to building counter-hegemonic institutions, whose role will be to elaborate and defend a restored progressive environmental vision. This means new think tanks, media outlets, internet blogging, and other innovative techniques that enhance and expand the participatory dialogue.

Enhancing the Political Capacity of the Environmental Movement

Social change is also constituted by a structural component. In examining the institutional makeup of large-scale social change, social movement theory emphasizes the role of civil society, arguing that this autonomous sphere outside the market and the state is a critical source of innovation (McAdam and Zald 1996; Sztompka 1993).[3] Civil society is constituted by multiple types of voluntary organization, including "clearly defined group interests; through associations and cultural establishments; up to public interests groups and churches or charitable organizations" (Habermas 1996:355). Civic organizations are a key link in translating the impulses from everyday experience into political demands for change (Habermas 1998:252).

Because these organizations are based in the deliberations of their members, the institutional dynamics defined by market forces and the political power of the state are minimized in their operation. This independence makes it possible to generation democratic action (Skocpol 2003). This puts civic associations, and, most importantly, social movement organizations at the center of the renewal and

transformation of social institutions (Habermas 1996:365). Social movement organizations develop and advocate alternative discourses and practices, and present these social problems and their solutions in the public arena. Thus social movements can be conceived as "learning processes through which latently available structures of rationality are transposed into social practice - so that in the end they find an institutional embodiment" (Habermas 1979: 125). Civil society is the key site for generating democratic control over political and economic institutions.

Civil society is not the only site where social change can be developed. As Beck (1986:23) has argued, the mass media, science and law are also important for fostering social learning. The administrative state is also a site for expanding the alternatives considered in decision making. Whistleblowers, committed activists, and contentious public administrators can foster the development of dialogue and democracy (Dryzek and Torgerson 1993:136). However, without a robust social movement to lead these efforts, little long-term change is likely to occur. A strong democracy (Barber 1984) requires the development of strong democratically organized social movements.

The effective translation of everyday life concerns into political demands by social movement organizations requires that social institutions be responsive to democratically formed public opinion. The public sphere is the arena in which citizens have historically exerted their influence over collective decisions (Habermas 1962). The public sphere makes it possible to "subject persons or affairs to public reason, and to make political decisions subject to appeal before the court of public opinion" (Habermas 1989: 141). University forums, newspaper editorials, internet bloggers as well as mass media create forums for debates and discussions to identify problems, develop solutions, and create sufficient political will to get constitutional governments to respond (Habermas 1996:359-360, 1998:248-249). This allows for social learning based on democratic deliberation (Calhoun 1993:392-393). The capability of a society to learn and respond to changed conditions depends on the generation of alternative world views, the open communication of these views into the general stock of cultural knowledge, and the use of this knowledge in development of social institutions.

From this perspective, to successfully address ecological problems requires a "radical and broadly effective democratization" (Habermas 1991) of our society. Environmental movement organizations are potentially key to this process of social change. By mobilizing citizens and providing a competent, legitimate and authentic representation of their needs, environmental movement organizations can be catalysts for the development of change to bring about a democratic and ecologically sustainable society. There are four areas that we suggest that could enhance the political capacity of the environmental movement.

First is through creating participatory environmental movement organization. Professional expertise and technical knowledge are critical to identifying the sources of problems and assessing solutions. But expertise needs to be guided by a broader political agenda and participatory movement organizations that mobilize popular support. The expert's role as an omnipotent seer needs to be replaced by being a contributor to "democratic science" i.e. a science "that is cognitively accessible and politically accountable to nonprofessional publics" (Brown 1998:ix). This means creating democratic participatory structures that facilitate the development of indigenous leadership and meaningful participation in governance. Democratic organizations will be better able to mobilize and articulate a broader diverse agenda.

We suggest four specific experiments that should promote this goal. First, the influence of foundations on the structure of environmental organizations needs to be seriously reconsidered. While foundation support is critical for many environmental movement organizations, this funding can marginalize or restrict the participation of members. As discussed more fully below, steps need to be taken to ensure that foundation support does not undermine member participation. Second, authentic membership participation needs to be developed. The overwhelming majority of environmental movement organizations are benign oligarchies. There are large, democratic national environmental organizations, such as the Sierra Club (Skocpol 2003: 269). Its methods of encouraging participation by members provides examples of how to expand the democratic capacity of environmental movement organizations. Third, to meaningfully participate, members need information about the activities of the

organization, and to engage in authentic communication with the leadership of the organization. Environmental organizations should enhance the knowledge of their membership by making their finances, sources of support, and program commitments available for public inspection via the internet. The internet and movement publications should be revised to create membership input and debates about programs and goals. Fourth, the environmental movement needs to develop stronger interorganizational coalitions and networks that link together diverse organizations working on multiple problems. Much as the women's movement has developed hybrid and diverse organizations that work across multiple issues, the environmental movement needs to address existing divisions between multiple discourses, scales of organization and problem definitions. The creation of a democratic society cannot be realized by employing undemocratic means. There is no separation of ends and means in this area.

A second area is reforming environmental philanthropy. Since the long-term effectiveness of the movement depends on popular mobilization, environmental philanthropy needs to promote democratic and participatory practices. As noted, the overwhelming majority of funding goes to professional advocacy and technical support organizations. Foundations need to put a priority on funding democratic leadership development and participatory processes. One hopeful sign is the emergence of alternative foundations that seek to create a mutual dialogue between the foundation and recipient organization. By bringing representatives of the recipient movements into the grant-giving process, these alternative foundations have created a new model for innovative grant-giving (Faber and McCarthy 2001: 47-48; Ostrander 1995). Foundation boards need to be made more representative of the constituencies they hope to serve. Second is thinking strategically about the long-term impact of environmental projects. As the NCRP reports (1999, 2004a, 2004b, 2004c) argue, "new right" philanthropy has been strategic, addressing a wide range of issues from a coherent political philosophy. Funding has been programmatic rather than project-driven, large-scale and sustained. While we have no precise comparative data, our sense is that this "new right" philanthropy is much larger, sustained and more strategic than environmental philanthropy. Third is creating greater transparency about environmental philanthropy. One side is better information about foundation programs. The Environmental Grantmakers Association[4], the National Network of Grantmakers[5] and Resources for Global Sustainability[6] make information about foundations more readily available but cover only a small portion of environmental philanthropy. A review of cumulative editions of the Foundation Directory identified over 4,500 foundations that claim environmental programs (Brulle and Jenkins 2005). Of these, a little over 200 are members of EGA, about 150 are members of NNG, and around 1,200 are profiled annually by RGS. The other side is the recipients. Internal democracy is impossible unless environmental movement organizations are required to provide full disclosure on all grants, contracts and other sources of income. The current regulations require only reporting of broad aggregates and substantial individual contributions.

CONCLUSION

To move towards an environmentally sustainable society, the environmental movement needs to reorient itself and increase our social learning capacity. Social science can contribute by identifying the social origins of environmental degradation and by identifying practices that contribute to effective action. The environmental movement is currently ensnared in a rearguard battle, attempting to preserve earlier gains defined by mainstream discourses. Its discourse lacks effective resonance and fails to link to a broader vision of social justice. It promotes piecemeal solutions that typically do not address the root causes of environmental problems. Whether market-based measures can be harnessed to a broader environmental agenda is less important than developing a broader environmental agenda. This will require a rejuvenated environmental movement based on democratic practice and organization. The specifics are less important than the method. As Commoner (1971: 300) argued: "But none of us – singly or sitting in committee – can possibly blueprint a specific 'plan' for resolving the environmental crisis...The world is being carried to the brink of ecological disaster...by the phalanx of powerful economic, political, and social forces that constitute the march of history. Anyone who proposes to cure the environmental crisis undertakes thereby to change the course of history...But this is a competence reserved to history itself, for sweeping social change can be designed only in the workshop of rational, informed, collective social action. That we must act is now clear. The question which we face is how." This is the challenge of the 21st century.

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Endnotes

[1] National Cancer Institute SEER Table I-15 - available online at http://srab.cancer.gov/devcan/

[2] Shellenberger and Nordhous 2004. This essay and a summary of the ongoing debate can be accessed at http://www.grist.org/news/maindish/2005/01/13/doe-intro/

[3] Skocpol 2003, Barber 1984, Calhoun 1993, Putnam 2000.

[4] The Environmental Grantmakers Association is online at www.ega.org

[5] The National Network of Grantmakers is online at www.nng.org

[6] Resources for Global Sustainability is online at www.rgs.org