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Praxis and practice : the 'what, how and why' of the UK environmental direct action movement in the 1990s

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Praxis and Practice:
The 'What, How and Why' of the UK Environmental Direct Action (EDA) Movement
in the 1990's.

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Abstract

This thesis is an ethnographic study of UK environmental social movement mobilisations of the 1990s, detailing the movement's characteristics such as its structure as a fluid series of biodegradable networks. The thesis evidences what action was taken during this period, using primarily qualitative methodologies: semi-structured interviews and Participant Observation (PO). Evidence showing how mobilisation occurred, how activist networks are 'born' and sustained, is given, examining issues such as the diffusion of repertoires over time, and the importance of social networks. The "why" of mobilisation was documented, detailing activists' rationales for action given in interviews and a variety of other media such as email groups and in PO settings.

The thesis approached the data from a 'grounded theory' perspective, meaning that appropriate theoretical directions developed during the research process. There were however initial aims: to investigate whether the EDA movement had a 'collective identity' (Melucci 1996), and hypotheses: that activists had complex rationales for taking action, and that there was a symbiosis between the taking of action, the development of movement praxis and collective identity, and the process of further mobilisation. These aims and hypotheses were realised by the research work. Despite many complexities outlined in the research, generally the EDA movement has a collective identity. This is based on a shared commitment to direct action, grassroots democracy, and a radical discourse, which challenges the codes and perceived abuses of power inherent in the dominant paradigm. Social justice, human rights, and environmental sustainability are equally important to EDA activists and seen as interrelated. Through charting the process of action in the 1990's, the thesis locates the 'anti globalisation' mobilisations at the turn of the millennium as evidence of EDA movement capacity building over a decade.

The thesis aims to have contributed to Social Movement theory through this ethnographic approach.

Acknowledgements

For my daughter, Seren Gwanwyn (conceived at the start of this PhD process and a happy, healthy five year old now) and my partner, Gareth, without whom this PhD would never have been finished. To all activists everywhere, fighting for, you know, "life the universe and everything!"- you have been my inspiration - and a special thank you to all my interviewees and other activist friends who have contributed to this thesis, you know who you are! Thanks to my supervisor, Graham Day, and all at the Dept. of Social Science, University of Wales, Bangor, for their support. There are many people within the academic community, several of whom have become close friends, who have been of inestimable help and inspiration throughout this PhD. Special thanks are due to my ESRC colleagues Dr. Brian Doherty and Dr. Derek Wall, to whom I owe more than I can say. Thanks also to Dr. Ian Welsh for reading draft chapters at short notice and some thought-provoking conversations. Thanks also to George McKay, who first inspired me to get writing.

Thanks to Lawrence Cox for setting up a social movements email list, it has been a huge resource, and thanks to those on the list for their help and dialogue. As with my friends and acquaintances in the activist community, there are so many academics and researchers who in one way or another have contributed to this PhD that I dare not name too many names as I wouldn't know where to stop. Thanks to the SCEnE team, who had to put up with me writing up in the first months of our research job and thanks to Jennie Jones for editing help.Last but not least,a special thank you to Shirley Harris for the hours she put in correcting formatting mistakes and other errors. Without all of these people, this thesis could not have been accomplished.

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Introduction

Praxis And Practice: The 'What, How And Why' Of The UK Environmental Direct Action (EDA) Movement In The 1990's.

It's very rarely that you actually talk about it, its kind of taken for granted...
(activist in interview 1999)

Section 1: General Overview

In summary, this PhD is a case study of the UK EDA movement, and its primary function is to map out the territory, charting the process of movement practice and (cognitive) praxis over a decade. Some key questions include: What is the EDA movement? What targets have been mobilised over, and what repertoires of action have been used? How is the movement structured? What rationales do activists give for the action they take? Under what circumstances, how, and why, is mobilisation triggered and sustained? What does this ethnographic detail signify - what are the implications of this data? Throughout, this PhD has taken a "grounded theory"[1] approach to the material; namely, the significance of what was being discovered was theoretically framed as a result of analysing the data. Thus, as discussed in the conclusion, the research process has altered the focus of the research itself. As is outlined below, determining the existence and nature of the movement's 'collective identity' (Melucci 1996) has remained consistent as a thesis aim, whilst much else has developed 'organically'.

Much academic theory, in particular Social Movement (SM) theory, has been developed as a set of workable 'tools' which enable SM researchers to deconstruct case-specific phenomena of mobilisation against a set of generally agreed theoretical principles[2]. By using the EDA movement as a case study, academic theories on (for example) the nature of movements (what *is* a social movement) the causes of mobilisation and what sustains it are weighed up against ethnographic examples, thus evaluating what theory seems to fit, what doesn't and why. Thus through use of SM theory, this PhD is seeking not only to document, analyse and explain the

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[1] See ch2 for further methodological rationale
[2] see ch3 for literature review and relevant summaries of academic discussion

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EDA movement, but also to contribute to the SM literature. In terms of activists' worldviews, their arguments, values and ideas are similarly evaluated against the literature on green politics and eco-philosophy.

"I have trouble enough defining who "I" am, never mind who "we" are..." [3]

I realised quite soon that I had set myself a difficult task for a number of reasons. Most importantly, the movement is in a process of continuous flux and change. It is diffuse and diverse, comprised of a series of networks and campaign groups, very large, and very hard to define. (This is in itself an important finding). The predominantly qualitative methods used also contribute to the issue of representative ness (although I would make the point that my status as an activist over 10 years and the range of participant observation (PO) I have undertaken enables me to make more of a case for the generalisability of my qualitative methods - see **Ch2**). Thus, this PhD presents a series of snapshots of the EDA movement, rather than a complete picture. It is important to stress that the emphasis in this thesis is on documenting the *process* of movement growth, change and collective identity, than trying to pin it down to a definitive, "nailed to the wall" definition.

Despite the emphasis on plurality, diversity and fluidity in movement structure, culture and action (a cross-cutting theme in this thesis - it is this diverse process of movement collective identity and inter-movement dissent which defines the EDA movement as a social movement - Melucci 1989, 1996), there are many ethnographic findings which are corroborated through a number of triangulated methodologies. Consistent findings about activists' worldviews, for example, surface in online chat, in interviews, in activist workshops at national gatherings, in the ethnographic evidence of what action has been taken. To this extent it is possible to *cautiously* extrapolate and talk, from these snapshots, about 'the movement as a whole'. The size, nature and speed at which the picture changes on the ground[4] are thus important methodological constraints. Another key constraint was the 'life, universe and everything' nature of the primary question I was asking activists, namely - what direct action have you taken and why? The complexity of what it was that activists had to say itself presented methodological problems:

[3] Activist in private conversation, 18.7.99
[4] Within four years from the end of the Newbury roads protest, large national protest sites are no longer the norm; GM and globalisation are now the prime targets of action nationally.

what we're opposing is so enormous, that to begin to summarise it in a few words is virtually impossible. I mean, we are talking about the whole way that the world operates...[5]

Thus this is something else I have to be pragmatic about, the detailed positions that activists hold are too complex to analyse in their entirety. Basically, there was too much data - I have had to cut out a lot of extremely interesting ethnography in order to construct a coherent and structured thesis.

1.1. Short Methodological Note

Methodological approaches are discussed in **Ch 2**; they were primarily qualitative, based on interviews with activists, and PO in a range of settings, in part drawing on my experiences as an activist over a decade, but primarily based on explicit and reflexive PO since 1996 onwards. Some quantitative data analysis was also practised. The period under study is roughly late 1991/1992 - early 2001.

As is mentioned in various places in the thesis, between 1999 and 2001 I was also employed part time on an ESRC research project[6], which was an ethnographic study of activist networks in three locations in the UK. I have used a small part of the data collated and analysed by myself for the project here, with the consent of my research colleagues Dr. Brian Doherty and Dr. Derek Wall. Cognitively, this thesis has benefited hugely *from my involvement in this* project; I have however generally avoided using the analysed data for this thesis as this was a team effort.

Section 2: Key Aims And Central Hypotheses

2.1 Important Note

Given that the process of conducting PhD research seems, anecdotally, to follow a certain pattern, it is likely that the following research paradox is a standard one. The aims of this PhD shifted focus during the course of the research; section 2 of the **conclusion** charts this process in detail.

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[5] Interview with activist 2000.

[6] Doherty, Plows and Wall: 'Radical Participation: Protesters Identities And Networks In Manchester, North Wales and Oxford'; part of the ESRC programme 'Democracy and participation' http://www.esrc.ac.uk/

Thus, key findings only surfaced later in the research process, during final analyses about what the ethnography gathered and literature searches actually signified; what the implications of the evidence were. Because of this, it seemed logical that the detail of my PhD findings and conclusions should be presented in the **conclusion** (section 3), because they came at the end of the research process. Like all other PhD students I have known, I am now writing my introduction last, in the light of my findings, which enable me to work backwards and firm up more conclusively what the aims of this thesis are i.e. the hypotheses outlined here are in reality often key research findings or outputs in themselves. For example, whilst now I could frame a hypothesis that the EDA movement has built capacity (drawing on theoretical propositions developed by Welsh 2000), and this is weighed up against ethnographic examples throughout the thesis, and evidenced as a key research finding, it was not a key aim when I started the research. My initial aims were fairly basic and not particularly well developed theoretically; however they enabled me to come to some extremely interesting conclusions; this is 'grounded theory' proving its worth as a research methodology. The broad and ethnography based nature of my initial research aims enabled me to develop more focussed hypotheses which I then used to deconstruct my data. Thus it is in the **conclusion** that the finer points of this PhD's achievements - the hypotheses, the theoretical critiques, developed and 'proved' by examination of the data - are to be found.

2.2 Initial Aims And Hypotheses

These have remained consistent throughout. Broadly, this PhD aimed:

- To document the 'what and how' of the UK EDA movement

Leading on from this, three basic questions were framed as follows:

- Why do EDA activists take action and what are the implications of their rationales?
- Does the EDA movement have a 'collective identity'?
- Under what circumstances, how, and why, is mobilisation in the EDA movement triggered and sustained?'

There were two initial hypotheses:

- Activists generally as individuals have a complex and coherent worldview, which motivates them to take direct action, they are "organic intellectuals".

- Action triggers discourse, individual and collective growth and change, and hence more action.

2.3 Initial Findings

See **conclusion** for a fuller discussion on the findings of this thesis. Generally, this PhD did fulfill the basic aims set out in the above section, answered the research questions, and provided evidence which backed up the hypotheses. Further, other PhD aims and hypotheses emerged as a result of these findings (see 2.4 below). The complexities of these findings are discussed and developed through the course of the thesis and summarized in more detail in the **conclusion**. To summarise them here extremely generally:

- The ethnography provided a detailed and coherent outline of the UK EDA movement over a decade.

- Explanations for movement activity, through evaluating how collective action is initiated and sustained, and through evaluating activists' rationales for action, are provided.

- Whilst "collective identity" remains a complex and contested field, it was shown to be a useful tool for understanding the "why" of the EDA movement. Broadly, the EDA movement shares a 'collective *identity*' *based on a* '*social ecology*' *paradigm*, a commitment to social justice and environmental sustainability. "Rights" and power relationships are related core themes of activist discourse, along with a commitment to direct action as the only or primary strategy for change.

- The ethnography provided evidence for the initial hypotheses.

- Much SM literature is focused on asking similar questions, and the theoretical explanations given tend, generally speaking, to corroborate the PhD's ethnographically led conclusions, they provided a useful framework through which to address and answer the research questions.

2.4 "Organically Developed" subsidiary PhD aims and hypotheses

It can be seen how the following aims and hypotheses developed out of the above, see section 2 of the **conclusion** for an analysis of this process.

Aims:

- To document and assess the importance of social networks in triggering and sustaining mobilisation
- To assess the influence of resources and Political Opportunities on mobilisation

Hypotheses:

- That the EDA movement has built capacity (Welsh 2000) over time, diffusing both ideological and tactical repertoires throughout its networks.
- That movement structure (biodegradability) means that capacity is also lost.

2.5 Subsidiary Findings

- The existence, nature and the importance of the factors outlined above was evidenced in the data
- Evidence to support the hypotheses were similarly demonstrated through the ethnography
- Relevant SM literature again corroborated the PhD findings and symbiotically shaped how these questions were framed in the first place.

Section 3: Defining Terms

The following subsections briefly highlight some key definitions and issues which surface throughout the PhD, and are important to clarify at the outset. This is not a definitive list, and again the detail is developed in relevant chapters.

3.1 What Is A Social Movement?
This is a key theme in this PhD, woven throughout the ethnography, and the theory is discussed in detail in **Ch 3.**

A useful definition is Mario Diani's:

"A social movement is a network of informal interactions between a plurality of individuals, groups and /or organisations, engaged in a political or cultural conflict, on the basis of a shared collective identity."

(Diani 1992: 13)

Movement collective identity is perhaps best described or defined as the process of cognitive praxis of many EDA interconnected networks. This is a key theme in this PhD and is discussed in **Ch 3** but also throughout the PhD in the context of ethnographic examples. Other commentators add that such movements are 'challenging codes' (Melucci 96), offering collective resistance to dominant forms of power (Tarrow 1998). The concept of "New Social Movements" (NSMs) is a contested one, but as discussed in **Ch 3** the following is a standard benchmark explanation of 'new' social movements since the 60's. Melucci (96) argues that in the information age, in a society where power is diffuse and located in complex sites, the new (social, economic) power of cultural symbols is reflected in movement's actions. Castells (97) makes similar points. Thus what is perhaps truly "new" about 'NSMs' *it is that activity is* directed against challenging dominant cultural and economic codes[7].

Finally, *mobilisation* is linked to social movement definitions, without mobilisation in some form, movements wouldn't be moving.

3.2 What is the EDA Movement?

As is evidenced throughout, the radical EDA movement is part of a wider environmental movement, and it is not always easy to separate these layers out. In fact, this PhD highlights that *blurred boundaries* are one of the key 'attributes' of the EDA movement (especially at the micro level of one to one encounters, and the 'meso' level of local activist networks – see **Ch 5**).

To further complicate the picture, the 'wider' environmental movement itself has 'blurred boundaries' in its interface with the general public, as commentators have noted (see for example Dobson 2000). A useful benchmark is Doherty (2002)'s definition of the wider green movement in the UK:

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[7] I would agree; with the proviso that activists prefer to target tangibles as the first priority, with the 'challenging codes' implicit in the fact that they take this action. However it can be seen that the "anti-capitalist" actions often focus on 'challenging codes' as the primary function of action. Mayday 2000 demos in London were actually criticized by activists and the media as unfocussed because of this.

"environmentalists who believe that radical political and social changes are necessary to deal with the ecological crisis" (Doherty 2002:pp1)

This distinguishes (for example) " captains of industry" who happen to be bird watching enthusiasts and so support their local wildlife sanctuary (whilst complicit through their jobs in degrading other habitats), from Green Party members who would tend to have a more sustained radical critique on habitat protection and changing human consumption patterns.

Another layer 'in' are those who not only have the worldview described above but are prepared to take **direct action** and have a more explicitly radical ideology (see **Ch 4**). This is the 'inner core' of the EDA movement, a mainstay of its collective identity (see Wall 1999), and forms the main subject of the ethnography in this PhD. The EDA movement under study throughout is succinctly described by Seel et al below:

"in the 1990s there was a dramatic rise in the amount of direct action...what distinguishes [this] new wave of direct action is an ethos characterised by an intention to affect social and ecological conditions <u>directly</u>, even while it also (sometimes) seeks indirect influence through the mass media, changed practises of politicians and political and economic institutions"
(Seel, Paterson and Doherty 2000: 1)

As discussed in **Ch 1** and **Ch 3** in particular, the EDA movement also forms a continuum with a succession of social movements and counter-cultural activity since the 60's. Thus both in terms of a generational legacy, and in current cross-movement activity, it is important to construct the EDA movement as an integrated and integral part (a 'wave' -Tarrow 1998-) of a wider 'sea' of radical mobilisations. Thus, whilst peace, human rights and social justice are in any case core frames through which activists construct their 'environmental' action, these are also issues which themselves have (either historically, or currently) triggered the formation of social movements in their own right. Thus as far as the EDA movement is defined, boundaries are blurred between different social movements as well as between 'layers' of radical and less radical environmental activists.

3.3 Defining "Protest"

This is one of many areas where meaning is contested. Defining protest is linked to defining what constitutes 'political' action - see **Ch 3** for a more detailed look at this issue. A useful definition is given by Doherty who defines protest as including

"all collective action that is directed at an audience outside the group, involves confrontation, and is intended to express or advance the groups' politics" (2002:11)

Applying Doherty's definitions to 'lifestyle' issues is initially challenging. However, TAZs-Temporary Autonomous Zones- (Bey 91), communes, coops, communal lifestyle projects and grassroots community initiatives such as squatted social centres, reclaiming green spaces *can* be classed as protests[8] when they involve law-breaking, or at the very least are deliberately, consciously transgressing dominant cultural codes, and thus represent a conscious political challenge to the dominant paradigm. Such 'cultural' activity also plays a vital role in sustaining activist communities and hence mobilisation over time (Doherty, Plows and Wall 2001) and is thus an intrinsic and symbiotic aspect of more obviously 'political protest' activity. Whilst most attention is given in this PhD to these more easily - defined forms of political protest (road protest camps, the 'trashing' of GM crops, anti-capitalist street parties), the broader background of politicised movement culture and lifestyle is also key and is referred to throughout.

Defining 'direct action' was something I asked my interviewees to do. A general conclusion is that for activists, whilst all direct action is protest, not all protest is direct action, and where the boundary lines are drawn is a subjective issue:

-Every person who takes direct action probably has their own definition - but a definition for me, it's like, doing things where I'm taking a bit of control back into my life that's been taken away from me by the State, by corporations or whatever. Actually going out and doing something, it's not asking somebody else to do something on my behalf, not writing to MPs and saying, 'you should ask someone to stop genetic engineering'. It's about going out and doing something yourself [laughs]...that' s not to invalidate the other ways of doing things.

(activist in interview 1999)

3.4 Personal Biography And Partisanship

As is discussed in detail in Ch 2 and at various points throughout the PhD, as an activist and a

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[8] Pepper (1993) has emphasized how some "New-Age" communes are more isolationist and apolitical whilst Sargisson (2000) takes a different stance, pointing out that the most seemingly apolitical of communes are still, through their lifestyles, challenging existing codes. For the direct action community, such lifestyle choice is part of a symbiotic strategy to achieve radical change through direct action. See also Plows (1997).

feminist I have approached (indeed, I could not have approached it any other way) my material with an explicitly partisan perspective, drawing on academic rationales developed by feminist and critical theorist perspectives. This was, not to put to fine a point on it, the reason I had entered into academia in the first place - to use research as a strategy to achieve environmental, economic and social sustainability, by enabling the relatively unheard voices of those within the movement to have an academically analysed (as opposed to, for example, a media sound bite) medium through which their views and actions could be more rigorously evaluated, which would hopefully contribute to a paradigm shift towards a more ethically and structurally sustainable and just society.[9] My political goals mirrored those of protestors' generally - I suppose in a sense, in 1996 I viewed academia as a protest strategy in the same way other friends were sizing up 100-foot oak trees. This of course is all directly contrary to the standard textbook position taken by Hammersley and Atkinson which warns against 'putting politics into sociology'.[10] The pros and cons of my approach are discussed in terms of methodological viability in **Ch 2**, revisiting work undertaken during my MA thesis.[11] A point also needs emphasising regarding the style of this PhD. Ethnographic, methodological and theoretical accuracy has been striven for as a priority, this PhD aims for academic excellence. These goals are, I would argue, compatible with an 'engaged' writing style, see **Ch 2**.

Section 4: PhD chapter summaries

Ch 1 movement overview

This chapter outlines the basic history of the last 10 years of EDA movement activity, discourse, culture and action. It is here that quantitative data analysing what action has been taken is presented. Changes in movement discourse, praxis and practice- movement strategy, identity and culture - are also analysed together with an evaluation of consistency. Evidence and analysis on how the movement is structured, how it organizes, is also presented here (e.g. local groups/networks, decentralised structures). The concept of diffusion and movement capacity building (Welsh & Chesters 2000) is presented with reference to previous generations of activists

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[9] It is likely that my research will be of most use inter-movement as a discussion tool in terms of activists' articulated desire to improve on their 'effectiveness'.

[10] Hammersley, M. + Atkinson, P. (1993); Atkinson P. +Hammersley ,M. (1994)

[11] Plows 1998

and preceding waves of movement activity (e.g. peace, anti –nuclear, feminist).

Ch 2 Methodology

Outlines in detail the various methodological approaches used in this thesis, both qualitative and quantitative. Rationales for methods used (pragmatic and also epistemological, e.g. feminist theory), pros and cons of each method, general methodological issues, problems and themes raised by the writing of this PhD are all presented here. My status as an "insider researcher" is also examined here together with relevant issues such as the methodological pros/cons of political partisanship and research.

Ch 3 Literature Review

This chapter serves to crystallise and clarify the theoretical underpinning of the PhD. All major theoretical directions explored in the PhD will be summarised and presented here. In keeping with the main direction of this thesis, all theory (social movement, feminist, eco-philosophy) is related to the "what, how and why" of social movements generally, and also specific literature related to the UK EDA movement. Thus the contributions of more "local" academic theorists who discuss the UK EDA (and related) movements (Walsh, Doherty, Roseneil, Wall) are analysed, as well as academics who discuss movements and their ideas more generally without necessarily mentioning the UK EDA movement (Tarrow, Melucci). Theoretical approaches used in this thesis are eclectic, with aspects of theories across the board of social movement theory being utilised and discussed. This is also the case for the academic literature on green politics and eco-philosophy. I have used theory as a "toolbox" out of which I have taken what seems to be appropriate to construct the theoretical underpinning of this thesis, taking some tools and discarding others, and providing rationales.

Ch 4 Interview Data: Analysis Of Activists' Life Histories And Accounts Of Action

Based on the life history interviews undertaken, this chapter primarily showcases the "what" and "why" of action, the viewpoints of activists themselves in terms of their stories and their personal motivations for taking direct action. This chapter explains what it *means* to be a direct activist, as through activists' stories and accounts of action a graphic picture of involvement in movement culture and mobilisation is given - the hidden history of the EDA movement. The extent and diversity of action taken, both by individuals and the movement generally, is evident. The "life

cycle" of individual activists is outlined, from initial contact with action networks, immersion within them, assimilation of movement ideas and discourses, accounts of burnout and alienation, the sustaining of action in the long terms or drop –off through factors such as biographical availability, are documented and whilst samples are small, there is a sense in which some conclusions about mobilisation and recruitment into action networks can be tentatively drawn.

Secondly, this chapter examines the interview data and establishes interviewees' rationales for action. The extent to which there are commonly –held rationales for action, recurring themes and points of view in interviews flagged by activists as being central to their rationales for taking action, are documented and then analysed. Proof that activists generally have systemic, "multi-issue" and highly complex rationales for taking action is given. Key PhD themes and hypotheses, for example representativeness, movement diversity and the nature of collective identity, where the boundaries of the movement are, are explored in detail in this context. The idea of *grassroots* activists as "organic experts" and "organic intellectuals" is also evidenced.

Ch 5 Case Study - Participant Observation of Gwynedd and Mon Earth First!

By focusing on the history, nature, action targets, alliances of a local direct action group, some of the methodological problems to do with the overall breadth of the PhD's general subject matter can be dealt with, i.e. this in-depth study can examine issues discussed in a wider context (such as the nature of movement structure) in more detail. Basically, studying the local character of one of the many small groups and networks which help (along with more 'national' campaigns/networks) to make up the wider EDA movement, supplements the generalised picture of the movement as a whole presented in this PhD with a more in-depth look at one of these groups. Thus, whilst being a small, localised sample, this case study can also corroborate claims made at a more general level about the way the movement is organised.

This chapter focuses primarily on the "how" of mobilisation, looking primarily at external and more macro factors which shape the opportunities for action, mobilisation levels, the nature and targets of action, local alliance patterns. These factors include local Political Opportunities, geography/population, the history of local radical action, the predisposition of other political actors in this locality. It can be seen how local macro factors shape the opportunities for and nature of mobilisation in areas, pointing again to the diversity of experience which comprises the national EDA movement, and how things are simultaneously different and

the same. How mobilisation is sustained over time - social networks, activist culture, the extent to which there is crossover with previous activist generations, alliance patterns - is also a key theme in this chapter. Ethnographic evidence for diffusion and capacity building is given.

Ch 6 "Let Our Resistance Be As Trans-National As Capital!"

This chapter further highlights that the recent anti-capitalist protests (such as "J18" in 1999) have not exploded from nowhere, but rather (at least, in the case of the UK), have evolved as part of the process of movement collective identity and capacity – building over the last 10 years (in itself a legacy of previous 'cycles of contention'). Legacies of precious activist generations are also discussed. When I started this PhD, one of my aims was to highlight that activists generally had a 'holistic', 'multi-issue' and systemic rationale as to why they took action on a specific issue (roads, GM). Over the course of writing this PhD, the EDA movement has become much more explicit in making this point and in shaping discourses and action strategies accordingly. The evidence for all of this (see also **Ch 4**) is given through documenting and analysing activist discourse in a number of formats (online, in activist workshops, in interviews, movement literature) and action – both at a local/grassroots level and nationally. The pros and cons of coalitions are also discussed - again, issues to do with the boundaries of movement, and movement collective identity, are looked at. The macro factors which have triggered and helped to sustain the anti-global capitalist mobilisations (POS factors, the Internet) are also presented and analysed. This chapter focuses predominantly on action which took place within the UK but also discusses UK involvement in international mobilisations.

Ch 7 Activist Discourse

This chapter provides more ethnographic data, providing examples of the varied settings of activist discourse and in the process continuing to explore PhD themes on how and under what circumstances activist identity (ies), movement culture, tactics and strategies are constructed, what they consist of, what the difficulties with these concepts are. Different settings of discourse (activist publications, workshops, during action, online, in social settings) all shape activist identity, praxis and practice, as do the ways in which activist interaction is undertaken. The 'what and how' of activist discourse is thus illustrated and then analysed in terms of what it tells us about the EDA movement generally, as well as again throwing light on social movement theories of the nature of movements and mobilisation. This chapter also provides ethnographic examples

of activist discourse in a specific setting - online anti-capitalist e-groups - and content analysis of this discourse is used to triangulate with other ethnography and analysis in this PhD in terms of the generalisability of common themes, shared worldviews, recurring discussions, the nature of collective identity, dissent and disagreement. Violence and non-violence is used and analysed as a key example of this activist discussion. Again it is the *process* of movement cognitive praxis through discourse (Steinberg 1998) rather than simply analysis of *content* which is being examined here, although content in terms of held-in common worldviews, shared tactics, what seem to be the main nodes of fissure in current activist discussions and views of themselves, is also evaluated and compared with the data sets presented in **Ch 4**.

Conclusion

This charts the story of this research process, and develops key findings in more detail, concluding with a current positioning of the movement.

Appendices

Consisting of ethnographic data extracts which further supplement /clarify the information given in the main body of the PhD.

Section 5: Thoughts On EDA 'Collective Identity'.

As I highlighted at the start of this chapter, it is enough of a task simply to demonstrate the range and complexity of activist meanings for action, let alone whether or not I had a representative sample of different voices and networks, or whether such an approach could provide any meaningful conclusions about 'movement collective identity'. However the evidence of the interviews would corroborate that activists have, to a large extent, a shared worldview - shared grievances, systemic critiques, ethical positions. Whilst a small-scale snowball sample, this data has served as reiterative evidence when triangulated with my PhD ethnography of activist engagement and participant observation over the best part of a decade. With all the provisos of the differences between activist positions rehearsed countless times throughout this PhD, I feel that the evidence does highlight that activist hold complex worldviews and action rationales, concepts, grievances, critiques which they generally hold in common. Whilst, as discussed throughout, some interviewees are able to frame their grievances more articulately than others,

have more facts at their disposal, the basic frame of reference remains the same. There is evidence of a held-in-common activist stance - activists see physical, structural, social and economic interconnections between issues. They share similar ethical codes, and often, emotive responses to the grievances they frame. Only one interviewee did not see his involvement with anti-traffic protests as linked much to anything else - the exception rather than the rule. Similarly, in my activist career and during PO I have occasionally met protestors who did just simply like trees. I am not arguing that everybody has such sophisticated analysis - far from it, but I do feel it is more the norm than not, and the evidence would seem to back this up (also, as highlighted, people develop their analysis during their activist trajectories).

As the quote used at the start of this chapter demonstrated, activists tend to take all of this (rightly or wrongly) for granted - it's an "instinctive" thing, a "gut reaction". This is perhaps best demonstrated by an example. Post '9-11', as Bush's "war on terror" got under way, I wrote this 'diary'. It was how I was feeling, and I knew that anyone I had ever mobilised with would feel the same. I soon began to find corroboration of this in the usual settings of activist discourse[12].

"Activists are anti the war on Afghanistan and will have been so almost 'instinctively'. They will see it as a war in which the victims will be the weak and innocent, civilians. They will point to previous US/UK economic and military involvement with Afghanistan which ensured the subsequent rise to power of the Taliban. They will see American discourse on the need to fight terrorism as the most obscene hypocrisy and will cite examples of how the West has bombed and killed many innocents in the name of justice and freedom, with the rising death toll from direct bombing and the extreme conditions suffered by refugees in Afghanistan rising daily being just the latest example. The preventable deaths of thousands of children in Iraq as a direct consequence of UN sanctions will be another standard example. They will point out that - irony of ironies - on September 11th 2001 there was an arms trade fair in London docklands, and that weapons of mass destruction are still sold to despotic regimes around the world, were no doubt still being sold that day despite the shocking news from New York (never mind the presence of large numbers of demonstrators outside). They will be making connections with oil resource issues and linking these to US/UK foreign policy (another set of shared discourses, around oil, climate change, vested commercial interest driving foreign and domestic policy, the human rights abuses and environmental damage caused by oil drilling, then complicity of oil companies

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[12] See for example www.the-spun.org

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with despotic regimes in whose lands the oil fields are, the complete farce of Kyoto, is waiting in the wings here).

They will give examples of the population displacement, poverty and environmental destruction caused by IMF loans for 'development' projects in the Third World, and will tend to define these sorts of policies and the WTO's free trade mandate as a form of terrorism in that they inflict pain, suffering and death. They will give tangible examples - the Narmada dam, the deaths in custody –Kurds in Turkish jails, Ogoni tribespeople in Nigerian ones - of those who stand up to these Western-imposed developments. In other words, they will point to the Neoliberal global capitalist agenda as causing the background conditions for September 11th and, further, directly contributing to mass destruction, environmental wreckage, and horror around the world"[13].

All of the above is a very different paradigm than that given out by government departments or editorials in the Daily Mail or by British Aerospace press releases. The complexities to do with inter-movement diversity should not prevent a more simplistic but still relevant appreciation of the "us and them" distance between the EDA movement paradigm and the dominant paradigm, evidenced here in the way the EDA movement constructed meanings around 9-11 and the "war on terror". A commitment to personally trying to effect change through direct action, rather than a trust in political processes, is what will tend to separate out the activists from 'the (wo)man in the street', who, it should be pointed out, are equally capable of similar deconstructions. To return to the point, that activists are better at agreeing about what they are against than what they are for. It is, I feel, a tremendously important and overlooked issue, that whilst within liberal academia, this is the major criticism activists are subjected to, outside the ivory tower, movements are fighting for the political space to deconstruct the dominant paradigm, and being constructed as "terrorists" and "enemies of democracy" when they try. Further, as this thesis will demonstrate, activists' strategies for change are much more developed than even they give themselves credit for, often.

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[13] written Oct 2001

Chapter One: Movement Overview

The direct action - the ecological direct action movement - it has a range of names, none of which quite seem to fit it, but there is undeniably a movement of predominantly young white people in the UK taking direct action with an ecological focus..."
(activist in interview 1999)

Chapter Outline

This chapter maps out the basic ethnographic field of study, outlining and analysing the nature of the EDA movement and a decade of its history. The format of this chapter is as follows:

1) Legacy Of Previous 'Cycles Of Contention' (Tarrow 98)

This section outlines the "pre-history" of the EDA movement, introducing the notions of diffusion and capacity - building, for example, the process of developing movement repertoires, and the way they have been adapted over time. Thus this section evaluates the impact of previous cycles of contention up to the 'official' period under study in this PhD, namely the start of a new mobilisation wave - the roads protest movement - in 1992.

2) Describing The Phenomenon

This section outlines what the movement is, what it does and how it organises. Briefly, it is a set of shifting, decentralised, autonomous and biodegradable networks. Pros and cons of this structure are evaluated. Secondly it gives an overview of movement history: tactical and strategic repertoires including levels, forms and targets of action across the last decade.

3) Selected Stories From The Movement - Protest Camps

To flesh out the more generalised overview given above, this section draws on the wealth of ethnographic data collated during this research and, mostly through the eyes of the activists, tells stories about the movement. Due to constraints of space, I have chosen protest camp life, probably the definitive memory of direct action in the 90's, as the focus of this section. See also **Ch 4, Ch 7** for more activist perspectives. It should be stressed that this section by no means attempts to cover everything about protest camps, but rather aims to give an

impression of what it was like.

Section 1: Legacy of previous 'cycles of contention' (Tarrow 1998)

1.1 Note

The academic/theoretical perspectives referred to throughout are discussed in detail in the literature review **Ch 3**. Further, a more micro (and thus more detailed, if context-specific) examination of the issues raised in this section is given in the case study of Gwynedd and Mon EF! in **Ch 5**.

It is also essential to recognise that, given the size limit of this PhD, it is not possible to accord the EDA movement's "pre-history" much space (a recurring theme throughout this thesis!). The basic aim in this section is to untangle some of the key 'strands' of influence which in some ways created the conditions, provided the resources (people, experience, allies) and helped to shape the direction of the new 'cycle of contention'- the roads protest/EDA movement - of the 90's.

1.2 "Waves In A Sea?"

An important issue raised through the conducting of this research[14] (see also **Ch 3** and the **conclusion** for an intellectual development of this argument) is that there is a case at least for stating that past movements should be seen as part of a continuum with present mobilisation cycles, i.e. that there is a 'sea' of social movement activity out of which mobilisation waves arise. This argument is also developed by Welsh (2000). This implies a much more interconnected appraisal of the legacy of previous 'cycles of contention' and their influence on the nascent EDA movement at the start of the 90's. Ethnographic evidence and theoretical rationales for this approach are given at various relevant points throughout this thesis.

1.3 Basic Overview

It is a characteristic of "New" SMs from the 60's onwards that they blur across boundaries and into each other as they cross–pollinate and build capacity (Welsh 2000). As will be discussed, this cross-fertilisation and the 'multi-issue' nature of many key grievances of previous SMs

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[14] I should reference the intellectual input of my ESRC research colleagues Dr. Brian Doherty and Dr. Derek Wall here, as this idea has very much developed symbiotically as part of both my research projects.

means that I am unhappy with defining these movements - epistemologically as opposed to practically - as, for example, 'single-issue' or 'identity'15 (Giddens 1994), see also **Ch 3** for a fuller rationale. With this proviso, it is possible to outline three basic mobilisation waves in the period spanning the late 60's to the start of the 90's which pre-figured the roads protest /wider EDA movement, and to an extent influenced its direction. They are: the peace movement, the anti-nuclear movement and the feminist movement. Whilst these are probably the three core nodes of SM activity, there are related SM movements whose legacy in terms of the EDA movement are also key - these include the gay rights movement, the animal rights movement, and, throughout this entire period, successive trade union and workers' movements/struggles such as the Miners' Strike[16]. Within Wales, the language issue produced Welsh - specific action networks such as Cymdeithas y Iaith (see **Ch 5**). A wealth of academic literature on previous mobilisation waves, their core grievances and action strategies exists - for overviews see (for example) Doherty et al (2002), Giddens (1994), Rowbotham (1999). For more specific analyses of individual mobilisation cycles see for example Roseneil (1995), Welsh & Chesters(2000), Wall (1999).

1.4 Diffusion And 'Capacity Building'

This PhD[17] explores the extent to which the wider 'sea' of SM mobilisation enables a diffusion of repertoires, tactics, ideology, across movement boundaries and through time, linked to hypotheses which seek to locate the EDA movement against Welsh's (2000) notion of 'capacity building'. Whittier (1995) also discusses diffusion, highlighting how between radical feminist generations, debate and argument over tactics and ideology, was a process which forged movement praxis and triggered the new generation to react against and/or to incorporate the experience of older activists. This PhD also charts how the 90's generation of EDA activists, both as individuals and as 'the movement as a whole', developed and diffused strategies and praxis over time, providing further evidence of the reality of diffusion.

The theory is further discussed in **Ch 3**[18]. It is important to set the notion of 'capacity building' against the fact that a lot of the time the wheel gets reinvented in splendid isolation

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[15] See also Bagguley (1999) for a similar critique
[16] Constraints of space mean that an analysis of the influence of such mobilisations is not developed beyond an acknowledgement of their importance. See however **Ch 5** for a micro- historical analysis.
[17] See Doherty, Plows and Wall all publications.
[18] As a significant idea about the 'what, how and why' of mobilisation, this theory is revisited throughout this PhD in different ethnographic settings, which provide examples of how diffusion is occurring.

from what went before. This re-learning may in fact be a crucial feature of SM activity. For example, debates about interpersonal/group dynamics and power relations, and developing structures to deal with them, were quite well 'sorted' by the earlier 80's peace movement generation, but it wasn't until the mid/late 90's that these issues were once again seen as an integral aspect of "keeping our own house in order" and properly dealt with. George McKay (1996, 1998) demonstrates clearly that the current counter-cultural generation is often clueless about its radical heritage. I would argue that both perspectives are simultaneously true (see also Doherty 2002). *Context –dependency* is an important proviso when evaluating diffusion, and as implied earlier the end result of such crossover is often a deliberate rejection of the values and approaches of earlier generations (as with the 'spikey-fluffy' /violence/non-violence debates of the mid 90's)- this is also an important aspect of the diffusion process.

Given this complexity, it is evident that 'proving' the extent of capacity building is far beyond the remit of what this section is aiming to do. Suffice it to say that four decades of SM activity have produced a vast kaleidoscope of knowledge and experience, of which some has been directly 'transfused', some picked up 'second hand', some transmitted via their adoption/'brand recognition' by the general public and recycled into the next activist generation via this route (e.g. vegetarianism), and much lost as older generations of activists drop quietly out of the direct action scene, taking their knowledge and experiences and contacts with them. To attempt to give even a broad picture of the wealth of SM repertoires built up over time is too vast to attempt here. However given that the rest of the PhD documents the 'what and how' of the EDA movement, the process of movement praxis and practice, parallels can be made with the complexity of what goes on in current networks with what happened in the past.

1.5 Diffusion Of Repertoires: Core Frames And Key Tactics

Especially in terms of the three 'core node' SMs of peace, anti-nuclear and feminism in the period between the 60's and the start of the 90's, it is possible to document a significant amount of crossover between SMs in this period in terms of how grievances are framed. A good example of this is the peak of cross-movement activity which in the early/mid 80's led to organic coalitions of networks focused on the "bigger picture"[19]. The 'Stop the City' protests, precursors of the 'anti-globalisation' protests nearly two decades later, were initiated

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[19] See **ch4, ch6** for further discussion in the context of current development of EDA movement cognitive praxis.

"to protest against the financial institutions and their role in the international arms trade, repression, and poverty, ecological destruction, and in human and animal exploitation"(from Peace News, 3.2.84)

Indeed, the fact that this 'holistic' stance was re-learned by the EDA movement in the 90's (the subject, in essence, of this dissertation) perhaps says something about the limits of the wider movement's capability to build capacity beyond a 'political generation' (see also **Ch 3, Ch 5**). Then as now, key 'master frames' (Snow and Benford 1992) included a basic deconstruction of power relations in a myriad of sites, issues of social justice, human rights, and environmental and animal exploitation (Doherty et al 2002). Then as now, often vitriolic disagreement between or within movements was a key aspect of collective identity - "extreme" radical feminist positions, like "extreme" animal rights action strategies, being classic nodes of fissure in the period. Possibly in part a result of the ecological frame implicit in many anti –nuclear and peace discourses (Welsh 2000), the environment became the locus of activist attention during the 80's, with Friends of the Earth and Greenpeace rapidly increasing membership and influence.

In many ways, it could be argued that all of these discourses (e.g. feminism, peace) and action repertoires are encapsulated by the phenomenon that was Greenham Common (see Roseneil 1995, Wall 1999), and certainly in terms of the tactics and collective identity developed by the EDA movement in 1991/2, Greenham is one of the most tangible links in the context of the diffusion of repertoires from previous mobilisation cycles.

whilst we - those of us living on the Down and coming down for days of action - were, mostly, all new to direct action, to the whole scene, blithely unaware of our political heritage as we geared up for the next round, there were other networks of activists and experience and local opposition who in more subtle ways had created the conditions for this moment. These included previous mobilisations like Stop The City demo's in the 80s and Greenham Common - activists from earlier actions like these, with tactical and strategic experience, helped trigger, and sustain, action on Twyford Down. Greenham women told me what to do with the pallets they brought down as the weather got colder and our benders more scrotty...[20]

See also Doherty et al (2002), Wall (1999), Doherty, Plows and Wall (2001 all pubs). The relative

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[20] Plows, Alex (2002) *Schnews yearbook* 2002

closeness between the peak in mobilisations at Greenham and the start of Twyford is, I would argue, a key reason why discourses on non-violent action, feminism and gender politics, and action strategies of protest camps were dominant "cultural markers" of the Twyford campaign, as crossover occurred between old and new 'micro-cohorts' of activists. Other movement strands cross-fertilised in, most notably the animal rights and hunt 'sab' networks (see Wall 1999; Plows et al 2001).

1.5.1 Generational Crossover And Resourcing

Again, whilst it is context dependant how much of the tactical repertoires of previous generations are/were known about by new 'micro-cohorts', it is certain that the variety of forms of protest, including: sit-downs, site occupations, criminal damage and protest camps, and the networking, interpersonal and administration skills required to organise successful mobilisations which activists also develop over time, have diffused down to some degree, again even if this was sometimes only to provide an articulated contrast with what the new generation was doing (by the mid-90's, very Ghandian-style 80's NVDA action was viewed as "naff" and even "counter-revolutionary" by some of the post – Newbury 'micro-cohort[21]'). The knowledge and expertise built up by previous generations as they develop into what I call "organic experts" (see **Ch 3, Ch 4**) often becomes 'shored up', as it were, into more tangible and longer-lasting resources: small offices, established newsletters, ongoing campaigns (e.g. CAAT- Campaign Against the Arms Trade, Transport 2000, Alarm UK, see Wall 1999), all provided points of contact, and a wealth of resources and information, for the new generation of EDA activists. Greennet, an online activist networking service, was enabling activists to mobilise and communicate online at the start of the 90's, well pre-dating the massive upsurge in the use of IT by the general public in the late 90's, although it was not until this later period that IT became a widely used activist tool.[22] Similarly, as 90's EDA activists gained knowledge and experience, they in turn set up offices, newsletters, grant funded campaigns and projects which resource current generations of activists, examples being the 'underground' media service Undercurrents, the various campaign offices in Oxford (e.g. Rising Tide, Illisu Dam, This Land Is Ours) and the newsletters *Schnews* and Squall.(See other subsections of this chapter and **Ch 4** for EDA history, and **Ch 5** for a case study of generational crossover and development of resources).

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[21] *"non- violence is counter-revolutionary"*: activist in workshop, EF! summer gathering, 1999 (post "J18").
[22] See ch7 for more on activists' use of the Internet.

1.6 Counter - Cultural Networks

Key texts by George Mckay (1996, 1998) have documented the radical history of UK counterculture spanning four decades. My research has also provided ethnographic evidence of the fruitful crossover between more 'hedonistic' and 'lifestyle' aspects of past counter-cultural activity, and its more overtly 'political' expressions in the form of direct action. See also Doherty et al ibid all pubs, Wall 1999, Welsh & Chesters2000- also **Ch 3**). Regarding previous activist generations, counter-cultural crossover is discussed in the more micro context of a case study of activism in North Wales over time in **Ch 5**. In terms of the lead-up to the mobilisations at Twyford Down, it is highly significant that the early 90's were a time of great activity "in the landscape", as rave culture and the more established free festival circuit of the "New Age Traveller" and wider counter-cultural scene exploded in the British countryside over a couple of summers. (Similarly, in the 1980's, the 'peace convoy' and the Stonehenge festivals - and later, confrontations with police[23]- coincided with a peak of SM activity in the form of peace and anti-nuclear activity.

The free festival of Castle Morton in the May of 1992, attended by tens of thousands of people, encapsulated the 'spirit of the times', and it is noteworthy that roads protest took off later that same year. In terms of the influence of rave and traveller lifestyle and culture, these were again crucial aspects of determining and shaping the "cultural markers" of the early years of roads protest activity. This is a theme which will be revisited later in this chapter. These networks also provided people who transited into activism via related, often hedonistic, counter-cultural activity (this was also an important aspect of my route into activism at the time). This radical history has been well documented by a series of contemporary academics and writers who have charted the direction of British counterculture - as well as McKay 1996, see also Lowe and Shaw 1993; Earle et al 1994; Hetherington 1998; Martin 1998, 2000; Wall 1999. The importance of other social networks (here the rave, free festival and traveller scenes) as key recruitment tools (Diani 1992) is evident.

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[23] For accounts of this period, in particular the infamous "Battle of the Beanfield" where dozens of travellers were beaten up by police and their homes- their vehicles- smashed, see McKay 1996, Wall 1999, Earle et al 1994.

1.7 The International Dimension

As discussed by, for example, Wall (1999), Welsh & Chesters (2000) and Doherty (2002), UK protest networks have long been influenced by contact with international counterparts (for case study ethnography see Doherty et al all publications). Welsh, for example, documents the fact that massive anti-nuclear mobilisations in Europe, Germany in particular, preceded UK protests in the 1970's. In terms of direct international influences in the immediate run-up to Twyford Down, as Wall (1999) has definitively outlined, a new generation of young activists was consciously attempting to create new networks of radical direct activists based on the US Earth First! (EF!) movement. An EF! road show toured parts of Britain in 1991, initiated by UK activists inspired by the US example, with Murray Bookchin speaking. UK EF! networks quickly acquired their own character and ideology, in many ways different to US EF! – for example, UK EF! networks have always been consciously social-ecology, rather than deep ecology orientated (see Wall 1999, and Ch 4). This is evident by the fact that it was the social ecology focused Bookchin, rather than US EF! figurehead Dave Foreman, with his "own brand" version of deep ecology, who talked at the UK EF! road show in 1991. Similarly, Welsh (2000) notes how repertoires of anti-nuclear action in the 1970's, whilst inspired by experiences in Europe, were also unlike them in that they were explicitly non-violent whilst still challenging in terms of their tactics of physical disruption (stopping the construction of nuclear power stations). The symbiosis of the growth of the Twyford campaign and the rapidly expanding EF! networks has been well documented (Plows 1997: Wall 1999: Doherty et al 2000: Seel and Plows 2000: Doherty et al 2002).

1.8 'Latent' /'Dormant' Networks

As discussed in **Ch 3**, a key debate in SM theory surrounds the concept of "latent" /"dormant" networks. Firstly, Whittier (1995) Welsh (2000), Diani 1992, 1995 and Melucci 1996), for example, all point out that a movement is much more than its peaks of visible mobilisation, and that much activity is 'hidden', local/grassroots, small-scale, and blurs out of confrontational protest into wider fields of often proactive activity such as setting up housing co-ops or establishing community gardens[24], themes which are also developed in later sections of this chapter and in **Ch 5**. This is an extremely crucial theme/finding in terms of this PhD's aims of

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[24] My and my colleagues' ESRC research focused on precisely this hidden, day-to-day life of activist communities and documented the more untold story of the grassroots life of the EDA movement (see Doherty et al all pubs).

outlining the 'what, how and why' of the EDA movement.

However, whilst it is true to say that there may in fact be more sustained and frequent (if smaller scale and hidden) SM activity happening during and/or in between the very visible 'bursts' of national mobilisations (e.g. Greenham, Newbury, "J18"), as Tarrow 1998, Diani 1992, 1995 and Melucci (1996) point out, 'cycles of contention' at all levels - local, national, international - follow a pattern of peaks and troughs of activity. For a variety of reasons (activist burnout, biographical availability and State responses, for example- see **Ch 3, Ch 4**)- movements/mobilisation cycles transit into periods of "latency", where activity biodegrades away and activist communities to a certain extent dissolve out of 'protest function'. During these periods, whilst many activists leave, networks and communities tend to stay in a variety of degrees of contact, often through the maintenance/development of related social or work contact in their localities as outlined above (see Doherty et al all pubs.). Melucci (1996) argues that these periods of latency are crucial to the development of movement collective identity and meaning construction - the calm before the storm of the next peak, as it were. This pattern can be clearly seen in the run-up to the catalyst of Twyford, the earlier (peace) protest cycle had 'peaked' in the late 80's after Greenham, with activist networks at all levels undergoing a period of dormancy (see also Doherty et al ibid). In interviews, Welsh language, peace and feminist activists in North Wales all recount a biodegrading away of activity in the late 1980's. Interestingly this pattern is mirrored around the country in other (connected but autonomous) activist communities. However, these older networks had not completely biodegraded away but rather (to varying degrees) picked up again following the seemingly sudden, rapid influx of new people and new directions at the start of the 90's. These again are crucial issues regarding the 'what, how and why' of SMs and the EDA SM in particular, and surface throughout this thesis.

Section 2: EDA structure, tactics and strategies, and history in the last decade.

2.1 Defining "The Movement"

The following subsections outline themes which are picked up and developed in different ways, examined through different lenses as it were, throughout this thesis - see for example **Ch 3** for a detailed examination of the relevant literature, and throughout this thesis for ethnographic "snapshot" examples of the 'what, how and why' of the EDA movement. These themes are thus introduced here rather than discussed in-depth.

2.1.1 Numbers Of Activists

This is an exceptionally hard thing to define, given the nature of the movement (see below throughout), and especially the fact that at the boundaries of the movement things get extremely blurred, it is hard to define many of the people who came to the "J18" protests for a one-off event as being part of "the movement", although they were on that particular day. Generally when referring to numbers, I am referring to the 'hardcore' of activists who are mobilising on a fairly regular basis (allowing for periods of latency), although it is evident that this is a subjective definition and again it is impossible to draw any firm conclusions given how activist communities organise. However through PE coding of activist newsletters, and my participant observation/activist experience, it is possible to have a sense of numbers in the many local activist communities around the country, and to map numbers of activists who turn up to nationally networked actions or gatherings. The EF! summer gathering, for example, tends to average approximately 500 activists. There are also peaks and troughs, based on the movement of 'micro-cohorts' and different mobilisation waves - people are continuously dropping in and dropping out, (see also section 2.5.5 below for more discussion on activist numbers and shifting patterns).

A general pattern would be that numbers started off very small in 1991/2- a few dozen committed activists[25]- and rapidly grew into hundreds and possibly a couple of thousand. Numbers have possibly dropped off since the late 90's. Beyond this it is impossible to be at all definitive about numbers, apart from reiterating that these couple of thousand represent the 'hard core' of an EDA activist base which is continuously fluctuating as it pulls people in and out through biodegradable coalitions. This sort of pattern is easy to see in Ch 5, where a case study of EF! activity in North Wales over a time period highlights how different campaign actions and issues pull in different subsets of participants from a wider field, although the 'hardcore' of EF! activists remains relatively consistent.

2.2 Biodegradable And Fluid Networks

I mean those things come and go, a lot of them are transitory, we've got GEN [Genetic Engineering Network] now, 4 or 5 years ago we had Road Alert, it's all very shifting...
(activist in interview 1999)

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[25] Not including pre-existing or latent networks

As has already been established, it is difficult to pin down a definition of what "the movement" is or consists of, as it is characterised by transient/biodegradable, diffuse and shifting networks, with blurred boundaries into other movements, NGOs and the general public. This has been well documented by academics who comment on the UK EDA movement: see for example Plows 1997; Routledge 1997; Wall 1999; Seel, Paterson and Doherty et al 2000; Purkis 2000; Doherty et al all pubs; Doherty 2002, Scheller 2000. As is highlighted in **Ch 3** in particular, the reality of the movement on the ground fits exactly with the descriptions of movements as fluid processes discussed by many contemporary theorists. Activists (as "organic intellectuals"- see **Ch 3**) and academics both identify flux, change and an extreme diversity as being at the core of movement practice and praxis.

"It [the movement] *doesn't really exist as such...its a list of networks...a series of actions... "*

"-I don't have a great deal to do with things like the GEN, with RTS... "

AP:

-But do you see them as being part of your wider network?

"-I think they are. It's all a bit like a Venn diagram. They are different networks that answer very individual needs... activists will just pick up on whatever one of those networks has the most relevance to them at a particular point in time - and that might be geographical, like saying 'well TL10 is coming to do a land occupation in our area, so I'll get involved, 'cos it's down the road, or it might be throwing yourself wholeheartedly into the GE network, because that's the most useful thing... "

quotes taken from activist interviews in 1999 and 2000.

As I have argued elsewhere (see Seel and Plows 2000), the way EF! networks in the UK organise and conceive of themselves provides a useful pointer to the way the wider movement of which they are an intrinsic part operates. EF! describes itself as being

"not a cohesive group or campaign, but a convenient banner for people who share similar philosophies to work under. The general principles behind the name are non-hierarchical organisation and the use of direct action to confront, stop and eventually reverse the forces that are responsible for the destruction of the earth and its inhabitants".[26]

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[26] EF! Action Update Issue 58 May 1999 email contact <actionupdate@gn. apc.org>

EF! is an idea as much as a reality, a potential network, a vessel to be filled and shaped by whatever use it is put to. This holds true as an analogy for the EDA movement of which EF! forms one (if a core) network. Thus rather than some homogenous, solid, static movement, the EDA movement comprises a vast number of distinct campaigns, networks and protest camps. Each has their own distinct identity/ethos[27] and specific goals. Cores of individuals will focus primarily on one particular campaign or locality - for example the Genetic Engineering Network, Arthur's Wood protest camp at Manchester Airport in 1998, local EF! groups, closed affinity groups. Resources and tangible spaces are created, which may be temporary - the Temporary Autonomous Zone (TAZ) of a protest camp with a limited lifespan, or they may be more 'permanent'- the setting up of grant-funded campaign offices, for example. Simultaneously - and crucially - network and campaign identities are also fluid and shifting:

"...environment movement networks and webs of interrelationships in flux"[28]

Thus an Earth First! (EF!)er becomes an anti-GM activist, a roads protestor, airport protestor, arms sales protestor simply through their presence on each particular campaign. Activists do more than affiliate with different campaigns, they *become* those campaigns. People move around a lot, physically and conceptually, and many consciously avoid labels, in particular the media creation of the "eco-warrior". We will see that this seemingly paradoxical state, where an activists' identity can be both fixed (to an extent) and fluid, is very characteristic of the movement. These campaigns, and the people who make them up, are linked through networking, actions...and also, as I will be arguing throughout the PhD, shared political/ethical worldviews.

Networks, 'tribal' identities and campaigns are always coming and going, with life-spans determined by a number of context - dependant, micro and macro factors, and activists tend to meld into multiple sub-sets, often becoming identified with particular campaign networks and identities for relatively short periods of time. The last few years have seen new networks emerge - 'Women Speak Out!' women-only activist gatherings and actions, Genetix Snowball, gay/lesbian activists (who recently started their activist newspaper 'the Pink Pauper'), the much – misunderstood 'black bloc', the Rising Tide climate change network, the 'Wombles'. Other activist networks and identities have biodegraded, Road Alert!, Dongas, Flowerpots, even RTS

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[27] This is perhaps particularly true of different protest camps, where common ground through identity with place is very important, so that there are often strongly held 'tribal' identities. This will be discussed in more detail shortly.
[28] Routledge, Paul (1997 pp359-376) 'The imagineering of resistance: Pollok Free State and the practise of postmodern politics' in Transactions of the Institute of British Geographers.

and EF! networks to an extent.

2.2.1 "Biodegradability" as pragmatic necessity

Firstly, I would argue that the shifting nature of networks and activist identities is mostly determined by the pragmatic necessity of reacting to circumstances. Activists change and adapt their tactics and strategies in order to respond to events on the ground, thus the tendency for groups and campaigns to come and go is based on perceived and/or actual tactical necessity, new challenges, new grievances. For example, the roads building programme was more or less dropped in 1996 by a dying Tory government, whilst simultaneously activists were beginning to find out about the imminent planting of GM crops in farm scale trials. Road protest campaign 'nodes' such as the Road Alert! office started to decline in activity, whilst new campaign groups such as GEN began to coordinate and network information about GE crops and campaign activity, stimulating GE- focused direct action. Activist 'burnout' post –Newbury was also an important factor in the 'biodegrading' of Road Alert! and the wider roads protest networks (see **Ch 4** and section 3 below).

This pragmatism is a common theme again stretching back over activist generations. Subsets of activist identity, activist networks, exist as long as there is a need for them to do so, the resources to sustain them.

2.2.2 Pros And Cons Of "Biodegradability"

Briefly, the pros are that with no fixed and permanent structures (see also **2.1.2** below), activists are able to shift and adapt extremely quickly to changing circumstances. In the example given above, the general switch in emphasis from roads to genetics happened 'organically', independently and extremely rapidly, it did not take months of committee meetings for activists to be free to pursue new strategies. As **Ch 5** highlights, this is as true at the local/micro level as it is for the "bigger picture". This is the 'movement in the movement', so to speak (see **Ch 3**).

The major con of this 'biodegrading' of activity is that much of the movement capacity built up during a specific campaign is often lost as activists move on (see also Seel and Plows 2000 for a discussion on this subject). For example, extremely positive relationships between activists and locals who have supported camps quite literally on their doorsteps (at Newbury, or

at Brewery Fields protest camp in North Wales[29] for example) which could, if built on, have had positive community and public participation potential, thus starting to proactively address the root causes of some of the development issues at stake, have simply not borne fruit - good ideas come to nothing as activists move on to the 'next big thing'. Of course, activist burnout is a crucial factor here too, but there is a point to be made that whilst direct activists like to talk a lot about proactive community outreach, the opportunities to pursue it are very rarely taken up - at least until activists start to succumb to 'biographical availability' (McAdam 1982). Also, useful contacts - locals with knowledge and expertise, relationships with sympathetic local journalists are also lost, often meaning that new 'micro-cohorts' of activists in localities have to reinvent the wheel when they kick-start new campaigns. The examples are endless and point again to the constraints which biodegradability places on movement 'capacity building'.

2.3 The Movement As A "Disorganisation"

Constraints of space mean that this is another brief overview, with the ethnographic detail woven throughout the thesis, and the theory discussed in **Ch 3**. In many respects the above section on biodegradable and fluid networks has also implicitly introduced these themes. For further discussion on this subject, see Plows (1997), Seel and Plows (2000), Wall (1999), Doherty et al (all pubs).

The EDA movement has been described as a "disorganisation". Rather than a formal, centralised NGO with a membership list and a hierarchical chain of command, generally speaking the EDA movement is autonomous, decentralised, non-hierarchical and uses networking as its primary structural tool - this too happens "organically" as interested groups of activists meet up, share strategic and tactical ideas, and *get out there and do it*, whether it be an existing local group deciding to take action about a planned development, or people with a specific interest coming together to form new national campaign networks such as the GEN or the relatively new climate change network Rising Tide. The above subsections have already given an idea of the immense variety of campaign networks, nodes and groups which comprise the EDA. No-one is overseeing or co-ordinating this - it simply happens, with activists using a variety of mediums to ensure they stay networked and in touch with each other (see **Ch 7**). Of course, *taking direct action* together is a key means of communication and staying in touch, these actions in turn sowing the seeds for

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[29] See Plows, Alex 1998

the next round of campaigning (see **Ch 4**)

2.3.1 Activist Rationales

(See also **Ch 4**, **Ch 7** and Plows 1997, Seel and Plows 2000, Purkis 2000 and Wall 1999).

Activist rationales for autonomy, non-hierarchical and decentralised approaches to movement organisation tend to come from an ethically-motivated pragmatism. The argument goes something like, 'hierarchy - lack of democracy and grassroots participation - are all power relationships which are intrinsic parts of the wider problem we face. Therefore our means must be related to our ends'. As with the fluidity/biodegradability aspects of movement structure, activists also point to pragmatic advantages, which tend to boil down to "empowerment"- or a term which was more current in the culture of the early/mid 90's EDA movement:

-something that was called DIY culture a few years ago, which was people just doing it for themselves, y'know-

(activist in interview 1999).

See also McKay 1996, 1997. People are encouraged to take responsibility for organising themselves, with the aim of seeding more action, more diversity, and avoiding the tactical problems of what might happen if movement "leaders" are picked off by the State (see Plows 1997). Early 90's slogans - "If not you, who? If not now, when?" highlight activists' emphasis on individual empowerment (see Purkis 1995, 2000)

2.3.2 Rhetoric And Reality

Certainly movement rhetoric, in particular anarchist approaches, is geared to the 'ideal type' as it were of autonomy, non-hierarchical structures and movement democracy. It is certainly true that around the country autonomous groups do what they want, when they want, independently of other groups and networks, even of larger 'umbrella' networks of which they are subsets. Further, during mass protest events such as J18, autonomy in terms of the tactics used on the ground is evident (see **Ch 6** for a fuller discussion). The same is true during the lifespan of protest camps and other actions, though in longer term TAZ situations such as protest camps, squats, activist gatherings, consensus/group decision making processes and group responsibility *tend* to be discourses and approaches which override individual autonomy (see **Ch 4, Ch 7** and

the discussion on protest camps later in this section). As discussed in **Ch 7**, activists do work hard at ensuring that, where possible, consensus decision making processes are in place to ensure that all have a voice, although there are often occasions when this a) is not practical (as on "J18") and b) simply fails.

On point b), this is where activist rhetoric on 'non-hierarchical structures' parts company with the reality on the ground. As discussed in **Ch 4** and **Ch 7** in particular, whilst there are undoubtedly "prime movers", activists who are particularly good at organising, mobilising and inspiring others - no question a movement asset - such people can become, as activists themselves recognise, "over-empowered", and dominate groups and entire networks. Further, as the quoted below points out, whilst there is a positive and essentially pragmatic[30] reason why groups of activists come together out of wider networks to organise things, there are also power issues here (see **Ch 7**). Cliques often develop, with other people being frozen out of the picture, becoming alienated - this can lead to individuals setting up new networks, creating more movement activity, or people can drop out (or never get the chance to 'drop in'), taking their resources, expertise and potential with them. Again this has implications for movement 'capacity building'. Obviously these situations produce much discourse - even arguments may have a positive function as issues *can* be resolved and dealt with - but the power balance in these situations is messy, to say the least. However, currently Jo Freemans' seminal article "The tyranny of structurelessness" (1973) is apocryphal within the movement, as discussed in **Ch 7** (and see later sections of this chapter) after a particularly bad patch in terms of power relations internally, the movement as a whole has worked hard at countering the effects of 'non-hierarchical hierarchy'.

2.3.3 Pros And Cons

It can be seen that the discourses and practices surrounding autonomy on the one hand and grassroots democracy on the other sit uneasily with each other - this is never truer than when negotiating the taking of action, where (for example) breaking windows on mass actions is an autonomous tactic taken without consensus. Activists are caught in a vicious circle of ethical dilemmas here, as the 'right' of activists to 'do their own thing', and the 'right' of the group as a whole to have some say in how actions which affect everybody will be decided upon, clash.

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[30] e.g. security, the practicalities of decision- taking in groups over a certain size

There is more or less an understanding that in circumstances like "J18", it is impossible to achieve consensus, meaning that "autonomy" is the order of the day. Where, in post-action post-mortems, the most bitter arguments have often taken place over the question of mutual understanding and respect for each others' point of view (see **Ch 7**). **Ch 5 and chi** also address the issues arising from principles of autonomy and group action, especially coalitions. Other pros and cons (e.g. cliques) have been mentioned throughout the above subsections so will not be repeated here.

2.4 (Collective) Identity And Diversity

At the height of that whole spiky-fluffy yogurt weaver fever[31] lets all label each other disaster I was a fluffy yogurt weaver... I was a fun mama as well at one point, which meant that I liked to lie about in bed and only came out when there was an action which was loads of fun for a while...

(activist in interview 2000)

...I think that there are very stereotyped images of the movement, the last few years it's been the dreadlocked eco-warrior in the trees kind of thing, and I think that that's now starting to move to the masked-up anarchist image that's coming as a result of June 18, and the GE test sites, with people being...covertly...masked up to do that, and I think that media image...masks the diversity of people who are involved, you only have to look around the gathering that's here and there's such an enormous diversity of people, from people who are in full-time employment, who have a job, who see direct action as something that they do when they can, to people who live in housing co-ops and are full-time doing environmental direct action... people who are very involved with squatting in urban areas, to people who want to live on the land in rural areas, and build their own homes, so though it's got the sort of predominantly white, educated classes sort of image, it is actually quite diverse... there are people who would say explicitly that they are anarchists, and others who don't necessarily see themselves as belonging to a particular ideology...

(activist in interview 1999)

2.4.1 Note

The basic issues raised here again cut to the heart of the PhD and are developed and revisited in

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[31] During Newbury, a new 'micro-cohort' of activists were starting to query the explicitly non-violent, ("fluffy"), and "eco-pagan" ("yogurt-weaver") aspects of 'standard activist identity'.

all chapters of this thesis - see in particular **Ch 3, Ch 4** and **Ch 7**. Thus to avoid repetition many of the ethnographic and theoretical examples/implications of these themes are not raised at this point.

2.4.2 Diversity

Autonomy and diversity are part of the movement's collective identity and a well-articulated movement principle. As Melucci (1996) notes, collective identity is a *process* under continuous negotiation, and as such is *"always plural, ambivalent, often contradictory"*
(Melucci 1996: 78)

Activists themselves see diversity within their movement as productive not simply because of a belief in autonomy but because of the way such diversity produces dialogue and change:
"I think what makes it a "movement" are the commonalities between people/groups/sections, but at the same time the only reason it is moving is because the diversity also creates many different ideas and goals."

(activist in interview 1999).

As the 'fluffy-spikey' activist quote at the top of this section highlights, seemingly fashion-oriented cultural identities tend to have much more serious undertones (see also below). Thus the cognitive aspects of identity meld with the more "fashion" orientated dimensions, the cleaving to 'subsets' of identity is often indicative of deeply held values and political points of view. **Chs 4+ 7** in particular evaluate the implications of movement diversity from activist perspectives. Whilst there is evidently great diversity within the EDA movement, there are also important limits and tensions here - see subsection **2.4.6** below on movement homogeneity.

2.4.3 Identification With Place: Tribes...

Whilst this may be more relevant to the 'roads micro-cohort' than the later GM/anti-capitalist one, as later subsections which discuss life on protest camps will highlight (and see also **Ch 4**), activists often have a strong identification with *place* which leads them to create a strong 'localised' collective identity as a group of activists in that particular area. This is often an

identification with an area of land under threat from development where activists set up a protest camp, it can also be an urban area (activists at the M11 protest camp in London had similar emotional connections to their threatened environment), and any 'TAZ[32]', a squatted building used for a café and info centre, for example. An obvious example of this 'localised' collective identity is the 'Donga Tribe'[33] (see Plows 1995, 1997 and Wall 1999) who were an integral catalyst of the roads protest mobilisation wave at Twyford Down in 1992. The 'dongas' were the local name given to the Iron –Age trackways, a Scheduled Ancient Monument, where the first trickle of direct activists had their camp[34]. This group had a very strong self identification with the land and this combined with a shared set of political/ethical discourses around indigenous peoples, threatened land and an opposition to 'development', meant that the name and *idea* of the 'Donga Tribe' was rapidly adopted. As "early risers" (Tarrow 1998) in the protest cycle, the Donga Tribe seeded the notion of 'tribal' identification with place - activists as indigenous protectors of their homeland, developing communal and eco-aware lifestyles - as an intrinsic aspect of what it *meant* to be a roads protestor. As discussed earlier, this was also part of a general counter-cultural zeitgeist- "Spiral Tribe", the underground/traveller rave crew and a vital element of the 'free festy' circuit, were also tapping into a similar 'vibe'.

Similarly, as is evidenced throughout, activists develop 'localised' collective identities around a certain issue, developing a 'community of ideas' even though they may be geographically separate and only come together occasionally, for example as GE activists who undertake covert action, as GE activists who take part in accountable 'snowball' actions. Email lists where activists 'meet' to discuss events and ideas also form 'localised' collective identities of a sort (see **Ch 7**).

2.4.4 Identity 'Badges' As Fashion Statements?

Post-modern commentators on contemporary counterculture (Hetherington 1998) have something of a point when they highlight a more superficial element to the biodegradability of activist identities (see also McKay 1996, 1997). To an extent, activists *are* playing with fashions - from 'crusty' traveller 'tribal' types on protest camps with their dreadlocks and hand carved wooden spoons, the predominant activist 'look' up until the mid/late 90's, to the "black –hooded top"

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[32] Temporary Autonomous Zone: Bey 1991.

[33] I was one of the "Donga Tribe" and lived and campaigned at Twyford Down between August 1992 and May 1993- see Plows 1995, 1997, 1998, 2002.

[34] The M3 motorway was scheduled to run entire length of the Down – it has now been built.

look of the urban anarchist style 'micro-cohort' of the anti-global capitalism mobilisation 'wave' which followed. However, I would argue that postmodern approaches are in general an unfair take on activist identity which more or less completely ignore the political dimensions and pragmatic functions of shifting 'fashions' (see also Szerszynski, B 1999; Wall 1999 for similar arguments to my own here). I have presented arguments elsewhere (Plows 2001) which discuss the importance of group bonding and peer acceptance – *belonging* - as essential aspects of forging collective identity. In this context 'badges' of identity fulfill a necessary function of maintaining network ties. Much of this creation of "we" also has to do with recruitment and sustaining mobilisation. For activists on the ground "high risk recruitment"[35] is paramount. People need to be highly motivated and connected, to feel part of a group identity, in order to sustain them through (often) difficult and dangerous actions, winters spent in dripping treehouses, years on the dole, criminal records. Thus having a shared cultural code - dress and lifestyle - can engender and reaffirm a sense of belonging, emotional commitment to the group - here is "us" and what "we" stand for.

At the EF! Summer gathering in 2001, one of the evenings' focal entertainments was a 'fashion show' put on by activists. A number of activists paraded down the ' catwalk' garishly made up in different activist 'looks'. To the acerbic and hysterically funny commentary of the evenings' compare, activists modelled looks such as the "pissed Crusty traveller" and "Black Bloc urban rioter". There is, as I have pointed out, some truth in Hetherington's deconstruction of activist "fashion statements". The point is, very often no-one is more reflexively aware, more self-critical, of this, than the activists themselves, and their ability to self-consciously play with their own fashion orientated peer groupings speaks volumes about the limits of postmodern attempts to cast activists as un-reflexive flotsam and jetsam in the sea of counterculture .

2.4.5 Cliques Revisited

There is an obviously paradoxical position where the often very strongly articulated "We's" the EDA movement creates via myriads of 'localised' identity sets ('tribes'), hit the fluid, shifting nature of movement collective identity, and activists' general antipathy to defining 'who they are' (Melucci finds this highly problematic).[36] This simply is the nature of the beast, I feel. The more pressing problem for activists is the fact that these 'localised' identities can become extremely

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[35] Jasper, JM 1998: McAdam, Doug 1986

cliquey and alienate not just the general public but quite often other activists (Wall 1999; Plows 2001), to the point where others can be put off taking any further action. At certain points the 'localised'/'tribal' identity – the group bond - comes to outweigh a wider sense of a movement collective identity. For example, during the Newbury campaign, activists who came to the site from other areas for short spaces of time (rather than living fulltime on site) were referred to as "weekenders". This was extremely hurtful for people who were involved in other campaigns, or who had children, or who were working, but had still made the effort to take action at Newbury, and one can only hazard a guess as to how many simply didn't bother to come the next time. Not all 'tribal cliques' have effects which are this negative (this certainly wasn't the full story for Newbury either), but still a sense of feeling 'left out' and unable to join in, seems to be a common story for those looking at localised identities from the outside.

Having myself been in one of these situations as one of the "Dongas", and having observed this phenomenon in the movement over the years, I would conclude that such 'clique-iness' occurs when mobilisation in that specific context is peaking or extremely intense. Core activists - those who are constantly mobilising together as opposed to others who drop in and out - are put under great pressure at such times (see accounts of life on camps, for example, later in this chapter and in **Ch 4, Ch 7**). They forge extremely deep bonds based on shared experiences, and this provides a sense of security and stability in often extremely unstable situations. Cliques can be self-preservation, and I would argue a case for "the strength of strong ties" (see **Ch 3**). Of course, then there's simply 'human nature'- everyone feels alienated at some time and not part of the group. Conversely, people also deliberately exclude others from their circle. Again, issues to do with interpersonal and power dynamics may have to be re-discovered by new and as yet relatively un-reflexive 'micro-cohorts' of activists. These such lessons tend not to diffuse well, in my experience[37] However this is one of the reasons why activists are often very wary of labelling themselves - because they are aware of the polarisation this can cause.

2.4.6 A Homogenous Movement?

Demographically, the movement (like NSMs generally - Parkin 1968) tends to be characterised by academics and activists alike (see for example Bagguley 1992, 1995, Giddens 1994, and Do or

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[36] see Melucci (1996) ibid. pp83

[37] at a recent feedback workshop for our ESRC project, I and my colleagues made the tentative suggestion that 'tangible' repertoires such as building treehouses and similar tactics diffused 'better' than 'intangible' ones, and that this had implications for theories of movement capacity- building.

Die! 1996) as middle class, young, predominantly white and able-bodied. This is fair comment, although it does need some unpacking. There are older- and often, old people who take direct action and get arrested[38] regularly, for example. Also what seems to be the common factor in this 'middle class' movement is that activists tend to have received tertiary level education (even if they then dropped out) which meant that they saw themselves as more middle-class although many actually came from working-class backgrounds[39]. However, as activists constantly discuss at strategic gathering after strategic gathering,[40] the movement 'could do better'.

Firstly, a kind of 'cultural hegemony' tended to be imposed on EDA movement collective identity up until the late 90's, with very little critical self engagement with how the movement itself reproduced a societal intolerance of, or possibly more kindly, a blind spot regarding, issues to do with difference amongst activists. Caught up in the implicit "we all feel the same, don't we?" cosy-ness of collective identity, there was a general lack of awareness of how differences in sexual orientation, for example, were being overlooked when forging a sense of 'who we are'. As a result of activists thinking more about difference in the late 90's (see **Ch 7**), things have improved - not only is there more articulated awareness of the issues, but there is evidence of more diverse activity centered around activists mobilising together at least partly out of their shared difference - the Disabled Action Network - the women-only peace actions "Women in Black", the gay/lesbian activist newspaper 'The Pink Pauper'.

Secondly, there are inclusion issues around differences such as race, gender, disability, class, sexuality – even being a parent. If the white, middle class (possible male?) assumed 'straight', young, fit and childless activist is "the norm", then those who deviate from that norm are going to find it harder to get involved, as action tends to be organised to suit the majority (see also Plows 1997).Whilst some may find it easier to join in than others in different contexts, it is obvious that dominance or homogeneity reproduces itself - and this is very hard to avoid when one is also trying to undertake actions that will 'be effective' and by their very nature often exclude those who do not fit 'the norm' because they are confrontational, and extremely demanding of activists' time and resources. This is again one of these topics which must be cut short here for reasons of space, though they are returned to in a number of places in this thesis (**Ch 4, Ch 7**). Briefly, it is a vicious circle that activists are very aware of but seemingly not very

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[38] a friend of mine recently said that he was in fact waiting until old age before he again had the 'biographical availability' to take action he was currently unable to because of his children.

[39] This observation is based on data analysis of interviews done as part of the ESRC project which specifically examined activists' class and background, as well as general participant observation.

able to deal with.

2.5 Ten Years Of EDA Movement History: An Overview

2.5.1 Note

This section compresses an amount of activity into a very short space, which has been quite frustrating if necessary for reasons of coherence. It is logistically impossible to do justice to the Twyford protests or any of the others which followed, (although extremely colourful stories are given in activist accounts - see section 3 below, **Ch 4**), so this section gives an extremely basic overview, plus the results of some quantitative Protest Event (PE) data sampling. This will give a sense of a general history, meaning that the more detailed 'snapshots' of the movement given throughout the thesis can be put more into context. It is worth bearing in mind methodological provisos (see **intro, Ch 2**) about the impossibility of definitively mapping this shifting and extremely complex movement. The lead up to the 'seeding' of the new mobilisation wave - roads protest - has of course been given in previous sections. Thus:

2.5.2 Telling the Story

2.5.2.1 Twyford Down

It is worth spending perhaps a little longer on the first part of this story, for which I have to confess a personal motivation (my own involvement) as much as an academic one, i.e., as 'early risers', activists at Twyford Down set the scene - the 'master frame' (Snow and Benford 1992), and a set of repertoires to be built on and adapted - for the wave of action which followed in the 90's.

Direct Action roads protests evolved at Twyford Down in early 1992 perhaps a 'movement whose time had come'. A long established legal campaign against the M3 had come to nothing leaving extremely motivated local campaigners seething (Bryant 1996), meanwhile events on the world stage were galvanising NGO environmental groups[41]- see also Derek Wall (1999). As discussed in earlier sections, counter-cultural activity was peaking in the form of large movements

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[40] For example, the EF! Winter moot 2001/2 saw over 100 activists split into groups discussing these themes.

[41] The frustrations of Rio could be seen as a POS action trigger. Speaking as an activist, they weren't an articulated action rationale for most of us who were actually mobilising, but formed part of a background- for some was a direct link, as Rootes emphasises: *"In 1988, Margaret Thatchers' speeches had legitimated environmentalists' concerns and had raised expectations ... in 1992-1993 ... the environment had ... slipped from the top of the public agenda. ..."* Rootes, C. (2000) 'Environmental Protest in Britain 1988-1997' p 49 in Doherty, Paterson and Seel <u>Direct Action in British Environmentalism'</u> London: Routledge

of "New Age Travellers" and ravers on the 'free festival circuit', meaning that there were large numbers of predominantly young people available and already out in the UK countryside, more or less waiting to be mobilised (with hindsight). Again, nascent EF! networks were quickly seeding around the country. Then there was the 'Issue Opportunity' (see **Ch 3**) itself - in my view, the crucial catalyst which triggered everything else, building work started on the Down. The 'Twyford story' has been relatively well documented by academics and by activists themselves[42]: See Wall 1999, Plows 1995, 1997, 1998, McKay 1996, 1998, activist publications 'Do or Die!', early newsletters by direct activists such as Road Alert!, see also the *Schnews* annual 2002. Contemporary newspaper reports such as those filed by John Vidal (The Guardian, December 1992) also provide pieces of the 'Twyford story'[43]

The infamous "Yellow Wednesday" eviction of the first roads protest camp at Twyford in 1992 sparked a massive upsurge in protest. The small number of activists and their supporters did not die away but were instead galvanised by their experiences. It was widely reported in the national press and in the 'green media'. Local activist networks which had established a pattern of coming down to Twyford (from, for example, Brighton, Manchester, Oxford, London) were triggered into much more focused activity. These regional EF! groups rapidly began to develop capacity in their area, building up activist bases and contacts initially through their involvement with Twyford. It was at this point that nationally dormant/latent activist communities became recharged[44] 'Established' NGO groups such as FOE who had famously had a 'hands off' approach to EF! and new direct action networks (Wall 1999) had a change of heart. By Spring 1993, roads protest and Twyford Down was a significant national phenomenon. State and corporate responses in terms of policing, security, legal approaches, use of private detective

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[42] Website searches throw out sets of histories, stories, "rants", action/campaign pages, personal accounts, photos. 'organic intellectual' activists making sense of their campaigns or culture with a bit of self- learned theory, interested commentators. Many of these are totally dedicated to Twyford Down; many more are a mix of lots of protests or focus on other personally important campaigns. There is an extremely wide variety of approaches to the story of 90's direct action "out there"; in the last few years especially, use of the web has grown exponentially and I do not claim in any sense to have done much beyond the barest of literature searches on relevant websites. An interesting finding in itself is this seeming significance of roads and related protest for so many people, whether or not they were personally involved.

[43] In interviews, and informally during 'natural' participant observation settings (in peoples' homes, squats, round protest camp fires, at activist parties, in the cells) people tell the stories of their protests like these extracts above show. This is how a lot of experience gets diffused down to new generations- through activist discourse (see **ch7**). An extremely effective, and powerful, method some activists have used to tell the story of how they feel is writing songs and poetry. The lyrics of some of these are given in **appendix 1**

[44] See Doherty, Plows and Wall all pubs; **ch5** for a North Wales case study.

agencies[45] began to develop in scale. The State, as well as the movement, was building capacity. Tactical innovation, always high during this phase of a mobilisation cycle (Tarrow 1998, Welsh 2000), included activists locking their necks to the undercarriages of machinery to stop it moving, or climbing up moving diggers whilst dodging legions of security guards.[46]

2.5.2.2 The Roads Protest Movement

Within a year a national movement comprising hundreds of people had been mobilised and other protest camps sprang up across the country, with repertoires - ideas, rationales, tactics - diffusing rapidly. Crucially, the UK government's "Roads to Prosperity" programme was being implemented, with 23 billion pounds scheduled to be spent on new road building over the next 30 years[47], thus providing a growing movement with a series of high profile, contentious schemes over which to mobilise (Wall 1999). The full range of SM literature –identified mobilisation "tools" (see **Ch 3**) can be seen coming into play. POS factors providing action triggers, whilst strong allies (established "straight" anti-road campaign groups such as Transport 2000) provided resources in the form of advice and networking skills, for example. An office dedicated to networking action on roads - Road Alert! - was set up. Newly 'blooded' activists made contact, via these resources, with established local protests at the grassroots. Pre-existing latent activist networks and campaigns were rejuvenated by the influx of new energy. The results would be dramatic. Some of the major flashpoints of action - many of these hard - fought campaigns which went on for several months (or in some cases years) - include the Cradlewell Bypass in Jesmond Dene, Newcastle in 1993 (the first camp to take to the trees - a tactic honed at Batheaston in 1994 and rapidly diffused throughout protest sites), the M11 link road in East London, 1993/4, the A46 Batheaston - Swainswick, Bath - 1994 (Solsbury Hill), the M65 at Blackburn, 1995, the Skye toll bridge protests, 1995, the southern bypass, Lancashire, 1995, the M77 Ayre Road route, Pollock Estate, Glasgow, 1996, the A34 Newbury Bypass in Berkshire, 1996/7, the A30 Honiton - Exeter, Devon (better known as Fairmile and the birthplace of a media phenomenon called 'Swampy fever'[48]), 1997. Many smaller /less well known roads (and similar) protest camps continued to

[45] Bravs' detective Agency based in Southampton had been used as far back as late Summer 1992 to spy on the Dongas and by 1993 were openly compiling intelligence.

[46] Forms of action are discussed in more detail later in this chapter- see also **ch4**, Doherty 2000; Wall 1999, Doherty, Plows and Wall all pubs. An evaluation of tactics – repertoires of contention- and their evolution over time could have been an extremely interesting PhD in itself

[47] In 1993, road building was scheduled to destroy 800 Scheduled Ancient Monuments (SAM), 160 Sites of Scientific Interest (SSSI), and 12 Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB) by 2025.

[48] See Paterson 2000.

spore well throughout the 90's: the A11 Besthorpe - Wymondham in Norfolk, the A17 in Leadenham, Lincolnshire, the A406 North Circular Widening, London, Brewery Fields protest camp in North Wales.

Whilst roads were the primary focus of protest in the early/mid 90's, activists rapidly broadened their bases (in fact, the first EF! protests had been organised around rainforest destruction and mahogany imports: see Wall 1999) as a result of building capacity, understanding the interrelationship of issues, and using tactics developed for one situation (occupying the offices of road-builders Tarmac, for example) for other targets. Mass EF! actions at Whateley quarry, Somerset in 1993 and 1996, the tree protests at the opencast mine site, Sellar in South Wales in 1995, and the Manchester Airport camp in 1997, are good examples. Reclaim The Streets (RTS) events, counter-cultural TAZ road reclamations which had grown out of the M11 protests, became popular in the mid 90's. In terms of developing rationales for action, the intellectual development of the movement is discussed in **Ch 4, Ch 6+ Ch 7**. By the mid- 90's, EDA activity was extremely multi-faceted, tackling a range of social justice, peace, and human rights issues/targets as well as 'development' and environmental destruction (see also **Ch 4**). Proactive, as well as reactive, campaigns also figure prominently, from small-scale permaculture co-op projects to large scale collective actions such as ' This Land Is Ours' and 'Diggers' "land-squats". A noticeable strategic development by the mid/late 90's was a move to more locally based, 'community' actions by protesters keen to build on grassroots ties, slightly shifting the focus away from national campaigns (see **Ch 5**, Doherty, Plows and Wall all pubs).

2.5.2.3 Genetics And 'Anti -Capitalism' -The Next Wave

As discussed in earlier sections, the movement's boundaries are diffuse and blur not just sideways, outwards through different networks (see Klandermans 1992, Diani 1992) but also over time. The 'wave' of direct action targeted specifically on genetically modified crops follows on chronologically from the roads movement, but these are not 'separate' movements, rather different networks adapting and emerging out of old ones, reacting to new grievances. There is a continuity of people and ideas who blur across 'micro-cohorts' of EDA activist generations (though many members of specific 'micro-cohorts' do drop out - see earlier, and **Ch 4**). What we have here is evidence of a growing, changing movement whose strategies tend to be reactive rather than proactive, but nevertheless has consolidated itself over a decade. As discussed at the start of this chapter in relation to earlier 'waves' of action, there may be peaks and troughs of

action, and changes of focus and direction, but these movement waves are all part of the same sea.

As the roads building programme was dropped by the Tory government in 1997[49], experienced activists with well developed capacity had already identified a new and (in their eyes), potentially more ecologically damaging threat: genetic modification (Purdue 2000; Doherty 2002). As with roads, experienced networks of activists liased with local grassroots contacts and more established allies (Greenpeace, FOE) and GE protests started to take off, with 'umbrella' networks such as GEN and Primal Seeds providing activist resources. Much GE protest activity has been covert (Doherty et al 2001) although unlike much covert 'ecotage' it is often reported in activist publications and websites[50]. There have been a number of accountable "crop- squats" and mass trespasses on GE sites with crops being pulled: Whatlington, near Oxford in 1998 for example. Building on a well-established peace movement repertoire of accountable action (Ploughshares), the Genetix Snowball campaign won a series of high profile court cases against the GE company Monsanto. It was during the late 90's, and possibly primarily through the lens of GE focussed protest[51], that EDA activists started to develop detailed understandings of how macro-structural, economic events on the global stage - the rise of the WTO - were impacting on a range of issues they were involved with (see **Ch 6** for a more detailed history of the rise of anti-globalisation' protests). UK 'anti global capitalist' protests, and UK activists' involvement with similar international protests, has been significant (see Plows et al 2001; Welsh and Chesters 2001)[52], with "J18" (London, 1999), 'the battle of Seattle' ("n30", November 1999 with solidarity protests in the UK), Mayday 2000 (protests in London, and also UK-wide - Glasgow for example), protests in Prague 2000 and Genoa 2001 being among the most well known.

2.5.3 Levels Of Protest Highlighted Through Protest Event (PE) Sampling.

2.5.3.1 Methodological Note

Methods are also discussed in **Ch 2**. Below are tables – data sets - produced as a result of

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[49] The roads building budget dropped to 7 billion just before the 1997 General Election. The Tories were bowing to environmental pressure due to their political position at the time. The roads building programme was reinstated by the New Labour government.

[50] See for example http://www.primalseeds.org/

[51] Though of course the implications of new WTO powers and free trade mandates was starting to make itself felt across a wide spectrum of issues- see **ch6**

[52] ESRC research highlighted how networks of UK activists, well- used to mobilising large numbers for UK actions, were diffusing their experience through working with international activists.

teamwork for the ESRC project referred to throughout. Because this is joint work I have not used or analysed this data (or any of the multiple subsets) beyond the bare bones for a basic overview, with the permission of my colleagues. The sources for this data were the EF! Action Update, a roughly monthly activist newsletter, and the fortnightly *Schnews*. Information was coded using SPSS software. These tables were produced for conferences in 2001, and the results are based on a preliminary analysis of an uncompleted protest event survey (PE coding from local newsletters has been added to the database, for example). Data from the original samples gives a basic overview.

Variables affecting the PE sampling reliability are as follows:

- Protest camps generate few separate events which can be coded via PE data sampling, but since they usually last for several months and sometimes more than a year, they are a particularly intensive form of action. Many hundreds of individual actions will have happened during Newbury, for example, which never got reported in any publication and so went un-coded. Protest camps were particularly large and numerous between 1995 and 98. This has obvious implications in terms of making sense of the results (see Doherty et al 2001). For example, in *fig 2* below it appears as if 1998 was a low ebb in activity in North Wales, whereas in fact activity was probably at a peak in this period due to activists mobilising at the Brewery Fields protest camp.

- Through interviews and participant observation, it is evident that covert action ('pixieing') in which construction sites and machinery (for example) is damaged is a widespread movement repertoire (Doherty et al 2001) but for obvious reasons, is rarely reported, even within the activist press[53].

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[53] It's my feeling that there will be localised affinity groups in Britain whose primary focus, will be the undertaking of covert actions, either ones which eventually get publicly accounted for such as Ploughshares actions, but I would guess predominantly focused on small(ish) acts of covert sabbing- GM crops, road and quarry machinery, Mc-Donalds 'trashings', animal experiment lab trashings. There is a sense in which this covert action is more felt than seen- leading to my terming of it as "dark matter" See Doherty et al (2001, 2002 forthcoming).There aren't hundreds of people full-time on protest camps any more, but there are latent networks -'big days out' such as "J18" attract thousands of people- and whilst there is a lot of action being taken overtly in localities all over Britain, my gut feeling is that there is a lot more covert action being taken than we think. However it's possible that more covert action was happening when protest camps were in their heyday. In some ways, it's possibly safer to do covert action on a large site during a national campaign (at Newbury, say)- assuming the security of the group isn't breached, it would be pretty hard for the police to pin this action down to specific people. In this case, it's fairly safe to be both engaged in overt campaigning- and be doing covert action. In local areas, this is more problematic. Often these days small camps, demos. are attended by just those people in a local area. So if 'pixie-ing' happens, it's more likely the police will be able to put two and two together and pay the local activists a visit. But if the activists aren't overtly mobilising, then the trail is cold- so covert action becomes an option.

- Activists do not always report every action in any case. It is also possible that the rise in activists' use of the net (see Plows 2001) and the increase in email newsletters means that fewer actions were reported via the newsletters, leading to lower numbers of reportable actions.

2.5.3.2 The Data
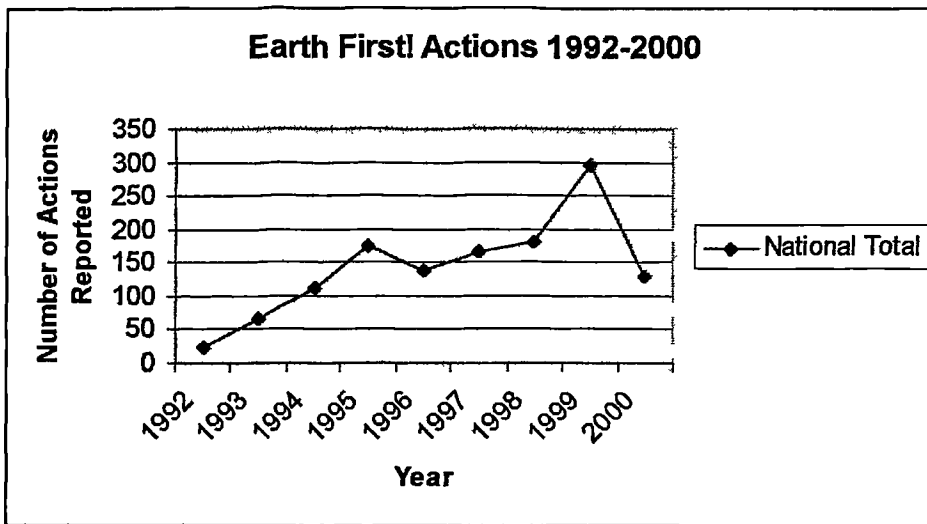
Figure 1 Protests Reported in the EF! Action Update 1992-2000
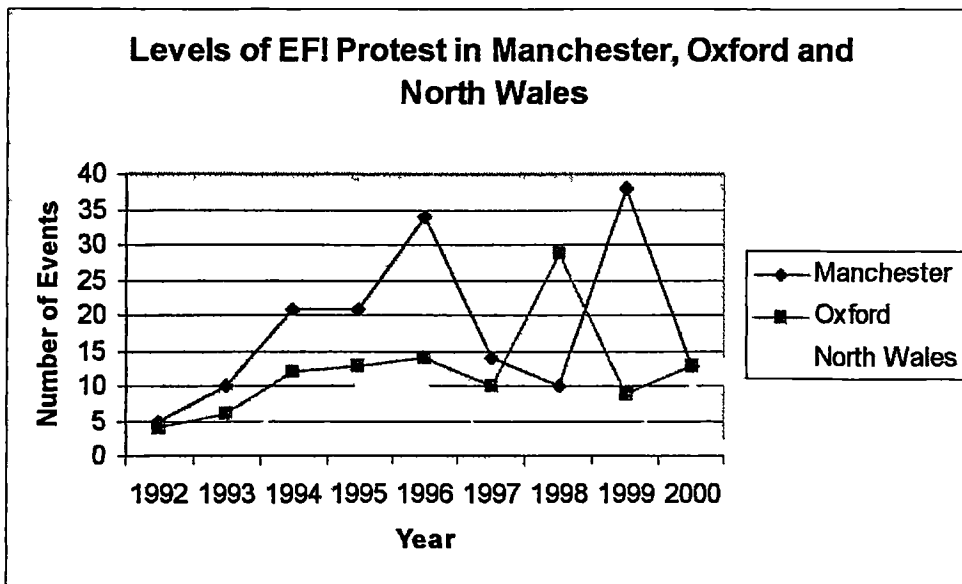
Figure 2 Levels of EDA Protest in Manchester, Oxford and North Wales reported in the EF! Action Update 1992-2000

2.5.3.3 Making Sense Of The Results[54]

Given the methodological provisos given above, it is hard to say definitively that protest events /EDA mobilisation generally climbed as rapidly in 1998/9 as *figure 1* suggests. Rather, it is likely that there are more separate protest events which were code-able, as activists moved from basing their tactics around protest camps to a more dispersed series of 'hits'. It may even be the case (see **2.5.5** below) that actual numbers of activists declined after the Newbury protests - though of course this could still mean that more actions were taken by a smaller pool of activists. The graphs do however give a general sense of levels of action. The apparent decline in activity in 2000 is sufficiently marked to suggest that fewer actions were occurring, something borne out in activist interviews and due to the fact that 1999 does seem to have been a particularly frenetic year. In *Figure 2*, events in each locality and events outside the locality in which the local group was involved are combined. Levels of action in each of the three areas differ considerably: it can be quite clearly seen that Manchester, with a large activist population, has a much greater rate of protest events than North Wales, a rural area with a smaller activist base, as one would expect.

Given the relatively small number of activists, and that the above data will underestimate true levels of activity, it can nevertheless be seen that this fairly small pool of people is responsible for a great deal of activity - see also **Ch 4**.

2.5.4 Pinch Sample Of EDA Activity

A sense of the level and range of activity going on in the late 90's can be got from citing the actions listed in the EF! action update for June 1999.[55]

Nine GM test sites were reported as destroyed in one night. A GM "crop squat" in Norfolk took place with Indian farmers from the Intercontinental Caravan[56] present. Biotech company Astra Zeneca's AGM was disrupted. Last minute details of the June 18th 'Carnival Against Capitalism' protest in the City of London were given. Cycle 'critical masses' took place in Norwich and other

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[54] NB. Data used with permission of ESRC team.
[55] EF! Action Update Issue 59 -email <actionupdate@gn.apc.org> or by post c/o CRC, 16 Sholebroke Ave, Chapeltown, Leeds, LS7 3HB.
[56] 500 Indian farmers and activists touring the G8 countries protesting about the IMF, the introduction of GM crops to the Indian subcontinent.

towns nationwide. URGENT, a coordinating network for the many anti-green field housing campaigns, advertised an action. Faslane Peace camp had two "very successful" actions against the Trident submarines. A mass direct action at the Valley D'Aspe road scheme in the Pyrenees was reported. Leeds protestors targeted Tesco's on several occasions over GM food. Activists in Sheffield held a series of "hit and run" mini- actions on one day targeting a BP garage, a 'cat torturer', a Shell garage, Reed Employment Agency, Midland Bank and McDonalds. A squatted church in Leeds - "A-Spire autonomous zone' was evicted. A mini "opencast mine" was opened by opencast protestors inside the Millennium Dome. A new road camp was set up in Essex. There was news from other protest camps - the Birmingham Northern Relief Road, Arthur's Wood at Manchester Airport, the Avon Ring Road. Tarmac's AGM in Birmingham was disrupted.

And so on...other actions were written about, and coming ones advertised, and this is by no means a comprehensive publication. Again, many small, unreported, local actions will have happened, and other networks such as CAAT (Campaign Against the Arms Trade), and GEN have similarly packed newsletters. Added to this picture of essentially reactive actions are the more hidden proactive actions such as 'Diggers' land reclamations, permaculture courses, people growing organic vegetables, being vegan, setting up food/land coops, performing educational environmental theatre.

This Action Update was published a week or two before J18, and it is evident that the anti-capitalist mobilisations did not just suddenly erupt, but grew out of these pre-existing networks **(Ch 6)**. Further, this plurality of multi-faceted, multi-targeted, cross-pollinating networks, remains the focus and nature of the movement.

2.5.5 Shifting Patterns

The EDA movement is constantly adapting and changing in a myriad of ways, but there are also some general trends. This subsection simply gives some examples rather than a definitive list (especially as much supplementary detail is dispersed throughout this chapter and the thesis generally). Firstly, in terms of numbers of activists, it is evident that there was a significant rise in activist numbers between 1992 - 1996, with quite some drop-off as the roads protest 'micro-cohort' generally started to biodegrade post Newbury. Whilst new mobilisations have ensured a

steady base of new recruits to fill the gap, I would think that overall the numbers of people active "full time" has waned slightly, although it is extremely hard to tell[57].

Secondly, as discussed above, whilst activists are constantly mobilising on a range of issues, there are also general trends of focus around key organising frames. There was a marked drop-off of massive roads protest camp mobilisations[58] after 1996, replaced with a focus on genetics, anti-capitalism and local grassroots action.

Thirdly, there are cultural shifts, very tied up with this general 'micro-cohort' movement. Due in all likelihood to the relative closeness between the Greenham and Twyford campaigns, the 'cultural codes' of the early years of the EDA movement were extremely gender - aware, and - thanks also to the Dongas' "early risers" influence - quite explicitly tied to ethical and often spiritual positions ('eco-paganism/practical paganism', Plows 1995, 1997 - see also **Ch 4**), non-violence and alternative lifestyles in the rural environment, especially travelling/living outdoors in groups (see also McKay 1996, 1997). Many of these values started to be questioned, ignored or rejected by the new, more urban based (post the protest camp era) 'micro-cohort' which followed, whilst many experienced activists were by this time extremely fed –up (to say the least) with State methods of subduing them, constant arrests, fines, criminal records and often atrocious violence meted out to them by police, security guards, bailiffs.[59]. This resulted in many old and new activists challenging the non-violent principles of the EDA movement, with the NVDA definition being dropped from EF! action updates (see **Ch 7**). Returning to an earlier theme, it is significant that activist 'fashion statements' can symbolise (often highly reflexively) extremely important political and ethical stances - the rainbow jumper of the NVDA activist, the black hooded top of the eco-anarchists. Tempting though it is, it is wrong to make a sweeping generalisation like this but there is definitely something of the sort going on here.

Perhaps the biggest downside of what was in essence a change in discourse/attitude rather than a change in strategy/tactics regarding the v/nv debate, was that patriarchal and macho

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[57] Some activists pick up on this in interview: *and I went to Fairmile as well... It was really interesting. It was definitely dwindling. There were a lot less people at those things, I guess because the nature of protesting had changed quite a lot...* (activist in interview 2001)

[58] Whilst the (post Newbury) A30 Fairmile eviction was big in the media, it was a much smaller event than Newbury. The Fairmile camp had been established for two years and in my view, given how draining the Newbury campaign had been, it is unlikely numbers would have been as high as they were had the camp not already been there for activists to go to after Newbury.

[59] My experience as an activist is that levels of violence meted out to activists as a matter of course are shockingly high, whilst conversely it is a remarkably under- reported fact of mobilisation in the press and in academia. It could form the basis of a thesis/a research project and needs to. I am aware that it is not dealt with particularly thoroughly in this PhD, though see also **ch4, ch7**

attitudes were extremely prevalent in the late 90's, something which further alienated many –
especially women, with this creating a vicious circle. The Manchester Airport campaign in 1997 is
flagged by many (women) activists in interview as signalling a low point in gender relations (see
Ch 4, Ch 7). With the deliberate attempts at improving inter-movement communication soon
afterwards, things did improve, also, no doubt in response to the macho trend, there was a
resurgence of women only gatherings (" Women Speak out!") and actions at around the same
period.

The above quick snapshots give at least a sense of the constant movement of process, praxis, and
practice within activist networks. Of course at micro level (in one area, in one campaign) such
patterns are also at work - see **Ch 5**.

Section 3: Selected Stories From The Movement -Protest Camps

3.1 What Were They Like?

*-I remember at the m65, this treehouse it was the last tree, we were camped round the base of it
and there was a bit of a standoff going on, and we built this sweatlodge... and we sat inside this
sweatlodge and we ended up singing ' no more roads' at the top of our voices, right next to the
security portacabin, and you know when there are lots of people singing in total disharmony and
you get those incredible echoes and sound vibrations- you can imagine, ' NO MORE ROADS!'
in disharmonies and echoes and weird beats and we're all stripped naked - and the security
guards sitting outside thinking 'what the fuck' and there were pipes going round ... that does
kind of sum up camp life, those wacky, off the wall, amazing moments...*

*-The camp grew and became a EEC stew steak nightmare[60] and it was just meat and nastiness
and then I moved down into this tree house which got set up that was a vegan thing...At this
point I knew, you know everybody vaguely and then a lot of new people came, a lot of nice
people and some really irritating people you know the score and it was lovely, it was really nice,
really good people...*

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[60] Tins of EEC stewing steak, apparently given free by social services to people on the dole, would regularly be
donated to protest camps along with a hugely eclectic range of "tat" and food.

-And so that merry little band of us, at opposite ends of the route got to know each other quite well and those were the people we'd do actions with. And then finally we had to move and I didn't like the new site that we'd moved to. I couldn't get on well with the people it was too agro, we couldn't control who was coming and going, not that you want to control it, but its just a case of 'this is the only home I've got now, and I don't feel comfortable here'.

-And they were definitely distinct identities and the Fly Wood camp seemed to be where all the boozers and the drug addicts went and there were a lot of problems (?) and Wild Darling seemed to be, I don't know if sort of deep ecologists is the best way of describing them, but certainly a more sort of peaceful kind of group

Roseneil (1995) talks about the camp "ethos" at Greenham Common, a generally unspoken, informal "way of doing things". Greenham's 'ethos' was

"relatively loose and informal...[it] continued to evolve through the discussions of politics that were embedded in daily life at the camp"[61]

Apart from the obvious difference in terms of Greenham's status as a women-only camp, and changes in 'micro-cohorts' cultural stances as discussed earlier, much of the day to day 'ethos' of the road/airport/housing protest camps since Twyford have strong links with Greenham's ethos. To generalise, major aspects of the ethos on protest camps included:
communal living, the sharing of responsibility and tasks, whether domestic - gathering firewood, getting water, cooking, putting up benders - or defensive - building tunnels, treehouses, tunnels. Non-hierarchical, peer pressure, a reliance on openness, respect, sharing and communication to work through issues as a group, the balance between group responsibility and individual autonomy. Group responsibility for the well being of the group, the maintenance of communal space and belongings, especially tools and ropes, the importance of personal space.

It is quickly evident to newcomers that here are new forms of organising, living[62]. These communal activities, as Roseneil also notes in relation to Greenham, are an important part of

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[61] Roseneil, Sasha (1995) Disarming Patriarchy: Feminist Political Action at Greenham pp 61 O. U. Press
[62] This cultural difference can be very disorientating and alienating when encountering it for the first time- see **ch4**.

forming collective identities. This is lifestyle as action :

"*Many of us became involved through sitting round a site campfire, hearing new ideas in a relaxed atmosphere...*"[63]

As the quotes above illustrate, especially at times of evictions, the gap between the ideal ethos and the reality is often obvious. Cliques and hierarchies do form, communication breaks down. Depending on a number of factors such as external environmental circumstances, the personalities on the camp and their individual agendas/the amount of experience they have, camps can vary drastically from place to place[64] (see **Ch 4, Ch 7**).

3.2 Repertoires

-Twyford was amazing, for lots of different reasons...we are taking action, we are protecting wild valuable areas now, we have power, we are fun, we are beautiful, stuff with nature and there's a whole cultural thing with the goal that's made it more interesting, it wasn't a boring political party, it wasn't boring marches, and the occasional days where we used to stop work, that was incredibly powerful, I mean really brilliant and when we completely outwitted their security, 'cause they didn't know what they were doing whereas we did and managed to stop work and smashed up the diggers and stuff, it was just great

-we were jumping on diggers and it was fun. And even now a lot of the things that we do now are fun and there is that whole thing about why I do direct action, it's fun and you feel that you had to be participating in this.

-In the run up to the work starting at Newbury, I worked hard, going to meet the local people, and just doing stuff with them all the time...and when the work kicked off I moved into various camps. I have to say that my interest wasn't really site defence stuff, I'm not very good at that...I used to go to the evictions, but I didn't spend the building up defences very often... I'm into the proactive stuff, like going to London, sabbing companies' AGMs, doing office occupations,

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[63] taken from an article about the "Blatant Incitement Project" in the EF! Action Update Issue 59.
[64] This was evident at Newbury, where there were different camps with perceptibly different 'feels', some within yards of each other, spread along the route of the road. One camp was totally vegan. One (though this is hearsay) called 'Rizla Ridge' was described as consisting of "empty cider bottles, rubbish and they never have a fire going".

things we did for a long time, a very small group of us, every morning trying to blockade the convoys of vehicles which were coming into work on the site...

...I was at Newbury the whole time that Newbury happened. I was at Newbury until they started building the road. It's all a horrible nightmarish blur... We would go on these missions and do nine actions in one day like running round all different Mott McDonald sites and Tarmac offices...

-I mean the kind of stuff that I did at Salisbury Hill were more like pixieing. So at that time I was going along in the middle of the night and you know putting knives in tyres of the land rovers that the security guards were in, or otherwise when they started putting out signs for where the road was going to go we'd pull them up...

AP

-That's right because that was the longest tunnel protest and it went on much longer than any one before.

G-NW

I think the longest one was 21 days and then -

AP

There was a pregnant woman down there, no that was somewhere else -

G-NW

I think that might have been Crystal Palace which had been - oh, I can't even be bothered going into the mentality of that to be honest because I think it is outrageous, it's something that does my head in about the movement just now. Just seems to be this mentality of everything's got to be bigger and better and more dangerous than the last time, for fuck's sake, someone's going to get killed, you know what I mean.

[I went to]...Solsbury Hill and just remembered being absolutely impressed with the kind of

commitment of people there to stop that development... it was quite late in the Solsbury Hill situation, there was a big pile of rubble in the path of the road and a guy buried a metal cabinet of some kind under it and was going to live in the cabinet to stop bulldozers going over the top of the pile of rubble...

-it was a time when there was loads of fucking hope and everybody thought it was working and nobody had gone through this siege mentality of sitting in camps and fortifying, it was really go get 'em kind of energy going on there, stop the fuckers before they got there. And so we'd be up all night building walkways and then the tree-cutting squad would be arriving the next day and we'd be trying to be there before them and sit all days in trees just to stop 'em cutting 'em down so that got a bit unsustainable really

3.3 Evictions

After I left the police station I got back in to where Wild Velvet camp had been, couldn't recognise it because it had been...not just the trees that had been occupied but some of the big trees and some of the medium trees and some of the little trees had been chopped and it just didn't look like it had looked before. It was very disorientating and there didn't seem to be any rationality in how they'd been cut down. So I walked to where there was a camp that was still occupied which was River Rats but when I got there, in a last dash chased by security I fell over in the river so I was soaked when I got there and didn't have any change of clothing and I didn't know what happened to River Rats camp because there was nobody visible of course they were all asleep because it was still about four o'clock in the morning. I wandered out of the River Rats camp and had a chat with a couple of Bailiffs. There seemed to be a sort of strange etiquette that they wouldn't arrest you if you were in a camp they hadn't started attacking yet

Yea, well, yea, not being very defendable you know, the lock-ons we built there and people brutalised out of them, yea, very, very unpleasant to be there, I wasn't actually in a lock-on myself, I was in a tree which was even worse to some level, I got to watch it without being able to prevent it. And yea, that was a really, really unpleasant eviction

-So that was a really nice pleasant little eviction, it was really weird...Everyone was really friendly and really nice, and the whole thing was a really nice experience. I was refusing to get

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*into Cherry pickers so they had to pick me up in there and carry me off site, and they just didn't
arrest me. Its like you've forgotten to arrest me! It felt a bit funny actually, just completely
different to anything I've seen at Newbury which was just so much more harrowing and difficult.*

3.4 State Responses And Their Effects On Activists

*And then I got involved in Manchester airport after Newbury...I had gone to Holloway prison for
two weeks, because I refused to pay all my Newbury fines because I didn't really feel that I
should and certainly didn't want to give any money to the government considering what they do
with it.*

Again, a completely neglected aspect of academic reporting on mobilisation is how the law gets
used on protestors, most have criminal records, many have had prison sentences. At the very least,
spending an entire dole check on travelling to the other end of the country for a court appearance
is a regular feature of activists' lives. See Plows (1997).

*-I saw policemen for the first time beating kids up... And like I've seen since on many evictions,
the cops were standing around watching people with chainsaws, threatening people with
chainsaws, using chainsaws within inches of people's hands and this kind of thing. Everything
was out of order and I went up to this line of police and said you've gotta stop this, this is a big
crisis, it's all gone out of control and somebody's gonna get hurt if you know anything about
chainsaws you know how dangerous they are. I was told to fuck off.*

*-the campaign down there was getting quite violent in terms of the police and the security were
extremely aggressive down there and it was very difficult at a certain stage to get on the site
without getting kicked about or arrested or whatever and you started to wonder what was the
point, it was almost like committing suicide just trying to go down there and do anything.*

*-Yea, it's physically exhausting, fucks you up really badly, and psychologically in the end I mean
many of us [have suffered?] serious trauma, and there's no victim support for those people*

3.5 The Rise And Fall Of The Protest Camp

-Sure, almost nobody is living on site anymore, I mean who's living on site, Nine Ladies[65], they're a drip in the ocean you know.

-Yea, I think it's been the same for everybody, things have moved on a bit, a lot of these people that are networking, doing other stuff, are people we would have been living on sites with five or six years ago, they're mostly the same people or same sorts of people but we're not just doing that [camps] any more ... the Earth First gathering just gone[66], I was doing a climbing workshop and it was like nostalgia, people didn't need to know how to do this anymore, that kind of thing had gone really on all the levels, it's like gaining experience of it but it wasn't really necessary skills to develop as a protestor.

-I think early on there's a sort of lot of hope that camps would actually stop the destruction and I think having been beaten a certain amount of times it's then clear that they can't really I mean because if you're upsetting the police however hard you try, they'll just increase their hardware so okay, it's not impossible but...

-No, it took a lot out of you, it burns your resources and you're sat there, you've just gotta maintain the site, 'cause if you don't, it starts to become a complete vortex of skank[67] you know.

3.6 Final Comments

By 1998, the protest camp had gone from being the primary repertoire of the movement, to being almost abandoned as a tactic. The changing shape of direct action repertoires over time, and issues surrounding this, is a theme returned to in many points in this thesis, as the story of the EDA movement's progression from Twyford to the streets of Genoa is re-told in a range of different settings. To conclude this chapter, it will be useful to summarise my findings regarding the drop-off in the repertoire of the camp:

1) 'prime movers' (e.g. Road Alert!) who invested all their time/resources into making certain

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[65] Anti- quarry protest camp in Derbyshire established in 1998 and still going in September 2002
[66] in 2000

[67] Ie, mess.

protests 'big' moved into other campaigns or scaled down their involvement with national organisation.

2) Camps drain resources. These TAZs are of course resources for activists in all sorts of ways (a visible entry point into the movement, networking, knowledge production, encouraging movement innovation). However, maintaining these spaces is also really hard work and can drain these resources (burnout, security and police violence, bad weather, "nutters". Static camp-sitting whilst a productive end in itself also means that other action isn't happening as being on site and maintaining the space is a fulltime occupation.[68]

3) Movement capacity building meaning new targets and tactics became more appropriate.

4) Different Political Opportunities and Issue opportunities (see **Ch 3**) providing activists with different targets.

5) Extremely importantly, the state builds capacity as well as activists. They used more force, that force was sanctioned, and they also developed better repertoires in terms of how to remove protestors as a result of doing it so many times. Given that the first wave of mobilisation had peaked, it seems likely that activist innovation also dropped off as the literature would suggest (see **Ch 3**).

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[68] PO from the EF! summer gathering 2000- at a workshop to discuss strategic responses to the New Labour re-establishment of the road building programme.

This was attended by many people who had been 'prime movers' in the major roads protests of the early/mid 90's, all of whom retained an interest in roads/transport whilst having moved into other direct action campaigns and networks. A passionately- held general view was that if there was to be a resurgence of direct action against roads then strategically camps were no longer the most viable option given this primary factor: that they were no longer an efficient use of resources. The stasis of camp sitting has been flagged for years by many as problematic. Not having massive camps but having concentrated 'flying pickets' of activists stopping work on national days of action were the types of strategic responses discussed. (Again, these tactics have been part of action repertoires since the early days-office occupations, leaving site and taking the action to other parts of the road route where work was going on rather than sitting and waiting was used at every protest from Twyford onwards). The camp however was the main focus, and it is this primacy which is now seen to be questionable, with experienced activists saying they didn't have the time/energy to commit in that way anymore. However it is possible that there could be a new wave of national protest camps initiated by younger people with fewer commitments to other protests, not jaded by years of burnout, - there were people at this workshop who represented this trend. As with everything else the direction will be shaped by those with the initiative and energy to do it, coinciding with other useful factors such as large scale community support. It could all happen again and it probably will, though roads may not be the trigger.

6)The media lost interest too, which may have contributed to a drop-off in numbers if this helped with recruitment in the first place.[69]

Section 4 Concluding Note

This chapter has laid out the basic map of the ethnographic phenomenon under study in this thesis, providing a background of essential information regarding the nature and history of the EDA movement in the 1990's. Many of the issues mentioned in passing in this chapter are core theoretical and ethnographic themes and will be returned to and explored in a variety of contexts throughout the PhD.

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[69] Interviewees do report having seen protest activity at e.g. Twyford and Newbury on the TV and cite this as key in triggering their routes into activism, though I would be wary of attributing too much to this.

Chapter 2: Methodology

Section 1: Descriptions/Analysis Of Methods Used

No research method *by itself* is problem free or definitive. They all have their limitations as the following sections highlight. Thus I could not claim that this research - or any, as far as I am concerned - is "the whole truth" but rather allows us some insights into the subjects 'lifeworld'[70]. The fact that I am wary of extrapolating too much from the data - saying that "this is a definitive picture of the direct action movement" is partially an issue to do with qualitative techniques. Further, as discussed in the **intro** and **chi**, my concerns with mapping this movement have as much to do with the nature of the movement itself as with my methodology. (See also Section 2 below).

With regard to the pros/cons of any methodological technique - what I called in my MA[71] the "swings and roundabouts" issue - whilst cons are unavoidable they can be mitigated to quite a degree by *triangulating* methods. As is discussed below, the different qualitative methods complement each other, either filling in gaps left by other methods and/or by enabling more confident extrapolation through producing reiterative data. This PhD has also benefited from the addition of the quantitative data produced as part of the ESRC project - see 5) below and **Ch 1.** The main focus of this PhD however has been on qualitative research methods. It will be of use here to discuss these methods in general before turning attention to the specifics given in the subsections below.

1.1 Qualitative Methods - An Overview

Qualitative research is in-depth and relatively small-scale research, it does not aim to offer the scale or the representative ness of quantitative methods, rather it is the particular as opposed to the general, depth rather than width, which is being sought. However whilst qualitative research makes no claims regarding the representativeness of its methods, general themes may emerge - the distinctions between these two methodological traditions are not completely black and white.[72] In fact I would argue that the data produced by my qualitative methods, and the amount

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[70] Habermas 1984

[71] Plows (98) 'In with the in crowd...' unpublished MA dissertation, University of Wales, Bangor.

[72] See Schofield (1993) 'Increasing the Generalizability of Qualitative Research' in <u>Social Research: Philosophy, Politics and Practise</u> ed. Hammersley, O.U.Press

of (for example) PO undertaken, is actually quite broad - although as stressed throughout by no means representative enough to make any claims as to complete mappability (an impossibility in any case). Ultimately, the effectiveness/generalisability of the data depends to a degree on the thoroughness of the research.

Qualitative research aims to get at the detailed views and behaviour of the research subjects:
"The essence of this approach is to view events through the perspective of the people being studied..."[73]

These methods can also represent a challenge or at least an alternative to quantitative rationale and in particular to early positivist claims of a "guaranteed neutrality"[74] (Weber) for "scientific" quantitative methodologies. Briefly, the claim for 'value-free' methodology in the positivist tradition has been dismissed by Marxists and critical theorists as being 'value-laden'[75], further, the feminist critique of this supposed objectivity is that it is "not simply a value, but a male value".[76] However it is important to stress that the reliance on qualitative techniques is often more a matter of pragmatism rather than ideology - in other words that different circumstances require different techniques - research methods "are not so much valid in and of themselves, but rather will be more or less useful for particular research purposes"[77].

Both these arguments - epistemological and pragmatic - are important to me and provide the rationale for predominantly using qualitative techniques. Epistemological/ideological issues are discussed in Section 2. Here the practicalities of qualitative methods in relation to my research need emphasising. In order to 'get at' peoples' views in detail, *trust* is the key issue and is arguably best achieved through qualitative methods. This is, I would argue, particularly true of the direct action movement, wary (with good reason) of the motives of researchers. If access is hard enough using qualitative techniques, expecting activists to fill in detailed questionnaires would be a complete non-starter. See Section 2 below for a more in-depth discussion of these issues.

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[73] Bouma+ Atkinson 1995:pp.207

[74] Williams + May 1996;pp.4

[75] See e.g. in Layder (1994)

[76] Williams + May 1996: pp.5

[77] Hammersley 1993: pp.17

1.1.1 Grounded Theory

Grounded theory - "Theory that is generated in the course of the close inspection of the research data"[78] - has also been important in conducting this PhD. Whilst I set out with certain aims and objectives, I have also been open to where the literature review, PO and interviews have led me[79]. This has altered the shape and direction of this thesis. Perhaps most importantly, the theoretical framework (New Social Movement theory in particular) of this PhD has been forged through the research process. I did not start with a particular theoretical framework but rather acquired one as I went along (see **Ch 3**).

1.2 Life History Interviews

1.2.1 Sample Selection

I conducted approximately fifteen life history interviews with direct activists (see Ch 4). These averaged at three hours per interview. My activist status meant that I did not have to look hard for interview subjects but was able to approach people known to me - this has pros and cons as discussed below.[80] Thus in several cases I specifically sought out people I knew to have been active for a long time in the movement, as I was interested in the extent to which views, analyses, actions changed/deepened/developed over time (see intro and Ch 4). I also 'snowballed' other interviewees unknown to me from these initial samples. Partially as a deliberate attempt to avoid built in sampling flaws (e.g., activists I was friendly with would be more likely to have a generally similar worldview to mine) I also put out a request for interviewees on a national email list - allsorts@gn.apc.org.[81] This resulted in two interviews being conducted online (with follow-up phone calls) and in two face to face interviews. I also conducted similar interviews with another twenty or so activists, primarily in my locality (Gwynedd and Mon - North West Wales) as part of the ESRC project I am also engaged with, data from these interviews has also been made use of. Generally in Ch 4 I have focussed in detail on six or seven key interviews which summed up the general position of the others. Clips from the other interviews have been made use of when, for example, their position was markedly different to that expressed by the majority of interviewees. The data in these interviews is thus deep rather than broad, even for this

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[78] Hammersley (1993) p.21

[79] for example, the realisation that the concept of movement collective identity, shared worldviews was much more complex than I had first realised.

[80] For a fuller analysis of the pros and cons on this and related issues see my MA (ibid).

[81] I am aware that recruiting interviewees from an email list is likely also to attract a certain type of activist.

medium. Again triangulation of methods - in particular the breadth/scope of my PO - complements the smaller sample of interviews here. Given that I was asking people such detailed questions, I wished in Ch 4 to have a 'quality rather than quantity' approach to my data.

1.2.2 Content And Scope Of Interviews

The interviews were semi –structured and primarily "life history" – orientated, with the aim being to get the interviewees to tell their own stories of involvement and action - the 'what and how'. I was interested in issues of recruitment, developing worldviews, immersion in activist/social networks. I also wished to demonstrate how much action the 'average' activist has taken - the scope and the range of their involvement. Such accounts also help to flesh out the ethnographic picture of movement activity over a roughly ten year period - 1991/2 to 2001. Equally central to the 'what and how' accounts of individual action, I was concerned with the 'why', spending quite a large part of the interview teasing out answers to the question - 'why have you taken the action that you have?' I also asked my interviewees to define certain key concepts such as 'direct action', 'the environment'. Interviewees also tended to raise recurring points about (for example) gender, movement cliques and burnout. These gave more ethnographic detail about the nature of the movement (from the activists' own perspective, at least), e.g. past and current points of discussion, consensus and fissure, the extent to which movement rhetoric is carried out in practice.

1.2.3 Pros And Cons

Firstly I would argue that the interviews are highly important contributions to the relatively scarce data archives in this subject area. It was a primary research aim simply to start to map what is/has been going on in the movement and what activists have to say about it. Interviews produce high quality data, enabling the interviewees to expand on their opinions in detail, contextualise and qualify their statements, in an informal setting. In terms of cons, the main point to re-emphasise here is that, like any methodological technique, interviews by themselves cannot be 'trusted' (see below) – but they can be trusted more when triangulated with other methodologies. It is important to emphasise that in fact the views, perspectives, accounts of actions given by my interviewees often reinforce the generalised impressions gained through PO and Protest Event (PE) data analysis. Cons of interviews are given briefly below. Such issues surface elsewhere (intro, Ch 4) and so for reasons of space I will not go into great detail, whilst

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acknowledging their importance.

a) limits of sample selection – how representative is the sample? Not only are my own predispositions likely to have been built into my sample selection to an extent, there is also the issue of attempting to cover the range of views within the prolific networks which comprise the movement. As discussed in the **intro, Ch 1** and **Ch 4**, this is frankly unavoidable given the nature firstly of qualitative methodology and secondly of the movement. Consciously factoring this into data analysis (i.e., recognising limits), my efforts to attract interviewees outside of social/activist networks primarily known to me, and triangulating methods can all significantly help to counter these problems. As discussed above, the size of the sample is small.

b) Telling stories - People (re)construct their own narratives. This is completely unavoidable - when discussing events from a few years ago such events are viewed through the lens of hindsight and more recently acquired knowledge. Memories fade. It is also likely that interviewees consciously or unconsciously edit out aspects of their experiences and approaches which they find embarrassing, no longer fit with their current opinions, or think aren't appropriate to the interview. For example, if someone leaves a protest camp because of a relationship break up (an important enough reason given the crucial role played by social networks in sustaining activism) they may play this down or remember it differently years later. Again, there is not much that can be done except to highlight this. It is also worth highlighting that my "insider" status probably helps a great deal here.

c) interviews are context-dependent – linked to the above. This was a key finding in my MA[82], that context can influence the interview a great deal. Interviewing an activist just after they have been through three months of protest camp life will result in a different interview to interviewing the same person a year later. This is simply what it means to be a complex human being and there is no way round this.

d) PhD aims - *Why* activists engage with the range of issues they do was not easily summarised, as this PhD reiterates throughout, and it was hard for people to try and articulate such a 'life, the universe and everything' perspective. These problems have also been discussed in the **intro** and **Ch 4**, and cannot be underestimated. Given that I wished to demonstrate that activists took action on a range of interrelated and complex issues

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[82] Plows (98) ibid.

e) because they had a 'joined-up' worldview, it is hardly surprising that asking such questions presented a challenge to the interviewees at the time, or a challenge to me (frankly) in terms of how to best write the responses up.

1.3 Participant Observation (PO)

I have been a direct activist since 1992.[83] From 1995 onwards I have been consciously simultaneously engaged in the process of participant observation, namely I have been attempting to analyse and practice activism at the same time, what Sasha Roseneil calls "auto-ethnography"[84]. The limits and strengths of PO vis a vis my own involvement are generally dealt with in Section 2 below. Here the emphasis is primarily on the 'nuts and bolts' of what this PO entailed and more general pros/cons of PO as a research method.

Even if I take my PO to have started "officially" in 1995 (by which point my time as a "full time" activist living on protest camps[85] was over) when I first started to write about/research the protest movement, the range and scope of action I have covered is immense. The PO undertaken in this PhD includes[86]: long visits and periods of action at Newbury (1996) and Fairmile (1995 /6) roads protest camps, high involvement with the setting up, maintenance and networking of the local Greenfield housing protest camp outside Bangor, Brewery Fields (1998: 87) taking part in a large number of national direct actions such as the anti-capitalist actions "J18" and Mayday 2000 in London, rallies and road blockades protesting against sanctions in Iraq (also London) in 2001 and arms fair blockades such as Copex in 1998, locally, as part of the local Gwynedd and Mon EF! group (see **Ch 5**) I have been involved with dozens of demonstrations and actions too many and various to count but including "Critical Mass" anti-car road blockades, demonstrations at McDonalds', Public Inquiry rooftop demonstrations, peace vigils and actions (over, for example, the recent war in Afghanistan), and the mass trespass at the only Welsh GM crop site in August 2001. I have kept a diary of local activity for the last two years, see **Ch 5** for more detail. I have also attended many "local" protests in other areas such as the anti-General Election day of action held in Manchester in June 2001. It goes without saying

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[83] see intro of this PhD. Also the intro of my MA (98) ibid.

[84] Roseneil 1993.

[85] other camps I lived on/took action at before 1995 include Twyford Down (for the whole of that campaign), a smaller camp in Newcastle, the M11 (London) and Salisbury Hill, Bath. I also undertook numerous other direct actions during this period.

[86] This list represents a significant proportion of my PO but really skims the surface. To this extent it is further evidence of the amount of action which activists get involved with.

that I have encountered first hand most of the experiences activists relate (see **Ch 1, Ch 4, Ch 7**), including arrest. I seem to have avoided an actual criminal record (though I have several bind-overs and cautions following me around), however I recently worked out that adding together all the hours I have been held in police cells means that I have spent over a week in police custody. I have also experienced several very nasty assaults and witnessed many more.

I have also attended the week –long EF! Summer Gathering for several years and other national activist gatherings such as the occasional "Gathering Visions Gathering Strength", one-off workshops, national strategy meetings as well as more locally - focussed meetings and workshops such as the fairly regular Gwynedd and Mon EF! meetings and those organised by the Welsh coalition Cynefyn y Werin (see **Ch 5**). I have also undertaken extensive PO of several activist email lists (see subsection 4) below) and websites, as well as reading the two main activist newsletters the EF! Action Update and *Schnews*. (These have also been analysed quantitatively - see subsection 5) below). Over the years I have read and kept copies of hundreds of flyers, leaflets and articles on a huge variety of issues written by activists.

I also socialise with activists nationally through social events or by going to visit old friends, many of whom I have kept in touch with and are also continuing to take action. Locally, many of my closest friends are activists. I am also engaged in networking with many different activist groups/individuals/campaigns nationally, where activists are exchanging information and contacts and planning strategies for short term actions such as the recent anti-war demonstration at RAF Valley (Anglesey) and long-term game plans such as effecting sustainable agriculture through a mixture of direct action and proactive methods. I have also been involved in the development of the national action network on climate change, Rising Tide. The nature and extent of such networking varies from issue to issue and is also dependant on goals. This type of general networking increasingly brings me into contact with more "weak ties" (Granovetter 1973) networks such as Christian Aid and also with people/groups completely outside even the broader Green movement such as farmers (see **Ch 5**).

As discussed elsewhere in this PhD (see section 2 below), I would have to say that I am one of the "stalwarts" of my local EF! group, and together with two or three other key individuals I have not only been an active participant in many actions and campaigns but have actually initiated mobilisation in the first place and/or been key in its initiation and subsequent maintenance. In other words, many of the local actions I map here wouldn't have happened at all, or as they did, without my involvement. A recent example of this includes the establishing of a

Welsh 'Repeal the Terrorism Act' coalition in 2000, which I did more or less single-handedly, and which brought together a wide range of groups and NGOs within Wales with political support, two large rallies in Bangor and Cardiff were also organised. I would argue that my involvement has been predominantly an asset methodologically as I am reflexively aware about the 'what, how and why' of mobilisation and able to map it - see section 2 below for more discussion on this issue.

Generally, the breadth and depth of the PO I have undertaken, the myriad of settings and types of action, the variety of people I have met in a variety of circumstances (up treehouses, on top of bulldozers, with linked arms on blockades, in workshops, in squat kitchens) and the hundreds of conversations (not to say heated arguments) I have had, makes a case, I would argue, for my qualitative data to have much more general representativeness than the literature referenced here would generally allow for. Again, I would be very wary of advancing any claims for high levels of accuracy in mapping this ever changing and vast movement. That having been said, I think the evidence given above does show that I have an extensive knowledge of my subject area - the various settings for/nature and types of action experiences, the different networks and activist identities, the plurality of movement voices and approaches (see **Ch 1, Ch 4, Ch 7**). Thus bearing in mind all the provisos already made, I would say that when discussing movement praxis and practice that I am basing my analysis on extremely good grounds. This PO also backs up /triangulates the interview data, often corroborating interview accounts and perspectives, filling in gaps by giving extra detail, and highlighting the difference between idealised accounts of movement activity and actual practise[87]. My PO suffuses this PhD - it is behind every word I write.

1.3.1 Data Cut-Off Point

Whilst references are made to actions taken after mid 2001, this was my 'cut-off point' in terms of formally mapping movement activity, in order to have closure over the data collection issue.

1.3.2 Online Participant Observation Of Activist Email Lists

The data produced by these lists is analysed in Ch7 in particular. For a more in-depth look at this

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[87] It should be pointed out that most of my interviewees were also aware of the gap between rhetoric and reality-gender issues being a key example flagged by several women interviewees. Often the rhetoric referred to here comes from other PO; in movement literature, for example. It should also be pointed out that within the movement there is always a "bullshit- debunker" or eight for every unreflexive position one encounters.

issue see also Plows (2001)[88].

1.3.2.1 What Was Done

I have conducted PO on several email lists from late 1999 up to mid 2001. Firstly to set out what lists were used:

a) November 1999 - December 1999: PO on the international email list n30@listbot.com set up to discuss the anti-globalisation action in Seattle and other solidarity actions

b) December 1999 - June 2000 PO on the UK list Mayday@yahoogroups.com which was set up to discuss issues surrounding the anti-capitalist Mayday action.

c) December 1999 - mid 2001; PO on the Welsh list bangor-werdd@yahoogroups.com. This list was initiated by Gwynedd and Mon EF! to network actions and issues for people in North Wales.

d) July 2000-mid 2001: PO on the Welsh list dan-cymru@yahoogroups.com which was set up (by G+M EF! again) to fulfil a similar function to Bangor-werdd except covering the whole of Wales.

e) November 2000 PO on therealfuelcrisis@yahoogroups.com - a list set up by Greens and activists to discuss action and issues surrounding the second fuel protest mobilisation.

f) July 1999 - mid 2001: action and other information from the "online newsletter" allsorts@gn.apc.org received.

1.3.2.2 How Email Lists Work[89]

See also **chi.** Email discussion lists are of several types but all follow a basic pattern of existing as an activist resource, enabling factual information and other resources (leaflet texts, sticker programmes) to be networked. Forthcoming action can be networked, requests for specific information and contacts are standard, and perhaps most significantly, issues surrounding action are discussed and argued over by online activists. Online discourse is of especial interest in this PhD - see **Ch 7.** See also **Ch 5** for a discussion on the use of email as a resource for activists. Lists can be set up for specific events and have a relatively short "shelf life" (such as 'therealfuelcrisis' list), can be set up for specific issues (animal rights, for example), or be more 'general' – such as the Bangor-werdd list, which covers all action and related issues in the North Wales area, but is also specific in the sense that it serves a particular geographical region. The

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[88] Plows (2001c) To what extent and in what ways does the Internet trigger and sustain activism?- Paper given at ESRC one- day workshop Sept 2001.

nature and type of each list is important as it is a further factor regulating the type of activist discourse online (for example, there aren't many animal rights activists on the recently set-up "pruning hooks" list, which aims to find crossover between farmers and activists vis a vis sustainable development), the extent to which this shapes what activists are talking about and why needs highlighting as an important methodological variable.

1.3.2.3 Email PO As Qualitative Method

I would argue a strong case for the use of (here specifically) activist email lists - and also websites[90] - as being a valid, and extremely useful, qualitative data source. The way in which I am able to get data via email lists is a cross between PO and interview. In many ways, being on these lists, listening and joining in with conversations/debates, and finding out how activists are networking, using the net as a resource to take action, is simple PO of the type I might be doing sitting at the EF! gathering or on any direct action. Secondly, the vast amount of first hand accounts, personal narratives, complex articulations of political and ethical motivations which surface on these lists on a daily basis are a highly important supplement to the data I am collating through in-depth interviews. Again, methodological triangulation (discussed above) is very important. My overall findings are that these postings reconfirm the results of the interviews I have done, enabling me to be more proactive in drawing general conclusions from the more micro samples of my interviewees. For example, the dozens (not to say hundreds) of postings on the subject of violence/nonviolence and direct action confirm the findings of my interviews and PO - that the majority of activists adhere at least to the discourse of nonviolence[91].

The whole culture of email, its use, the ways in which discourse is framed and being shaped online, the patterns and tendencies of online interaction, is a subject of immense interest to sociologists and anyone interested in how people interact and communicate. Online discourse is a significant phenomenon, and online ethnography has very rapidly become accepted as a viable and significant qualitative methodology.

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[89] see Plows (2001c) ibid.
[90] I have 'browsed' a number of activist websites- their addresses are given in the bibliography. I haven't subjected them to the same amounts of analysis that I have the email lists discussed here so they are not discussed in detail. They do however form part of the PO "background" data like the newsletters and flyers produced by the movement.
[91] A loaded term which needs defining... but not here. See **ch7**, Seel and Plows (2000); Plows 2000

1.3.2.4 Sample Selection

In terms of its methodological viability, especially regarding sample selection, I would argue that that email is as viable a form of collating data as any other, with its own variants of pros and cons, meaning that as always the methodology needs contextualising.

- **Pros.** This is a self-selecting sample - these are unasked-for, naturally occuring points of view. In my opinion a sample of this type has the edge in some ways (but not in others) over a selection of activists picked by interview by myself, where it is likely that my own personal agenda and position have determined whom I chose to interview. The thousands of posts again mean that this qualitative method bridges the general and the particular. Further, monitoring email lists is a quick, cheap, efficient and effective form of data gathering.

- **Cons.** The applicability of the sample is a methodological issue and important con. In terms of the class/gender demographics of the net -white middle class males predominate on the net as a whole, anecdotally - whether this is true for email lists is hard to determine given that many list members stay silent, use codenames. There are other problems regarding the issue of who, actually, is doing the talking. On lists of this type (unless lists are 'closed', i.e. by invitation only, as many are) are a whole range of people who simply aren't activists but are (covert and/or overt) journalists, timewasters, researchers, and, very likely, agent provocateurs and others who may or may not work for governments or multinational corporations. Thus, when someone emails a pro-violence post, and gets very aggressive towards people on the list who disagree with their opinion, it is always a consideration that the emailer is a government 'spook' trying to ascertain the level and types of pro-violence feeling. So, then, it is possible that some of the data I am collating isn't being produced by "real" activists at all. Similarly, it is impossible to tell where activists are geographically unless they state this directly or it is evident from the content of the email, making it very hard to state definitively whether the discourse produced is that of the UK movement or from elsewhere. Whilst in general saying that UK-based lists would be most likely to simply contain posts from UK activists, this cannot be

guaranteed. The Bangor-werdd list, for example, has a couple of American subscribers (though this was obvious from their first email). These are very specific problems generated by the net, there are few easy answers. Again, highlighting the potential problem will have to suffice. Plus, this method is being triangulated with others - by itself, this method has enough potential flaws to make it methodologically problematic. Backed up with other methods, it

- is viable. Further, as highlighted above, activist email discourse - at least on these 'public' lists - is self censoring, given the context. This obviously has implications in terms of content analysis and these, whilst self evident, should be noted throughout.

More generally, the question about applicability revolves around the availability of the net as a resource to activists. In other words, is what we have here discourse production only for those online? A resource for those who have it but few do? To draw conclusions, then, that what is being said on the net is typical of what is being said in the wider movement is methodologically suspect without hard evidence of ideas, information disseminating outwards into the movement as a whole. And it is one of my research findings that generally online discourse *does* tend to mirror current movement views, debates, key themes. It is also important to emphasise that information and ideas are disseminated outwards into other activist discourse settings, or are reflecting them. It is also the case that most activists will be able to get access in one way or another to the internet. It is worth remembering that email is simply part of, one type of, activist discourse.

Information overload is possibly the biggest con for the researcher (and of course for the activists themselves). On average the 'general information' lists trigger four or five messages a day. The action specific lists such as the J18, n30 or May 2000 lists can generate 30-40 messages at their height. It is a fulltime job dealing with the information, sorting it and saving it. It is easy to save too much data which might never get used.

1.4 Quantitative Data Analysis - Protest Event Data Analysis Using SPSS[92]

1.4.1 What Was Done

As shown in **Ch 1**, some quantitative data has also been produced and used for this PhD. As discussed, this data was produced by myself, Dr. Brian Doherty and Dr. Derek Wall for our ESRC project analysing activist networks. As part of a Protest Event (PE) survey of EDA activity we examined protests reported in the bi-monthly activist newsletter the Earth First! Action Update between 1992 and 2000, and the weekly newsletter *Schnews* between 1995 and 2000, for six locations: Manchester, Oxford and North Wales, Stoke-on-Trent, Birmingham and Dyfed in West Wales. The occurrence of Protest Events, their forms - blockades, office and site occupations - the targets of action (specific companies, government departments) and the claims made by activists (i.e., why they said they did it), were all coded quantitatively using the standard SPSS programme. In this PhD I have not relied much on this data or used its applications beyond a certain point for the following reasons:

a)   I would argue that the qualitative data already produced would have been sufficient by itself in any case.

b)   The data was not produced solely by myself but was a team effort and thus there is a limit to the extent to which I could justify using it in this PhD.

c)   The numerous applications of the PE data and the SPSS programme have produced a large amount of data and avenues of inquiry which, whilst relevant to the project and interesting here in that it greatly 'fleshes out' the picture of 90's activism, is simply too large to be properly used here.

Thus instead I have simply used the 'bare bones' of this material as reiterative detail (see **Ch 1, Ch 5**).

1.4.1.1 Pros

The scale of the data providing an overview of the 'what, how and why' of UK direct action in the 90's as reported in the key activist publications -serves to back up claims made by myself about the movement deduced from the qualitative sources outlined above. Analysing events in this way enables a very wide, and detailed, picture of the movement to be produced from hard

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[92] See **intro** and **ch1** for more detail

evidence. Given the complexities of mapping this movement, this PE survey provides back-up, balancing out the potential flaws of qualitative data which can be summarised as being too small-scale, and based simply on subjective and anecdotal evidence. The PE data further backs up claims made in this PhD about scales of activity, highlighting a) that the qualitative data does stand up to testing and b) that triangulating methods produces reiterative detail.

1.4.1.2 Cons

It is often said that quantitative methods are more "objective", more fail-safe, than qualitative ones (Williams and May, 1996). I would disagree. There are simply different pros and cons. Here, whilst it is obvious that the data produced by the PE coding is viable and extremely useful, there are a number of methodological problems as discussed in **Ch 1**. To begin with, the reliability of the

sources can be questioned. Firstly however, I would argue that the EF! AU and *Schnews* are more reliable in some ways than the national newspapers as a data source as they tend to report all events which take place which are reported to them. However in other ways they are less reliable in that they base their reports on activists' own accounts. In reality what we have here is qualitative data put through a quantitative process. Also, many Protest Events simply never get reported as the activists do not submit write-ups. Further, covert action hardly ever gets reported (see section B below). Thus, whilst PE coding produces a very useful generalised picture, it is not definitive and not totally reliable.

Something which also doesn't get discussed in 'standard' methodology textbooks is the fact that the quantitative, "objective" process of coding is actually highly subjective. When coding, I had to use my judgment in terms of deciding which category of action an event was coded under, what its major targets and aims were. Thus whilst the end result is that the codes and categories are "objectively" turned into tables by the SPSS programme, a lot of the researchers' own views (and hence assumptions) have been built in. Personally I don't feel this to be problematic as long as this is acknowledged. But there is a tendency in research to ignore this dimension completely. I offer it here as an observation about the state of the academic literature on this subject.

Section 2: General Methodological Issues, Problems And Rationales Raised By Research

As discussed in the **intro**, this PhD is be focussed on the "what, how and why" of the EDA movement. To sum up the main problems briefly, it is a lot to be taking on and making claims about. What mitigates these methodological problems is that I am aware of these limits. Thus I am continuously situating my claims about "the movement" in the light of these limitations - that I have taken some snapshots of a complex, semi-hidden (even to those inside it) and shifting movement. However my involvement over a decade of movement activity and the reiterative nature of my various ethnographic approaches does cover quite a diverse selection of activist milieu, and does show that activists are developing collective identity - a process of constructing movement cognitive praxis, with all that this entails (see PhD throughout). I have demonstrated the difference where appropriate - see **Ch 4,** and **Ch 7** in particular for differences of opinion evidenced in activist discourse[93]. To say that people also disagree with each other is something of a truism-people are complex, and are contradictory, often themselves providing conflicting opinions on the same subject over time, depending on context. It is very difficult as a researcher to be 'true' to this without losing the baby with the bathwater, so to speak. Admittedly this PhD has not focussed on lines of difference as much as it could have - to do so beyond a certain point would have meant a loss of coherence in terms of the PhD structure. This is certainly a fruitful area of further research. Similarly the many interesting avenues opened up by this research such as the issues surrounding anti-globalisation coalitions or feminist issues inter-movement could only be flagged to a certain point.

However, that I have under-represented networks and voices within the movement is in part unavoidable. This PhD has from the start highlighted the limitations tied into undertaking such a perspective. The speed at which events evolve on the ground, the diversity of activist experience and involvement, the myriad of submerged networks and campaigns, means that to pin down such a phenomenon would be a limiting and reductive goal. Definitions of "the movement" have also been consistently shown throughout to resist such attempts at closure, given the fluidity of its nature. The best I can do is to highlight this diversity, energy and capacity for change. This

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[93] Of course, there is also fallout- alienation, for example. I know of many people who have disassociated themselves from movement activity due to arguments over positions. Some of these people have simply continued to take action in other (interrelated) movement networks- others have stopped taking action. Dissent can have a negative effect, but I would argue that this is often due to ways the dialogue takes place. EF! gatherings in particular have over the years got much more clued-up about the facilitation of discussion in workshops, meaning that they tend not to be the disaster areas they once were in terms of respecting others' opinions. (see Ch7).

in itself is an important research finding. Generally I have tried to strike a balance between the need to quantify and make sense of the data I have, without extrapolating too far.

2.1. Covert Action[94]: A Methodological Minefield

In terms of mapping "the movement", further methodological issues emerge when considering the implications of covert action (see **Ch 1**). Methodologically speaking, there is a black hole here. Firstly, as the specifics of such covert action are generally not even discussed beyond the core group of individuals who undertake it, there are no ways of mapping levels - numbers participating, range and amount of targets, damage costing. Thus unless actually present (which has legal and ethical implications - see below), knowledge about covert action is generally based on rumour and anecdote (it is possible to see how different this is to US EF! who, like the ALF in the UK in the 1980's, publicise criminal damage and provide rationales both through their own press and the mainstream media[95]). Occasional "evidence" presents itself - a broken down bulldozer, metres of "trashed" security fencing, acres of trampled GM crop. Covert GM crop "trashing" is in fact one area of covert action where UK activists are more upfront, websites such as http://www.primalseeds.org hold regularly updated pages on where GM sites can be found, which have been completely or partially destroyed. Occasionally other types of covert action are reported in activist publications, and when people are caught and have trials or go to prison this also surfaces in activist newsletters (see *Plows et al 2001*).

Not being able to map accurately means that measures of movement activity are rendered even more imprecise. However because, as discussed above, such a goal isn't achievable in any case, this perhaps doesn't matter a great deal. What we can say for certain is that covert action does happen, forms part of the repertoire of "tools" available to activists, and is thus part of movement collective identity and culture, the stories activists tell about themselves. The fact that activists so readily identify with "pixie-ing" and see it as a legitimate strategy - somewhat different from the 'generalised' point of view of 80's peace activists, tells us something about where activists are coming from. Covert action as a theoretical principle is often discussed in different activist milieu, it was certainly discussed as such by my interviewees. The 'why', certainly, of such

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[94] Plows et al 2001

[95] It is very likely that notorious animal rights court cases such as that against Ronnie Lee, which succeeded in having publicity spokespersons convicted for conspiracy charges accruing long prison sentences, warned off UK EF! from similar strategies.

covert direct action can be gleaned even if the what and how - the detail - is blurred.

Perhaps a more important methodological implication is when visible levels of action (Protest Events - PE) are used as the basis for theories about the nature and causalities of mobilisation. To give an example, one could make certain assumptions about a range of factors consistently found to lead to /be conducive to mobilisation: for example, 'strong' issue to mobilise around that has the potential to attract a range of allies (say a road scheme through a nature reserve) or a well networked, highly motivated, socially connected group of activists. All the factors may be there for overt mobilisation, but it may not occur. The activists may well have made a tactical decision to mobilise covertly (perhaps they feel too stretched to take on the setting up of a camp, have other issues to mobilise over, or just feel that 'pixie-ing' is more efficient). If this is the case, it is possible that they will be mobilising covertly and using this as their only action repertoire in this instance.[96]Actions and activists disappear out of sight, and this significantly changes the idea of the activist landscape if one is aiming to map what action is being taken, or to try and work through mobilisation causalities. The only course of action, methodologically speaking, is simply to flag all this up and say, well, an almost unquantifiable part of the picture, which stops us making sense of what's going on out there, is covert action. Covert action is thus the "dark matter" or

"anti-matter" of the movement (Doherty et al ibid) - we know it's out there, we know it has an effect on what happens overtly, but we can't really say how or why or what is happening very well.

2.2 Practising "Insider", Partisan, Reflexive Research

2.2.1 Overview

This subject formed the entirety of my MA thesis[97]. To justify academically my own position was of paramount importance to me, for obvious reasons in the context of my subject matter and my relationship to it. Whilst my approach to my material is unavoidable in any case, I also (as an eco-feminist, and a reflexive activist) have ideological commitments to these research practices.

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[96] (Of course, its often been the case that the two sit side by side- Twyford Down and Newbury are just two examples where pixieing was known to be going on simultaneously with the overt tree camps, digger-diving).

[97] For more detailed discussion of the issues raised in this section see :Plows, A. 1998. Here. whilst I am aware of the issue of over- using MA data for my PhD, this whole area is of such importance that I feel it is necessary to reiterate the main points in some detail.

"Intellectual autobiography"[98], reflexivity and partisanship, as feminist research strategies, serve to reinforce an epistemological position. Thus my research is intended to be accountable, non-hierarchical, "user-friendly" and of use to the research subjects[99]. Such an approach simultaneously challenges the unequal balance of power between researcher/researched, and the concept of "objective" research. Feminists reject as a false construct any claims to 'objective', 'value-neutral' research, agreeing with Becker that it is impossible

"To do research which is uncontaminated by personal and political sympathies... therefore...the question is not whether we should take sides, since we inevitably will, but rather whose side are we on".[100]

To summarise my MA findings and as will be discussed below, whilst feminist writers such as Mies (1992) and Roseneil (1993) have argued that their methodological approach is not only valid but *better* than other approaches, I would tend to say that as with any research process there are pros and cons but that reflexivity does surface as a constant plus in the research process. Generally I have found my 'insider', partisan status as an activist/academic to be a great help, and reflexivity ensures that the (potential and actual) cons of my approach are factored into this PhD and highlighted throughout, as should be evidenced in the text.

2.2.2 Partisanship

Partisanship is defined by Mies in the following way:

"The postulate of value - free research...has to be replaced by conscious partiality, which is achieved through partial identification with the research objects".[101]

It was relieving and liberating when I first read feminist methodology, which revelled in its political partisanship, and realised that far from having to play down my engagedness and assume "objectivity", my research position had large bonuses. The idea that in fact subjective, personal assumptions and motivations are a reality in any research process seemed to me to be self- evident - and here was the "proof".

"Almost invariably...sociological research takes place with some sort of political context, yet how

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[98] Stanley 1991.
[99] For example, I have given workshops at activist gatherings on Social Movement theories about mobilisation, networks and resources.
[100] Becker 1974: 107

[101] Mies 1992: 38

many of the normative textbooks take account of this?"[102]

2.2.2.1 Methodological Pros Of Partisanship

Put very simply, feminist literature states that partisanship generates trust on the part of the research subject, and that trust facilitates access to the subjects' "lifeworld". Trust and access, as discussed in the section on qualitative techniques, are the basic building blocks which ensure that participant observation and in-depth interviews are successful. The trust engendered through partisanship, the reassurance the research subject feels that they are both 'on the same side' enables good rapport, good interviews and good data - again in particular in this hyper-political environment. Roseneil again -

"I am convinced that the degree of intimacy between myself and the women I interviewed...was only possible because they knew I was a Greenham woman and a feminist first...and a sociologist second".[103]

This is my experience as a partisan researcher. The rapport which develops during my interviews has led to extremely in-depth data being produced. I also felt that I was getting what my subjects really felt and thought, rather than them feeling that they needed to be giving a certain 'line' or not being sure what use the researcher would put the material to, what their 'spin' was. In terms of PO, I am seen by others primarily as an activist enabling others to act "as normal".

Academics such as Roseneil (1993) argue that a non-partisan researcher is likely to be denied access to participant observation settings. Whilst this is debatable or at least context-dependant, it is certain that these are issue which I am able to negotiate with ease. People are suspicious of 'outsiders'- journalists, researchers - and in high stress, demanding environments with little free time, they have little incentive in any case to agree to an interview. Even if such barriers are passed, it takes up valuable research time. Thus, rather than my political engagedness detracting from the objectivity, the validity, of my research, I would agree that explicitly identifying with the goals/views of the research subjects is an effective way of getting access, in-depth data and "truthful" accounts.

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[102]Bell+Newby (1977) Doing Sociological Research 10

[103] Roseneil 1993: 191

2.2.2.2 Methodological Cons

The main methodological pitfall for the partisan researcher is that she/he is unable or unwilling to form criticisms of the movement. Being too close to the subject matter, or deliberate bias in its favour, is a very real danger:

"Our problem is to make sure that...our unavoidable sympathies do not render our results invalid...we might distort our findings...we might introduce loaded questions"
Becker 1974: 118

Similarly,

"If you know you hold strong views...you need to be particularly careful about the way questions are put."
Bell 1995:95

Awareness of these dangers is crucial - again, reflexivity surfaces as a methodological advantage. Ultimately I do not know whether (or rather, to what extent) my partisanship has affected the way I look at the movement - whether I have been too "easy" on people, not critical enough, had 'blind spots', asked the wrong or leading questions. What I can do is to be accountable about this and enable the reader to make up her/his own mind. Yes, I was - am - emotionally, subjectively involved. I am also very aware of this. In my own defence, criticisms of the movement (the gap between rhetoric and reality in matters of interpersonal relations, for example) do surface throughout this PhD. This is an area I have thought hard about, and I have tried to conduct this research with these issues in mind, I have tried to ensure that my research methods and criteria are as rigorous as possible[104]. My throughout has been to be very cautious about the claims I could make based on my research findings. There are ethical considerations to bear in mind - see below.

2.2.3 "Insider" Research

As an activist I am not only partisan but also, like Sasha Roseneil (1993), an "insider researcher"

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[104] I would say in fact that I was able to use my partisan, 'insider' status to push for more detail during interviews than a non- partisan interviewer may have felt comfortable doing. This has ethical implications- see below.

as evidenced in the earlier section on PO methods. This has been at times an almost schizophrenic process, as (for example) in the middle of discussing and organising actions in my local EF! group I have been stepping back, mentally filing away comments, weighing up the reality on the ground against the claims of social movement theory. If nothing else this research process has made me a better activist, more analytical, more able to see the bigger picture. In terms of methodological pros and cons, these are mostly identical to the points raised in the discussion of partisanship above, so this is a shorter summary.

2.2.3.1 Pros Of "Insider" Research

"I claim a high level of validity for my findings because of, not in spite of, my own involvement".
Roseneil 1993:192

The issues here are primarily 'membership' shared knowledge/experiences, trust and subsequently access. Being familiar with the research setting enables the "insider researcher" to "get down to business" quickly, making confident evaluations about what aspects/situations are. For the outsider researcher

"the problem is that of getting beyond the superficial, of becoming empirically literate...you have to be knowledgeable to collect good information".[105]

Thus the "insider" researcher enjoys the methodological advantages of knowing and understanding the setting of research. This "insider knowledge" is probably the major methodological plus. On many occasions during interviews I have been able to use my experience, shared with the interviewee, to tease out a particular point, helping them to develop their argument and add extra detail. I feel that this has made my interviews inestimably more rich in detail than would otherwise have been the case. Roseneil found likewise that

"as soon as it was established that we had a shared experience of actions and daily life at the camp, and a shared vocabulary for discussing them, women seemed to open up and were prepared to expose their thoughts and feelings quite boldly"[106]

Generating trust is probably the main other plus -and, as with partisanship above, access as a result of trust. This has implications both for interviews (whether they are granted at all, the rapport within them) and for PO settings.

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[105]Miles + Huberman 1984: 48

[106] Roseneil 1993: 198

2.2.3.2 Cons Of "Insider" Research

Bouma and Atkinson's (1995) critique of "insider" research needs quoting -

"Where there is a choice, the researcher should choose a site where the people are strangers. The reason for this is that knowing the people to be investigated can change their behaviour - they respond to a researcher in a way that they would not do otherwise. Moreover, it is better to investigate a setting where the researcher has no particular expertise. For example, a doctor investigating a hospital will bring preconceptions as to how patients are treated and so will tend to evaluate the medical performance rather than seek to understand and describe what is happening".[107]

Firstly, there are dangers associated with being too involved with one's own material. Perhaps the most important is the danger of being "too close to see the wood from the trees". As someone who has been with the roads protest movement from the start, I will never experience the newness, the oddness, which must strike the outsider viewing (for example) a protest camp, a "standard" action such as an office occupation for the first time. Situations and set-ups I take for granted, or am not even aware of, will strike the outsider as deeply significant - the perspective of a (partisan or non-partisan) outsider researcher looking at a counter-cultural scene for the first time is bound to observe significant detail which appears "normal" to those inside. In other words, whilst the outsider researcher may well be initially lost through lack of background knowledge, he/she may 'gain on the swings' as it were by spotting vitally important detail I do not even notice. If I am unaware of such situations, and consequently unable to criticise them, then this is a significant methodological drawback to be set against the advantages just outlined. As with partisanship, whilst I have sought throughout this research to remember this and to try and address it as much as possible, it is likely that there have been methodological cons. Accountability/reflexivity highlighting this likelihood and being more careful about claims made about my research, also mitigate potential methodological flaws.

Bouma and Atkinson's comments above are representative of an academic tradition which appears to believe that there is some Utopian ideal of research out there, where the researcher does not bring their personal baggage with them into the process - and that this Utopia is not only

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[107]Bouma +Atkinson 1995: pp.210

achievable, but that those who fail to meet this standard have produced "flawed" research. Conversely I would argue that to assume that one can conduct research without one's own views impacting on this process is naïve in the extreme. Given the evidence produced in this dissertation, I have to query whether this engagedness is more of a theoretical, rather than an actual, problem, and whether the theoretical worries are based more on academic convention than actual methodological problems.

2.2.4 Reflexivity /Accountable Knowledge/"Intellectual Autobiography"

"To read what we call *normative* methodology, be it ever so positivistic or ever so phenomenological, it frequently would seem as if much, if not all, sociological research was "context- free" - i.e. carried out by non-people in non-places...sociologists too are people."[108]

2.2.4.1 Pros

Reflexivity has been referred to throughout this section. It is perhaps the most important methodological aspect of the three sections delineated here, without reflexivity acting as a check, as a balance, partisanship and "insider" research would certainly become methodological minefields. The reflexive awareness and acknowledgement of the impact the researcher's history (or perhaps here that should be her story) has on the research procedure can lessen its potential damage. Reflexivity is the writing of self into, the locating of self within, the research process:

"Feminist methodologies suggest that we exploit our subjectivity and personal experiences, and locate ourselves and our research practises on the same critical plane as the object of study".[109]

Reflexivity involves far more than a passing nod to the effects of self as a researcher on the research material. Instead, a far more in-depth personal biography forms an intrinsic part of the research. The pre-existing views, values and experiences of the researcher are laid bare, the part they play in forming the way the research shapes up is acknowledged. Stanley (1991) uses the term "intellectual autobiography" rather than personal biography - and in fact the former term better depicts the analytical process being carried out here.[110]

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[108] Bell and Newby 1977: 10

[109] Roseneil 1993: 181- see also Harding 1987: 9

[110] " Intellectual autobiography, then, is the careful analytic explication of the reasoning procedures used in interpreting and theorising whatever research data the researcher is concerned with" Stanley 1991: 211

It is hopefully evident that this process of reflexivity and "intellectual autobiography" has been written into the research as a whole. Stanley (1991) states that research techniques of intellectual autobiography and reflexivity produce "accountable knowledge"(1991:209)[111] i.e. those vital aspects of the research procedure which are left out by the reductionist/scientific approach - producing "alienated knowledge" - are put back in. Thus reflexivity applies not only to the researcher but the research process, the research methods. This is essentially a process of demystification, enabling the reader to have a holistic appreciation of how the finished research was arrived at. Thus I have documented my PhD research methods in detail, highlighting potential and actual flaws, and conceding that they will have had an impact on the finished research.

2.2.4.2 Cons

Methodological flaws as such were not evidenced in the literature or in practice. Of the three sections discussed, it is this one which best stands up to feminist claims of methodological superiority. I would agree with the writers quoted above that accountable research is methodologically preferable to non-accountable research. Thus, for example, I do not present my interviews with protestors in a vacuum. I draw on my insider knowledge, I analyse the effects of my surroundings or the state of mind of the interviewee to arrive at an academic interpretation which contextualises the data. It is made accountable - I am holding my hand up, saying, 'there are limitations to this technique, this interview - there are variables which must be taken into account'.

A criticism of writing autobiography into the research process could be that it is simply self indulgent - not to put too fine a point on it, that it is nothing more than irrelevant personal detail poorly substituted for "real" research. This could all be true - it depends on the researcher and the uses to which they put their material. In the case of this PhD, I have avoided telling too many stories about myself, in fact I have used far less of my own autobiography than I expected to. Given the relevance of my experience to the research, I could have argued a case for much more autobiographical writing.

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[111]   Stanley 1991: 209

2.3 Ethical Issues Raised By Research

2.3.1 Ethics And The Law

This is a large area. Briefly, legal and ethical issues are intertwined. I have an ethical code of responsibility to my research subjects. I am also legally obliged, under a number of laws, to pass on information about crimes committed. This has become more serious during this research with the passing of the Terrorism Act (2000)[112] which states that criminal damage (such as the destruction of a GM crop or the "symbolic" cutting of an MOD wire fence) undertaken with political intent is a terrorist act, and that anyone withholding information about such acts can also be tried under this new terrorist legislation. This revokes previous journalistic confidentiality clauses, as far as I am aware there were none for academics in the first place. Thus interviews where the subject may raise specific matters for which they (or others) can be prosecuted, and PO situations where criminal damage is likely to occur, are often problematic. No doubt like many other researchers, I have simply avoided being put in this situation as the most straightforward way around this.

2.3.2 Confidentiality And Anonymity

There are a number of similar legal and ethical issues which have needed careful navigation during this research. Activists tend to break the law - they organise occupations of offices, of company AGMs, of worksites, of town and city centres. They blockade, climb buildings, ignore policemen. They squat land threatened with development and evade "capture" as long as possible. These are relatively "minor" offences but can often result in criminal records, fines and custodial sentences. Organising such events theoretically carries longer sentences - conspiracy and incitement are serious charges[113]. Further, in order to carry on taking action, many activists jump bail or ignore their bail conditions, evade fines. If eventually re-arrested sentences are harsher, this was the case during the protracted evictions at Newbury, for example. Thus there are many reasons why it is not in activists' best interests firstly to have their names published and secondly to be giving detailed information about what they get up to. Anonymising all interviewees and all other data sources is thus a central ethical principle and duty of care to my research subjects. Personally I still have ethical misgivings (however irresolvable) about the security implications of my research for

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[112] http://www.homeoffice.gov.uk/terrorism/act2000.htm

[113] http://www.homeoffice.gov.uk/atoz/crim_law.htm

activists, the information given in this PhD about activist milieu, case studies and modus operandi could be of use to those government (and commercial) agencies committed to undermining these activist networks. This is not an issue about partisanship[114] so much as an issue about an ethical duty of care to my research subjects, whatever the 'rights and wrongs' of the legal issues.

2.3.3 Trust: 'Using' My Friends And Fellow Activists

A prime concern throughout this research whether I have been abusing the trust others have placed in me. Despite earlier comments on the aim of having a 'level playing field' during research, Roseneil (1993) does however question the extent to which the hierarchical exploitative position of privileged researcher/"used" subject ever goes away - perhaps, she argues, it is even exacerbated through these techniques of partisanship. The more comfortable the subject feels, the more she is able to identify with the researcher, the more she gives - the more the researcher is able to "use her".[115] I would agree with this - and the same goes for PO settings where my status as a long-time activist overrides peoples' knowledge that I am also undertaking research. I have felt it necessary to remind people that I am also a researcher - when new activists joined our local group, for example. This is another extremely important issue, although again it is impossible to quantify effects.

2.3.4 Email

To reconfirm, this is a new area and the ethical issues are vast. Given that the net's potential has still to be actualised then it is likely that new ethical issues will continue to surface. In terms of my research specifically, several issues emerge: firstly, "using" people's postings. In a sense, there is a case to be made for this not being a problem at all. If I, as an activist, send an email out to a list of unknown size and content, I assume automatically that people are going to use what I say - that's the point. I let go of my 'intellectual property rights'. I also assume that my posting will be read by government agents, for example, so am careful not to say anything incriminating: I self-censor. Therefore anything that I do say I am happy for anyone to "use". I have asked other activists about this and this is what people generally feel.

However, just because people don't mind doesn't mean the researcher shouldn't ask. And

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[114] Whilst I am partisan- on the side of the activists, believing that the police and government are often draconian, legislation excessive, sentences outrageous, state violence unfairly sanctioned- this is not the issue here in reality, and to debate such a complex issue would involve several thousand words this PhD does not have the space for.

[115] Roseneil (1993) p204

this has complications - should the researcher then highlight that they are carrying out research? Given that, if they do, it is likely not so much that people will clam up on the list per se (for the reasons set out above), more that they may well respond differently to emails from that researcher once he/she has 'come clean'.(Or there may be no difference at all - it is a context - dependant issue). In my case I did tell people I was doing research, but – significantly - only when I had already established my credentials as an activist. I was also keen to highlight the aims of my research, and that I am overtly partisan. At the moment, the jury is out on whether my 'insider' status as an activist researcher is an added pro in this area. Certainly I have had no direct negative feedback. In fact, I put out a request for interviewees on an email list in 1999 with very positive results (see above).The data is anonymised throughout as are all my sources.

"For collective action to be effective [should]...one not worry about 'who we are' but choose...a common ground, on which many people can work together... Theoretically, the question is then whether and how it is possible to affirm both unity and difference simultaneously"

(Melucci 1996: pp187)

Section 1: Introduction.

All major theoretical directions explored in the PhD will be summarised and presented here. In other chapters, the theoretical framework is woven into the ethnographic data, and in many cases more detailed /complex aspects of particular theoretical approaches are discussed *in situ* with case study examples. For example, the NSM literature on networks is re-visited in detail in **Ch 5** and **Ch 6**, where ethnography on cross-movement networking at a local level (the North Wales case study) and at international level (via "anti globalisation" protests) is discussed. Similarly Melucci's (1996) notion of movement 'collective identity' is tested to its limits in many areas of this thesis, not least in **Ch 4, Ch 7**. Not every aspect of theory outlined below is re-visited as thoroughly, so in other cases this chapter provides an opportunity to 'showcase' relevant academic literature which underpins the intellectual direction of this PhD more thoroughly.

1.1 Theory About The "What, How And Why"

In keeping with the main direction of this thesis, all theory is related to the "what, how and why" of social movements generally, and specifically how this literature relates to the UK EDA movement. Thus the contributions of more "local" academic theorists who discuss the UK EDA (and related) movements are discussed, as well as theorists who discuss movements and their ideas more generally without necessarily mentioning the UK EDA movement (Tarrow, Melucci, and others).

Tied up with this basic concept of the "what, how and why" of the EDA movement, some major themes running throughout this thesis are: what is an SM? What makes an SM? How is identity constructed? What is the internal worldview of this movement and what are its connections to related academic fields (eco-ethics, Green politics)? How, why and in what

conditions is mobilisation initiated and sustained? How does the literature shape up against my (and other academics') experience of the UK EDA movement? In terms of the SM literature specifically, following an academic approach favoured by two other "local" academics, Sasha Roseneil and Derek Wall (who, significantly I feel, were also both activists before they were academics), in my examination of the UK EDA movement I combine what have been summarised as the "American" and European" approaches to the question of mobilisation and the nature of movements - namely, many aspects of both macro and micro factors are relevant, and have a symbiotic relationship. Wall (1999) uses Roseneil's (1995) concept of the "meso level" to articulate this eclectic position.

1.2 The 'Toolkit' Approach

Thus my approach to relevant theoretical positions has been an eclectic one, coming initially from a 'grounded theory' perspective of having ethnographic knowledge, and then seeing which aspects of theories seemed relevant, rather than starting from a specific theoretical perspective and weighing data against this. I feel that this has enabled me to be freer in terms of being able to decide which theories seemed relevant in terms of explaining and/or describing the social phenomenon I was studying[116]. To use an analogy, I have chosen from a 'toolkit' of academic literature, using what fits, what seems to work, when examined in the context of EDA movement praxis and practice. In the course of this I have also made some decisions about what *doesn't* seem to fit, and these intellectual arguments are also outlined in the course of the chapter. Perhaps the main criticism of this "toolkit" approach is that by covering such a wide field, there could be a lack of detail or in-depth analysis on any one area. This, to an extent, is true, but I would argue that making a case for more "holistic" or symbiotic approaches to the study of social movements is a worthwhile challenge in itself[117]. I would argue that the ethnography I present in this PhD also helps with sharpening up aspects of SM literature.

1.3 Mobilisation Is Not Formulaic

A proviso I have with much social movement literature is that it sometimes gives the impression that it is providing some sort of formula for mobilisation and the existence of movements. I am

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[116] As discussed in **ch2**, there is much relevant literature on this methodological approach- predominantly, feminist approaches to research. See **ch2**, and section 7 below here for a summary.
[117] Nick Crossley's 2002 book <u>Making Sense of Social Movements</u> similarly presents a series of SM theories as a useful set of tools for understanding mobilisation; see also Doherty 2002.

not, I should stress, trying to present a theoretical formula for the existence of the UK movement, namely

"social networks + POS + resources + collective identity = mobilisation!"

I don't think mobilisation and the emergence of movement is something that can be 'scientifically' predicted. What I am arguing is that when there is mobilisation or a new movement cycle, the above are all factors which are present, and the theoretical perspectives presented here have provided a useful 'codebook' to enable researchers to decode what is going on, how and why. There is also hardly any recognition of how hard activists work to achieve these processes, how difficult they are - SM theorists use terms like collective identity with very little (if any) discussion about the effects of these processes on the activists, how fragile they are, how much work goes into them, how alienated activists can feel. Such ethnographic reality is melded with the theory throughout this thesis.

Section 2: What Constitutes a Social Movement?

2.1 What Constitutes A 'Movement'?

2.1.1 Theoretical Overview

Defining what a movement *is*, what constitutes it, what its qualities are, has been a major undertaking for social movement theorists, the blurred edges of where a movement ends - who is 'in' or 'out'- mean that definitions are fraught with problems. In my opinion the best theorists[118] emphasise that these difficulties and ambivalences are at the core of *what makes a social movement* (Melucci 1996). This holds as true for the EDA movement as for movements in general (Wall 1999, Doherty et al, Seel and Plows 2000). This is why Diani's definition (below) of what a movement is - a series of interlinking networks which adapt and change - is a more useful way of appreciating movements than seeing them as a static block. Recent work by post-modern authors (Scheller 2000, Routledge 1997) has emphasised the fluidity in the 'network' concept of social movements (see below).

Several important 'check list' criteria of SMs have been developed (also see **intro**). Similarly, Tarrow (1998) outlines the main "processes" of social movements:

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[118] Ie. those which appear to me to most accurately describe and explain the situation 'on the ground'.

"mounting collective challenges, second, drawing on social networks, common purposes, and cultural frameworks, and, third, building solidarity through connective structures and collective identities to sustain collective action"
(Tarrow 1998 :4).

See also della Porta and Diani (1999: 14-16); Doherty, Paterson and Seel (2000:10), Welsh (2000) for similar definitions. Doherty (2002:1) also states that SMs posit a challenge to dominant forms of power, and that action is taken outside of existing political institutions[119].

All of these definitions have been extremely useful in enabling me to 'decode' the EDA movement, whilst I would re-iterate the proviso I have that the 'blood, toil and tears' aspect of what it actually *means* to create a collective identity tends to be overlooked. These are not components in chemical formulae, after all, but people. By using SM theoretical tools to understand the EDA movement, I also feel that the ethnography is enabling me to ground the theory in reality and add in the 'human factor'.

2.2 'New' Social Movements: Challenging Codes

2.2.1 Theoretical Overview

"New" social movements are generally viewed as evolving in the 60's and 70's - Touraine (1981,1985,2000) - Melucci (1989; 1986).There is a tendency to describe 'new' social movements as being focussed on culture and identity (women's', gay). Giddens (1985, cited in Bagguley 1999) plots out different types of movements on an axis, which Bagguley (1999) critiques as a limited analysis, given the fluidity of social movements. As Seel et al note

"...Since all movements develop their own identity, common values and culture, it seems unjustified to see older social movements as materialist and NSMs as concerned solely with identity..."
(Seel et al 2000: 11)

Perhaps the key point made by both Melucci and Touraine in the context of the NSM debate is

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[119] though not *exclusively* outside of political institutions — see **ch5** for discussion of this in the context of ethnographic case study examples- see also Doherty, Plows and Wall (2001a) .

that sites of power have become more plural in modern societies (Melucci 1996:307) so that social movement resistance is also directed at other targets (e.g. MNCs) and less towards the nation-state[120], the target for 'old' social movements. This then is the "why" (Melucci 1996) of NSM political action - challenging codes. Melucci argues that in the information age, the (social, economic) power of cultural symbols is reflected in movement's actions. Castells[121] (1997) makes similar points. If there is anything "new" about 'NSMs' it is that activity is directed against challenging plural forms of *power* - dominant cultural and economic codes - so that power in its multiplicity of sites is made visible (Melucci 1989:70, see also Touraine 2000: 90). Movements can challenge codes through symbolic action, or through economic and physical disruption - or through broader movement culture (and often, through a simultaneous mix of all three - see McKay (1996, 1997, Wall 1999, Roseneil 1995). Knowledge and power are symbiotically interrelated; Eyerman and Jamieson (1991).

Similarly Giddens credits SMs with the role of "constraining the juggernaut of modernity" (Giddens 1990:158, quoted in Doherty 2002: 15)[122]. Ulrich Beck (1992, 1995) Bauman (2000) Giddens (1994) and Welsh (2000: 151)—are amongst theorists who emphasise that by contesting "accepted" structures and cultures of knowledge, power and expertise, movements are precursors of reflexive modernity - as Melucci, Touraine and Castells emphasise, movements are both signifiers, and agents, of social change. All these theorists are in agreement that "new" social movements are developing reflexive praxis in terms of their ability to deconstruct the forms and expressions of power inherent in the dominant paradigm and develop appropriate strategies (Doherty 2000, Paterson 2000).

In terms of the 'identity movement' debate, I've always found this categorisation problematic: there tends to be a bit of an edge to a 'cultural' classification, as if identity movements are somehow less 'political'. Whereas in fact I would argue that "the personal is political". The "identity movement" categorisation is counterproductive, a) because they are in fact intensely political, and b) because movements from the 60's onwards are so cross-networked, one

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[120] This very structuralist deconstruction of modernity is so evidently a highly reflexive political act, that I really cannot understand why so- called "identity" movements like the women's' movement have been seen as somehow less politicised.

[121] Castells, M (1997) The information age: Economy, Society, and Culture. Volume 2- The power of identity Oxford: Blackwell.

[122] -though as far as I remember, it was Bauman (2000?) who first used this rather appropriate phrase of the 'juggernaut of modernity' being viewed almost as a 'law of nature' within the dominant paradigm(a construct which activists seek to demolish).

movement blurs into another, so rigid categories just don't work and broad organising frames of reference seem more realistic. See later subsections on movement culture and identity - also green ideology - for linked discussions - also **Ch 1**.

In general the debate on the 'newness' of SMs leaves me rather cold - it's not irrelevant, but it's not that central to the main intellectual direction of this thesis. It is of course important to understand the debates for the background context (Tucker 1991, Brand 1990). Melucci suggests that

"the debate over the <u>concept</u> of NSM has tended to obscure the extent to which the <u>activity</u> of NSMs poses a direct challenge to contemporary cultural codes and socio-economic logics".
Melucci (1996:8) - referred to in Seel et al (2000:15)

I wholeheartedly agree - and I would argue that this provides a good rationale for the ethnographic emphasis and intellectual direction of this thesis. By documenting and analysing the UK EDA movement, the ethnography in this PhD examines evidence for the theory that "new" social movements challenge codes, that their action exposes and challenges current forms/structures of power. I would argue that these concepts accurately describe the way the EDA movement operates - its "why".

2.3 The 'Movement' In Movements

2.3.1 Theoretical Overview

"a movement remains alive as long as there is struggle over its collective identity..."
(Whittier 1995: 18)

As later subsections discuss, the interactive and processural nature of collective identity (Melucci 1996, Steinberg 1998) and movement strategy is flagged by many leading theorists as being what *defines* a SM. Movements are not static, but are fluid, shifting, 'biodegradable' (Wall 1999) and hence highly adaptable, responding to specific circumstances (Dalton and Kuechler 1990: 288). This ability to adapt and change is seen by many theorists (Wall 1999, Welsh 2000, Routledge 1997, Melucci 1989, 1996) as being a movement strength. Postmodern academics Paul Routledge (1997) and Mimi Scheller (2000) also use the metaphor of fluid to describe the way movements

operate and adapt. Movements have, says Scheller, " a barely graspable fluid structure…".[123] The fluid metaphor played with by Scheller (2000) is a useful one, and it is interesting how many processes and aspects of movement nature, aims and structure have a watery base. Theorists talk about movement "waves" (Tarrow 1998). Roseneil (1995) discusses the 'ripples' generated by Greenham (see also Plows 1997, 2001). Welsh (2000) discuses the 'submerged' nature of much movement activity (see also Doherty et al 2001, 2002).

Ability to change is perhaps the most essential factor of a 'living' social movement. As the word 'struggle' in the above quote from Whittier implies, this is often difficult, as changes of direction and emphasis in any context are often hotly contested. Further, the movement can be pulled in different competing directions at the same time. As discussed in **Ch 1, Ch 4** these "fluid" descriptions and analogies are frequently used by "organic intellectuals"- the activists themselves - when they explain their movement. Thus:

"the movement is a shoal of fish…it responds to zeitgeist resonances…"
(activist in ESRC workshop, September 2001)

Theory and ethnography highlighted throughout this thesis shows how this fluidity enables activists, local networks and campaigns within the wider movement to flow across boundaries, take up different identities, become involved in cross-network mobilisation (see **Ch 1, Ch 5**). Generally I like the fluid metaphors described above. When thinking about whether movements achieve change (see also the concept of 'capacity building' below), there is also what I would call the "drip, drip, drip" effect. The 'organic' quality of movement process and structure - i.e., that movements operate like processes of nature (flowing, adapting and changing like water, 'biodegrading' like plant matter) - could just be a happy coincidence given the aims and concerns of the EDA movement. After all, capitalism could be said to work similarly (Schlosberg 1999).

2.4 "Latent"/"Submerged" Autonomous Networks

2.4.1 Theoretical Overview

As Whittier points out in her case studies of radical feminist generations in America,

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[123]Scheller, Mimi (2000)

"the survival of radical feminism has been largely invisible to scholars precisely because the movement has never had a centralised or national organisation but is based in grassroots, loosely organised groups..."[124]

Other commentators (Roseneil 1995, Welsh 2000, Doherty et al 2000, Doherty 2002) on previous movement waves in the UK have made similar points - peace, feminist and "eco" movement activity and structure has tended to be predominantly decentralised, underground, autonomous - focussed on grassroots, local networks which form both the basic "building blocks" of national activity and more visible campaigns, and the continuity between activist generations, between movement 'waves' (see also Epstein 1991, Piven and Cloward 1992, Doherty et al 2001). From the literature it would appear that such descriptions are generally applicable more or less globally: see for example Diani 1995, della Porta and Diani 1999; Mies and Shiva 1993; Routledge 1997[125]).

Commentators on the UK EDA movement in the last decade have also noted that the structure of "the movement" means activity is often less visible because it is happening at a local level, within counter-cultural networks which avoid, or are ignored or misrepresented by the mainstream media (Wall 1999, Doherty 2000, Seel and Plows 1997, Plows 2000, 2001, Purkis 1995, 2000, Welsh 2000, Doherty et al 2001, Rootes 2000). This autonomy and decentralisation is firstly what constitutes a movement (as opposed to a NGO or political party - Wall 1999) but is also a deliberate strategy on behalf of EDA activists, who are concerned with opposition to dominant power structures and hierarchies, and see their movement structure as part of the solution[126] (Purkis 1995, 2000; Wall 1999, Plows 1997, 2001, Seel and Plows 2000, Doherty et al 2000, Routledge 1997). This is a strongly 'anarchist' frame (Purkis 2000, Wall 1999).

Like Whittier, Welsh (2000, 2001) notes how much movement activity is thus of this 'submerged' nature, operating at the edges of public (and academic, often) awareness (see also Doherty et al 2001). The increased use of certain action repertories - the 'closed' affinity group, the seemingly more widespread use of covert action as a standard activist repertoire (Doherty et al 2001, 2002)

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[124] Whittier (95) ibid. pp5
[125] Routledges' extensive work on social movements in India highlights how social movement theories usually applied to Western movements are equally useful in other contexts.
[126] The tendency for "human nature" to create 'unofficial' hierarchies based on cliques, power, personalities can also be problematic in these types of structures where power relations are made less explicit; Granovetter 1973, Wall 1999 Purkis 2000, Seel and Plows 2000, Plows 2001 MMU) and the potential and actual problems it creates

perhaps even exacerbates this tendency and is also –at least in part - a response to government repression, i.e. macro 'Political Opportunities' (Kreisi 1995, Tarrow 1998) - or rather the lack of them. As discussed above, movement structure - decentralised and/or local grassroots networks - can be the 'holding pattern' which keeps activity ticking over when the first rush of a movement 'wave' is over and from the national perspective appears to be dormant - see Welsh 2001, Whittier 1995, Doherty et al 2001 in particular.

2.5 Waves Of Movement Activity: "Cycles Of Contention"

2.5.1 Theoretical Overview

Tarrow (1998) highlights another important process of SM activity, that concerted high-profile action comes in 'waves' or "cycles of contention" (a concept first developed by Tilly - 1977, 78, 95). This is a period, he says, of intense innovation (see also Doherty 2002) and is triggered not only by macro processes but also by individual or group agency in the form of what he terms "early risers":

"By challenging elites and authorities, "early risers" reveal their opponents' vulnerability and open them to attacks by weaker players..." (1998:24)

All this has strong parallels with Snow and Benson's (1992) theory of 'elaborated master frames'- early risers setting out on innovative action strategic repertoires and ideological claims, which are broad enough to be decoded and used by others (other networks, other campaigns) following (see Seel and Plows 2000:113 and below for an elaboration on frame theory) .

The concept of mobilisation waves is an important one, and it is evident that mobilisation does have peaks and troughs (roads, anti-capitalist protests - see **Ch 1**), but it is also important to remember that movements have not gone away in between - what seems to be a 'new' mobilisation wave is usually pre-existing networks coming out of semi-hibernation with an added catalyst which could be new people in the area, a new grievance emerging. (see Doherty et al 2001; Doherty 2002 :24).

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are also well documented (see **ch1**).

2.6 Activist Generations: Diffusion And Capacity Building

2.6.1 Generations

Mannheim (1952) developed the idea of a 'political generation'. Whittier (1995) emphasises the interaction and shared experience as well as external social conditions which constitute activist generations:

"members of a political generation are bound together by shared transformative experiences that create enduring political commitments and worldviews".

Whittier 1995: 16

See also Roseneil (1995, 1993), Finch (1993), Wall (1999), McAdam (1988). Subsections below dealing with activist culture, community, collective identity and network ties also have relevant references. Whilst many activists become 'slow burners' and continue in sustained (if declining in scale) patterns of activism, bridging gaps between activist generations, many due to 'biographical availability' (McAdam 1982) become immersed for a shorter space of time, before they 'drop off' (see **Ch 1, Ch 4**, Doherty et al 2001, Epstein 1991) leading Whittier to introduce her useful notion of 'micro-cohorts' (Whittier 1995) within larger longer activist generations.

2.6.2 Diffusion Of Activist Repertoires.

Theorists and commentators on the EDA and other social movements have noted how diffusion happens down through generations and sideways across networks as activists transfer skills, tactics, deconstructions of state power (Kreisi et al 95; Roseneil 95: 99 -100; Tarrow 94: 31-47 Doherty et al 2001; Doherty 2002:24 Wall 99:154/55: Scheller 2000; Diani 92 ;Diani and della Porta 1999; Welsh and Chesters 2000). There are 'tangible' resources which are diffused such as how to build a tunnel or treehouse (Doherty 2000; Wall 2000) less tangible ones like knowledge about how the police operate, how roads induce traffic, how the WTO works. Thus there is diffusion of strategies, repertoires, discourses as movements emerge from existing networks and adapt, extend, reject repertoires from previous mobilisation waves (Doherty et al 2002). See also subsections on collective identity and networks below.

2.6.3 "Capacity building"

2.6.3.1 Theoretical Overview

The above subsections have indirectly explained what 'capacity building' Welsh (2000, 2001) is, namely, a process of acquiring and diffusing resources and repertoires of various types: intellectual, ideological, cultural and tactical. Tarrow calls this "social capital" (1998: 169), see also Klaus Eder (1985, 1996 cited in Doherty 2002) who talks about 'collective learning', the key point is that agents generally carry out social action reflexively.[127] So 'capacity building' is the process of 'internal' diffusion, movement's repertoires are also "externally" diffused through wider society e.g. via the media ("eco-warriors"): Paterson 2000, Wall 1999.

As discussed in the **intro,** through an appreciation of the concept of 'capacity building', this PhD 'organically' developed the hypothesis that the EDA movement in the 90's built capacity - developed its repertoires of actions, diffused its accumulated knowledge on tactics, deconstructions of power and key strategic responses - over the last ten years, a hypothesis which has been tested and 'proved' when weighed against the ethnography. Further, diffusion does not always have to be totally reflexive - new activists may join the movement without really knowing what has gone before, but benefit through the process of rapid politicisation they experience as they become immersed in activist networks. Practical skills, knowledge are often passed on without new generations being aware of the precise history of where a tactic such as building a treehouse has actually come from[128]. A further hypothesis was that capacity is also lost, due to a large degree to movement 'biodegradability'. This was also borne out by the ethnography (see McKay 1996 for a very convincing ethnography - based discussion on this – also Doherty et al 2001) - this is a very context-dependant issue. As Doherty (2002) points out -

"...Since the green movement is so heterogeneous its ability to 'learn' collectively might be questioned. Certainly this learning has not been unilinear. For instance, many of the same questions recur in direct action protests in the 1990s as had also characterised the 1970s and 1980s. Among these are divisions over the use of violence and questions of feminist praxis" (Doherty 2002: 53)

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[127] an important observation which is also developed in various places in this chapter and throughout this PhD; though the unreflexive inheritance and even reinvention of tactics and discourses, ie the lack of awarness that these are repertoires with a history, is also very much a factor of movement identity.

[128] For the ethnographic evidence of all of this see **ch4** in particular 'the life cycle of the activist'

At all levels of movement activity -"the movement as a whole", in specific regions, in specific networks and in small groups, wheel reinvention and capacity building co-exist at once, like everything else about this movement nothing is straightforward. Also, it is important to emphasise that the knowledge that this all happened in the past does not mean that things don't have to be worked out again. Things change, what was relevant to one situation is not necessarily to another. Thus movements need to re-learn, and re-visit and often re-shape, old ideas "worked out" by a previous generation. This could well be a crucial factor in the process of mobilisation, and it is part of the process of collective identity.

Section 3: Collective Identity And Culture Of Social Movements

3 .1 The Construction Of Collective Identity

3.1.1 Theoretical Overview

"collective identity as a process involves <u>cognitive definitions</u> concerning the ends, means and the field of action...this cognitive level does not necessarily imply unified and coherent frameworks...rather, it is constructed through interaction and comprises different and sometimes contradictory definitions...collective identity as a process refers thus to a network of <u>active</u> <u>relationships</u> between actors who interact, communicate, influence each other, negotiate, and make decisions... [it is] always plural, ambivalent, often contradictory... "
Melucci 1996:71-78

The theorists in this section are highly concerned with the "why" (Melucci 1996) of political action, on the internal drives which cause people to act collectively - the cognitive aspects of mobilisation. In many ways Melucci's concept of movement collective identity lies at the heart of this thesis[129], as it seems to me to exactly capture the fluidity, diversity and contradictions, and the simultaneous sense of "us", "we believe in *this*", inherent in the EDA movement's ideology. In a nutshell, it is this very uncertainty which *is* a movement's collective identity, which causes the 'movement in movement's:

"The construction of "we" is changeable and highly contested as activists seek to delineate

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[129] I was upset to learn of Melucci's death in 2001 as I had wanted very much to let him know how important his theories had been to me in terms of helping me understand what I was looking at, or indeed for.

who "we" are (and are not)"

Whittier 1995: 56

Collective identity for Melucci has a meaning which surpasses the "cultural" tag normally associated with the term identity[130] and is to do with the production and transmission of *knowledge*: movements are creating collective identity, constructing worldviews, based on shared experiences and the actions they take (see also Whittier 1995, Epstein 1991, Piven and Cloward 1992, Roseneil 1995, Wall 1999, Plows 1997, 2001, Seel and Plows 2000, Doherty et al 2001). This cognitive dimension – challenging codes - is an important statement of the reflexive and intellectual capacity of movements. Eyerman and Jamieson's (1991) notion of movement cognitive praxis is also highly significant and similarly describes the process of knowledge production, the "why" of political action, which takes place within movements. Melucci also emphasises the 'hands-on' approach to such cognitive processes:

"The sites where knowledge is produced are 'political' arenas where the demands by social actors and the exigencies of the system meet and clash"

1996: 224

Whilst these can be 'bodiless' clashes of paradigms, it is the physical interface between protestors and "the enemy" on the streets, in woodlands and in offices which is the image Melucci's words conjure up. In many ways, action is the key to generating movement praxis and collective identity - whilst as Steinberg (1998) points out, it is through discourse that ideas are generated, it is often discourse about *action* (Plows 2001).

'Collective Identity' has provided me with a useful frame to decode the EDA movement. Melucci's theories are re-evaluated throughout this thesis so this section is deliberately brief. With regard to the last quote above, Melucci seems to be emphasising something which my ethnography also evidenced, that movements (and here specifically the EDA movement) have a pragmatic approach to the generation of movement knowledge, and that this is the way social movements develop, rather than being led from the front by an ideological framework developed by elites, grassroots activists, or "organic intellectuals" make it up as they go along, enabling them to grow, adapt and change, rather than fall apart when new or competing claims disrupt set-in-stone ways of doing things. This is why I feel that academics who slate the EDA movement for

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[130] though see later sections for the importance of shared cultural codes

not having a 'set –out' ideology (McKay 1996, Lent 1999) are simply missing the point.

However, as is discussed more fully in the conclusion, collective identity has its limits. First, whilst disagreement and dissent is an intrinsic (even central) aspect of movement identity, it is my ethnographic experience that the *form* of this disagreement can often mean that it is detrimental to activist communities. Arguments, factions and cliques can mean that dissent can be a messy, painful and alienating process - not something Melucci has much to say about[131].

Secondly, and perhaps more importantly, my ethnography has highlighted tensions regarding dissent, often in the context of coalitions, which the theory of collective identity is possibly unable to cope with, see **Ch 5, Ch 6** for the ethnographic detail, and the **conclusion** for further theoretical development.

3.2 Frames

3.2.1 Theoretical Overview

A 'frame' in the context of a social movement is

"...an interpretive schemata that simplifies and condenses the 'world out there' by selectively punctuating and encoding objects, situations, events, experiences, and sequences of action within one's present and past environment ... "

(Snow and Benford 1992: 137).

The theory of frame alignment - a movement's decoding of the dominant paradigm - developed by Snow and Benford (Snow *et al* 1980; 1986; 1988; 1992 - see also Goffman 1974: 21 for a forerunner of frame theory, and Zald and McCarthy 1980) is a useful supplement to the concept of collective identity. Steinberg (1998) has developed valuable critiques of framing, drawing attention to its apparent static nature as Snow et al describe it and also to the tendency for them to describe the process of framing as being developed by movement "elites" who transmit knowledge and ideas down to other movement activists[132]. However frame theory, like collective identity and cognitive praxis, are all concepts which emphasise the importance of individual agency and cognition within movements as a major factor in mobilisation and also emphasises their intellectual capacity, the concept of collective learning, their reflexivity - all key themes which emerge time

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[131] Whilst activists leaving networks because of disagreements can be a positive example of change and growth (if, for example, they start new networks), in many cases the strength of a movement can be undermined by badly-handled rows which implode and undermine years of capacity- building. It is probable that both positive and negative aspects of dissent have simultaneous effects. See **ch1, ch4, ch7**.

[132] Similarly, Tarrow (1998) tends to assume that cognition is primarily practised by movement elites and intellectuals rather than at the grassroots.

and again in different theoretical approaches set out within this chapter. Similarly Klandermans 1988, 1997 talks about 'consensus mobilisation', Gamson (1988, 1992) of 'ideological packages'. Klandermans (1992), like Castells (1997) emphasises how activists both 'spin' their frames for external consumption[133], whilst simultaneously developing their more internal codes, i.e., activists are not only highly reflexive, they are also strategic.

Snow and Benson's (1992) idea of the "elaborated master frame" as a broader 'holistic' frame of reference capable of incorporating the claims and grievances of a range of campaigns or movements is a good 'fit' for the broad cognitive identity of the EDA movement:

"...Movements that surface early in a cycle of protest are likely to function as progenitors of master frames that provide the ideational and interpretive anchoring for other movements in the cycle..."

(1992:144).

This again has parallels with the innovation of Tarrow's "early risers".

In terms of 'master frames', I have argued elsewhere[134] that nascent EF! and roads protest networks at Twyford in 1992 set the terms for a broad frame of reference for the movement over the last decade (see also Doherty et al 2001). These arguments are further developed in **Ch 4, Ch 6** in particular. I also agree with Steinberg that 'challenging codes' is a much more interactive and grassroots led process than Snow et al suggest, and to this extent Melucci's more fluid notion of collective identity remains a better "fit".

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[133] The relationship between activists' construction of their own identity and reflexive sense of what they "stand for", and the way this is influenced by outside agents like the media, is a vast subject area which is not particularly dealt with in this thesis, as it would have become another major theme which could have "taken over" this PhD- see Castells 1997. However activists' use of the media, their relationship with it, and their highly developed awareness of agendas, power, are given as ethnographic examples throughout this thesis- see also 'underground' media sources for highly articulated rationales (see websites at the end of the bibliography). Thus Zald (1992), argues that social movement theorists should be wary of the assumption that activists and authorities are simply able to 'play to the media'. Goldberg (1991:226) charts the changing relationships between the media and social movements who become involved in what he calls a high-risk 'media dance'. See also Paterson 2000. It is certain that activists do not need to be told that *"much of what adherents of a movement see, hear, and reads is beyond the control of any movement organisation..."* (Gamson 1992: 71).

[134] see Plows 1997, Seel and Plows 2000

3.3 Culture And Lifestyle

3.3.1 Setting The Scene: Theoretical Overview

"...cultural events have been integral to feminist organising all along and are not a recent distraction from more important "political" work..."
Whittier 1995: 27.

"Communal living, diet, drumming, drugs, dress derived from earlier green cultural networks, all have contributed to the distinctive identity of anti-roads camps. Cultural codes, often subtle, were used to maintain boundaries...[but] lifestyle does not just generate signs and maintain boundaries: squatting is a means of survival and soya milk an affirmation, in a very practical sense, of support for animal liberation... "
(Wall 99:163)

SM literature tends to emphasise the protest and overtly articulated "political" elements of SM activity and discourse. However the development of culture, community, social networks and lifestyle choices associated with radical political ideas also form much of movement activity, political praxis, and help to sustain mobilisation in the long term, bridging activist generations. This is another aspect and function of activist collective identity (Doherty et al ibid, Diani 1992, Roseneil 1995).

"shared culture, practises and traditions also shape a movement's collective identity and these evolve and change over time. In the case of the green movement its culture includes a commitment to non-hierarchical styles of organisation and an acceptance of the value of changing ones' lifestyle to be consistent with political principles" (Doherty 2002: 7)

Thus, to summarise much literature:

- the 'sustaining' function of movement culture and lifestyle is part of what makes a social movement able to mobilise and take other sorts of more 'political' action
- definitions of 'political activity' need to include culture and lifestyle.

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I would agree wholeheartedly with theorists who emphasise the importance of culture and lifestyle for movements, as should be evidenced throughout this thesis. To revisit themes in **Ch 1**, whilst there are 'macro' cultural identity signifiers which tend to be consistent over large periods of time within counterculture generally (e.g. the importance of summer festivals and gatherings in the social calendar), there are also movement 'fashions'.[135] Boundaries and cultural signifiers are continually renegotiated as with other aspects of collective identity. Also, many varieties of counterculture and lifestyle exist simultaneously - none more far-reaching possibly than the vegan vs. meat-eating

paradigm[136]. Geography also plays a role in determining 'local' cultural codes (**Ch 1, Ch 5**, Doherty et al 2001). Strongly held cultural identities can be problematic in a number of ways - see **Ch 1.**

3.4 "The Personal Is Political"

3.4.1 Theoretical Overview

As commentators such as Whittier (1995), Roseneil (1995) and Wall (1999) emphasise, proactive "lifestyle"- orientated projects such as housing coops, allotments, are often undertaken by activists as a conscious political strategy[137]. See also Sargisson (2000) for a more sympathetic reading of the political nature of coops and communities than Pepper (1991, 1993) and more arguments for redefining what constitutes 'political action'. By opting out of mainstream lifestyle choices, the 'cultural challenge' such alternative communities offer is part of the process of reflexive political praxis and thus fits in neatly with theorists like Melucci (1989, 1996), and Touraine(1985), who point to the importance of symbolic and cultural opposition to the dominant paradigm as a key aspect of social movement activity and identity. See also Jowers *et al* 1999:100; Dobson 1990:139-45, McAdam 1986.

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[135] See **ch1**, McKay 1996, 1997, Hetherington 1998. As discussed in **ch1**, there was a point in the first couple of years of the roads protest movement when the lifestyle element of 'back to the land', travelling, living communally 'close to nature' were central aspects of protest culture (Plows 1995, Wall 1999, Doherty 2000, McKay 96, 97, Earle et al 1994, Martin 1998). In 2002, a decade later, communal living is still a key aspect of many activist counter-cultural milieu (co-ops), but these are less inclined to be in extreme rural environments/situations (like the post- Twyford 'Freedom Trail' was- see McKay 1996). This is partly to do with changes in activist's internal identity construction and sense of who they "are" as new 'micro- cohorts' (Whittier 1995) take up centre stage, plus the decline of protest camps as a primary form of movement strategy (**ch1**) and probably quite a lot also to do with POS factors- State repression: the 1995 CJA Act which effectively killed off (albeit slowly) the highly visible movement of travellers and the free festivals- already on the decline post- Castlemorton. See McKay 1996, 1997, Hetherington 1998, Martin 1998.
[136] though often meat consumed by activists is free range, local, organic, or "skipped" (i.e. would have been thrown away)- sometimes it isn't (this led to 'meat camps' and 'vegan camps' at Newbury- see **ch1, ch4**).
[137] Ie, they are creating alternatives as well as reacting against what is seen as negative- and trying as individuals

Without wishing to get sidetracked into discussing the 'wider green community', I have to agree with Pepper (1991,1993) who outlines at the least very apolitical and disengaged attitudes amongst more isolationist, new-age communes, but this is a far cry from the radically politicised housing coops which nurture the social network base of the radical EDA movement in places like Manchester (Doherty et al 2001; see also Plows 97). The title of George McKays' 1997 book "Party and Protest in 90's Britain" is a good indicator of the crossover between fun, counter-cultural hedonism and protest which characterises the EDA movement. The sheer fun and creativity of the movement's political action is one of its most obvious external characteristics and is a key recruitment tool (see Ch 4). Again the symbolic resonance of art as protest, protest as art, reaffirms that the EDA movement is indeed "challenging codes" on many levels - symbolic, disruptive, - as the theoretical literature would lead one to expect . RTS street parties are an obvious example of this combination of party and protest. See also Bey (1991).

3.5 Recruitment And Sustaining Mobilisation

3.5.1 Theoretical Overview

Counter-cultural and 'hedonistic' activity is often peoples' way "in" to protest activity[138]. See also section 4 below on the importance of social networks/affective ties (McAdam 1988, Diani 1995) in terms of recruitment/sustaining mobilisation. In sum, counterculture has been flagged by many as providing the mulch in which the seeds of radical protest are germinated and nurtured - see in particular Mckay (1996, 1997), Hetherington 1998, Earle et al 1994, Martin 1998. See Doherty *et al* 2001 ibid for a study of local counter-cultural networks where "alternative" lifestyles and wider spiritual, hedonistic, sustainable development concerns cross over into "political" activity - also Barbara Epstein (1991).

Again, I wish to emphasise that much of this counter-cultural activity, the broader alternative 'scene' does not simply provide a resource for the protest movement - much of this activity is in and of itself political[139], and forms an intrinsic part of movement collective identity. Further, having fun is a simple way of ensuring that activists hang around - the sheer explosive energy of

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and groups to live out political values as much as possible.

[138] it was certainly mine, via squatting, the early rave scene and free festivals at the start of the 90's.

[139] It can be argued that much hedonistic activity was forced to become politicised, via State clampdowns (the CJA 1995) on raves, 'New Age Travellers' and festivals in the 90's (McKay 1996, 1998; Earle et al 1994, Hetherington

the 'party and protest' scene, the enjoyment of digging over a communal allotment and making stew with the vegetables, the proactive projects which endure once a mobilisation wave has settled, all contribute to the sustaining of activity in the long term.

3.6 Emotion

3.6.1 Theoretical Overview

"Emotion is perhaps the last taboo in SM studies..."

(Doherty 2002)

However it appears that the "sociology of emotions" (Groves 1995) is starting to become mapped out territory. Groves points out that "...the way we feel about an issue, or our emotional states associated with it, is also a result of an interactive process..."

Groves [140] 1995: 437

For similar arguments, see also Jasper 1997, Jasper and Rucht (1990) re. the role of expressive action. Doherty (2002:10) also notes how Hetherington (1998) uses Raymond Williams (1989) "concept of a 'structure of feeling' to capture the emotional bond of solidarity often found in new types of elective communities. See also Whittier 1995, Roseneil 1995, Wall 1999.

Emotion is often viewed with suspicion by academics and by activists[141]. Because everyone seems wary of attributing "irrational" emotions as a rationale for action, this explains its lack of analysis in SM studies.[142] However as theorists cited above highlight, people feel emotional because they have engaged on a process of cognition, decoding information which is often unseen or under-reported in the mainstream media for example, and have come up with facts which make them emotional - angry, frustrated, often bleakly, desperately upset (see **Ch 4**). An emotional response is the logical next step. Other emotional responses are linked to the 'how' and 'why' of movements - again, affective ties (McAdam, Diani) produced by living communally, shared experiences of protest - even or especially challenging and dangerous ones - are formed, with beneficial effects on sustaining community and mobilisation.

1994).

[140] Groves, J.M. (1995) 'Learning to feel: the neglected sociology of social movement's, *Sociological Review*, 435-61.

[141] not least because it tends to be a strategy of "the other side" to appear "rational" and present activists as emotive and hence irrational and unrealistic in their responses to the cutting down of a mature woodland.

[142] especially given the legacy of SM theorists in the 60's and 70's developing alternatives to the 'herd mentality',

3.7 Religion And Spirituality

Various commentators (Roseneil 1995, Jasper 1997, Whittier 1995) have emphasised the importance of values and ethics as a predisposer to individual action and in sustaining mobilisation. See 'green ideology' below for more detail. It will suffice to say here that spirituality in various guises does form part of activist collective identity and cultural background. Whilst individually activists may draw on family backgrounds of more 'traditional' religions such as Catholicism, in terms of there being a spiritual aspect to activist *collective* identity, this tends to be more 'pagan' ('eco-paganism'). This can be expressed simply in terms of a commitment to certain values and ethical approaches which have respect for life, for the earth, or in more explicitly 'pagan' fashion, via celebration of natural cycles such as full moon, summer solstice[143]. See also Plows 1995, 1997, McKay 1996, 1997, Wall 1999, Seel 2000.

Section 4: Networks, recruitment and mobilisation

"Networks serve as crucial means for <u>mobilising resources</u> through recruitment of activists...networks...serve as media of <u>cognitive praxis</u> through which activists...come to share both common viewpoints...and a sense of collective identity" Caroll and Ratner 1996 : 604.

Previous subsections have shown how important the concept of networks are for SM theorists, this section deals with network theory in more detail. Network theorists such as Diani tend to emphasise three inter-related functions of movements as networks: namely recruitment, sustaining mobilisation, and increasing capacity via cross-movement networking. The movement's structure is thus in and of itself a resource.

4.1 Recruitment In To Activist Networks

First, numerous studies have found that previous involvement in an applicable political or social network is the most significant predisposing factor for activism in social movements (McAdam 1988; McCarthy and Zald 1988; Walsh and Warland 1983, 765; Diani 1992, 1994; della Porta and

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positivist views of movements current in the 1940's (see RM theory section).

[143] This aspect of movement culture has tended to come in waves, coming in and out of fashion; very "in" at Greenham (Roseneil 1995) and Twyford and in fact the first wave of roads protest mobilisation up to about 1995- very "out" after that, and creeping back a bit now. See **ch1, ch4.**

Diani 1999; Whittier 1995).

"social networks at the base of society have emerged as the most common sources of recruitment into social movements"

Tarrow 1998: 124

Snow et al (1980: 791) talk about the " 'bridging function' of social networks in relation to movement recruitment, affective ties make a difference between support and action. What makes the difference between the supporters of a cause who take action and those who do not is that those who act are likely to know someone who is already actively involved. McAdam's 1988 study of Freedom Summer also emphasised that friendship networks were a primary means of recruitment into activism though it is worth pointing out that "moral shock" (Jasper 1997) –via emotive leaflets, photos on high street stalls - provides a seemingly successful 'cold start' way in to animal rights networks.

4.2 Triggering and sustaining mobilisation

4.2.1 Theoretical Overview

The subsections dealing with activist culture above have introduced much literature which emphasises the importance of social ties in terms of sustaining mobilisation. Network theorists and commentators on the EDA movement constantly re-emphasise that

"what is most likely to sustain movement activity is loyalty to others based on shared experience of action"

(Doherty 2002)

Similarly, new action waves tend to grow out of out of pre-existing social networks which may have been semi – dormant - Welsh 2000, Diani 1992, 1994, Doherty et al 2001 Tarrow 1998.

The positive benefits of social networks have thus been flagged by a number of academics, with good reason. There are, however, some disbenefits which tend to get overlooked in the literature, with Granovetter's (1973) article being an important exception. As Granovetter emphasises, whilst 'strong ties' in social networks create solidarity, a sense of collective identity, which sustains high-cost, high-risk action (Jasper, McAdam 1982, 1986, 1988), such 'strong ties' can mean that these networks become more insular and closed-off.

Inter-movement cliques (and even simply strong groups of old friends) can alienate activists and new recruits, and stop ideas, tactics diffusing beyond the boundaries of the inner core of these networks. The ethnography throughout this PhD highlights the simultaneous 'swings and roundabouts' benefits and disbenefits of having 'strong ties' –see also Wall 1999: 65-93, Roseneil 1995.

However as this chapter has also already established, what characterises social movements generally, and the UK EDA movement specifically, is that whilst 'strong ties' groups and cliques do exist, the movement as a whole is comprised of blurred, diffuse, biodegradable action networks. Activists have many 'weak ties' links to other radical networks (see Plows 1997, Seel and Plows 2000) and in fact blur the boundaries of what the direct action movement *is*, where it ends, by having 'weak ties' links to a huge variety of other networks, groups, agencies. As other section have emphasised, it is this fluidity, adaptability and ability to interact with others which characterises the EDA movement and also enables it to carry on 'living'. These ideas are developed in the final subsection on networks below.

4.3 Cross-Movement Networking

4.3.1 Theoretical Overview

Networks provide a means of communication, allowing political entrepreneurs to contact sympathisers (Freeman 1973; Granovetter 1973). Communication networks can resource mobilisation, accelerating donations not only of activists' discretionary time but finance, physical resources and repertoires of action (see Doherty et al 2001 - also **Ch 5** for the ethnography). *Diffusion* is again a key term here, both of 'physical' resources but also of ideas. As Granovetter highlights, 'weak ties' which provide bridges to very diverse networks have been seen as more useful to the spread of protest than stronger ties to fewer groups.

"...whatever is to be diffused can reach a larger number of people, and traverse greater social distance...when passed through weak ties rather than strong"
(Granovetter 1973:1366)

- See also Caroll and Ratner (1996 p797). Whilst there is a tendency towards 'strong ties' based on affective bonds, shared experiences within specific groups and networks in the direct action movement, there is simultaneously much 'weak ties' cross-network bridging of the type

Granovetter advocates which both stimulates and symbolises the diffusion of repertoires of action and ideas. Such diffusion builds capacity as wider networks are exposed to new ideas, benefit from each others' resources –see Snow et al 1980: 795[144]. In this way networks can be appreciated as essential factors in developing cognitive praxis and movement frames, as Caroll and Ratner point out,

"... the practises of master framing and cross-movement networking probably condition each other..."

Caroll and Ratner: 1996 p616

The *biodegradability* (Wall 1999) of much of these networks needs re-emphasising, and the question of whether shared experiences outlast the biodegrading of specific action networks in terms of longer term movement capacity-building is an interesting one, as other subsections in this chapter have pointed out. Finally it is worth emphasising that the network literature tends to emphasise the positive implications of weak ties and cross-movement networking without mentioning the disbenefits. I would argue that on occasion, diffusion becomes dilution, having too many links to other groups - being 'all things to all (wo)men'- can de-radicalise action networks and hamstring them - they may, for example, feel unable to take radical action because of new more reformist allies, or they may lose the strong sense of collective identity which mobilised them in the first place - see **ch5**.

Section 5: Resources Literature

5.1 Theoretical Overview

Resource Mobilisation (RM) theory signalled a development in SM theory by a new generation of social scientists in the sixties. Beginning with Thompson (1966) and later Sewell (1980) work began towards a more sophisticated analysis of collective behaviour, one which recognised group behaviour as *"collective political struggle rather than individualistic irrationality"* (Shefner 1995: 597). New (politically partisan) researchers declared that '*social movement participants are at least as rational as those who study them*' (Schwartz, in Ferree 1992: 30). Protestors were

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[144] Snow, Zurcher , and Ekland- Olson (1980) 'Social networks and social movements: a microstructural approach to differential recruitment' in American Sociological Review Vol 45 pp 787-801.

now theorised as reacting to 'real grievances' (Goldberg 1991: 7). The development of resource mobilisation (RM) perspectives have been traced back to Olson's The Logic of Collective Action, which, published in 1965, elaborated on his 'rational choice theory' with a focus on individual self interest (Mueller 1992: 3; Zald 1992: 332) This analytical shift led to the substantial formulation of 'the theory of resource mobilisation' (McCarthy and Zald 1973; Oberschall 1973; Shorter and Tilly 1974; Gamson 1975; Useem 1975; Zald and McCarthy 1979). According to RM theory, social movements, like other organisations, collect, trade, utilise (and waste) resources in their activities. These resources may be members, money, votes, information, trust, jobs, guns, and image(s) (Goldberg 1991: 7-8). RM theorists moved much of the attention of social movement investigators towards the rationality of social movement organisations who

weigh the rewards and sanctions, costs and benefits, that alternative courses of action represent for them
(Oberschall 1973: 29).

Recent contributions to the resource mobilisation field have returned to an emphasis on individual social movement members who are theorised largely as rational actors who calculate the benefits and costs of social movement membership and activism. (Groves 1995: 436).

However, given its stress on organisational rationality, resource mobilisation perspectives are often criticised for concentrating on the form of social movements rather than on their content (Mueller 1992) and for sometimes recasting movement participants as '*ultra rationalistic actors devoid of feeling*' (Benford and Hunt 1995: 103; Groves 1995: 436 - see also Tarrow 98). RM theory, say critics, has also treated protest as more organised than it actually is (Piven and Cloward 1992: 138).

Firstly, RM theory deserves credit for locating the 'thinking actor'. And obviously, activists need resources in order to mobilise, and it can be argued that the more resources they have, the better/more effectively they are able to mobilise. This PhD cites numerous examples of resources which have enabled activists to mobilise and sustain activist networks over time. These include - money, vehicles, office space, computers, free internet access (e.g. via university), contacts and allies. There are also many other resources[145] which activists need which are arguably their prime ones. These include factors such as fitness, determination, stamina, dedication, selflessness, social

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[145] not, to my knowledge, defined in the literature

skills, bravery, an emotional/ethical imperative to act, the intelligence to decode/deconstruct information, networking and strategic planning skills. These could be classified as "internal resources". The strength of the communities within activists take action, levels of trust, group responsibility, are also resources without which activists can do very little. One could even argue that all these sorts of resources are the more "valuable" than the more superficially obvious material ones, as I have encountered many activist set-ups (on protest camps, for example), where there was a significant lack of anything that RM literature defines as a resource, and yet there was plenty of mobilisation happening because of the strength of the activist community and determination in the face of the odds. Here other factors such as political beliefs, collective identity, having knowledge of repertoires of action such as successful tactics (how to build a treehouse or tunnel), the pre-existence of social networks are all essential tools in activists' mobilisation kit. Wall (1999) has termed these factors "cultural resources".

In this context, it is evident that resources thus defined affect mobilisation, when combined with other factors. But there the point of agreement ends. In my searches on relevant academic literature, there has been no single theoretical approach which seems to me to be so completely off-kilter in ascribing activists' motivations for action. Personally what I always found objectionable about RM approaches was the language of capitalism used as a way to describe the process of mobilisation - that activists made a cost-benefit analysis and worked out whether it was "worth" them mobilising. In my experience, activists fling themselves helter-skelter into action with scant regard to what the costs will be for themselves (**Ch 4**). They mobilise because they feel passionately that they have to, they have a burning moral and practical imperative ("we must *do* something about climate change!"), not because they have calmly evaluated the costs and benefits to themselves and acted accordingly. Of course there are times when activists decide not to take action in specific circumstances, making a personal choice, for example, to not mobilise on a specific issue because of overwork, or an up-and-coming court case. This is a natural phase in the cycle of being an activist, and given what people put themselves through, counts as a well earned rest which if they do not take could result in permanent drop–out from movement activity. In the world of RM literature however, this activist has taken a cost-benefit analysis and decided that the costs outweigh the benefits of her mobilisation. Taken at face value, this is so. But this is not the best way such action can be constructed.

However, resources are an important aspect of mobilisation, movement culture, nature and identity, and thus I would argue for a re-shaping of the way RM theory is approached. The

obvious point is that many other factors conducive to mobilisation outlined in different sections of this chapter (collective identity, allies, social networks) are in fact resources, and together with more 'material'/external resources their existence (or non-existence) can affect mobilisation. This seems to me to be a way of acknowledging the importance of resources for activists, and that they do in fact often make strategic/tactical decisions based around what resources they have at their disposal. This is also a way of ensuring that the emotion and political content (not to mention the often considerable personal qualities) of activists are given value, whilst ensuring that the importance of resources is not disregarded by rejecting the specific approach of RM theory.

Section 6: Political Opportunity Structures – POS - and EDA Movement Comparison

6.1 Theoretical Overview

Challengers who seize political opportunities in response to openings in the polity are the catalysts for social movements and cycles of contention...By the concept of Political Opportunities, I mean consistent - but not necessarily formal or permanent - dimensions of the political environment that provide incentives for collective action by affecting people's expectations for success or failure...writers in the PO tradition emphasise the mobilisation of resources <u>external</u> to the group. They also, for the most part, emphasise elements of opportunity that are <u>perceived</u> by insurgents - for structural changes that are not experienced can hardly be expected to affect people's behaviour, except indirectly".
(extracts from Tarrow (98) p72-77)

The theory of POS has been developed to explain the macro processes which are a factor in triggering mobilisation. Tarrow (98) makes a very useful point in emphasising that examining the 'when and how' of mobilisation – when political opportunities are opening up - is an important aspect of determining the 'why'[146]. POS is thus focussed on the external conditions for mobilisation (classed by social movement scholars as the 'American' tradition of SM theory, as opposed to the 'European', which as discussed earlier tends to be more interested in the internal world of movements): Eisinger (1973), McAdam (1982), Kitschelt (1986), Koopmans (1990),

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[146] Tarrow's approach to POS is a pragmatic one and he emphasises that POS is one aspect, rather than the full picture, of mobilisation: "*most opportunities are situational [my underline] and cannot compensate for long for*

Kreisi (1995) Tilly (1995) Tarrow (1998) are foremost amongst those who have developed these ideas.

Recent revisions of POS by Tarrow emphasise that such macro triggers work symbiotically with other factors to cause mobilisation, thus combining micro and macro approaches. Also, as the above quotation emphasises, Tarrow points out that many of these political opportunities are fluid and situational rather than formal or permanent, and he shies away from the term 'structure' (although I have tended to keep the acronym POS rather than PO primarily as a way of avoiding confusing it with the acronym for Participant Observation).

POS is basically examining the degree to which the state, state mechanisms, and potential allies/powerful elites, facilitate and assimilate - or repress - dissent, and how these variables affect mobilisation. Theorists such as Kreisi and Tarrow have outlined useful 'check lists' of such variables, this is from Tarrow:

1) access to formal decision-making process, a mix of closed/open best conditions for mobilisation

2) unstable political alignments

3) "divided elites" splitting the power base/resourcing 'the people'

4) presence/absence of political/influential allies

5) repression and facilitation[147]

A common theme in much POS literature is the fact that such political opportunities can be both open or closed, and both these case scenarios can trigger mobilisation. The state may, for example, encourage participation, enabling social movement players room for maneuver, if political elites are supportive, non-hostile or at least neutral to a movement's aspirations, these conditions can nurture social movements. These circumstances may be involuntary - the state may be 'weak' and fragmented, a condition which grassroots actors exploit. On the other hand, *"strong repression may also stimulate collective action"*[148]- a 'strong' state which closes off avenues of political participation, clamps down on social movements, can trigger more movement activity which arises in opposition to perceived repression and injustices. Kreisi (95) cites Koopmans (1990) who outlines three main ways in which repression aids mobilisation:

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weaknesses in cultural, ideological and organisational resources " (1998 p77)
[147] Tarrow (98) pp77-80

1)repression reinforces identity

2)repression becomes a mobilisation theme

3) repression may focus media attention on the challengers.

(I would add that forming alliances/coalitions with others similarly affected - a sense of shared grievance - is also a key result of repression which aids the process of mobilisation). The POS literature goes into great detail discussing the ins and outs of these and other variables - how decentralised the state is, the type of political conflicts between elites which enable mobilisation to flourish in the gaps, as it were. Political opportunities can surface at local, national and international level, everything from local council policy to international laws defining terrorism. These levels can combine and overlap, or at times one level may predominate.

There is a highly instrumental flavour to POS theory - as the opening quote from Tarrow highlighted, POS theorists tend to assume that participants have evaluated the political scene and are acting accordingly - from a starting point of awareness of the external conditions, i.e. a very strategic, precursive approach. It can be seen how POS theory grew out of another 'American' SM perspective - RM theory - in that both approaches tend to emphasise a rational, cost-benefit approach amongst social movement actors. Tarrow is amongst many other POS theorists in supposing that there are movement leaders who are responsible for such pre-planned mobilisation waves[149].

Like Wall (1999)[150], through my ethnographic case studies I have identified many instances of how activists have perceived an opening/closure in their political opportunities and have mobilised accordingly. At a local level, the fact that Gwynedd council failed to listen to grassroots community pleas for the Greenfield site Brewery Fields to be preserved as a green space rather than be sold off for housing, ensured that locals were prepared to take direct action[151] (see Ch 5 for a discussion of local political opportunities). Internationally, the free trade rules of the WTO are triggering global action - this is discussed in more detail in Ch 6. In the 80's, Thatchers' clampdown on Left/liberal/working class movements and values fostered a climate of political repression which, whilst dehabilitating for those struggling against it, triggered strong opposition.

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[148] Kreisi 95 ibid pp 177

[149] Tarrow (98) ibid pp5.

[150] All of chapter 6 in Wall's (1999) book on EF! and roads protest deals with the relevance of political opportunities to mobilisation.

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Fifteen years later, Welsh language, peace and socialist activists still spit out the name 'Thatcher' and recall how she was a hate figure which – ironically - enabled Welsh language activism to focus and re-mobilise opposition after the mood of pessimism following the 1979 devolution vote.[152] As will be discussed below, whilst I have problems with (amongst other things) the insistence in the literature on instrumentality, there are two 'classic' mobilisation waves in recent EDA history which perfectly fit the theory, that is to say actors articulate clearly, prior to mobilisation, that their main grievance/rationale for acting is the repression of the state. These are the protest waves which arose out of the 1995 Criminal Justice Act (CJA) and the 2001 Terrorism Act (TA).

Both these acts themselves were consciously constructed as a response to the protest (and wider counter-cultural) movement's successes, in 1995, the race, free party and protest scene was at a peak, and the CJA which made trespass a criminal offence was designed to clamp down on this activity, and repress the still-strong movement of "New Age Travellers" into the bargain[153]. Ironically - but possibly predictably - the appearance of the Bill in 1994 led to a national mobilisation of loose coalitions focussed on opposition to the (then) Bill. Similarly, in a move also aimed at undermining the direct action movement, the Terrorism Act of 2001 made damage to property for a political cause a terrorist offence. This again triggered mobilisations and coalitions with the specifically –articulated grievance of state oppression. Within Wales, peace and Welsh language activists mobilised with eco-activists, strengthening bonds and a sense of collective identity based on shared grievances.

These are 'textbook' examples of POS theory in action. Generally though I find POS theory to be an uncomfortable fit. Firstly, I have problems with the notion of instrumentality - the insistence in the literature that POS factors are pre-known by the actors and are their main rationale for mobilising. Intertwined with this is my feeling that for many POS theorists – especially Kreisi - this notion of prior appreciation of political openness or closure is put forward as being the main factor causing mobilisation. In other words, social actors always consciously choose to mobilise at certain times because they have evaluated the chances for success/failure. Like RM theory, I find this cost-benefit approach to mobilisation unhelpful and misleading, based on my research, I would argue that activists tend to mobilise over specific issues because of a moral and pragmatic imperative to do so, with POS factors forming more of a background of contributory variables which the actors come over time to appreciate (when, for example, their

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[151] Plows 1998

[152] Several Welsh language activists interviewed for the ESRC project made this point.

peaceful protests are met with state violence, as happened at Twyford Down). In fairness, whilst Tarrow does stick to this instrumentalist approach, unlike other POS theorists who tend to use their theory as if no other factors were responsible for causing movements to appear at certain times, he does point out clearly that political opportunities are not the sole causal factors at work when movement activity is triggered.

The idea of movement leaders evaluating the current political climate and deciding when to strike, when to exploit a perceived opening, paints a very strategic view of movements but not in my opinion a very correct one - at least not in the context of the EDA movement, where things seem much more scrambled, random and arbitrary, and mobilisation is primarily driven by a specific issue. The thorny issue of movement leaders has been discussed in section 1 and these same arguments need reiterating here. The 'check list' of POS factors given at the start of this section is still relevant, I would argue, as a set of background factors which are shaping the way mobilisation issues appear in the first place and the way the State then deals with dissent, and I would argue over time these factors become assimilated into activists' rationales for action, but in my opinion it is the appearance of a specific *issue*, first and foremost, which most often triggers action. I would argue that my ethnography shows that people mobilise consciously over specific articulated grievances - a road cutting through their local nature reserve, the growing of GM crops, the bombing of Afghanistan. Factored into this is a sense that (for example) the State, or the local council, or the UN isn't listening, is acting repressively, has closed down its political opportunities, but first and foremost in peoples' minds is a specific grievance, an actual issue. "Issue Opportunities" as a field combining micro and macro elements - the external circumstances which cause the issue in the first place, and the way that the issue is constructed as a grievance – the process of movement collective identity - perhaps deserves attention as a new theoretical approach to POS factors.

Section 7: Methods Literature - Feminist Perspectives, Qualitative Approaches.

The theoretical arguments have been outlined, analysed and applied in **Ch 2** so it is not necessary to reproduce them here. I have kept the section heading in however to emphasise the importance of feminist perspectives in my research.

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[153] See McKay, George (1996) senseless acts of beauty; London, Verso.

Section 8: "Green" Ideology: Politics And Eco-Philosophy

The importance of the 'why' of movements generally, and of the EDA movement specifically, has been emphasised in previous sections. This final section presents an overview of the literature relevant to deconstructing the ideas, worldviews and challenges to the dominant paradigm expressed by the EDA movement in interviews and in other settings of activist discourse. This is the background theoretical framework to the ethnography given throughout this PhD and in **Ch 4**, **chi**, in particular.

8.1 How "Green" Is The Movement?

8.1.1 Theoretical Overview.

In terms of the applicability of green ideological theory to the EDA movement, Doherty 2002:68 states that a broader frame of reference for green ideology than that developed by green political theorists (Barry 99, Dobson 2000, Eckersley 92) is necessary, and emphasises the need for greater pluralism in defining and applying terms to a movement whose use of ideology is in any case primarily pragmatic and highly fluid. The key elements in this 'broad frame' according to Doherty are "a commitment to ecological rationality, egalitarianism and grassroots democracy" (2002: 67). Wall cites similar 'baselines' and (with reference to Snow and Benford) sees them as "core frames" (see Wall 1999 :144) See also Plows 97, Seel and Plows 2000, for a similar analysis. Eco-anarchism (Purkis 2000) could be seen as another strand of this broad, loosely applied definition (via grassroots democracy and local autonomy, ideas of political participation). Whilst many key elements in green political thought are not new in themselves, Dobson (2000) highlights a 'new' element - the realisation that the earths resources were finite - thus 'old' ideas re egalitarianism are seen against the backdrop of a potentially fatally damaged eco-system.

How 'green' is the EDA movement's ideology when there are so many other elements within it which in themselves do not have a 'green' focus, i.e. anarchist, socialist, anti-capitalist? I would argue a case for keeping the 'green' definition because of the strongly held environmental strand in the UK movement's collective identity - generally, a social-ecology stance, see below. It's a challenging word to use though. I might tentatively suggest "brown" for that mix of 'red and

green' (Plows 97, Pepper 93, Wall 99, Seel and Plows 2000).

In terms of Doherty's points about broad organising frames, this is an assertion supported by my PhD findings that having a 'broad church' of ideological frames is a more accurate description of movement reality than narrower attempts at classification (eco-fascist, eco-anarchist, liberal Green). So, as commentators on the EDA movement highlight, the way activists organically construct and *apply* green ideology is more pluralist, less 'pure' than the theory, although this isn't to say that activist don't theorise - they do - there is simply a more 'hands-on' pragmatism of grassroots 'organic intellectuals'.

8.2 Does The EDA Movement Have An Ideology?

8.2.1 Theoretical Overview

"Green ideology and green identity is based upon a general analysis of the political and social system and the relationship between humanity and the natural world...the ideology of social movements develops and changes as a result of experience and action"

(Doherty 2002:20)

In other words, there are no clearly defined tenets of EDA 'green' ideology, and movement ideology is best understood when appreciated as working similarly to the process of collective identity (see also Bevir 2000:280 cited in Doherty 2002: 85). Radical green ideology per se and here the ideology of the EDA movement is pluralist, diffuse, shifting, with many different positions and weights of emphases (ecofeminist, spiritual/deep ecologist, anarchist) while also retaining core principles. As discussed in previous subsections, Snow and Benfords' (86, 92) concept of core framing is also a useful way to appreciate how movement ideology works as a more pragmatic, interactive process. As highlighted in **Ch 4** many activists personally combine and re-combine aspects of green political and ecophilosophy theory together in ways which in the literature would be anathema but in practise works as a hands-on mixing pot of shared radical ideas. See Seel and Plows (2000), Plows (1997) for similar discussions.

As Doherty notes:

"these issues do not usually cause problems in green movements. Divisions...over the priority to be given to ecological philosophy are rare...Much more important as a source of divisions is the traditional problem of radical political praxis, namely, how to achieve radical political changes while working within the constraints of a hostile system" (2002:3)

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However as discussed above there are core held-in-common 'building blocks' (or frames) of the EDA movement's ideology. As Doherty (2002:77) notes, when one of the boundaries of these base lines is crossed then this puts the holder of such views outside the broad ideological framework of the EDA movement - thus the Unabomber who privileges wilderness over human life was 'out' because of the lack of a social dimension to his philosophy. Thus with a commitment to grassroots democracy as a core organising frame,

"...green authoritarianism and right wing ideology become oxymorons..."[154]

This apt analysis explains why the issue of violence/non-violence within the movement is so hotly contested - see **Ch 7.** Whilst activists as "organic intellectuals" often have their own personal ideologies worked out with reference to green political/philosophical theory (and often have as sharp an appreciation of (for example) the ins and out of the differences between deep ecology and social ecology as the theorists), divisions are more likely to be over tactics (e.g. work with the media, or ignore them) than over the finer points of social ecology theory vs. eco-feminism(s). McKay (97) has highlighted a distinct anti-theory, anti-ideology stance within the EDA movement and the more general alternative scene. This may be naïve - but it may be anything but, given the tendency of such debates to never leave the pub (Seel and Plows 2000).

Sometimes 'red and green' concerns are mutually symbiotic - at other times one may take precedence, causing much discussion and argument within the movement - like the issues surrounding the fuel protests (Bagguley 2001, Doherty et al 2002, 2003) where ecological concerns clashed to a certain extent with social ones. To re-emphasise, I would agree with Doherty (2002) that like collective identity, green ideology is something which is shifting, is continuously worked at, with room for many different positions within the broad framework. Again Steinberg's (1998) emphasis on interaction via *discourse* is crucial.

8.3 Challenges To The Dominant Paradigm

The references given in the earlier subsection 'challenging codes' in section 1 are relevant here and I refer the reader back to them. Several key academic theorists have highlighted how social movements generally posit a worldview which sits in direct opposition to the dominant paradigm -see earlier references to Melucci, Castells, Giddens, Tarrow. Gramsci says that such movements

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[157]Doherty 2002 ibid pp80

challenge hegemony. All of these theorists are in agreement that activists are challenging specific structural relationships of *power*. As the subsections below on eco-ethics/eco-philosophy highlight, within EDA movement ideology there is an inter-relationship between critiques of values systems which provide the (reflexive or un-reflexive) "raison d'etre" of the dominant paradigm, and critiques of the specific structural conditions which are causing conditions of oppression and exploitation. Again political theorists such as Barry (1999), Welsh (2000), Schlosberg (1999) and Dobson (2000) develop these arguments with reference to specific examples, see also for example Bauman (2000). In recent years the crop of more 'grassroots' movement academics who articulate critiques of the dominant paradigm "on behalf" of the movement (the anti-globalisation movement in particular - see **Ch 6**) has grown to include more populist literature - see Monbiot (2000), Klein (2000). These are movement activist-academics who combine more 'abstract' deconstructions of power relations (e.g. eco-feminism) with explicitly politically - engaged analyses of social and ecological effects.

8.4 Ethics And Values: Eco-Philosophy

All the approaches discussed here combine an emphasis on the need to tackle values and ethical systems as a symbiotic strategy, with changing structural relationships of power. There are a myriad of perspectives within each specific stance, and it is important to make a distinction between what theorists articulate on paper, and how these theories can get "translated" by the wider alternative community (a point Pepper (1991, 1993) fails to appreciate when he dismisses all eco-feminism as "apolitical" because of extreme "New Age" adaptations of eco-feminism in some of his commune case studies). These are also ideas and perspectives which have diffused to some degree into general EDA movement consciousness, not least because of the crossover between debates on social ecology and deep ecology with the development of US EF! as a network and subsequently in the UK (see Wall 1999). As with the deconstructions of power relations, structural inequality, examples of oppression or resource depletion given by academics, it is noticeable that these theoretical perspectives are often arrived at "organically" as activists build intellectual capacity and arrive at the same conclusions as the "official" theorists (see **Ch 4**).

8.4.1. Deep Ecology

8.4.1.1 Theoretical Overview

Deep Ecology (Arne Naess (1973, 1984); Orton (1995) Lovelock 2000 2nd ed) is a "holistic"

philosophy which states that nature - "wilderness", often - has intrinsic value, and that all natural systems are interconnected. Deep Ecology is often linked to deep green spirituality, and an identification with the values - systems of other cultures, an "ethics of respect". In this more 'spiritual' mode deep ecology has affinities with some forms of eco-feminism (in particular Starhawk) - see below. In turn this has been critiqued as apolitical, by for example Pepper (93), and biologically essentialist - see Warren (1994). Whilst there are more "New Age" and apolitical forms of deep ecology - see Dryzek (1997:164) for his definition of 'green Romantics'- Starhawk (1999, 2002) however advocates an extremely "political paganism" (see also Plows 1995, 1997).

Deep ecology has been criticised by many writers as being biocentric, i.e., deep ecology places nature on a pedestal - sees it as 'other' and values it above humanity. Social ecologists like Murray Bookchin (1988), Bradman (1989) and David Pepper (1993) have both critiqued the lack of priority given to the social sphere in deep ecology - in extreme cases this leads over the edge into extremely biocentric - even anti-people ideologies - famously Dave Foreman the founder of EF! in the US (see Wall 1999, Doherty 2002) and at the far extreme the Unabomber (Doherty 2002). However it should be stressed that Naess's concepts of deep ecology (extensively revised over the years: 1984, 1990) are far away from the ideology of the Unabomber and most deep ecologists have a social dimension - see Devall and Sessions 1985. Dobson (1990:47 cited in Wall 1999:150) talks about 'strong' and 'weak' deep ecology. Naess (1990) refutes the tag of 'biocentric' and it is true as Wall and Dobson point out that "deep ecology informs green politics in general" (Wall 1999:150).

In terms of subsequent criticisms levelled at deep ecology it is easy to forget how taken for granted now are the philosophical, intellectual and political concepts they introduced of an interconnected biosphere. This basic "nature needs to·be re-valued and interconnections appreciated" aspect of deep ecology (putting aside the more 'spiritual' aspects this often shades into) stands up after lots of muck has been thrown at the rest of deep ecology, some of which has stuck.

8.4.2 Social Ecology

Social ecology has been developed as a theory predominantly by Bookchin (1982, 1990, 1994, 1995, 1997) see also Pepper (93) and highlights an explicitly social dimension within ecophilosophy. This is the 'frame' which seems to be a more generally - applicable "fit" for the EDA movement. Many activists describe themselves as social ecologists - issues of egalitarianism

and social justice and grassroots democracy are intrinsically related to eco-concern issues as others have highlighted (see Doherty, Dobson et al above) - also Judi Bari (93: cited in Wall 1999) and **Ch 4** for the ethnography. I personally have a lot of problems with Pepper's (93) approach - not his social ecology as such, but because it seems to me he not only willfully ignores the fact that other perspectives are also politicised (see especially his take on eco-feminism: Plows 1997). Personally I would define the broad critique of power relations outlined by most 'green' political theorists quoted throughout this section as being a basic social ecologist position.

8.4.3 Eco-feminism

8.4.3.1 Theoretical Overview

In reality, there are "eco-feminisms". Similar to Dobson's concepts of 'weak' and 'strong' deep ecology (see above), there are at least two clear forms of eco-feminism which could be classed as 'first wave' and 'second wave'. As will be discussed, all forms of eco-feminism share deconstructions of power, and specifically male power/patriarchy as an ideological and structural tool of women's' oppression. It is what I would call the 'first wave' of eco-feminism which tends to highlight links to Christianity's attitudes towards women, the witch-burnings e.g. Daly 1979, White 1994. The 'first wave' of eco-feminism is thus highly concerned with re-valuing aspects of female 'nature' and sexuality seen as de-valued by patriarchal cultures and structures over thousands of years of developing social systems: see White 1994, Plumwood 1994, Mies 1993 - these arguments are also discussed in Plows 1995. These frames tend to overlap with much other general eco-philosophy focussed on 'anthropocentric' and oppressive value systems Plumwood (1994) and Mies (1993, 1994) frame male 'nature' as being 'the problem' - men, argues Mies, make war - women do not.

Charges of biological essentialism have come most strongly from within feminism, with other feminist theorists arguing that by advocating a re-valuing of "female nature" (nurturing and caring, also 'goddess' imagery) or 'female' characteristics-instinct, emotion - this first wave of eco-feminism simply reproduced male stereotyping of female 'nature' i.e., these are socially constructed categories not biological 'truths' (Warren 1994). This appraisal led to the 'second wave' of eco-feminism. Further, the lack of specific focus solely on women's' oppression in this 'second-wave' eco-feminism has led to a questioning of how 'feminist' it actually is - see Warren 1994.

These critiques were well-aimed, as there is a large element of quite un-reflexive essentialism in some 'first wave' eco-feminism (Mies 93 in particular). However, like deep ecology, it is important to recognise that these were ground-breaking ideas which whilst in need of revision had important things to say, in particular the articulation of an alternative values paradigm as part of a symbiotic strategy if structural change was to happen (Mies and Shiva 1993, Plumwood 1994). Further it isn't particularly biologically essentialist to state that traditional religion informed views of female sexuality and biology were oppressive (to say the least), and (for example) celebrating menstruation after centuries of guilt and shame is frankly a political act which has been unfairly dismissed in later revisions, in my view. It is also important to emphasise that advocating a re-valuing of instinct and emotion need not be stereotyping women per se into these categories if it is acknowledged that all human beings rather than women have this potential. Starhawk, whose books advocate a deep green, ecofeminist "political paganism" has expressed similar arguments in recent interviews (in 'Resurgence' magazine, Spring 2001).

Such revision - my own included - has been the legacy of 'second wave' eco-feminism, which has tended to focus much more on how women's' oppression is part of a system of linked oppressions - a "logic of domination" (Warren 1994) and specific structural examples of how women's exploitation and suffering is connected to environmental destruction. This is an extremely 'political' and structurally–informed ideology, which is most useful for its specific case - study, tangible examples of how the 'logic of domination' actually manifests. See Mies and Shiva (93), Warren (1994). These explicitly structural and political implications of eco-feminism have been misread by a number of (male) academics - see Pepper (1993) and seemingly Doherty (2002).

8.4.4   Short Comment On Ecophilosophy

It is extremely telling, I would argue, that activists (organically, and often without any awareness of any theoretical positions) jumble up all aspects of the above theories quite workably, whilst much of the literature seems to be getting ever more nit-picky, academic and detached from 'the real world'. I think that these are important theories which have been developed in enough detail to be impacting (especially in the current political and ecological climate) on the consciousness of the general public, and I have to admit to being extremely impatient with the general emphasis on splitting hairs within the literature, when as a broad tool ecophilosophy hangs together well enough to be clearly articulating another paradigm, and helping to shape the political agenda.

Section 9: Short Conclusion

This chapter has set out the core theoretical perspectives which, implicitly or explicitly, underpin the ethnography of the rest of this PhD. Because the same theoretical arguments explain (and/or are deconstructed through) a variety of ethnographic settings, and are thus developed in detail in these contexts, I approached the shape of the literature review pragmatically, wishing simply to lay out the bare bones of the arguments, and leaving it to the other chapters to discuss the implications of these theories in more detail. To re-emphasise, this chapter has laid out the 'toolbox' of social movement theory.

Chapter 4
Interview Data: Analysis Of Activists' Life Histories And Accounts Of Action

"There is...a matrix of social power according to which society classes, collective actors and other social categories have the greater chance in shaping and reshaping political reality, and of opening and closing the political agenda. Access to and control over the means of production, the means of organization and the means of communication are unevenly distributed within the social structure"

(Offe 1982: 82).

"Personally I feel some of the main things I have in common with other movement activists include the yearning for a world in which power is more evenly distributed - whether that be political power, or money, or any other form of power, and also a world where the environment and people's well-being comes before profit and greed".

This chapter contains the bulk of the interview data. It is divided into two sections:

- Section 1 - "the life cycle of the activist". Using the life history material to chart and analyse activist trajectories in and out of activism, and document what happens to activists during the process of mobilisation.

- Section 2 - Mapping and evaluating activists' rationales for taking action, demonstrating the complexity of their worldviews, their status as "organic intellectuals" and "organic experts". Melucci's theories of collective identity are tested and discussed against this ethnographic background.

The evidence for the hypotheses outlined in the **intro**, and the key findings given in the **intro** and **conclusion**, is outlined during the course of this chapter. It is not necessary to continuously re-assert these hypotheses and key findings, but they should be borne in mind as, for example, evidence of how individual activists build capacity through their immersion in action networks is given. Methodologically, the main point to re-emphasise here is that interviews by themselves cannot be 'trusted', but they can be trusted more when triangulated with other methodologies. People re-construct their own narratives **(Ch 2)**. Further, the nature of the questions I was asking activists was extremely challenging:

- The question on what my motivations were really stumped me. They seemed so diverse and difficult to put down on paper, it became a bit of a challenge to produce something elegant and meaningful that went beyond "Because I want to change the world" which remains a good reason, but needs a bit of interrogating.

Further, personal reasons - the adrenaline associated with high personal risk strategies such as rushing into a building, a worksite, onto a bulldozer, the fun to be had during action and associated activity the social scene/affective ties, psychological triggers such as (very importantly) ego, 'guilt trips' 'martyrdom syndrome' - as well as other emotional triggers which may well be linked to personal experiences - are all interconnected. This PhD does not aim to get deeply into psychological motivations, beyond discussing the pragmatic function of social ties and peer group activity in triggering and sustaining action, and the reasons for activist burnout, further emphasising the importance of *emotion* as an action trigger. Activists are themselves well aware of all these motivations, hence their occasional bafflement at how best to articulate themselves when put on the spot. I emphasise all this here simply to point out that the picture is far more complex than merely saying that activists act solely out of emotional, strategic and intellectual responses to perceived grievances in terms of environmental damage and human rights abuses. Activists are driven people, and social psychology must play a part.

Section 1 "The Life Cycle of the Activist"

1.1 Recruitment Into Activist Networks…How And Why Do People Start Taking Action?

All interviewees followed the same pattern of: recruitment, mobilisation and sustained involvement, with variants in terms of the actual events, and how involved they get at a later stage with organising actions, how long they continue "full-time". In terms of making initial contact with the EDA movement, there are a mixture of factors including network opportunities, the individual's own initial drives usually some early contact with politicised key figures such as parents or teachers, and, crucially, luck: being in the right place at the right time.

1.1.1 Early Political Socialisation

Key themes emerging from interviews are early memories of cognitive and emotional responses following awareness of specific issues. For many people this is bound up with contact with nature (living by a river, for example). Most importantly, the activists' family (often parents) is very often noted as an important 'initiator' into protest or at least seeding awareness of political/'contentious' ideas and issues.

AP:

-Would you say, then, that you had quite an unusual background - not everyone's lucky enough to have so radical roots?

-[laughs] Actually, a lot of the people on the protest camps will say 'oh yeah, my mum went to Greenham'. They have this (political) background (but) I don't know if everyone had such an articulated radical politics in the time, so yeah, I was very lucky

-Well it came from my house really, my mum had been active in CND since the late 50's. She was into things like Greenpeace, Friends of the Earth... locally, we lived in the middle of the Miners' strike when I was a teenager... We did a lot of support work for the miners' strikes and going out on the picket line, so I sort of grew up in an atmosphere where you kind of understood that the state was something you challenged...my grandfather was a founder member of the National Union Of Mine Workers and of the Labour Party. He founded the South Wales Labour Party, so they're very sort of working class people, they have a lot of opinions.

-Well, basically I was born into politics and direct action and that sort of stuff because my parents were really involved in the CND movement and the labour party and the communist party. So I was going on CND marches and basically being dragged on lots of marches and so that was always very much part of my childhood... I think in some way through my teenage years there was this kind of feeling, like this need to do something about the way the world was...

-My parents are both politically active and aware... Both were involved in the 1980s peace movement, going on demos and some of my earliest memories are of CND demos in Trafalgar

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square and at Barrow, where the Trident submarines were constructed...... Another memory that is very clear is seeing my mum get nicked for planting potatoes on an American airbase, possibly Menwith Hill... at the time I thought everyone's mum did stuff like that. I have since learnt that they didn't, but a lot did, and you meet more of these children, now grown up, on peace camps than in a lot of other places. My gran was also politically active, in the (old) labour party, and went to Greenham with my mum...we had bits of the Greenham fence decorating our Christmas tree... I think that has been a major influence on my getting involved in the stuff I do now, both on the issues and on the ways in which I am active.

Given the small size of my sample[155], it may be coincidence that many of my interviewees came from extremely politicised families. However it is interesting that the interviewees themselves add further confirmation that "political parents" is a common factor amongst activists. I can add further corroboration by highlighting my mother's campaign background - she was part of Stop Toxic Waste In Cleveland (STINC[156]), amongst other environmental campaigning, and looking back I realise that this was a key influence in my teenage years. It is noteworthy that my interviewees in several cases represent a third generation of family activism - quite a significant finding. [157]

Importantly, this parental involvement factor isn't always present – or perhaps more accurately - doesn't always get flagged as significant by the subject:

-I started off as a little 13 year old, and everything was kind of sparked off by a very bizarre week in France... for some reason I spent the whole week with the weight of the world on my shoulders: quite literally. Just the fact that the world was really screwed up hit me and I felt completely and utterly powerless. It got to the point where I was even crying myself to sleep over it. I got back from that and a few weeks later got my hands on a "how to save the world for kids" book thing which was stuffed with organisations to join.

This interviewee appears (or at least, defines herself) as developing political awareness via a moment of catharsis. She also, in the presumed absence of social network contacts initiates her own involvement - consciously takes agency in order to trigger access into these networks. Other

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[155] And the fact that several of my interviewees were "prime movers" within the movement
[156] A group which successfully fought off two toxic waste incinerators near Billingham, Cleveland in the 1980's
[157] CND is the common factor- it is reasonable to surmise that those marches were so well- attended by that generation that it is hardly surprising that if they were at all politically- inclined, they went on them.

activists also mention these 'epiphanic' moments where earlier, unconscious or unconscious, influences become crystallised. Often these occur outdoors:

-I was under this huge oak tree ...and the sun was setting and just my brain went, this land, this earth, the planet we live on is really fucking important. You know, next to your family and these people who love you and totally support you, is this earth and this sky and this air that you breathe and these trees, and every single one of them in this big diversity, and without that you've nothing... thinking we are absolutely fucking it up, everybody knows we're fucking it up... on a social and an environmental level we're screwing the planet up... it was definitely a classic moment.

This is a crucial point in activist narratives as will be evidenced time and again in this chapter, the emotive, personal response - the facts are *felt* rather than merely understood (see Jasper 1997). It is not that there are rational responses (sound) and emotional responses (faintly spurious) - rather the emotion is also rational, comes from a rational appreciation of fact, or rational appreciation is symbiotically connected to the emotional experience. Notice it's when the interviewee has an emotional response that earlier learned facts fit into place and the imperative to *act* becomes stronger. Emotion is not a 'second-rate' action trigger[158].

Finally, other key figures (e.g. teachers), or events, or circumstances, can generate initial conscious awareness, again triggering initial contact with social actors. And again, luck does come into this - it's possible that without chance meetings people might not have become activists.[159]

AP

How did you get involved in political or environmental direct action?

-Probably because of the vegan shop that at I went to work in when I was 13. My dad made me get a job there ... and that was my thing then, that was my direction...It exposed me to, there were a lot of leaflets in there about all sorts of different things and it was mostly animal rights obviously, there were some environmental stuff in there as well... and I was beginning to

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[158] See **ch3** re David Pepper and his comments on 'apolitical' green spirituality
[159] Watching a documentary about Timothy McVeigh on the night he was executed, I wondered what would have happened to him had he met someone like Starhawk rather than right- wing militias when he came back, disillusioned, from the Gulf.

understand that there was another world outside of normal life.

1.1.2 Social Networks And Other Recruitment Opportunities

Numerous studies have found that previous involvement in an applicable political or social network is the most significant predisposing factor for activism (McAdam, McCarthy and Zald 1988: Marwell, Oliver and Prahl 1988: Walsh and Warland 1983:765). In other words, those who act are likely to know someone who is already actively involved (McAdam 1986). In the context of the interview narratives, often a significant period of time passes between the early stages of emotional response and some formative political awareness-raising, and the taking of direct action, the subjects becoming 'dormant' as it were - aware (to an extent) but inactive - until contact is made with other social actors. Sometimes, as highlighted, this gap is in itself mediated by the interviewee becoming 'activated' *directly* by parents, or, another occasional option, that future activists appear to be[160] completely politically unaware until contact is made with counter-cultural networks.

And put more colloquially - meeting/making friends, and having fun with them, is the most common way 'in' (though of course it helps to be predisposed to seek out certain types of people as friends in the first place). Affective ties and a good social scene are all incredibly important factors in terms of getting involved.

I went to uni in '86 when I was 18/19 - I got involved in hunt sabbing... A lot of my motivation was that it was really enjoyable, a good thing to do, but I wish there had been a way at that time of doing it [i.e. direct action] on environmental issues, and there wasn't much [other] direct action I could take... so sabbing was pretty much where it was at really ... I enjoyed the direct action, and there wasn't the forum to take direct action on environmental issues, so I was doing the action on other issues but it wasn't really my main interest. It's a bit weird really. I hadn't really thought about it. I've never really deconstructed it before [laughs] - it's about opportunities really.

-it was all linked in, the witchcraft, the music, the drugs, the environmentalism, the animal rights

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[160] At least in their own accounts...

was a whole huge thing that was one thing... [at university] there was a lot of stuff going on... I didn't get involved in the animal rights group but I did go with them to a couple of things in the middle of the night... Then Stanworth Valley (?) was really close, thirty/forty miles away and we started going there.

-and then I went to Hastings College ...and there was a gulf war march, and a few of us decided to go up to that... we kind of vaguely knew one another from the college, and up we went... about 55 people came, ... And then there was a lot of the anti-nuclear stuff going on as well. And then I think X and X started to talk about this Earth First stuff...

Key themes in these interviews, most tellingly, going to university/college is a significant social network resource, and a lot of peoples' way 'in' to meeting other people who think similarly, enabling them to get more involved in counter-cultural networks.[161] The excitement, the adrenaline, the sense of *doing* something with likeminded others and having fun whilst doing it, is seemingly what gets people hooked. The crossover between the counter-cultural scene - soft drugs and music into politics/direct action networks, often through college, is noteworthy (see also **Ch 1**).

Others, not so lucky in 'falling' into the right social networks, actively sought them out. Interestingly, but not surprisingly, in many cases initial contact was made with NGOs - and it seems that dissatisfaction with NGO methods triggered more determined searches for alternatives, or even 'self-starting'. Comments such as these below are extremely common in activist accounts of entry into direct action networks.

-I tried to get in touch with Greenpeace, but the way they organise is a bit - you can't just go in and be a volunteer and go on a boat and save a whale, that's not how it works...
-I joined the local Friends of the Earth group and I went to a couple of meetings and the first action that I ever organised was about the sea - they [the council] used to pump raw sewage out... [FOE] were absolutely useless... they came but they were nervous about it, they thought it was a bit too exciting.

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[161] Another ESRC project finding was that tertiary level education was a common factor amongst a high percentage of interviewees.

1.2 Immersion In Activist Networks

Once established in the EDA networks through initial contact and action – taking, activists tend to experience a burst in activity, closely linked to meeting more people, exposure to more issues and a rapid politicisation. This burst of action will in many cases last for years - for others it may for be the duration of a single protest camp, for example. One of my hypotheses about the EDA movement - a theory about mobilisation - was that action generates more action[162], and this was borne out by activist accounts. At this point in activists' narratives, most follow a similar pattern of meeting a range of new people and making lots of new friends in a very short space of time, coupled with a massive amount of action-taking. Often this involves a move completely out of "normal life" (in my protest experience I have seen many new activists give up university, their jobs, move areas to get completely involved) into "activist space": squats, housing co-ops, protest camps. Many new activists thus experience total immersion - within a very short space of time their lives can be radically different. The following extracts will highlight the range of actions my interviewees became involved in and the roles they as individuals played, indirectly also giving a sense of the amount of action happening in Britain in the 90's (see **Ch 1**).

1.2.1 Developing Action Repertoires

-in 1993 when the Twyford campaign started winding down there was this feeling, that road protest was going to get big and we felt that people should have the experience of people who had been at Twyford, so Road Alert was set up to give support for people who wanted to take on road protests...then I was at the M11 which was a mad, crazy campaign in the centre of the city... I was involved in Road Alert! till I guess the middle of '96... Yeah, after Newbury I was burned out really badly and went to Norfolk and was really glad not to do anything for a while, except for being a tourist on other people's actions which was superb - then started to get more involved in genetics actions... we organised a national action in Norfolk, which was a crop squat where we actually went and occupied a genetic test site...I guess it sounds as if I progressed from one campaign to another, but its all quite mixed up really, for example two years ago I did a really full-on peace action. Eleven of us broke into a warehouse full of vehicles that were going to East Timor, and we did stuff to the vehicles...That was something really worthwhile to be involved in, that went on at the same time as other protests

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[162] It was for this reason that I interviewed people who had been 'prime movers' in the EDA movement from the first time of their involvement during the Twyford Down campaign.

This is a very edited extract from a long interview. Having been previously involved in hunt sab and peace actions in the late 80's she was an already experienced campaigner and so, once connected into the new networks, she plunged in at the deep end, getting very involved in movement strategy at an early stage via her and others' appreciation of the need for something like Road Alert! Even in this very small record of the actions she has been involved in, the range, scale and intensity of her input is evident. How actions trigger each other off is also written into this account. Actions targeting construction company offices or AGMs are the natural spin-off from the protest at the construction site itself. These companies' involvement with other road schemes or other developments and/or resource extraction globally is unraveled, presenting further issues such as human rights to be campaigned over in their own right. It is these sort of logical progressions, tracing issues through effects back to causalities, which play a crucial role in the development of individual and collective cognitive praxis, particularly in developing systemic worldviews. During 1993/4, TARMAC in particular became a prime activists' target. Once taking action, activists are constantly meeting likeminded others with new information and resources. The explosion of action taken by the new wave of activists in the early 90's against a range of related targets is a result of the linking of issues and contact with other campaign groups through the initial taking of action at Twyford Down. This story of deep involvement across a range of campaigns is in fact not uncommon as the extracts below highlight.

-and so we started going to Stanford Valley [road protest camp]... when you go there you don't know anybody, you don't really know what's going on because nobody tells you ... the people who are really doing stuff are out there doing things and the people sitting by the fire pit163 offering you special brew[strong beer] but eventually I got to know people better... We were staying in tree houses. I learnt to get up, at first I was terrified of the walkways, absolutely terrified... and we went on the criminal justice bill rally that turned into a riot in London in Hyde park, remember when they crushed everybody. That was the first big hectic police confrontation

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[163] As discussed briefly in **ch1**, most (if not all) protest camps attracted what activists tend to call "casualties"- often people with severe mental health or drink problems. Dealing with these people, and "lunch- outs" generally (i.e., people contributing nothing but draining camp resources) places an incredible strain on the core camp dwellers. Not only are resources such as food and firewood drained, but the emotional and mental space is often very dehabilitating. Keeping on top of this as well as everything else is very hard work, and on bigger camps it was easier for "sorted" activists to retreat to their own spaces, often treehouses. Another downside was how off- putting such situations were for new people like Sarah who found it hard to meet the 'nice' people on camp. In my experience, many ' first- timers' were so offput they never came back. It is likely that getting involved in activism demands a certain amount of mental toughness as well as other factors.

I saw, mounted policemen running over people ... That was my first Oh my God they are out to get us ... then I went to Fairmile [road protest camp] *for a couple of weeks and went digger-diving and digging tunnels ... it all happened quite quickly...*

...then the Stanford Valley eviction happened ... I was one of the first people that they got, and X was on the walkway outside the tree house that I was in and they cut the walkway with an axe from under our feet and crazy stuff happened, they cut it from under her feet and she was just hanging, she grabbed the top with her hands because she panicked and she was just hanging and she was clipped on but she wouldn't let go with her hands and Y was going 'get some fucking tape' and I didn't know what to do and I was trying to get these loops to X so she could put her feet in them. They were up there with axes and knives the bailiffs... they just dragged me off but I got back up in another tree... it was all completely mad, completely mad...

[I was] *going from camp to camp with no break and no retreat... I am doing a lot less since I've come back to North Wales obviously because I am not living on sites all the time...*

It's a short step from sharing a joint with a friend of a friend to dropping out of college into the types of experiences described above, and it is a common tale. This is a classic activist journey from low involvement to complete immersion in a matter of weeks. Having talked above about the fun to be had taking direct action, which is often people's 'way in' to sustained action-taking, it should also be evident by now that such action is also hard work and often dangerous and terrifying, and as highlighted above, many peoples' first experience of protest camp/activist counterculture are less than positive. At the point my interviewee talks about sitting by the firepit, people less determined, shyer or perhaps even less politically/environmentally aware may leave never to return. In some ways, involvement is something of a lottery - first experiences could be crucial in determining future involvement in EDA networks, and this aspect of introduction to counter-cultural networks is severely under-theorised.

In this extract I have chosen to focus on one small part of this activists' story, to highlight one example of one eviction - thus giving a sense of what it means to continue to take such sustained action over a course of years. This is the sort of detail that rarely appears in SM theory accounts[164]. As discussed in **Ch 3**, these experiences of hardship can also act cohesively on

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[164] Resource Mobilisation/Rational Choice theory in particular really grates at this point. Activists are not making 'rational choices' over rewards - they are trying to achieve something, driven by moral and political imperatives, and often nearly getting themselves killed in the process.

groups, bonding activists together through shared experiences165. There have been plenty of times on actions and protest camps when I have felt that I was there as much for my friends as for anything else. Ties made during these kinds of conditions are very strong. Building communities, creating friendship ties out of shared experience is a key factor in sustaining activism, often strengthening resolve. Such experiences, repeated up and down the country, also serve to create movement praxis - appreciation of the State's power and how it is used, creating movement collective identity through shared experience.

-The next summer (1997) I went to the RTS, helped kick off the Hull EF! group and we even managed to get a Hull RTS together...Hull EF! took a trip to the BP Chemical plant open day, where we messed up their big media stunt balloon sculpture with a banner drop ...In the spring/summer of 1998 I spent 6 months living at Faslane, mixing concrete, painting banners, cooking, digging more tunnels, building walkways, and waiting for the eviction - it never came. Also did more proactive actions against the base including managing to cut a hole in the weldmesh fence... got arrested in the pouring rain on a blockade of Coulport (nuclear bomb store), using arm-tube lock-ons...Went to Kleine-Brogel (Belgian nuclear bomb store for US bombs), and got nicked twice in one weekend, once for leafletting inside an air show, and one for cutting a hole in the fence and getting into the US Air force living area (something like a charge of espionage)...went on the 'disgrace the base' action at Rolls Royce and associates, manufacturers of nuclear reactors for nuclear submarines, and the new load of cruise-capable submarines. got arrested for conspiracy to commit criminal damage ...So, in terms of tactics, it's mainly been bolt cutting, locking on, flyposting, a bit of painting and general pixie-ing...

This interview continues at the same non-stop pace spanning several years. It highlights in detail how much activists can travel about and gives a good sense of the amount of continuous and sustained actions taken by individuals. X also flags that he has undertaken covert criminal damage ('pixie-ing') - very likely minor damage to fences and property - as well as the overt, accountable fence cutting he undertakes through his involvement with the Trident Ploughshares campaign. As discussed in **Ch 1** and **Ch 2**, such covert action is a standard activist repertoire, part of activist culture and is "non-violent" - a primary concern is to ensure there is no danger to life.

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165 Without presuming to draw a parallel- obviously the experiences of first world war soldiers were infinitely worse- there is something about the experiences of protest camps (the siege mentality, the physical endurance, the

- I really launched out my first year at university, and was getting involved in stuff, we did the ICI action, started going to the Green Student network gatherings, and it was at that point going down to Twyford and really starting to get a handle on the political side of it all ... That was what started a very non-stop three/four years of my life...my feet didn't touch the ground really... Within the Green Group we had ongoing campaigns around the Nestle boycott, the Lloyds Midland boycott... and the M65 campaign started... I was much more involved [organisationally] with that...we had a farmhouse on the route and we squatted, and we had an office in the farmhouse, then it became mobile orientated, feeding into Road Alert and using Road Alert as a networking thing, and national press...always telling them... Then I got more involved in the genetic stuff... We were also setting up GEN - the genetic engineering network...

Such extracts vividly highlight the intensity of experience, and a feel for the numbers of people similarly engaged - as well as a sense of how much action was taking place in the 90's. This sort of drive is infectious, a sense of shared purpose. All activists mention the same major targets for action - primarily MNCs and other companies[166], and local or national State mechanisms - and in the last few years in particular the IMF and WTO as agents of globalisation The range of targets mentioned, the issues and the rationales for action, are incredibly diverse - only a sample is evidenced here - and whilst individual activists often have their 'speciality' (peace or GE, for example), as demonstrated throughout this PhD, all will get involved in a huge range of action.

Equally as important is the development of tactical repertoires as activists learn what works (and what doesn't). This is one of those areas where individual trajectories and that of the wider movement symbiotically overlap - individuals' innovation enables the movement to develop capacity.

1.2.2 Developing Worldviews

All interviewees explicitly highlight the learning curve they go on once they get involved. Basically this tends to mean thinking more strategically and getting more experienced tactically, and developing political ideas and understanding, making connections. This process of:

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personal risk, and the comradeship) which has always reminded me of the trenches.
[166] road construction companies were the primary target in the early/mid 90's. They continue to be a priority target for activists, in part due to their involvement in other (related) issues: Balfour Beatty, for example, which helped build some of the most contested road schemes in the 90's, is currently a key target due to its involvement in the Turkish Illisu Dam project. As I am arguing that as the anti-roads movement developed its systemic critiques throughout the 90's, one would expect a corresponding proliferation of targets and issues- and this is the case, with

Recruitment, involvement, action taking, developing worldviews through network ties, and taking action:

is repeated time and again. This set of quotes highlight the learning curve activists embark upon once settled into activist networks and taking action.[167].

-Well, when I was a teenager, I got involved with direct action on a gut reaction. It was just a fun thing to do... but as you get older you begin to analyse these things, and I've now come to the point where to me, direct action is important as an ideology in it's own right... slowly you peel back the layers you realise all the ramifications...

-Somewhere along the line, my thinking changed from the classically liberal position of seeing "injustices" in an essentially free world, to more systematic problems... I'm more aware of how difficult it is and how much more work there is involved (more that I could possibly imagine). And how scary it is likely to get, both at a personal level, and in terms of major social-economic-political-physical changes if we get anywhere near where we're heading. I think I'm more sensitive to alternative views, and take them more seriously than I used to, but I'm not sure of the implications of that... is it possible to take everything seriously, all the time, without it stopping you acting.

-I think I'm much more strategic about [taking action]... *now there are things I do that aren't empowering or all that much fun but its necessary and part of a strategy...and I think where I have moved as well is that I have a much more global perspective on the knock-on effect of my actions, maybe that's because we've* [the movement] *got more clued-up, maybe I'm just more able to take it all in...feeling that we're fighting global companies and industries, and whilst we have to act on a local real human level, we have to be actually thinking globally - the global implications of our campaigns. And as I start to take that on, those companies actually become less scary —and you know they are being hit in India as well - so that's where I've changed, thinking more strategically, looking at a wider picture...*

All the above quotes highlight that movement experience leads to practical developments in

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the targets of action quickly becoming much more diverse by the end of 93. See also **ch1.**
[167] The reasons why activists become more cynical, more sophisticated in their reading of (state) power, for

strategic thought, combined with a development of the 'why' of political action. The emotions experienced on first actions - in particular the sense of fun, liberation, of empowerment - do tend to become replaced by a more focused, less euphoric, pragmatism.[168] Further, it is hard to continue to feel as deeply as one does the first time a mature tree is felled in front of you - personally, unless I 'turn off' my emotions on this level, I risk mental breakdown. This is not to say that emotions stop being important - and all activists will continue to feel strongly about the issues they get involved with, but it is true that in the initial stages of taking action these emotional responses are great triggers, gradually being replaced by a sense of determined purpose.

The developing praxis on the 'why' of political action primarily comes with the experience of taking action - via the different settings and situations, and the availability of knowledge, information about issues, which contact with other activists inevitably brings. As discussed throughout, the discourse is symbiotically connected to the action, both combining to create movement cognitive praxis, movement 'frames', collective identity. This does not necessarily mean agreement, of course. The importance of movement discourse (in a range of settings) to the development of movement praxis is highlighted in **Ch 7** in particular.

1.2.3 Sustaining Mobilisation - Activist Communities

-actually have to say I have to work quite hard to have any kind of relationship with people who are not part of the movement...I find it very hard to form friendships with people who don't share the same worldviews...

The importance of friendship networks in sustaining individuals throughout their activist career cannot be underestimated[169], of course these same networks can also make individuals feel extremely alienated and unhappy, such is the human condition. This subject is covered in other chapters, so whilst an appreciation of activist community is essential in understanding activist trajectories, is will not be developed further here.

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example, is obvious given the preceding extracts.

[168] of course people also continue to have fun on actions later in their careers- many mention the 'buzz' of planning and carrying out a successful action. In my experience, especially when involved at the planning level of action as well, one tends to have a very good time and a very bad time simultaneously.

[169] See **ch3, ch5.**

1.3 Biographical Availability

I'm older ...I'm less impressed by macho behaviour on protest sites, and I'm more careful not to fall into the same trap myself. The groups of which I am part have also grown up a lot. Faslane is talking about establishing a housing co-op and has joined Radical Roots.

As discussed in **Ch 3**, activists at some point start to succumb to "biographical availability" (McAdam 1982). If they are to be what I would call "slow burners" - i.e., the smaller 'hard core' of activists[170] who bridge several 'micro-cohorts' of mobilisation, then at some point the nature and scope of action taken changes.

1.3.1 Pacing Oneself

Generally, activists become more experienced, more cynical, and - those whose involvement is lengthy - much more discretionary about what they get involved with. Direct action moves to being large part of ones' life, rather than the be-all and end-all[171]. It is significant that many older or very experienced activists move into (often) campaign-related (part-time) jobs[172] and 'pace' themselves, give themselves time to do other things. Other full-time activists who don't do this risk complete burnout and often drop out of action altogether.

-I've got so much less confrontational as I've got older and it is just so tiring, you can shout at someone all day and it doesn't make a blind bit of difference - its just falling on deaf ears...I did use all my energies up and started to slowly destroy myself by living on site for so long with so many difficult people and so the most important thing for me at the moment is maintaining my mental health and then protests have got to come second which is a distinct change in order... so things like a McDonald's action - giving free organic food to children ...has a positive effect which you might not be able to say about a lot of the more horrible scary nasty actions in a lot of cases and it doesn't do your head in. I am still up for doing things but in a completely different

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[170] Who possibly also tend to be 'prime movers'- i.e., those who take organisational and strategic roles in the movement

[171] Although socially, friendship networks within the activist community tend to remain consistent.

[172] Again, my own experience is relevant here- my involvement with academic research has enabled me to combine taking action with doing things for myself. Further, many activists tend to find employment or another focus outside activism through proactive ,self- started projects such as the educational eco centre MERCI in Manchester.

way.

-it's much harder to get me to do an action now, I have been let down having put trust in people...the fuck-ups and the sort of 'I'm not doing that again' are a learning curve –

1.3.2 Burnout

For some activists, "overdoing it" [173] signals an end to all movement activity - the 'drop off' rate after a campaign like Newbury is massive. For others, burnout, once experienced, changes activists' perceptions of action - they wish to sustain themselves in the long term, having realised that the world is not going to change overnight. For these activists avoiding burnout becomes part of an action strategy.

Yeah, I was really burned out for the best part of a year [laughs] absolutely. I should talk about how burned out I was after Newbury...

-I think I went mad a couple of years ago, after spending three months solid at Faslane. That is the time limit that people seem to put on an intense time there. Not quite sure why, but I'm sure it's got something to do with a mixture of the constant noise of traffic from the road, the mud, the nuclear bases up the road, with several nuclear subs and enough warheads to destroy several reasonably sized countries. I found it impossible to put any distance between myself and the issues that I was campaigning against...more generally, I think there's a lack of support for people's mental state within direct action, because people try and separate it from the rest of the struggle... I've seen a lot of people burn out because people think it is an individual problem, and also a lot of people come to Faslane with problems that they think this ready made community should sort out...

-I could not do any of the work, the computer stuff, I have a complete horror of 'weeks of action' I've had so many bad experiences, and I was so totally burned out on it all, I was tired and exhausted and needed a couple of months rest... because more and more people have been through burnout there is also a growing thing of 'we are all capable of getting too tired to do stuff, and if you're too tired then don't do it, because if you do and take some kind of leading

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[173] And simply being part of these protests counts as overdoing it!

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role then you will fuck up your friends', and you don't do that because we put ourselves in dangerous situations - dangerous in terms of being arrested but physically dangerous situations - and more and more I've heard people say that, just go home and rest.

I've burnt out, lots. I don't think I've ever been as bad as I was after protracted protest life during the Twyford Down campaign, where my burnout was related to the pressures of site life. But I've also burnt-out (or at least badly overdone it) several times by taking on too much campaign organization. There is a sense in which activists do "guilt trip" themselves - a more positive way of looking at this is that the moral imperative to act people have is so strong that personal considerations get ignored. Similarly risking life and limb, constant arrests, putting up with violence meted out by security guards and policemen, having no money are something activists put up with because they just have to – that is part of taking action. There is movement culture/collective identity surrounding burnout - whilst activist support networks are still pretty dire, the movement "guilt trip" culture is less than it was in the early 90's. Activists have grown up and movement praxis/practise has grown up with them. Activists will continue to suffer (extreme or less so) forms of burnout, but it isn't as 'glam' to continue to soldier on, martyred, as it used to be, though no doubt history will repeat itself.

Section 2: Activist worldviews: the 'why' of political action

-You know, a few years ago at the EF! gathering we might be sitting down and discussing how we could challenge the Government's road programme - that doesn't happen so much now, people are much more explicit that we're tackling an enormous problem.

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Do you think that ... everyone perceives this enormous problem, is that what we hold in common?

-Yeah, though the words that they would choose to use would be really different, different ways of articulating it...

-there are a lot of ideological differences, big ideological differences, but pragmatically, there is so much that is the same, that we would be stupid to ignore each other and not work together,

-there is a shared worldview in the movement of what is wrong with the world, and there is a certain amount of shared worldview of how to challenge it, and a smaller amount of shared worldview as to how to put it right...all the hypocrisy of these damaging companies...and the shared hatred of that, within the direct action movement there is this 'we've got to stop it, put a spanner in the works at every possible opportunity'- and I think in some ways that's as far as our shared worldview goes, and a general hope and belief that there are people doing proactive things, community housing, building things to put into the vacuum...

2.1 Overview

To say that people disagree with each other is something of a truism - people are complex, and are contradictory, often themselves providing conflicting opinions on the same subject over time, depending on context. It is incredibly difficult as a researcher to be 'true' to this without losing the baby with the bathwater, so to speak. Admittedly this PhD has not focused on lines of difference as much as it could have, to do so beyond a certain point would have meant a loss of coherence in terms of the PhD structure[174]. So, whilst acknowledging the massive divergences[175] over means and ends, tactics, visions of the future, as well as different perspectives and personal motivations over issues of class, race, sexuality, gender, disability, it is I feel still valid to also assert that, particularly in regard to framing grievances/systemic critiques, activists are engaged in a process of constructing shared meanings - a collective identity. Generally, direct activists share the same deconstructions of the dominant paradigm, arrived at through a symbiotic process of their absorption of movement praxis and their individual experiences. Some may be less well informed than others, all have areas where they diverge dramatically from each other, over issues such as spirituality and veganism, for example, or in the types of tactics they use. Yet in the main what is most striking is what these activists share in terms of the way they deconstruct the world around them and what they do about it.

2.2 "Organic Experts"

I firstly want to demonstrate how much people know about the issues they take action about, the

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[174] This is certainly a fruitful area of further research.

[175] Many of these points of contention have been highlighting in passing in the PhD. See also ch7 (as well as below

depth of activist knowledge. To use myself as an example, I started off my activist career knowing little more about roads beyond the fact that they were building a motorway through a very nice place. Within days I knew about the governments' road building programme, why it was counter productive, about traffic induction and Environmental Impact Assessments. I have since challenged schemes at Public Inquiry level on economic as well as environmental grounds, providing evidence and cross-examining officials.

Activists become (they have to) "organic experts" on the issues they engage with. And once they start linking these issues together, they become, in my opinion, "organic intellectuals" too. My basic critique of frame alignment theory and the concept of 'organic intellectuals' as defined in the 'classic' SM literature cannon (see **Ch 3, Ch 7**), is that such theories presuppose a movement elite, manufacturing knowledge which the common-or-garden activists take on board. I tend to disagree with the assumptions in this perspective, whilst firstly acknowledging that there are definitely people within the movement whose discourse is so clear, so knowledgeable and so inspiring that they stand out - and interestingly, often these are also people with the practical skills, charisma and drive to trigger mass mobilisations.

there are people at points within the direct action movement who absolutely shine, who really push the boat out - Helen Steel and Dave Morris - absolute heroes, pushed a lot of stuff and completely threw their lives away in doing it, but they're no more heroes than all the other people involved in McLibel and in London Greenpeace who were doing all the support and were printing and handing out the leaflets in the first place...

'Prime movers' (some of whom are heard throughout this chapter) probably do contribute more to movement discourse, identity and action than others. However, my basic point (concurring with the activist quoted above) is that it is the great majority of activists who *together* create movement praxis, trigger movement practise, come to deep and broad understanding of issues, through their direct action.

That [chemical] *side of the agri-industrial business is quite appalling ...you've got the direct impact in the environment, loss of trees, hedgerows, habitat, as well as the impact on the community, and then the pollution, and the pollution from the production of the chemicals as*

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in less detail) for activist discourse on a range of tactical and ideological issues.

well. It spreads outside Britain, the effects that it's [i.e. agriculture as big business] *having on farmers in the third world...and there its much more obviously a bid for power by these corporations involved - the 'green revolution' in the '70's farmers lost so much autonomy then to companies... corporations were insisting that 'you have to buy into our 'green' packages, this is something you have to do' - and not really giving people much choice... and people lose their ability to grow a variety of crops, lose their ability to farm in different ways, lose their ability to store their own seed, have to buy a certain chemical package... those skills are lost - communities fall apart...*[a chemical sprayed on rice] *was killing all the invertebrates which were living in the paddy fields, and one of the important things about the paddy fields was that there were fish there, and fish was an important part of their diet, the protein, so you kill off all the snails and suddenly there's no fish, and there's famine - it's the knock-on effect - it's unbelievable - I can't even begin to separate everything out, the enormous ramifications...*

-We were also setting up GEN-genetic engineering network... because there was so much information around it needed co-ordinating, GE goes into an area of very complicated laws in terms of the WTO, patenting laws, EU regulations, and there's also the science itself can seem very complicated because it's an alien language, it's an alien thing to people, they need good quality information before they're going to be able to act, it was going to need a lot of NGOs doing a lot of work challenging a lot of the academic press, challenging a lot of the laws and lobbying the EU parliament, it needed this massive groundswell of people doing lots of stuff to educate trying to pull the democratic process back to what people actually wanted for their food, question this whole thing, which was really questioning the whole food industry, there needed to be a lot of communication between all those levels...and I eventually produced this report which got called leaking from the labs - about GM micro-organisms – a whole look at that industry.. and I didn't have the background, you know if they said that they were using a particular virus then I wouldn't know anything about that virus.. so it was very difficult for me...because it was this whole new area that no-one knew anything about, the only people who did were people like the Health and Safety Executive ...now a year later I feel more comfortable that I understand things...

Both these interviewees displayed similar levels of knowledge on a range of issues, and my interview data is saturated with other examples. During my career as an activist, I have

encountered countless people in the EDA movement who have similar knowledge. Over the last decade, the amount of counter-cultural publications, leaflets, websites, action newssheets, reports[176] containing a vast and hugely-well researched body of knowledge, experience and ideas has been noteworthy, and it has been an amazing thing to be a part of. I have been involved in a myriad of campaigns and events where I have seen people take on board information, become very expert, create activist literature, talk to locals, give media interviews, make links to other issues, and act upon it all collectively. Admittedly dominated by middle class, white,[177] tertiary educated (or level) people in their 20-30's, the EDA networks are notably intelligent and knowledgeable. They are rarely portrayed as such by the State or media or by the companies they target. Activists also (for example) acquire social/group skills, become computer and media literate, aware of planning, environment and public order laws, they learn to think strategically when planning campaigns and action.

Whilst not everybody is engaged actually in researching the information, for example, it is diffused widely throughout activist networks and people find their level with it. Everybody is an "organic expert" to an extent, acquiring, producing and diffusing information, expertise, in a range of settings, round campfires, in front of computer screens, in police cells, on sit down blockades,. This diffusion of repertoires, ideas and strategies is taking place through the process of taking action and campaigning. Generally, action generates discourse, meaning production, the framing and linking together of other grievances, the development of better tactics, links with new allies, leading to more action[178]. This is what Welsh (2000) means by movement capacity-building.

2.2.1 "Taken For Granted" Knowledge

Whilst activists talk quite a lot about the issues involved, this is also tempered with a pragmatic realisation that one can be preaching to the converted, beyond a certain point, it is actually very tiring, very emotionally draining, to continue to rant into the night with ones friends about the

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[176] See **Appendix 2**

[177] Not forgetting of course the many ethnic local or international communities and campaigns which have strong ties to the main activist networks; Kurdish Illisu dam campaigners in London and Newport, for example. The 'inner core' of the EDA movement, as highlighted in ch1, is rather homogenous however. See throughout this chapter for different perspectives within EF, the dangers of homogenised counter- hegemony via the 'Tyranny of structurelessness' (Freeman 1973).

[178] When it's not all going horribly wrong, of course. See Ch5 for detailed ethnographic accounts of day- to day local activism.

issues. Of course in initial stages of mobilisation[179] it is precisely these conversations which generate solidarity and inspiration, however simultaneously there is an awful lot of assumed knowledge, assumed consent - "of course everybody knows that ..." McDonalds are exploiting their workforce/that roads are bad/that Shell is polluting the lands of the Ogoni people - so activists tend to take such knowledge for granted, often for the very good reason that people *are* aware of the issues and that the 'how' of mobilisation - i.e., 'how are we going to stop work on this site today?' has to take precedence. It is precisely because of the tendency of activist discourse to focus on the 'how' of mobilisation, with the 'why' being more implicit, that there is such an ethnographic gap in the area of activist discourse, which is what this PhD aims to fill. When pushed on the detail as during these interviews, or by recording conversations during PO, activists evidence that not only do they have a high level of understanding regarding the issues themselves, they also frame these grievances in a similar way, they share the same critiques. This then is the 'proof' of movement collective identity.

2.2.2 Defining "Knowledge"

Knowledge and expertise should not be rigidly defined as merely cognitive understanding of political issues. Understanding the issues is one thing - mobilisation is another. Activists also become 'organic experts' at - to take a few random examples - motivating people, planning actions, building treehouses, walkways and tunnels without killing themselves, the best way to stop a machine from working with your body, cooking for dozens of people on an open fire, how to 'de-arrest' your mate, how to destroy a GM crop, how to use samba drums tactically in mass demonstrations. Action repertoires are continuously learnt, re-learnt, are innovated, by people acquiring/producing knowledge through taking part. It is the acquiring of such skills which contributes in part to the feeling of 'empowerment' so often felt by activists. And without these sorts of knowledge, there wouldn't be a movement.

2.3 "Multi-Issue" Perspectives: Systemic Critiques As A Rationale For Multiple Action - Taking.

'lots of these different groups which are portrayed within the media as single issue groups,

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[179] It is possible that knowledge/discourse is more important/relied upon at the beginning of mobilisation, whether for an individual activist, or for a whole campaign.

actually are all about capitalism, - actually you can't just sum it up in that word - it's this whole system and mindset which is fucking up the planet. And it's bigger than any single issue thing, we need to show that we are in communication and all of these issues are linked up...[180]

2.3.1 My Rationales Revisited

I asked my interviewees why they took direct action, or more precisely why they had taken direct action over so many issues. Back in 1995 a major factor in me undertaking academic research was to highlight that activists had extremely articulate, systemic evaluations of a range of perceived grievances, often misrepresented (at least in the national media) as a series of "single issue" concerns[181]. Since I started my PhD, the movement has become much more proactive in openly declaring itself to be against the economic and social mechanisms seen as underpinning a range of interrelated issues.[182] Ethics and morals are also symbiotically woven into activist rationales for action –taking. It is interesting that during the Twyford-Newbury years, activists would refer ironically to "progress" or "progress culture"[183] when defining the wider picture they opposed. Implicitly, activists were critiquing a whole mindset, an attitude - an ethical stance as well as a structural, political/socio-economic one[184].

Given the amount of space given over to anti –globalisation discourse and action in the last chapters of this PhD, a small sample here will suffice to highlight a fairly general activist position regarding seeing their campaign targets/grievances as linked at systemic levels. Out of all my interviews, only one person failed (or did not wish) to make links to other issues outside of their key grievance:

I'm more single issue... that's why I don't get involved in GM crops 'cause I don't really understand it enough to get involved so I do feel like, pick one or two things and get involved in those. Actually it is quite a selfish thing, yeah. I like cycling so I don't want so many cars on the road. I see all sorts of reasons why there shouldn't be so many cars on the road but really the

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[180] activist in interview 2000 discussing the London J18 anti capitalist demo in 1999

[181] *"if we protest about one thing we're single issue- if we show how we protest about a lot of different things we're rent- a- mob... we just can't win"*- activist during PO 2000.

[182] and once again (as in the mid- 80's) putting loose common ground alliances (both on international days of action and at a local grassroots level)forward as a key strategic goal . Chs 6 and7 discuss and highlight activist opinions, strategies and action on the subject of globalisation in much more detail.

[183] McKay 1996, 1997; Plows 1997

[184] The subsections below highlight that ethical imperatives, the destruction of the environment and the abuse of human rights are vital dimensions of activists' accounts of the 'why' of action. Here the focus is primarily on the more purely 'economic' or 'political' aspects of activist systemic (and structural) critiques.

primary motivation is wanting a better place for myself.[185]

Usually however, activists have gone through a certain 'learning curve' of action taking, assimilation and politicisation as outlined in above sections. Again the movement's current stage of praxis is most likely to rub off on new activists, though the extent to which this happens is context dependant, varying due to a range of factors such as the group/campaign involved, geographical location, the make up of each individual activist[186]. Such cognitive cross-diffusion is also a result of (inter-generational) movement collective capacity building (Welsh 2000) or the process of collective identity (Melucci 1996). Again there is an interplay between the learning curve of the movement as a whole and that of individual activists, although this is too large and context dependant a topic to be able to do more than highlight its relevance here.

2.3.2 The Data And Analysis

-[my action has] *tended to be peace, anti-militarism, arms trade stuff. I think this is really one of the major issues facing us, socially, environmentally, politically, economically, emotionally and so on...* <u>*challenging militarism is a way of challenging the whole thing rather than seeing it as a single issue*</u> [my underline]. *But, unfortunately that doesn't always come across in the media coverage which is often too quick to reduce it to the simplest level... I hope that the campaigns I've been involved with tend to work a bit harder at making the links to wider issues.*

Other interviewees whose primary action focus is or has been animal rights, or road building, or GM crops, state similarly that addressing this one issue doesn't mean that they are 'single issue'. Rather, such an approach is often a pragmatic/tactical necessity, as I have argued elsewhere:

"...yes we have a holistic, 'multi-issue' perspective, but what are we supposed to do - split ourselves into an infinite number of pieces and campaign about everything everywhere all at once? Pragmatically, it is often best to focus on one issue and pull out the interrelated

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[185] Within the wider 'multi-organisational field' of the 'Green movement, there are plenty of groups and individuals with less radical, more reformist critiques which also have a tendency to be focused more on one 'single issue'. This is much less the case within the EDA movement.

[186] See ch5 for more emphasis on the locally- constructed character of framing protest grievances.

arguments from there... "[187]

Of course, the evidence presented in this chapter and throughout this PhD serves to highlight that generally activists *do* take action on a range of issues, even if (as is often the case) there is one issue above all others which they tend to mobilise over.[188] From my own experience, although I know that politically/ethically by focussing on road building I can and do address wider issues of: defining development, land use, oil, capitalism, the environment and human rights, I will still mobilise on other issues - GM crops, arms sales - because I feel that this also needs to happen in the here and now - I have a moral/practical imperative to act (or a sense of impending doom).

-I see all these issues as being so interconnected, I don't really see one as being distinct from another. I think the thing that joins them...some people talk about 'global capitalism'...It's a slightly lazy phrase we've come to use because it's an easy shorthand for what we mean - I actually think its more to do with the imbalances of power that exist throughout the world...I think we should...say there's a whole lot of social relations - it's the imbalances of power that exist in the world, where people, and non-human beings, plants, animals, and birds, trees, don't have any kind of say against the people who are profiting from their exploitation and its that imbalance of power that is the overwhelming thing...

This is an extremely interesting and useful piece of activist analysis. Whilst being highly aware of the economic imperatives underpinning many of the issues she has campaigned over, it is noteworthy how X resists the temptation to define everything she opposes in terms of economics, there is more going on than that[189]. <u>Power</u> is a key resonating theme for all interviewees:

-it has got to the point where the greedy/rich/powerful people can play with less powerful people's lives and not give a stuff, while completely wrecking the planet for short-term gain which results in long-term problems...

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[187] Plows (1998)

[188] Here emotion as a motivation trigger is key, as the following quote emphasises. See subsections 3 and 4 below for more on ethics and emotions. *"Yeah, I believe that people work best on the things that interest them the most, and that if you do something its better to have strong feelings for it or you won't do it as well..."*

[189] See **ch6:** a commonly- aired theme in recent activist discourse is that to define oneself as 'anti- capitalist' or 'anti global capitalism' is unnecessarily reductive, not very accurate, and possibly counter- productive.

-I think centralised power structures result in war, famine, mass poverty and power in the hands
of the few. Power destroys people...

Expressly saying that 'all these issues are interconnected' is a common theme in activist discourse, not only in these interviews, but generally in a variety of activist milieu. To protest about the cutting down of a rainforest is an environmental claim, it is an issue of human rights/social justice too, as indigenous tribes are affected and forced to move, often dealt with brutally if they try to resist. Protesting about a toxic waste incinerator has to do with environmental issues and also with social justice - the pollution being forced upon communities. Corporate complicity, the bypassing of democratic mechanisms, the way economic structures and institutions enforce such actions, are inextricably interrelated issues. In this sense all activists have an 'ecofeminist' perspective in that they resist intellectual dualism and separation.

-I think that's it a mythology within capitalism, this idea that you have to have economic growth,
because if you don't someone else will, and you'll be left behind, and therefore everybody has to
have economic growth...it's 'keep up with the joneses' syndrome, it's totally unnecessary– and
what is happening in the world today is that people in developing countries are at the bottom,
and to think that if they were more politically stable we could help them get there - that's so
naïve... I mean what happens when there's a minimum wage for everybody in every country in
the world, what happens when you can't produce Nike trainers for pretty much slave labour or
Gore-Tex jackets in the Far East for slave labour? Ok they're going on about these great Tiger
Economies[190] but at some point people are going to want to get paid a decent wage, and the only
reason these goods are cheap at the moment is that people are on a very bad wage, and terrible
labour conditions.

This basic socio-economic critique was reproduced time and again in my research, framed differently, using different examples or emphases, but the same basic approach. Current economic structures are quantified by activists as being economically, never mind environmentally or ethically, catastrophic, underpinning a myriad of grievances/issues. Interviewees[191] are also well

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[190] The 'tiger economies' bubble had not yet burst when this interview was conducted in 1999; more proof (if it was needed) of the intelligence and prescience of activist perspectives.

[191] Such opinions are also found in activist publications. PO undertaken throughout this PhD corroborates that such discussions are a standard part of activist interaction in a number of settings.

aware that 1st world dwellers (themselves included) are also reaping the benefits of such systems, though they tend to qualify this with a number of examples of how chickens are coming home to roost here too (environmental destruction, pollution, the collapse of agricultural industry, health issues, PFI and public services). The different issues activists get involved with are all deconstructed by them as being products of an inherently faulty economic structure whose advocates fail to quantify (in fact, go at length to hide) its knock-on or 'hidden' effects. Whilst (as discussed above) all interviewees who go into detail on this subject are dismissive of reducing their perspectives down into critiques of economic mechanisms, they all highlight how issues are blurred into each other not only ethically (power relations)or via cross-issue interaction on human rights and eco-risk issues (see below) but via the movement of capital and the Neoliberalist agenda.

I am not attempting to critique activist perspectives, but simply highlight what they are saying: what interests me is not so much whether their economic critique is proto-Marxist, but rather to highlight that my interviewees[192] are basically saying the same types of things. A key point to make is that activists are doing this without reference to 'big idea' texts such as Das Capital. They don't need to - they are deconstructing it for themselves, which I think is a key to how the movement is structured in all sorts of ways.

2.4 Related Rationales For Action

2.4.1 The Destruction And Oppression Of Human And Non-Human Nature

The data supplied in this chapter has already highlighted how intrinsic such issues are in activists' accounts of the 'why' of their action, and how these issues are interconnected together. That activists have an in-depth knowledge of how the systems and practices they oppose are actually having an effect on the environment, on people, on natural systems, should be evident simply from the accounts already given. There were literally hundreds of examples of environmental pollution, resource depletion, human rights abuses, species loss given by activists in interviews, and it was again – as discussed throughout - the sheer scale of what they oppose which made it incredibly hard to sum up.

-it's th e destruction of the natural environment, whethe r that's quarrying in the English

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[192] Again, this small sample did reproduce findings and perspectives articulated in my PO settings.

countryside, or the destruction of temperate rainforests in Canada, its actually the destruction of the planet that we live in...

- if we're not careful the human race will drive itself to extinction by completely exploiting the planet to the point where the planet dies...Equally, due to our lack of respect for the resources available to us, our extremely inefficient use of resources means we will use them up far faster than is necessary and then have to deal with a world that's turned into one almighty landfill...."

A significant number of interviewees - and this is true of my experience of activists generally - felt that it was simply too late, they talked about unquantifiable pyramids of chain reactions - GMOs loose in the environment, radioactive seas, heavy metals and toxins in the soil, climate change, poisoned water, soil loss, loss of biodiversity - meaning that Pandora's box had been opened and that prospects are bleak. Discussions of Utopian visions tended to centre around the fact that whilst they could imagine green futures to an extent, the prospect of planetary systems collapse was more realistic.

basically I have a vision of a really appalling future I am afraid, a really, really terrible future... [193]

Human rights and social justice issues again surfaced in a multitude of examples - Ogoni and Uwa tribespeople forced off their land by oil companies (Shell and Oxy respectively) Kurds in Turkey dispossessed by Balfour Beatty's dam construction, East Timorese civilians killed by Hawk jets and other military hardware Indonesia bought from the UK, Bhopal, the examples were endless. First world social justice issues were as relevant - the casualisation of labour markets and similar working conditions issues, the fact that it is working-class communities who tend to have toxic waste incinerators dumped on their doorsteps, civil liberties issues such as the 1995 CJA and 2000 Terrorism Acts. As discussed throughout, activists blur discourses on peace, environment/"green", animal rights and "red" issues. These are interrelated issues and interrelated movements and networks.

-these companies.. ... go and find some ver y poor people who'll just be glad of any little

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[193] Thus to mobilise in the face of a sense of overpowering doom is hardly a "rational choice" as defined in SM literature.

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carrot... [to be] the slave labour for some rich people in the West to have some cheap toys -and they don't want to do that. And then what happens is that those people/countries actually get put into blackmail situations by these companies which force them to allow them to be there... and it's just atrocious, you get people like RTZ absolutely destroying peoples natural environment, you get Shell in Nigeria devastating whole areas, and basically sanctioning the killing of vast numbers of people - the massive explosion and spillage of toxic waste at Bhopal-not just the immediate death of a lot of people, but all the long-term deformities - you affect the women's health and then the next generations won't be as healthy - tying millions of people to devastating lives...

2.4.2 Ethics And Values

-we might block a road, or hammer a sub, but equally important is the way in which this action acts against norms and values...

-I've tended to go for [issues] that get that little spark going inside, walking down the route of the Newbury bypass before work started, you know, the wood there – 'not in my name you don't - this is a beautiful place and I'm gonna try and stop it getting trashed'- I'm an emotional person...

The importance of activists' ethical codes and emotional responses cannot be overestimated. In interviews, activists refer to the moral codes, the norms of the dominant paradigm, as being a key part of what they are mobilising against. Again, activists are "challenging codes".[194] In interviews, as in other activist milieu, there is a strong sense of moral outrage which manifests in deep emotions, political discourse and the taking of action. This deconstruction and critique of the ethical stance implicit in structures of inequality and oppression tends to be a held-in-common aspect of activist identity. At the same time, there is also a lot of personal variety in terms of how individual activists choose to explicitly articulate their own ethical codes. For some this will be tied into some form of spirituality - often paganism, occasionally Christianity - for others, there is an emotional response tied into ethical issues of justice, oppression, exploitation but a resistance to framing their response in terms of spirituality.

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[194] The interrelation of ethical, moral and political discourse is notable.

It should also be highlighted that this is one of the areas where some activists are most aware of theoretical positions. It is also worth re-emphasising that individual activists (reflexively or not) blur between social ecology, deep ecology and ecofeminist positions. Whilst many interviewees were aware of reducing their perspectives down into concepts so general as to be meaningless (a worry I share), this is nevertheless the only way 'in' to this material.

...I guess my moral code is a hatred of oppression, a very deep sense of justice...a gut reaction to a hatred of the power relations that exist within the world and the inequalities which they create...

Basically, I want there to be more respect for the important things in life...like nature, the environment, life - animals, plants, people's rights...

Injustice, oppression, exploitation, inequality are words that resurface on practically every paragraph of interview transcript.[195] All interviewees are clear that they are opposing what Karen Warren calls a "logic of domination" (1994). There is a certain 'checklist' of issues, groups seen to be on the receiving end of this 'logic of domination' which again stays notably consistent between activists (whilst some will seem more important for individual activists than others - animal rights, for example). It is simply anyone, or anything, relatively powerless in the face of those with power, and suffering under/from socialised apathy, disinterest or worse antagonism, exploitation and attack. In a nutshell, the exploitation and oppression of animals, the environment, women, children, the global poor, the "other" are not only linked at a systemic, tangible level (i.e. through tracing the activities of a particular company) but also – symbiotically - at the level of ethics and values. Activists concur with ecophilosophy's general stance in emphasising that the dominant paradigm devalues much of what they hold dear. The slogan "people and planet before profit" sums this up well enough (and see 'consumer culture') below. Again, this is evidence of activist "joined-up thinking".

There are issues within the movement about the extent to which individuals or "the movement as a whole" reinforce oppressions which they either (mostly) don't notice or think are not as important. In fairness, many activists including several of my interviewees make detailed

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[195] see **ch7** for discussion on how this is true not only for interviewees but for all activist discourse I have ever encountered.

reference to this:

*-[activist] networks are also cross cut with forms of power-over and resistance within them.
Gender inequalities, informal and formal hierarchies, tyranny of structureless, divisions of
knowledge and labour. These both continue those forms outside the group (in the big bad world),
allow their expression in different ways, and possibly also involve the invention of entirely new
and novel forms of exclusion...*

*-In what I have felt, observed, said I am not able to agree that there is little homophobia (Bucket,
the camp dog at Faslane used to be routinely be called "Gay" as an insult to his masculinity.
This was a term of abuse less frequently used towards me, and other men) racism (So many times
I've heard racist jokes being made, black British/international visitors to the camp being
ignored/patronized). I would be the first to admit that I can't challenge this every time it happens
and often can't be bothered to talk to visitors, more likely if their English is not good...*

Whilst this is context dependant[196], and varies greatly from individual to individual, gender, race
and disability issues are dealt with less well by the movement as a whole **(see Ch 7)**. Certainly
this is an area where there is much difference and diversity in terms of activist (collective) identity,
and the gap between rhetoric and reality is large.

2.4.3 Emotion

Activists are motivated strongly by their emotions. Some kind of emotional, spiritual and /or
aesthetic connection to *place*, for example, is often peoples' first action trigger. Many of my
interviewees talked about their personal, emotional response to a particular place under threat
(Twyford Down, Newbury) as being a key factor in their initial decision to take action, and also as
being something which continued to have an impact on their decisions to mobilise. All
interviewees highlighted their "ethics of care and respect"[197] (Goulet 1990) for nature, for animals,
for people - as being core parts of their motivations. This was often - but not always - tied into
an appreciation of nature which had a spiritual dimension. As discussed earlier in this chapter,

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[196] On camps, the dynamics around these issues could change from week to week during periods of high activist
turnover- though this in itself was dependant on the dynamic, situation and attitude of 'core' camp dwellers.
[197] "out of an ethics of respect for nature's diversity flows a respect for the diversity of cultures and livelihoods, the
basis not only of sustainability, but justice and equity." Goulet (1990) 'Development Ethics' in Engel and Engel

emotional connections to other activists - ties formed under (often) extreme conditions - are also important.

These 'positive' emotions also mean that when activists deconstruct a perceived harm - the loss of loved landscape, the deaths of innocents in an Indian factory - they often have strong emotions of - for example - hatred, rage, guilt, frustration, anger, pain. Some interviewees resisted the idea that hatred was a motivation, choosing to emphasise that they were motivated through positive emotions. Most interviewees had a more complicated (possibly more honest) stance:

-I think it boils down to the fact that I get very angry...very often those emotional levels are there...I guess my moral code is a hatred of oppression, a very deep sense of justice...

-I have a hatred of the power relations that exist within the world and the inequalities which they create, I think that's probably what gets most people going... that gut reaction.

My interviewees displayed a moral outrage at what they saw as injustice, oppression and exploitation. This rage and anger is completely tied up with feelings of connection, love and respect. The EF! (roughly) annual publication 'Do or Die!' has 'with love and rage' on its front cover. Other emotions - despair ('it's all too late anyway'), fear – of nuclear holocaust, for example - are also key. In terms of the concept of activist collective identity, it is evident that again there is a general activist position which most people hold in common, with a massive amount of individual variation.

Finally, activist cynicism is a kind of anti-emotion - a deliberate strategy (sometimes pose) which helps people cope with highly depressing and emotionally exhausting facts and situations. This can be misleading for researchers with perhaps less experience of activist life. Activists also often take the idea that they all have shared emotional responses to events and facts for granted, and so often this is less articulated than its importance would indicate.[198]

(eds) Ethics of Environment and Development

[198] Again PO in various activist milieu throughout my activist /research career has highlighted that activists constantly articulate emotion when they are discussing facts- for example the fate of the West Papuans, or the moment when a certain oak tree fell. See also **ch7**

2.4.4 Spirituality

There is a continuum here, with an ethical and/or emotional but consciously secular approach on one end to spirituality on the other. When articulated, there is a fairly 'standard' activist spirituality, which I have described elsewhere as 'practical paganism'[199] as opposed to a less-engaged, apolitical New-Ageism[200]. Affinity with nature, landscape, is also bound up with commonly –held ideas about modern society's alienation from nature, again very ecophilosophy - based ideas.

AP: to what extent does your spirituality inform your politics?

- Completely utterly and totally... its not like a simple belief system, I don't follow a prescribed religion or spirituality but I feel, I think that Earth is alive its quite simple really, I think the Earth is a living being and we are like cells of that, its all aligned, everything is aligned and its all important and human beings... have lost the ability to live in harmony and that's what's gone wrong... we have separated ourselves from the web and I think ultimately the only way that any of it could possibly be resolved is either by us becoming extinct or people individually reconnecting with the energy that makes everything alive and understanding that everything is alive... I believe in the spirit of everything and the sanctity of everything

-developing my own positive relationship with nature and the changing seasons, sharing that relationship and knowledge with another bunch of people ...I remember...we were all physically and emotionally exhausted, and we went for a walk up the valley into beautiful woodland, with a stream, and X was like ' oh I do like spring water' and splashed it over his face, and we splashed it all over us– it was absolutely freezing in January, and it was lovely, you just felt you were lapping up that entire woodland, and this isn't some kind of clever religious "I must have this big belief in Mother Earth", it was simply that you were taking up the energy of the woodland, anybody could see and feel that, and we just felt loads better, and we just played around and splashed in puddles and came out of that woodland absolutely re-energised and happy...

-every single thing on the planet has a right to a reasonable life, the life it wants...I can talk

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[199] Plows 1995;1998; 2003 forthcoming in Directory of nature and religion
[200] As discussed, it has been an ESRC finding that activists often have some sort of spiritual drive. or have had a

about it in another sense, if I had to put a name to my... spiritual feelings, which are there, I believe that if you walk in the beach or if you walk in the woods then everything around you has it's own spirit, and its own existence, and that has a value - it has the right to be there

Feelings of interconnectedness are a common denominator and the links to political and environmental issues are evident. It is worth pointing out that something along these lines was characteristic of the majority of my interviewees' responses. There is much that could be written on activist spirituality and (where this was /is a factor in the context of different activist milieu) its place in helping forge feelings of group cohesion. For many women in the Twyford 'micro-cohort', celebrating 'goddess energy' was also an ecofeminist position connected to critiques of Christianity as patriarchal and anthropocentric. The extent to which such celebration reinforced socialised concepts of 'male' and 'female' aptitudes and characteristics was /is as much a debate within the movement as within the literature.

It should also be emphasized that a more explicitly 'spiritual' identity was a characteristic of the roads protest micro-cohort, and whilst individually these motivations factor in many interviews and in participant observation, the movement culture surrounding these practices has long been on the wane (**Ch 1, Ch 7**), although specific actions occasionally make reference to eco-paganism, for example anti-capitalist mobilizations in London on May 1ˢᵗ 2000 also highlighted that May 1ˢᵗ was also Beltane, the pagan celebration of Spring.

2.4.5 Direct Action As The Preferred Way Of Doing Things

The rationale for taking direct action as a strategy and a tactic to achieve goals is intrinsically connected to ideology. This is yet another area where the interview data gives evidence of a generally held position. Some common themes include:

General distrust of the state: corporate complicity: democracy a sham: unlevel playing fields and power imbalances: direct action as a preferred tactic/strategy over others, empowerment.

Direct action is seen as a way of reclaiming some of this power - getting the issues aired in public rather than hidden away in unaccountable bureaucracies, costing companies money[201]. Activists often construct themselves as acting on behalf of the powerless202/those less able to defend

religious family background which provided a basis for early moral and political drives.

[201] See below and **ch1** for discussion of direct action tactics- see also Seel and Plows (2000)'strategies of EF!' in Seel, Paterson and Doherty (eds)<u>Direct Action and British Environmentalism</u> London: Routledge.

[202] McKay (1998) raises the spectre that activists are being patronising 1ˢᵗ world middle class do- gooders. I tend to

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themselves.[203]

-it comes back to this ideological framework of feeling you have the power to go out and create the world that you want, and to challenge things through your own actions, and that's probably where people make the shift from perceiving the problems, to going out and doing something about it,

-the people who are controlling a lot of the scientific research that's going on are companies that have a vested interest in looking at certain things in a certain way, therefore when they present something as being safe...well you can't present something as being safe - you can present something as having a lack of evidence to show that it's not safe, and the reason that there is continually the lack of evidence to show that things are not safe, well it's because there isn't the money there to do as much research... there's always going to be new products coming onto the market, newer GE crops, newer chemicals... because it's totally market led

-direct action is a justifiable response...say there's going to be a supermarket being built on beautiful Greenfield land ...sometimes you need to physically stop them...people shouldn't take that lying down - what ends up happening often is that 4 or 5 people can end up empowering a community...saying if we just sit back and let Safeways build there, then Tesco's will come along

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disagree. Activists are themselves fiercely critical of such attitudes/approaches (similar to their well- articulated critique of scientific neo- colonial 'we know what's best for you' GM technology –see http:///www.primalseeds.org) which they usually associate with NGOs. Radical activist engagement with 3rd world oppressed or struggling tribal peoples is along lines of solidarity- 'we share the same enemy', with publications such as UK EF!'s occasional periodical 'Do or Die!' highlighting that the West Papuans, for example, are actively seeking help of those in the West privileged to be able to protest without getting shot (as a standard as opposed to occasional mode of State repression, I should add, post- Genoa)

[203] I once used an analogy to explain how the Public Inquiry system works. You are playing chess with your opponent. You move your queen to a 'check' challenge. They reply by kicking the ball into the back of your net- GOAL! Forget level playing fields. The moment you get anywhere they start playing a completely different game. It's surreal, unfair, and loaded. This is what makes Conservative councillors throw themselves over the razor wire on frosty mornings. This is why activists take direct action. It is the only viable option. I gave evidence at the A55 Public Inquiries in 1995 and 1997. The road (as the then Welsh Office themselves calculated) would induce extra traffic, meaning that the construction would result in more traffic and a raising of CO2 levels, contravening CO2 reduction mandates the government had signed up to. I contested the road on these and other grounds- issues such as economic leakage and other environmental impacts. I also highlighted significant flaws in the roads' Cost Benefit Analysis (COBA) mechanism. I did this as unpaid fulltime work as set against Welsh Office staff on a fulltime budget. As a 'member of the public' my voice carried little weight as set against Welsh Office and Welsh Development Agency (for example) 'experts'. The road was passed and is now built; it is significant that the Hastings bypass has just been rejected (Summer 2001) at Public Inquiry based on the same arguments I gave on Anglesey. The most remarkable thing is that Hastings arguments were listened to; many believe it was the threat of a resurgence of roads protest direct action which swung the balance. I would agree with activists when they

and build one next to it and so will Asda, and then they'll build a housing estate and more roads, and this continual erosion will happen...and although you might not stop that first supermarket being built you've given them such a good run for their money, you've changed the political scene, your local council, government or the company doing it, that then they say well we're getting a lot of flack for Greenfield building lets look at inner cities, which has been their response, you've achieved something...its made people start to think about these things .

Again there is movement dissent, and individual variation, on the subject of direct action - namely, is it one tool in the box or the preferred way of doing things? Most direct activists would say that given the unfairness of existing political systems and the weight of vested interest, that direct action is the only viable option. Some direct activists do maintain this very uncompromised position, but there is a gap between rhetoric and reality here, though, activists are pragmatic. If NGOs can make short term, compromised reformist gains, they are better than no gains at all. Thus whilst there is on the one hand a strong rhetoric of direct action being the only way of achieving positive change, many of my interviewees are actually engaging with the system even though they are aware of its limitations, or they are happy to support NGO campaigns at public inquiries, say[204].

2.4.6 Having Fun - Social Ties

AP: all the campaigns you've been involved in - what do you think links them?

-My mates [laughs] -it's very important, it's what makes you carry on when you feel absolutely down about it all, is if I stop doing all of this and move away from it then I lose a lot of my mates and they're too valuable to leave behind...

- I have an emotional reaction and I have an ideological reaction but I've also found it a lot easier sharing an action with people who I know have got involved with something because they know somebody...

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highlight issues of power and knowledge, and state that flawed systems are endemic in our so- called 'democracy'.
[204] Proactive, positive grassroots solutions at local community level (housing co-ops, permaculture projects in cities, alt tech), whilst clearly not what most activists would describe as direct action, are also central in terms of my interviews' strategies of achieving change; they are antidotes to the sorts of structures and powerlessness they

-I also went on the big M41 RTS that summer, which was wicked. No Trots selling papers, lots of sun, fun, children having fun, banners which were funny and colourful, lots of good music and good food....

AP: Why is the fun side of direct action so important?

-I think in part it's a reaction against the boring nature of much politics... this is going to be a long haul, and if I separate my "fun" into one bit (and space and time) of my life and my "activism" into another bit, and in other spaces and times, that's not a particularly sustainable way of going about things...Play is, literally, vital to our struggle. And struggle is vital to ... play.

Again, the same themes surface in different interviewees' responses. Key is the pragmatic function of support which social networks – friends - provide for activists engaged in high risk activism. Friendship ties and having fun on actions not only sustain activists during their trajectories, they are often what draws them into these networks in the first place, as the first part of this chapter emphasised. Again, arguments, cliques, alienation and burnout are also very prevalent within activist communities, which could explain why a lot of people choose to leave movement activity.

RM cost benefit approaches would no doubt use these examples as evidence that activists are getting something 'out' of activism which is what motivates them. And of course on one level they are - making deep and lasting friendships.[205] This is simply reductive, pushing an aspect of activists' "why" of action out of perspective. The rewards are tiny when compared to the risks, in any case it is hardly peoples' core reason for mobilising, and further many interviewees were consciously aware themselves of how such friendship networks had a pragmatic function in maintaining their activism. Trust is a key aspect of mobilisation, and planning and carrying out high risk action is more likely to happen, and easier to do, when doing it with people one knows and trusts intimately.

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articulate so well in interview.

[205] For many 'long- haul' activists, whilst many acquaintances are short- lived given the transient and biodegradable nature of protest activity, they also acquire long- term friendships sustained over many years with people who have been through the same experiences. I am no exception and many of these friendships are some of the most important relationships I have.

Another important point is raised about the interdependency of activist lifestyle/culture and political action[206]. One of my interviewees during an informal chat talked about how she often travelled to socialise with activist friends. We don't always talk about action and strategy, she said, we often just hang out and chat, and get to know each other better. This means that when we come to take action together it works really well because we have these levels of trust, we know where we are coming from, we know we can rely on people and know what they will do and how they will act.

2.5 Other Common And Important Themes Articulated In Interviews[207]

Whilst the above sections have covered a lot of key areas, there were many other important themes and issues which surfaced in my interviews which also tell us a lot about the "how, what and why" of action. Below are some more 'snapshots'. The reiterative detail again serves to highlight that such issues, and the discourse and action surrounding them, are commonly held, key parts of movement praxis and practice. However again, whilst there is evidence for a commonly held position, there is simultaneously a massive amount of variation and contradiction.

I have left the violence/non-violence discussions - a key part of all interviewees - to **Ch 7** where it is a key part of the activist discourse chapter. It was a major discussion point for all interviewees.

2.5.1 Creating Alternatives

Key 'common ground' principles are a commitment to grassroots decentralised democracy (often defined by interviewees as "anarchism") and sustainable development. What these actually mean, and how to get there, are much more contested. This is an area where the diversity and plurality of individual perspectives is very noticeable. Also, many interviewees' early visions of Utopia

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[206] I believe that the cultural/political aspects of activist lives to be so intertwined that it is completely counterproductive to separate them. I was at a party just after Sept 11th (2001) held by EF!ers in a rundown urban area of Manchester predominantly lived in by ethnic communities, mostly Asian. By the early hours it was swarming with "rave-y" kids from the local area. Its something activists feel very consciously, that their direct actions tend to be white/middle class. But their parties are often very mixed, due to the scene and the setting. It was a hedonistic party, but it will have political and tactical repercussions, lots of ripples. It could be some peoples' way "in" to the movement. It was also certainly doing its bit for cross- cultural ties at a time when racism, anti –outsider, anti any religion that's not Christianity- type issues were/are really key in general public actions and discourse.
[207] See also **ch7** for discussion of current activist discourse.

become replaced after a while with more pragmatic and achievable goals. Further, activists have to balance what they would like to see, or think should happen, with what they think is *likely to* happen, namely, ecological disaster on a massive scale, wars over water. Rather than talking about Utopias then, most chose instead to discuss smaller scale (more achievable?) proactive alternatives to the systems and structures they mobilise against.

-I believe that the power relations that exist on the planet don't answer our needs, and the only way that we can address these problems and our needs at the same time...is through a much interactive way of governing, which is governing ourselves, which is what anarchy means, a society which governs itself without elected rulers.

-My standpoint of this anarchist utopian vision, communities that are targeting the ability to sustain themselves in ways that don't require any money to be made out of it, in ways that everybody has equal access to resources but don't exploit them, these are driving principles in my life, that everyone has a right to the resources of the world, and those resources have a right not to be exploited.

-in the Peak District, we had this atrocious questionnaire recently basically saying 'these are the options – should we increase quarrying or should we increase tourism - these are the options for the sustainable future of the Peak District'- and I could come up with about 30 or 40 different ideas- farming the land in a better way, increasing soil fertility...somewhere along the line in the direct action I've been taking, from the campaigns and the discussions and the workshops we've had, the challenges we've set ourselves, we've got a lot of the answers, and obviously we're not communicating these answers to people because they're coming up with these really stupid ideas - we've not been very good at putting our fuller analysis across - people think that being green means that we've got to go back 300 years, that we are completely unrealistic, that we haven't thought any of this stuff through...and quite often because we are going straight out and trying to stop things, because there's such a bloody emergency, that we don't put enough energy why they shouldn't be being done in the first place...

It's a fairly standard critique of activists to say that they aren't very clued up about solutions and alternatives. There is a case to be answered here, as activists themselves admit - but comments

like the one above are a standard part of activists' discourses. Further, highlighting that the emperor is wearing no clothes has been a great achievement - credit where credit's due. Activists are currently getting the worst of both worlds, it seems to me, they have got the state/MNCs telling them their critiques are politically naïve and dangerous (whilst refusing to engage with the arguments) whilst the left/liberal establishment hector them for not being proactive enough, not having a counter-hegemonic master plan. This last somewhat misses the point, given that it is Western arrogance in presuming to speak for the rest of the world/the powerless which is what activists critique in the first place. Let's provide the forum for real grassroots global democracy - then we'll start to get answers, is a common theme in interviews.

-I would suggest that the question is more how would I like to have a say in what replaces the current system. There are over 6 billion people on the planet, most of whom are doing significantly less well off than I am under this system, whichever way you look at it. Maybe it's time me and my ideas, and ideas from the north/west stopped being so important...

Also, simply stopping all the unfair trade practises, human rights and power abuses, environmental destruction which activists highlight is a goal I myself would be overjoyed to see in my lifetime.

Plus, activists *do* focus on creating alternatives, although again this is an area where there is much variation and is context dependant, not only upon individual inclination but also on the opportunities available. Firstly, for all the activists I have interviewed (and again, this is reiterated in my PO), "the personal is political". 'Standard' activist lifestyle choices include fair trade, environmentally friendly and locally sourced goods where possible, communal living, vegetable plots and permaculture and alternative technology (compost loos, wind generators and solar panels). Squats and land and housing co-ops also figure prominently. Activists tend to be vegetarian or vegan, and few have cars.

-Every time I eat something I feel I'm taking direct action because I'm refusing to consume something which has caused another animal to suffer. The same goes for when I buy clothes - I never buy new leather, wool, and I don't like wearing it, but every now and then I'll buy a second hand jumper or something with wool in. The other thing is that by changing the way you live your life you're setting an example to other people of how things COULD be: cycling or taking a bus rather than jumping in a car

Some activists define these lifestyle choices as direct action - being 'part of the solution rather than part of the problem'. Others simply see them as a necessary complement to their direct action. To re-emphasise, there is much individual variation (a minority of activists[208] are meat eating, others are vegan), not to mention a rhetoric/reality gap and a fair amount of (for example) Mars bar eating and cigarette smoking, and activists are also pragmatic, using high tech climbing equipment, mobile phones and computers can help them achieve goals. It is hard to opt out of society and live a completely ethical lifestyle - to do so is a fulltime job.[209] So activists juggle these sorts of issues, and whilst there is a lot of difference there is also a 'standard' activist lifestyle[210].

There is a focus on the importance of sustainable communities and decentralised grassroots democracy[211]. For many of my interviewees this had gone beyond theory. Those in rural areas were/are busy establishing links and common ground between green activist perspectives and farmers over issues such as local production and consumption. In urban areas large grants have been awarded to activists setting up community centres and projects - such as MERCI in Manchester. This is an area where activists tend to work more with others outside the radical activist community - Green Party policy makers, alternative economists. It is worth emphasising that whilst some activists are anarcho-primitivist[212], many interviewees stressed that they are more 'realistic':

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[208] In fairness, mostly wild, free-range or organic. Many activists will also eat "skipped" goods thrown out of supermarkets- thus some vegetarian activists will eat 'skipped' meat. Of course, there are others who simply eat sausages, whilst acknowledging the contradictions in their behaviour... or not, as the case may be. What is true for the meat/dairy issue is also true for most others- supermarkets.

[209] It is notable that people who have chosen to live like this are then often criticised as "opt out" twee hippies with their heads in the clouds- see Pepper (1991) 'Communes and the Green Vision'.

[210] In terms of feasible alternatives one could ask to what extent such lifestyle choices are practical for the population as a whole. Again, I think this is an area where lifestyle issues have had a bad press. Housing co-ops are certainly an answer for affordable housing for young/low- income people. Alt. Tech- compost loos and solar panels as part of mandatory building regulations- would work to save energy, resources and reduce pollution. These things may not solve bigger problems like employment210 but they are a step in the right direction.

[211] Of course there's a lot to scuttle away from- would a true democracy really mean best outcomes? (if, for example, the third world wanted to have its coca cola and deplete its forests, if the locals in rural areas wouldn't give up their cars and voted –via their new democratic structures- to keep them). It's a fairly standard activist admission that whilst there is a lot of agreement on criticising what is *wrong*, there is less discussion and agreement on how to put it right and on what to put in its place. Means and ends come up a lot here, and this is probably the main area where there is a lot more divergence of opinions and approaches- "Eco-fascist" means or liberal Green ones? anarcho- primitivist or green technology? global standards or local variation? Does the current system need reforming or demolishing? A mix of all of it? To what extent in the ideal world there will be space for multiple approaches- means and ends, carrots and sticks211 - these are big questions, which is why many activists appreciate that they need others to think about these issues, and do not presume to have all the answers (but in fairness, they have some pointers) but rather would prefer to focus on setting up structures to achieve true democracy and hence best outcomes; achieving change in their local area through setting up a co-op, for example, and taking direct action in part to get the population thinking along a different paradigm.

-I'm not going to say that traditional methods are...I'm not a traditionalist, there probably is some scope for progress...

AP: Can you just define 'progress' here?

-Yeah, there's probably scope for making harvests more certain...for learning to grow food, and of different varieties so that you don't have famines. Famines so often results from monocultures... that potential [for progress] *does exist...but it can be done in sustainable ways...in ways which compliment what's been done already*

2.5.2 Attitudes To Science

-the knowledge that [genetic engineering] *was very narrow reductionist science, this was fairly across the board with a lot of the lecturers...that was quite an amazing thing to get from a bunch of academics...especially scientists*

-We pretend to understand what goes on in the world and call it Science, but really we have no conception of the total inter-connectedness of things in this huge ecosystem, and so have no idea what kind of impact our being will have on the world. We need to treat the world with much more respect, not think or act as if we know it all, and stop leaping before we look.

It is a common critique that activists are 'anti-progress' and 'anti-science'. Activists would counter that they are in fact quite rigorous in their scientific methods. Activists often use science themselves to query, for example, the environmental impacts of scientific developments such as GMOs and chemical weed-killers. My interviewees tended to define quite clearly what they meant by science when they talked about its shortcomings - and ironically a key point is that certain aspects of science aren't scientific enough - aren't methodologically viable, aren't independent as the research is compromised by vested interests, aren't examining cause and effect. It is compromised, reductionist science that activists critique, often drawing parallels with neo-Colonial attitudes ("we know what's best for the Third World and they need our GM rice"). Knowledge and power are again common themes - the privileging of Western scientists'

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[212] none of my interviewees were, however.

knowledge over that of an indigenous peasant farmer, for example. Activists tend to bring sociology and politics into science.

Such approaches mean that activists tend to have what they see as more 'holistic' approaches to science where cause and effect are identified and challenged, rely on herbal medicines more and self heal approaches to medicine generally including childbirth. Again the evidence of my interviews highlights a 'standard' activist position here. My PO shows more variation in terms of wider movement actions and attitudes to technology, when medical intervention is appropriate. In PO, by far from all activists make the distinctions between science per se and reductionist science that my interviewees do - but there again, we are back in the quandary of assumed knowledge and 'everyone knows that...' It is likely that if questioned as closely as I did my interviewees, generalised positions would be sharpened up.

2.5.3 Gender

Gender issues in movement collective identity fall into two main areas - a) the oppression of women (patriarchy)introduced by activists as part of their analyses, ecofeminist ideas, and b) gender dynamics inter-movement: rhetoric and reality.

2.5.3.1 Ecofeminism

- the oppression of women touches me personally...patriarchy is probably the most useful term for it, I mean its becoming blurred, because people are seeing now in the West that women are having more and more access to, say, governments, being the head of a corporation, but I'm not sure that still isn't a patriarchal structure even though there are women in it, because all they are doing is behaving in a way that men have done for the last 2000 years. Men have been at the top of the pile and now those women are having to behave worse than the men - there's no room for the rest of women, and the rest of the men as much as women... wherever you go whether you're looking at state, corporate, public or religious power which has been a significant force...you see men at the top of the heap...

-when ecological destruction is happening, it's often women who suffer the most... like the Chipko movement in India...it's the women who go out and collect firewood, so they're the ones who immediately perceive the destruction before anyone else does, and it affects their lives very

immediately, because suddenly they have no fires to cook their food on and feed their children, and that strand of ecofeminism is very important to me, because as a woman I would really identify with another woman going through that kind of hell, and because I would put it in a feminist framework, of the way that women are oppressed... There is some stuff I've read by Vandana Shiva that I question a lot, which is that women have a more natural connection with the Earth than men do, and I think that's probably a social construct. I don't think it's innate. I know lots of women who have no connection with the planet, no feeling for it at all... that's not a very useful perspective to take, that women have a greater spiritual connection with the Earth, and also because I think that that creates a hierarchy - it creates a hierarchy of women saying 'well, tough shit men, we're more connected to the planet than you are'. It invalidates their opinion, it invalidates the men who do have a connection with the Earth...

whilst all my interviewees talked about the oppression of women as part of a system of linked oppressions that they opposed, it is notable that it was the women who had a more personal/emotional connection to this issue. Several of my (female) interviewees had a basic awareness of ecofeminist perspectives, as evidenced above, and 'standard' ecofeminist critiques[213] of patriarchal , misogynist, and anti-nature discourses within Christianity were also common - these were also linked to body image and culture, knowledge and power. The above quote is also important in that a basic critique of "first wave" ecofeminism - that it tends towards biologically essentialist assumptions - is given (it was news to this interviewee that later waves of ecofeminist argument had made the same point). Several of my interviewees made similar points. . There is also a lot of awareness that black working-class men are more likely to be a victim of oppression than white middle class women - class and race are key aspects of activist analysis. Again these reproduce discourses within the literature (see **Ch 3**) which my interviewees weren't aware of - more evidence of "organic intellectuals".

2.5.3.2 Inter - Movement Gender Dynamics

I would like simply to let the following extracts speak for themselves.

-I felt that towards the end of my time at Newbury - I haven't spent much time on site since, only days or two - I was fed up with a predominance of very, very loud blokes, the feeling that it was

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[213] cf Mary Daly (1978) Gyn/Ecology; Lynn White 1994.

spiralling down on some of the sites I was on, to only being the women doing the cooking and washing up and keeping the site together, and that making me really angry, because I don't see why I should fit into that stereotype...

-It's a nightmare on site isn't it, that is why I left Manchester Airport because, it was like a big boys adventure...and there is a lot of that about really and people don't talk about it for the same reasons that people don't talk about it in everyday life because then you get labelled... you try and say this is out of order and you get labelled as like a whatever, a dyke or a stupid woman or whatever they want to call you... feminist is an insult...It was much nicer in the past... [but]Manchester Airport was just young lads - it wasn't for ages it was lovely but then it got this young lad testosterone-fuelled boys adventure park and they would take no notice of you, you'd be ignored unless you were really aggressive in your attitude... there was a lot of it at Newbury too...

-AP: There are men who are protesters who are aware of the gender imbalance thing, which predominates - is it tougher for women on site?

-Nobody is going to stop you doing anything, you don't have to conform to the gender thing of dressing up and looking beautiful and stuff, nobody is going to give anybody a hard time ...I suppose that's better in a lot of ways, you don't get hassle you don't get sexual hassle off men as much which is really nice and you can just tell them to fuck off and they will and its very safe on site isn't it, like if a bloke tried it on with a woman and was really out of order they'd get kicked off I think, they really would it just wouldn't be tolerated.

AP: So in some ways its better on site and some ways it just reproduces it.

-Within the protest thing I think there is an even stronger thing against talking about these issues because people are really not into talking about it, its almost as if because they've broken away from traditional society to be in this alternative society then it must all be fine and perfect and we don't need to talk about it anymore - we only need to talk about it with the enemy so its like them and us and we are all right but its just not true is it, so there is a stronger ethos against trying to sort these things out it is almost as if like oh that's not important because that's not

about action

AP: Which is why Greenham happened.

-Yeah right, which is why women want to do women only actions, I can totally understand that I really can.

As discussed in **Ch 1** and **Ch 7**, class, disability, race and sexuality are other significant lines of fissure[214]. Again it must be pointed out that it is possible to have widely differing experiences, and gender issues are a context dependant thing. I also experienced these problems at Newbury, but I also met plenty of old (and new) friends who weren't like that in the least. In fairness as my interviewee above highlighted, some things - such as the "anti-girlie" way activist women dress/behave, for example -are taken for granted. It's not all bad news. But there are movement 'waves' of attitudes (**Ch 1**).

Gender - like race and class - is an area where there much diversity in terms of movement collective identity. To be fair, whilst there are people who will be hostile to the idea that the movement ,or they themselves, has these problems (**Ch 7**) it is evidence of movement strength in terms of its structure that it is able to avoid atrophy, inter-movement hegemony and shift perspectives very rapidly.

2.5.4 Consumer culture

-I think we are a deeply arrogant society, that thinks it has the right to absolute luxury at the expense of everything else - I just see it working in the tiniest ways, as well as the really big ways, you can tell people a million times why, say, eating fair-trade organic chocolate is better for the environment, and better for people than eating a Kitkat, but they just think 'well, I want a Kitkat, and I'm going to eat it'... and that arrogance has pushed people further and further away from placing any kind of value on the environment and the lives of other people...

...however it's also the case that people don't take it in...it's so far removed from their own lives. I think we live in a time of the age of the short term gain and the short memory span, and people just don't examine what they're doing, they're thinking about the things they read yesterday...about how they're stood in the checkout and the kids are screaming, they haven't got much money so...they buy whatever's easiest

-we are living in societies which say that every single day we have to consume more and more and more ...we are continually pushing back the boundaries of what this planet can produce, generally more and more crap, stuff that doesn't make people feel happier, generally more and more stuff that allows for their life to get worse in many ways - cheaper nastier lager - a small point - but stuff that doesn't help peoples lives, doesn't enrich the world we live in at all

-Maybe I'm not going to get sold that particular deodorant, but I am going to get sold that image of a women in a suit jumping in a car on the go, doing life, got the tape decks, nice music, going to a great job, going out to dinner with a great bloke, going with her mates shopping, going on a nice holiday around the world, that's the life that I am sold continually every day, and actually we've been sold down the river haven't we ...Adverts are really evil the way we're kept blinded from seeing what's really going on, the social and environmental destruction at the other end... but we are convinced by adverts that we need this stuff ...

These types of views are a common component of mainstream activist discourse. Culture and politics are deeply tied together in activists' accounts. This is evidenced not simply in terms of activists' own lifestyles but in the way they frame their critiques about what is wrong with the world, or the West at least - the dominant ethics and values. In interviews, activists tie such cultural and ethical critiques neatly back into the ways in which social, political and economic structures condition or force people into consumer culture.

2.6 Conclusion

This chapter has provided an ethnographic overview of the 'what, how and why' of the UK EDA movement. Major PhD themes and hypotheses are proven through the ethnography given in this chapter: activists are consistently shown to have complex, 'multi-issue' rationales for taking action, they tend to develop these perspectives through the process of mobilization and involvement in activist networks - namely taking action leads to a development of discourse (worldviews) and further action taking, and there is a general activist 'collective identity' regarding the 'why' of action, with all provisos on the issue of diversity and disagreement already discussed. How and why mobilization takes place, and under what circumstances, are again core thesis themes which are outlined in this chapter through the interview data.

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[214] See ch7 for attempts inter-movement to confront these issues.

The interviews conducted have provided evidence of a pattern of "the life cycle of the activist", mapping what seems to be a common story, a tendancy to be predisposed to act, via early socialization, recruitment into activist networks, and immersion within them, with this latter period usually involving extremely high levels of action before activity either drops off completely or slows down. Theories of recruitment discussed in **ch3** (Jasper 1999, McAdam 1986) have thus been proven to match ethnographic accounts, similarly SM theories which discuss the nature of activist culture and the ways in which activists take action (social networks - Diani 1992), can be seen to be effective theoretical tools. Importantly, the ethnography provides hard evidence of how movements - and the EDA movement in particular - are shaped through the 'life cycles' of the activists of which they are made up.

The ethnographic accounts given also shine a torch onto the murky area of what action has actually been taken by the semi-submerged networks which comprise the EDA movement in the 1990's, while evidence presents itself through activist publications such as the EF! Action Update and *Schnews*215, generally –speaking activity in the form of specific mobilizations is indiscriminately covered by the media and there is also relatively little detailed ethnographic study. This chapter, and the thesis as a whole, contributes to filling the knowledge gap regarding the 'what and how' of action, so that more information about this fast changing movement can be documented before the many mobilizations of the 1990's, and their specific character, are covered by the sands of time. Again, mapping activists' rationales for the action they have taken has highlighted that they have extremely complex and well developed reasons for mobilizing, which blur between strategic, emotional, structural and (reflexively, often) less 'political' ("having fun with mates")216 accounts, and also that a case can be made for an 'activist collective identity', with core frames which generally remain consistent in different activist accounts. These are again important ethnographic findings which corroborate PhD hypotheses about what motivates activists to mobilize, as well as contributing to ongoing theoretical debates about the existence and nature of activist collective identity (Melucci 1996).

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215 The ESRC project undertaken by myself and Drs Doherty and Wall did quantitative analysis of activist publications in the 1990's, using this as one method of comprehensively mapping levels of action taken, activists' primary grievances and the forms of action used.
216 Though as stressed throughout, these social aspects are an intrinsic and essential part of mobilization- if people didn't have social network support systems, they wouldn't be mobilizing at all.

Chapter 5: Case Study - Gwynedd and Mon EF!

Section 1: Introduction

1.1 Methodological Note

The data in this chapter consists primarily of PO of the Gwynedd and Mon EF217! group between November 1999 and April 2001. PO and "auto-ethnography" (Roseneil 93) of G+M EF! undertaken by myself since 1995 is also made use of. Life history interviews with local activists were also conducted.

Welsh language activism and activist communities provide the predominant characteristic of radical action in North Wales[218],[219] with numbers of activists and supporters, and quantities of action far outweighing that taken by eco-activists. As is discussed below, there is - has been much crossover between these two activist communities, with the tradition of Welsh NVDA influencing the nature of eco-activism and vice versa. The importance of Welsh language and related action is not proportionally represented in this chapter, which is primarily focused on the community of eco-activists, and thus discusses Welsh Language activism from this perspective.

1.2 Case Study- A Rationale.

It is important to stress here that this chapter is more concerned with the 'how' than the 'why' of action, though of course the two are inextricably interconnected[220]. With this proviso, this chapter is focused mostly on mapping, and analysing, the more external circumstances which in a number of ways prefigure and contextualise what action is taken, with whom, and under what

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[217] Referred to throughout chapter as G+M EF!

[218] After the period of PO used for analysis in this chapter- i.e. in 2001/2002, Welsh Language and related activism in the form of a new movement-Cymuned- coming out of the ashes of the more dormant Cymdeithas y Iaith- has flourished, whilst EF! networks have experienced a low point of mobilisation.

[219] For the purposes of this PhD 'North Wales' is North-West Wales- the counties of Gwynedd and Anglesey. Bangor is at the 'epicenter' of this study. Very occasionally, action is mapped/discussed outside of North West Wales- specifically, North East Wales along the A55 corridor. (The furthest direct action mapped is the GM crop rally in Flintshire in 2000). Geographically this covers quite an area- the rationale being that this is the area activists themselves would see as 'local' enough to concern them. 'Eco'-activists (Gwynedd and Mon Earth First!) themselves are scattered throughout this district, with a predominance in the villages surrounding Bangor. The majority of eco- action mapped tends to be in Bangor and its immediate surroundings. The North Wales direct actions of Cymdeithas y Iaith (the Welsh Language Society) tend to have Caernarfon (Gwynedd) as a focus for action but it should be emphasised that this is far from exclusive. Bangor and Llandudno (Gwynedd) are also common sites of Cymdeithas action.

[220] Other researchers acknowledge this blurring: Roseneil (93) uses the term 'meso' level; Wall (99) uses Roseneil's term with the same rationale 'under what circumstances, how, and why, is action triggered/sustained', many factors, both micro and macro, ideological and structural, individual and collective are relevant.

circumstances. As discussed, the EDA movement is made up of a series of networks, in a continuous process of flux and change. It is hard to make grand claims for being able to map what is going on at all effectively. Given the range of diversity in terms of voices, ideologies, strategies, networks, campaigns which comprise the EDA movement it is impossible to do justice to the mapping process in terms of recording in-depth detail at the national level. Hence the rationale for this case study of G+ M EF! Studying the local character of one the many small networks which help to make up the wider EDA movement, supplements the generalised picture of the movement as a whole presented in this PhD[221].

- This helps to balance out the PhD methodologically by focusing attention in detail on one area, complementing the rather scattered, or 'thin' ethnographic snapshots of the bigger picture. The types of actions taken by G+M EF! can be recorded in detail.

- The more in–depth analysis at the local level will allow, through triangulating results here with other ethnography collated, for some further extrapolation on some of the theories, ideas and themes highlighted throughout the PhD.

- The extent to which at the local level activism is affected by contexts such as geography, pre-existing alliance patterns and social networks, local variations in POS, can also be mapped. Thus it is possible to identify both similarities and differences in terms of identities and strategies amongst local activists as compared to the generalised 'national' picture. Of course, the fact that such localised variations in networks occur and can be mapped provides us with a clearer picture of the sort of complexities of which the EDA as a whole is comprised. Similarly, other PhD research has focussed on specific protest camps, Seel 2000 on Pollock (Glasgow) and North 1999, on Salsbury Hill (Bath).

- Further, it is possible to investigate what ties exist between radical activists and other political groups. My research has highlighted that there are considerable overlaps and ties between EDA groups and other political or social movement groups. The interaction

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[221] Studying the characteristics of local activist networks our team gave similar rationales: *"The first reason for this is because there is no single organisation or formal national co-ordinating structure for this movement. Instead, it is a network of groups based in local areas, some calling themselves Earth First! groups, others with different names, but sharing a common identity, form of action and linked by network ties...Personal ties and solidarity based on common participation in protest actions over the past nine years have created strong bonds between activists from different areas. The separateness of local groups is also blurred by the movement of individuals between local areas. But, despite this the national community of activists does not have the regular face-to-face interaction that characterises the local groups. Moreover, most action is carried out by local groups, either in their own locality or travelling together to join in national actions. Thus local activism and local communities of*

activists have with other groups, campaign networks, and individuals - the (often) biodegradable alliances and coalitions - is of crucial importance. Repertoires and ideas diffuse 'sideways' as activists make contact with others. Mapping the extent, circumstances and nature of crossover between local EF! activists and other networks, social actors, is important for a number of reasons. First, it is useful simply to map what is going on - ethnography is important in its own right. Secondly, this case study highlights very dramatically that the boundaries of this 'movement' are very blurred, and this diffusion works both ways, direct activists, often through working with more 'conventional' actors, have more to do with conventional strategies and tactics (such as giving evidence at Public Inquiries, for example, or standing as Green candidates in local elections), than is often recognised. The pros and cons of such coalitions are discussed. Crossover over time - between activist generations as well as across networks - has also been mapped.[222] By discussing the past through the lens of the present, theories about the diffusion of tactical repertoires of action, the process of constructing movement collective identity over time, through action, can be examined in more detail at this local level. Inter-generational diffusion of protest repertoires, strategies and common themes in activist worldviews mapped at the local level in case studies like this can enable us to see how these local processes diffuse into, and reflect back upon, the national movement more clearly.

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activists still have a distinct space ". Doherty et al 2001 ibid.

222 Mapping the extent of crossover between activist generations was a key aspect of the ESRC project: "Research on continuities between generations of activists is one of the most promising elements of social movement research since, as Whittier's (1995) research on feminist activists in Columbus Ohio shows, it can provide useful evidence about changes in identity and how movements or activist communities are sustained over time. Other research on continuity is based upon establishing that there were previous examples of similar forms of action, or cultural expressions, rather than on direct ties between activists. McKay (1996, 1998) has criticised those among current EDA networks who fail to recognise the importance of their immediate heritage in counter-cultural free festivals and other counter-cultural traditions of the 1960s-1980s. Welsh has emphasised the importance of collective capacity building (Welsh 2000) in assessing the long-term effects of direct action networks. Beginning with his analysis of the small-scale non-violent direct action (NVDA) carried out by Torness Alliance and similar groups in the late 1970s in Britain, Welsh shows how many of the organisational forms, such as the commitment to non-hierarchical and consensual forms of working, and many of the debates, such as the politics of gender in protest camps, and differing views on the justification of violence were very much the same in the 1970s as they are in the current EDA. Welsh attributes the increase in direct action protests in Britain (on which see Doherty 1999, Rootes 2000) to two factors, first, the diffusion of protest repertoires through 'civil associations', in which direct activists and other social groups work together and second the increasing sense that national governments are incapable of resolving national political problems, a point that has more general application than just to Britain ". Doherty et al ibid 2001.

1.3 Brief Theoretical Outline

As discussed in **Ch 3**, several theorists have highlighted the importance of activist/social networks in initiating and sustaining mobilisation. It is also important to acknowledge the influence of available resources, or lack of these resources, on activism. These are resources such as people, information, facilities, transport, money, media and other contacts - for example, the internet is both a resource for, and a network of, activists. POS is another useful theoretical tool here, i.e., the Welsh Assembly, as well as more locally Gwynedd Council, are background factors also affecting activist mobilisations, alliance patterns. Again, it is the *issues themselves* ("Issue – Opportunities"- see **Ch 3**) which activists choose to mobilise over which play a very telling role in determining (for example) whether mobilisation is triggered, on media and public responses, shaping alliance patterns.

Section 2: Setting the Scene

2.1 Socio-Economic Background

The counties of Gwynedd and Mon (Anglesey) in North West Wales are rural, largely Welsh-speaking and one of the heartlands of Welsh nationalist politics. In the 1991 Census 73 % of the population of Gwynedd and 63% of the population of Anglesey were Welsh-speaking. In Gwynedd Welsh is the main medium of instruction for 94% of primary school pupils.

	Gwynedd
Population (1997)	118,000
Persons per Sq Km	46
Average Weekly Earnings (1998)	£316
% of adult pop claiming income support (1999) – state benefit for poorest of population.	No Figs
% of single parent households (1998)	No Figs
New Housing Starts	155 (1997)
GDP per head (UK=100) 1996	68

Table 1. Socio-Economic Profile of North-West Wales [223]
Sources: Matheson and Holding, Regional Trends 34 (1999) and Statistical Service for the Welsh Office (1998)

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[223] Data taken from ESRC project with permission of Dr Brian Doherty and Dr Derek Wall

As will be discussed, the socio-economic picture shapes the action taken by G+M EF! and the wider activist community.

2.2 North Wales Activist Community

North Wales is a sparsely populated rural area (see *Table 1*) and consequently there are fewer EDA activists than urban areas because there are simply fewer people in the area. Most activists are clustered in the Bangor area, either in Bangor itself or in the many outlying villages within say a 10 mile radius. Some are scattered further afield. Whilst the rurality of the area makes socialising harder (and reliance on public transport is also a key factor here), North Wales EF!ers do tend to have strong affective ties to each other and to socialise outside campaign activity. The counter-cultural 'hippy' and rave scene, combines, with climbing/outdoors activity, and the social facilities provided by the Student Union, to provide a vibrant social scene. Music, art and permaculture/land use projects are common social and work hubs. The Greenhouse, the resource centre set up by campaigners in Bangor in the late 70's, continues to provide a focus for activists but over the years its role has changed (mostly through the necessity of self-financing) to that of primarily providing NGO office space rather being than a place where activists 'hang out' much any more.

2.3 A Brief History Of Direct Action In North Wales Since The 1960's

The early sixties saw a proliferation of direct action and radical campaigning in North Wales, most notably Cymdeithas y Iaith[224], (the Welsh Language Society) established as a formal direct action group in the early sixties. Direct action (in particular the stealing of road signs which were only in English) was from the outset the preferred strategy to achieve the group's primary goal of legal recognition for the Welsh language. Interestingly, most direct action was a) fairly minor criminal damage and b) accountable, with the court appearances enabling discourse about the issues to be heard 'formally' in court (like much peace movement NVDA (non-violent direct action) later on.

[224] The history of Cymdeithas y Iaith in North Wales appears in this history of activism in a very shortened version which doesn't do justice to it's political and cultural significance. Such a topic is beyond the scope of this chapter, which has as its central focus the present and recent past of local eco-activists. (This is also the focus of the ESRC project; however there more attention is paid to the personal biographies of Cymdeithas activists, several of whom were interviewed for the project- also there is more space to focus on the extent of crossover between networks of activists in past decades as well as now). In terms of the project and this chapter, I am aware that by focussing on the history and current mobilisation of eco-activism in north Wales, and addressing the history of Cymdeithas in terms of its influence on eco-activism, I am presenting a skewed perspective- that the many direct actions undertaken by Cymdeithas over the decades are not given the prominence they deserve in terms of the bigger political picture.

Mass rallies were also a common feature. The 1961 flooding of Trewerin village, near Bala, for a dam to provide water for Liverpool, was a major catalyst for Cymdeithas action and also led to the setting up of more radical Welsh nationalist groups.

Cymdeithas y Iaith initiated a 'wave' of direct action in North Wales and throughout Wales generally, and the 60's and early 70's were a time of sustained and frenetic action. Very differently from the more 'anarchic', decentralised direct action eco-groups of the 90's, Cymdeithas has always had a very formal, hierarchical, structure - actions and long term strategies are planned in advance and decided predominantly by an elected committee. It should be pointed out that the direct action undertaken by Cymdeithas has achieved some of its goals, at least in part[225]. The Welsh language has better legal recognition and status - there is a Welsh language TV channel. The other important campaign network in North Wales during this period (70's/80's) was CND. The crossover between Cymdeithas and CND activists was considerable[226] and the radical Methodist/Christian connection again fed into both networks. The Welsh music scene was a site of social and political crossover[227]. In the mid/late 70's an influx of English hippies into North Wales and especially Bangor established new counter-cultural networks.

New political discourses, most importantly feminism, were to the forefront and the 'scene' of soft drugs/communal living/squats/whole foods/music blended with the more overtly 'political' campaign issues of the time - predominantly feminism and opposition to nuclear energy, with peace issues becoming important in the 1980's. This new wave of political entrepreneurs and 'heads' made for an interesting mix on the North Wales scene as they squatted houses in local villages, planned music festivals and set up food co-ops. Crucially, this new wave of activists set up the Greenhouse - a resource centre still running today - and various campaign groups had office space there, including Cymdeithas y Iaith for a time as well as SUSTRANS (campaigning for national cycle routs and a sustainable transport network). Welsh classes were also run (they still are) from the centre. In terms of political/campaign activity, peace/anti-nuke/CND was probably the main crossover interface between the Welsh activists and the English ones[228], and the

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[225] Whilst Cymdeithas activists acknowledge their gains in interview, current campaigns for new Language Acts and Property Acts draw attention to deficits in the existing legislation which activists feel continue to undermine their language and culture.

[226] I.NW interviewed about this period was active in both networks and recalls much active interconnection)

[227] In interview I.NW and B.NW both flag the 'cool', politicised music scene as a fun, vibrant and essential aspect of this counterculture.

[228] B.NW speaking at the Feb. 2001 Cynefyn y Werin conference (theme: Wales and Globalisation) about direct action in North Wales made the same point. Interestingly she also felt that more general network crossover in terms of finding ' common ground' to mobilise on was really taking off now and that attempts (outside of shared campaigns such as CND) to do this in earlier decades were ' ahead of their time'

shared interest in /involvement with the music scene facilitated social crossover. In the late 70's there were over a dozen local CND groups in the locality. But while there was undoubtedly political and social crossover the social networks seem to have generally remained separate, language and culture, and possibly the difference in organisational structure (Cymdeithas as a 'closed ties' network), being hard bridges to gap.

Network crossover also occurred during Greenham Common when women from all networks went to Greenham together on hired coaches. During the early/mid 80's PAWB- People Against Wylfa B, a campaign against the second nuclear power station proposed for Anglesey- ran its campaign from the Greenhouse. This was a successful campaign - Wylfa B was shelved. Cymdeithas activists continued to take direct action in the 80's but all networks appear to go through a more 'dormant' phase during the late 80's/early 90's. Interviews show that older activists moved into NGO campaign activity. A prominent animal rights activist was unable to catalyse direct action mobilisations when he arrived in Bangor during this time.

In 1993, seemingly inspired by the eco-direct action 'wave' happening in England, students at Bangor university and others set up an Earth First! group - Gwynedd and Mon Earth First! and started taking small direct actions about issues such as mahogany in DIY stores. Generally, North Wales is one of a number of locations in which there has been fairly consistent activity throughout the 90's - present day from a smaller group of (eco)activists – such as Cambridge, Nottingham, Totnes (Devon), South Somerset, Lancaster, York, Guildford, Exeter, Warwick and Swansea. Again initially comprised of people from outside the area, over the years G+M EF! has attracted people with local ties. Approximately a third of the current group (2001) are local Welsh speakers. Numbers of activists have varied up and down throughout the 90's, but have averaged a group of about 10 who can always be counted on to get involved with campaigning and taking action, with another 10-20 more 'casually committed' people and friends of activists who will get involved in different ways at different times. (As would be expected, numbers and levels of commitment went up during Brewery Fields, when the camp attracted a lot of local support across a cross-section of the community. Occasionally, actions such as 'Critical Mass' and the opening of McDonalds' attract larger numbers of otherwise 'dormant' activists). Throughout the mid 90's the group held a number of small actions (many people during this period were spending time outside of Wales on protest camps such as the M65 and Solsbury Hill), using the Greenhouse as a network centre.

In the mid nineties, the rave/free party scene took off, with regular outdoors raves

attracting hundreds of people who benefited (at least initially) from the fact that North Wales police were more tolerant than their Southern English counterparts who were keen to implement the new powers ascribed to them under the Criminal Justice Act (1994). Whilst many ravers and travellers[229] were from England, the North Wales rave scene was also very 'homegrown'. Second generation hippy kids, children of the first wave of English hippies who had stayed in the area, were at the forefront of the local rave scene as were other local Welsh youth. North Wales police had become more draconian by 1997, and the number of free parties declined.

The main campaign focus from 1994 onwards was the proposed greenfield housing development at Brewery Fields. Early EF! activity catalysed the residents into action and EF! NVDA and the more 'traditional' campaigning of the residents sat side by side. Action crystallised during Spring 1998 when the first plots of land earmarked for development were squatted at the last minute and a camp set up. Eventually evicted, the protest forced the council to compromise - a percentage of the land was saved for a nature reserve. This camp, which attracted much publicity, did much to establish EF! as a local, communityn orientated campaign group in the area and probably was crucial in helping to pave the way for the network crossovers of the past few years. In 1997 the animal export blockades in the South of England spread to North Wales and local/national animal rights activists blockaded animal exports at Holyhead, an action repertoire which would be ironically used by the farmers themselves with a very different rationale a few years later.

The EF! national summer gathering was held in North Wales in 1996, and whilst there was involvement with other local campaign groups who were invited to the gathering by local EF!ers, in general the gathering was much less well networked - into the local area as compared with the second 'hosting' of the gathering in North Wales in 2000, which had Welsh classes, bilingual literature, and workshops by Cymdeithas y Iaith as an integral part of the event. Given the national picture in 2000 (see **Ch 6**), it is significant that a 'new wave' of coalition actions against 'common enemies' was also being initiated in North Wales. Previous to this, crossover ties between EF! activists and other local networks remained minimal. (As with earlier generations of local activists, peace being a major crossover - the North Wales 'Stop the Hawks!' campaign run in the early/mid 90's by local women, mostly with Cymdeithas y Iaith involvement, also included some local

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[229] There was a large Traveller site in the area at Dorothea Quarry for most of the 90's. A smaller traveller site just outside Bangor has recently been evicted.

EF!ers).

Other actions in the mid/late nineties were sporadic but activity was kept ticking over: Shell garages were targeted in Anglesey and Bangor in 1996 and 1997, with activists blockading petrol pumps, climbing on the roof and spilling fake blood on forecourts. Activists also targeted the Anglesey Euroroute Public Inquiry in 1997, scaling the Inquiry building and demonstrating outside. Small actions such as demonstrating about Nestle products outside supermarkets were also undertaken. Many local activists temporarily left the area to live full –time on the Manchester Airport protest site around this time. The local group also attended COPEX arms fair demonstration in 1998 in England. Several individuals were visiting Faslane peace camp on a regular basis. As discussed above, action took off dramatically with the establishing of the Brewery Fields camp in Spring 1998.

In the last two years, several events and actions organised by G+M EF! have had explicit network crossover. Triggering much of this would appear to be the increasing anti-globalisation focus of many disparate campaign groups. Many groups came on the EF!-organised anti WTO rally in Bangor on N30 in 1999. Another coalition trigger was the recent Terrorism Act, the clauses of which have been seen by a range of organisations as undermining civil rights to protest. A demonstration in Bangor about the Act in May 2000, organised by EF!ers, had speakers from PAWB, Cymdeithas, animal rights, Gwynedd Stop the Hawks, and the Communist Party. All these groups and others became part of the Welsh 'repeal the terrorism act!' coalition. At the beginning of 2000 the North Wales 'branch' of 'Cynefyn y Werin' (Common Ground) was established by an experienced campaigner who had initiated the network in South Wales. The aim of Cynefyn y Werin is to be an umbrella network which is a resource for disparate campaign groups who have a common focus. Globalisation, and local/environmental/community sustainability are increasingly explicitly seen as commonly held themes by a range of groups in the coalition which includes most Welsh NGOs and activist groups.

"Trips away" to national actions continue to account for a significant proportion of G+M EF! activity. G+M EF! took a minibus down to J18 in 1999 and to Mayday 2000, both in London. Acting on a (false alarm) tip off, a car of "flying picket" EF!ers recently (3.5.01) went down to Pembrokeshire to try and prevent the planting of a GM crop (the farmer has since pulled out of the trial). Another car load of EF!ers went down to London for an 'end the sanctions in Iraq' rally in January 2001.[230] National action days at Faslane in 2000 and 2001 were also attended by G+M

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[230] Two activists- myself and another- had formed an affinity groups and were prepared to "lock- on"; that is, use

EF!ers.

Many of these actions and demonstrations have ended in the arrest of individual or sometimes (as in the two Brewery Fields evictions) all group members. These charges, normally for 'minor' offences such as obstruction of a police officer or bailiff, behaviour likely to cause a breach of the peace, or obstruction of a public highway, have resulted in most G+M EF! ers having criminal records. In a number of cases, local EF! ers who were active on protest camps outside of Wales in the early/mid nineties (Twyford Down, Newbury, the M11, Solsbury Hill, Fairmile[231]) already had significant criminal records relating to activism, other G+M EF! activists whose involvement with direct action has been solely local had their first protest related arrests at Brewery Fields.

Finally, no discussion of direct action in North Wales would be complete without a mention of the direct action taken by farmers. From the 1997 BSE crisis, North Wales farmers have been instrumental in taking direct action to protect their livelihoods. The Holyhead blockades of Irish Beef by farmers in 1997 set the agenda for action repertoires which were used again to great effect in the Stanlow refinery fuel blockades in September 2000. It is quite possible, given the (often) anti-globalisation, pro local production/consumption agenda of 'prime movers' in the North Wales farming communities, that there could be sustained crossover with 'green' activist and campaign networks.

2.4 Short Update

Whilst the media made much of a supposed 'crisis' amongst anti-globalisation activists post September 11th, this was far from the reality locally (or nationally/internationally) where such discourses combined powerfully with peace ones. When the WTO met in Quatar in November 2001, a rally in Bangor organised by Cynefyn y Werin was attended by at least 200 people, who heard impassioned speeches from (amongst others) CND Cymru making the connections between capitalism, the WTO, oil and arms sales, and the 'war on terror'. Peace activity reached a peak during the height of the bombing of Afghanistan over November and December 2001, with weekly candlelit vigils in Bangor, and a series of peace rallies and meetings held in villages all over North Wales by 'ordinary people' as much as activists. The Welsh legacy of NVDA and pacifism was much in evidence and was championed by Plaid Cymru. A peace email group was set up,

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non-violent tactics designed to prevent us being removed from the area. Both of us were arrested for obstruction of a public highway.

there was a well attended peace 'festival' in Aberystwyth, and a Bangor peace group has been meeting weekly since December. Whilst EF! 'eco'-activity has dropped off, with any major activity being focussed on fundraising for Amnesty via benefit gigs, anti-war action remains a high priority.

Section 3: Resources

3.1 Rationale

This and the following sections provide ethnographic data against which the relevant SM theories surrounding the 'how' of action/mobilisation can be evaluated. Starting with resources - the following section addresses the theory, that activists need access to resources in order to mobilise effectively, against an ethnographic background.

Two major resources - money and, ironically, transport - are not discussed in detail here, and frankly there is no doubt that *some* money is always needed to mobilise. Most money and transport access -borrowing a car, or occasionally hiring a minibus - comes out of activists' own pockets, or by calling in favours from friends. EF!ers in North Wales have only ever had one donation - £200 sent anonymously to help organise the Cardiff Terrorism Act demonstration. Money is occasionally sourced from the Students' Union (see below). All activists are in agreement that money, their own office space and transport would transform their capacities to be effective, in recent PO conversations, EF!ers have flagged the fact that most of what they have done locally has been out of their own pocket, a fact that they see as a considerable achievement. *"If we had a van, we'd fill it, every time we go on an action* [outside the area] - *as it is we can only get a car load together"*[232]

Benefit gigs to raise cash, and approaching the better resourced, almost NGO-status English groups such as Corporate Watch for donations, are current local EF! strategies. Thus whilst access to funds and transport are possibly the most important resources activists need, given that these are resources primarily generated by the activists themselves it will I feel be more interesting to look in more detail at 'outside' help, i.e. locally specific resources which help EF!ers mobilise.

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[231] See Ch4 for more activist stories

[232] EF!er during PO visit to the Pembrokeshire GM crop site with EF! activists, 3.5.01. When money is found (always from the SU) to hire a minibus, it is always filled- J18 (1999) and Mayday 2000 were London demonstrations a minibus- load of EF! ers attended.

3.2 Bangor University

In Bangor, the University continues to play an important role in providing a source for recruiting new activists and through the resources that students there can gain access to. For instance, the Students Union was able to help with childcare for the national Earth First Summer Gathering in 2000 by providing some materials and money for more. The S.U. campaigns officer also funded the hiring of a coach to take students and local activists to the Repeal the Terrorism Act rally in Cardiff (organised by G+M EF!). Of course, the availability of such resources also depends on the people who have access to the funds - it so happens that in 2000/01 there have been campaigns /community S.U. officers who are politically sympathetic to EF! campaigns. This was also the case in 93-95 when the then president of the S.U. had political and social crossover with activists who set up EF! This was less the case in the late 90's, though EF! was able to use the university newspaper offices to an extent to network the Brewery Fields campaign, there was resistance to this happening and feeling somewhat 'persona non grata', activists looked elsewhere for more reliable resources. Gwynedd and Mon EF! also has occasional joint meetings with student People and Planet (Third World Solidarity) and Green groups[233], providing EF! ers with the opportunity for increased numbers on some of their actions and occasionally some funding. For example, in March 2001 People and Planet and Green students used some of their budget to hire a minibus to go to an Illisu dam rally held at Trewerin, Bala on the suggestion of EF!ers who also used the minibus.

3.3 IT and Email

Activists, students and other local campaigners who have access to IT are in regular contact through email chat groups234. Set up in Summer 2000, these have turned out to be a resounding success and a vital way of keeping in contact and passing campaign information around geographically dispersed activist networks. In the absence of 'squat caffs' and decent public transport, these email groups go some way to enabling more vital activist chat/social crossover to occur - for online activists, at least, IT is an invaluable resource. Interestingly, email groups are an example of a 'loose ties' (Granovetter 73) network, the Welsh lists have a variety of subscribers across a range of NGOs and campaign groups, and are not limited to the 'hardcore' of EF!ers who focus predominantly on direct action as a strategy (it should be noted that many of

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[233] This was the case from November 1999 until fairly recently, when EF! meetings have again become more sporadic- see later for rationale

[234] bangor-werdd@yahoogroups.com is the North Wales list; dan-cymru@yahoogroups.com links activists across Wales.

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these activists are not online at all). Thus direct action ideas, discussions and information are disseminated across a wider range of social groups on a much more regular basis than happens in 'real life'. The email lists are thus *both a resource and a network*, enabling more people to get active, or at least providing them with the information to do so. Simple contact with like - minded others is also useful for activists, especially in a rural area where feeling isolated is often a physical, as well as ideological, reality. Some local peoples' first contact with G+M EF! has been via the email lists.

Extract from my PO: the Cardiff rally against the Terrorism Act in October 2000

"... Without free email as a resource, mobilising and networking for this rally would be so much harder. Once I'd done a poster/leaflet and X had translated it, I emailed it straight off to Y who formatted it. I could then email it straight out to CND Cymru, the Cymdeithas offices, and all other contacts for instant downloading. Instant and free. If we were still relying on post it would be slower and more costly. Add to this the fact that the Bangor-werdd and dan-cymru lists are being used very frequently by activists to talk about administration details for the rally..."

3.4 The Greenhouse

Set up 20 years ago as a more specifically campaign orientated resource centre, over the years "economic realities"[235] have led to the Greenhouse(G/H) widening its focus to become more of a community centre where rooms, space can be hired out (for example a Welsh language class meets there, the Family Planning Association have offices upstairs). Campaign networking continues to form a major part of the G/H's activities, and its current set up as described briefly here has ensured that it is able to continue to provide cheap access to some resources such as meeting space, for campaign groups such as EF! In brief, the G/H is primarily a resource for activists as a contact point - EF! ers use the G//H as their c/o address. As one of the oldest such networking centres in Britain, the G/H is on many mailing lists and access to free activist and campaign publications is another benefit for EF!ers. Over the years EF!ers have tended to use the G/H in a rather sporadic way, namely when they were engaged on a specific action and needed to use the facilities to send press releases, make banners. During high mobilisation peaks the G/H has been invaluable in terms of a focal centre where activists could be sure of meeting up. In the past, it has tended to be the case that those most motivated to get involved in the administration side of

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[235] Quote, informal chat with Greenhouse original member

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campaigning could be found here. The amount of use activists make of the Greenhouse varies dramatically, and it has to be said that there is a general feeling amongst activists that the G/H is a good *potential* resource, but fails to deliver given the expense of using the facilities. A recent lottery grant has brought in up to date computers and internet access which are available for use[236]. However the access to these computers is limited due to very high tariffs which price the service out of activists' reach. Cheap mobile phones and individuals' access to IT elsewhere has meant that since the Brewery Fields campaign EF!ers have tended to meet up less and less often there, though use of the c/o address continues to be invaluable.

Over the years EF!ers have (wo)manned the desk as volunteers, giving back to a resource that they have benefited from. Older activists who set up the G/H and were active in the 70's/80's still work (as paid NGO staff who rent office space) in the building, and this generational crossover is notable.

3.5 PO Diary Extract

The following, taken from my PO diary detailing the Bangor "n30" solidarity action in 1999 - is a good example of how resources contribute to mobilisation.

EF! ers decided to call an action to be held locally in Bangor on Nov 30th 1999 (n30) in solidarity with the actions internationally, and in particular in Seattle, against the WTO[237]. Three main resources enabled this action to come together at the last minute - the Internet , the existence of student green groups/'dormant' EF! activists, and The Greenhouse. The email networking list[238] set up by, and serving, activists worldwide mobilising against the WTO provided Bangor EF! activists with leaflet texts/facts and figures, and local contacts not previously encountered - the latter being a mix of people in Gwynedd who wanted to take direct action, (see later) and X, whose background comes more from NGO-type campaigns such as Jubilee 2000 and set up the North Wales Cynefyn y Werin network. X provided EF! activists with a string of local contacts, such as people who worked for established NGOs such as Christian Aid, sympathetic Plaid Cymru MPs and councillors who he thought would be sympathetic/actively supportive of the anti-WTO demonstration. As a result of contacting X via

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[236] see a separate doc. for a more detailed look at the history of the greenhouse and its significance as a resource/network crossover.- also interviews. See later on in this doc. for recent developments in terms of use of resources.

[237] See Ch6 for a fuller discussion on anti capitalist/globalisation actions

email, EF!ers got a message of support for their action emailed to them by Dafydd Wrigley, the Plaid MP, the use of the Christian Aid photocopier to make free leaflets, and the consent of a wide range of (these and other) politically powerful Welsh campaign groups such as Cymdeithas yr Iaith to put their names on the EF! press release.

Despite the fact that EF!ers had not been having 'official' meetings, activists were regularly meeting up at the Greenhouse. This was the case on the 25/6ᵗʰ of November when several of us met up at the greenhouse and were able to hammer out a leaflet text, get it translated, do a press release, make and put up posters. Other EF!ers and potential demo-attenders were contacted by word of mouth, meanwhile several EF!ers finally got round to doing what they had meant to for months, i.e. attend the student green group meeting. At this meeting students were very motivated to come on the demonstration, and took posters to put up in their halls of residence. Most were also members of the university's 'people and planet' group and said that they would contact others in this group as well. Importantly, it was also decided that EF! and the student green group should hold joint meetings in future.

In the above extract we are able to see how resources are used by the group and help to trigger action. Of course the issue itself (globalisation) and POS are also triggers - such alliances and help were forthcoming because of the *issue*. These factors will be discussed in due course - here the focus is primarily on resources. Of course a key point is that EF!ers would have mobilised anyway - but the resources mentioned were a great factor in the success of the mobilisation.

Section 4: Activist Networks

4.1 Overview

The importance of social and campaign networks as a mobilisation factor for activists cannot be underestimated. Activists rely on such networks to provide "bums on seats" as it were, and often resources. Examining the ethnography of activist networks in North Wales firstly provides data to compare against the literature on networks (Diani et al). Secondly, examining social network patterns enables a more comprehensive picture of the process of mobilisation for activists generally, and specifically at the local level, to be built up. As mentioned elsewhere, there is a

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[238] see ch2, ch7

tendency to polarise NGO campaigners and direct activists as completely separate groups. In the case of G +M EF!, this proves not to be the case, there is considerable crossover between 'conventional' actors and radical activists. The extent to which this may be a locally dependant factor is discussed in detail below. Further, EF!ers themselves also use 'conventional' campaign methods as well as taking direct action.[239] To use myself as an example, over the years I have (for example) given evidence at the A55 Anglesey Euroroute Public Inquiries in 1995 and 1997 (on both occasions spending months collating evidence and reading the documentation supplied by Welsh Office), organised rallies with NGOs specifically directed at the Assembly, presented evidence to government White Papers on globalisation, had meetings about transferring to organic production methods with farmers, and stood as a Green Party candidate in the Assembly elections. All the above have necessitated working with other more 'conventional' players, and, frankly, playing the system's game. The point is that for me this was a symbiotic strategy with organising more confrontational, radical direct action such as protest camps and civil disobedience. Conversely, the ethnography collated for this case study highlights that NGO actors have much more crossover into radical networks than is often credited, again, the extent to which this is a locally influenced variable is discussed below.

4.2 Alliance Patterns

Movement boundaries blur considerably, and not just between networks of radical activists, but outwards into 'conventional' players. Academics such as Granovetter (1973) and Diani (1992) have flagged the importance of these 'weak ties' links. Other, more field studies - based projects have highlighted network diffusion and have further emphasised the importance of pre-existing activist and related campaign networks as a mobilisation factor.[240] At different times, in different contexts, and through different individuals, there is interaction (or more accurately, a range of interactions of different types) between radical and conventional actors. Referring back to **Ch 1**, the important thing to focus on here is the *biodegradability* of all of these network links. They have a fluidity and a changeability which makes them incredibly hard to map, pin down, this can be both a strength and a weakness for activists. An important parallel to draw here is the fact that while the circumstances and contexts are locally - specific, the way G+M EF! operates - a mixture of reacting to circumstances, pragmatically playing to their advantages, thinking strategically in

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[239] see **ch1** and **ch4** for more detail on activists' use of multiple tactics.
[240] See Snow, Zurcher , and Ekland- Olson (1980) 'Social networks and social movements: a microstructural

terms of alliances, for example - is more or less a template for EDA groups nationwide.

4.3 Generational Diffusion-legacy of Past Activist Communities

Whilst activist tactics, action repertoires and ideologies change over time, with much that is truly innovative and different (treehouses and tunnels for example) there is also a significant amount of continuity. Ideas about, say, non-violent direct action, tactics such as building benders to live in and protest camps as an action strategy, diffused from the peace movement discourses, the Traveller scene of the 80's and Greenham Common into the action strategies and attitudes at Twyford Down. It is important to bear two things in mind, firstly that this diffusion is often - but by no means always - a process of barely conscious osmosis,[241] and secondly, that these ideas and repertoires are sometimes adopted, sometimes rejected, most often re-made to fit current circumstances. Conversely, much stays the same, Sasha Roseneils' description of site life and police action at Greenham is a template for much roads protest experience of the 90's. Such generational diffusion does not always need crossover between specific individuals to occur, but there is no doubt that this also plays a factor.

The new younger activists who formed Earth First! in 1993 had few ties to the older local peace campaign groups, who had declined in activity, until they built ties with local communities through their joint opposition to Brewery Fields. It took a while to re-establish network crossover ties that had been established in the 80's but had biodegraded somewhat by the early 90's. Significantly, many of the older Welsh peace/CND/nuclear power/human rights activists were still in the area and these ties began to be picked up as EF! strengthened as a local network in the late 90's. However, in general cross generational ties between past and present activists are strong in North Wales. One reason for the strength of these ties is the longevity of the Greenhouse as a base for meetings, offices and resources - many of the founder members of the G/H have social contact with EF! ers due to their ongoing connection to the G/H. But perhaps the primary reason is the scale of the radical population. In larger cities, there are so many campaigns and centres that it is difficult to get to know everyone. There are many more campaign groups. In areas like North West Wales, there are fewer local issues to mobilise on, a smaller base of activists and more incentive to work together with older NGO actors who have radical histories. These are all geographical factors to do with the nature of small rural populations, it is even possible that this

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approach to differential recruitment' in <u>American Sociological Review</u> Vol 45 pp 787-801.
[241] McKay 1998

could be evidence of a wider sociological issue - namely the tendency of people to stay in a small town and commit to it, rather than passing through as seems to be more often the case in cities, although it may simply be that older activists are simply more 'visible' in smaller places.

In the context of North Wales and G+M EF!, it is hard to know whether the continued explicit insistence on non-violent direct action is to do with the predisposition of individuals in the group, or whether the radical non-violent direct action heritage of Welsh language and peace action has also played a role. It is likely that both are factors. At the 'launch' of the Direct Action Network (DAN) Cymru email list in 2000, Welsh EF!ers were keen to use national identity as a way of making a clear space between their explicit commitment to non-violence, at a time when this had been dropped from the EF! AU's description of itself. [242] Diffusion both at a national level and at a local level, via awareness of past experience of successful non-violent action and the strengths of non-violent discourses, have had an unquantifiable influence on North Wales activists. Whatever, this shared ideology has certainly facilitated coalitions. It is significant that many of the earlier generation of peace activists occasionally attend EF!-organised protests such as the Terrorism Act rallies. Many were re-mobilised during the Afghanistan bombing in 2001.

4.4 Cross-Movement Networking

Alliances between different activist/campaign networks in North Wales are nothing new. In the 80's, CND campaigning provided an important bridge between the English "alternative" incomers and Welsh language campaigners:

And you know there were quite a lot of people on those Welsh classes who were quite left wing politically and a lot of them were involved in CND...I met a lot of people through [teaching] Welsh classes, and am still involved politically with some of them who went al the way with learning Welsh and became involved not only with CND but also with our (Cymdeithas) campaigns. Yes definitely CND in the early 80s was important and the Greenham campaign. You had women from Cymdeithas and Plaid Cymru, a lot of them in this area going down to Greenham and getting very involved there. [243]

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[242] as discussed in **ch4 and ch7** in particular, there is a seeming discrepancy between loudly articulated voices of current national prime movers supporting violent means of action, and the majority of activists who remain committed to non-violence, as evidenced in interviews, email ethnography and participant observation; actual activist violence remains minimal

[243] Interview with I-NW

As highlighted in the section on resources above, EF!ers have had sustained network and social crossover with many 'conventional' NGOs such as FOE[244] and Christian Aid, both of whom have supported and attended different EF! campaigns and provided some resources - not least the reflected status of their name. Further, links between EF!ers and University students are also strong. EF!ers have had social and campaign crossover with other radical activist networks - primarily Cymdeithas y Iaith for several years now. Cymdeithas activists have given workshops at EF! national gatherings held in North Wales, have been part of the 'repeal the Terrorism Act!' coalition initiated by G+M EF!, and even supported EF! campaigns against the A55 Euroroute. Again, the importance of specific *issues* as alliance triggers is evident. As with earlier waves of activism, peace, anti-nuclear, anti-arms issues remain crossover nodes for EF!ers and Welsh NGOs and Cymdeithas y Iaith. The decommissioning of Wylfa B power station on Anglesey is another crossover point.

EF! ers and local animal rights activists are also blurred together, whilst there are campaigns, such as the cull of ruddy ducks on Anglesey, which vegans and animal rights activists initiate with less support from EF!ers, there are also many actions and campaign issues where they completely cross over - a classic example of this is the action outside McDonalds' in Bangor on its opening day in Feb 2001. This action was resourced and organised jointly by animal rights activists and EF!ers. To provide a complete contrast, there are also 'weak ties' links between farmers and EF!ers. EF!ers are interested in the potential for farmers to develop anti-globalisation, anti "agribusiness" discourses and recognise the potential on green discourses on sustainable agriculture. Much of this crossover happens through individuals and is more networking than anything else - passing on information, establishing contacts. Strategically EF!ers are considering the possibilities of an anti-supermarket action in conjunction with farmers. The strain between the two positions - animal rights and farmers - is obvious, but this is the advantage of EF! as a fluid network, where individuals have the agency to pursue whichever strategies suit them best. Any action alliances with farmers would be a *temporary* affair. This is not to gloss over the difficulties with alliances however - see below.

A further impetus to current cross-movement networking has been provided by the interest of majority world solidarity groups and churches in opposing the current dominance of neo-liberal forms of globalisation, an issue that is central to the praxis of EDA (see next section for more on alliance rationales). Cynefyn y Werin (Common Ground) was established in North

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[244] the North Wales FOE co-ordinator took part in an 'ethical shoplift' of mahogany with EF! in 1994.

Wales in January 2000 to bring together groups with a common interest –which significantly, post n30, has been focussed in opposing neo-liberal form of globalisation. Many of these groups are Welsh NGOs, charities and Church groups with a traditional focus in campaigning for human rights in Third World countries - discourses which increasingly have led them to critique globalisation and favour local production/consumption and fair trade. Such discourses and the acceptance of NVDA as a legitimate strategy (though peace and Welsh language connections - Cymdeithas y Iaith is also part of the coalition) have produced an inclusive network (Gwynedd and Mon EF! is also a member) with resources and potential. The acceptance of NVDA is clear evidence of the diffusion of ideologies and repertoires of action. Again, Welsh politics provides an important background as prime movers in this network aim to help set the political agenda/domestic policy specifically in Wales via representation to the Assembly. For others this may not be as important as the coalition's potential to help their own actions and provide resources (not least people who might attend actions and demonstrations).

Links with the Welsh Socialist Alliance (a coalition of socialist left groups which includes the SWP) have also been established in North Wales. Members of Gwynedd and Mon EF! went to several WSA meetings and discussed joint campaigns (primarily ways to campaign against the privatisation of public services). However EF!ers began to be disillusioned with the WSA when they realised that it was more focused on fighting elections than campaigning locally. This being said, on the micro level of individuals within the WSA also disillusioned with the focus on elections, there is sustained social and political crossover with EF!ers.

4.5 Limits of, or problems with, alliances

From the perspective of the activists themselves, the primary problems with alliances are strategic ones, and there are certain situations where the pros/cons of alliances need careful weighing up. The farmers/animal rights dilemmas are a good case in point. EF! activists have had several conversations discussing the problems of having a joint action against McDonalds' or a supermarket with farmers when such an action might "*fuck off our friends*"[245] - friends here referring to animal rights and vegan activists. Pragmatically, certain key animal rights figures have provided EF!ers with help mobilising on a number of different actions - for example writing /printing leaflets for the McDonalds' action, driving EF! ers down to London for J18 and Mayday 2000 in a minibus. From an activist perspective (and here I use myself as a template), the

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245 Activist comment during EF! meeting. Feb 2001

reliability of the farmers in terms of enabling effective EF! mobilisation beyond a temporary alliance which cynically would suit both parties is probably minimal. Hence the pros and cons of such an alliance need careful weighing up. Friendship ties need to be relied on and could be damaged.

4.5.1 Diffusion or Dilution?

Similarly, the burgeoning anti-globalisation alliance in North Wales described above was recently rocked over the recent custard pie-ing by radical activists of Clare Short, Minister for Overseas Development during a speech she made at Bangor University in support of the globalisation of trade[246]. At the time, and soon afterwards on the Bangor-werdd and dan-Cymru email lists, there was a lot of bad feeling and polemic between EF!ers who were supportive of the action, and felt it was a justifiable thing to do, and representatives of NGOs who were angry that such a tactic had been used. There may well be some insurmountably deep divides between some NGOs and the 'no compromise' strategies and attitudes of Earth First. Whatever the rights and wrongs of the action, what is significant is the problem with alliances it highlights. The NGO campaigners have been happy to attend rallies in Bangor high street organised by EF!, and EF! ers have been happy[247] to sign up to /be part of "conventional" methods used by the Cynefyn y Werin coalition such as attending government consultation processes and lobbying the Assembly. But once a tactic or target used by EF! is seen as beyond the pale by others, then this affects the alliance in the eyes of those who were offended by the action. As one EF!er recently put it,

"I'm quite happy to go to a People and Planet coffee morning, more than happy ...but they won't support my actions...it's not reciprocal"

The cons of alliances here for EF! ers are that on occasion they will be under pressure to compromise their more radical position and this in some cases could put them off taking direct action. Without the constraints of peer pressure in these situations, they would be freer to act. Diffusion between networks could result in strong identities becoming too dilute and dissolving away. There is thus a case for championing the 'strength of strong ties'.

The pros of alliances, which as highlighted are able to provide (on occasion) people, resources and administration help - need weighing up, if these pros are only available for

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246 see http://uk.indymedia.org/display.php3?article_id=2123 for activist coverage of this action.

[247] Though with many provisos about 'playing the system's game'; but despite these concerns, G+M EF!ers for the

"unconfrontational" action such as rallies, then are they enough? As discussed in **Ch 3**, there is plenty of literature on the strengths of weak ties and cross movement networking, but none that I have come across on their weaknesses or constraints. The least that can be said is that such alliances are more messy, and more problematic, than is given credit for. Alliances, like the process of collective identity, are often discussed by academics as if they were some immutable chemical formula, rather than intensely emotional, difficult - and often painful as much as they are rewarding or fun - processes. Ultimately such alliances will either become more reciprocal, adaptable, more able to accept differences in 'bottom lines', or they will very likely biodegrade. Such outcomes depend to quite an extent on individual agency (see later section). This biodegradability is in any case the 'modus operandi' of the EDA movement, as discussed in **Ch 1**, alliances, tribes, camps, networks, campaigns, come and go. This is partially a strength in that the movement is able to adapt to circumstance and not be floored by it but rather adapt and change. However, unless activists are careful to build on the strengths of the links made during bursts of activism with other campaign groups, local residents, sympathetic council officials, by staying in touch, then this is also a strategic shortcoming. Activist turnover being what it is, new arrivals have to do a lot of unnecessary self starting, slowly building up links (often the same links made by previous activists).

Section 5: Explaining Cross-Movement Networking And Alliance Patterns

The network crossovers and alliance patterns described throughout this chapter are in many ways specific to North Wales, as will be highlighted in this section, it is specific local variants which are major factors in determining mobilisation patterns and building local activist communities and identities.. However the following sub-sections which list factors contributing to North Wales alliance patterns can also be seen as providing a template which can be applied to the study of other groups and campaigns, highlighting their locally specific results. Whilst being aware of the dangers of extrapolating too much from small qualitative samples **(Ch 2)**, it is also important to note that the types of alliances described here, with all of their pros and cons, do represent fairly general activist experience as I have found it to be over nine years of direct action and "auto- ethnography". All activists face dilemmas over alliance patterns - talking to 'single issue'

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main tend to see conventional forms of action as co-existing symbiotically with radical ones.

NIMBYS on protest camps, for example[248]. It can also be seen that G+M EF!ers use action tactics and targets which are common currency, established action repertoires in the EDA movement (see **Ch 1**), protest camps, blockades, stopping work, office occupations. That they also adopt other, more 'conventional' strategies is partly a result of locally specific factors or opportunities available to them, and is also – crucially – evidence that EDA movement boundaries are very blurred and diffuse. Perhaps most importantly, the case study provides more evidence of shared meanings, shared worldviews, held in common which run through the diversity of activist experience. Thus this case study adds further evidence to the main PhD research aims of highlighting these shared meanings.

5.1 Numbers Of Radical Activists

As discussed, the G+M EF! group is relatively small - comprising a 'hardcore' of 5-10 activists who will turn up to meetings and almost always to actions, with approximately another 10- 20 activists who will sporadically attend actions. The number of 'prime movers' prepared to get centrally involved in the planning, preparation and resourcing of action numbers 2-5. The costs of action are high for the core group as major responsibilities are almost always picked up by a small number of people. Further, organising demonstrations which only get attended by 10-30 people (and it's mostly at the lower end) can be very demoralising. The following is an extract from PO, when an EF! prime mover was bemoaning the apathy of her friends who wouldn't come to the Terrorism Act demonstration in Cardiff, even though there was a coach laid on.

"I was thinking, just one day, just one fucking day out of your lives ... I mean what IS it with people - why don't they DO stuff? It's not like we're asking them to organise anything, just turn up occasionally and hold a banner..."[249]

In North Wales EDA activists are not strong enough as a separate network to *always* rely just on their own social group to provide numbers for actions or help to organise them. So they make alliances with anybody who has remotely anything in common with them in order to spread the costs of taking action. Due to their relative strength of numbers, Manchester EF!ers, for example, can afford to be more choosy and (e.g.) not approach Christian Aid or other NGOs but stick

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[248] See Seel and Plows 2000.
[249] From PO 10.10.00

within their own more 'radical' political and social networks when taking direct action or campaigning about specific issues. Thus students, NGOs, charities and even political parties (the Welsh Socialist Alliance and even Plaid Cymru[250] on occasion) are almost always approached when G+M EF! activists are planning action.

5.2 Cultural Legacies - Local Histories And National Identity

As discussed, another important catalyst for cross movement networking is the tendency of left/radical groups in Wales to organise within Welsh national structures. Welsh national identity, nationalism, and a tradition, which is particularly strong in North West Wales, of using direct action, facilitates cross movement networking. Many people working in Welsh NGOs, charities, campaigns have got direct experience of taking direct action (mostly Welsh Language) or they work/socialise with people who have done so. There is a strong crossover also between Welsh Chapels and a radical peace tradition - Cymdeithas y Cymod, for example, is a Welsh Church network/organisation with a long history of radical dissent and peace action going back to campaigns of conscientious objectors in the First World War. Cymdeithas y Cymod is one of the many Welsh Christian/peace groups who have joined the 'Repeal the Terrorism Act' coalition. Thus in a specifically Welsh context, the 'conventional' NGOs and campaign groups tend to be more radical in their outlook/worldview and approach to campaigning, often tying the discourses about the specific issue into wider discourses on Welsh identity. The existence and nature of such allies could count as POS factors.

5.3 Geography
Geography also plays a key role in shaping mobilisation patterns and even types of action engaged on, the rurality of the area providing different opportunities for network/social crossover Living and often working in the countryside enables activists to make contact with farmers, for example, in an everyday setting in a way urban activists are unable to do. Activists are thus in a position to be more sensitive to the problems faced by rural communities and to structure their discourses and action strategies accordingly. The sense of Welsh rural communities in crisis, and strong local

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[250] E.g. Plaid Cymru councillors and MPs/AM s sent a message of support to Bangor activists mobilising on n30" in solidarity with the Seattle anti- globalisation protestors. Plaid Cymru leader, at the time, Dafydd Wigley sent a message of support to the Welsh 'Repeal the Terrorism Act!' demonstration in May 2000. EF!ers have also clashed - bitterly- with the Plaid Cymru-dominated Gwynedd council over their decision to give planning perm-

identities and discourses on this subject, lead EF!ers to make strategic links and choose action and alliance patterns which are more likely to get a favourable response from local communities. In a similar vein, farmers are able to hear green ideas at first hand. Activists have been establishing 'weak ties' links to the farming community since the BSE crisis where a commitment to direct action and an anti-supermarket discourse were established as common bonds. Co-ops, farmers markets and sustainable rural economies are other key crossover issues. Thus whilst veganism and animal rights issues remain key elements in many North Wales activists' political identities (and it should also be pointed out that maintaining a vegan/animal rights' strongly critical position on food and farming issues is an important strategy for some activists too), there is also a pragmatism and a willingness amongst other activists to engage in dialogue brought about through direct contact with rural communities.

Despite the existence of strong social ties to each other, the activist/hippy networks in North Wales are not insular but on the contrary have very eclectic social, campaign and work ties This is in part due to the fact that many people in EF! and the wider counter-cultural scene are local to the area, went to local schools, and have Welsh as a second language. (This has also aided network crossover with Cymdeithas y Iaith).[251] It also has to do with the land use projects such as dry stone walling and reforestation which many people are involved with, which often involves working with local landowners. There is also a strongly voiced commitment to local community integration, linked to discourses on rural sustainable development as an alternative to globalisation. In 2001, a music evening/art exhibition held in Mynedd Llandegai village hall by local EF!ers and others from the wider social network was attended by most of the village. It was a truly community event.

5.4 POS

While organising as Welsh groups is a long-standing practice (see above), the creation of the Welsh Assembly in 1999 has provided further local/regional Political Opportunities, namely an indigenous focus for Welsh campaigning. Institutionally, the creation of the Welsh Assembly has

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ission for Brewery Fields. Plaid Cymru at local level is an enigmatic mix of the radical and the reactionary.

[251] Cymdeithas y Iaith activists in North Wales tend to be deeply rooted in their local communities, often going back generations. They also have a distinct identity as first language Welsh- speakers. There is a distinct Welsh social scene, from Welsh halls of Residence at the University, the vibrant and (from the 60's onwards) very political Welsh music scene, to the solid social base of the local villages and Welsh Chapels. Welsh activists may cross over politically with local eco-activists, and get involved in each other's campaigns to an extent, but there is a limited amount of social crossover.

provided a focus for Welsh campaigners seeking strategically to fundamentally alter the structure and direction of Welsh politics. Whether or not State structures have *actually* become more receptive to campaigners' voices, there is certainly the *perception* amongst activists that this is the case, and activists (especially those who have a primary focus on 'conventional' campaigning) are excited at the possibility of having more access and influence to promote ideas about sustainable development as an alternative to globalisation, with the knock on affect this would have on human rights and environmental issues.

-*"I think we are at very early stages, a really exciting time ...politics in Wales is definitely changing, for the first time in a long time... the idea that the Assembly hopefully will become a Parliament and the idea of networks and the idea of community control... I don't think about London at all now, I think of all campaigning more or less in terms of the Assembly even though the Assembly has limited powers and a lot of stuff still lies with London... What is the best way to generate public pressure, campaigning against the Parliament or campaigning against the national Assembly".[252]*

-*"the introduction of the devolved Government in Wales has made Cymdeithas rethink it's strategies and it's demands of the Assembly... it's still fairly early days of course, and I think people will get more sophisticated in their lobbying means with the Assembly. It should be more accessible than London shouldn't it...I think it's time to kick ass there really.*

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-*Do you think there's space there to do that?*

-*Yeah, well, you've got to create a space...* "[253]

This Welsh Assembly focus was also evident in the Repeal the Terrorism Act!' coalition activity. Both the local rally organised in Bangor in May 2000 and a second demonstration outside the Welsh Assembly (both organised by EF!), were aimed at encouraging the Assembly to oppose the new legislation. As the primary initiator of this coalition, I can highlight my rationales for its focus

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[252] Taken from NGO campaigner and occasional direct activist B.NW interview
[253] taken from interview with direct activist and campaigner I.NW

on the Assembly. To begin with, whilst cynically I expected the Assembly to be as deaf to 'radical' demands (which it was!) as the government due to constraints of structure if nothing else, it was still worth a go. I was primarily hoping that if the Assembly had had a vote of no confidence in the Bill (as it then was), and London had turned round and said 'tough', then the Act could have been allied to the bigger political football of devolution and Assembly powers, and been used as a type of test case - possibly in the longer term actually contributing to the growth of Assembly powers. This issue aligning process did in fact happen over the issue of GM crops in Wales. Of course, none of this came to pass, though the coalition was supported by a number of AMs and the Archbishop of Wales[254], no less. Overall, what was most successful was a combination of a) the British Governments' repressive legislation acting as a national POS factor and triggering a range of allies (see below) b) the focussing on specific Welsh solutions to the issue and c) a focus on Welsh radical past as a rationale for a specifically Welsh-orientated campaign.

"The Bill as drafted would effectively describe as 'terrorist' many of the movements which have shaped Wales over the past century and a half..."[255]

In terms of the reality of political openness or closure, in a sense, belief becomes reality. There is no doubt that the creation of the Assembly has galvanised political actors, especially those from more established campaign groups. Cynefyn y Werin is producing policy documents which it hopes the Assembly will take notice of. The upsurge in activity will undoubtedly produce results, even if they are not the primarily intended ones.

5.5 Issue Opportunities

I have coined the term Issue Opportunities to refer to the importance of the issue itself as a primary mobilising factor. As with Political Opportunities, issues can not only trigger action but can shape it, determining, for example, who allies with the initial 'early risers', whether direct action is seen as acceptable by potential allies. That different issues trigger different alliance patterns has been evidenced indirectly through the PO accounts throughout this chapter. Here they are made more explicit - however again due to limits of space there will be minimal detail. It is worth emphasising that in many cases the alliance is not a formal structure, so much as a

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[254] Now the Archbishop of Canterbury
[255] Excerpt from an email circular about the Act later used on the action leaflet

biodegradable, temporary coming together of different campaign networks. Other factors, such as how hard people initiating the campaign worked to get others involved, also play a part in triggering the shape/success of alliance patterns. Thus one should be careful of reading too much into the importance of specific issues. Nevertheless, there is still something of significance here.

Alliances between EF! ers and other campaign groups over specific issues happen more readily when there is a clear link between the issue and the other campaign group. It should be emphasised that because EF! ers tend generally to have a 'joined-up' perspective, and to see, for example, human rights, peace, environmental and social issues as interconnected, they tend to almost always see a variety of issues as being of concern and are increasingly explicit about the economic and social forces of global capitalism seen as underpinning these issues. The point is here that EF!ers will usually align with other campaigns almost automatically. For other campaign groups, it is apparent that they will get active and/or form alliances over issues when they can interpret the issue in terms of their own primary claim. This is possibly primarily pragmatic[256] in the sense that as everything is interconnected, in practical terms it is a better use of resources to focus on 'single issues'. G+M EF!ers on the other hand, tend to 'butterfly' between issues more.

A number of issues have triggered explicit alliances or network crossover in North Wales in the last two years - below are a few examples.

5.5.1 Globalisation

As discussed earlier, major NGOs and charities are coming forward to tackle the causes, rather than the symptoms, of poverty and are identifying globalisation as the cause. Thus when EF! organised a Seattle solidarity demonstration in Bangor on n30 1999, the demonstration was attended by an unusual mix of people - not just 'hippies' and EF! ers, but also well dressed, middle aged NGO professionals from Christian Aid and Oxfam. It is quite likely that anti-globalisation will continue to be an issue which pulls in other interest groups into eclectic biodegradable alliances, for example farmers and workers.

5.5.2 GM Crops

The issue of GM crops - and specifically GM crops being planted in Wales - has led to alliances of Welsh nationalists, locals including farmers, organic farmers, EF! ers, Welsh AMs who voted for Wales to be GM-free, FOE, the Green Party, the WSA, and many other campaign groups. Rallies

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[256] i.e., EF! ers are not alone in having holistic, 'multi- issue' perspectives; see 'shared worldview' section below.

at the Sealand crop site, Flintshire, were attended in 2000 and 2001 by representatives of all of these and other groups and individuals.

5.5.3 The Illisu Dam

The Illisu dam, Turkey, has been the focus of systematic campaigning in Britain for some years now. In March 2001, a Welsh 'branch' of the campaign organised a rally at Treweryn lake, near Bala, drawing an explicit parallel between the social consequences of the drowning of the Welsh village for the dam in 1961 and the displacement of the Turkish Kurds. This was another rally which had explicit crossover between practically all the different Welsh campaign groups. Most prominent were Kurds, Cymdeithas y Iaith and other Welsh nationalists, Plaid Cymru, other Welsh Christian campaign groups, Oxford members of the Illisu dam campaign, People and Planet students, and G+M EF!ers.

5.6 "Single Issues"

In order to highlight that many direct actions are not supported across networks, the following are brief examples of actions which have failed to attract such a range of allies, for a number of factors, including:

- lack of networking due to a range of factors including time, resources, inclination of the organisers.
- the issue failed to appeal as broadly across the networks, and/or is seen as being more the 'specialised' remit of the organising group
- the tactical repertoires used

Sometime in Summer 2000, Cymdeithas y Iaith took direct action at Llandudno, at the offices of the mobile phone company Orange, over language issues. This action was not attended by G+M EF!ers - primarily because the action was not networked outside of Cymdeithas circles. But it is unlikely that language issues would have provided enough of a trigger for EF! ers, despite the fact that many are bilingual.

5.6.1 McDonalds' Opening

Bangor, Oct 2000. The opening of McDonalds' was disrupted by direct action. The G+M EF!-organised action attracted students and one individual from the NGO campaigners, but despite it being a Saturday, good pre-action networking and the obvious (to EF!ers at least) globalisation

links, this was primarily an EF! /animal rights and 'usual suspects' affair.

5.6.2 Rising Tide Climate Change Action

In April 2001 a G+M EF!-organised action on climate change took place. EF!ers boarded a train for a trip to the seaside, and with prepared cards informed the ticket collector that they were not going to pay[257]. Only EF! ers and their friends took part in this action, probably due to lack of networking further afield.

5.7 Shared Worldviews

To return to the theme of cross movement networking, my research has found that it is not just EF!ers who have the type of systemic radical critique discussed in **Ch 4**. Other local campaigners in a variety of networks have it too. I would say that firstly this is possibly an individual thing, by no means all campaigners share these views, or – importantly - think that direct action is an important, never mind the primary, way of achieving change, as EF!ers do. Secondly, I feel that the growing, explicit anti-globalisation focus of many conventional groups has meant that campaigners across the board are increasingly likely to think in terms of the bigger picture and to make the links between issues. Similarly EF! ers are becoming more strategic in pointing out the links, for example, highlighting how being opposed to current development models such as out of town superstores is as much about the Welsh language and Welsh communities as it is about environmental issues[258]. The common ground of sustainable community development versus globalised agribusiness is another key link here. The following are quotes from local activists /campaigners who are not EF!ers who were asked about crossover between environmental , peace, human rights issues.

"-Yeah, well I think it's all one...package really isn't it...You can't do everything though can you?[259]

"-Environmental issues is a funny one. I consider at the heart that is where my politics lies.

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[257] This action was inspired by the Rising Tide ' 90% for 90%' campaign; activists are calling for a 90% reduction in rail fares if targets on carbon dioxide emissions are to be met.

[258] What is interesting is that these ideas are finding more currency now, whereas when the A55 Euroroute was being planned (1994-1997) EF! (my) attempts to galvanise opposition on these grounds fell pretty flat. Local Cymdeithas activists did support their name being put on leaflets at the time, but this apparently caused fall- out at the national level. All attempts to find significant allies outside of FOE were complete non- starters at the time.

*For community that is where it has got to be. But again, it hasn't been a campaigning priority...
But for me there is justice and there is injustice between social and economic conditions. There
is only the two sides, it doesn't matter what the issue is.* [260]

The above quotes, which are representative of the sorts of comments made by most non-EF!
interviewees, highlights the potential for network crossover based on shared worldviews and again
emphasises that when there is lack of crossover it is more likely often down to the necessity of
campaign priorities than anything else, in other words, people don't have the time to mobilise over
everything even if they support the issue. This is very important to remember.

5.8 Personalities

Finally, the importance of the micro level should not be forgotten, PO has highlighted how the
political/strategic predisposition of prime movers in local networks is also a factor which
contributes to 'weak ties' links. To an extent, the amount of network crossover is dependant on
how much of a priority is accorded it by the people who trigger mobilisation, and on how open
(even how friendly) the networks are to people outside their immediate social and political scene.
To take the first point, it is notable that when prime mover X moved to North Wales from Cardiff
in 1999 and started up the North Wales branch of Cynefyn y Werin, that networking between
different campaign groups took off. As he said:

*"the first things you need to concentrate on is what we've got in common... and if we can start
doing that and building up relationships on those terms then we've got much more chance of
sorting out the thing we haven't gotten in common and discussing them and seeing where the
differences lie and either coming to some sort of conclusion or agree to disagree without us
strangling each other. For me anyway there are far more important targets that we need to be
confrontational with rather than spending time disagreeing with people who are sort of on our
same side ...I actually believe that networks are good things in their own right. That people
coming together, even if they go away and they haven't decided to do anything together, the
amount that they learn from each other strengthens that. This is the idea that has been taking up
by the a lot of different social movements in Central and Latin America, Zapatistas, these ideas
of encounters where people come together, sort of gain strength from each other. I think things*

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[259] Interview with I.NW
[260] interview from B.NW

Similarly, the amount of work the initiators of actions put into networking the event outside their social circle will also affect mobilisation alliance patterns. In actions that I have been centrally involved in organising, pre-action publicity and networking has been a priority, without the time I put into contacting other groups about the Terrorism act coalition rallies, for example, the coalition would not have been so well represented. (Of course, sometimes all the networking in the world will not be enough. Brewery Fields protest camp was another case in point, attracting EF! ers and their friends, national EDA activists, and local resident support - but no-one else, despite massive local publicity which was very supportive). Other actions which due to their nature crop up at the last minute, or where networking is not seen as a priority, attract only those who are in touch with the action initiators - i.e. the EF! core group. Sometimes this lack of contact could represent a strategic or administrative shortfall due to workloads (for example a recent Rising Tide action was hardly networked at all, posters went up in Bangor the day before the action), at other times (as with a recent day of action at Brewery Fields) a lack of time due to events on the ground means that there is no choice but to rely on 'strong ties' links. Finally, there are actions (covert actions in particular) where numbers, or alliances, are not the major focus of the action and are not needed to be effective. This last is crucial. The Rising Tide action was a success despite only having seven or eight people in attendance. These sorts of numbers are all it takes for many of the direct action tactics EF! ers carry out - stopping work on site. Thus the extent of network crossover depends on the focus of the action initiators - what they see as their priorities, what they hope to achieve through taking the action.

Section 6: Chapter conclusion

This chapter has aimed to give a more in-depth picture of the nature and extent of local activism, and to provide ethnography which enables the relevant social movement literature to be evaluated in terms of its' applicability (conversely, the theory has provided a set of tools which has enabled the data to be decoded, as discussed at the start of this chapter, the theories and the ethnographic focus of the data in this chapter centre on the 'what and how' of action). One of the main achievements of the chapter is simply that it provides a detailed ethnographic account of one of

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[261] interview with B.NW

the small but nonetheless important local networks, whose specific character forms part of the wider movement, this then contributes to a greater understanding of what the wider EDA movement actually "is". A core theme in this PhD is the 'biodegradability' of activist networks and identities - things move on, often extremely rapidly, leaving little visible trace, and whilst campaigns and actions survive in the accounts of older activists who stay in contact with current networks, random newspaper articles and so on, where possible it is obviously of greater benefit to map the ethnography more comprehensively before memories fade. Many of the core direct action focused events and issues which have shaped, or have been shaped by, the local activist networks, POS and culture of the area have been documented for posterity through this PhD research. This is, I would argue, a key achievement in itself. It is easier to trace the more intangible 'ripple' effects of previous action on current mobilization waves, if one is aware of the full extent of these previous mobilizations.

The chapter has also provided further ethnographic evidence which supports key PhD themes and hypotheses. It provides evidence which highlights how mobilization is sustained across time through the existence and activities of social networks, and correspondingly how more "radical" actors blur relationships across an eclectic mix of other social actors. Activist communities, whilst distinct, have diffuse boundaries with 'civil society'. The data provided also highlights that the ethnography of North Wales activist communities (due to generational crossover, the strength of social networks, and so on) backs up Welsh's (2000) claims for 'capacity building' within social movements. The increasing predisposition of local activists in various networks and 'single issue' campaigns to engage in a variety of action based coalitions over issues such as globalization and anti-war activity also points to the existence of movement 'capacity building', with this local ethnography matching a pattern of the types of coalitions seen not only in the UK but internationally. Further, the evidence highlights that capacity is also lost as activists drop out of networks.

Finally, some of the major factors which trigger specific types of action/ mobilization, and a unique culture of activism and activist communities at this regional level, have been mapped. Thus regional POS, geography and specific issues (such as the "crisis in the rural economy") which have shaped the opportunities for action, and the nature of relevant allies and resources such as the support of other social actors, and the use students make of University facilities, have been identified.

The chapter thus backs up the claims made by relevant theorists (outlined in detail in ch3,

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and discussed in context throughout this chapter) regarding the above issues - such as the diffusion of activist repertoires, generational crossover, the importance of social networks and so on. Whilst generally the data has backed up the theory, it has alsopointed out some significant areas where the theory is underdeveloped - for example, the 'dilution' aspect of weak ties links in coalitions, and the effects this can have on mobilization through undermining strong identities and action strategies, which coexist simultaneously with the 'strength of weak ties' effects more widely understood in social movement theory.

Chapter 6:

"Let Our Resistance Be As Transnational As Capital!"

Excerpts from my PO from J18 (1999)

We carried on down the road. As we turned the corner I could see that we were going towards an area which had already been the target of activism! Banners were draped everywhere. A huge fountain of water, 50 ft high, was spraying everywhere, protestors already on the scene - hundreds of them - were dancing in the water...London had been laid out for me like a giant adventure playground, turning this drab grey alienating shithole into a colourful and vibrant and exciting place where we could - and were - making our mark in a positive and definitive way. We were outside the LIFFE building[262] and as we went past I heard windows smashing. The crowd stopped, milling around in fascination as, in slow motion, the front of the building caved in and a mass of activists struggled for entry...

... The main body of people started to move off down the road away from the LIFFE building but now there was a sense of urgency, and round the corner coming into view were a line of riot police pushing the crowd onwards. The crowd came to a standstill, regrouping again at a main crossroads with the samba band in the middle - people started to dance around... To my right the line of police started to run into the crowd of dancing, samba-ing people. Mounted police on horseback appeared and started charging into the back of the crowd. Chaos. They were bringing the riot right down on our heads, really triggering it and making it kick off...

... I met up with other musicians and we stopped to party some more, we made some really nice music...Suddenly the line of police charged us. Chaos, it was fucking terrifying, I could see wielded batons coming my way. I ran for it, screaming 'get to the side get to the side!!' I got out of the way. Lots of people ran for safety up a bridge that crossed the road. The underpass loomed up ahead. No way was I going down it - it looked like a deathtrap. I hovered and people melted away. I ran up the road a bit leaving the police behind and stopped to admire the sight of a burning car. Around me the thick luxury smoked glass of City buildings was caving in as people smashed up the windows...

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[262] The London Stock Exchange

Section 1: Introduction

The large scale, international demonstrations which, since 1998, have coincided with meetings of the G8, the WTO have replaced earlier public conceptions of the nature of UK activism, for the media, and probably the mass of the general public, "Eco-warriors" and "Swampy's friends" are now "anarchist anti-capitalists". This no doubt has had an influence on activists' own evaluation of their identity *(pace* Castells 1997). From the inside, and speaking as both a researcher and an activist here, actions opposing Neoliberal forms of capitalism seemed like the logical next step for the EDA movement as it built capacity. Further, as this PhD has demonstrated, these "big days out" have not replaced other forms of action, or other targets[263], rather they crystallise them. Given the nature and relative speed of activist turnover, it is likely that a new "micro-cohort"[264] of anti-capitalist activists has emerged post J-18, but this was not a movement that exploded from nowhere. Rather, inter-connected issues, facts, campaigns. combined to ensure that *explicitly* highlighting these links and targeting the whole became a rationale for action in itself in the late 90's. Building on the arguments, the first section of this chapter will concentrate on the evidence of the ideological and strategic diffusion which resulted in this next step for the UK EDA movement.

If diffusion and "capacity building" (Welsh 2000) are the internal triggers for this recent round of mobilisations, there is also another key factor. Whilst neither the form of action or the anti-capitalist rationales for it are completely new, there are very recent events and structures which have triggered action. Fitting in with POS theory (Kreisi 95, Tarrow 98), it can be seen how the essentially reactive EDA movement is responding to specific macro-economic triggers, forms of capitalism which are currently under expansion, such as the WTO - driven TRIPS (Trade Related Intellectual Property Rights)agreement which is enabling companies to patent genes. It is the effects of such macro triggers which are also galvanising other groups of the population, ensuring that the protests are attracting new (and in many cases, surprising) allies with a range of specific grievances which experienced EDA players are then able to incorporate into their anti-capitalist discourses. The nature of the EDA movement is enabling other groups to become

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[263] There is no evidence that other actions against a range of targets have declined since the predominance of anti-capitalist days of action; direct action in activist networks remains pluralist, high in occurrences, multi- issued and multi- targeted. See Doherty Plows and Wall (2001 all pubs) for more discussion on this- see **ch1** for quantitative analysis of underground publications in 2001 which give levels of activism in three activist communities. These issues are also discussed later in this chapter.

[264] Whittier (1995).

involved through international networking and biodegradable coalitions, at local level, at national and international protests in the short and long term. As with every other aspect of the EDA movement, the picture is complex, fast changing, with significant variations in the nature and types of coalitions depending on a number of variables, there are stresses and strains as well as pluses with coalitions, and these are also discussed in this chapter, together with an emphasis on the ongoing nature of preceding campaigns (GM, animal rights, climate change) at both national and local levels.

As activists themselves realise[265] "anti-globalisation" and "anti-capitalism" are in reality almost counter-productively short of the mark in terms of describing what it is that activists feel they are "up against". It has also been quite hard to find a shorthand way of describing these protests which does not fall into the same trap of sacrificing accuracy for ease of phrase. After much thought I have decided to define these protests as being Anti Neo-Liberal forms of Global Capitalism which, whilst more accurate, doesn't trip off the tongue so I have used an acronym: ANLGC. I have also focussed predominantly in this chapter on the earlier protests in this mobilisation cycle, the UK protest "J18" in 1999 and EDA solidarity events in the UK during Seattle (n30) 1999, primarily because of the need to draw a line in this PhD between the collating of ethnographic data and the process of writing up. The international nature of these protests is one of its most striking features, and the part key UK activists have played in co-ordinating and participating in protests in Prague, for example, or producing literature for Seattle on international activist websites, highlights another innovative shift of movement strategy[266]. Primarily for reasons of space, I have not developed this analysis of movement direction beyond the bare bones, for a more in-depth look at the area of national involvement in international mobilisations, see Welsh and Chesters (2002). This chapter is more focused on issues around ANLGC action within the UK.

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[265] more so than many of those who comment on such matters in the popular press, seemingly

[266] It is worth briefly re-iterating that UK involvement with international action/campaigns/struggles is not new and has existed in many forms such as UK activists visiting the road protest camp le Vallee D'Aspe in the Pyrenees throughout the 90's, taking part in nuclear convoy actions at Gorleben, Germany; solidarity actions in the UK on behalf of indigenous struggles such as the Ogoni/Shell struggle in Nigeria or the West Papuan independence/human rights struggle, the Kurds and the Illisu dam Turkey (see also Ch 4). Campaign coalitions with international activist communities over issues such as climate change are also common. The recently- formed climate change network Rising Tide has international, as well as national and local, groups. The scale of international networking and participation during the ANLGC mobilisations has been quite stunning however and marks a significant phase of strategic innovation. See also section c of this chapter for macro triggers.

Section 2: Movement Diffusion and Capacity Building

"most local environmental justice organisations may begin with a single issue in mind, but most often begin to relate issues and various forms of domination"

(Schlosberg 1999:137).

2.1 The Process Of Developing "Joined-Up" Worldviews

A: -why did you go to J18?

- we are rent a mob but its not for "any issue", its for a whole range of issues, we care about all of them, [though] *quite often it's best to focus on one issue, tactically...so what would have been good and didn't totally get pulled off on J18 was all these different groups, sections of the campaigning community, doing all these different actions –to hit all these different targets and say yes actually we are all the same thing - our own way of saying yes we are all the same people, yes we are...*

(activist in interview 1999)

A -why did you go to J18 ?

-To participate in a day of action which I felt emphasised the links between different organisations and campaigns, as well as showing the global links, and proving to the corporations of the world that our campaigns are not just single issue and blinkered, they are all integrated, and we are all integrated...Also because it was a chance to come alongside other activists who may not otherwise have been brought together...

(activist in interview 1999)

-The "Stop The City" [demos] *in the 80s were light years ahead of their time but successful in many ways and highly significant precursors of the idea of reclaiming high streets and centres of cities (including efforts to create a party type atmosphere), and focussing on international capitalist institutions. Now capitalism and capitalist 'targets' are being forced right up the agenda for the first time in decades thanks to j18 and Seattle...*

(activist on email list n30@listbot.com in 2000)

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"the world we live in, the oppressions we suffer and perpetuate, are phenomenon ally complex. Class, feminist, race, anarchist and third world experience and analyses of oppression are all valuable. The oppressions they name and seek to overturn interconnect and mutually reinforce... The struggle is at least as complex as the oppressions themselves. One potentially creative and constructive antidote is to form coalitions with those groups whose aims and methods we roughly share..."

From Peace News editorial, 25th May 1984

Written as commentary on the UK 'Stop the City' protests in 1984, this editorial could have been taken from any of the recent communiqués from Peoples' Global Action (PGA). **Ch 1** highlighted how EDA activity has long been diffuse, bridging different frames and bringing shifting identities together. The discourses and actions of the peace, human rights and early environmental movements in Britain and their influence on current events cannot be overestimated. The precise legacy of movement diffusion/capacity building cannot be easily quantified and there are important provisos, the movement being what it is means that much knowledge, expertise, biodegrades away as people drop out of networks, so whilst ideas are diffused throughout networks and down the generations there is also much re-invention of the wheel as new generations self start. This is a paradoxically symbiotic process, and ultimately dependant on the crossover between generations in specific locations or in specific campaigns. There is however an inherited legacy of tactics, discourses which can be "tapped into"- one of the activists above expressed this in terms of the precursive nature of the STC protests - and capacity is also diffused via "outside" conduits such as the media (Swampy, "tree people").

Certainly, whilst throughout the 90's there have been waves of different micro-cohorts of activists there has also been much continuity both in terms of long-term active participants bridging mobilisation cycles and in the way that individual activists and the EDA movement as a whole developed holistic / "joined-up" perspectives as a result of intensive campaigning on issues such as roads and GM. The quotes used above further highlight this process of developing *internal* movement cognitive praxis/collective identity. *External* triggers such as macro-economic developments have also influenced the development of EDA cognitive praxis and these will be discussed below.

2.2 Defining Terms: "Targeting Capitalism"

A decade of collective identity and capacity building resulted in a movement zeitgeist which effectively re-claimed the term "anti-capitalist" and consolidated years of diffuse EDA activity. The EF! Summer Gathering in 1999, post J18, was buzzing with this sense of watershed and dominated by discourses on all things anti-capitalist. There were workshops which enabled activists to discuss their feelings surrounding tactical/ethical issues (such as criminal damage) on J18, workshops to discuss future involvement with international ANLGC networks (PGA) and the up-and-coming Seattle demo (n30). Importantly, there was also a workshop which bravely attempted to get people talking about what they *meant* when they said they were "anti-capitalist". This workshop, attended by about 60 people, articulated many of the problems people had with the term. It will be of benefit to summarise the proceedings, as not only does this provide a crucial example of the process of movement cognitive praxis, and the symbiotic diversity and held-in-common views within EDA collective identity, it also highlights again just how sophisticated the "average activist's" analysis can be - again, here are grassroots "organic intellectuals" contributing to movement direction and collective identity through discourse. Of course, how activists defined their terms in this workshop also helps to firm up what can sometimes be seen as rather wobbly/imprecise use of language generally inter-movement.

The workshop facilitators had prepared four main themes which they felt got to the heart of what needed "sorting out", and these were agreed by the workshop participants. Phrased as a series of questions, they were:

1. *what do we mean by capitalism?*
2. *is capitalism 'the heart of the beast' or is this a simplified analysis?*
3. *is this analysis alienating?* [to the general public]
4. *how do we target capitalism?*

The workshop never got near discussing 4), hardly surprisingly - the hour or so was spent mostly trying to define terms and let everyone have a say about what they felt about defining themselves as "anti-capitalist", so the time was predominantly spent addressing questions 1 and 2. Given the time span and the size of the workshop, the discussion was more productive than it could have been, with some key factors surfacing.

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Some people held to the "classic" interpretation of capitalism, i.e. "the private ownership of the means of production". There was a significant amount of class analysis, that challenging capitalism was a specifically working class struggle.

*-the way capitalism is overthrown is if people rise up and throw over their jobs - the way forward is class consciousness, workers struggle...

These activists had a "traditional", 'Old Left', precisely defined economic and class definition of being anti-capitalist. However, the majority felt that capitalism thus defined didn't accurately summarise the problem 'out there' or what they felt they opposed. There was certainly an implicit consensus that capitalism, however defined, hit the poorest and weakest hardest. But rather than focussing primarily on 'the working class' the discourse was far more wide-ranging than this. People themselves flagged up their own (predominantly middle-class) backgrounds as being part of the reason why this class struggle perspective was not central to their motivations, but rather formed one reason of a linked set of many. But personal background is by far from being the only, or even the main, reason, why this rationale failed to resonate with people. There was a feeling that socioeconomic/political systems were (or had become) far more complicated -

*- we are all participators in the capitalist system, where are "us" and "them" really...

*-capitalism is part of a totality [of linked oppressions] -its a separate but related part.

*- we fall into a useless shorthand if we say all oppression is capitalism. It's not the heart of the beast, it's superficial, we need to understand all these different oppressions

*- I think that capitalism does encompass the totality, it takes over all areas of social life, all issues - gender, race...capitalism uses those to its own advantage, so I think the fundamental issue is capitalism

*-I see capitalism as a system of social relations which invades all our lives...and J18 is in that context [for me] - a lot of things which people say/think are separate from capitalism aren't.

-but all these other forms of oppression, women, the environment and the rest, existed before capitalism...

For this group majority, what mobilised them was being opposed to what they saw as a series of linked oppressions. Power relations, injustice, the exploitation of an infinite variety of different groups/beings/things, more accurately summed up their perspective. As is evident in the above quotes, there was much to-ing and fro-ing over whether the term "anti-capitalism" was perceived as incorporating this wider, looser, more "holistic" definition, or whether capitalism - an economic set of social relations - was perceived as an interconnected part of power relationships more generally. Given the interrelatedness of campaign issues as discussed in **Ch 4**, and the changing, vastly complex nature of globalised economic structures, these activist definitions, articulated off the top of peoples' heads on a sunny day, are incredibly sharp and well articulated, more evidence of grassroots "organic intellectuals". To their credit activists tried to avoid being bogged down in detailed semantics, though this debate kept re-surfacing throughout the workshop.

- I think capitalism is about workers and bosses. Other peoples' analysis is much broader... is it better to talk about what we are for and against instead?
[consensus yes.]

- should we make a distinction then between "the system" - the totality of linked oppressions - and "capitalism" as just economic oppression?

* *-there is an "activist slang" definition of capitalism - [for capitalism] read vaguely oppression or something like that... - so we're against capitalism... "and that"...then?!*
[amused agreement]

What is so obvious, so taken for granted, by the activists, is the level of agreement. No-one is questioning the main ideological thrust that capitalism (in either/both definitions) is *wrong*, should be combated. No-one is saying, for example, 'well I think free trade enables the poor to become richer' or 'development is good for third world countries'. No-one stood up in the workshop and said "I'm sorry, but I don't agree with you and I won't be doing actions in future with you", Given silence as consent (i.e. I am assuming - and it's a big assumption - that anyone who disagreed

would have spoken up) what this tells us about activist worldviews is very significant. Despite the diversity in interpretation, there's a great deal of common ground, as again the participants themselves were well aware of.

*-I think we can find out that we can all agree with what we are _against_ - exploitation, oppression, injustice - and is attacking capitalism a useful way of achieving what we want to do...

The following data from the "targeting capitalism" workshop is a list of issues flagged up during the workshop as being what people felt they were 'against':

Against:
patriarchy, hierarchy generally, private ownership of the means of production, capitalism defined both 'traditionally' and as a 'series of linked oppressions' (though it was not always stated what those 'oppressions' were).
The terms 'oppression', 'coercion', 'use', and 'exploitation' kept resurfacing in these contexts.

Issues/things explicitly named as suffering:
the environment, the animal kingdom, society ,workers, gender/women, different races.

There was both an articulated and implicit sense that free choice, autonomy, freedom were innate rights being denied by the former group to the latter. Words such as 'control', 'manipulate', emphasised this. Implicit was a strong belief in human rights, individual rights, extended to the environment and to animals. It can be seen that this further reiterates categories/issues. articulated by my interviewees in **Ch 4**, basic though these lists are. Given the context and limits of the workshop I would not expect a very clearly articulated or complete picture to emerge. Again note the implicit agreement, activists have an underlying set of taken for granted assumptions about their own, and each others', worldviews, by which I mean that for most activists the reasons why they mobilise, the issues they mobilise over, are so obvious (to them) that they don't give it much thought. Thus someone can simply use a shorthand like 'exploiting the environment' and people understand (or think they understand) where they are coming from without the need for much

discussion of what that actually *means*. Also , as an interviewee noted[267], when discussing motivations for action, large - so general as to be almost meaningless - phrases are at least a good code, a good shorthand, for what would otherwise be an almost impossible task given the 'life, universe and everything' subtext.

As with my interviewees, there are explicit and implicit moral codes, value systems, ways of viewing the world, going on here. Capitalism is linked to oppression and this is seen as ethically wrong i.e. it's ethically/morally wrong to exploit and oppress people and planet. This is implicit throughout the workshop and in peoples' tone, the words they use, a sense of moral outrage, of 'moral shock' (Jasper 1997): capitalism *'uses'* and *'coerces'* and *'oppresses'*, very emotive, very loaded, words. Similarly, there is a valuing of ideals such as human rights, autonomy, freedom. There is an implicit understanding that current systems do not value that which they exploit, thus, the activists do attribute value to what they see society/the dominant paradigm as having devalued, women, indigenous peoples, the environment. These arguments dovetail with the generalised eco-ethics literature, whether eco-feminist, social ecologist, or deep ecologist, specific differences between these positions are, I would argue, not as important as the basic building blocks which are shared in common (see **Ch 3**).

There is also a very structural analysis going on here, a desire to take action and physically stop/confront the "manifestations" of capitalism, "the totality". As evidenced by the quotes below, the discussion moved from abstract generalisations towards specific action targets and strategies:

*-it's better to attack the manifestations of capitalism, the tangible bits...- anyway we are in no position to deliver the knockout blow...

*-we're in agreement that we are against a totality [of oppressions], so shall we discuss that at the Winter Moot...
*- can it be a practical discussion of the totality and how to hit it?

The above quotes are significant not only for their implied structural thrust and content, but for their action-based agenda, and the strategic emphasis on pragmatism. The last quote, which was also – interestingly - the last comment of the workshop, sums up for me the quality of EF!/the

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[267] Interview Feb. 2000

EDA movement as a primarily action-based movement. Whilst the commentator had taken an active role in the discussion this last comment had traces of, not impatience exactly, but a pragmatic/strategic imperative to *get out there and do things*. It is not that activists don't want to analyse, are anti-intellectual, but they are wary of being trapped in talking shops. Issues which seem irresolvable in meetings can be immaterial in practise.

All of the above quotes firstly provide reiterative detail of themes/areas of common ground highlighted in **Ch 4** by my interviewees, secondly they highlight how complex, reflexive and analytical activists' approaches to ANLGC discourse is, thirdly it gives us a better idea of what activists mean when they say they are "anti-capitalist".

Section 3: Grassroots Action - The Globalisation of the Local

'...we now call for sympathetic communities, grassroots groups, and individuals around the world to organise their own autonomous actions, protests, and carnivals against the capitalist system on November 30th '
(from PGA literature on Seattle)

The ANLGC protests are the tip of an iceberg of a movement, much of whose activity is submerged far below the awareness of the general public. This PhD provides ethnographic evidence that "single issue" and local campaigns have always had a "multi-issue" focus implicit in their rationales. As discussed in **Ch 1**, previous generations of movement activity (feminism, peace, anti-nuclear) have had a similar systemic focus -which the almost - clichéd 1970's campaign phrase "think global act local" is just one example of evidence for.

That being said, it is also the case that from the late 90's onwards, many campaigns at national /local level have been making more explicit links to other issues, and importantly to how NLGC processes impact upon their primary grievances (these themes - recent macro-economic triggers, and coalitions - will be dealt with more fully in later sections). For example, in March 2001 there was a Welsh anniversary demonstration over the building of the Treweryn dam, where a village in North Wales was drowned in 1961 to provide water for Liverpool (this event did much to trigger the radical Welsh language/culture direct action campaigns). The anniversary was used as an opportunity to highlight Welsh Language and community issues together with support for the Illisu Dam (Turkey) campaign, highlighting a myriad of other issues - human rights,

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solidarity for the Kurds, environmental damage, the economic mandate pushing the dam, the World Bank, UK/DTI - run export credit guarantees. The demonstration brought together people across a variety of campaign and social backgrounds who articulated this common ground, with a key theme running through all speeches being the mandates and values of an economic and social system which affected people similarly in a variety of different settings. The sight of brightly dressed Kurdish dancers spinning to the sound of haunting reed instruments, overlooked by the weather beaten faces of silent Welsh locals beside the shining waters of the lake, is one I won't forget in a hurry.

Much of the activist discourse coming out of strategic discussions around ANLGC protests emphasises the need to promote the issues at a local level, thus enabling local communities to relate to seemingly abstract concepts such as TRIPS mechanisms and free trade rules. The PGA quote at the top of this section advocates solidarity actions in localities during n30 (Seattle) as a key way of shoring up grassroots support. One of the most exciting things about the n30 protests apart from the events in Seattle itself, was the sense of being part of a global community of activists who were all taking solidarity actions at the same time, whether on Bangor high street or in New Delhi. Dozens of actions, with vast numbers of participating activists worldwide were reported in almost real time via activist websites. This sense of local/global connection and drive to show the interrelationships of issues is now apparent in many of the "single issue" and local actions taking place in the UK on a regular basis, as this activist email highlights:

'... local grassroots campaigning, explaining to people what the issues are, shoring up support in our communities, explaining (for example) the connections between bad bus services, privatisation and GATT, we do this a lot and we need to do more of it. We need to redouble our efforts to contextualise the global locally, otherwise people will feel increasingly disconnected from what we are doing and why. We recently had an action at Bangor McDonalds making the links between McDonalds, MNCs, agribusiness, globalisation, the WTO, and promoting local production as the sustainable alternative... [268]*

Ch 5 in particular provides ethnographic detail at case study level in terms of how positive,

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[268] (activist email sent to a number of activist lists including bangor-werdd@yahoogroups.com during the Genoa protests)

proactive actions and projects are undertaken by activists at grassroots level, as I discussed in **Ch 1**, this emphasis on strengthening local networks and contacts via positive, often sustainable development – orientated projects, is also something which has evolved as part of EDA strategy over the years. Again, such projects are seen increasingly as providing (or at least, attempting to trigger) alternatives to current socio-economic structures, consciousness-raising, bringing sections of communities together.

'I think that we also need to keep our feet on the ground and be involved in things that are bringing about change in communities...say, a squat cafe, where we only serve food that is GE free, and having lots of information, having talks, having videos about GE, saying this is why we're doing this, and giving people a very gentle way into it, showing them a whole spectrum of things they can do in their own lives. The number of squat cafes and social centres is rocketing, people are getting really into doing those sorts of community actions... [269]*

Massive international ANLGC protests may drop off in frequency or scale after time, but part of their lasting legacy will have been the re-invigoration of local, grassroots and "single issue" campaigns.

Section 4: POS And Macro Mobilisation Factors

4.1 Theoretical Overview

Again, mobilisation in the UK EDA movement is triggered by the internal world of the individual activist, the development of movement community and capacity, and external triggers in the form of issues, grievances and other political opportunities. Whilst not wishing to unnecessarily re-visit too much of the ground covered in **Ch 3**, it is important to re-emphasise this essential point in terms of how I, personally, construct POS factors. I am unsure whether Tarrow et al would define the macro-economic conditions laid out by the WTO/IMF/G8 as "political". Personally, I would argue that such macro-economic structures are incredibly political as I define the term, certainly these structures out rank the political mandates of nation states, also they rely on political interaction with member states - and consequently the way activists mobilise against structures such as the WTO is proof of POS theory in action.

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[269] activist in interview 1999

Kreisi (95)[270] discusses international POS preconditions, emphasising that counter-cultural movements "react strongly to changes in the POS" [271] and that countries with strong international links, a colonial past, are more likely to be responsive to events on the international stage. This certainly has parallels with the ways in which international ANLGC protests have been galvanised. Similarly, the commonly held POS viewpoint that "strong repression may... stimulate collective action"[272] also explains external mobilisation factors for ANLGC activity. Importantly, this is "political repression" which is/has been very well articulated by activists *prior* to mobilisation (pace Tarrow) and indeed forms one of the primary grievances.

Whether the WTO's mandate and similar macro-economic conditions are counted as "Political Opportunities" or as what I have called "Issue Opportunities", the important point is that there are specific external factors which have triggered UK ANLGC activity, i.e., these mobilisations have occurred also as specific responses *to* specific events, much as *GM* covert "crop trashing" occurred because GM crops started to be grown in the UK.

4.2 Activist Action Responses And Rationales (Focus On "N30")

4.2.1 Articulated Rationales For Mobilisation

November 30th, 1999 - A Global Day of Action, Resistance, and Carnival Against the Global Capitalist System

*Activists from diverse groups and movements around the world are discussing, networking and organising for an **international day of action** on November 30th. On this day, officials of 150 governments will meet in Seattle for the 3rd conference of the World Trade Organisation (WTO), at which they will decide on new policies that will further escalate the exploitation of our planet and its people by the global capitalist system. Thus, there will be attempts to push through a new version of the Multilateral Agreement on Investment (MAI), strengthen intellectual property rights, and further neoliberalization through a new round of free trade talks. A coalition of radical activists has been formed in Seattle to stage actions against the conference, and activist groups around the world are planning to converge on the city.*

Also, the international Peoples Global Action (PGA) network and the IWW (Industrial Workers of the World) are planning actions against the WTO around the world. Meanwhile, various

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[270] Kreisi, Hanspeter (1995)
[271] Kreisi (1995). pp193

grassroots groups prepare to take action in their own parts of the world in recognition that the capitalist system, based on the exploitation of people, societies and the environment for the profit of a few, is the prime cause of present social and ecological troubles.[273]

"... The clout of the WTO actually rests in a quad of countries: USA, UK, Japan and Canada. The countries enforce WTO decisions by imposing trade sanctions. The USA has little to fear if a 'minor' country threatens sanctions against the USA but the USA can destroy an entire economy overnight. It has also backed irritation over trade issues with covert threats of military action. The USA has filed nearly a third of all complaints considered by the WTO and has won 90% of them. Over the past 20 years the developing countries share of global trade has halved.

The WTO current aims are 'liberalisation' of trade across the world. The reality is very much different. Several big corporations such as Microsoft, Chiquita and Monsanto control the World Trade Organisations funding, and their funding allows "the greatest possible interactions" with organisers in return..."[274]

Activists argue that the WTO's mandate is to ensure the flow of "free trade", a term which, campaigners argue, is little more than whitewash for protecting the interests of multinational corporations (MNCs) at the expense of people and the planet. Free trade's agenda, defined by the WTO, takes legal precedence over, for example, health and safety laws of a particular country:

"Free trade" in the World Trade Organisation's view is forcing the European Union to accept hormone treated beef which is produced by multinational Monsanto. Even though this beef has not been tested properly for safety, and even though its use makes the cows lives miserable, we, as members of the EU must accept this dirty beef onto our markets. If we don't then we can be sure that the USA will force us to.[275]

The applications of WTO law, and the effects that it has, are numerous. The fact that this is an agenda imposed on countries/governments/communities/individuals is also a major issue for

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[272] Kreisi (1995)ibid. pp177

[273] From http://www.n30.org

[274] activist email from the n30 email list n30@listbot.com

[275] ibid.

campaigners. Activists are identifying the mechanisms of trans-national capital, and the working of MNCs in concord with these conditions, as a threat. As the WTO, free trade conditions impact further on international/national /local political processes, and on the fabric of daily life – public services, the food we eat, - the response is counter cultural, cross movement action, taken locally at the grassroots, nationally and internationally, in solidarity with other international groups and campaigns, eliciting a range of allies. Activists' rationales and explicit articulation of specific grievances highlight that they are responding to specific macro-economic triggers.

Constraints of space mean that an in-depth analysis of activists' criticisms of Free Trade mechanisms, TRIPS, GATT agreements cannot be given here, all that can be done is to present some of the basic arguments made, without entering into the tricky territory of how *justified* such claims are[276]. For the purposes of this PhD, the main point is to highlight that this is how *the activists themselves* construct their grievances, that they are constructing movement collective identity based on such analyses, that (importantly in terms of movement direction and strategy) these are grievances and analyses shared by a wide variety of *other affected parties, increasingly* from sectors of 'civil society' not normally associated with counter-cultural /counter hegemonic discourses of this type.

4.2.2 Other Voices

Interestingly, current "movement intellectuals" and academics commenting on how NLGC structures adversely impact on populations and the environment are widely read both by activists whilst also, because of the scale of the protests, being given 'airtime' by the media, books by eco-feminist writer and activist Vandana Shiva[277], George Monbiot's 'Captive State', Naomi Klein's "No Logo" all articulate similar deconstructions of the structural workings of the dominant paradigm, providing facts and tangible examples. Similar discourses can also be found within organisations such as 3rd world NGOs like Oxfam and Christian Aid and, interestingly, within more "official"/politically compromised organisations such as the UN, where conferences on

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[276] It is also important that I re-iterate my own political partisanship here; it is likely that I take much activist discourse on these issues for granted simply because I agree with them, frame my own arguments similarly. Perhaps if I personally agreed less with activists' rationales, I may have focused more on deconstructing them in this PhD. Whether or not my partisanship has impacted adversely on my treatment of movement action and discourse is ultimately for the reader to decide, and I refer back to arguments on this subject made throughout **ch2.**
[277] http://news.bbc.co.uk/hi/english/static/events/reith_2000/lecture5.stm

women and globalisation have for some years been producing publications which voice strong opposition to Neo-Liberal development models. "Third World" campaigns/indigenous struggles and in some case, governments have also articulated detailed opposition providing specific examples to prove their points.

4.2.3 Cognitive Praxis/Capacity Building

An important dimension of these protests is that in the majority of cases the "bigger picture" of macro-economic conditions are explained as exacerbating the problems caused by a pre-existing grievance, for example Indian farmers burning fields of genetically-modified crops explicitly articulate how under WTO rules they would be forced to grow them, similarly locals mobilising at an overt GM "crop-trash" in Flintshire, North Wales in summer 2001 were incensed that the WTO could force this crop on a country whose Assembly has already declared it to be a GM-free zone. Thus through being involved in pre-existing campaigns on specific issues such as GM, where the introduction of WTO Free Trade rules could be instantly seen to be further exacerbating the impact of the primary claim(s), GM campaigners had to become as expert on NLGC structures as they were on GMOs. Whatever the actual route(s) of knowledge - and in my own case, such information was diffused down to me through a number of different routes, via "single issue" campaigns' specific examples, in activist workshops on the overall mandate of the WTO[278], and as the ANLGC movement picked up speed, via dozens of websites, emails, publications – as with other issues, individual activists often become "organic experts" via direct campaigning. This is further evidence of the 'chicken and egg' process running as one of the sub-themes of this PhD, the interweaving of action, discourse and further action.

It is evident how global movement capacity has been able to grow as activists worldwide articulate their common ground, all are mobilising against the same economic systems.[279] Again, I would like to emphasise that the re-invigoration of grassroots community struggles, national campaigns against specific "single issues" (that dam, that import, that privately - built hospital,

[278] At the "Gathering Visions Gathering Strength" activist weekend in Hebden Bridge. 1999

[279] Another good example is this report of n30 /anti WTO action posted on the n30 website:
New Delhi, India: Action against the WTO and the Maheshwar dam in New Delhi
500 women and men from the Maheshwar area of the Narmada valley arrived on the 29th of November to New Delhi in order to participate in a 3-days Dharna (sit-in) at Raj Ghat. Their actions had two specific targets: the collusion of Indian industrial interests, diverse multinational corporations and the German state to build up a dam in Maheshwar, which would have devastating local impacts, and the WTO regime, for the equally vandalistic and insidious dispossession that it creates globally.... (from http://www.n30.org)

AIDS drugs in the 3rd world) via the global links of a shared opposition to NLGC structures is likely to be one of the most important legacies of this "movement of movements"[280].

4.2.4 Action[281]

November 30th, UK

In Halifax a Nestle factory is occupied and an anti-WTO banner is dropped outside, 16 are arrested. In Leeds city centre, around 50 protestors leaflet outside scummy companies. In Manchester Lloyds Bank is occupied and shut down by 50 activists, who then proceed to block the street outside. A disused garage and an old Toll House, soon to be luxury apartments have been squatted in Totnes, South Devon to draw local people's attention to the WTO. In Exeter a coalition of activists protest against the WTO and global capitalism. An anti-WTO procession marches through downtown Cardiff, Wales. In Bangor, North Wales, a coalition of groups hold a nonviolent and colourful protest march in the high street. London. In the morning people distribute leaflets and stickers designed to raise awareness of capitalism and the WTO. At noon, construction workers protest. Students picket a bank to highlight globalization induced student loan debt. Nigerians and British environmentalists hold a street theatre "People's Court." A rally at 5:00pm at Euston Station draws nearly two thousand people to support public transportation workers and to highlight the links between the free trade agenda of the WTO and the privatisation of public transport in the UK. There were also speakers covering a wide array of issues linked to the WTO and the system it governs. Afterwards, protestors make an attempt to block a busy intersection but confrontations with the police result in an overturned burning police van, 38 arrests, and several casualties. A pirate radio station replaces a yuppie one on

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[280] description taken from a recent London RTS publication on the war in Afghanistan and global capitalism – a "spoof" newspaper "the Spun" (see www.the-spun.org). It is worth emphasising that the analysis of how the WTO impacts on peoples' lives, and the anti -war stance of this publication is an excellent example of the sort of intelligent analysis backed up by *facts* which characterises much activist literature, whether anti- war, GM, climate change. It is also worth re-emphasising that these are discourses very rarely heard in the mainstream media, and certainly specific criticisms are never (or rarely) responded to directly by politicians/organisations, who tend to smother all opposition by character- assassination, i.e. "these people are woolly- minded thinkers/anti-democratic violent anarchists..."

[281] See also earlier PO account of J18. In some ways n30/Seattle has almost been surpassed by events in Gothenburg, Prague and Genoa in 2001- as stated at the outset, for pragmatic reasons to do with amounts of data collection, intricacy of subject matter and the time available to properly analyse it, I have deliberately drawn a line after n30 in terms of evaluating movement praxis and practise.

106.9 FM across London until it is shut down at 4:00pm [282].

The extent of protestors' success across the channel surprised even the most optimistic of activists.

I am writing with exceptional news for all of you. The WTO conference has broken up, and they have no new agreement, no new round, no agenda, nada, ZILCH, NOTHING! The talks have broken up without an agreement even on what is to be discussed over the course of the next two years. Not only have we succeeded in shutting down the largest and most powerful organization in the world, but now we have prevented them from expanding their powers. [283]

Update: Activists declared victory as the WTO wrapped up its week long meeting without reaching consensus on any major issues. During the week of protests, over 600 people were arrested and dozens injured by police. The demonstrations and the independent media covering them received extensive press around the world. Amnesty International and Human Rights Watch have called for independent panels to investigate charges of police misconduct during the week of protests. The ACLU is also investigating. [284]

Section 5: Alliances And Coalitions

"Movements create opportunities for their own supporters, for others, for parties and elites. They do this by diffusing collective action and displaying the possibility of coalitions, by creating political space for kindred movements and counter-movements, and by producing incentives for elites and third parties to respond to..."
(Tarrow 1998 pp72)

5.1 Biodegradable, Cross-Movement Networks

"Networks serve as crucial means for mobilising resources through recruitment of activists...

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[282] From http://www.n30.org
[283] From n30 list n30@listbot.com
[284] http://damn.tao.ca/index2.htm "The Direct Action Media Network (DAMN!) is a multi-media news service that covers protests, marches, strikes and direct actions.

networks...serve as media of <u>cognitive praxis</u> through which activists...come to share both common viewpoints...and a sense of collective identity"[285]

Within the sea of interconnecting networks which the EDA movement consists of exists a multitude of different types of campaigns, activist identities and, more specifically in this context, <u>coalitions</u> which, depending on a number of variables such as the predisposition of individuals, the nature of the claims made by participants and their strategies can be more or less formally – structured, temporary or ongoing. Similarly these varieties of coalitions can exist simultaneously at local, national and international level. As the ANLGC movement forms an integral part of the movement as a whole, with 'strong ties' and 'weak ties' links between individuals, issues, networks and so on, it is evident that the nature and types of structures and coalitions prevalent in the wider movement are also practised here. Thus there is a great variety in the nature of cross-network coalitions dependant on the area and the predispositions of the prime mobilisers, but whether at local, national or international level, such coalitions tended to be helped by the fluid and adaptable nature of pre-existing activist communities and networks.

In terms of the overall picture of the ANLGC movement as a "global coalition", there are several layers of the onion. Generally, a loose coalition based on nothing more than a shared sense of grievance and ethical/structural connections to other activists globally was formed based on the vast numbers of "single issue" campaigns and organisations around the world who were united in opposing the WTO. Simultaneously, the PGA (Peoples' Global Action) network had a degree of more formal organisation - there have been international PGA meetings - which in the context of n30 mobilisations amounted predominantly to a generalised 'mission statement' put out by a central 'core' and the expressed hope that grassroots groups would take autonomous action, linked to PGA general aims and agendas (see Welsh and Chesters 2001, and PGA quotes used throughout this chapter). The PGA in other words is very similar to other EDA movement networks, comprising mostly of a 'banner'- these days, often a website - behind which autonomous groups take uncoordinated action. At a local level, the history of pre-existing communities of activists and NGOs also triggered 'spontaneous' coalitions, as the quotes in the previous section highlight - see also **Ch 5** for case study detail. Whilst this picture is as applicable to the international ANLGC movement, here the ethnographic focus is primarily on the UK-

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[285] Master framing and cross-movement networking in contemporary social movements- Caroll, William and Ratner, RS 1996 (p604).

though it is impossible in this context to ignore the international links.

On the subject of the nature/structure of the ANLGC movement, the literature of networks discussed in (predominantly) **Ch 3** and **Ch 5** can be usefully re-visited. Cross-movement networks

"...will normally grow at a more rapid rate and normally attain a larger membership than will movements which are structurally more isolated"[286].

Snow, Zurcher, and Ekland - Olson 1980 pp 787-801.

This is corroborated by the size, rapid growth, and rapid response to the call for action, of the alliances and actions taken as part of J18 and n30. Obviously, it is the process of network*ing* - interaction and discourse and, of course, the taking of action itself - between these groups/networks which enables mobilisation to be initiated and sustained in the short and long term. The fluid, loose, cross-movement coalitions of J18 and n30 perfectly echo Granovetter's[287] description of how 'weak ties' work to disseminate information across networks, to attract as wide a range of recruits as possible to large scale mobilisations and long term strategic alliances. The dissemination of information, ideas, contacts and resources happening in real time on the Internet via email groups and on websites during the J18/n30 mobilisations are so representative of how direct activists network generally that they achieve a kind of symbolic resonance as well as being an increasingly crucial resource/networking tool in their own right[288].

Other researchers also note that

"'motives'....arise out of a process of ongoing interaction with a movement organisation..."[289]

and that

" the practises of master framing and cross-movement networking probably condition each other"[290]

In terms of the sections of civil society, NGOs, interest groups, older campaign groups and

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[286] Ibid pp797

[287] Mark S Granovetter 'the Strength of weak ties' in American Journal of sociology vol78 no6

[288] The importance of IT as a networking tool and mobilisation trigger/resource, which I would argue is of particular relevance for the movement alliances and actions discussed here, cannot be underestimated. It is discussed generally in **ch7**; see also Plows, Wall and Doherty 2001- Helsinki- for the impact of IT as a factor on the ANLGC protests and Plows (2001).

[289] Snow et al ibid pp 795

[290] Master framing and cross-movement networking in contemporary social movements- Caroll, William and Ratner, RS 1996:pp 616

political parties who (amongst others) have to a greater or lesser extent become part of the loose coalition of the ANLGC protests, it is evident that the Political Opportunities or Issue Opportunities referred to in earlier section have had a huge impact in triggering mobilisation and finding common bonds with radical EDA activists via their primary claim, opposition to the WTO.

5.2 Common Ground - New Allies In 'Civil Society'?

...Look, we're all fucked if we don't make a united stand. let's put up a broad left anti-WTO united front. some may feel more like "anti-capitalists" than others, or some may even think to have a more correct political and ideological line than others, - but in the final analysis, if we don't put our act together we'll all be thrown into the dustbin of history...

...let us strengthen our UNITED FRONT. Reds, Pinkos, Greens, Anarchists, Trotskyites, Maoists, Marxists, Zapatistas, Leninists, (even Leninists), people's organisations, grassroots movements, etc. should once and for all come together with ALL forms of struggle to frustrate the globalisation of capitalism. We cannot have a united front if we stick to our own sectarianism, vanguardism, or triumphalism...

...the protests have successfully brought together differing strands of the movement which is something that will strengthen the movement enormously...Socialists, anarchists, environmentalists and trade unionists are collaborating in a way that bodes well for the future...

(emails taken from Mayday 2000 egroup discussion list mayday2000@yahoogroups.com)

An important feature of the ANLGC protests has been the fact that "weak ties" groups/NGOs and other sections of society not previously associated with radical movement activity have taken part - and are also strongly opposing the macro-structural processes of Neo-Liberal Global Capitalism. Key questions for this final section are then - who is mobilising, why is this happening, and what is the long term strategic significance?

Three main groups seem to me to be highly mobilised and articulate in terms of vocalising their opposition to the WTO and NLGC structures and taking part in the ANLGC mobilisations. They are: 3rd –world charities and NGOs, in particular Oxfam and Christian Aid, the "old Left"

and related trade union/public service workers, "third sector"/civil society groups such as farmers.

5.2.1 NGOs And Related 'Reformist' Campaign Groups

Whilst NGOs have always had *something* of a radical campaign agenda, this has become much more politicised in the late 90's, with statements emerging from groups like Oxfam which say that addressing the effects of poverty is not enough - the causes must also be addressed. This led to very strongly - articulated opposition to WTO policies from Oxfam during the n30 protests. Perhaps the most extraordinary thing about the nature and extent of the loose coalitions and alliances forged over n30 was the fact that many of these 'respectable' NGOs such as Christian Aid were consciously aligning themselves with activists who, post J18, had been increasingly vilified in the national press as violent anarchists and terrorists,[291] (in general, all activists attending J18 have been classed in this way despite the fact that the vast majority of protestors remained nonviolent). Despite this, the n30 alliances were even stronger than they were on J18.[292] Whilst some of these sorts of organisations (including many religious organisations and the Jubilee 2000 campaign) may have a more reformist agenda, e.g. have been more inclined to focus solely on the WTO rather than on a more systemic opposition to NLGC, or critiquing the mandate of the WTO rather than its existence per se as direct activists are prone to do, in the short term on specific issues there has been network crossover of an impressively large scale and with a fairly radical agenda. In terms of a short term, biodegradable loose coalition mobilised for a specific event, this has been very significant, stretching the boundaries of what the movement "is" (or at least, highlighting how blurred the edges are) and providing the base for further inter-network crossover. In the longer term, there are strategic problems - see the next subsection.

5.2.2 The "Old Left" And Related Interest Groups (Public Service Sector)

It is evident from activist critiques of the WTO already given as data in this chapter, that there are many issues regarding workers' rights and conditions which are adversely affected by WTO trade rules Current rounds of WTO talks are proposing the complete privatisation of public services run via WTO guidelines, these are seen as further exacerbating the perceived problems of

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[291] Ref newspapers.

[292] Given the escalation of violence at the ANLGC protests- even though these seem to be often a response to violence from the State- see http://www.indymedia. - these loose coalitions with the more reformist organisations will have come under a great deal of pressure- see also next subsection.

privatisation. These and related issues can fairly be said to be the province of the "Old Left" (though as stressed throughout this PhD this social dimension to radical opposition has been a key, symbiotic feature of all "environmental" protests) - Marxist groups, marginal political parties such as the SWP, the extreme Left in the Labour party, the Socialist Alliance. Again the WTO has galvanised opposition and triggered mobilisation amongst a formerly radical section of society which, one might argue, had the political fight knocked out of it during the Miners' Strike. It is also likely that the "Old Left" were inspired and further galvanised into ANLGC action by the energy and radical forms of organising and action of the EDA movement.

There is much ethnographic evidence to suggest that many individuals within the "Old Left" have been inspired not only by EDA activists' radical discourses but also, importantly, their forms of organising - autonomous grassroots action as opposed to "traditional" party or hierarchical structures. During the course of my activist involvement /PO in a variety of settings, I have encountered many "Old Left" who have been inspired by (for example) the roads protests camps, RTS street parties, the lack of restrictive structures which enables rapid response to action. There is no doubt that many activists who come from a primarily socialist perspective have been happy to meld into the amorphous mass which is the EDA movement and here the ANLGC mobilisations - the quotes at the top of this subsection are just some of the dozens of similar posts on the anti-capitalist egroup Mayday 2000. Much more complicated has been the revival of "official" Old Left structures and political parties such as the Socialist Alliance and the SWP- led "Globalise Resistance!, which has articulated strong opposition to NLGC structures, but from an EDA activist point of view is seen primarily as a vehicle for political party recruitment rather than as a social movement for radical change. These problems will be picked up again in the following subsection.

5.2.3 Farmers[293]

Internationally, it is clear that those who work the land have long been sowing the seeds of global resistance to ANLGC structures, for example movements of land workers who have been thrown off their land because of a chain of events initiated by IMF repayment loans, or forced to move

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[293] Farmers are by far from being the only example of civil society affected and mobilising about globalisation-induced grievances, but they are noteworthy for two reasons; firstly because traditionally they are a sector with leanings towards the right, the opportunities for crossover with ANLGC activists, the instances of this happening in practice, the obvious barriers in terms of 'right wing and 'left wing' discourses clashing, and the potential implications of all of this, are extremely interesting. Secondly, and more pragmatically, during the course of my research, farmers in North Wales have been mobilising consistently and have provided an obvious case study.

because of deforestation or water pollution caused by MNC development, have been feeling the sharp end of globalisation for many years. The agri-chemical industry has been radicalising farmers in the 3rd world since the fallout of the so-called 'Green Revolution' (see interviewees comments inCh 4), the Indian farmers burning GM crops are carrying on this tradition of resistance and opposition to what academic/activists like Vandana Shiva have called 'the new colonialism'. Thus the impact of WTO mandates on the way MNCs run agribusiness in (especially) the 3rd World has triggered mass movements of people, as evidenced by the global solidarity of the ANLGC protests.[294]

In Europe, until recently artificially buoyed up by the CAP, farming communities have not mobilised specifically around the primary claim of WTO/NLGC structures as clearly or as early as in the developing world, though in France, Jose Bove has been an almost symbolic figurehead of farmers opposed to globalisation models and has 'led' many ANLGC protests.[295] However, whilst farmers were not to be seen on the streets of London during J18, at a grassroots level there is much crossover, as farming communities hit by BSE and more recently Foot and Mouth begin to construct opposition in terms of globalisation and the WTO. Activists in Norwich invited the 'Intercontinental Caravan' of farmers opposed to globalisation to their GM 'crop squat' in 1999, and local farmers met their more politicised counterparts. Norwich campaigners have also organized conferences themed on the adverse effects of WTO rules and agribusiness agendas, bringing together EDA actors with ordinary farmers. EDA activists and Greens have been attempting to win over farmers to their cause by highlighting the importance of sustainable farming methods and systems over agribusiness. Green agriculture action networks such as 'Pruning Hooks' and 'Action on Corporate Agriculture' have arisen to network information to farmers and make the links between green arguments and the farming crisis, combining such discourses with critiques of WTO policy. There was a notable amount of crossover between

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[294] I am aware of the (structurally necessary) limitations of this chapter in not addressing in more detail the many movements and affected people across time, across the globe who have countered neoliberalist policies and agendas (See for example Mies and Shive (93) 'Ecofeminism'. It is clear from activist literature that these are facts, strategies of resistance and radical discourses which have long inspired the UK EDA movement.

[295] Things spread fast- I received an email on 22.1.02 from the UK- run farmers/green email list 'pruning hooks' (pruninghooks@yahoogroups.com): *Dear friends, From our side we have started to prepare the events around the 17th of April, the international day of farmer's struggle. Via Campesina had a board meeting in Paris where we discussed the focuses for 2002. Via Campesina proposes that the main focus will be genetic resources/bio-diversity, GMO's and patents. This year there are several international events that we can use to raise attention on the issue: the FAO summit in June and the Rio+10 summit in August/September in Johannesburg, South Africa. Beside that there is also the COP6 meeting on the Convention on Biodiversity in the Hague, Netherlands. We want to link this to the "Rights issue": the right of having access to production/seeds and the right for farm leaders to be free: we have many leaders that are in jail and in the next weeks José Bové might join them...*

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radical activist networks and the farmers (primarily) mobilising during the fuel protests[296], these social links have been informally maintained with Farmers For Action leader David Handley[297] and others.

As discussed in **Ch 5**, activists in North Wales have been successful in creating 'weak ties' links to the farming community, where small sheep farmers have been hard hit by the farming crisis[298]- as an earlier activist email pointed out, a recent McDonalds' action was attended by local farmers, and a number of speakers including a local farmer identified the threats the WTO posed to rural communities. Some of these farmers went to hear Jose Bove speak in London in 2001. Nationally, organic and small farmers have been significantly moving towards radical green and left networks, but the majority have tended to join in with the Right/'traditional' mobilizations, namely the Countryside Alliance[299]. the harder task is to convince the farming community as a whole. However despite the obvious problems with the clash of (to generalise) left and right paradigms' opposition to globalisation (see next section), farmers are nonetheless new potential allies for those who oppose the WTO, and are, I would argue, significant precursors of more general "third sector"/"civil society" opposition to globalised economies, as well as for what Meyer and Tarrow (1998) term the 'social movement society'.

5.3 Problems With Coalitions

A recurring theme in this thesis is where the boundaries of "the movement" are - how far collective identity can be stretched (see **conclusion** for final summaries). There really isn't an easy answer - the boundaries are blurred, and this is simply what constitutes an NSM. In the context of the ANLGC mobilisations, the loose coalitions and range of new (potential and actual) allies - or at least people with similar grievances - throws the spotlight further onto this question about where the contested boundaries of "the movement" are, and what constitutes movement collective identity. In some ways the temporary, biodegradable nature of EDA structure and activity can be seen as a strategic bonus[300] in that alliances may dissolve away until the next time they are needed,

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[296] Doherty et al 2002, 2003 forthcoming

[297] FFA recently (August 2002) initiated a 'farmers' strike', in part inspired by direct action tactics of Pruning Hooks/Rising Tide and EDA activists who they are in communication with.

[298] During the BSE crisis, when farmers were picketing at Holyhead and engaging in direct action- throwing imported Irish Beef into the sea and pushing back police lines- import and export rules were a key grievance; WTO Free Trade rules which exacerbate these problems are now common discourse amongst politicised farmers.

[299] The CA marches in September 2001 and in 2000 highlight that a 'default' to a more nationalist, parochial and Right wing discourse- even if this is in some way vocalizing opposition to globalisation- is still the primary frame for this section of civil society. This is an interesting topic for further research.

[300] which, given the nature of the movement- limited resources, combined with high- cost action, is I would argue an

though this has strategic limitations in terms of having always to pick up dropped threads. Whether at international level via PGA conferences or at local level (see **Ch 5**), activists also wish to build on and firm up areas of common ground. There are so many potential problems with coalitions that it is easy to understand why the 'biodegradable' approach can be constructed as a strategic decision as much as simply being 'just the way things happen'.

To summarise, new allies in these coalitions often have more 'reformist' agendas and strategies, are radical on a single issue point but not in a systemic way, have their own agendas such as achieving political power. These affect action strategies and tactics. Some of these present a problem in the short term, i.e., will Jubilee 2000 distance itself from the ANLGC movement because of activist "violence", conversely, will the more radical elements of the ANLGC movement refuse to accept J2000 as part of "their movement" because of J2000's limited and (some argue) reformist agenda in campaigning for debt relief without challenging whether or not the countries concerned really 'owed' that money in the first place? Are these two positions really part of the same movement when the Black Bloc and J2000 all protest on the streets of Genoa? And ultimately, does it matter? **Ch 5** outlined how the radical direct action of custard-pieing DFID minister Clare Short overstepped a boundary for the Cynefyn y Werin coalition which Gwynedd and Mon EF! was involved with. What EF! activists found hard was that they had on several occasions "put up with" what was seen as quite a reformist agenda and strategy in order to focus on commonly held ground, at least one activist in interview felt that this sense of tolerance was not reciprocal. Whilst relations were strained for a while before radically improving with the shared sense of purpose triggered by recent anti-war activity, this problem of coalitions as hamstringing radical direct action and agendas is the main reason why radical EDA activists tend to mobilise primarily in their own "strong ties" networks. More than one email-er on the anti-capitalist groups bemoaned the tendency to have marches and rallies as opposed to more radical and confrontational direct action - this again surfaced in my local interviewees' comments on the limits of coalitions, and elsewhere in EDA discourse.

"... We don't always have to work together, to reach a consensus where no- one is offended. This always comes down to the lowest common denominator where a few leaflets are handed out, cake is eaten, samba played and another photo opportunity arises... "
(taken from EF! Action Update Issue 77 2001)

essential part of the mobilisation cycle, enabling activists to rest, recuperate, before the next cycle.

In the longer term, these strategic differences would be hugely problematic in terms of outlining alternatives to present structures and systems. For example, being anti WTO rules does not automatically mean that all goals are held in common, for example, the Transport and General Workers Union may be anti the WTO, but how committed to environmental goals such as freight by rail is it? Similarly, finding common bonds with farmers because both groups are opposed to the WTO means compromising on animal rights and vegan principles. Whilst local production and consumption is a convincing dialogue for these farmers, Greens have to be careful not to blur local community sustainability discourses into more narrow parochial/nationalist ones. The potential of UK farmers to oppose globalisation with Greens is probably less than its tendency to side with its traditional Conservative and Right-wing allies. Worryingly, the British National Party also urges farmers to oppose globalisation. The Countryside Alliance, a counter movement that aims to oppose restrictions on hunting, might potentially frame its rural concerns around anti-globalisation, and I would argue that the Sept 2001 CA march highlights extremely clearly to groups on the Left that to frame grievances through a 'traditional' and right-wing approach remains the default option for many in the rural landscape. As the recent UK fuel protests have shown, farmers are a potent force if mobilized[301] it remains to be seen to what extent they are prepared to break with tradition and work with new allies (Smith 2001).

The real danger for UK EDA activists is that, by trying to be 'all things to all men', they may end up having to compromise on tactics and long term strategies. These two issues play off against each other and are well worked out in activist discussions. The good news is that it doesn't have to be 'either or', as the looseness of coalitions and the autonomy of local groups enables everyone to do pretty much anything they want without limiting other peoples' directions. This is also why the ANLGC protests exist side by side with a myriad of "single issue" campaigns. There are also strategic bonuses in that by having small specialist radical groups continuing to take high risk actions on "single issues", coupled with the strengths which come from wider coalitions, 'the state'/'global capitalism' are being hit on all sides. Thus this diversity of objectives is in the nature of such loose coalitions and alliances, as it is (to a lesser extent) within the EDA movement. There is enough shared common ground for everyone to mobilise together over, here specifically helped by a common enemy in the WTO. Diversity within the direct action movement itself is very marked and generally seen as a movement strength (*pace* Melucci), the same applies here. The problem is, that each individual activist has their own sense of what is outside the boundary of

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[301] Doherty et al 2002,2003

what counts as 'their movement'. Whilst there will be general, clear areas of agreement, well summed up in the following email, there will also be much that is blurred and contradictory. This is just the nature of the beast. As Melucci argued, movements continually negotiate their identities, even when they apparently stride on the world stage to make history. The diversity of the ANLGC mobilisations enhances such an emphasis.

5.4 "Not One Of Us"

But of course, our united front effort should NOT include the right wing groups like the national front, buchananites, neo-nazi's organisations and fronts, and anti-migrant, anti-women, and anti-gay groups. Instead, we should consistently struggle against these groups and oppose and expose
them for what they really are...
(taken from mayday2000@yahoogroups.com)

The possibility that movements and political parties whose beliefs run counter to EDA movement, but can nevertheless springboard off their intellectual/ideological gains, is another worry for activists. As discussed above, the Far Right have been framing their racism behind a seemingly respectable discourse of opposition to globalisation.[302] Farmers and others affected by the 'crisis in the countryside' are tending towards Right-wing solutions and structures, despite encouraging signs from some activist farming networks such as FFA. Activists note that this "ideological hijacking" is filling the structural void left by EDA activists who are not as focused on outreach as they are at mobilising directly against "the enemy". Whereas the discourse of the Far Right by far is the most worrying and serious issue[303], in terms of the practicalities of ANLGC mobilisations the primary villains in the eyes of the EDA community is the network "Globalise Resistance", widely seen as a front for the SWP. Anarchists within the direct action movement have accused the SWP in particular of 'vampirism' and of trying to use the anti-capitalist movement as a means of recruiting new members.

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[302] Anti- racist, and anti- fascist, action and discourse is a key frame for the EDA movement, one not referred to directly much in this PhD due to constraints of space.
[303] The increase in racial tension in Bradford, the anti immigrant feelings whipped up by the Far Right, opposition to European integration, the Countryside Alliance, are all manifestations of a general national unease- in some senses, there is an ideological battleground between the left/green and the Far Right over the meaning of opposition to globalisation. This is an important issue which is already the subject of research- it certainly needs to be.

'Seeing a growing anti-capitalist movement, they saw an opportunity to fill the other half of the equation - sure, we're all anti this, that and the other, but what are we for? The SWP's answer to this is that we should be building a centralised, hierarchical party, making it as big as possible and then hopefully taking over the state in the name of the working class. Once we've done that we can centrally plan the economy (i.e. work) and expand production (i.e. industry). This is so far from the free, equal and ecological community most of us want it's amazing the SWP felt able to act the way they have'

(Do or Die 2001 9: 134).

And this from *Schnews:*

Monopolise Resistance? - how Globalise Resistance would hijack revolt...

Socialist Workers Party and Globalise Resistance are trying to do just that. While working closely with "respectable" anti-globalisation groups, the SWP/GR increasingly attack those involved in direct action, describing us - just as the gutter press does - as disorganised, mindless hoodlums obsessed with violence. They are willing to make these attacks so they can portray themselves as more "organised" and, therefore, the best bet if you think capitalism stinks and want to do something about it. They are nothing of the sort. They want to kill the vitality of our movement - with the best of intentions, of course - and we need to organise better in the face of this threat...[304]

Section 6 Conclusion

This chapter has shown how the process of EDA movement cognitive praxis and capacity building was consolidated in the late 90's through explicit opposition to macro-systemic grievances and issues identified by the EDA movement and other social actors, resulting in the ANLGC protests and grassroots local action. The ethnography provided has demonstrated how EDA activists developed an understanding that the "single issues" which they also campaign on are instrinsically related to the power relations, values and structures of Neoliberalism and related macro-economic mandates. The reclaiming of the "anti-capitalist" banner by 90's activists in a way which reflects the postmodern complexities of where power lies and how it is used, is a powerful example of internal movement development (again the ethnography corroborates Welsh's (2000)

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[304] The full text of this discussion leaflet can be found at http://www.schnews.org.uk/mr.htm

concept of capacity building), evidenced in the activist discourses on what 'anti-capitalism' means given in this chapter. Such ethnographic examples demonstrate clearly that grassroots activists generally have a highly complex worldview which motivates them to take action, also that taking action over one issue tends to lead organically to taking action over another, both PhD hypotheses which are again proved through ethnographic study. The ANGLC protests discussed here, and the ones which followed soon after (Prague, Gothenberg, Genoa) were the subject of much media and academic discussion. The overwhelming impression given by the media was that this was an international movement which had 'suddenly' appeared on the streets, the product of an Internet revolution. Whilst IT certainly played a part in the recruitment of new activists and the diffusion of information (see Plows 2001, and **ch7**), what the data provided in this chapter shows conclusively is that this was not a movement which appeared out of the blue - it was a consolidation, a coming together, of a myriad of different networks and campaign groups which existed before the ANLGC movement, even if new networks and movements (such as the PGA) were formed as a result of gearing up for the latest mobilization rounds. The capacity of the EDA movement to adapt to the mobilizations of other 'single issue' groups with grievances relating to ANLGC structures has also been documented.

Again, the ethnography has backed up much 'standard' social movement theory, and symbiotically the SM 'toolbox' enabled a clear deconstruction of the nature and significance of the phenomenon of the ANLGC mobilizations at the cusp of the new millennium. For example, literature on cross movement networking and the diffusion of activist repertoires has been useful in examining the nature and effects of the ANLGC coalitions which emerged at local, national and international level. The 'internal' process of movement capacity building has been shown to have contributed significantly to these mobilizations. Symbiotically, the external POS factors which Tarrow (1998) et al highlight as playing a major role in shaping the course and existence of mobilization waves has also been evidenced, the protests were a clear response to the development of the WTO agenda in the 1990's. The data on the nature and types of the ANLGC coalitions contributed to the debate on the issue of movement collective identity, see the PhD **conclusion** for a summing up on this issue.

The areas of blurriness, dissent, contradiction and so on in movement praxis and practise are as prevalent here as in other areas of EDA action and discourse, and it can be argued that this is a healthy sign for the *movement* of the movement. Where there is dissent, there is discourse and argument, growth and change, an avoidance of fossilisation. The final chapter of this PhD, by

concentrating on the settings of activist discourse and giving more examples of current movement praxis, will demonstrate the ongoing nature of movement collective identity and strategy.

Chapter Seven:
Activist Discourse

Section 1: Introduction

Firstly, this chapter provides more examples of the 'what and how' of the EDA movement, by giving ethnographic detail on the types of settings in which activists interact, communicate, discuss and argue with each other. This first half of the chapter examines the different settings for activist discourse - online, in workshops, on actions and so on, highlighting strengths and weaknesses of the ways in which activists engage with each other. Development in movement practise on the issue of inter-movement communication will also be discussed. Secondly, this chapter will focus on what activists say (to each other, primarily) in these settings - the 'why' of political action. Samples from activist discourse in a range of settings will provide ethnographic confirmation of much NSM literature regarding the production of knowledge, collective meanings, worldviews, and identities. Discussion and interaction are crucial parts of how a movement's collective identity is formed.

The wide variety of PO settings also provides reiterative detail. Analysis of this discourse shows some of the main issues, ideas and directions the movement has taken - particularly in the last four or so years. It provides evidence of strategic thought, of political analysis, of major points of contention over means and ends (e.g. violence and non-violence) and other important topics in current movement praxis. This data provides further evidence of commonly held EDA worldviews and analysis. Constraints of space mean that these samples are necessarily limited. In using this final chapter to discuss the plurality of voices, in a variety of settings, all focussed, debating, arguing, agreeing, compromising, falling out, over strategies for change, I hope to point to the ongoing nature of movements. For example, the road protest movement melded into existing GM, local action and anti-capitalist action, through a process of developing movement praxis and practise. As activists take action, and talk about it, they sow the seeds of future strategies.

Section 2: Settings Of Discourse.

Briefly, this section discusses how and in what circumstances discourse happens. This section is primarily about *how and where* discourse happens and what this can tell us: i.e., it's primarily descriptive, looking at settings. What's actually *said* is analysed in section **3**.

2.1 Gatherings And Workshops

there are arguments all the way down the line we can disagree over...which is fine, there are big things we do agree over...the violence/non-violence[v/nv] *thing is definitely a difference in worldview because it's an ideological difference... when discussions* [on v/nv] *have actually happened ...* [sometimes] *we can discuss the long term ideological stuff around it in a positive way... the thing is when people try to bring it up most people don't want to talk about it any more...and it's interesting that it's the ones who have most moved away from pacifism are the ones who are telling everybody to shut up and not talk about it* [my underline] *...whilst I feel that it is right not to spend the entire time there talking about whether violence in specific instances was right or wrong...it is a subject we do have to constantly discuss in the same way we discuss our effectiveness*[305]

The movement's various networks and campaigns hold regular (and in some cases, frequent)gatherings and workshops. For example, the recently formed Rising Tide[306] climate change action network held weekend strategy gatherings in 2001 and 2002 which also was a chance for people to get up to speed with current issues. Women-only weekend gatherings – "Women Speak Out!"[307] have also been a regular occurrence of the last few years. Skill sharing, discussing the ins and outs of issues, long term strategic planning, socialising and networking are major functions of all activist get-togethers, whether themed around a "single issue" or having a more general focus such as the two yearly EF! gatherings which bring together activists across the

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[305] Activist in interview 2000
[306] http://www.risingtide.org.uk/
[307] *Women Speak Out International Women's Day Anarchist-Feminist Weekend: 8-10 March. Meeting to organise actions, discussions, films, performance, music. Vegan food for lunch and dinner. 'The Dairy'* 47 Kynaston Rd Stoke Newington. Info: 020-8809 1352 or 07985 365 992. From http://www.schnews.org.uk/archive/news344.htm

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movement.[308] As highlighted throughout this PhD, whilst activists tend to talk primarily from a practical, pragmatic point of view (the nuts and bolts of setting up an action, what will be most effective) such debates instantly pull in wider, more 'abstract' ideological points about the "why" of action. There is usually plenty of space during more general gatherings and workshops for people to discuss feelings and concepts, though as always this is dependant on a number of factors such as who is in the group, what the agenda of that workshop/discussion is.

In general, there are many more of these gatherings and workshops than there were a few years ago (it's likely that living on protest camps, the main focus of the movement in the period 92-96, fulfilled many of the functions of meeting up, swapping ideas, having plans). Like email lists, the number and agenda of these gatherings can tell us about current movement directions, aims and issues. Similarly the way they are set up - in other words how communication is facilitated - is also important. Discourse conducted in workshops is of a specific type - usually more 'formalised' and structured than a conversation or impromptu debate. How activists interact with each other in these settings enables us to weigh up movement rhetoric (about equality, non-hierarchical structures) against reality. The workshops and gatherings I have attended in the last three or four years are radically better at dealing with unspoken power issues than ones in the early 90's. As with much else, the EDA movement has been through some steep learning curves, with skills and ideas about group facilitation either re-learnt or picked up from the 80's peace movement generation. Early EF! workshops I attended in the mid 90's tended to be dominated by three or four strident voices, with quieter/less confident people effectively silenced in the face of very confident, vocal others. It was also often the case that this was not a 'safe space' for people with dissenting views, or views that went against the group majority. People would get shouted down or made to feel uncomfortable, which put off others from airing their view in case they said 'the wrong thing'.

As the quote used at the start of this subsection highlights, all of these problems still go on - in workshops perhaps less so, but definitely in other settings, it's a very context dependant issue, and ultimately depends on the attitudes and approaches of those instrumental in organising and participating in the workshop/gathering. But at some point in the mid-90's people within the EDA movement started to own these problems and find better ways of communicating. This too had always gone on in groups, campaigns and networks but by 1997 a new way of facilitating

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[308] the Summer Gathering is primarily about practical action and skill- sharing, the Winter Moot is more focussed on "abstract", theoretical discussion about strategy, current issues.

workshops had become the norm at the EF! gathering. Workshops have facilitators and a system of hand signals ensuring that everyone gets a turn to speak, and that 'strong' personalities do not dominate[309]. People have become better at listening. The issue of the exclusion of others such as foreigners and deaf and dumb people has started to be addressed, this years' EF! gathering asked for people with signing and language skills to make themselves available. There is much more awareness of the diversity of perspectives within the movement (gay, coloured, disabled, working class). Openness, inclusiveness, plurality - such aims highlight a movement development in terms of strategic thought (recruitment issues, sustaining mobilisation levels), and also ideological development in terms of putting rhetoric into reality. That this breaks down – constantly - that there still are cliques, unheard voices, botched discussions, alienated activists - is inevitable, but there is now an activist 'standard' of communication and outreach. Below are three examples of workshops or gatherings which I have attended in recent years, which provide some ethnography of this specific setting for activist discourse.

2.1.1 "Targeting Capitalism"[310], EF! Gathering Summer 1999

This workshop happened during the EF! Summer gathering 1999, with approximately 60 people in this particular workshop. The London anti-capitalist protest "J18" had not long happened and activists were keen to discuss issues surrounding ANLGC action. It is worth emphasising that this workshop is representative of a standard of workshops during this gathering and others. Thus a highly significant finding of this PO is that activists *are* organising, meeting together, to discuss strategy, to look/think reflexively, to analyse why they took action and where they are going next. The very fact that this workshop took place at all is evidence that activists have well thought out rationales/aims for why they take action, they are concerned about 'where the movement is going', what it is 'for'- what they are 'against'. They are thinking reflexively, and strategically. They aim to build on what has been already achieved. Discourse about action (post J18) helps to reaffirm collective identity, and keep the process flowing - this collective identity, these shared meanings, are constantly shifting, being defined, redefined. All of this was in evidence in this workshop. Given the size of this workshop and the complexity of the agenda (see Ch6) the discussion was well-managed and facilitated, with proactive efforts being made to ensure everyone who wished to

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[309] actually, they still can, but the system is definitely "fairer".

[310] The content of this workshop was analysed in Ch6 - form is the issue under discussion at this point.

had the opportunity to speak, that "ramblers" were given a chance to air their views without throwing the aims of the workshop off-track, that the discussion was constructive rather than becoming a slanging match. The success of the workshop's facilitation emphasises movement praxis and practise.

2.2.2 Gathering Visions Gathering Strength (GVGS 3)[311]

Held 15-17 Oct 1999 in Hebden Bridge, Yorkshire, this gathering was in its own words

"bringing together people from different movements and communities to explore self organising for radical social change".

This meant approximately 100 people having workshops by day and dancing to live folk music by night. Again 'best practise' in terms of communication and facilitation was explicitly aimed for. Generally this worked well. There was a predominance of peace movement activists, and several "Old Labour" socialist groups. There was a noticeable age range, and many activists with lots of experience of direct action, animal rights groups, roads protest camps - the usual mix. However there was a definite weighting towards peace movement activists, very pro NVDA, and a definite absence of pro-'violent revolution' anarchist types, probably due to the fact that the date clashed with the annual London anarchist bookfair[312].

This gathering had workshops on a number of issues and campaigns, including more prosaic/lighthearted - "blags and scams". WTO trade rules were a well attended workshop which brought a lot of people up to speed - others were more strategic, as was one run by an ex-Labour councillor who had started to visit the Birmingham Northern Relief Road protest site[313].

As with the EF! gathering, activists got a range of different things out of GVGS. They met each other and found that people from different ages and backgrounds had things to teach them, and things they had in common with. They found out vital information about upcoming actions and issues such as the WTO's mandate. They were able to meet and constructively discuss differences of perspective -disagree and still be friends (or at least still want to take action together) and have

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[311] http://www.gvgs3.freeserve.co.uk

[312] another important space for activists to meet and discuss ideas and action, the Anarchist Bookfair has been going for over 20 years.

[313] He noted, tellingly, that "linkages are made fortuitously...then they disappear...we need some sort of process... we need to create networks of people who can come in and out [of action], we can bring them together....you have to work out a process, rather than being issue- led."

things in common. They socialised and had fun. The settings, the ways in which activists interact, network and communicate has a huge impact on recruitment and mobilisation, GVGS is an example of a successful gathering, one of dozens which quietly happen every year and keep movement process and praxis ticking over.

2.1.3 EF! Gathering 2001

Po Of The Ef! Summer Gathering, Derbyshire, 1-5 August 2001

"Hard to gauge numbers, especially with people coming and going, but probably approximately 150 people during the week rising to 300 at the weekend. Seemed to be slightly smaller than last year. Very chilled out atmosphere and a lovely site. Fewer workshops, although still a full timetable on a diverse range of issues and campaigns. I'm not sure if fewer workshops means less people were offering them, or if there was a decision to stop people getting workshop burn-out[314]*. A lot of deliberate 'taking it easy' the phrase "this is a political gathering NOT a festival!" being used ironically (during disco nights). "Yogurt"*[315] *appears to be back in favour after a patriarchal moment in the late 90's. Lots of music sessions round fires till 4am. Ceidlihs and 'open mike' nights happening in the evening, also film showings (on actions, on campaign issues) and rave music.*

Lots of 'secret meetings' and informal networking going on as people use the space to meet up and network actions, long-term strategies (e.g. genetics issues). Possibly this explains fewer 'official' workshops, as there is a sense in which these have to be pitched to introduce new people all the time, are not secure, and thus there isn't the space to actually plan much - hence lots of little get togethers. Can see why this happens and it's good on one level but there is a danger of becoming a 'two tier' movement of inner sanctum and less clued-up[316]*. The positive vibe in all workshops I attended though is notable and all were attended by lots of people.*

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[314] Other years have involved very tightly packed timetables; there was still plenty on offer this year and the choice was actually more manageable.

[315] "yogurt –weaving"; a joke-y, veering towards snide-y, term for activists who place a great deal of importance on lifestyle and spirituality as part of their political action- see **ch1, ch4**

[316] In reality, this has probably always been the case- the division in the movement between the people who initiate and organise action and the people who attend them and perhaps do more of the leg- work (fly-postering). The danger as far as I see it strategically is that this can become very cliquey, have more to do with power- over than effectiveness, and isn't conducive to people with similar skills outside the 'loop' joining in. Pros of course have to do with issues of trust, avoiding infiltration, and being able just to 'get on with it'.

The gathering seems more diverse and more aware of ways in which we unthinkingly perpetuate social problems every year. I.e., site welcome packs had disability awareness /access, gender/sexuality issues and info. Lots of info on peoples' projects and campaigns - agit- prop everywhere. There were workshops on 'Genoa- ways forward' looking at long term strategies, coalitions, grassroots liaising. There were climate change and agricultural workshops looking at what's happening, where next and co-ordination. There was a good activist/academia workshop which was very interesting - a lot of people wanting to use their University access to further movement ideas and agendas".

This PO highlights very effectively how activist gatherings are a mix of the social and political and provide the space for discussion and networking for both new and experienced activists. The social/fun element of interaction is also important, as for new activists this is also an 'approachable' side to what can be from the outside a very daunting movement, for 'old hands' the chance to let their hair down and have fun with their friends is crucial given the intensity of action settings and often the level of political debate in the days' workshops. It is worth stressing how far removed such ethnographic scenes are from media images of direct activists317, late at night, in fields under canvas, Black Bloc activists are...dancing to naff 80's disco. All of this - the debates, the networking, the socialising - forges movement praxis in a multitude of ways.

2.2 Email

Email is another setting for activist interaction and discourse, obviously in many ways much less "personal" than face to face interaction but having a number of characteristics which make a unique contribution to movement praxis. Whilst net demographics are a big issue, I would stick my neck out and say that activists are quite likely either to be online or be able to get access if they wanted it. Most EF! and other action groups have an email contact and all nationally run campaigns have email addresses and websites. Another proviso would be my feeling that email is used in particular by a certain type of activist - those who network and organise campaigns - more than by others, though use across the board is also high as my content analysis of several email lists has indicated.

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[317] see ch5 for ethnographic study of the "conventional" network ties and strategies also pursued by direct activists.

2.2.1 How Activists Use Email[318]

Between 1999-2001 I conducted PO[319] of a number of activist email lists. These included:

bangor-werdd@yahoogroups.com   dan-cymru@yahoogroups.com   n30@listbot.com
mayday2000@yahoogroups.com   therealfuelcrisis@yahoogroups.com   allsorts@gn.apc.org

I have undertaken detailed content analysis of several of these lists and make use of the Mayday 2000 list in particular. Briefly, there are several different types of activist egroup lists:

1) ones which primarily give information about forthcoming actions or accounts of how they went. EG- the UK 'Allsorts' list allsorts@gn.apc.org

2) 'specialised' interest - group lists such as animal rights, genetic engineering, climate change. An example is therealfuelcrisis@yahoogroups.com - a list set up by Greens and activists to discuss action and issues surrounding the second fuel protest mobilisation. These can be either invite-only ("closed" - in reality another sub-group) or open to anyone to join. I would also describe the Welsh lists (bangor-werdd@yahoogroups.com dan-cymru@yahoogroups.com) which exist to network ideas and information for Welsh activists as 'specialised' – as they are self selecting by region. Noticing which lists pop up and when they biodegrade can tell researchers quite a lot about movement directions and current issues (a violence/non-violence list started up last year) and could signal precursors to major mobilisations. [320] I would say that Bey's (1991) concept of 'Temporary Autonomous Zones' (TAZs) is applicable here.

3) Discussion lists which are started as part of the 'run-up' to specific actions, often international lists these, linked to website use. These would include the Seattle (n30) international mobilisation list n30@listbot.com and the Mayday list

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[318] for more detail on these issues see my paper Plows, A (2001) To what extent and in what ways does the Internet trigger and sustain activism? Paper given at ESRC workshop organised by Dr. Tim Jordan, held Open University Conference centre, London, September 2001
[319] see ch2
[320] Combined farmer/rural/green/anti-capitalist mobilisations are obviously on the agenda of activists, networking through email groups such as "Pruning hooks", established in 2001.

4) mayday2000@yahoogroups.com

Activists use email and email lists to:

- disseminate or find out information - forthcoming actions, facts
- discuss ideas - ideological points, their feelings about issues. Eyewitness accounts of action are also common.
- network and plan action.

Activist discourse online is a mix of the practical (wishing to network information) and more 'abstract', i.e. wanting to chat and swap feelings and opinions. Both these uses of email are equally important in terms of: keeping the movement dynamic and open to new ideas, getting activists to talk to each other about the 'why' of action, recruitment and mobilisation issues, effective networking. Activist discourse on familiar themes –long term strategies, action - can all be found in this new setting. Movement meaning production/praxis is facilitated through instant communication between geographically dispersed actors. As I have highlighted elsewhere[321], the Internet's set up is highly conducive to activists, as it is organised in similar ways, biodegradable, fluid, autonomous, rapidly shifting and adapting to circumstances. Hyperlinks on websites and group email lists operate as "weak ties" (Granovetter 1973) links between activists, networks and campaigns. This network friendly format means that ideas, resources and activists themselves are easily diffused online. During my PO I have noted the extreme ease in which contact is made between interested activists wishing to discuss issues/take action/get resources.

There are of course problems with online discourse, mostly related to email format. The norm is for people to write in a very shortened style, which means that verbal qualifiers and tonal indicators are often removed. Tone is very hard to gauge on email. Such stylistic issues often lead to misunderstandings and communication breakdown on large lists which have a tendency to erupt in bickering. This normally sorts itself out (the wise stay quiet or make pleas for one to one arguments to be conducted off- list) and there are 'norms' of behaviour which are usually adhered to. The sheer scale of posts can also be a block in terms of facilitating good interaction - in this sense activists are a victim of their own success, and with so much activist talk online it is possible to be completely overloaded and turn off.

Activist discourse online, then, is facilitating movement process and praxis in a number of ways and content analysis tells us a great deal about activists' rationales and strategies.

2.3 Newsletters, Fliers And Other Publications

"Round-up" newsletters such as the bi-monthly EF! Action Update (AU), the weekly *Schnews*, and occasional publications such as EF!'s ' Do or Die!' are another setting of activist discourse. "Single issue" campaigns also produce newsletters, and there are local newsletters such as Manchester's 'Loombreaker'. Most have editorials which are an interesting touchstone of movement praxis and highlight current areas of movement debate. This is taken from *Schnews* just after J18:

"The actions of a few hundred troublemakers clearly intent on causing mayhem and violence marred what was otherwise a great day out. This small, highly organised group, some of them wearing suits and sporting mobile phones, managed to get into buildings housing major financial institutions. One man who didn't want to be named told SchNEWS: "They had little or no connection with the thousands of ordinary protesters out on the streets and were clearly intent on causing serious violence. They used computer and comms equipment and were quite aware of what they were doing. We did all we could to stop them but by the end of the day they had killed 11,000 kids. That may sound shocking, but these people are responsible for that, through easily preventable poverty related diseases, every day. They give protests like the one today a very bad name, because they own the newspapers that print complete crap about what's really going on. It is very important that the public supports our efforts to bring these people to justice".

From Schnews http://www.schnews.org.uk Issue 217, Friday 25th June 1999 : editorial on "J18" anti-capitalist action in London.

Newsletters enable activists to air opinions and network actions, albeit in a much less interactive way than online. First hand accounts of actions combine information with polemic - a way of letting others know what is happening in a locality, in a campaign, which can trigger further action and involvement. Rationales for action, deconstructions of power and the dominant paradigm, are prolific.

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[321] Plows A (2001) ibid

Fliers and leaflets similarly are forms of activist discourse, used to promote/justify activist rationales and agendas. They speak (perhaps primarily) to other activists and also to the general public[322]. From a research point of view, content analysis of these leaflets can build up the picture of what activists are doing and what they think about it. I know myself that leaflets and similar hand outs have often inspired me, providing me with information I didn't know and opinion I agreed with which inspired me to act, opinion I disagreed with which made me think hard about what I did believe in. All of this contributed to further discussion with (activist) friends, during meetings, informal chats. Thus newsletters, leaflets are not only forms of discourse in themselves but promote further discourse, interaction, recruitment and action.

2.4 General Action Settings And Social Chat

It goes without saying that wherever there are activists, there is activist discourse. Interaction happens in the following settings: local group meetings, action planning meetings (local, national, international), socially, and crucially during action in the range of settings this encapsulates. *How* such discourse is played out is very context-dependant. Meetings would tend to be facilitated as for workshops, informal chat down the pub is of another nature entirely. Whether it is ultimately positive or negative is generally down to the individuals concerned, although circumstances do have a role to play as is described below. Such interaction can be part of ongoing action patterns and friendships - the regular meeting, the ongoing protest camp - or "one-off", as strangers, acquaintances, old friends meet and talk (gossip, hurriedly discuss revised tactics) during a RTS event or a quarry shut-down action, for example. Activist discourse in all of these settings can be extremely positive, forging friendship ties which sustain mobilisation, empowering and inspiring each other, or conversely (ironically, often in the same set of circumstances, so context-dependant is this) very damaging, destructive and alienating, resulting in arguments, communication breakdown, burnout and drop-off. This is often to do with the extreme setting of action, and protest camps are a prime example of this.

During the protracted evictions at Newbury in 1996, activists were living in a state of siege with nightly temperatures of minus 15, undergoing constant surreal and dangerous eviction procedures, physical and mental abuse from security guards, bailiffs and policemen, getting arrested, spending time in cells, having to go off for court cases or often trying to evade capture

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[322] this issue is an interesting one- dealt with in terms of identity construction by Castells amongst others.

because of breaking bail conditions, going without sleep, not eating properly, and having to cope with a massive and constantly changing influx of "new recruits" (many of whom would leave soon afterwards) who had to be constantly shown the ropes, as well as a high proportion of people with alcohol, mental health and drugs problems, and the media constantly wanting sound bites. Paranoia, frayed nerves, mental and physical exhaustion are the norm in these conditions. It is hardly surprising that there was a breakdown between the rhetoric of facilitated group meetings, balanced gender relations, positive interaction, and the all too common reality of chaos, argument, drunks falling into the firepit. Many experienced activists after spending time on the ground trying to keep the communal spaces and fires going as a space for interaction, a point of reference, simply gave up and retreated to their treehouses. This, combined with the influx of new people arriving for the first time into an environment where activist norms of interaction were already breaking down, meant that un-reflexive praxis and practise on a number of issues such as group responsibility, gender relations and power issues began to dominate. Relationships between old friends became strained. Feuds broke out between the office crew in town and the site. All of this is similar to descriptions of clashes between the camps at the different 'women's' gates' during Greenham Common[323]. Many older activists burned out completely during Newbury and didn't take action again or took years off. New recruits can have a range of first experiences, as discussed in **Ch 4**, it is likely that many are so alienated after their first interactions that they never contact activist networks again. Others will be lucky enough to find the 'right' moment, when things are calmer, or through a one to one interaction with a "sorted" activist[324].

In the same breath it is essential to highlight the extremely positive interactions which take/took place in exactly the same settings. As Jasper (1997) noted, it is precisely the extreme and challenging nature of action which triggers deep friendships and shared bonds. Whilst some activists' only or predominant experience of interaction with others is extremely negative, for the majority such experiences are balanced with more positive ones. At protest camps like Twyford Down, Solsbury Hill and Newbury, the intensity of protest camp life as described above led to very close knit communities of activists who were bound together through shared experiences:

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[323] cf Roseneil. Sasha 1995

[324] Perhaps we could have done things better. I doubt it though- frankly it's amazing that in the conditions activists underwent, that they achieved what they did. When I think about these sorts of circumstances, I am filled with admiration for everyone who went through it. As a movement there is something of an 'anti- hero/ine' culture; in fact activists are more likely to focus on what went wrong than right. I'd like to take the space here to celebrate our achievements and our survival.

"...despite the mud, the cold, and the threats of confrontation and arrest, direct action may be exciting or even enjoyable, encouraging the pursuit of more intense activism....Such experience may lead to personal change that reinforces a new collective identity..."[325]

Such communication and interaction between friends and acquaintances is one of the major personal benefits of activist life. It makes the planning and carrying out of action easier as people are happy to help each other out, getting up in the middle of the night to put up some last minute defences, or making someone some food and sending it up to their look out point. It helps mobilisation because on some level people put up, keep going, for their friends as much as anything else (a kind of "trench warfare" comradeship). Activist interaction of this type is obviously beneficial to movement praxis and practise. It happens during long winter nights in freezing treehouses, huddled together discussing everything from who's going to make the tea, whether the camp will be evicted in the morning, who's sleeping with who, how Private Finance Initiative economic strategies for roads induce traffic, what a horrible time someone had at school... It happens in police stations when so many have been arrested at once that there are five to a cell and the time is spent singing, rolling fags, reassuring those who are risking much by breaking bail conditions and are consequently using a false identity, moaning about the food, discussing how the police acted, discussing the contents of a dog-eared newsletter someone has in their pocket... It happens on blockades when activists are locked on together, waiting for the police to come and remove them, and you make jokes about needing a wee, discuss whether the police will be violent or not, try and remember the words of songs, talk about the last time you were locked on somewhere and why... and on and on. Not only are these the types of experiences that activists look back fondly on years after the event, but they are, I would contend, the very stuff of which the movement is made and depends. This is where and how movement praxis and collective identity is forged, re-shaped, revised and reconfirmed - not manufactured by movement elites, as Snow and Benson (1986) describe the production of movement frames, but on the ground in countless interactions between activists.

These close knit communities of activists which emerge during protest camps, over years of interaction in a local affinity group, in communes and housing co-ops,[326] even online to an extent - are generally an important aspect of sustaining mobilisation (see **Ch 3**). As discussed in

[325] Wall (1999) ibid pp96

[326] 'Equinox' in Manchester and 'Cornerstone in Leeds are two examples of longstanding housing co-ops which

Ch 1, a word which characterised such close knit communities and was very tied up with the collective identity of activists on protest camps in the period up to about 1996 was 'tribes'. 'Tribal' identities, along with closed affinity groups, campaign organising groups, members of a household are all examples of "strong ties" (Granovetter 73) communities. As discussed an important positive function is the mutual support those within these tribes and communities enjoy. There are obvious (potential and actual) disbenefits of 'strong ties' communities, which can adversely affect mobilisation, clique-iness, insularity as discussed in **Ch 1, Ch 3**.

Section 3: The 'Why' Of Action: Common Themes And Current Points Of Debate

3.1 Introduction

In this final section of the chapter the content of some activist discourse will be examined in more detail - here again activists are talking about the "why" of political action. This data enables me to point to certain key elements of held in common activist worldviews, and past and present areas of debate in movement discourse. Here I present some more 'snapshots' of a complex movement, some examples of discourse. Bearing in mind that the data below is a 'pinch sample of a pinch sample', it is also reiterative detail and evidence which fleshes out the ethnographic picture. In this final section, rather than jump around using small pieces of data from a variety of sources, I have decided to focus on one setting in particular and have chosen to use content analysis of the anti-globalisation email lists n30@listbot.com mayday2000@yahoogroups.com to demonstrate:

- some key held in common themes
- areas of current debate running through activist discourse
- that activists intelligently deconstruct and analyse their action.

The nature of email, and the type of list, both shape and pre-determine the sorts of activists who are talking and what they tend to talk about. A climate change email list, for example, will tend to have certain types of discourses on them as opposed to an animal rights list, further, the public nature of email is such that posts will be self censored. Further, are online anti-globalisation activists more likely to talk about symbolic challenges, finding allies, forming coalitions? Less likely to critique the media or be anti non-violence? More militant anarchist email lists (for example) are likely to be more dismissive of coalition-building, and more pro-violence as a tactic.

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sustain close- knit activist communities.

There are many views, groups, networks and positions within the EDA movement, the notion of collective identity is a difficult one, for every generalised statement I make the reverse could also be true. Lists with these built-in determinants are by their very nature not representative of 'the movement as a whole'[327] and so it is with these provisos to the forefront that I conduct my analysis.

This being said email has some advantages in that it is a large self-selecting sample, so that the reiterative evidence it provides of shared ideology and analysis within the activist community is very useful. Further, in this format many debates about strategy and ideology are posted, so that this source provides useful evidence of the range of points of view within the EDA movement. Whether such debates on points of difference are positive or not could depend quite a lot on the manner in which they are carried out. A constructive debate in a setting of mutual respect for others' point of view is likely to aid movement and individual development, a slanging match (or worse) is likely to cause alienation and drop out. I personally know of a number of activists who have felt so alienated from the movement after particularly destructive interactions that they have stopped taking action. However I also know that others have shrugged such episodes off as 'par for the course' and it shored-up their determination to continue to remain in activist networks. I would emphasise that this is a downside not mentioned in the SM literature (to my knowledge).

3.2 The Data

3.2.1 Methodological Note

The following data, collated from Oct 1999 to May 2000, is ethnographic material copied straight from the email lists n30@listbot.com and mayday2000@yahoogroups.com. These lists were specifically focussed on discussing mobilisations, and issues underpinning these mobilisations, on the issue of 'global capitalism' (the Mayday 2000 protests) and the WTO more specifically in the case of n30@listbot.com[329]. As lists which predominantly focussed on neo-liberal forms of globalisation, it is perhaps hardly surprising that there was much evidence to highlight that the subjects had a "multi- issue", rather than a "single-issue" perspective. Nevertheless the emails flag up recurring themes evidenced in interviews and other participant observation.

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[327] but then, what is…

[329] An important methodological point; as discussed in **ch2**, this list was an international one set up to discuss the Seattle mobilisations. I thus used data only when it was completely obvious that the post-er was from the UK.

The email samples used here are very typical of the hundreds of postings on the list, and where there are atypical ones I have made a point of including these as examples below. They do not simply provide evidence of coherent political critiques, evidence of the types of discourse in the movement. The debates themselves are framing the discourse, this is collective identity in action, as a process, being (re) constructed through dialogue, interaction, agreement and - crucially-dissent. Whilst many issues were discussed on these lists, I have picked out several which dominated, and/or which highlighted key PhD themes. These are:

a) Systemic analysis of global capitalism (including ethics and values)
b) Strategic and tactical thought
c) Violence and Non-Violence (V/NV)

It goes without saying that many posts blur across several categories. I have cut down the data drastically and have "showcased" the posts on violence/non-violence, one of the most common topics on the lists.

3.2.2 Systemic Analysis Of Global Capitalism[330]
Example 1
The WTO conference has broken up...We cannot rest now! The corporations are surely infuriated by this result and are already preparing for the next ministerial round...Remember, the WTO is just an expression of an economic system that is inherently faulty. We must keep up the fight! (my underline).

This is an example of a very typical post sent at the time, with the usual "taken for granted" factor (see **Ch 6**), that activists themselves feel comfortable in the concept of having held in common world views so that they do not outline and/or justify their position in detail. Capitalism 'stinks', it's 'faulty'. In conversations with (they assume) like minded people on busy email lists, shorthand is more pragmatic. Again, the *implicit* view, that everyone receiving the post will understand, and they have a similar critique, is very interesting. It says a lot that people can confidently post a statement like that and feel people will know what they mean. Even if they are wrong, then it still

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[330] This theme, whilst a list 'favourite', has been cut down dramatically here due to the fact that these perspectives have also been evidenced and analysed in **ch4, ch6** in particular.

says a lot about *assumed* collective identity, common ground, worldviews.

Example 2

This is the text of a leaflet used for a Nestle held in the North of England to coincide with the n30 protests. It was posted onto the list and represents the worldviews of the person(s) writing it.

'Trade ministers from around the world are gathering in Seattle today to worship at the high altar of global capitalism - the World Trade Organisation. The transnational corporations are pulling the strings to set up a world in which the power of big money reigns supreme.

Notice the language - capitalism is a religion, trade ministers and multinationals are the priests. Capitalism is perceived as a values system as well as a specific economic reality.

'As president of the International Chamber of Commerce, Nestle supremo Helmet Mauncher used his influence to push for greater trade liberalisation - that's why we are staging our protest at the Nestle factory today.

In terms of systemic analysis, the above demonstrates an awareness of how the WTO 'works'. Tactically/strategically, it is interesting that activists chose a specific target to 'hit' whilst ensuring that the context of Nestles involvement with the WTO and the way the WTO operates is demonstrated.

'The grey men of the WTO regularly pass binding judgments which outlaw any attempts to protect the environment, improve health, promote animal welfare or help poorer nations.
'An EU ban on hormone injected beef from the US was ruled illegal. US laws on cleaner petrol fell foul of complaints by Venezuela. The US was not allowed to ban shrimp caught in ways which killed turtles. The EU was prevented from providing preferential treatment to impoverished Caribbean farmers.

Here are the sort of specifics behind the shorthand of why the WTO, in the words of other posters, "sucks". As demonstrated in the WTO discourse section (**Ch 6**) activists are actually very clued-up on specific, physical examples of the systems, structures and values they critique. I've left

it in here to demonstrate the type of critique which the more shorthand posts are based on.

'We say enough is enough. It's time to put forward an alternative vision - a society which puts people and planet before profit'

This is a slogan which has been current in the movement since at least early 93 to my knowledge, and probably before. In itself it is so general as to be meaningless, yet put into context of activist actions and discourse, it is still, for many activists, a useful summary of 'where they are coming from'. To the fore is a critique of current *value systems*, (as much as a structural socio-economic reality), which don't "put people and planet before profit".

3.2.3 Strategic Thought

Example 1

On Saturday, ten of us stood in central Brighton and petitioned to scrap the WTO. No, this will not change the world, but we did meet nearly 200 people who signed, not just single issue people who were against privatisation or GM foods (although everyone had their major gripe), but people who were pissed off at the system as a whole.

This email is an example of many posts sent on the subject of the effectiveness of taking direct action, this was an ongoing debate which caused a lot of reflexive analysis. In this post, as in many others, there is a sense of pragmatism here - *No, this will not change the world* - that change will not happen overnight, but that all these actions can contribute to a longer-term goal of a paradigm shift. Activists constantly talk in these posts about changing peoples' minds, their worldviews, their values, and/or tapping into the perceived shift in public opinion already starting to happen. As I have said elsewhere[331], there is an emphasis on changing values, opinions inherent in activists discourse in this specific context/medium. But this is not the only strategic key goal. Activists are also engaged with physically stopping "manifestations of global capitalism" (e.g., roads, the Illisu dam, GM crops) in the here and now. Such actions will not instantly bring down an entire structure, emailers emphasise, but they all have an impact.

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[331] Plows 1997.

Example 2

Surely one of the priorities of a successful Mayday 2000 march must be which targets to hit. As well as the usual corporate capitalist companies surely a legitimate target could also be the houses of parliament, Millbank house or Downing street.

This email again demonstrates an impetus to 'hit' specific, tangible, targets as well as critique the more intangible whole. However it is worth re-emphasising that there were fewer numbers of postings on these lists about parallel strategies of 'hitting' corporations at the same time, i.e., economic sabotage, direct action on a specific company. Of course this is happening, and the people going to disrupt board meetings, pull up GM crops, are the same people who go to these bigger anti-capitalist actions. But there was a lot more silence on the subject of specific direct action targets on these specific lists - probably due to the fact that activists were aware that their discussions were being monitored. As an activist I wouldn't be sending a message out on such an email list along the lines of 'hey everybody let's target Monsanto's factory next week'. Rather, people are mobilising amongst trusted friendship networks, local affinity groups, through national campaigns on specific issues[332]. Plus, my PO also provided a lot of evidence that email lists enabled people to 'meet' and network effectively off the main lists on a one to one basis.[333]

This email triggered further debate about whether governments or MNCs should be the primary targets.

Example 3

No one serious believes that N30 will result in the instant collapse of capitalism. But "infiltrating" the system will never work, it would take too long, the possible infiltrators would be unsuitable for the organisations they infiltrate, it would not be possible to infiltrate many, they would be expelled as soon as they tried anything.

This post expresses a point of view held widely amongst activists - that direct action is the preferred way of doing things, the classic EF! "no compromise!" position. Set against the standard movement rhetoric, however, is often a more pragmatic reality-activists are aware that whilst engaging with the system and trying to (for example) overturn an unjust law, or work with

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[332] see **ch.5** on local network recruitment and mobilisation
[333] Plows 2001

industry on implementing 'best possible practise' is a flawed process which legitimises bad systems and values, nevertheless everyone stands to gain from the achievements of more reformist measures. Again, many activists (especially those with long movement histories) are engaged in "working for the system" as well as doing direct action, and in fact argue that taking a job (often part-time) in law, for an NGO sustains them in their continued action-taking. The movement contains a mass of different opinions and approaches to this subject, and the fact that it is able to integrate these is a great strength. Obviously, there are also many activists who wouldn't touch the system with a bargepole, so to speak.[334] This in fact is one of those key movement themes where different approaches amongst activist networks are noticeable and point to a substantive difference in outlook. This next email is an intelligently argued rationale which fleshes out these issues.

Example 4

I agree that "infiltrating" will never work (except for punctual improvements in specific areas - certainly not for fundamental changes)... In my view, what makes "change from within" so difficult/impossible is the fact that the "rules of the game" (called "cultural grammar" in discourse theory) within a parliament, let's say, prevent certain topics or ideas to be brought up at all. So... if you join parliament...you will say things which have a meaning according to the cultural grammar of parliaments. Things like: Let's pay less allowances to jobless people so we can pay more to unwed mothers." Pragmatic things. The language of parliament doesn't contain any words for serious change. So if you join parliament, you will end up talking like "them".

Example 5

November 30 International Day of Action - http://www.n30.org

Please face it, nothing of any consequence will be organised in Leeds, Oxford or London. These events are nothing more than excuses for the same old faces to meet up and discuss a non-existent revolution. The only way to proceed in this situation is to start from the top. I know it isn't ideal, but if you're truly serious it's the only way to be listened to. Miner's strike, poll tax, J18 achieved nothing, so start infiltrating those in power and stop denigrating the cause. The

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[334] Whilst this is admirable rhetoric, mobile phones, computers, are part of most activists' toolkit and the extent to which anyone is able to operate outside of consumerism/capitalism is limited, unless withdrawal from society into land communes is being practised. People in communities such as these then tend to get criticised as "apolitical"- see Pepper 1991.

current situation is one of empty actions, not words, and it is words which ultimately win the argument. I share your aims, so please understand reality and pursue worthwhile methods of achieving our goals.

Responses

1)You've got totally the wrong attitude man, I think we should all go to London even if it's just because otherwise we would be sitting at home doing nothing at all - at least make the effort and start somewhere.

2) Beware of instant gratification all or nothing scenarios. Every drop of resistance is better than doing nothing and/or whining. Anyone naïve enough to think that thoughtful arguments and appeals to capitalists will win the day is frightfully out of touch. Sorry to sound so harsh.

Again, the constant pragmatism - 'success' is hard to quantify, change is a gradual process. Plus there is, combined with the implicit goal of a paradigm shift, the awareness of the need to take action to physically target 'capitalists'. Interestingly, no-one is really explicitly saying in any detail *how* they think direct action makes/will make a difference - again this is assumed "common knowledge", with all it's pros and cons. To analyse explicitly stated rationales for direct action in the above two emails - as before, there is the 'doing something is better than nothing' aspect. There is also a personal thing going on here, whilst in my experience, direct action isn't done for personal satisfaction in the way the (RM) literature represents it as some kind of yuppie kick, however it makes people feel better to feel that they have agency - and even more so to do this in solidarity with others, standing up and being counted. Other explicitly stated aims of direct action in these posts - that these types of direct action function to raise public awareness, are part of a longer term strategy to effect a paradigm shift, show solidarity with other people/campaigns worldwide on a range of issues, and send a clear message to decision-makers, the state, global institutions, and big business. For activists, the chance to meet up, build networks and alliances is also an end in itself - enabling bigger political clout, wider/mass movements being taken more seriously. The specific type of mass direct action being discussed here - mass actions against global capitalism-are because of their focus less able to achieve specific goals and this is recognised by the activists.

Example 6

Friends:

I have noticed that some people are leaving the Seattle email lists, as if the work is now done. Yes, the world is now talking about the WTO and what it does to us. But if we stop now, the message will be conveyed solely through the corporate run media.

Note -again, an aim of direct action - communication of 'the message' - consciousness raising, and implied, an optimistic belief in 'people power' once information has been disseminated.

So, before everyone leaves the lists, let me make an appeal for people to make a commitment to do a few simple things.

1) Stay active locally. The big actions are fun, exciting, inspiring and necessary, but the real organizing takes place in our neighborhoods.
2) Stay active globally. Our local actions, when united, will become a movement. Only a peoples' movement will defeat corporate rule and create genuine democracy.
3) Keep in communication. J18 and N30 were international successes because we stayed in touch with each other. Let's not forget that. A few lists you might want to join. In each case, joining is as easy as sending an email to the address listed.

These are good strategic pointers, re-emphasised in many other posts. There is a note of warning - 'let's not just dash off to the next big thing - let's build on what we have achieved'. This essentially slower, more invisible, process is often highlighted by activists as being essential, and it is often recognised that the 'follow up' to actions, once people have been potentially radicalised by events, is pretty dire - that activists tend to focus on the next immediate problem, rather than slowly build up grassroots bases. "Organic intellectuals" are as aware of this as SM theorists. Again, it isn't just the fact that this takes legwork, is time consuming, can be frustrating, is more invisible, less glamorous. Direct action fits strategically/tactically with what resources activists have at their disposal. This being said it is precisely the importance of building up community links which have driven the establishment of proactive community initiatives that have happened/are happening, from Cooltan in Brixton in the early/mid 90's (a great community centre and a good melding of local/black community with arty types and activists), the Anarchist Teapot in Brighton

and the many farmers market, veggie box schemes being set up by activists in their spare time.[335]

The importance of grassroots networking is also highlighted in the post below. Interestingly, the post-er makes reference to similar discussions happening at the EF! gathering, providing reiterative evidence of my claims that these are key topics of debate inter-movement

Example 7

anyway, from what I remember from the bookfair/EF! camp discussions there was a preference for less of the 'spectaculars' and a much more grass-roots orientated focus. After all, revolution [which is the whole point] will be made by the majority of people taking action where they live and work. If the Mayday events ensure that, in the weeks before and after Mayday, we've managed to help activists set up locally based Solidarity Groups and networks at least in every borough in London, it will have been well worth the effort people are putting into it already...

This is a direct action aim for this emailer: using 'spectacular' actions as a catalyst for better networking and communication between activists and their neighbourhoods. As part of a much longer email, the post-ers' focus on the more specific issues of class, working and living conditions highlight a strategic concern to make her/his worldview relevant to her/his community, that s/he sees grassroots agitation as the primary strategic key to achieving 'revolution', as well as demonstrating what personally drives this activist-communities in tower blocks, whereas for one or two of my interviewees, it was ecological habitats and species which they felt most passionately about and caused them to want to take action. Yet both these approaches have similar critiques, strategies - they just choose to focus on what motivates them the most. Another clear example of how activists focus on "single issues" with "multi-issue" rationales.

Example 8

Focus of Mayday.
Wouldn't it be great if around Mayday people discussed ideas, had access to a variety of practical solutions to homelessness and housing insecurity, to healthcare, to living and working together in less capitalistic relations. It could happen over a number of days. Maybe one day where meetings could be more accessible, on subjects and in a style which was accessible for say

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[335] Doherty et al 2001 all pubs.

our mums and dads, older sisters with kids who aren't politicos, neighbours who pop into the local newsagents for a natter.

This email emphasises the need for up strategic inclusiveness and accessibility - another hot topic for activists during the run-up to the May 1ˢᵗ anti-capitalist action in London in 2000. 'How do we do outreach? Why aren't more 'ordinary people' finding us? Do we need to change our approach to ensure people can engage with us?'

Maybe there could be meetings on another day more for the politico types be it workshops for women on facilitating meetings and building confidence to speak out more confidently or on particular aspects of the zapatista struggle or particular historical discussions.

In fact there was a weekend conference on all sorts of issues, held over the weekend before Mayday. It got absolutely no press coverage as far as I recall, neither do I expect it would have done even without the infamous Cenotaph incident.336 The conference was excellent, bringing in all of the points on this senders' wish list and more besides. Whether 'ordinary people' off the street, community groups came, I'm not sure - I only visited the conference briefly, but it seemed full of the "usual suspects" to me. Still, the above email is further proof that activists are aware of the need to think inclusively and strategically.

3.3 Means And Ends - Violence And Non-Violence

3.3.1 Methodological Note

it should be made clear that this list is heavily monitored both by police and by journalists, the latter looking for titbits they can use to hate monger and build the public mood to enable repression from the former. This means any debate on non violence is going to be heavily distorted by consideration of this monitoring...Nobody can say anything on this list that they wouldn't mind being quoted out of context in the Daily Mail or used against them in a court room.

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336 The Cenotaph was graffiti-ed; probably not by "activists"- and Winston Churchill's statue was given a grass "Mohawk" hairstyle, to the horror of the press.

(activist on Mayday 2000 list)

Given the safety and strategy implications of being seen to be overtly in favour of "violence", it is hardly surprising that there are fewer pro-violence posts on these public lists. This has significantly affected the data - there are certainly more pro-violence points of view in the movement as a whole than was evidenced by their presence on these email lists. To redress this, given the importance of this topic inter-movement, and the massive limits placed on activists communicating over email on this issue, I also refer to other ethnographic data collated during my research here.

3.3.2 Overview - Background To The List Debates

Tellingly, violence/nonviolence (V/NV) was one of the most 'popular' themes for debate on the n30/may 1st email lists. The issue, incorporating as it does vital aspects of activist identity and strategy, is possibly the main node of fissure in current (2001) EDA identity. V/NV flags up, implicitly or explicitly, means and ends - such initially pragmatic (tactical) issues are infused with ethics and values (and implicit strategies). The debates on this issue then are vital in understanding activists' worldviews, and they stretch Melucci's concepts of dissent within collective identity to the limit - a real boundary area. To what extent does this point of fissure reaffirm, to what extent negate, the theory that diverse opinions and strategies can be contained within the movement's master frame/collective identity? There are no easy answers – nor do I seek them, except again to offer the observation that issues which seem to work beautifully as theoretical propositions are more messy and muddled in reality.

Other commentators on the UK EDA movement have suggested that the 'fluffy/spikey' debates of the mid-90's are over, that this is a discourse which has run its course, that a more pro-violence mood now predominates[337]. I would take issue with all of these comments, with provisos. There is certainly more pro-violence discourse around now than there was in 1994, say. Specific people who were prime movers, strong voices in the movement during a time of strongly articulated NVDA principles, are not around as much, and some of the current micro-cohort of very vocal prime movers are more (or very) pro-violence in their discourse, and this has affected activists' collective identity inter-movement and outside perceptions of it. Whether much has changed in real terms is debatable, heavily publicised acts of "violence" on mass demonstrations in fact account for a tiny proportion of the direct action taken, and this type of pragmatic "violence"

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[337] See Seel et al (2000), introduction

has always been a factor in mobilisation.[338]

My *personal*[339] experience is that by 1996 discussions at EF! gatherings on this issue had broken down, with pro non-violence people often browbeaten and too intimidated to speak up. This was happening in the post-Newbury/Fairmile period, a time when many of the 'old guard' were burned out and turning to other proactive ways of protesting and living. There had been some appalling acts of violence perpetrated by the security guards/police/bailiffs at Newbury, (and before at other camps and on other actions, but particularly here) and these events (amongst others) were used as justification for the 'we must hit first' lobby. "Non-violent" activists who understood where this was coming from (having suffered the same violence) put up and shut up, carried on as normal in their local groups, got alienated and left the movement, focussed on issues where the 'hardcore' weren't, discussed the issues in arenas other than the national EF! gathering, and so on. The discourse was as strong as ever in fact, because it made people really define where they were coming from. Improvements in communication within the movement, as discussed in earlier sections of this chapter, have made it easier for people to discuss these issues. The discourses below are ones which have been ongoing, in many contexts, for years[340]. The debate, as these postings show, is alive and kicking... a workshop at the 2001 EF! gathering was a constructive move forward in terms of the conducting of these debates. In early 2001, a violence/non-violence discussion email list was set up, further evidence of the continued importance of the issue to a new generation of movement activists.

3.3.3 Shades Of Grey

Whilst the writing of this PhD has made me extremely cautious about offering any observations as 'fact', and here as nowhere else I am aware that my own predispositions are likely to have made me take a selective look at the evidence, my research indicates that in fact the broad majority of activists approach the issue of violence/non-violence as a context - dependant and shifting spectrum of shades of grey, rather than as a black and white issue (there are very entrenched and polarised voices at extreme ends of the spectrum, obviously). That being said, it is my view based on my ethnography that the 'general' activist position tends towards "non-violence", with highly individual 'takes' on what this actually means. It is important to emphasise that this subject was an

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[338] Rootes, Chris 2000

[339] Again, it's important to stress that this is one of those areas where my activist identity and personal perspective as a non –violent activist no doubt impacts quite substantially upon my data collection and subsequent analysis.

[340] To refer back to debates on movement capacity- building and it's limits in certain arenas, Welsh (2000) writing

important topic surfacing in all the interviews I conducted. The email comments highlighted below are (to generalise) identical in outlook to the general position taken by my interviewees, and the general position of the "average" activist discourse as I have encountered it in a range of PO settings over the years.

As I analysed the email discussions (and my interviewees' comments) on V/NV, it became clear to me that the 'public' debate was often polarised into assumptions of two very extreme points of view, whereas in fact most activists in reality, whether they defined themselves as violent or non-violent, had a much more context - dependant approach. For example, some 'pro-violence' activists sent emails differentiating between their targeted political violence such as smashing up the Liffe building during "J18" in order to occupy it, and general drunken mob vandalism of local shops on the same day[341]. There *is* a distinct difference here, and I sympathise with exasperated "pro-violence" activists of a specific type who are unfairly characterised by (on occasion) very sanctimonious non-violent activists who stand at the other end of the spectrum. Most activists tend to fall in the middle, where "effectiveness" becomes a key issue, as is discussed in more detail below:

It is incredibly hard to define what violence actually *is*, given that ultimately it is a normative/subjective concept. At a workshop in North Wales in Spring 01, [342] older generations of Welsh peace activists and the current 'crop' of direct activists met up to talk these types of issues through, and the notion of "bottom lines" came up - everyone's is different, was the general conclusion. For the older peace activists, the custard pie-ing of Clare Short in Bangor some weeks earlier had crossed a line in terms of their commitment to a personal type of non-violence. For the younger generation, pie-ing as a tactical repertoire fell within their definitions of non-violent direct action. Several of these latter workshop participants were also my interviewees, and it was interesting how they held a very passionate position on non-violence, explicitly talking about means and ends, values and ethics, and still felt that custard pie-ing Clare Short fell within a legitimate repertoire of non-violent action. This again highlights how complex, how subjective/ individual, this debate is. I feel that it doesn't reflect well on the general quality of activist discourse (on these lists, first and foremost, but also in many of the activist discussions I have encountered) that this relatively simple point, which would substantially aid communication,

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about the anti- nuclear movement notes that the same debates were current then.

[341] Similarly during Genoa a self- termed Black Bloc activist sent an email highlighting different attitudes violent strategies within the Black Bloc- again, mostly differentiating "legitimate targets" from "non- legitimate".

[342] "making history"- a workshop organised as part of the ESRC project

doesn't get aired – I don't recall any posts which asked emailers to define terms. In my one to one interviews, on the other hand, such complexities were better teased out. The clip below is taken from one of my interviewees, who was talking about a workshop at Faslane he attended on the subject:

Everyone professed to being nonviolent, at least for the duration of their stay in the camp, and whilst on actions as part of the campaign... But, responses to scenarios differed greatly... the difference being that some people were willing to cross the "line" into what they considered violence at a different point.

It would be good for the movement to appreciate this and break out of the polarisation, perhaps by abandoning these absolute terms in favour of less loaded ones.

3.3.4 Conduct Of The Debates On The Lists

As discussed above, I feel that the intellectual level of debate was less than it could have been as people tended to make subjective assumptions about what was meant by the terms, and this is a common tendency whenever this subject comes up - emotion tends to override intelligent debate. That being said, the conduct of the debate on the lists was generally constructive. This is especially interesting given that email as a format is easy to start arguments on.

-The discussion about choosing the means in the continuum violence-sabotage-nonviolence is good in the sense that everyone seems to have quite a ready opinion about it, and you don't need to be any sort of authority to argue. Bad side is that discussion seldom leads anywhere, although the issue is maybe the most crucial in the movement.

-Anyhow, re: what appears to be long swathes of discussion on violence/non-violence, I agree that the way forward is not to start finger pointing at those who feel great anger at the situation around them, whatever may be thought of some's tactical ill timing... it could be more shocking that people are not in a greater state of anger. I say this though I know we are ensnared and breaking ourselves out of a mindset of consumerism, continual disempowerment and basic resources having been turned into capitalist money makers.

-After Seattle and J18 what's needed is a politics of alliances and a working through of differences. What the Zapatistas call "many Yeses, one no". That is we're all united in opposing capitalism but we can fight in our own different ways. We have to work out how our different ways of struggling can complement each other.

The above emails highlight the general mood in terms of discussing this issue on the list - there was a lot of evidence for tolerance and understanding, for constructive debate. This did occasionally break down into slanging matches between individuals but generally people seemed just to appreciate the space to talk the issues out, and that holding different points of view was OK. Again, this was probably because the majority of posters tended to be coming from a non-violent perspective and this extremely important methodological/ethnographic limit must be borne in mind.

3.3.5 Definitions Of And Rationales For Non-Violence

3.3.5.1 Property Damage - NVDA?

Violent action is action which is violent/will hurt/cause damage to living beings, be it physical or mental, so directing violence towards machinery isn't automatically violent. However, if violence is used indiscriminately [e.g. at the end of a demo - such as J18 - people begin attacking shops, buildings and other inanimate objects] it can be very dangerous because people can become caught up in the atmosphere and not think through what they are doing fully, and end up putting other people in danger....I am much more in favour of planned " violence"[e.g. planned sabotage of a vehicle/fence/sub] which is clearly defined and not committed in a heat of passion.

As the email above highlights, this definition of non-violence includes, for the majority, the right to damage property, with the proviso that this will not endanger humans/animals. This is very different from the predominantly highly non-violent discourses of the 80's generation of peace activists, for example some of whom who argued that damage to property is a violent act. Examples include cutting perimeter fences at nuclear bases, the 'pixie-ing' of earth moving

machinery[343]. Emails on this issue tended to show (and this is also a general finding) that the 90's- now generation of activists tends to view property damage as OK and as a non-violent act. There are boundary problems here too, again well articulated by the above email - property damage in certain circumstances can frighten people, (e.g. employees inside buildings), can trigger reactions from the state which can harm bystanders - an example is the large scale property damage on J18, which may have been partly responsible for bringing down heavy baton charges onto the crowd which was full of children. For many activists this type of 'non-violent' property damage crossed a line - it was felt that activists involved were failing to consider how their actions might impact upon their fellow protestors, which is a key theme running through many discourses on this issue. Thus whilst in theory emailers on these lists (like my interviewees) had no issues with "pixie-ing" which didn't endanger peoples' safety, the majority did however feel that "smashing things up" during mass actions was at least counter-productive and often morally wrong. It is possible to break this down again into people who supported an amount of "targeted" property damage such as that required to gain entrance to the Liffe building, but had problems with "random vandalism" (drunk 'Crusties' chucking lumps of concrete about). Activists' attitudes to property damage is another clear example of what I mean by saying that activists perceive the issue of V/NV as a spectrum of shades of grey.

3.3.5.2 Self Defence

Most people aren't either violent or religiously pacifist. If they see people being beaten they will step in and help them the best way they know how.

Self defence, and defending others from violent attacks, is also part of the non-violent rationale of this generally held position, activists are pragmatic about the limits of staying non-violent when under threat. Again, the line is different for many people, and their reasons for staying non-violent may be more pragmatic than ideological here - in my personal experience, fighting back has just landed me in more pain and danger. Similarly, the non-violent post-ers who expressed an opinion on the issue of resistance in violent dictatorships, have been fully behind the right for

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[343] see Plows Wall and Doherty: 'Dark Matter' 2001 for more discussion on this issue. It is important to emphasise that whilst the issue of property damage was more contentious in the 80's, it also happened a great deal, with "accountable" NVDA such as fence- cutting happening at many nuclear bases. This accountable criminal damage is still very different from the unaccountable "pixie-ing" described in **ch1,ch2.**

oppressed and endangered peoples to take up armed struggle to defend themselves - in West Papua, in East Timor, for example.

-if you're living in Afghanistan or East Timor, say...I know I cannot say that its wrong to pick up that crowbar to defend your family...I have a lot of respect for the East Timorese... holding their own integrity...

-The greater issue of the use of violence is of course an old and complex one (e.g. Hizbollah South Lebanon vs. Dalai Lama Tibet)... Hizbollah advocate the use of violence to rid their country of an occupying force and will most probably achieve that objective. The Dalai Lama does not advocate violence in a similar (well broadly similar) situation. The latter continues to get shat on. Who is right and who is wrong is a tricky one. Hizbollah are of course concerned with their specific situation, whereas the perspective of the Dalai Lama (as a Buddhist) is a regard not just his country, but the whole human race (his occupiers included). We could debate this for hours of course and I don't really know the answer myself.

Again, to generalise, many non-violent emailers go further, saying that if the situation degenerated in Britain to the extent that they were being shot at, then they would take up armed struggle/be in favour of it. "This isn't a banana republic - we aren't being shot out of the trees (yet...) - but if we were...", to summarise countless discussions.

3.3.5.3 Proactive NVDA Tactics And Their Effectiveness

Non-violence for direct activists is active, not passive. Peaceful resistance does not mean that when confronted by authority and asked to get out of the tree/off the road/off the machine/out of the office that people will leave. A range of avoidance tactics comes into play. Sometimes activists will just sit down and be removed. More often they will lock on, climb higher, withdraw and get in round the back, set up a counter-action. They will do anything except directly (or at least consciously) threaten the safety of another human being (apart from their own safety, of course). Non-violence is often characterised by those in favour of violence as highly passive. A specific type of extreme non-violence is more passive than this and whilst it is used as a tactic in certain circumstances (on a peace vigil, say) it isn't the norm. Activists say that proactive non-violence

'works' as a tactic for achieving short, as well as long term ends. In my experience, 'invasions' of construction sites which remained proactively non-violent, with drums and music and drama, have often been very successful. They have confused the opposition, diffused 'their' violence - it's hard(er) for them to get psyched up to be violent when no-one is giving them the come on, the excuse. It also makes them drop their guard - whilst people are singing and dancing on the machines, "pixie-ing" of machinery, say, goes on surreptitiously. Other practical rationales flagged include the need to 'keep a good vibe going' for the activists' own state of mind - direct action needs to be fun, enjoyable, otherwise people stop doing it. Often whether or not it's fun or "successful" is out of activists' hands (evictions at dawn). But things which lift people's energy levels are good for sustaining mobilisation, commitment, triggering recruitment. This post highlights some of these issues:

If you are dealing with a crowd of any reasonable size, the concept of sitting down simply isn't viable. You have to be pretty brave to keep your ground in the wake of a fast approaching police horse...The idea of actual events such as 'invisible' theatre, less surreptitious street theatre, speeches, readings, musical performances, dancing, and general leafleting could happen all over the city simultaneously but not necessarily in the same geographic location. This way, there is no centralised activity and therefore no centralised police control of the event. In a large enough space, such as Hyde Park, the idea that everyone moves slowly away from anyone they see displaying violence - throwing bricks, stones, bottles - may be effective but in any small area it may be unworkable.

As well as giving examples of proactive non-violent tactics, this emailer is clearly differentiating her/his type of non-violence (in this context, at least) from a more passive type. Inference: if you use the non-violent repertoire of sitting down in this type of situation and expect the police to treat you as a human being, then you are in for a shock. The emailer's rejection of tactics at both extreme ends of the spectrum is a good outline of most activists' approach.

3.3.5.4 NVDA As A Pragmatic Strategy (Violence As Counterproductive)

- it is pragmatic though, cos the police will start being violent deliberately to wind people up, and generally in these situations being violent - you lose, they will have more police, more

batons…and even if we did succeed, and beat the police up its like oh great we beat the police up isn't that marvellous aren't we marvellous and its like no we're not marvellous its still not stopped, a cat farm, or global capitalism, or a road being built…

- Sympathy to the revolution and all that, but there will be no revolution without mass support, and no mass support without a point to violence, rather than violence towards a point.

(response)

-Oh ok, so are you saying limiting violence to a certain point doesn't work, instead you need violence toward a specific and objective goal? See my main reason for disagreeing with you is that either way, you are saying we need violence in order to achieve anything, and I can but think of Ghandi.

The last two clips taken from a longer series of posts between two activists (one for, one against, violence) are again noteworthy for the constructive way in which many of the debates took place. The non-violent post-er feels that long term strategic gains cannot be achieved through violence. The pro-violence post-er obviously feels that targeted violence (again, these terms are not defined) will achieve certain goals, though whether these are short term tactical ones such as (for example) the reclamation of space/pushing back a police line, or longer term strategic ones is not made clear. Pro-violence rationales will be discussed in more detail in the following section.

Non-violence is often cited as a pragmatic tactic and strategy for activists on the lists. Such strategic gains are keeping the moral high ground, not giving the media the excuse to 'do the dirty', showing up by contrast the violence of the state (all exemplified in the harrowing footage of unsafe tree evictions at Newbury). These are aimed ultimately at long term strategic goals of trying to get 'the message across' to the general public:

-All said though, pointless mob violence attracts new supporters - more people up for mob violence. It also damages credibility, reducing the already minority support the movement has, and increasing the feeling against it. And gives justification for even bigger police and special branch budgets, and new laws to destroy the movements.

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-Anyway, from what I could see, the 150 people [at London n30 demonstrations at Euston which turned violent, with a police van being set on fire] *were a mob and would have been equally happy smashing up anything (the bus stop was pretty funny - nice one smashing up some public transport at an anti-privatisation rally). Special brew and Stella preparation was much in evidence for the would be berserkers. Difference between this bunch and football hooligans? Not much...Hating police and smashing 1, creating a better future, 0. Mob antics turn off those who are becoming sympathetic to the cause, and without attracting those who are becoming sympathetic, you do not increase support.*

The more the public see 'anarchists on the rampage', say many posts, the more they turn to Home Office legislation to keep them safe in their beds - more willing to sacrifice rights for 'safety'. However this argument - the more we protest, the more draconian the response - is also used to dissuade people from taking any type of civil disobedience and this must be appreciated by those using this argument - taken to it's logical conclusion, it does the movement no favours either.

There are several problems with criticising violent strategies out of hand, firstly it is very hard to separate out "genuine" pro-violence activists from what may well be agent provocateurs and /or random hooligans. Pro non-violence activists would use the London example above (in my opinion, quite rightly) to highlight that such action is counter-productive, and use this as a rationale to dismiss any strategic/tactical/ethical arguments in favour of violence. As I stated earlier, there are many types of violent actions, but pro-violence activists tend to get lumped together, this is somewhat unfair. The post below is a good one in that it differentiates between different sorts of violence.

- The bottom of the ladder has to be mindless violence such as that evident at N30. Next step up is the sacrifice of violence or destruction to achieve a greater good. This is the real tough one though. You can look throughout history at struggles which started in this form and spun out of control, often becoming much worse than the very regimes they thought to replace.

This emailer has differentiated between 'strategic/political' violence and "mindless violence" but

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still rejects the idea that violent strategies will be effective, her/his rationale having much to do with the 'means and ends' arguments summarised in the next subsection.

3.3.5.5 Ethics, Values, Means And Ends

it is just not worth it, it is justifying the means and what do you become if you become violent? ... you become the oppressor of somebody - and then you are taking on their role and joining in their game ... and I don't understand how people can think that it is a useful idea...

Last but not least, the general rationale for "non-violence" has to do with ethics, values, means and ends. Many posts highlight what they feel is the utter senselessness of critiquing state violence, and then fighting fire with fire. 'We need to be demonstrating alternatives. Setting an example. If we use violence we will become what we are fighting', to summarise many posts. As the email in the section above highlights, people are very wary of 'ecofacism', of where such revolutionary violence might end. Many posts say things like, 'Changing hearts and minds will not happen through violence - we can only coerce and frighten people this way, and such change will not be sustainable in the long term'. Feeling angry about the abuse and oppression of marginalised groups, individuals, animals and nature, and wishing to have a world free of such things, activists stick to a nonviolent position because they feel that without it they become as bad as those they take action against - using violence and justifying it. This generalised non-violent activist is completely aware of the violence of the state - that's often a prime motivation for becoming active. Pro-violence critiques of the 'fluffies' often tend to assume that such activists have their head in the clouds, are not aware of the violence (in terms of policing protest, the selling of arms to dictatorships, the indirect violence of 'global capitalism', war) inherent in the system. Again, my research highlights that all non-violent respondents are highly aware of this, but choose *for this reason* to remain non-violent. Their rationales are both pragmatic and ideological.

There was a higher weighting towards non-violence in these anti-globalisation email list postings. That I am not simply subjectively selecting the data is emphasised by the post

below. Again, it is essential to emphasise that non-violent posts probably predominated on the list because of security implications - the format of email - and because of the type of activist likely to be online on this type of list.

So...given that no-one's in control of events like j18/Mayday 2k, it's inevitable that some geezers with rocks will turn up...do we want that, NOOOOOO, seems to be the resounding echo around this mailing list, and can we do anything about it, refer to earlier.

3.5.6 Definitions Of And Rationales For Violence

Whilst there were fewer pro-violence posts (re-emphasising the methodological problems) there were enough for there to be an actual debate on the lists. One thing generally lacking from the debates as a whole was any serious attempt to explicitly /self reflexively define what violence was, what it represented for specific emailers (whether pro or anti). These types of definitions can occasionally be gleaned, however. I am aware that there aren't as many articulated rationales for violence here, which in some ways is unfair to those activists in the movement who hold this position as their POV is under-represented.

3.5.6.1 Shades Of Grey Revisited

-I wouldn't call the vast majority of the behaviour I witnessed on j18 violent, certainly not the damage to property. I guess I've justified the "chucking stuff at cops" to myself as just not particularly violent... So, I was happy not actively going out of my way to stop people chucking bricks at the cops, but I did feel it was necessary ...to persuade the arseholes who couldn't throw that they better move further forwards to stop hitting the front line of the crowd on the back of the head.

each emailer defined the violence they were in favour of slightly differently, and like the non-violence post-ers were aware of the importance of context. Again like the non-violence emailers, pro-violence activists had different 'bottom lines', "trashing" this building but not that, shoving and pushing but not punching. Whilst it is tempting to be simplistic and say that, any action which could potentially or actually harm another is violent and there is a distinct moral line here, the fact that many explicitly pro-non-violence activists themselves sanction "grey area" activity such as property damage in

mass demonstrations, abrupt personal contact such as custard-pieing someone, or pushing them heavily out of the way in order to gain entry to an office or worksite, shows that the issue of what constitutes violence and in what circumstances is more complex than this absolutist position would allow for. As one of my interviewees pointed out,

there are some actions which could normally be considered to be "hurting stuff" such as going up to someone who is walking down the street and shouting in their face, or grabbing their arm, which in the context of an action are actually the quickest, safest, least risky, least "arrestable" way of preventing someone (including myself) from getting injured... There are times when the only practical choice is between inaction and action. Who knows where that action might lead when you begin it, and which side of some imagined line (constructed by yourself or someone else) it might come down on?

3.5.6.2 Violence Of The State As A Legitimate Rationale For Activist Violence

In my years as an activist, I have personally encountered violence from security guards and policemen. I have been pressure pointed, kicked, thrown off machinery and generally pulled around, groped, and systematically punched in the arm until I released from a lock-on. I have never offered any resistance (apart from verbal) or violence back, firstly out of pragmatism- I felt I'd just get worse treatment - but secondly because of my commitment to principles of NVDA. After the last (and possibly the worst) incident of State violence - the lock on incident which took place in Jan 2001, I heavily questioned my commitment to a type of action which saw me getting injured and the State able to legitimise its treatment of my body[344]. It is these types of state violence, common in my experience to most activists who have taken direct action - which is one reason activists change from explicitly non-violent to explicitly pro-violence. Bailiffs and climbers at Newbury punching activists in their treehouses and cutting their safety lines as they dangle 60 ft up in the air, the riot police charging in on horseback into crowds of activists of all ages dancing to samba music on J18, security guards on roads protests groping young women and twisting their arms behind their backs - the systematic violence meted out to activists is a

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[344] I have recently been advised by lawyers that I have no case against the officers in this particular incident. In terms of my moral dilemma, I eventually decided that lock- ons had evolved into a type of passive NVDA which in the light of current policing was ineffective and counter- productive; I have abandoned the tactic but not my commitment to effective forms of NVDA.

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major untold story of the EDA movement. This burning frustration with passively putting up with the state's violence comes across in many pro-violence emails, and I sympathise. Pro-violent rationales of this type have as much to do with avoiding being a victim as actually wishing oneself to inflict harm.

-I'm not sure if you can talk about violence in the context of riot gear and vans versus bits of brick and bottles...

-Heavy handed policing does not differentiate between nice pacifists and evil extremists...

A few broken windows pale into comparison when placed, for example, next to the (documented) deaths, dispossessions, mutilations, diseases and other atrocities caused by arms sales, war, landmines, poverty, pollution and industrial accidents, UN sanctionsin Iraq and the activity of MNCs. As highlighted in Ch 4, it is the deaths and suffering of the innocent, vulnerable and weak which is an emotive trigger for all my interviewees (as indeed for all activists I have met who have ever talked about it), a major reason why they take action. The same rationales are observable in pro-violence discourses. This email was written in 2000, well before the recent bombing in Afghanistan.

The outrage about violence from the politicians and the media is utter hypocrisy. They are all in favour of violence when it comes to bombing the latest "evil" nation. If we are discussing violence then perhaps the issue of war should be the focus. If I have one criticism of the movement it is on the lack of comment on this. War is a feature of capitalism which has been starkly demonstrated recently by the bombings of Serbia and Iraq (and the rest!). War may not be on the WTO agenda but it should be part of an anti-capitalist agenda. The New World Order with the WTO and IMF has NATO as an integral and central part as "world policeman".

The *Schnews* published on 21.12.01 led with this information:
Number of civilians killed in Afghanistan by U.S. Bombs - 3,767 [345]

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[345] http://pubpages.unh.edu/~mwherold/

And this doesn't of course include numbers of refugees and others slowly dying from exposure, hunger as a direct result of military action. Many pro-violence emails simply compare the scale of what they oppose with their own "violent" tactics and feel they are legitimised because of how far the states/systems they oppose have gone the other way. Violence is expressing a frustration at the severity of the problems, and the seeming remoteness of possible solutions, the WTO/GATT/IMF mandates continue, innocent children still die in war, are blown up by landmines, starve to death. What is unclear to me is whether pro-violence post-ers feel that expressing their rage through violence will galvanise those in power into acting differently, or whether they are actually trying to overthrow the state through violent ends (these are the sorts of issues which were frustratingly lacking on the e-lists, again no doubt primarily because of the unwillingness of pro-violence post-ers to voice their opinions). This brings us on to the issue of *effectiveness* (see below). It is important to re-emphasise that from a non-violent perspective it is precisely the violence of the state and the hypocrisy around it which galvanises N-V activists into pointing to other ways of living and interacting with others.

3.5.6.3 Effectiveness Of Violence As A Tactic And Strategy

Set against non-violent emailers who stated that the publicity given to violence during mass demos was counter-productive, pro-violence emailers tended to state that without such tactics, the demonstration and the issues would not have received world-wide attention.

-I have been on loads of really big demos that have just been completely ignored by the media. They don't think "Oh that was peaceful lets really take an in depth look at the issues", they ignore them completely... The WTO summit remains a major news item precisely because of the disturbances...

This is true. The anti-war demonstration in London ,November 2001 –50 000 people – made a small article in the next Monday's *Guardian*. Over the following days there were several angry letters from peace protestors who pointed out that had there been violence, there would have been more coverage. However this isn't a particularly well-thought through rationale for violence, in my opinion, as it means that direct action mandates, strategies are being called by the media rather than the protestors - which is precisely what many activists have against the media to begin with.

Effectiveness is another context - dependant term which is incredibly hard to define. Even

if one acknowledges that there is no such thing as bad publicity and that violent anti-capitalist demonstrators got the issues on the agenda, the long term consequences of playing the media's game could be more counter-productive. When an emailer says that X or Y tactic is effective, it may well be in the short term, but not in the long term. I have been on many pretty ineffective non-violent demos, where a few of us hung around outside buildings with some damp banners, feeling ignored and marginalised. Such examples show that non-violence - any action, in fact - can be ineffective and sometimes counterproductive, however other forms (or even the same form in another context) such as getting inside the building in costumes and having an obviously non-threatening office occupation, can be incredibly effective. Similarly the smashing up of the Liffe building and the almost - clichéd McDonalds' windows can be effective in the short term, it costs money, it has symbolic capital, it is a strong image-

- the images of windows being broken on j18 London directly inspired action (that takes a huge range of forms) across the world.

But there may well be long term consequences, such as the State getting new powers to deal with demonstrators, or the response of the police to future activists they come across, or that alienated activists leave the movement after such experiences, or the fact that each side is upping the ante, escalating their responses. The death of Carl Guilini in Genoa, 2002 I think highlights this.

A major factor in the success of the anti-poll tax movement in the UK in 1990 was the Trafalgar Square riot. Civil disobedience combined with the ongoing threat of public disorder killed the poll tax

This emailer is highlighting a specific type of perceived effectiveness - using violence to put pressure on those in power in order to change things, and there may well be a point to this in simple terms of strategic effectiveness, leaving aside ethical issues, means and ends. Whilst there were several of these posts I didn't see any which argued in terms of the effectiveness of violence as a way of overthrowing the State - a discourse I have heard in other activist settings but not surprisingly absent here.

I am going to end this section on an email from an activist who was at the very least sympathetic to pro-violence discourses/rationales. What I feel is most important to emphasise, and it was a point made by many people, is that they felt it was in the state's interest to portray

activists as dangerous, needing containment, because it de-legitimised their arguments. If it is in the state's interest for us to riot, then no matter what the gains may be for us, in the long term it is counter-productive.

There are people who are deeply alienated from the police (as I am) and who want to attack them at any opportunity even on terms of the polices' own choosing when we are in a position of weakness (which I don't want to). This has the effect of pulling people in to defend them when our energies might be better used elsewhere. More of a problem, I think, is the likelihood that the police will want a physical defeat on the movement on Mayday itself and will go out of their way to have a police riot.

3.4 Conclusion

The email data presented above represents a tiny sample of activist discourse in one particular setting. Hopefully it gives a sense of the level of debate within the movement. This was discourse selected from two out of hundreds of email lists, and as the rest of this chapter highlighted, email lists are simply one arena of activist interaction. Newsletters, "spoof" newspapers such as "Evading Standards", which was circulated on J18, and leaflets would have been another interesting area of detailed study, given the high level of analysis and expression which tends to surface in such publications - again, I feel that activists deserve more credit as "organic experts" and "organic intellectuals", forging movement praxis through practice, and that the PhD aim of demonstrating that grassroots activists have complex, "multi issue" rationales, has been proved through the ethnography. Whilst the ethnographic excerpts used here can do no more than point to the settings, nature, standard and types of debate inter-movement, I hope to have highlighted how movement discourse forges movement praxis and process, further triggering action, again a PhD aim.

The process of how movement cognitive praxis, collective identity and movement frames – and hence mobilization - comes about through discourse, major SM theoretical perspectives utilised throughout this PhD (Eyerman and Jamieson 1991, Melucci 1996, Steinberg 1998), is again documented through the data set out in this chapter. Again, the data provides evidence of movement collective identity, with the disagreement and contradictions expressed by activists creating the necessary *movement* in the movement, as the very process of discourse and interaction creates meaning, creates the collective identity around activists. Of course, the fissures

over issues such as violence and non-violence point to where a blurring of the edges of the movement's collective identity could lead to a greater collapse, if a movements' collective identity is put under too much pressure, then it will split and biodegrade. This pressure coexists simultaneously, symbiotically even, with the existence - again demonstrated in the ethnography of this chapter - of held in common worldviews, generally, the data reaffirms the existence of an EDA 'collective identity' regarding issues of power, a commitment to social justice and democracy, human rights and environmental sustainability. Again it might well be said that activists generally share more of a held in common notion of what they are against than what they are for, or how to get there - although a commitment to direct action as the primary strategy for change is again a "taken for granted" standard of activist discourse.

Further in relation to key theories which run as core themes throughout the PhD (see ch 3), it can be seen how activist repertoires - tactics, ideas, strategies and so on - are diffused throughout networks, and across generations, though this mix of talk and action in a multitude of settings, as activists swop experiences and opinions about, for example, how best to put up a treehouse or how, precisely, WTO trade rules will impact on UK public services. This again is movement 'capacity building' in action.

The settings of activist discourse outlined in this chapter also contribute to another core PhD aim, that is, simply to map what the EDA movement "is", what actions get taken, in what circumstances, how activists interact, how they feel about the things they do and the reasons why they do them. Actvists are 'challenging codes', primarily through their direct action, and this is reflected not only in what they say but in the ways they say it.

Conclusion

Section 1: Personal note

During the writing of this PhD "biographical availability" has started to catch up with me. I have moved house from an isolated cottage on Anglesey, with goats, vegetables, a wind generator and Heath Robinson water facilities, to a small terraced cottage in the mountains where access to 240 volt electricity and an easier (if less sustainable) way of life has been an essential component of me completing this thesis. The irony of this is not lost on me. For much of the time, my part time ESRC research and my PhD research enabled me to "legitimately" spend a significant proportion of my time taking and helping to organise action, and thinking reflexively about this process. In May 2002 I started a full time job, and more or less overnight had to give up most of my activism and related activities such as networking, between writing up and the job, there was no time to visit the Peat Alert! protest camp and week of action on Hatfield Moor, attend a GM direct action in London, take part in the Rising Tide steering group discussions and organisation of a climate change action weekend...all actions I felt moved (amongst others) to attend, primarily as an activist, and also, academically, to "keep my hand in" with current movement praxis and practise.

Whilst I drew an historical line in terms of where I stopped describing and analysing current movement trends in this PhD, nevertheless in many places in this PhD (including this conclusion) I do make reference to events post 2001. However whilst I am currently less intimately involved with these events[346], and with movement culture than I was in 1992, in 1996, even in 2000, through the process of conducting this research I have learned a great deal which in some ways enables me to better understand and comment on the EDA movement than when I was more involved. In some ways, and despite my epistemological positioning which gives legitimacy to the 'subjective' perspective (see Ch 2), through my academic training I feel I am more able to take the long view, to separate out my own feelings (" personally, I feel that *this* is what this movement is about..." - meaning, "this is what it means for me") from a more detached overview of the movement as a whole which recognises the myriad of voices within it, and what these voices and ways of doing things signify. I have been able to stand back and more coolly evaluate my own position, and deconstruct my own opinions. This process has been predominantly

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[346] although the bombing of Afghanistan triggered me into quite "high- cost" mobilisation in the Autumn/Winter of 2001; and whilst as I write this (28.9.02) , I am missing the anti- war (with Iraq) demonstrations in London, I

triggered by my appreciation of social movement theory, which enabled me to think about issues more in the abstract - and also across time - before applying these perspectives to my data.

This has also had benefits for my activism. I am a more thoughtful, more strategic, possibly even more considerate activist now. However given that this is a process seemingly common to all activists of my generation still active, this is probably not solely a result of my immersion in academia and has also to do with me building capacity as an activist, and simply being perhaps older and wiser. And whether I was more "effective" hurling myself under moving bulldozers in the dawn of the roads protest movement, or triggering coalitions of Welsh activists across the widest possible spectrum in response to the (2000) Terrorism Act, is simply not a valid question. Both have legitimacy, both are necessary and part of what appears to be a natural process in the 'life cycle of the activist', and of the movement possibly too, as my data analysis and literature review have shown me (Ch 3, Ch 4).

I may be less involved at the action end of the movement, but I remain strongly connected through my continued immersion in social networks - a wider social (party, festival) scene with many acquaintances, and some extremely strong friendships. In North Wales, the core of my friendships are tied up with our (currently "resting") EF! group. Partially as a result of my ESRC work, I have reconnected with old friends in the Manchester/Northern direct action scene and their wider social/activist circle (interestingly, many also have ties to North Wales). I was recently at a wedding of two activists in Oxford, both of whom I have known for nearly a decade, and realised that I had kept up links with more or less all the familiar faces there. In recent years, email has also reconnected me to parts of the activist community whose ties had dissolved somewhat when I relocated to Wales in 1993. Many of these old friends and acquaintances are still, however obliquely and in many cases still strongly, involved in taking and planning direct action, and looking at the ways in which we all keep in touch, I have a real sense of an activist "family". But some of my most valued friendships (even if we scarcely see each other from year to year) are with people who shared their peak of activity with me between 1992-1996 and who are no longer "active". These are people I would (and have) drop everything for and would travel across the country to see if they needed me - and I know they would do the same for me. I count myself as extremely privileged and lucky to have had these experiences and made these personal connections.

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expect to be mobilising on this issue at some point in the near future.

Section 2: Charting the Process of Constructing This PhD

The direction, shape and focus of this PhD has also changed significantly as the research progressed. About a year in, I realised that whilst what activists had to say about *why* they took action was still of crucial importance to me as a research direction, what I thought was most significant to analyse from this data had shifted focus. Initially I spent a great deal of time reading green politics and eco-philosophy literature (Dobson, Eckersely, Bookchin et al), with the idea that I would be evaluating activists' worldviews in terms of how well they stood up against the literature, and how "useful" they were as strategies for change[347]. It wasn't long before I realised that this was an extremely complex and tangled area, taking me into policy arenas and the necessity for some kind of "proof" which, whilst still interesting research questions (especially given recent policy moves and discourses surrounding "Sustainable Development"[348]), were firstly possibly unworkable in the context of a PhD research project, and secondly would require research routes I was more unwilling to go down.

I began to come across social movement literature which discussed mobilisation and the nature of social movements. The questions posed by these theories were ones which I felt that my ethnographic experience was able to answer, providing further case studies against which to evaluate the literature, which would not only provide a more solid thesis framework through which I could discuss the EDA movement, but also hopefully enable me to contribute something to the theoretical cannon by weighing theory up against practise. Thus, as has been discussed in various points of this PhD (e.g. Ch 4), a primary function of the data gathered regarding activists' worldviews has been to evaluate what it signifies for the processes of mobilisation, movement structures and cycles generally, and the EDA movement specifically. For example, as discussed in Ch 6 the fact that many (most) activists around the turn of the millennium were organising their discourses and diverse action strategies around the concept of "anti-capitalism" was interesting in terms of: what macro political processes and issues were causing this discourse and mobilisation? Was this evidence of movement 'capacity building'? (yes). Was this framing having an effect on mobilisation and if so, what and how? What are the implications? However, it will be evident that

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[347] Green spirituality and lifestyle issues were also more to the forefront of my initial research searches. All of this was in part due to my focus on what was really one strand of the EDA movement- the 'tribal' /traveller influence- before my research processes made me sit back and realise that in discussing this subset, I had been assuming that it represented EDA collective identity, whereas this was patently not the case; again an initial finding of my research process.

[348] See for example http://www.sd-commission.gov.uk/

this PhD continued to look extremely closely at what activists were actually saying - see below. My ESRC project work contributed significantly to this process. I developed an understanding of other, often newer, SM theories which I was then able to use to appraise data already collated, and to shape the way in which I undertook further research (e.g. Ch 5). Activist networks, generations, the diffusion of repertoires and movement 'capacity building', surfaced as key tools in deconstructing the EDA movement specifically, again, by using these ideas as lenses through which to view my data, I was also able to add what I felt were significant findings about how these theories stood up to being tested in practise, thus evaluating a more general theoretical case. Thus "the life cycle of the activist" section in Ch 4, for example, not only paints a vivid picture of 90's EDA activity in the UK - what being an activist in this context was like - but contributes to the literature on social networks, recruitment, sustaining mobilisation.

I started my research with a burning certainty that the movement had a shared worldview, which I wanted to illustrate. The research process, and my own parallel development as described, quickly demonstrated that I had been hugely naive in assuming a larger degree of consensus than was in fact the case, the more I was able to take a step back and realise the diversity of perspectives within the movement and their equal legitimacy, the further the concept of a shared worldview retreated. And yet conversely, as I conducted my fieldwork, I felt that my original gut instinct about an EDA shared worldview was still justified, despite the diversity inter-movement also evidenced. Melucci's theory of collective identity as a process, with diversity at its core, instantly bridged this seemingly irresolvable paradox and also provided further rationales for movement fluidity and biodegradability. However, as discussed in (e.g.) Ch 6, Ch 7, my research also evidenced that collective identity as a theoretical proposition has its limits - did the Black Bloc and Jubilee 2000 share a 'collective identity' as they protested about the WTO on the streets of Genoa? In some senses (though I do not wish to overstate the case for this), theoretically I have come full circle – from doubt, to some certainty, through to a certain amount of doubt again. The international ANLGC "movement of movements" collective identity is a good starting point from which to re-appraise the relevance of Melucci's theories[349] - again, something of a research finding, and an issue for further research, certainly.

Whilst my ethnographic practise and my development as a theorist may have picked up

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[349]This is seemingly also being picked up by other researchers- see McDonald, Kevin (2002) 'From Solidarity to Fluidarity: social movements beyond 'collective identity' - the case of globalization conflicts' in Social Movement Studies Volume: 1 Number: 2 Page: 109 – 128

cracks in the seeming perfection of Melucci's theories, I would stand by my thesis assertion and hence (to an extent) direction, that collective identity remains an extremely useful theoretical tool, which enabled me to approach my data practically: to discuss diversity inter-movement without getting too lost there, and simultaneously empowering me (like the theories of master framing and cognitive praxis) to undertake an evaluation of what movement 'held in common' worldviews (to the extent that they exist at all) actually consist of. To return to the 'why' of political action, it is evident that the thesis did to a large extent retain something of an applied 'political' and philosophical focus through an analysis of activist worldviews. Activist rationales for action were evaluated in a variety of settings in the different chapters (locally framed in Ch 5, for example, in interviews as outlined in Ch 4, online in Ch 7). In Ch 3 I tested out my findings and conclusions against what others were saying about the core frames of the UK EDA movement, and found a large degree of consensus. General findings and comments on this area are given in section 3 below. To this extent, my initial research directions withstood the test of time and continued to be relevant throughout the research process. Documenting the "what, how and why" of the EDA movement was from the start an extremely strong motivation: I felt back in 1995[350] that it was vitally important for academics to know what was being done and said within the movement. Time has only reinforced this initial instinct, given the (albeit unquantifiable, at least within the boundary of this thesis) impact of the EDA protests, their scale, variety, and their seeming support base within "civil society", ethnographic detail –generally in scarce supply in this field - is of crucial importance. As a partisan, "insider" researcher (see Ch 2), my epistemological commitment to enabling the movement to 'speak for itself' as much as possible has also remained a constant in the research process. Thus there is an emphasis in the thesis on quotes from the activists themselves in a variety of media (but predominantly in interview), which have prominence in the main body of the text rather than being placed in appendices. This has meant a somewhat word - heavy final document - justifiable, I would argue, in the light of the above rationale and also because these quotes also evidence another PhD aim which has remained consistent throughout. Namely, to provide evidence that the majority of activists have complex, "multi-issue" worldviews, and can be described as "organic experts" and "organic intellectuals".

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[350] When I wrote my first paper for the first conference on "Alternative Futures and popular protest" at MMU, and decided at about the same time to do a PhD- which resulted in me undertaking an MA in Social Research Methods at UWB between 1996/7 before starting the PhD "proper".

Section 3: Key Findings In Summary

This remains an extremely difficult task, I would argue that "the devil is in the detail", and that this PhD has in fact had a significant number of small findings, making dozens of important, if fleeting, analyses of the significance of a specific ethnographic instance, for example, which are context-specific and cannot be workably summarised. In other words, there are a myriad of "micro-findings", ethnographic and occasionally theoretical, which are written into the body of the thesis and could not be evidenced here without in essence having to repeat large sections of the original text. In this respect, a re-reading of the chapter summaries given in the introduction may be helpful here - whilst these are also extremely general, they may also serve as a memory jog for some of these "micro-findings".

I intend to highlight in the broadest terms what this PhD has achieved, which can be productively separated into ethnographic and theoretical sections.

3.1 Ethnographic Findings

In general terms, the evidence provided in this thesis helps to fill a knowledge gap regarding the "what, how and why" of a social movement whose antipathy to being mapped, studied and analysed, as discussed throughout, is marked. The fact that this PhD is so data rich is, I would argue, to quite an extent due to my partisan and insider status (this is actually also something of a theoretical finding in the context of the methodological case for my research approach argued in **Ch 2**). Highlights of the "what, how and why" of the EDA movement evidenced by my research include:

The nature of movement structure as a fluid series of biodegradable networks, evidenced through a number of qualitative and quantitative methods in a variety of settings, see **Ch 1, Ch 4, Ch 5**. Evidence of the implications, pros and cons. The local or specific character of individual networks and groups and the interrelationship between these 'local' and national activist communities and mobilisation waves.

The scale, substance and processes of movement change and adaptation over time, evidenced in the accounts of activist action and discourse given throughout. Targets, grievances, repertoires (tactics, forms of action) are documented throughout, together with accounts of diversity in all these areas and analysis of the issues and implications.

How movements and networks sustain mobilisation (build capacity) over time - evidence of

'micro-cohort' peaks and troughs, latent networks, crossover between radical activists and 'civil society', evidence of activist communities, and links between activist generations. See **Ch 4, Ch 5** in particular.

The "life cycle of the activist", predisposition, recruitment, immersion, sustaining 'high cost' action (see above), what the costs are, biographical availability, burnout, "slow burners" and micro-cohort involvement patterns.

A proven PhD hypothesis, that activists generally have a "multi-issue" and complex rationale for why they take action, effectively de-bunking "single issue" and "rent a mob" popular/public constructions of activists' aims and agendas.

A related proven PhD hypothesis, that action triggers praxis - discourse - and through this, further action, a key aspect of the process of mobilisation (**Ch 4, Ch 6, Ch 7**).

Thus, activists are grassroots "organic experts" and "organic intellectuals", forging movement praxis through practise. Linking back to earlier important points about the nature of the EDA movement and the process of mobilisation, the evidence for this grassroots knowledge production is a key finding in terms of the way the EDA movement operates, i.e. this process is what causes mobilisation[351], and the emphasis on 'DIY culture' is an ideological and a practical one.

Another proven hypothesis, that the EDA movement has a "collective identity" based on generally shared worldviews (see 3.2 below). To summarise, UK EDA movement collective identity is based around a social ecology perspective, grassroots democracy, social justice and environmental sustainability are commonly held nodes. Power relations are another important organising frame. A commitment to direct action as the only or primary tactic and strategy (**Ch 1, Ch 4, Ch 6, Ch 7**).

The movement's sense of what it is against is better developed than what it is 'for' (**Ch 4, Ch 6, Ch 7**). However proactive strategies for change are often extremely well developed, and are often practically demonstrated via grassroots community and environmental projects which blur boundaries into 'civil society' and which often mirror recent sustainable development and citizenship policy moves (**Ch 5**).

Evidence of activist reflexivity ("organic intellectuals") on all the above issues, for example the appreciated gap between rhetoric and reality in terms of activist discourse on power relations, and movement practise.

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[351] I would argue that, were activists to have an equivalent of a 'little red book', that the phenomenon of mobilisation would be fundamentally different to the shape it is now.

3.2 Theoretical Findings And Highlights

The ethnographic focus of this thesis means that theory was approached practically, as a tool by which to understand the data. Thus theoretical advances were not so much a target of this PhD.

However as discussed above, this ethnographic approach to theory enables theoretical development, in that movement 'reality' in this specific case study has been weighed up against the literature. In many cases this 'testing' of theoretical perspectives has highlighted their usefulness and continued applicability, there have also been occasions where theories missed important aspects of mobilisation, felt like an uncomfortable 'fit' or seemed wrong - in this specific context, I should stress[352], these then count as important research findings which may help to develop social movement theory. As with the ethnographic findings above, there are many 'micro-findings' (see **Ch 5**, for example) regarding SM theory in this PhD which are not practically possible to repeat here - see also **Ch 3**, the following is a generalised summary of SM theoretical areas and perspectives which this PhD has contributed to in some way.

Resource Mobilisation theory was found to be a less convincing explanation for mobilisation, due to the emphasis on 'rational choice', which does not fit with the picture which emerges from the data of activists engaged in high cost, high risk, activism, often with emotion and social network involvement as a strong motivator (**Ch 4**). However the data confirmed that resources of various types are a key factor of mobilisation (**Ch 4, Ch 5**).

Political Opportunities were seen to be a factor in mobilisation, at local, national and international level (**Ch 1, Ch 5, Ch 6**), although the data did not corroborate Tarrow's (1998) emphasis on a pre-existing strategic awareness of PO factors[353], but instead highlighted that they formed part of a background set of preconditions, which activists picked up on more consciously at some point in a mobilisation cycle.

My tentative theorising (arrived at during the research process - see **Ch 3, Ch 4, Ch 5**) about the importance of "Issue Opportunities"- the articulated framing of a key grievance which sparks mobilisation (often across a range of 'stakeholders') as a supplement to the macro-mobilisation factor of Political Opportunity Structures, is justifiable I feel in the context of my own ethnography, and could also be an interesting area of future research.

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[352] Whether or not these findings have general applicability is beyond the remit of this PhD, except where already-published research or papers make similar points. An example would be Steinberg (1998)'s critiques of Snow and Benford's tendency to describe frames as being manufactured through movement elites; a criticism I had also had developed "on the ground" via my ethnography.

Again from the perspective of the data gathered in this thesis, 'standard' SM theories which describe and explain movement processes and 'life cycles'- in other words discuss what a social movement is, and what causes and sustains mobilisation inter-movement, generally fitted EDA movement reality extremely well, see **Ch 3**. For example, the importance of social networks (Diani), the fluidity of movement structures (Routledge, Scheller) and the pattern of their biodegradability and latency (Wall, Welsh), the importance of activist community and generational crossover (Whittier), were all approaches strongly corroborated by the data throughout the PhD. Tarrow's theories surrounding mobilisation cycles ('early risers', innovation) were of particular relevance.

My ethnography provided a "reality check" for the above theories, often emphasising aspects of movement process either ignored or under theorised (this is where significant 'micro-findings' are to be found in the main body of the thesis), for example, the fact that "weak ties" (Granovetter) provide challenges and constraints for mobilisation as well as opportunities (**Ch 5**), that cross-movement networking and in fact all movement processes are extremely difficult and sometimes counter-productive, that social networks can alienate, as well as empower, activists (**Ch 4, Ch 5**). To make a general point, then, a finding of this PhD is that it is imperative to remember that all theories are describing processes undertaken by real people, and do not provide causal, formulaic, explanations for action, things are much more context-dependant than much of the literature allows for.

Movement 'capacity-building' as theorised by Welsh (2000) is another key concept in the context of the above, which has also seen to fit well in terms of understanding the processes of the EDA movement. The fact that capacity can be lost as well as built is perhaps a main theoretical finding of this thesis (**Ch 3, Ch 1, Ch 5**).

In terms of understanding, or being able to tackle, the "why" of the EDA movement, framing, cognitive praxis, and collective identity[354] are 'proved' to be extremely useful tools. However framing, and collective identity to a lesser extent, both showed strains in terms of their complete applicability to movement reality. Framing as conceived by Steinberg (1998) as more grassroots, fluid and situational is a more accurate and useful tool when applied to the EDA movement. The issues surrounding collective identity have formed such a large proportion of this PhD in various chapters that they can afford to be simply summarised here. The paradox of movement diversity

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[353] With some stated exceptions such as the Criminal Justice Act mobilisations in 1994 /5.
[354] And similar concepts; e.g. Klandemans' "multi- organisational fields"

and simultaneous solidarity regarding shared meanings for action, shared worldviews, is generally extremely well accounted for under the theory of collective identity, although the strains when dealing with extreme paradigms, often under coalition conditions, are noticeable and may signal a limit to its usefulness as a way to understand what goes on in movement's cognitive and hence strategic processes.

Appreciating the potential of movement network biodegradability could be an important supplement to the theory of collective identity here, i.e., a variety of ethnographic examples seem to highlight that when the tensions involved in the process of sharing a collective identity reach a certain critical mass, the network (group, coalition) 'organically' biodegrades (e.g. **Ch 5**, North Wales anti-globalisation coalitions fall apart somewhat after the contested 'pie-ing' of Clare Short in 2001). Assessing the potential general applicability, and pros and cons of this theory (e.g., in terms of the implications for movement capacity building) could be an interesting area of future research[355].

The ethnography (in particular **Ch 1, Ch 4, Ch 6, Ch 7**) fitted a range of key theorists' (e.g. Melucci, Touraine) appraisals of what (broadly, Left orientated) social movements are doing conceptually, challenging the codes of post-modern and globalised power structures. Further, other academics' work on key frames and values within the UK EDA movement has been corroborated (Barry, Dobson, Wall, Doherty, Welsh).

In terms of the methodological approaches developed and used in this PhD (**Ch 2**), my own theoretical positioning, based on feminist and similar engaged academic epistemologies, has I feel been an extremely important theoretical development, which critically engaged with trails blazed by (amongst others) Mies and Roseneil, and through a reflexive approach, enabled the reader to use their own judgment regarding the viability of this research and the pros and cons of this research process.

Section 4: PhD constraints

Mappability and representativeness have been constraints discussed throughout this PhD. I did try to write this PhD with two audiences in mind, those examining it academically, and those reading it from an activist perspective. In terms of the latter, knowing that I myself represented a certain

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[355] Whilst it is tempting to go back and re-evaluate my data in each chapter against this tentative theoretical conclusion which was arrived at in the final stages of the research process, it is not practicable. It is offered here

body of discourses and practises within the movement, I started to write imagining this PhD was being read by an activist who I knew to hold sometimes diametrically opposite opinions and tactics to my own, would what I had written represent his perspective as much as mine? This I think did help me overcome the issues of representativeness regarding my own personal biography. The more problematic area, that the movement is vast and there are probably whole networks of equal importance I have failed to even mention, is simply par for the course (see **Ch 2**).

Theoretically, there are several key theorists whose work is of such crucial importance regarding my subject matter, that the valid question, as to why I did not make more use of their work, needs answering. These theorists include Bordieu, Castells and Touraine. Whilst Castells' network theory, and Touraine's social movement approach form a theoretical backdrop to this study, neither engages directly in an empirically grounded sense with the internal, interactive dynamics of movement engaged within in this thesis. The data presented here has been interpreted primarily through theorists whose works provided operationalisable categories appropriate to my study (egg Whittier's 1995 concept of 'micro-cohorts'). Analysis of data from one country cannot provide a broad enough base for the construction of general theory. This thesis thus represents a meso level study. Nevertheless the material presented here suggests that further qualitative work needs to be done in other countries, global networks across a range of issue foci. Such effort is required to add depth and insight to the way in which network interactions are constitutive of movement identities and coalition formation and further define the social movement that Touraine would argue is always 'immanent' within any particular mobilisation. This lies beyond the scope of this thesis and forms an important basis for future research underlining the contribution to knowledge made by this work.

Section 5: Twyford +10, Rio+10

At this years Earth First! Summer Gathering a meeting...decided to start a Radical Ecological Direct Action 'Strategy and Action' Discussion Group. Many of us were/are dissatisfied with Earth First!, the direct action movement, the anti-capitalist movement, or whatever we choose to call it, in its present form, and dissatisfied with a lack of assessing where we are, what we would

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simply as a conclusion drawn from a final assessment of the issues raised during the course of this PhD.

like to be, where we are going, and crucially, what are the best things to be doing with our time now. The aim of the group is to provide a regular open forum for people with similar aims (a broadly ecological libertarian society) who take action to discuss action-orientated strategy to help us develop as a movement. The plan is to meet for a weekend, quarterly, in a different part of the country, for structured discussions...

(extract from email 'flier' for strategy meeting, held on Sept 28/9, 2002).

Apart from providing more evidence that activists are reflexive and aim - through gatherings like these - to be more strategic, the above quote also re-emphasises that the movement is always moving and changing. Future directions are likely to grow out of strategic discussions like this, equally, new mobilisations are likely to spring up from unexpected directions, thrown up by series of factors (issues, political opportunities, 'early risers') which are only traceable in hindsight. A combination of the above, established, pre-existing networks possibly undergoing a relative period of latency[356] and re-evaluation with resources (experience, information) at their disposal, and the potential emergence of new actors, possibly initially mobilising without knowledge of these more established players, could 'suddenly' trigger the next wave of mobilisation, like the processes which seeded and supported evolving action networks at Twyford Down[357].

Ten years after Twyford, and ten years after the Rio summit, with the Johannesburg summit a nasty taste in the mouth of the movement, it is hardly surprising that there is a more strategic and thoughtful re-appraisal happening inter-movement at present[358], a "Twyford+10" gathering/action has been planned for December 2002. As discussed in **Ch 6** in particular, 1999 was the year that 'benchmarked' a long period of movement capacity building, in terms of the movement explicitly mobilising, and framing its discourses, around the "bigger picture" which had

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[356] This is not to say that mobilisation in a myriad of formats and with the diffuse array of issues which typifies movement activity is not still happening; Peat Alert! has recently had another week of action; the Rising Tide national gathering is scheduled for the first weekend of October. Some activity is taking the form of networking. Thus I would be wary of saying that there is less happening in the movement, although there is a perceived sense inter-movement that this is the case and that numbers are down. This could be a natural 'blip' due to the fact that 2001 was an extremely action-packed year meaning that many are taking time out; similarly, 2000 was less active than 1999- see tables in **ch1**.

[357] Peace/anti- war mobilisations have combined easily with "anti- capitalist" discourses surrounding power, vested interest and the death of the innocent (see **intro, ch6**); the flier above also made clear that many workshop attendees will be mobilising on the anti-war (with Iraq, but also surrounding US/Western military strategy in the middle East generally) demonstrations planned nationally for Sept 28th before attending the meeting. These demonstrations, like the ones opposing Afghan air strikes a year ago, promise to be well- attended.

always been implicit in the "single issue" frames (roads, GM among other things) through which activist networks had been mobilising. Again, given that I am part of the phenomenon I analyse, I do not think it is a coincidence that my research, which had striven from the start to emphasise how all encompassing and complex activists' rationales were for taking action, started to come to fruition at the same time that the movement itself started to mobilise explicitly around the macro processes and dominant values seen as underlying and cross-cutting a huge range of key grievances. The significances of the global nature of these protests, and the solidarity (or otherwise) of the international networks of what RTS called "the movement of movements", remain to be explored both academically and pragmatically by activists themselves. Tarrow and Meyer's (1998) claim that as contention becomes a normal part of citizenship, we are moving towards a social movement society, is an interesting direction in this context.

Having achieved so much, and with the implications of these achievements so mind-boggling as to almost confuse the UK EDA movement with the potential directions it could follow, it is hardly surprising that the initial euphoria and mass mobilisation peak is currently subsiding into a more reflexive mood. The tensions of coalitions with 'civil society' stakeholders affected by Neoliberalism have been explored in **Ch 6**. Added to this, internationally (and especially, possibly, in the US and UK), mobilisations and arguments were effectively silenced in the public arena post '9-11'. However, in the long term the coming together of peace and anti-globalisation networks in the face of these difficulties could produce an even stronger movement. It could also be the case that newer activists, not encumbered by their awareness of the complexities of the wider picture (but still able to draw on the experiences of these activists), are able to mobilise more effectively over 'single issues' at this time.

The legacy of my research has been that by documenting ten years of the movement, especially focussing on the mobilisations (and activists' rationales for action) which preceded and developed into the anti-globalisation protests, I have provided an essential supplement to the academic analyses which focussed on the seeming 'suddenness' of these more recent mobilisations. There is no final conclusion - but I have to stop somewhere, leaving the UK EDA movement poised at some interesting crossroads - all directions for the taking - watch this space...

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[358] See for example Plows, Alex (2002) 'Remembering Twyford Down', *Schnews* annual.

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Appendix 1

A proper documentation of the vibrant and inspirational creative talent within, or in some way attached to, the EDA movement, is utterly beyond the scope of this thesis. Peoples' talent is awesome and abundant. The websites given in the bibliography have hyperlinks to much protest-inspired cultural activity. Below are two website links, and some lyrics from activist band (and personal friends) 'Seize the Day'. Two other activist musicians, Feth and Paul Gill, also deserve special mention as voices of the movement.

http://home.freeuk.net/rooted/index.html

http://www.seizetheday.org/index.htm

_Goodbye Ancient Mystery - the Call Of The Wild is history.
*We'll weed out indigenous sperm with the aid of a smart designer-germ
Select the hot shots that we need for a cleaner, leaner, meaner breed,
A gene elite in a righteous war to waste whatever was on Earth before"* □

Food 'n' Health 'n' Hope

Seize The Day 1999

Those Polar Bears now - who really cares now ?

They're breeding gender-bending babies, who won't be breeding none

Cos PCBs, yeah, are in the seas, yeah

We like to think that there's a little piece of us in everyone !

Cos we're Monsanto - that's right Monsanto

We're turning Satan into Santa, by giving kiddies cancer

Coming through now, we're changing you now,

The Mother-Nature Terminators of Food n' Health n' Hope

That DDT ban - don't lay it on me man!

cos we had all these creepie-crawlies fallin' on the food we grew,

Was a revolution-ary solution

It's just a shame that what we sprayed on made the turnips toxic too!

Let me remind yer 'bout Indochina,

Then commie dominoes were fallin' so we sprayed 'em into hell,

Give peasant farmers Orange pyjamas -

We made their jungle cover wither, then we withered them as well!

Cos we're Monsanto - that's right Monsanto

We're turning Satan into Santa, by giving kiddies cancer

Coming through now, we're changing you now,

The Mother-Nature Terminators of Food n' Health n' Hope

It's not our fault there's chemical warfare

but if there's dollars in dioxin, it's our duty to supply

that rain of poisin they washed our boys in,

A cancer-agent from the C.I - Hey! - I cannot tell a lie

From Pentagon came that drug Aspartame,

Our Pepsi-Cola with no calories was every kiddies' treat.

When there were rumours it gave 'em tumours

Somebody falsified the data, and we called it NutraSweet

And you get more juice now from a dairy moo-cow,

Monsanta's daily dose of hormones, them udders gonna swell!

-Don't blame the cream though if you're in chemo,

There may be BST mastectomies, but nobody can tell!

Cos we're Monsanto - that's right Monsanto

We're turning Satan into Santa, by giving kiddies cancer

Coming through now, we're changing you now,

The Mother-Nature Terminators of Food n' Health n' Hope

Robert Shapiro, well he's our Hero !

He's on a mission with a vision of 'Sustainability'

Which means we're goin' to keep on growin'

Till we're the biggest corporation in the 21st Century !

Seeing no future for the big polluters

He span an 'eco-friendly' line in redesigning DNA,

Genetic eyes on that far horizon

Where every thing alive is privatised and every seed'll pay.

We got the soya, we got the lawyers,

The politicians in our pockets all the way to President !

The press and T.V. to guarantee the

co-operation of your nation in our new experiment

You did not choose it, but you'll have to use it:

We'll get our 'Round-Up Ready' fingerprint in every pie you eat,

With every patent, be a bit more blatant,

Till our corporation's domination of your globe'll be complete !

Mister Monsanto! Monster Mutanto !

We're turning Satan into Santa - Give Everybody Cancer !

Coming through now, we're changing you now,

The Mother-Nature Terminators,

Hell-On-Earth Creators,

Gene-Manipulators,

Bio-tech Dictators.

The Future's gonna hate us....

Food n' Health n' Hope!

Appendix 2

Similarly to appendix 1, the most useful way of accessing activists' own discourses and analyses is through the website links given in the bibliography. Two of the most reliable are: http.//www.schnews.org.uk/ and http.//www.uk.indymedia.co.uk. The text of a recent *Schnews* follows.

THE NATIONAL SECURITY STRATEGY
OF THE
UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

① Choose our enemies
② Bomb them
③ Bomb them
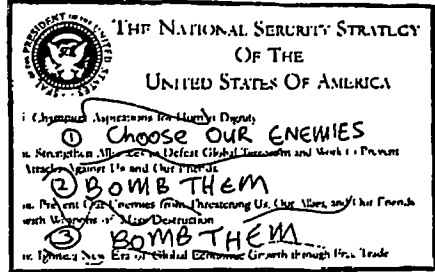
DOCU-MENTAL!

"This is a time of opportunity for America. We will work to translate this moment of influence into decades of peace, prosperity, and liberty... We will actively work to bring the hope of democracy, development, free markets, and free trade to every corner of the world." From the recently published National Security Strategy of the USA.

We couldn't make it up if we tried, ladies and gentlemen. Last month, the Bush Administration released its new National Security Strategy of the United States of America. A document whose contents list included agenda items such as the obviously ironic, "Champion Aspirations for Human Dignity," the arrogant, "Ignite a New Era of Global Economic Growth through Free Markets and Free Trade," and the downright scary "Develop Agendas for Cooperative Action with the Other Main Centers of Global Power." The document also contained gems such as:

"Today, the United States enjoys a position of unparalleled military strength and great economic and political influence" (*and we will kill anyone and everyone who threatens this position*).

"We seek to create a balance of power that favours human freedom" (*and America*)

"We will defend the peace by fighting terrorists and tyrants" (*i.e. anyone who has the slightest criticism of America*).

"Free trade and free markets have proven their ability to lift whole societies out of poverty" (*and into our clutches*)

"The United States will work with individual nations, entire regions, and the entire global trading community to build a world that trades in freedom and therefore grows in prosperity" (*too much bullshit to even parody).*

"Freedom is...the birthright of every person—in every civilisation" (*as long as we get to dictate 'freedom to do what?').*

"Today, humanity holds in its hands the opportunity to further freedom's triumph over all its foes. The United States welcomes our responsibility to lead in this great mission" (*and to cash in on all the profits that come with it).*

The Bush Doctrine

This idiotic new document is already being hailed as the new Bush Doctrine. But the idiocy contains an evil little twist. Included in the paper is a section titled 'Prevent Our Enemies from Threatening Us, Our Allies, and Our Friends with Weapons of Mass Destruction'. The section basically says that the cold war strategies of 'containment' (preventing the spread of communism) and 'deterrence' (being so incredibly tough that no enemy could attack you without guaranteeing their own destruction) are no longer sufficient to guarantee US security. The US government now thinks it must reserve the right to use its overwhelming military might pre-emptively to attack and overthrow governments that it suspects of attempting to acquire WMDs, harbour terrorists, or contain any ill-will whatsoever towards the good ol' US of A. SchNEWS reckons that pre-emptivity (read: kicking the shit out of everyone before they can make a peep) has always been America's policy (Vietnam anyone?). It's just that now, they've put it down in black and white.

And what's the justification for this newly publicised strategy? That the terrorists and rogue states that threaten America aren't motivated by a rational power-lust like the USSR was, oh no. Instead they are of course driven by an irrational hatred of justice, liberty, and freedom. According to the Bush Doctrine, because the new enemies of the US are not just evil, but also mental, it can't be assumed that they will act as 'responsibly' as previous forces of darkness have. And this, supposedly, is what justifies the Bush Doctrine of pre-emptive strikes—rogue states' sheer insanity.

On this basis, the Bush administration reckons that they can justify upsetting the UN by officially tearing up the rulebook on when it's acceptable to bomb the shit out of people in other countries. The problem is that no one, not the US's allies, 'citizens' or even their secret service is ready to buy the argument. According to the director of the CIA, George Tenet, there is no evidence that the rogue state currently in Bush's sights (Iraq) has any immediate desire to attack Western populations. He argues, however, that the kind of pre-emptive attack that Bush and his cronies are pushing for "could trigger the very things [Bush] has said he's trying to prevent—the use of chemical or biological weapons". The Bush government might think they're powerful enough to re-write the rules to justify their ambitions, but there's one rule that they would do well not to forget: playing with explosives makes you look hard, but if you don't know how they work, they just might blow up in your face. Tick, tick, tick...

For more ridiculous reading, see the full document at www.statewatch.org/news/2002/sep/nss.pdf

CRAP ARRESTS OF THE WEEK

For being Palestinian...
Last Friday nearly a hundred soldiers surrounded Iraq Burin - a small village near Nablus city. They were 'looking for terrorists' and 'suspicious Palestinian men.' For five hours 3 houses were repeatedly hit with rockets and bullets, families were evicted from their homes, belongings were smashed, and 16 men were arrested, tied up, driven 25 km to Huwara military base, interrogated, and then released. "Sorry," said the Israeli Defence Force. "We made a mistake."

War BRIEFS

Last week 160 people shut down the gates of US Air Base Lakenheath in Suffolk where about 30 US nuclear war heads are kept. www.lakenheathaction.org ** Some Americans don't agree with Bush!! Last weekend 87,000 protestors took to the streets across America to protest against war on Iraq. www.indymedia.org ** An anti-war group has squatted the former Brighton Peace Centre in Gardner St. Open day Saturday 12th, check it out! ** Demo outside Menwith Hill Spy Base. Sat 12th, 12-4pm, 01943 466405 www.caab.org.uk ** Whose Terror? Speakers from three countries facing "War on Terror" state terror--Palestine, Iraq, and Columbia. Sat 12th 2pm Friends Meeting House, Ship St, Brighton. ** Films against economic sanctions and war on Iraq. Sat 12th from 2.30pm, Rio Cinema, Kingsland High St., Dalston, London. £4/£2.50 0845 458 2564 voices@viwuk.freeserve.co.uk ** Threat of War and Future of the Kurds public meeting. Tue 15th 7pm, Committee Room 10, House of Commons, Westminster, SW1. 020 7435 4547 Liberation@btinternet.com ** Why is the Anti-War movement ignoring Saddam's crimes? With Peter Tatchell. Tue 15th 7:30pm, Upstairs Bar, Rugby Tavern, 19 Great James Street, London. www.newhumanist.org.uk * Don't Attack Iraq March & Rally, Sat 19th 11.30am George Square, Glasgow. 0141 423 1222 scnd@banthebomb.org ** One SchNEWS reader has been getting their anti-war message across by adorning bank notes with anti war messages - not a bad idea. ** National day of action against the war, 31st October, see www.stopwar.org.uk 020 7053 2155. In Brighton, a critical mass is planned, meet 3pm, University of Sussex. At 5:30pm there's an action planned, meet at the War Memorial, Old Steine. ** Stop the War, Stop the City. Meet on the day after war is announced against Iraq. 5:30pm in Churchill Square, Brighton. Bring pots and pans!!

LULA-LA LAND

Yer on-the-ball SchNEWS is in downtown Sao Paulo this week to give you the lowdown on the man they call Lula ("The Squid" in English, it's short for Luiz Inacio da Silva).

This week, Brazil's Workers Party (PT), led by Lula, won an unprecedented 4-2 victory against the US-backed government team in the first round of the Massively Important Presidential Championships of Latin America. The PT almost doubled their seats in the Senate, and at the final whistle, with 46.4 percent of the vote to his nearest rival Jose Serra's 23.2 percent, Lula was just short of outright victory. In the second and final leg, to be played on October 27th, the scores are back to 0-0 with everything to play for.

In Brazil, Lula is as recognisable a name as Pele or Ronaldo. He became famous as the leader of illegal metalworker strikes that helped bring an end to the military dictatorship in the mid-1970s. He has run for president and lost three times since becoming co-founder, in 1980, of the Workers Party.

GOOOOAAAAL!!! Lula opposes the Free Trade Area of the Americas, which he calls Bush's 'Annexation of Latin America.' He opposes Plan Columbia. He opposes sanctions on Cuba. He has the support of the landless movement in Brazil, Movimento Sem Terra He promises to end endemic corruption by getting people not aligned to politics or business in on the budget-making decisions.

There's talk of an axis between Lula, Castro and Hugo Chavez in Venezula, who foiled another attempted coup this week, timed to coincide with the Brazilian elections. With strong left gains in neighbouring Bolivia and Paraguay and elections in Argentina next March, Latin America's face could be unrecognisable from just 12 months ago, a complete rejection of the US-led free market reforms.

But however good all this may sound, Lula still may be foul. Because of his previous campaign defeats, Lula has changed much of his lefty tune this time around and many in the Workers Party are angry but, for the moment, are keeping schtum.

DODGY KEEPER!!! Despite being locked-up and having his 1970s rallies buzzed by army choppers, Lula has made friends with the military, suggesting the signing of nuclear non-proliferation treaties was wrong. He is also supporting a move by Embraer, Brazil's massive aircraft maker, to develop a serious fighter jet and missile programme.

OVER THE BAR!! Despite previously fighting on a platform of defaulting on Brazil's crippling $260bn debt -- more than half of what the country produces in a year -- he now says they'll pay up. (But some people think he'll still default) Lula also says he'll work with the IMF and honour the new record-breaking $30bn loan. Lula has also attracted a few dodgy new geezers including his vice president and running mate, Jose Alencar, a textile baron worth $500M, from the centre-right Liberal Party. Seeing which way the wind is blowing, other business leaders have also backed Lula.

SchNEWS fought through the crowds last week at Lula's final emotional rally at the metalworkers union in the industrial suburbs of Sao Paulo, where he worked as a lathe operator and transformed the 100,000-strong union. "Everything that we have done until now hasn't been done to gain the Presidency, that is just a consequence," he told the crowds. "The most symbolic thing about me winning is that we will prove to anybody the truth of something that I said in 1979, which is that nobody will ever again be able to doubt the working classes." Does Lula deserve a Red Card? You make the call!

DAFT TAFT

We thought that full-scale global war and U.S.-instigated regime changes the world over would be enough to keep George Dub'ya busy, but no. Now Georgie has to take aim at unions as well. For the past two weeks, in 29 major docks up and down the American west coast, the International Longshore and Warehouse Union (ILWU) has been locked out by their bosses over contract disputes that have been raging since last June. The meanie bosses, the Pacific Maritime Association (PMA), want to sack a large number of dockers and attack workers' rights. Understandably, the ILWU have been threatening to strike and recently did a work "slowdown," which lead to the lockout. Enter our old friend George. Deciding that the union shouldn't be allowed to use the lockout time to work out a better contract with PMA, as the whole dispute was costing the US economy billions of dollars, Bush decided to call in the draconian Taft-Hartley Act. The Daft Act was passed in 1947 as an anti-union law. It commands both the employers and the union to return back to work under the conditions of the old contract for 80 days. The act goes on to call for fines and prison sentences for those violating the terms of the contract (i.e. striking or engaging in slow-downs). This part of the bill is aimed at workers and effectively breaks the back of the union for the 80-day period, leaving them open to whatever the abusive bosses can come up with, with no real way to fight back. The 80 days of the Taft-Hartley injunction also gets PMA through the peak shipping season and to the slowest time of the year, thus relieving them of any urgency to bargain once the 80 days are over. PMA loved the government intervention, but labour unions were furious that the president had once again acted in the interests of big business. "PMA will start alleging supposed slowdowns straightaway. Taft-Hartley gives them 80 days of free shots at the union and we expect the employers will be dragging us to court daily, trying to bankrupt the union and throw our leaders in jail," said ILWU president James Spinosa. "No one should be surprised by the turn of these events," Spinosa said. "Bush has always actively sided with employers against workers. This collusion between the government and the employers was planned well in advance." www.labournet.net or http://sf.indymedia.org/

Inside SchNEWS

A new Zine is now available to support Jeff 'Free' Luers, the US anarchist prisoner serving an amazing 22 years for burning a few cars. The zine called 'Let's Get Free'- includes writings for, by and about 'Free'. It's available for a donation of $5. Proceeds of the sale will (after paying copy costs) go to Jeff Luers directly. From NA-ELPSN, POB 50082, Eugene, OR 97405 USA. naelpsn@tao.ca. www.spiritoffreedom.org.uk/prisoners/fc/freezine.html

Positive SchNEWS

Radical Routes is a network of over 50 small co-operatives who work together to support collective ownership of houses and buildings for groups working for radical social change. It also aids small worker controlled businesses involved in socially useful work, supports and promotes de-schooling and home education, and helps facilitate the development of radical clubs and social centres. Radical Routes members meet four times a year. The next gathering is Manchester 26th-27th October. On the 26th there's an afternoon of discussions open to non-members who want to find out more about co-ops and the work of Radical Routes. Bridge 5 Mill, 22a Beswick St., Ancoats, Manchester www.radicalroutes.org.uk, info@radicalroutes.org.uk 0161 224 4846

SchNEWS in brief

SchNEWS nearly 8th Birthday Party, with LSDS, Miss C MC & Mama, Harry Diezel, Judge Trev and Jelly, 7-11pm, 14th, Albert Pub, Brighton. ** SchNEWS exculsive: we're the first to announce that Noam Chomsky speaks at St.Pauls Cathedral, 9th December as a benefit for the Kurdish Human Rights Project. Tickets £15/£8 will be snapped up quick, get yours from Hannah 020 7287 2772 ** Gianfranco Fini, the Italian Foreign Minister, well known fascist, and director of police operations at last years Genoa protests, is speaking in London on the 22nd. He'd love to see you!! Meet 8am onwards outside Claridge's Hotel, 53 Brook Street, London, W1 ** The offices of SHAC (Stop Huntington Animal Cruelty) were raided again by police last Friday. Five computers were confiscated and two people nicked. SHAC desperately need donations to replace the stolen property. Four other SHAC protestors, including a 70-year-old woman, have also been arrested in Kent and are on remand. SHAC, c/o Lynn Sawyer, 6 Boat Lane, Evesham, Worcestershire, WR11 4BP. 0845 458 0630 www.shac.net/resources.html ** Sat 12th is a silent demo in Cambridge against the University's proposed primate research lab. Noon, Guildhall, Market Square 01223 311828 info@x-cape.org.uk ** 1000 students are expected for next months Shared Planet Conference, speakers including Mark Thomas and George Monbiot are hoping to inspire students to start campaigning for a better world. 2-3 Nov. Warwick University Arts Centre. £16 (incl. accommodation) www.peopleandplanet.org/sharedplanet ** There's a European Social Consulta which aims to build activist networks across Europe in Barcelona, 19th-20th October. Info www.europeanconsulta.org encuentro@consultaeuropea.org ** 18th October is Media Democracy Day, a day dedicated to the promotion of independent media. Events in London see www.mediademocracyday.org.uk ** Special Screening of McLibel Two Worlds Collide film, 8pm 16th October, Cinematheque, Middle Street, Brighton.

...and finally...

What would you do if you'd got yourself a nice countryside pad with a sea view, but your neighbours, whose land your house is built on, keep making extensions that are reducing the price of your property? You could maybe move house, become more tolerant, or maybe even kill your neighbours!!

This last option may seem extreme, but for a family of badgers in Saltdean, East Sussex this is exactly what's going to happen. Residents in houses that were built on top of a badger sett have complained that the badgers subterranean extensions are undermining their foundations. And rather than look for alternative ways to cope with this problem, the Animal Welfare Minister, Elliot Morley, has granted a licence for the family of badgers to be killed under the 1992 Protection of Badger Act (Ummm). SchNEWS would like to suggest that a load of property developers out there be culled instead.

This Saturday there's a demonstration against the slaughter of the badgers at Saxon Close, Saltdean 10am- noon. www.geocities.com/wildlifeambulance/index.html

* The culling of badgers by the government in their long drawn out attempt to prove a link between badgers and the spread of TB in cattle is restarting in two areas of the UK. To get involved in stopping the culls contact 07773 572970 (Devon) or 07811 629846 (Derbyshire) www.badger-killers.co.uk

Disclaimer
The SchNEWS Doctrine warns all readers that we reserve the right to pre-emptively use our weapon of mass distraction against any bush-shit. Honest.