The practice of environmentalism: Creating ecological habitus

(from *Developing a Compassionate Sense of Place: Environmental and social Conscientization in Environmental Organizations*,
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This paper draws on Bourdieu's sociological approach to expand social movement theory, while offering a sociologically robust direction for movements themselves. Given the relatively ineffectual position of environmentalism in North America, I argue that the environmental movement would be better served by conceptualizing itself as working to create an ecological habitus. Co-generated within its social field, habitus conveys cultural encoding yet in a non-deterministic manner. The habitus of a less-than-environmentally-aware society are problematic. Bourdieu's theory of practice is compared with Eyerman and Jamison's notion of social movements as cognitive praxis, in order to develop a more useful synthesis for a broadly based habitus of environmental practice. In this approach, environmental social movement organizations become the social space in which this new, ecologically more appropriate, logic of practice can be "caught" through the informal or incidental learning that occurs as a result of participation with social movement organizations.

An obvious conclusion of the considerable environmental degradation now evident is that environmentalism has been less than effective in changing attitudes, lifestyles and social structures that constitute the rapacious appetite of contemporary society, despite considerable effort and evidence of environmental decline. This paper will draw on the sociological thought of Pierre Bourdieu to expand the way that we conceptualize social movements, with a focus on environmentalism. It draws on Bourdieu's concept of habitus to explain why environmental social change has been so difficult: in an environmentally unsound society transformation of the habitus in more ecologically appropriate ways will be very difficult. By building on Lofland's idea of social movements as "insurgent realities" and Eyerman and Jamison's description of the "cognitive praxis" of social movements, Bourdieu's sociological tools expand our understanding of the flaws and potentials of environmentalism. A Bourdieusian "theory of practice" suggests explicit attention to social movement involvement as a site of social learning that changes the habitus, that is, develops an environmentally-aware *modus vivendi*.

Parson (2001) began an edited volume on Canadian environmental policy by questioning whether incremental improvements (ecological modernization) or paradigmatic changes were

required to address contemporary environmental needs. Environmental organizations vary widely in their orientations, and in what they perceive as organizational or movement goals. Saving particular natural areas, changing lifestyles, promoting an ecological worldview change, sustainability policy battles, sustainable development, recycling and green consumerism are among the foci for various environmental social movement organizations (ESMOs). Rucht (1999) described the effect of this diversity as the "paradox of success and failure" (p. 205) The environmental movement has shifted attention to environmental issues – although primarily just on individual levels – without having much impact on large-scale environmental degradation. Some analyses have seen the problem being deeper than movement strategy, implicating a cultural worldview that, they argue, permeates Euro-American societies (e.g., Leopold, 1966; Merchant, 1980; Naess, 1989; Orr, 1994). Environmental sociologists observe that the "structure-agency dilemma" is central to the study of environmental problems and their solutions (Dunlap et al., 2002, p. 9).

The problem is worsened in that analyses of environment-society associations and contemporary communication of environmental messages miss the link with 'practice' – what real people (CEOs, middle managers, students, truck drivers, and all the rest) do in real life, and how this constitutes societal structures and institutions. These questions require attention to a "theory of practice," and to the "learning" and unlearning of these practices and what underlies them. For Bourdieu, this underlying component is an embodied habitus.

The argument of this paper will unfold in several steps. First, I will argue that social movements aim to create social change, not just engage in political contention. However, such change is not only on the cognitive level, as evidenced by the research on learning in social movements that will be examined. This literature highlights the often tacit character of learning. That cultural knowledge has a considerable tacit dimension lends support to utilization of Bourdieu's approach, specifically that social movements can be the "field" within which dispositions consistent with the new reality promulgated by movement framing can form and be maintained. Therefore, Bourdieu provides a robust theoretical framework for movement organizations to be more intentional about their informal learning strategies. Ultimately, the goal of social movements is to routinize practices in line with their movement praxis. In the case of

ESMOs the goal is an ecologically sound logic of practice, underlain by the routinization embodied in an ecological habitus.

Social Movements

Dominant theories of social movements emphasize their contentions in the fields of politics (McAdam, Tarrow & Tilly, 2001). However, it is possible to conceive of social movements as trying to generate cultural change, that is, change the values, behaviours and symbols of the populace (Hart, 1996; Earl, 2004; Johnston & Klandermans, 1995; Polletta, 2002). If changes are to be generated in the populace, social movements must be more than just political contentions, and theories of social change that cross the structure-agency divide would be productive (Crossley, 2002). People learn, meaning that they acquire movement beliefs, but how?

Among the numerous perspectives on social movements, Lofland (1996) describes social movements as "insurgent realities" that provide "collective challenges to mainstream conceptions of how society ought to be organized and how people ought to live" (p. 1). This implies a normative dimension. Lofland explains that in and through the personal and institutional decision-making done in society, some ideas and courses of action emerge as better and more "true" than others. Therefore, a socially sanctioned way-to-be and way-to-think, and a social order– a reality – is produced, and reproduced. The flipside of mainstream reality-producing is the reality-excluding of those who have a different version of the "way-to-be and way-to-think, and way-to-interact." In other words – to use Bourdieu's conceptual tool (which I will explain in detail below) – those who have a different habitus. Social movements aim to generate and sustain this alternate "reality;" by being more conscious of this aim of their practice, they may be better able to deploy educative strategies that have more impact.

In Polletta's (2002, 2005) view, this is social movements doing culture work. While welcoming more attention in social movements to "culture," she bemoans the narrow conceptions that seem to dominate such attention. Culture is more than something carried by cultural actors, for example, values, normative commitments or discursive practices; culture also constitutes the structures, legitimate resources and actors themselves. For example, Bordt (1997) shows how feminist culture shaped feminist organizational forms, while Polletta (2005) demonstrated "how

participatory democracy became white." Polletta concludes that we need a conceptualization of culture that does not see it as a contrast to structure, nor limit it to values and practices carried as resources by social movement actors.

As Eyerman and Jamison (1991) depict them, social movements are distinguished by the new thinking that they bring to the social scene. In fact, Eyerman and Jamison centre the "cognitive praxis" of a movement in their approach. By cognitive praxis, they mean social movements are "producers of knowledge." In their analysis, social movements have particular ways for knowledge creation and dissemination, such that a social movement *is* its cognitive praxis. As one example, the two analysts described the environmental movement across several countries in Europe.

> The movement provided, we might say, the social context for a new kind of knowledge to be practiced. There was no talk, before the environmental movement began to put its ecological cosmology into practice, of ecological living or ecological lifestyles... The movement made the space for those types of knowledge and experience to be able to emerge. (p. 73)

Eyerman and Jamison's perspective about social movements as cognitive praxis has some usefulness. However, their conceptualization needs expansion, primarily about the role of the "cognitive" in "praxis."

Social Movement Learning

Adult educators have theorized social movements as sites of learning (Finger, 1989; Foley, 1999; Holford, 1995; Holst, 2002; Jarvis, 1998; Kilgore, 1999; Mayo, 1999; Welton, 1993). Social movement organizations do, of course, provide many deliberately educational programmes such as workshops or courses, but I wish to focus here on the informal or incidental learning that may occur through participation in the organization (Falk, 2005; Marsick & Watkins, 2001). Empirical studies have tended to be ethnographic in both adult education (e.g., Branagan & Boughton, 2003; Foley, 1999) and the social movements literature (e.g., Conway, 2004; Ryan, 2005). The latter has not drawn productively on the considerably more extensive education literature on learning in social movements (Hall & Turay, 2006).

From this literature, I draw four conclusions that lead me toward Bourdieu's concepts as assistance in understanding the experientially-based learning that may occur through social

movement participation. First, there is not yet a comprehensive understanding of these sorts of learning environments or outcomes. Second, research has typically focused on learning as gleaned from activist accounts, and more attention needs to be devoted to ordinary members. Third, what is labelled as "learning" has become that which is conscious to the movement participants themselves, although upon reflection, they often express "surprise" (Foley, 1999, p. 3) at what they have learned. However, fourth, careful ethnographies consistently show that there is a tacit dimension to "knowledge" – that we act in ways and come to know (learn) in ways that are not fully available to our cognitive attention.

Janet Conway's (2004) study of a social justice network in Toronto over several years highlighted the interaction of identity, social location (which she termed "place"), and knowledge production in a social movement. She concluded "movement-based knowledge is largely tacit, practical and unsystematized.... This multifaceted praxis fostered new practices and emergent theories of knowledge production" (pp. 8-9). Social movements were sites of learning. Some of that learning was tacit or pre-cognitive.

Similarly, Mick Smith (2001) concluded that anti-roads protesters, tree-sitters and other "radical environmentalists" sought to develop a vastly different ethos, attentive and committed to an environmentally sound life lived in concrete relations of "place." Through this work, Smith also shows how the regular way of modern society is normally reinforced such that it becomes conditioned, unreflexively taken-for-granted as the "genuine" way. In fact, he convincingly shows that the environmental ethos developed by the movement participants could not be expressed in terms acceptable to the ethos of the society it fundamentally critiques. Moreover, neither can it be codified in the universalistic and normative manner of formal rationality, since ecological sensitivity must be attentive to its environmental context. Smith concluded that the goal of radical environmentalism is a practical ecological *sense*, an environmental expertise developed from gaining a "feel for the game" (to use a favourite expression of Bourdieu's) of living ecologically. In other words, Smith (2001) concludes, "an ecological habitus" (p. 198).

These studies draw conclusions that resemble experiential learning theory. In contemporary learning theories, learners are understood as active agents. Learning does not occur because teaching happens but because of what goes on in the learner. Learning is, however,

socially situated and embodied, and therefore an intersubjective process in conjunction with the activity of the learner. Fenwick (2000) describes five experiential learning theories that are primarily variations on this situatedness. However, because humans operate in social settings, learners may or may not be entirely aware of the knowledge constructions that they are developing. This challenges the emphasis on "reflection upon experience" in most experiential learning theory (Le Cornu, 2005).

In this vein, Le Cornu (2005) begins to build a model of experiential learning that emphasizes the process of internalisation. Doing so highlights the multifaceted complexity of learning, that it is not a sequential or linear process, and that we "learn" or are affected by all experiences, whether we think about them or not. Much of what we know is part of our bank of tacit knowledge. Since most of life's practices – toilet-training, social interaction, recycling, not-littering, getting to work via carbon-intensive means – were once learned, then routinized and in a sense "forgotten" by the mind (but not the body), we need a notion of learning that does not rely only on thought. So, whether conscious or unconscious to the learner (who is, by the way, fully immersed in a social context and not an independent, autonomous thinker of the Cartesian variety), learning "must be understood as the gradual transformation of knowledge into *knowing*, and part of that transformation involves a deepening internalisation to the point that people and their 'knowing' are totally integrated one with the other" (Le Cornu, 2005, p. 175, emphasis added). This has considerable implications for the development of a routinely environmentally attuned lifestyle – what I will describe as an ecological habitus.

Crossley (2002) finds social movement theory inadequate because of its overemphasis on movement agents' intentionality. He asserts that social movement theories that give primacy to strategies based solely on consciously managed discourse "seem inadequate to express the depth and richness of that which must be connected to. It is not simply a matter of cognitive frames, but of deeply held and embodied dispositions; an ethos, and ultimately, a way of life" (pp. 142-3). Crossley insists that social movement theory deficiencies are best met by Bourdieu's theory of practice and calls habitus the "hinge between agency and structure" (p. 177). Bourdieu has also been heavily used by theorists to explain social reproduction. Therefore, to Bourdieu we turn to give direction for a sociologically robust approach to learning that can be applied by SMOs.

Bourdieu and the Logic of Practice

Bourdieu describes his sociological approach as explaining "the logic of practice." He conceptualizes society as space, both symbolically and substantively. He posits that actors interact within interlocking and multilayered social "fields." A field is a network of relations. It is not just the actors on a particular field, but the configuration of relations between actors and their relative positions – differential resources, power, marginality and command of capital are part of these configurations.

The field constituted by its interactions generate "habitus." Habitus, in Bourdieu's thought, is the internalized set of general dispositions in a social setting. As social and cultural norms, habitus generates practices and beliefs as it forms individual and social representations of the world (Bellamy, 1993).

> The theory of action that I propose (with the notion of habitus) amounts to saying that most human actions have as a basis something quite different from intention, that is, acquired dispositions which make it so that an action can and should be interpreted as oriented toward one objective or another without anyone being able to claim that that objective was a conscious design. (Bourdieu, 1998, pp. 97-98)

Habitus is a set of embodied rather than consciously held dispositions, or tendencies; the concept occupies middle ground in the structure-agency tension that has characterized social theory.[1]

The dynamism of habitus and field co-generate a "logic of practice," the context-appropriate ways of thinking, acting and interacting. Since the English "logic of practice" tends to convey cognitive action, it is the French expression, the *sens pratique*, that I wish to emphasize – an embodied habitus that unreflexively generates the way to be, the way to think, and way to interact. Mick Smith (2001) picks this up to describe the practical ecological *sense*. An ecological

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[1] LiPuma (1993) characterizes Bourdieu's theorization of the co-generation of fields and habitus as his way of accounting for culture while specifying how people carry internalizations that produce practical logic appropriate for perception and action in social settings. Interestingly, Polletta (2002) explicitly states, "Structures, as I conceptualize them, are patterns of durable relations" (p. 9), which is precisely Bourdieu's definition of field. Polletta wishes to recover a wider conception of "culture" as being involved in constituting structures, which seems to me better handled by the specifics of Bourdieu's sociological theory. Bourdieu and his exegetes argue his approach is designed to avoid such antimonies as structure-agency, subjective-objective (e.g., Bourdieu and Wacquant, 1992; Lane, 2000), and, in Smith's (2001) view, even the division of culture/nature.

habitus would generate more environmentally sound lifestyle practices, that is, lifestyles grounded in what makes sense in that socio-ecological location.

The result of the dialectical cogeneration of field and habitus is that we – our ways of thinking, ways of acting, and so on – are produced by our social conditions, which are constituted by and embedded in us through the diverse but consistent social relations of our biographies. This generates a "feel for the game" of THAT social milieu. The habitus is embodied at a deeply, pre-reflexive level, resulting in what Wacquant (2004) calls the "prelogical logic of practice."

In the conclusion to his introductory environmental sociology textbook, Michael Bell describes the goal as "living environmentally without trying" – as routinized habits. Such habits at the individual level serve to reduce one's ecological impact. To make such practices routine, they need to be outgrowths of a habitus which privileges ecological considerations. He points out the attitude/behaviour split – that proenvironmental attitudes are not matched by environmentally sound lifestyles. Bell attributes this to "social structure. We do not have complete choice in what we do. Our lives are socially organized" (Bell, 2004, p. 225). The notion of habitus implies that our very means of operating in a social milieu are organized, such that other ways of being do not make sense, even were they within our conscious awareness. Habitus generates practical actions – that is, actions are "practical," because they work in the field. Bell concludes: "We are more likely to regard the environment in environmentally appropriate ways when our community life is organized to encourage such regard" (p. 248), but that contemporary community life is not so organized. The result: transformation of the habitus held by an individual will be difficult apart from the social fields in which the person finds him or herself.

Some scholars have asserted that Bourdieu's theory cannot account for progressive social change (e.g., Lau, 2004; Mesny, 2002). It is true that for Bourdieu, the habitus is basically conservative. He states, "[habitus] tends to ensure its own constancy and its defense against change through the selection it makes within new information by rejecting information capable of calling into question its accumulated information" (Bourdieu & Wacquant, 1992, p. 167). The coincidence between habitus and field then allows structure to meet the expectations of the habitus. Habitus is thus responsible for a systematic "misrecognition" of the nature of the "fields" and institutions within which agents operate, for example, resistence to information about the

dramatic effect of contemporary humans on the earth. Thus, the intransigence of society to social change efforts is (partly) explained.[2]

Bourdieu's concept of habitus has also been criticized as deterministic (Bohman, 1999; Butler, 1999; Jenkins, 1992). In response, he considers that most such critiques underplay the strength of forces in fields and apportion more ability to individuals to change their dispositions. "What happens to an object in the field does not depend only on the characteristics of the object, but also on the forces exerted by the field upon it" (Bourdieu & Wacquant, 1992, p. 97).[3] Elsewhere Bourdieu explains, "No doubt agents do construct their vision of the world. But this construction is carried out under structural constraints" (Bourdieu, 1990, p. 130). Yet habitus is generative of practice, so creative change can occur as the ever-shifting conditions of the field enable different interactions (Bourdieu & Wacquant, 1992).

Habits of mind and social practice are shaped by pervasive cultural forces and the existing social fields at odds with societal change or new environmental paradigms (Bowers, 1993). An habitus is neither compelled by the field (as in structuralism), nor freely chosen by actors (as in rational choice theories or phenomenology). Thus, habitus is the hinge between objectivist and subjectivist accounts of human action. Aboufalia (1999) responds to this criticism, "It may be that those who charge Bourdieu with determinism are in fact detecting recurring invocations of determinism's kissing cousin, the inertial" (p. 168). Bourdieu characterises actors as "falling into" habitus. To conclude, we are not creators of our lives, so much as reworkers of the raw materials yielded to us by history and biography.

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[2] A thorough explanation of social change/reproduction needs to address the struggle over the various species of capital, especially that which Bourdieu calls "symbolic capital" – "the power to give a certain meaning to the social world" (Meisenhelder, p. 169). Environmentalism has extremely limited resources of symbolic capital compared to other actors in their struggles on the broader social field, which partly explains the inhibitions against environmentally-sensitive lifestyle practices.

[3] Shusterman (1999) summarizes one reaction of critics to the concept of habitus:

> Much of the resistence to the *habitus* (italics in original) derives from the assumption that it must function somehow as an underlying causal mechanism. Since we tend to assume that behavioral explanations must be either in terms of conscious rules or brute causality, and since *habitus* is clearly not the former, one implicitly (but falsely) assumes that it must somehow involve some hidden causal mechanism that Bourdieu's analysis fails to display (p. 4).

An Ecological Logic of Practice

The question remains: how is social change to be accomplished? As co-generative operants, Bourdieu insists that a focus on either the field or the habitus would be inappropriate and ineffective. Much rests upon the recursiveness in the system of habitus and field. Key to outcomes in this system, however, is understanding the "prelogical" nature of the habitus (Wacquant, 2004). Thus Bourdieu's theory of practice differs from the cognitively held praxis of Eyerman and Jamison.

Since we cannot think about everything, much of life's action needs to be routinized: the outcome of habituated dispositions. Duenkel's (1994) phenomenological study of eight consciously ecocentric wilderness guides showed how difficult it is to maintain that philosophy and concomitant lifestyle in a society with a very different orientation and structure. Duenkel characterized an ecocentric orientation as "not separate" and "not superior" to the earth or other creatures. In her study, the individuals described their slipping back toward the separated and superior attitudes of the dominant milieu. As a *cognitive* praxis, they bought the deep ecological worldview. The difficulty was maintaining this at the level of *sens pratique*. The social field mitigated against this ability, facilitating a less ecological lifestyle praxis. Nevertheless, the disjuncture between cognitive praxis and *sens pratique* helps generate reflexivity (Bourdieu & Wacquant, 1992; Meisenhelder, 1997).

Since society is a field centred around hegemonic versions of realities that are contrary to the social movement's goals, and therefore, these hegemonies must be contended against, insurgent social movements will have to be intentional about their reality-making. Naidoo (2004) considers this a limitation of Bourdieu. "The exclusive focus on the dominant principles structuring society excludes an analysis of social forces that are strong enough to challenge dominant forces but too weak to entirely displace such force" (p. 468). Karakayali (2004) argues a similar point in comparing Adorno's critical theory and Bourdieu. He believes that critical theory places perhaps too much faith in cognitive analysis and would be improved by aspects of Bourdieu's theory of practice. But he also argues that Bourdieu allows too little space for creative imagining of alternatives.

It is possible that reflexivity can be conditioned as part of the *sens pratique*, particularly

among those whose habitus is marginal to the dominant poles of a field (Adams, 2006). However, this is not to lose the embodied character of the habitus, particularly among those who are not so marginal and therefore for whom the dominant constructions of reality adequately describe the world in which they operate. An alternative logic of practice – that of ecologically sound lives – will need to be creative and explicit, since it appears illogical to the dominant social field's existing logics. In their efforts to rename the social reality, insurgent social movements must develop this reflexive analysis, as Conway's (2004) study showed. This does not overemphasize the *cognitive* praxis of a movement. Habitus's nonreflexiveness does not entail that it absolutely cannot surface to awareness (Lau, 2004).

To this point I have not specifically described an ecological habitus. To do so, we can take a cue from Bourdieu's relational sociology. Social relations are situated, embodied beings are located; the habitus is conditioned in its field. In transposing Bourdieu's tools to environmentally familiar language, the word "field" can be replaced with "place" It is beyond the scope of this paper to give a full exposition of the meanings of "place." Suffice it to say that no place is narrowly bound, isolated, nor the same for all members (Cresswell, 2004). A place incorporates objective and subjective components, in ways that are quite similar to Bourdieu's characterization of society as multi-layered and interlocking fields, wherein a sense of place and strategies to be employed therein are relevant. Now, let us extend beyond the anthropocentrism of *sociological* theory to *mitake oyasin* – all my relations in place, including other ecological actors (Smith, 2001). Landforms, weather, distance to energy sources, ecosystems, watersheds, endangered species, animals, economic class composition, ethnic groups, religious worldviews and other relations are a portion of what comprise a place and have a role in shaping the habitus, and to which a *sens pratique* responds albeit not necessarily consciously.

So what is an ecological habitus? It would be described *backwards* from the practices of reducing ecological impact and living socially and ecologically well in place. Since habitus provides a *sens pratique* or "feel for the game" by being embodied in a particular place, we can understand an ecological habitus as an expertise developed from a "sense of place" – a practical logic of how to live well in *this place*, which necessarily includes this place's linkages externally (Massey, 1997). Universally applicable rules for living well in every place do not exist. We are

talking, instead, of a *modus vivendi*, a *sens pratique*. The normative aspects of social movements are suggestive, rather than prescriptive. The practices generated by an ecological habitus are attentive to its place as a socio-ecological milieu.

The inclusion into environmental social movements of a theory of practice culled from Bourdieu points out strategies to be employed by a better understanding of the intersecting ecological and sociological verities of human life. That is, that much of life is a function of a pre-logical habitus produced and reproduced in a particular social milieu. It is important to highlight this point, as it clearly points to several components that an ecological *sens pratique* will need in the negotiation of an un- or anti-ecological society. These include:

1) details for ecologically sound lifestyle practices that reduce impact and reinvigorate ecosystems;
2) a critique of the social structures that inhibit an ecologically sound lifestyle,
3) an understanding of how social relations resist an ecological worldview and lifestyle.

These three components of an ecological *sens pratique* wed the cognitive praxis and habitus of an environmental way of life. The first component recognizes that new technical knowledge about how to live is part of an environmental movement's purpose. The latter two components imply that a facet of habitus informed by insurgent social movements is reflexivity. A Bourdieusian theory of practice, however, also implies a fourth component:

4) an ecological habitus will thrive only in a social field that supports its maintenance.

It is not enough to inform, as if cognitive knowledge was enough to change internalized dispositions. A strategic move on the part of environmental social movement organizations might be to be these interim communities of practice, rather than epistemic communities as a focus on cognitive praxis would imply, or as mobilized members as political opportunity theory asserts. Ironically, intentionality as a social space wherein alternate habitus is supported would help provide for environmentalism the symbolic capital and other resources to compete politically and to present its own socio-ecological messages in the societal marketplace of ideas.

Pedagogical Implications for Social Movements

This leaves the transformation of the habitus as a matter of question. For Bourdieu, the

habitus is resistant, and generally conservative in that it seeks to conserve its characteristics. Yet, because habitus is generative of practice, but not determined, Bourdieu allows that habitus can be modified in the face of other fields, or due to "an awakening of consciousness and social analysis" although it is not easy (Bourdieu & Wacquant, 1992, p. 167). It is a process of learning.

Transformation of the habitus is not a strictly cognitive process, nor is it individualistic (Reay, 2004). Learning is always situated. If habitus is contextual, then learning of new habitus is the transformation of deep-seated habituations of mind and life. The challenge is to help people learn to recognize how the existing order co-creates their experiences via habitus and to help them internalise new dispositions. Since habitus is contextual, such learning would be best accomplished within an alternate order in which the new habitus "makes sense." This provides an enhanced pedagogical role for social movements.

Conway's (2004) ethnography uncovered the "evolving habitus" of social movement participants (p. 163). Movement effectiveness is enhanced, she concluded, by intentionality to learn from collective engagement. "The practical implications of recognizing the nature and importance of tacit knowledge are enormous for understanding how social movements might more purposefully and effectively reproduce themselves and their politics, practices and knowledges..." (p. 164). Such transformative learning is best accomplished in a relational setting (Kilgore, 1999; Mezirow, 2000; Ryan, 2005), connecting personal biography with opportunities for new experiences in that biography through which dispositions can be modified or new ones incorporated. "Habitus is a practical sense emerging from experience" that needs a sense of the possible (Lau, 2004, p. 370). The sense of the possible is certainly significant for the insurgent reality-making of a social movement.

The question remains whether the environmental social movement can do the job of re-education of the habitus. It is an important question, but it is not answerable in the abstract. As insurgent realities, environmental social movements must critique the dominant reality, articulate a vision of alternatives, and model these alternatives. These are essentially educative tasks. Eyerman and Jamison have made a good point about social movements as knowledge incubators. However, the notion of cognitive praxis is expanded by Bourdieu's theory of practice. For the environmental movement, it is an environmentally sensitive cognitive praxis that is to be taken up, put into

practice, and routinized until it becomes internalised as an ecological habitus and the resultant effects on social fields. Bourdieu's theory of practice contributes to an understanding of social movements as change agents via political and cultural mechanisms involving the interplay of habitus, practice and the contentions on social fields over the naming of – in this case – socio-ecological reality.

Habitus is creative and generative of practice leaving socio-cultural change as diverse and dynamic. Instilling a new *sens pratique*, then, is not a rational task, because it does not depend on the logic of the doxic habitus. Or, more accurately, it is not a rational task only. In the words of Zygmaunt Bauman, it is "not safe in the hands of reason," (quoted in Jarvis, 1998, p. 71).

Conclusion

To conclude, there are several points that I wish to summarize. First, a theoretical potential exists for environmental organizations to provide opportunities for a transformation of habitus. Numerous studies have shown that learning – cosmological, organizational, technical and so forth – have occurred through experiential participation in environmental movement activities.

Second, effectiveness implies that the environmental movement include an intentionally experiential and transformative pedagogy as an intentional part of its movement praxis (Mayo, 1999; Mezirow, 2000). Such education must have both the cosmologic and technical content as outlined by Eyerman and Jamison. It must have experiential components that can impact the non-cognitive portions of the eco-logic of practice. To change habitus and impact fields, the pedagogical intent must be to do more than chip at incremental lifestyle changes or only attend to structural or policy considerations. Environmental social movements must include the reflexive components listed above, even becoming "communities of practice" in support of emerging ecological habitus. For movement purposes, a transformation of both fields and habitus must co-occur, until an ecological logic of practice is routinized.

Third, too few of these studies have focused on the everyday practices of environmentally-active people, and too many have focused on those engaged in highly visible protest activities. In understanding the creation of an ecological habitus, we need research in the lived experience of "regular" environmentalism – that of environmentally involved people, not merely the most activist.

Fourth, environmental social movements would usefully see themselves engaged in a struggle for ecological praxis melding theory and lifestyle, habitus and community, structure and agency, reason and habituation. Bourdieu's theory of practice is helpful in that it directs attention in certain ways – toward everyday practices situated in a social milieu. Such a theory can help us in developing an ecological *sens pratique* appropriate for contemporary lives in today's world. This reconceptualization of the purpose of the environmental movement as a whole is its lifeblood, the genuine praxis needed in an un-ecological society.

Finally, Bourdieu's theory of practice advances social movement theory. What has been described for ESMOs could be applied to other social movements. Social movements are not only about mobilizing resources and finding opportunities on the political field. As knowledge-creating, and reality-making entities, they are engaged with the often unreflexive aspects of social fields that reinforce existing reality constructions. A Bourdieusian theory of social movements recognizes that much of what constitutes the *sens pratique* of regular life is tacit and routinized, rather than explicit, and available to cognitive or conscious attention.

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