

**Nancy's Reaction Paper**

Posted: Mar 28, 2005 10:53 PM

Determinants of Strategies and Tactics

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The four articles in this week's reading list provide detailed analysis of the current discourse on strategies and tactics that various NGOs adopt around the world. After having read the four articles, I realized that there were a number of common threads across the articles, although each article had its own unique aim and thrust.

Dalton, Rohrschneider, and Recchia (2003) provide a cogent and rich analysis on modes of political action adopted by ENGOs. The authors cluster modes of action into four distinct groups: conventional activities, networking behaviors, mobilizing activities, and unconventional activities. The crux of the article, in my mind, was their examination on the factors that determine the modes of action regularly used by NGOs. The authors posit three theoretical frameworks: resource mobilization theory, ideology, and positive opportunity structures. The authors contend that the environmental movement in both developed and developing countries taps into diverse strategies of political action. Moreover, the finding of this article underscore that the notion that the "environmental movement as a whole is losing its antisystem orientation" (Dalton and Recchia, 2003).

In a somewhat similar vein, Carmen and Balsler (2002) are concerned with better understanding the kind of factors that lead to an environmental movement organization (EMO) adopting a certain "repertoire of action" (Carmen and Balsler, 2002). The authors offer four interrelated schema that shape an organization's decision as to which repertoire of action to employ. These four schema are: experience, core values and beliefs, environmental philosophy, and political ideology. I found the comparative analysis of FOE and Greenpeace enlightening because although these are "household names" in the ENGO sector and I, as probably many, am familiar with the general scope of each organization's genesis and work, this is the first academic analysis I have read on any particular ENGO. Another salient element of this article was the section on future investigation – the two lines of inquiry suggested (intraorganizational conflict and mutable nature of organizational sensemaking) seem both timely and compelling.

Edwards and Andrews (2005) investigate environmentalism at the local level. The goal of this research is to generate a more comprehensive understanding of contemporary environmentalism of social movements more generally. The authors survey a group of North Carolina environmental organizations and they look at five variable and then examine three sets of comparisons based on: geographic scope, voluntary and professionalized environmental organizations, and disruptive tactical repertoire. It appears there are two key findings: (i) groups that rely on a mixture of volunteers and professional are more formalized and have greater levels of success at mobilizing people and (ii) those that engage in disruptive and routinized protest tend to be more similar to one another.

Richards and Heard (2005) assess the state of affairs of marine ENGOs (MENGOs) in Europe. They expand on the insider/outsider paradigm which initially struck me as over-simplified. The authors describe several factors affecting MENGO campaigns across Europe, such as, self-awareness, evolving strategic approach, growing awareness of importance of coalitions. The authors suggest that "the most fundamental dilemma currently facing the MENGO community is the decision whether to 'go it along'...or to work in coalition" (Richards and Heard, 2005).

Discussion questions:

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|  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>· Is there another sub-set of ENGOs besides MENGOS that may be experiencing the a similar dilemma to the one described by Richards and Heard?</li><li>· What are the implications of the idea that the environmental movement as a whole is losing its antisystem orientation as stated by Dalton et al.?</li><li>· Carmin and Balser provide a comparative analysis of Greenpeace and FOE in terms of their repertoires of action. How would this analysis differ if one were to compare another type of social movement organizations, such as, human rights (Amnesty International and Human Rights Watch), or two big consumption-focused NGOs?</li></ul> |
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