THE INVISIBLE MOVEMENT: THE RESPONSE OF THE NEWFOUNDLAND ENVIRONMENTAL MOVEMENT TO THE OFFSHORE OIL INDUSTRY

LEAH FUSCO

Your file Votre référence
ISBN: 978-0-494-33420-1
Our file Notre référence
ISBN: 978-0-494-33420-1

The Invisible Movement: The Response of the Newfoundland Environmental Movement to the Offshore Oil Industry

by

Leah Fusco

A thesis submitted to the School of Graduate Studies in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Master of Arts

Sociology Department
Memorial University of Newfoundland

October, 2007

St. John's Newfoundland

Abstract

The aim of this research is to explain how the environmental movement in Newfoundland has responded to the offshore oil industry in this province. It is based on the observation that while environmental groups in other parts of the country have undertaken issues regarding the environmental impacts of the offshore oil industry, groups in Newfoundland, for the most part, have not. In order to explore what factors have contributed to such a response, or lack of response, this research used theories of frames, political opportunities, and resource mobilization. Thirty-seven semi-structured interviews were conducted with members of environmental groups, government, industry, and the private sector, as well as unaffiliated individuals. These interviews provided information about the key factors that contributed to or hindered action against the offshore oil industry. The main findings suggest that resources, opportunities, and frames all played a part in whether action took place and if so, in what form. Both resources and opportunities were important for groups to act, as were their perceptions about these resources and opportunities, i.e. the likelihood that using them would lead to change.

Acknowledgments

I would like to thank the following people and organizations for their role in the completion of this thesis. Funding for this research was provided in part by Memorial University's graduate fellowship and the Oil, Power, and Dependency project, a research project of Dr. Peter Sinclair and Dr. Sean Cadigan. Without help from these sources this research would not have been possible. I would specifically like to thank Dr. Peter Sinclair and Dr. Sean Cadigan for giving me the opportunity to work on the Oil, Power, and Dependency project. It has been an extremely valuable experience. Both of my supervisors, Dr. Peter Sinclair and Dr. Bob Hill, have been extremely supportive and helpful throughout the entire research process and I have learned a great deal from working with them. Next, I must thank everyone who participated in the interviews, not only for providing information, but for motivating me and making me feel that I was doing something worthwhile. Because so many interview respondents expressed interest and excitement in this research, I constantly felt motivated to continue. Finally, I would like to thank my parents for their lifelong encouragement and support of every decision I've ever made or thought about making.

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Chapter 1: Introduction

The global oil industry is immense, prosperous, powerful and impersonal. It may also conjure up images of environmental problems and social injustice. Contrast these images with the small island of Newfoundland, with its half a million people and historically struggling economy. Representations of this island include small fishing communities, warm and friendly people, and a pristine environment. However, in recent decades the oil industry has entered the province and caused these contrasting images to collide. Based on the aforementioned connotations associated with the oil industry, this could have brought concern to the people of the province, but instead it has brought them hope for a brighter economic future. Since the early 1990s the oil industry has had, and will likely continue to have, major implications for the province's economy, environment, and way of life.

The Newfoundland economy has traditionally been fish-based. The fishery created a significant number of jobs not only on the water, but also in processing plants. This was a way of life for many Newfoundlanders, but it suffered a blow in 1992 when, after years of over-fishing and mismanagement, the government put a moratorium on the cod fishery. The already historically struggling economy suffered even further as people lost their jobs and their way of life. In order to find work and provide for themselves and their families, many Newfoundlanders have had to leave the island.

Offshore oil development in the province has been heralded as the activity that would lead the province to better economic times. It has been hoped that the industry

would lead to an increased number of jobs and revenue, and boost the morale of a people whose province has long been depicted as constantly begging for money. Since the development of the Hibernia oil field began in 1990 and production began in 1997, the province has experienced a great deal of change. The industry has been credited with significant increases in GDP, has provided jobs, and has generated royalty income for government coffers.

However, despite these economic benefits, one cannot disregard the images conjured up by the global oil industry. The oil industry has been responsible for some of the worst environmental disasters worldwide, and it is this same industry that now operates in Newfoundland, a place viewed by many as having a relatively clean environment. Thus, although the industry has brought with it its huge bank account, it has also brought the potential for environmental disasters. Outside of Newfoundland, this potential has induced groups to address the oil industry's effects on the environment. For example, in Alberta groups including the Pembina Institute, Canadian Parks and Wilderness Society, and the Sierra Club, work on environmental issues related to the tar sands. In British Columbia environmental groups are working to maintain an offshore oil moratorium. Even as close as Nova Scotia there are groups directly addressing that province's offshore oil industry. However, while the same risks exist in Newfoundland, it seems, at first glance, that this province's environmental groups have not shared in the response.

My interest in the subject

I came to this province more than two and a half years ago. I grew up in the state of Maine, a place not completely unlike Newfoundland. Maine has about twice the number of people, but shares with Newfoundland its coastal geography, rural communities, weak economy, and some of the same resource-based industries. Perhaps it was for this reason that I did not feel that I was in such a different place when I moved to Newfoundland. However, Maine has a fairly active environmental movement and I grew up in a politically and environmentally active family and so was constantly exposed to environmental groups. Because of this I found it surprising when I came to Newfoundland and did not see more groups addressing the environmental effects of the offshore oil industry. Why has more action not been taken to address the offshore oil industry in this province? Alternatively, if there has been action, why has it not been more visible?

Research problem and chapter outline

This research addresses the apparent lack of visibility of Newfoundland environmental groups working on offshore oil issues. I do not assume that there has been no activity, but take as a starting point that if there has, it has not been readily apparent to the general population. The purpose of this research is to explain how the environmental movement in Newfoundland has responded to the offshore oil industry. It is, at its core, a case study of a social movement. Specifically, it is a study of how and why the environmental movement in Newfoundland has manifested itself the way that it has.

The environmental movement in Newfoundland is an interesting case study for several reasons. First, little research has been conducted on the subject (perhaps because the movement here is relatively new) and this provides an opportunity to fill a gap in knowledge. Second, Newfoundland is so far removed from other major areas in which environmental activism has taken place, that the evolution of the movement here has been unique. Finally, although Newfoundland's population is small, some interview respondents suggested that they had always thought that Newfoundlanders' close relationship with the land, and their dependence on it for their livelihood (the fishery), would have made them strong advocates for the environment. However, this does not appear to be the case.

In order to make sense of this research problem, it is necessary to examine the literature on social movements. Chapter two will review the literature that guided the theoretical and methodological approach taken to conduct this research. This chapter will predominantly focus on the recent theories of social movements that came about in response to 1960s activism, namely, framing, resource mobilization, and political opportunities. Although each theory has been used on its own to explain social movements, I will argue that all three are necessary. This chapter will provide the theoretical toolbox with which to begin my own exploration of the environmental movement in Newfoundland.

Data for this research were gathered through interviews with individuals involved with environmental issues, most of whom were members of environmental groups.

However, interviews were also conducted with others who were familiar with the offshore oil industry and the environmental issues related to it (such as members of government, industry, and the private sector). Chapter three will discuss the methodological approach used to conduct this research. I will explain my use of qualitative research methods, the research process itself, and problems and reflections on this process.

Chapter four will provide a background of the offshore oil industry in Newfoundland. This will consist of a brief history of the industry in the province, current offshore developments, major issues, and economic impacts of the industry. It will also include a brief overview of Canadian oil policy history in order to contextualize the discussion of the emergence of the industry in Newfoundland.

Chapter five will provide background on the environmental movement in Newfoundland. It will explore how this global movement has become manifest in the province, including its history, structure, organization, major groups, and the major issues addressed over the years. Together, chapters four and five will provide the context within which the research problem is explored.

Chapter six will present the data gathered in the interviews. These findings will be organized by fitting them within the theoretical framework presented in chapter two.

In the final chapter I will provide concluding thoughts, policy suggestions, and suggestions for further research.

Chapter 2: Theory

Social movement theory has gone through a renaissance in recent decades. The previously dominant theories, in which social movements were viewed as the result of irrational behavior by individuals, have been replaced by theories that look beyond this micro-level of analysis and toward the wider social structure. This progression in theory was largely a response to the social movement activity of the 1960s, which was fundamentally different from past activity and thus was not reflected in the then current literature. Consequently, new theories emerged which replaced the emphasis on individuals and focused on the wider social, political, and economic environment.

This chapter will outline three recent theories that have been developed to address social movement activity since the 1960s: resource mobilization, political opportunities, and framing. While each has its respective benefits, they gain strength when used together; a combined approach provides a more useful theoretical framework with which to analyze social movements. I will begin with a section on background, including an explanation of social movements, as well as a discussion of the previous theories of social movements in response to which the newer theories were created. Also included in this chapter will be a brief overview of new social movement theory. Although not explicitly used in this research, new social movement theory is useful to include, not only to ensure an accurate picture of the current literature, but also because it describes some of the changes in social movements that have taken place since the 1960s. Finally, I will explain how framing, resource mobilization, and political opportunities can be used

together to make sense of social movements, and thus provide a theoretical framework for this research.

1. Background

What is a social movement?

It is sometimes argued that social movement is not an easy concept to grasp (Zirakzadeh 2006:3; Diani 2003:1). According to Diani, this is because "They cannot be reduced to specific insurrections or revolts..." (2003:1). Rather, social movements encompass a wide range of actors and organizations, all working in different places and times, but toward the same overarching goal. Gamson and Meyer state that:

> A social movement is a sustained and self-conscious challenge to authorities or cultural codes by a field of actors (organizations and advocacy networks), some of whom employ extrainsitutional means of influence (1996:283).

The kinds of groups involved vary from formal and highly organized to informal, 'kitchen table' groups. Each group also works on a different aspect of the overarching goal and will employ different strategies and tactics to accomplish these goals. Thus, Diani states that social movements:

> cannot be reduced to specific insurrections or revolts, but rather resemble strings of more or less connected events, scattered across time and space...Social movements are in other words, complex and highly heterogeneous network structures (Diani 2003:1).

Zirakzadeh explains that he considers a political phenomenon to be a social movement when it has three characteristics. The first is that the actors involved are trying to create a new social order. He states that, "Participants in a social movement not only challenge

decisions made by authorities and make demands on authorities but also try to make lasting, large-scale, and significant changes in the texture of society" (2006:4). The second characteristic of a social movement is that its members are non-elite and come from a variety of backgrounds. This means that members generally "lack political clout, social prestige, and enormous wealth, and their interests are not routinely articulated or represented in the political system" (Zirakzadeh 2006:4). The final characteristic of social movements, according to Zirakzadeh, is that they make use of a wide range of tactics, notably disruptive and confrontational, which distinguishes them from other interest groups or political parties (2006:5).

Classical social movement theories

Classical social movement theories examined social movements from a micro-perspective. Their focus was on individuals and what causes them to become involved in social movements. According to McAdam, these theories are based on the pluralist model of politics (1982:5). Within the pluralist model, power is conceived of as decentralized: it is held by many different groups of actors rather than concentrated in the hands of a few. Also, a group can always exert some degree of power to fight a grievance. McAdam states that, "groups may vary in the amount of power they wield, but no group exercises sufficient power to bar others from entrance into the political arena" (1982:5). If there are power imbalances, and a group cannot address a problem on its own, it can form a coalition with other groups that have similar concerns. In theory, these groups will pool resources and become a more powerful agent for social change. This is considered the

rational and logical approach for groups to take. Thus, the pluralist model is based on cooperation and non-confrontation. Involvement in a social movement that does not adhere to this framework is considered irrational.

McAdam includes several theories, such as mass society, collective behavior, status inconsistency, and relative deprivation, under the rubric of classical social movement theories. He argues that while each is different in specifics, they share certain important characteristics, one of which is the use of a similar sequence of events to account for the emergence of social movements. This sequence begins with a structural strain in society, which in turn causes psychological disruptions in individuals. Individuals become involved in social movements as a way to deal with these disruptions. This is a linear approach to the explanation of social movement emergence: a cause leads to an effect, but there is no acknowledgment of any interaction.

Although following a similar sequence, the specific theories varied in terms of the strain to which each attributed the psychological disruption. For example, the mass society model attributed the disruption to isolation, which was caused by breakdowns in social ties resulting from an increasingly industrialized and bureaucratized world. This isolation caused individuals to feel alienation and anxiety, something they tried to deal with through involvement in a social movement. Zirakzadeh explains that postwar social movement scholars saw social movements as:

> the social-psychological consequences of the rush to modernization. Most movement activists, it was argued, were recent urban immigrants from small towns and petite-bourgeois rural families (Fromm 1941; Lipset 1955). The newcomers to the city needed a psychological balm for the social dislocation and

> personal loneliness inherent in modern life. As daily life became noticeably more industrialized, bureaucratic, urban, and large-scale, people felt increasingly insignificant and normatively out of place (2006:6).

According to classical theories, people do not participate in social movements because they want to change something in society, but because they need to deal with a psychological issue. Thus, McAdam states that, "The social movement is effective not as a political action but as therapy" (1982:10). Because involvement in social movements was the result of individual psychological disruptions, participation in social movements was not viewed as rational behavior. Zirakzadeh explains that, "Uprooted and insecure, participants were thought not to be open to judicious reasoning and to intelligent discussion of their circumstances and political options (2006:8). Thus, classical theories looked to the individual in order to explain social movements. McAdam, McCarthy and Zald state that:

> Ultimately, the impetus to collective action was to be found at the micro level with the individual as the appropriate unit of analysis. Disagreement arose only over the identification of those individual characteristics thought to be causally significant (1988:696).

This focus on individuals meant that early theories ignored how structural and political factors influenced social movement activity.

Responses to the classical model

McAdam argues that the biggest problem with classical theories is that by focusing on the individual, they ignore structural and collective components of social movements. He states that the classical perspective:

> requires that we ignore a fact that, on the surface, would appear to be obvious: social movements are *collective* phenomena. Obvious or not, classical theorists are guilty of failing to explain the collective basis of social insurgency. They offer no explanation of how individual psychological discontent is transformed into organized collective action (1982:15).

What is missing from classical theories is an examination of the wider context in which individuals act. Tarrow states that:

> the theory of collective action must be extended from individual to collective decision making: from simple microeconomic models to socially and historically embedded choices; and from single movements to the dynamics of the political struggle (1994:10).

This change in social movement literature took place as a result of the social movements of the 1960s. These movements were fundamentally different from those of the past, and thus, did not fit the image created by the literature at the time (Meyer 1999:82). In response, authors conceptualized alternative theories that incorporated the wider political, social, and economic environment (more of the structural factors). While classical theories had been based on the pluralist model of politics, newer theories were based on an elite model. This model states that the elite, those with more wealth, have power in society. On the other hand, those who lack wealth, and therefore power, have a much harder time accomplishing their goals. Zirakzadeh explains that:

> According to most of the new social-movement analysts, in every known society a small group systematically influences decisions made in the political system and monopolizes the resources needed to create wealth (2006:9).

The new body of literature created in response to the 1960s movements no longer saw social movements as a result of individual psychological disruptions, but rather as "a tactical response to the harsh realities of a closed and coercive political system"

(McAdam 1982:20). Individuals involved in social movements were also no longer viewed as irrational, but rather, their actions were seen as rational attempts to influence political processes in a society in which the wealthy usually have more power. Zirakzadeh explains that:

> After the mid-1960s, fewer scholars saw social movements simply as uncalculated expressions of rage against modernity and only as threats to democracy. Growing numbers interpreted movements as pragmatic political responses by nonelites to objective social inequality, political oppression and economic exploitation (2006:12).

Thus, there has been a development in the literature from an examination of the psychological factors influencing social movement activity to structural and contextual factors. McAdam et al. explain that there has been a "reassertion of the political" (1988:699) in the social movement literature. Turner explains that this reassertion has meant a shift from examining social movements from the inside out, to the outside in (1981:8). This shift in focus has led theorists to change the questions they ask. Fireman and Gamson state that the question is no longer "'Why do these people want social change so badly and believe that it is possible?' but rather, 'How can these people organize, pool resources, and wield them effectively?'"(1979:9).

Three theories have emerged in the social movement literature since the 1960s that are commonly used to explain social movement activity. These are resource mobilization, political opportunities, and framing. The resource mobilization and political opportunities theories came first and explored the way structural factors influenced social movements. Framing followed to address the criticism that resource mobilization and

political opportunities focused too much on structure and not enough on culture. Although each of these theories has been addressed independently in the literature, there has recently been a movement to unify them. The remainder of this chapter will explore the main points of each theory, then briefly explain how they can be used together. I will also include a brief overview of new social movement theory, which will prove useful for understanding the kinds of changes that took place in social movements in the 1960s.

2. Resource mobilization theory

While classical theories viewed social movements as a direct result of an increase in grievances within society, resource mobilization theory assumes that there are always grievances around from which social movements could arise, and thus, the existence of grievances cannot in itself be used to explain the emergence of social movements. If it could, then a rise in the level of grievances would automatically lead to an increase in social movement activity.

Because grievances are always present to some degree, resource mobilization theory looks toward resources to account for social movement activity. What changes in society is "the amount of social resources available to unorganized but aggrieved groups..." (McAdam 1982:21). Zirakzadeh explains that:

> It is said that in every society most people are unhappy with the status quo, are ignored and mistreated by their government, and suffer economic injustices. People, however, seldom form or join movements because they are cognizant that they lack adequate material and organizational resources with which to battle vested interests (2006:9).

Therefore, in order for a social movement to arise, resources must be mobilized,

that is, the resources needed for collective action must be secured and controlled (Jenkins 1983:533). Specific resources that can be mobilized vary, including money, time, people, space, and access to the media. However, resource mobilization theorists focus heavily on the influence of money. The way that resources are mobilized is through some kind of organization; resources must be organized and put to use in order to be productive. Thus, resource mobilization theory emphasizes social movement organizations, which McArthy and Zald define as, "a complex, or formal, organization which identifies its goals with the preferences of a social movement or a countermovement and attempts to implement those goals" (2005:173). Organizations aggregate and organize resources so that they can be used to accomplish goals. In fact, resource mobilization theorists believe that there is a direct relationship between the amount of resources a group has available and what it can accomplish. McCarthy and Zald state that, "the amount of activity directed toward goal accomplishment is crudely a function of the resources controlled by an organization" (2005:174).

Although often dominant in the literature, social movement organizations are not the only mobilizing structures. Mobilization also takes place on a much less formal level. Other mobilizing structures include:

> the range of everyday life micromobilization structural social locations that are not aimed primarily at movement mobilization, but where mobilization may be generated: these include family units, friendship networks, voluntary associations, work units, and elements of the state structure itself" (McCarthy 1996:141).

These locations are often the root of social movement activity because they are where individuals interact and share ideas and concerns about society. People are more likely to

become active around an issue if they feel support from family and friends. Thus, it is in these locations that often "local dissent is built up" (McCarthy 1996:142). This local action may progress into something larger and more formal.

Traditionally, resources available to groups were those things that were held by the aggrieved population. However, because resource mobilization theory is based on an elite model, the aggrieved population, those who are involved in social movement activity, usually do not control many resources, while the elite do (McCarthy and Zald 2005:175). McAdam states that this approach means that:

> most versions of the model contain an implicit assertion of powerlessness on the part of most segments of the population. Instead, the focus of research attention has been firmly fixed on powerful groups external to the movement's mass base, on the assumption that such groups are the crucial catalyst for social insurgency (1982: 22).

Because of this, social movements often have to branch out beyond their bounds to secure resources. This makes the organizations and their actions dependent on outside sources. Zald and McCarthy state that resource mobilization theory:

> locates many of the resources available for supporting social change in the larger society. These include all levels of government, foundations, religious institutions and conscience constituencies, groups that support the movement's goals, even though its members are not eligible to receive the direct output of the policy/political changes that the movement advocate (2002:150).

3. Political opportunities theory

While resource mobilization theory focuses on resources and organization, the political opportunities theory examines the way in which the wider political and institutional environment affects the opportunities for action available to groups. Changes in this

environment alter the arena in which groups act, which can either provide further opportunities or hinder groups from acting. Political opportunities theory looks toward the world surrounding the social movement and examines how this affects "(a) mobilizing, (b) advancing particular claims rather than others, (c) cultivating some alliances rather than others, (d) employing particular political strategies and tactics rather than others, and (e) affecting mainstream institutional politics and policy" (Meyer 2004:126). Political opportunities theory emphasizes:

> resources *external* to the group - unlike money or power - that can be taken advantage of even by weak or disorganized challengers. Social movements form when ordinary citizens, sometimes encouraged by leaders, respond to changes in opportunities that lower the costs of collective action, reveal potential allies and show where elites and authorities are vulnerable (Tarrow 1994:18).

While resource mobilization theory considers that the masses lack power due to their resource poor state, political opportunities theory explores how groups can exert power despite their lack of resources. It asks how:

> excluded social groups on occasion gain some level of bargaining power and concrete political influence, when they lack conventional political resources (i.e., money, social capital, and lobbying access within the polity… (Almeida and Stearns 1998:37).

Rather than assuming that groups without resources are powerless, the political opportunities theory recognizes the inherent power in the general population: using traditional resources is not the only way groups can assert power. There is latent power in the masses: "the insurgent potential of excluded groups comes from the 'structural power' that their location in various politico-economic structures affords them" (McAdam 1982:37). A group may lack monetary resources, but can still use disruptive

tactics such as strikes, protests, and sit-ins. In the case of a strike, power comes from the group's structural position in society: some workers' roles are such that if they collectively stop working, the normal flow of life will be disrupted, which will draw attention to their cause. This requires no additional resource, just the decision by all workers to act together. Tarrow explains that social movements:

> draw upon external resources (opportunities, conventions, understandings and social networks) to coordinate and sustain collective action. When they succeed, even resource-poor actors can mount and sustain collective action against powerful opponents (1994:17).

According to political opportunities theory, because traditional resources are not necessary to accomplish goals, elite involvement in social movements is also not necessarily needed or beneficial. Resource mobilization seems to overlook the inherent conflict of interest in relationships between social movements and elites. On the one hand, social movements are typically trying to change the status quo, while on the other, elites are trying to maintain it. Zirakzadeh states that:

> Occasionally, members of that elite may disagree among themselves about specific policies but generally harmoniously advance their common interest in reproducing current patterns of inequality in status, wealth, and power (2006:9).

McAdam states that, "*all* social movements pose a threat to existing institutional arrangements in society" (1982:26). Therefore, linkages between social movement organizations and elites can lead to co-optation. If elites inject money into a social movement, they are also injecting some form of influence. This can either take place prior to the relationship, where the group alters its actions to impress possible elite supporters, or afterwards, where the elite make conditions under which their support will

be granted (McAdam 1982:28). McAdam argues that, "Perhaps the most damaging outcome of co-optation is the channeling of potentially disruptive protest into institutionalized channels" (1982:28). Almeida and Stearns explain how this situation has played out with regard to environmental groups:

> When pro-environment agencies come into existence (usually after heightened social movement activity), they often validate victim complaints and confer general legitimacy on the environmental movement's objectives (Cable and Waslk 1991). In addition, sympathetic individuals within environmental state agencies may at times consciously leak confidential information that LGEMs exploit. At a later point, however, these same agencies often are used to co-opt successful grassroots movements (Piven and Cloward 1979). For example, government agencies with jurisdiction over a particular pollution problem may offer concessions in a manner that reduces the benefits of LGEMs provided by strategic disruptive action. In Japan, the Environment Agency offered LGEMs monetary compensation in the early 1970s, in part to dissuade them from taking their grievances to the streets (1998:39).

Thus, elite involvement in social movements, while a source of objective resources, may actually hinder social movements more than help them.

While the political opportunities theory does recognize that the masses have a "latent capacity to exert significant political leverage at any time..." (McAdam 1982:39), there are usually enough constraints in society to greatly restrain action. However, these constraints change over time, altering the arena in which groups act and thus, the opportunities available for action. The arenas in which groups act are often referred to as political opportunity structures. Tarrow defines these as:

> consistent - but not necessarily formal, permanent, or national - signals to social or political actors which either encourage or discourage them to use their internal resources to form social movements (1996:54).

These signals can include "wars, industrialization, international political realignments,

prolonged unemployment, and widespread demographic change" (McAdam 1982:41). In contrast to classical theories, which would have labeled these as the direct causes of social movements because they caused psychological strains in individuals, McAdam argues that these factors cause social movements indirectly. They do this by altering structures and power relations within society and thus, altering the opportunities available to groups.

When opportunities are created, the difference in the power held by elites and the aggrieved population decreases. When this happens, a group's bargaining position is enhanced and there is "a net increase in the political leverage exercised by insurgent groups" (McAdam 1982:43). Groups are more inclined to act because there is a greater chance that they will accomplish their goals (McAdam 1982:43). Thus, Meyer explains that:

> The wisdom, creativity, and outcomes of activists' choices - their *agency* - can only be understood and evaluated by looking at the political context and the rules of the games in which those choices are made - that is, *structure* (2004:128).

Political opportunity structures can be conceptualized in various ways. Tarrow makes the distinction between proximate and statist structures. Proximate structures are more localized and often take place at the group level. Tarrow states that they focus on the "signals that groups receive from their immediate policy environment or from changes in their resources or capacities" (1996:42). State level opportunity structures have a wider scope and examine "how political institutions and processes structure collective action" (Tarrow 1996:43). In this case, social movements are examined in

relation to specific state structures and the opportunities these provide for action. This often involves comparative work in which similar social movements in different countries are compared. For instance, the Green movement in the United States and Germany can be examined in terms of voting structures and the different opportunities these create. In Germany, the Green movement has been very politically oriented because a proportional representation voting system guarantees at least some level of representation and therefore access to the political system, even for smaller parties. In contrast, in the United States it is difficult for third parties to gain access to the political system, and thus the Green movement has taken a more grassroots approach.

Tarrow outlines what he believes are "the most salient kinds of signals" (1996:54), or political opportunities. The first is "the opening of political access" (1996:54), meaning that groups gain more access to certain political opportunities. However, despite what might seem logical, neither full access nor complete inaccessibility seems to be the ideal situation to incite action. Tarrow states that, "Neither full access nor its absence encourages the greatest amount of protest" (1996:54). If groups have full access, they may feel that the current system is fair and open enough and does not require their taking action to change it. Alternatively, if the system is too closed, they may feel that there are too few opportunities to get involved and so do nothing. The second kind of political opportunity is unstable alignments, or electoral instability. When a government is unstable, for instance when new members are entering or leaving government or when new coalitions are formed, opportunities are created. The

government may not be stable because relations among members are new, and thus groups can enter politics and try to influence the elites before they form too many bonds with each other. The third opportunity structure is the existence of influential allies. Allies can act "as a friend in court, as guarantors against brutal repression, or as acceptable negotiators on behalf of constituencies which - if left a free hand - might be far more difficult for authorities to deal with" (Tarrow 1996:55). The fourth opportunity structure occurs when elites have conflicts. This can be a signal to groups that they may be able to gain the support of one side. Tarrow states that, "Divisions between elites often have the effect of widening the circle of conflict to groups outside the political system and giving them marginal power, while a united elite leaves less opening for the exercise of such marginal power" (1996:56). McAdam et al. state that:

> regime crises or periods of generalized political instability improve the relative position of all challengers by undermining the hegemonic position of previously dominant groups or coalitions (McAdam et al 1988:700).

4. Framing theory

Theories based on resources and political opportunities were first on the scene following the social movement activity of the 1960s (Zald 1996:262). However, these theories were criticized by some for having a structural bias because they focused almost exclusively on objective factors, such as political, economic, and organizational, to explain social movements, but they ignored culture (Goodwin and Jasper 1999). Zirakzadeh explains that scholars criticizing these approaches:

> shared the belief that 'culture' - broadly understood as how we interpret social

> arrangements, how we see our places within those arrangements, and how we see our immediate opportunities, powers and limitation - profoundly informs and shapes our political actions. Cognition and political action should not be treated as unrelated phenomena; political activity expresses and embodies cognition (2006: 13).

Similarly, McAdam argues that structural opportunities alone cannot explain social movements:

> neither 'strain' nor some propitious combination of underlying grievances and newly mobilized resources create a social movement. People do, on the basis of some optimistic assessment of the prospects for successful insurgency weighed against the risks involved in each action (1982:34).

Even with endless opportunities and resources, if people do not define something as a problem, they will not mobilize to address it. Similarly, if they do not define something as an opportunity, they will not make use of it. McAdam et al. state that:

> At a minimum people need to feel both aggrieved about some aspect of their lives and optimistic that, acting collectively, they can redress the problem. Lacking either one or both of these perceptions, it is highly unlikely that people will mobilize even when afforded the opportunity to do so (1996:5).

Without shared optimism about the usefulness of taking action, "oppressive conditions are likely, even in the face of increased resources, to go unchallenged" (McAdam 1982:34).

Framing theory was developed to address the structural bias that some saw in the existing literature. Its purpose was to illustrate how culture and shared meanings (frames) influence social movements and how social movement organizations make use of these frames to accomplish their goals. Thus, framing embodies both culture and agency, which many see as largely lacking in the previous theories.

Frames are based on the idea that everyone has her/his own perceptions, and that these perceptions are shaped by the world in which she/he lives. Zirakzadeh explains that:

> We never view events directly but through intellectual prisms (or lenses) composed of our presumptions about our society and ourselves. The prisms give observations meaning...shape our emotions...and determine whether in our political responses to social circumstances we are tolerant, outraged, passive or active, cooperative or confrontational. Although we may almost always believe ourselves to be completely open-minded, unbiased, and uncommitted to any cultural myth when thinking about public affairs, we never can escape our cultural presumptions. Indeed, we need our interpretive lens to organize our observations, to make judgments, to see alternatives, to predict consequences of imagined alternative courses of actions, and to determine what political actions (if any) are effective and appropriate. Cultural assumptions thus profoundly (and inevitably) influence both our understanding of our powers and our exercise of them (2006:13).

Frames are essentially the way that an issue is packaged and presented. Frames "organize experience and guide action…" (Snow et al. 1986:464) as well as, "create expectancies and thus shape perceptions of possibilities" (Zald and McCarthy 2002:160). Framing can be used in social movements as a strategy to gain supporters. By actively framing an issue in a specific way, organizations can guide people's perceptions and thoughts about the issue in a certain direction. According to McAdam, the success of framing "is determined, in part, by the *cultural resonance* of the frames advanced by organizers" (1994:38). Movement leaders seek to "tap highly resonant ideational strains in mainstream society (or in a particular target subculture) as a way of galvanizing activism" (McAdam 1994:38). For instance, Zald suggests that the phrase "A woman's body is her own" frames the issue of abortion in a very specific way that, "makes sense only in a cultural discourse that highlights notions of individual autonomy and equality of

citizenship rights...." (Zald 1996:267). McCarthy et al. state that movements have to "frame social problems and injustices in a way that convinces a wide and diverse audience of the necessity for and utility of collective attempts to redress them" (1996:291). Indeed, Zald states that:

> Contemporary framing of injustice and of political goals almost always draw upon the larger societal definitions of relationships, of rights, and of responsibilities to highlight what is wrong with the current societal order, and to suggest directions for change (Zald 1996:267).

McCarthy et al. explain that movement frames are both prescriptive and descriptive: they include a definition of both the problem and the solution (1996:291). Zald states that, "Frames help interpret problems to define problems for action and suggest action pathways to remedy the problems" (1996:265). They "provide a selected view of the world that communicates the injustices suffered by movement members to a larger population...(Almeida and Stearns 1998:45). One example of framing's descriptive and prescriptive elements is the way the Republican Party in the United States has swapped the term "global warming" for "climate change." Global warming had too many negative connotations, and thus, it was exchanged for climate change, which has a more neutral sound. This neutrality suggests that much less action is needed in response to rising global temperatures. If an issue is framed a certain way, people outside of the movement may recognize the need to take action (or not to take action in the case of global warming). For instance, in Almeida and Stearns's work on local protest against a chemical plant's pollution and the health problems it caused citizens, the environmental group framed their case in terms of 'environmental rights' (1998:5). In this way, the

campaign was able to resonate with citizens' beliefs in the importance of an individual's right to breathe clean air and live in an uncontaminated area.

Snow et al. refer to the way social movements attempt to frame issues in a certain way to gain supporters as frame alignment. The purpose of frame alignment is to link "individual and SMO interpretive orientations, such that some set of individual interests, values, and beliefs and SMO activities, goals, and ideology are congruent and complementary" (Snow et al. 1986:464). The goal of frame alignment is "to propound a view of the world that both legitimates and motivates protest activity" (McAdam 1994:38).

Snow et al. describe four kinds of frame alignment used by social movements, and argue that at least one is necessary for mobilization to take place. The first is called frame bridging. This occurs when a social movement organization attempts to link, or bridge, its ideas and goals with unorganized groups of individuals who share the same ideas and goals. Through the bridging process, individuals are brought in contact with the social movement organization, which can organize and provide resources for them to act on their beliefs. The social movement organization bridges the gap between itself and those who support it but do not know how to act, or do not have the resources to act. This bridging can be done through the media, mailings, telephone calls, etc.

The second alignment process, called frame amplification, highlights an existing frame and attempts to reinvigorate and clarify it (Snow et al. 1986:469). This is often needed to combat indifference about an issue; people sometimes need a boost to get

excited enough to respond to problems. Amplification can be based on a specific value or belief. With reference to mobilization, these can include beliefs about how serious a grievance is, the cause of the grievance, beliefs about antagonists, how useful collective action will be, and how necessary it is to do something about the problem (Snow et al. 1986:470). In order to gain supporters, a group may choose to frame a problem in terms of one of these values or beliefs in the hope that it will strike a chord with citizens and thus, incite them to become involved.

The third type of alignment is frame extension. This is necessary if the social movement organization is promoting something that does not directly affect possible supporters. Rather than trying to gain supporters by tapping into a belief or value that is lying idle, the social movement must portray its goals "as attending to or becoming congruent with the values or interests of potential adherents" (Snow et al. 1986:472). The social movement organization has to extend and widen its goals so that they encompass issues and views that would gain supporters.

The final type of alignment is frame transformation, which is needed if the goal of the social movement organization appears antithetical to the generally accepted way of life for potential activists. In this case, it would be difficult to frame the issue in a way that people would accept, thus "new values may have to be planted and nurtured, old meanings or understandings jettisoned, and erroneous beliefs or 'misframings' reframed..." (Snow et al.1986:473). Frame transformation changes the way people see a situation. It redefines an issue so that it will be defined as a problem that needs

addressing. Snow et al. explain that, "The objective contours of the situation do not change so much as the way the situation is defined and thus experienced" (Snow et al.1986:474). For instance, in the past, the amount of driving done by individuals was not seen as a problem. However, this view has recently been transformed by campaigns about pollution and global warming, so that now we are used to being told that we should drive less. Frame transformations can lead to changes both on a small and a large scale. Domain specific transformations transform something on a small scale, such as diet, lifestyle, leisure activities, etc. However, transformations in frames can also take place on a larger and global scale. Snow et al. explain that:

> In this final frame alignment process, the scope of change is broadened considerably as a new primary framework gains ascendance over others and comes to function as a kind of master frame that interprets events and experiences in a new key (1986:475).

Because there are many social movements and social movement organizations, there are constant frame contests. Organizations compete to reach the greatest number of people and gather the most support. In order to win these contests, social movement organizations need resources, which are limited. They also must frame themselves and their work in a way that will gain supporters and resources. Movements and counter-movements "are involved in framing contests attempting to persuade authorities and bystanders of the rightness of their cause" (Zald 1996:269). These framing contests take place throughout society, such as through daily interactions between people, on television, radio and written material (Zald 1996:270).

5. New social movement theory

Although not used explicitly in this research, it is important to briefly address new social movement theory. This theory came about as a way to explain the different kinds of movements (such as the Green movement) that were taking place in Europe during the 1960s. Briefly exploring new social movement theory is useful for this research because it was in response to these different kinds of movements that resource mobilization, political opportunities, and framing theories arose.

Buechler states that, for the most part, new social movement theory came about as "a response to the economic reductionism of classical Marxism that prevented it from adequately grasping contemporary forms of collective action" (2000:46). New social movement theory asserts that while previous social movements were based on labour and economic issues, during the 1960s this shifted toward a focus on cultural issues. The focus of new social movements is on "other logics of action (based on politics, ideology, and culture) and other sources of identity (such as ethnicity, gender, and sexuality as sources of collective action" (Buechler 2000:46). Williams states that:

> the cultural component of new social movement theory had to do with *content* of movement ideology, the *concerns motivating activists,* and the *arena* in which collective action was focused - that is, cultural understandings, norms, and identities rather than material interests and economic distribution (2004:92).

New social movements focus on changing something in our culture. Ruggiero explains that they "are said to be mainly concerned with the 'grammar of forms of life', and engaged in conflicts around the quality of life, equality, individual self-realization, participation and human rights" (2000:par 1). While there are different definitions of

what new social movements encompass, Kelly states that the following are elements emphasized in common in the literature:

> a primary emphasis on noneconomic forms of injustice; a rejection of traditional political modes of protest associated with the labor movement, parties, or interest groups; and a concern with the 'symbolic' content of demands and actions (2001:16).

Often described as new social movements are the environmental, feminist and gay rights movements.

6. A synthesis of theories

Resource mobilization, political opportunities, and framing are all necessary to make sense of social movement activity. However, each of these theories, while contributing something useful, is not sufficient on its own. The authors of social movement literature seem to be increasingly aware of this because there has been a movement in the literature towards a combined perspective as the best way to understand social movement activity. "By this triangulation, collectively if not individually, we can get a deeper understanding of the causes and consequences of social and political protest politics" (Meyer 2002:4).

Resource mobilization theory's focus on resources and organizations provides a solid groundwork for the study of social movements. However, resource mobilization alone cannot explain how and why a movement arose. Even with numerous resources, political opportunities are still needed; if there are no opportunities to use resources, resources will simply lie dormant. Conversely, resources are needed in order to take advantage of political opportunities. Thus, even if opportunities exist, if a group lacks

adequate organization or resources, it may not be able to take advantage of them. McAdam states that:

> in the absence of this supportive organizational context, the aggrieved population is likely to be deprived of the capacity for collective action even when confronted with a favorable structure of political opportunities. If one lacks the capacity to act, it hardly matters that one is afforded the chances to do so (1982: 48).

However, both resources and opportunities may still not lead to social movement activity if group members do not have a collective definition of the problem, the solution, and the opportunities available to them. If opportunities are not perceived as opportunities, then they will not be taken advantage of and resources will not be used. McAdam explains that, "The fact that groups fail to exercise this potential much of the time is more often attributable to their shared perception of powerlessness" (1982:31). Meyer states that, "opportunities must be perceived in order to be meaningful, and the perceptions of opportunities are culturally constructed" (2002:15). Thus, framing is a key component to social movement activity as well. McAdam summarizes all of this:

> Expanding political opportunities combine with the indigenous organizations of the minority community to afford insurgents the 'structural potential' for successful collective action. That potential is, in turn, transformed into actual insurgency by means of the crucial intervening process of cognitive liberation [framing]. All three factors, then, are regarded as necessary, but insufficient, causes of social insurgency (1982:51).

It is this combined theoretical framework that I will use in order to explain the environmental movement's response to the offshore oil industry in Newfoundland.

Chapter 3: Methodology

In this chapter I will address the methodology used to conduct this research. I will begin with an explanation of qualitative research methods and why they were an appropriate choice over quantitative methods. I will then discuss the specific methods employed in this research, why I chose them, the problems encountered, and my reflections on the research process.

1. Qualitative research methods

Both qualitative and quantitative research methods have their strengths and weaknesses and a researcher must be open to both in order to be successful in a project. Unfortunately, researchers are not always flexible because some have a bias in one direction or the other (Neuman 2004:83). Neuman explains that:

> qualitative and quantitative researchers often hold different assumptions about social life and have different objectives. These differences can make tools used by the other style inappropriate or irrelevant (2004:83).

However, one size does not fit all with regard to research methods, and the superiority of any method is entirely situational. This is because, as Morton-Williams states, "Each study is, unique; it is therefore impossible to draw up a blueprint that will apply to all" (1985:27). Qualitative and quantitative methods have their respective benefits and drawbacks and each is appropriate for specific types of research problems. Thus, the research methods chosen must be a reflection of the specific research at hand. Bryman explains that, "the decision over whether to use a quantitative or qualitative approach

should be based on 'technical' issues regarding the suitability of a particular method in relation to a particular research problem" (1988:106).

Quantitative methods are appropriate when the researcher is interested in making generalizations about an entire population. This typically requires a large sample. Data gathering is more structured and standardized so that the same kind of information is gathered from each person, which makes it easier to compare and analyze. For instance, a questionnaire making use of closed-ended questions may be mailed out to several hundred people in a sample. The questionnaires would all include the same questions with the same choices for answers, thus making the responses easy to enter into a computer program to be analyzed.

However, as Berg states, "certain experiences cannot be meaningfully expressed by numbers" (2001:3). For instance, when a researcher's goal is to understand a specific social phenomenon, including people's beliefs, the meanings they attach to things, or their values, qualitative methods may be more appropriate. In these cases, the researcher is not necessarily interested in quantifying data and using it to generalize about the population, but rather, gaining in-depth perspective and descriptive data that can be used to understand the research problem. This kind of data can be gathered in a number of ways, including interviews, focus groups, and participant observation. Bryman explains that in qualitative research:

> the apparently superficial trivia and minutiae of everyday life are worthy of examination because of their capacity to help us understand what is going on in a particular context and to provide clues and pointers to other layers of reality (1988:63).

Neuman likens qualitative research to a path. This path:

> makes successive passes through steps, sometimes moving backward and sideways before moving on. It is more of a spiral, moving slowly upward but not directly. With each cycle or repetition, a researcher collects new data and gains new insights (2004:83).

Therefore, unlike quantitative methods, which are represented by a straight path in which the researcher knows in what form the results will appear, qualitative methods are less predictable from the start. Talking to people directly involved can take the researcher in directions that she/he had not originally thought of. Thus, the researcher can encounter new ideas, stories, and facts to which she/he had not previously been exposed. Bryman explains that:

> qualitative researchers tend to the view that the predominantly open approach which they adopt in the examination of social phenomenon allows them access to unexpectedly important topics which may not have been visible to them had they foreclosed the domain of study by a structured, and hence potentially rigid, strategy (1988:67).

2. The research problem

This research seeks to explain the environmental movement's response to the offshore oil industry in Newfoundland. Based on the research problem, the most appropriate choice for research methods was a qualitative case study of the Newfoundland environmental movement. A case study is "an in-depth, multifaceted investigation of a single event, person, or social grouping..." (Kendall et al. 2004:57). Based on the theoretical framework described in the previous chapter, this research includes exploring the way three factors have influenced the action taken by the Newfoundland environmental

movement in response to the oil industry: frames, resources, and political opportunities. Each of these could be examined by talking to members of environmental groups in the province. The remainder of this chapter will be devoted to explaining the specific research methods employed in this research, why they were chosen, the problems encountered, and my reflections on the research process.

Respondents

Because my research focused on understanding the environmental movement in Newfoundland and was not aimed at making generalizations, respondents could be chosen through nonrandom sampling methods. My original plan was to interview only members of environmental groups because it is these groups that make up the environmental movement. Thus, to understand the environmental movement, I would have to understand the situation that individual groups face. I had planned to interview both members of groups that had, and had not, responded to the offshore oil industry. Interviewing members of groups that had responded would reveal what factors prompted them to act, while interviewing members of groups that had not responded would reveal what factors are keeping them from acting.

In order to decide which groups to interview, I began by creating a list of as many environmental groups as I could find within the province. I had hoped that such a list would already exist, but was informed by the Newfoundland and Labrador Environment Network (NLEN) that at the time it only existed in partial form. Therefore, I thoroughly searched the internet and talked to people I knew in environmental groups, and ultimately

compiled a list of sixty-six environmental groups in the province. This list included groups both large and small, those that were local grassroots-based, and those that were branches of larger national organizations. I then conducted basic research on these groups, collecting information about their mandates, membership, structure/organization, projects, and other relevant factors. From this I organized the original list into three categories.

The first category consisted of groups that were directly involved with the offshore oil industry, that is, they had participated in activities that brought them in direct contact with the industry. This could include work on oiled seabirds, writing a review for an environmental assessment, or participating in public hearings. I planned to contact all of these groups to schedule interviews.

The second category included groups that were not directly involved in projects related to the offshore oil industry, but whose mandate or projects were peripherally related. These groups were not currently involved in offshore oil issues, but under the right circumstances, could become so in the future. Groups in this category included those working in areas such as global warming, ocean pollution, and issues related to the ocean environment. While offshore oil was not their focus, their projects were potentially affected by the industry. The purpose of interviewing members of groups in this category was to discover why they did not get involved with offshore oil issues. Because it did not seem that many groups were working in the area of offshore oil, I predicted that it would be from this category that most of my respondents would come.

The third category included groups not working on issues directly or indirectly related to the offshore oil industry. These groups had very specific mandates, such as cleaning up one particular area or picking up litter. Because these groups were so far removed from offshore oil issues, they were not contacted for interviews.

Although I tried to make my original list of environmental groups in the province as comprehensive as possible, I knew that it was not all encompassing. I only had access to the internet and a few people to help me, and many small groups would not have websites or be very well known. However, because I knew that my list was not complete, I added a final question to the interview schedule, which asked respondents to suggest other people they thought I should contact for interviews who were knowledgeable about issues related to my research.

While this final question had been intended to ensure that no-one of consequence was left out, subsequently, it led me to alter my research methods. I had expected this question to result in further contacts within environmental groups, but after being given the names of non-environmental group members on several occasions, I began to re-think my approach. Suggestions from respondents had included people within industry, government, the private sector, and individuals who were working on issues relating to the offshore oil industry and the environment. Although my interest was to explain the response of the environmental movement, I realized that individuals who were not necessarily involved with an environmental organization could provide valuable information as well. This information would complement what I would learn from

members of environmental groups and thus, make my research stronger. I felt that if I excluded the people suggested in the interviews, I would miss valuable perspectives and knowledge. One reason I felt this way was that people who are not members of environmental groups themselves, but who have worked on issues relating to the offshore oil industry and the environment, may have had contact with environmental groups and therefore, could provide a different perspective on how and why environmental groups act the way they do. Another issue to consider is why these individuals have not joined environmental groups themselves.

A second issue that arose as a result of conducting interviews and which also contributed to the decision to alter my research methods was linked to the fact that, before I began my research, I had a clear idea of what environmental groups, environmentalists, and activists were. Based on my own background, being an environmentalist was not only normal and accepted, but was also a perfectly respectable activity. However, through the interview process I discovered that many people in Newfoundland do not share these ideas. As a result of the anti-seal hunting campaign that took place in the 1970s, the term 'environmentalist' has negative connotations for many people in Newfoundland. Respondents often acknowledged this negativity and several explained that they did not want the term applied to them. Therefore, I worried that by simply interviewing members of environmental groups, I could potentially miss individuals who work on environmental issues, but specifically do not call themselves environmentalists.

Thus, due to the previously discussed issues, I altered my original plan to find respondents and in addition, used a snowball sampling method. Neuman states that snowball sampling:

> is based on an analogy to a snowball, which begins small but becomes larger as it is rolled on wet snow and picks up additional snow. Snowball sampling is a multistage technique. It begins with one or a few people or cases and spreads out on the basis of links to the initial case (2004:140).

Babbie states that:

> In snowball sampling, the researcher collects data on the few members of the target population he or she can locate, then asks those individuals to provide the information needed to locate other members of that population whom they happen to know. 'Snowball' refers to the process of accumulation as each located subject suggests other subjects (2001:180).

My sample began with a number of respondents who were taken from the list of environmental groups I had created, and grew as these respondents suggested further contacts. During the data-collecting stage of the research, I conducted a total of thirty seven interviews, which included individuals (4), members of environmental groups (24), government (6), and the private sector (3).

The interviews

An important and often used method in qualitative research is the interview. Adams and Schvaneveldt state that, "The successful blend of *method* and *art* is the goal of interviewers who are dedicated to obtaining quality data for successful research" (1985:225). Denzin and Lincoln state that:

> The interview is a conversation, the art of asking questions and listening. It is not a neutral tool, for the interviewer creates the reality of the interview situation. In

> this situation answers are given. Thus the interview produces situated understandings grounded in specific interactional episodes. This method is influenced by the personal characteristics of the interviewer, including race, class, ethnicity, and gender (1998:36).

The interview is valuable for its ability to get the perspectives of those people directly involved in the research topic and to raise issues that had not previously been thought of by the researcher.

The interview itself can take many forms and can range from structured to unstructured and can make use of open or closed-ended questions. In highly structured interviews, the interviewer asks respondents a set of questions from which she/he does not deviate. These interviews also often make use of closed-ended questions, in which the respondent must choose from a specified list of answers. The benefit of this approach is uniformity, i.e., that the same questions are asked of everyone, thus making the results easily comparable.

On the opposite end of the spectrum are unstructured interviews, in which questions are open-ended and not specifically pre-determined. The interviewer asks questions that seem relevant to the specific respondent and allows her/him to answer however she/he wishes. The benefit of this is that the interviewer has much more freedom to pursue issues that are specific to each respondent, thus she/he may be more likely to discover unexpected information. Fontana and Frey explain the difference between structured and unstructured interviews:

> The former aims at capturing precise data of a codable nature in order to explain behavior within preestablished categories, whereas the latter is used in an attempt to understand the complex behavior of members of society without imposing any

prior categorization that may limit the field of inquiry (1998:56).

For this research I used the middle ground between these two extremes. I wanted some structure because I knew that I needed to gather information on specific topics from everyone. However, I also wanted the freedom to explore further topics, and, as Neuman states, "To learn how a respondent thinks, to discover what is really important to him or her, or to get an answer to a question with many possible answers (e.g. age), open questions may be best" (2004:172). Thus, I chose to use semi-structured interviews, making use of open-ended questions. The benefit of semi-structured interviews is that they ensure that certain questions are asked of all respondents, but that there is also room to explore issues on an individual basis. If the contents of the interviews I conducted had been too limited, I would only have collected information based on the questions I had originally derived from the theoretical framework. This would mean that I had presumed to know in advance what factors were causing groups to act and was thus not open to further information that may arise. Using semi-structured interviews and open-ended questions allowed me to discover new and unexpected things. Bryman explains that:

> qualitative researchers tend to the view that the predominantly open approach which they adopt in the examination of social phenomenon allows them access to unexpectedly important topics which may not have been visible to them had they foreclosed the domain of study by a structured, and hence potentially rigid, strategy (1988:67).

An interview schedule was used in my semi-structured interviews to ensure that I would gather information around the same topics from each respondent. However, during the interviews I could still pursue any new topics that arose. Because I conducted

interviews with individuals and members of environmental groups, government, industry, and the private sector, I had several versions of the interview schedule. However, I began with a set of questions directed toward members of environmental groups, because this was predominantly whom I would be interviewing (see appendix 1). These questions were organized into five groups, and were asked in order of importance. I was most concerned with ensuring that I asked the first three groups of questions during the interviews. The purpose of the first group was to gather background information about the respondent and the group with which she/he worked. This included gathering information about the respondent's position in the group, her/his responsibilities, whether work was paid or volunteer, and her/his main duties.

The second group of questions was aimed at attaining the information needed to assess how both the offshore oil industry and the environmental movement are framed in the province. This included recording the respondents' opinions about the offshore oil industry in general, and the benefits, general problems, and environmental problems associated with it. The purpose of these questions was to gauge how supportive respondents were of the offshore oil industry in Newfoundland. This second group of questions also asked for respondents' views of the environmental movement in the province, including how strong they felt the movement was and how it compared to other places.

The third set of questions on the interview schedule addressed how environmental groups were responding to the offshore oil industry. If the group had been directly

involved with issues related to the offshore oil industry (such as work on oiled seabirds or on environmental assessments), I asked respondents to describe what they had done, any problems encountered, whether further resources or political opportunities would alter their actions, and whether any other factors would change their level of activity. If the respondent's group was not currently working on offshore oil issues, and had not done so in the past, my goal was to find out why they remained on the sidelines. I asked these respondents whether further resources or political opportunities would alter their involvement.

The final two sets of questions were much less crucial than the first three because much of this information was general and more likely to be available from the internet. The purpose of these questions was to gather further background information about the groups, including their mandate, number of members, strategies used, funding, and successes and failures.

As previously stated, this interview schedule was used as a base model and was only used in this form when interviewing members of environmental groups. A second interview schedule was made, based on the first, but geared towards individuals. The same categories were addressed, but some of the specific questions were altered. For instance, I still asked respondents to comment on the actions of environmental groups even though they themselves were not members. I also asked questions with the purpose of learning why the respondent acted alone rather than as part of a group. For interviews with members of government, the industry, and the private sector, I generally altered the

interview schedule based on what I knew about the person's position. However, I attempted to address the same general categories in order to get similar data but from different perspectives.

I allowed respondents to choose the location of the interviews so that it would be both convenient and comfortable for them. Most chose their homes or offices. Upon meeting, the respondent was given a consent form to read and sign (see appendix 2). This form explained the nature of the research, its purpose, the respondent's role, and what to expect in the interview. It also asked for permission to record the interview and explained the precautions taken to assure that identities would be kept confidential. The consent form invited the respondent to ask questions or to address any concerns that she/he may have. The purpose of this form was not only to gain consent for the interview, but to ensure that the respondent was comfortable and at ease so that she/he would discuss things freely during the interview.

The interviews generally lasted about an hour. Overall the respondents were extremely positive about the research and offered to help in whatever way they could. One respondent, a member of government, seemed paranoid, as if he did not quite believe that I just wanted information for my research project. However, for the most part, respondents were excited about the research topic and thought that it was something that needed to be studied. Several also expressed an interest in reading the results. On a personal level, I found conducting the interviews to be a positive experience, after which I would feel a renewed sense of excitement about my research.

When I began my research I had not expected that anonymity would be a big issue for respondents. I had originally planned to interview only members of environmental groups and in the past I have found that anonymity is not something about which they are particularly concerned. Members of environmental groups generally talk candidly about their beliefs and are used to having their views in the spotlight. During data collection there were very few concerns expressed about anonymity, and these were mostly from members of government. This makes sense because members of government would not likely want it known if they were criticizing their employer or the oil industry. I assured these respondents that their identity would not be revealed to anyone, and this seemed to satisfy them. However, I still expected that their concern about anonymity would lead these respondents to be less candid in our conversations. In fact, I had expected that members of environmental groups would express more critical views in general. Although I felt that one member of government was being particularly careful not to say anything negative, the others were very open and honest, expressing criticism that in some cases was more harsh than that expressed by members of environmental groups. This could have been due to the fact that government employees directly involved in offshore oil and environmental issues knew a great deal about this subject, while some members of environmental groups were less well informed.

One issue that came up on a number of occasions was the duality that people faced when working for an organization. On one hand, respondents represent an organization and its values, and on the other, they have their own personal beliefs. During

several interviews, most of which were with individuals employed by government, respondents asked whether I wanted them to answer as a member of the organization for which they worked or as a member of the general public. In one interview with a paid member of an environmental organization, the respondent asked me to shut off the recorder before she would express her personal views. As soon as the recorder was switched off she began speaking as a member of the general public rather than a representative of the organization, and it was at this point that she expressed critical views about her employer. This situation illustrated the point that money can interfere with a respondent's fully expressing her/his views. Respondents being paid by an organization may feel certain obligations toward that organization and this may keep them from being critical of it. Additionally, they may be fearful of losing their jobs. Volunteers, on the other hand, do not have this obstacle and thus may feel more free to speak as they please.

Data analysis

Because qualitative data are typically in the form of quotations and text, they can be analyzed and used in different ways. The option that I chose was to present the original quotations within the analysis. Quotations can enrich the findings by providing an illustration from the perspective of someone involved. Analyzing qualitative data is interpretive, that is, each researcher can interpret responses in a different way. This is sometimes used as a criticism of qualitative methods because of the researcher's ability to select some quotations to prove a point, while excluding others that may disprove it.

Bryman states that:

> One reason why there is some uneasiness about the issue of interpretation is that we, as readers of an ethnography, cannot readily decide for ourselves whether researchers have genuinely put themselves in a strategic position to enter the world-view, and whether their interpretations of actions and events are congruent with their subjects' understandings (1988:77).

I categorized my data by themes and created an outline in Microsoft Word that linked to other documents containing quotations about that theme so that I could easily refer to data on a particular subject when I needed it.

Problems

One problem that arose during the interviews had to do with wording. Words can have completely different meanings for different groups of people, and it is important to try to prepare for this prior to the interviews. Some respondents may be more or less sensitive to the use of a specific word, and if one does not take this into account the data can be skewed. Adams and Schvaneveldt suggest that:

> *big business, powerful labor, moral majority, socialists,* and so on...are all red flag words (or referents), and people react in specific ways to them because of media influence or socialization regarding certain ideologies (1985:207).

I encountered this problem in my research with the words environmentalism, environmentalist, and activist. Many people in Newfoundland have understandings of these words that are different from my own. I did not recognize this prior to the interviews because I am not from Newfoundland and had only been living in the province for about a year and a half at the time. I also had not been very active in the environmental community here, so was not exposed to this view. Thus, my understanding

of these words was based on my own background, coming from the state of Maine and from a family that was very environmentally and politically active, as well as my academic background, in which I have constantly studied environmental groups. This caused problems because it meant that the respondent and I were not always referring to the same idea when using a word. It also meant that respondents may not have been comfortable thinking of themselves as environmentalists or activists or as being part of an environmental group, something on which I had originally been counting. However, as previously explained, I altered my research methods in order to deal with this problem.

Another problem that I encountered was that when I made my original list of groups to interview, the contact information was not always completely accurate. In some cases I had the names of people I wanted to interview, but their contact information was incorrect or outdated. There were also two respondents that I had wanted to consult but with whom I could not schedule interviews.

Conclusion

This chapter has illustrated and explained my choice of qualitative research methods. In order to explore the environmental movement's response to the offshore oil industry in Newfoundland, it was necessary to interview people involved with environmental issues in this province. Although predominantly with members of environmental groups, the thirty-seven interviews conducted in this research also included individuals and members of government, industry, and the private sector. These respondents provided the data necessary to explore the current environmental movement in Newfoundland and its

response to the offshore oil industry. In the following chapters, I will briefly explore some of the background issues that will be necessary to frame the data gathered in the interviews.

Chapter 4: The Offshore Oil Industry in Newfoundland and Labrador

The offshore oil industry in Newfoundland and Labrador is relatively new. Although exploration dates back to the early 1960s when wells were first drilled, nothing significant was found until 1979, and first oil was not produced until 1997. Since then, two further projects have come online, the industry has become established, and its effects on the province's economy are starting to be felt. This chapter will provide a brief history of the offshore oil industry in Newfoundland and Labrador, its current developments, major issues, and economic impacts. However, in order to set the context for the emergence of Newfoundland's oil industry, I will first provide a brief overview of Canadian oil development policy.

1. History of the oil industry in Canada

Until 1973, oil policy in Canada was primarily focused on development. Doern and Gattinger explain that, "The main concern with oil was to move it and sell it efficiently so as to earn the highest rate of return" (2003:26). Thus, the government was fairly passive when it came to regulating the industry and oil companies were essentially left to themselves (Laxer 1983:2). The government's main role at this time was to facilitate the exploration and development of oil and gas resources (Doern and Gattinger 2003:27). Government made no effort to restrict which companies developed resources, and this led to a situation in which development was dominated by United States companies. This dominance was insignificant prior to 1973 because until this point oil had been plentiful

and cheap: Canada could easily supply its own oil needs as well as export to the United States. However, after the 1973 oil crisis, when prices throughout the world increased dramatically, problems resulting from the government's previous passive policies became apparent. Following the oil crisis, the Canadian government realized that its earlier policies left it little control over its own resources.

As was the case throughout the world, the oil crisis triggered major changes in Canadian energy policy, including a new emphasis on gaining control of its resources and protecting itself from high world oil prices. In contrast to its previous passive policies, the government now began implementing nationalist strategies, including the 1974 establishment of Petro-Canada. Petro-Canada was a state-owned oil company and was intended to give the government direct involvement in the industry and thus, the ability to influence oil development in ways that it never could have from the outside. The National Energy Program (NEP) was also established in 1980, prompted by the second world oil crisis in 1979. The NEP included goals such as Canada's becoming self sufficient in oil production by 1990, gaining 50 percent ownership of its energy resources, and channeling a greater part of oil revenues to the federal government (Rutledge 2005:81). The NEP, however, did not last. By the early 1980s the scare over oil prices had subsided and the government was feeling less anxious. Pressures to dismantle the NEP were also building from within Canada and the United States. Elected in 1984, the Mulroney government heeded these pressures and began supporting market based strategies for managing oil resources.

It is useful to know this history of Canadian oil policy development before proceeding to an examination of the industry in Newfoundland. When oil policy was first being developed in Newfoundland, the federal government had already established its own policies and goals. Thus, from the time when oil was first discovered in Newfoundland, there has been a constant need for negotiations as the provincial and federal governments attempted to reach compromises over offshore oil development. It is within this Canadian context that development of the offshore oil industry in Newfoundland proceeded.

2. Development of the offshore oil industry in Newfoundland

Although the first exploration wells were drilled off the coast of Newfoundland and Labrador in the early 1960s, they were few and far between. This was partly because throughout the world there were an abundance of oil fields that were cheaper and easier to develop, and thus oil companies had little incentive to explore off Newfoundland's coast. However, when world oil prices increased dramatically in 1973, interest in Newfoundland's offshore rose and exploratory drilling increased.

Unlike past resource developments, which were predominantly controlled by outsiders, the province viewed offshore oil as something over which it could have control from the start. In fact, prior to any oil discoveries, the province established regulations stating how it wanted oil to be developed if it were found. These regulations were based on the North Sea model, which emphasized maximizing local benefits.

In 1979 the Hibernia oil field was discovered and proved to the world that

offshore Newfoundland had economic potential. Hibernia's discovery also meant that the province now had to attempt to implement its 1977 regulations. However, this proved problematic because by this time Canada had already established its own goals for oil development which were reflected in the NEP. These goals included using oil revenues to build the federal treasury rather than the provincial one. Pratt states that, "The architects of the N.E.P. believed that oil was too important a commodity to remain under provincial control" (Pratt 1985:182). Similarly, Crosbie states that:

> At the time Canada believed that administration and ultimate decision making authority regarding offshore mineral resources must remain essentially under federal administration in view of the many factors and responsibilities which they thought were involved of a national character including uniform and efficient management, standardized policies of resource management, optimum conservation practices, control of export arrangements, establishment of Canadian criminal and civil law in the offshore, and negotiations and agreements with foreign states (2003:260).

House states that, "From their perspective, the Hibernia oil field and the other resources off Newfoundland were an important component in their national energy strategy" (House 1985:56). However, the federal government's vision for Newfoundland's oil contrasted with that of the province and thus, a lengthy battle over jurisdiction ensued which delayed any development for several years.

In 1985, after years of conflict and legal battles, the Atlantic Accord was signed. This established a joint management system for Newfoundland and Labrador's offshore resources, giving the province the benefits as if the oil were located on land. This, however, did not ensure that the province would benefit greatly from the industry, but rather, gave it the opportunity to negotiate with the oil companies.

The Atlantic Accord created the Canada-Newfoundland Offshore Petroleum Board (CNOPB)[1], a seven member board, with three members chosen by each level of government and a mutually agreed upon chair. The CNLOPB was given the job of managing offshore resources on behalf of both levels of government. The Atlantic Accord also established the requirement that a development application be submitted and approved by the Board before any development takes place. This was one of the ways the province attempted to ensure local benefits from offshore development. A development application would consist of both a benefits plan and a development plan. The benefits plan required that companies proposing development illustrate how they would guarantee local benefits, such as job creation and purchasing. The development plan, on the other hand, explained the proponent's desired mode of development, such as a Gravity Base System (GBS) or a Floating Production, Storage and Offloading (FPSO) vessel, as well as a description of any alternatives available. Describing alternatives would provide the opportunity for anyone reviewing the application to know what the company was planning and what other options were viable, therefore allowing them to assess the company's application accurately.

3. Offshore development projects

While the Atlantic Accord set the policy context in which the industry would be developed, the government still had to negotiate with oil companies before development

1 The name was later changed to the Canada- Newfoundland and Labrador Offshore Petroleum Board (CNLOPB)

of the first oil field could start. Subsequent projects also had to be negotiated and thus, each project proceeded in its own way.

Hibernia

Hibernia was the first oil field found and was therefore the most time consuming to get started. Although it was discovered in 1979, because of the jurisdictional dispute, plans to develop the field could not begin until after this was settled in 1985. Following the signing of the Atlantic Accord, the government still had to work out a specific deal with the oil companies. This, however, was difficult because, unlike when the oil was first discovered, world oil prices were now very low. On top of this, high costs associated with spearheading development in the province (because there was no current industry or infrastructure) acted as a serious deterrent to companies. However, eager to get the industry off the ground, the government offered financial incentives to the oil companies so that they would invest in Hibernia. The final agreement between the government and the oil companies was that the government would give the developers $1 billion in grants and $1.7 billion in loan guarantees so that the $5.2 billion dollar Hibernia project would move forward.

In exchange for this hefty financial help, the investors agreed to build a GBS, which would provide short term construction jobs for people in the province. Not only would jobs be created from constructing the GBS itself, but a shipyard would have to be built first so that the GBS could be built, and this would provide even more jobs. Additional jobs would also be created from any future construction contracts won by the

shipyard, both related and unrelated to the offshore oil industry. Despite these benefits, however, there were still concerns that the government had been too generous in its agreement with the Hibernia developers. Critics argued that if oil prices did not rise, the whole project would be uneconomical.

Because the oil companies had agreed to build a GBS, which would provide the province with much needed jobs, they were able to bargain for a relatively low royalty rate. This meant that once the construction phase for Hibernia was finished, the field would not prove very lucrative to the province. The original royalty agreement was that the province would increase its take by 1% every 18 months until 2004, when it would receive 5%. While this original arrangement did not matter at first because world oil prices were quite low, it became an issue years later when oil prices rose and companies wanted to increase production. Because royalties had never been tied to production levels, the province had nothing to gain by allowing an increase in production. In fact, the government would lose money because existing oil would be produced more quickly. However, with oil prices at about $30 per barrel and oil companies desperately wanting to increase their profits, the two sides finally reached a deal in which royalties would be tied to production levels.

Because the Hibernia project was the first of its kind, it encountered unexpected problems and setbacks that both prolonged the time before first oil was produced and increased the total cost of the project. However, despite these setbacks, the government's goals were met: the Hibernia project had created jobs by using a gravity based system,

and it had built up provincial infrastructure so that future oil fields could be developed more cheaply, easily, and without government assistance.

Terra Nova

Terra Nova was the second oil field to be developed in the province. A formal announcement that a development application would be submitted for the field was made in 1995, and construction was ready to begin shortly after the application was approved in 1998. Both the government and the oil companies were eager to begin this next project, and thus the development process proceeded much more quickly than for Hibernia.

While the Hibernia developers had received a great deal of government assistance to move the project forward, government was adamant not to follow the same path with Terra Nova. In fact, the government insisted that Terra Nova would proceed on its own or not at all (Tobin 1996: par 6). This meant that developers had to be much more cautious regarding costs. The original budget for Terra Nova was expected to be approximately $2 billion, about one third of the final cost of Hibernia.

Developers chose to develop the Terra Nova field using an FPSO rather than a GBS because it was significantly cheaper and would take less time to build. The drawback to this mode of development, however, was that most of the construction work could not be done in the province. In fact, the $200 million contract to design and build the FPSO's steel hull, the bulk of the construction work for the project, was given to a Korean company. This left only lesser construction work to be done in the province,

including some of the topsides work.

Although the Terra Nova project did not provide the same level of employment as Hibernia, the Newfoundland government was able to establish a much more lucrative royalty agreement. In fact, it was expected that at 1996 oil prices, the Terra Nova project would generate twice as much in royalties as Hibernia (Tobin 1996: par 12).

Like Hibernia, the Terra Nova project also ran into problems that caused delays and price increases. These included a number of mechanical problems, which have continued to plague the project throughout its life. These problems have led to several production slowdowns and shutdowns, thus decreasing provincial revenues. In the end, the Terra Nova project was a full year behind its originally scheduled first production date, and a billion dollars over budget.

White Rose

When development talks began for White Rose, its developers (Husky and Petro-Canada) had two past projects from which to gain insights into the development process in Newfoundland. These oil companies could look to the past to help them determine what to expect if they chose to develop in Newfoundland. Hibernia and Terra Nova had both run late and over budget, and thus Husky and Petro-Canada worried that this would happen to White Rose as well. The companies also worried that if oil prices declined too much, the project would not make a profit. Despite these concerns, Husky eventually decided to move forward with the project and submitted a development application in early 2001.

The development application for White Rose included the use of another FPSO. This decision was controversial, with a group of citizens, including St. John's Mayor Andy Wells, lobbying for the use of another GBS. They argued that the government should force developers to use a GBS because it would create more jobs and could be used to develop natural gas in the field as well (CBC 2000: par 4). However, the oil companies maintained their original plan, and for the second time the province lost most of the construction-phase jobs to out of province companies. The province now attempted to work out a deal with the oil companies so that as much of the topsides work as possible was done within the province. Compared to previous developments, the in province work for White Rose was expected to include much more project management and engineering. This, according to the government, was because local companies had been gaining knowledge and experience with each of the previous projects (Newfoundland 2001: par 8). However, all of this work was still only a fraction of the total construction work for the entire project, about 33% of total project expenditures (MacDonald 2001: par 17).

The White Rose project was the first oil field in the province to be developed under the generic royalty regime. This regime was established in 1996 and, since the Hibernia and Terra Nova agreements had already been negotiated, would apply to all projects beginning with White Rose. This generic regime was intended to be both fair to the province and encouraging to investors. It would accelerate the process of development and save money by eliminating royalty negotiations. It would also give oil

companies a degree of financial security; oil companies would know prior to committing to development what they would be expected to pay in royalties.

Hebron

It was widely hoped that the Hebron oil field would be the fourth field developed in Newfoundland. The field was found in 1981, shortly after Hibernia was discovered. It was originally thought to hold approximately 195 million barrels of oil, but subsequent wells have revealed that it holds several times this much. The most recent estimate, as of June 2006, was 731 million barrels, thus making it the second largest field in the province after Hibernia (Lono 2006:6). However, Hebron is different from other fields because its oil is of a heavier quality, meaning that it is not only harder (and more expensive) to extract, but also harder (and more expensive) to refine. Furthermore, this oil would sell for less than the lighter oil found in other fields. These issues have proved hurdles to the field's development throughout the years.

Despite the difficulties envisaged in developing the Hebron field, development talks between potential partners began as early as 1991. Since then hopes concerning the field's development have risen and fallen continuously. In 1991, Norcen Energy announced that if plans moved forward, production of the Hebron field could begin as early as 1995 (Slocum 1991: par 2). However, this hope was short lived as it was determined that the Hebron field was too expensive to develop at the time. In 1996, Chevron bought Norcen's share in the project and in 1997 expressed a renewed interest in developing it. Drilling began so that further information could be gathered, and in March

2000 it was announced that Chevron would take the lead role in a partnership that could result in development. This project began with viability studies that would assess the ability of Hebron to be a stand alone project. After two years, however, the project was again deemed too expensive and shelved.

Hopes to develop the Hebron oil field were renewed yet again in April 2005, when the partners signed an operating agreement which, coupled with higher oil prices, increased the viability of developing the field. Negotiations between the government and the oil companies began, and prospects looked good that an agreement would be reached. However, failure reigned again in early April, 2006 when it was announced that no agreement could be reached, that Chevron had disbanded its Newfoundland and Labrador team, and that there were no expectations that talks would resume. In fact, Chevron claimed that it would take two years to reinstate its Newfoundland team and get the project moving again (Cattaneo and Harding 2006: par 16). Oil companies blamed their withdrawal on the government's insistence on gaining an equity stake in the project and an increased royalty system during times of high oil prices.

4. Economic impact of the offshore oil industry

Since development on the Hibernia project began in 1990, the province has increasingly felt the economic impact of the oil industry's presence. These impacts have recently been documented in a socio-economic benefit study (Community Resource Services 2003; Jacques Whitford 2005). The Community Resource Services report concludes that the "offshore oil industry is making a substantial contribution to the Newfoundland and

Labrador economy, particularly in relation to GDP and employment" (Community Resource Services 2003:5).

The offshore oil industry in Newfoundland has been credited with the significant increases in GDP experienced by the province recently. In 1999 the offshore oil industry's contribution to the provincial GDP was 13%, in 2001 it was 14.4%, and in 2002 it was 21.5% (Jacques Whitford 2005:8). The GDP is also expected to grow in 2007. Significant portions of the GDP increases have come from construction and retail. Some of this construction was necessary to create the infrastructure necessary to build up and sustain the oil industry. As of 2001, there had been $1.2 billion worth of onshore infrastructure (both direct and indirect) as a result of the offshore oil industry (Community Resource Services 2003:19).

The oil industry's impacts have reached throughout the economy, not only to those sectors related to offshore oil. There are a number of indirect ways in which impacts have been felt. The Community Resource Services report states that:

> there are a very wide range of benefits and beneficiaries. In particular, it is not only highly-skilled technicians and specialists, and the companies they work for, that are benefiting; industry expenditures are also creating employment and income for people working in construction, retailing, hospitality, education, tourism, the arts and numerous industries. Yet others are deriving indirect benefits from the contribution the industry makes to municipal and the provincial finances, though taxes, revenues and reduction in some areas of public expenditures (2003:2).

One of the major government concerns with each development negotiation has been the number of jobs that would be created. Employment gains from offshore oil development have not only come from construction. Full time jobs on the oil rigs have

been created, as well as direct and indirect offshore support jobs. As of March 31st, 2006, 961 people were directly employed in support of Hibernia (95% of whom were residents of Newfoundland), 1,136 people were directly employed in support of Terra Nova (88% Newfoundland residents), and 990 people employed at White Rose (St. John's Board of Trade 2006:9). In 2002 the industry was responsible for 4.3% of total employment in the province. This increased to 6.8% in 2003, and 8% in 2004 (Jacques Whitford 2005:9).

The offshore oil industry has also been responsible for increases in income, housing starts, and retail sales. During 1999-2002 personal income averaged 6% higher because of the industry, and personal disposable income was 5.8% higher (Community Resources Services 2003:v). This increased income has likely been responsible for the growth in retail sales and housing starts in the province (Community Resource Services 2003:13).

However, despite the rosy picture often presented in the media, most of the benefits from development seem to be accruing to the St. John's metropolitan area (Community Resource Services 2003:14). Interestingly, the report states that:

> However, it should be noted that much of the business income in the petroleum industry accrues to non-resident companies. This is the case with virtually all types of external investment in a small economy. As such, the scale of the effect on GDP is not reflected in the scale of that on other indicators (2003:13).

Thus, it is clear that the offshore oil industry has had a significant impact on the province. It has not only provided revenues and jobs, but instilled hope in many people that the economy of the province can be improved. However, despite all of these benefits, it may be unwise to focus solely on them. The oil industry also poses risks to the province's

environment, including harm to wildlife, oil spills and ecosystem disruption.

Chapter 5: Environmental Groups in Newfoundland

Although an entire thesis could be written about the environmental movement in Newfoundland, this chapter will provide a brief overview in order to set the context for the following chapter in which the findings of this research are presented. I will begin with a history of the environmental movement in this province, including its beginning, progression, and the major issues that have arisen. Next, I will explore the strength of the environmental movement, and finally, I will discus the kinds of groups that are active in the province.

1. History of the environmental movement in Newfoundland

The development of the environmental movement in Newfoundland lagged behind the rest of Canada. During the 1970s, when the environmental movement elsewhere was increasing the number of active groups as well as general awareness of environmental issues, Newfoundland was still fairly untouched by it.

Karen[2], a long-time member of environmental groups, stated that through the 1970s and early 1980s, the environmental movement in Newfoundland did not exist, aside from an occasional issue around which a group would form. For instance, Karen's first involvement was on a campaign against the Department of Forestry's plan to spray pesticides to eliminate the spruce budworm. Another early environmental issue in the province was the 'say no to American garbage campaign', which was in response to the

2 All names have been changed in order to protect the identities of the respondents.

possibility of the government's allowing the United States to dump garbage in Newfoundland. Several respondents noted this issue specifically because it gained a great deal of public support. However, aside from the occasional campaign, early environmental activity, through the 1980s and early 1990s, focused mainly on education. Events included speakers and environmental fairs, both of which were intended to spread information about environmental issues.

Environmental activity in the province did not significantly pick up until the late 1980s and early to mid 1990s. It was at this point that larger organizations entered the province and groups became organized, with boards of directors, ongoing projects, and paid staff. The period between the late 1980s and mid 1990s saw the addition of The Conservation Corp, The Grand River Keepers (a major group in Labrador), Northeast Avalon ACAP, Protected Areas Association, The Sierra Club Forestry Campaign, Western Newfoundland Model Forest, The Humber Arm Environmental Association, St. John's Clean and Beautiful, Torbay Environment and Trails Committee, the East Coast Trail Association, as well as other smaller groups. Since that time there has been continued growth in the number of environmental groups within the province, including the Canadian Parks and Wilderness Society (CPAWS), a second Sierra Club, Newfoundland and Labrador Legacy Nature Trust, The Alder Institute, and The Western Environment Centre.

Environmental issues

Since the organization of the environmental movement in Newfoundland, there have been

some longstanding issues that groups here have addressed. Forestry has been a major concern on the west coast, and in the early 1990s, The Sierra Club began a forestry campaign there. Pesticides and mining have also been areas in which environmental groups have worked over the years. Water, and issues associated with water, both ocean and freshwater, have consistently been on the agenda of several environmental groups as well. For example, a number of groups have formed to protect specific rivers or lakes. Ocean Net was started with the purpose of keeping the water free of garbage, and the Northeast Avalon ACAP began originally to address the sewage problem in St. John's Harbour, but has now broadened its scope to include other watershed issues as well. There are also several salmon and salmon habitat protection groups, with The Salmonid Council of Newfoundland acting as an umbrella organization.

Interestingly, the collapse of the fishery, which was a huge economic and environmental problem, has not been given a great deal of attention by environmental groups. Bill, who worked for an environmental group, stated that, "the moratorium, which was an environmental disaster, cultural, social disaster of very large scale, has gotten a cursory response from the environmental community to date." He said that while it certainly had not been ignored, it has not been given priority or tackled thoroughly. He suggested that it may be too sensitive and difficult an issue for many groups.

Anti-seal hunting campaign

For many people in Newfoundland, the term 'environmental group' will bring images of the anti-seal hunting campaign that began in the 1970s. Although this was predominantly

an animal rights campaign, its effects have been felt constantly through the years by environmental groups.

During the 1970s, Greenpeace began a campaign with the purpose of stopping the traditional seal hunt that takes place in Newfoundland each year. The seal hunt has been an ongoing part of Newfoundland culture, as well as a very important means of income for many people. The campaign waged by Greenpeace was fairly ugly. It relied heavily on the media and celebrities to convey to the public what it argued was the cruelty of the seal hunt. Although to Greenpeace its campaign was about saving seals, to Newfoundlanders it was an attack on their way of life. An article in the New Internationalist in the late 1980s explained that:

> Greenpeace in Newfoundland is synonymous with the destruction of an important tradition and livelihood. Greenpeace's use of 'good guy/bad guy' media images has alienated a group that ought to be part of the constituency for change" (Draper 1987: par 17).

The Greenpeace campaign was yet another instance of outsiders entering Newfoundland and telling its people how to live their lives. It was a sore issue then and it continues to be a sore issue today.

As previously stated, this campaign was more of an animal rights campaign, but it came to be associated with environmental groups, and the terms 'environmentalist' and 'environmentalism' have been tainted in the province ever since. Conrad, a university professor, stated that:

> Environmental groups are associated with Greenpeace, which I think is a great organization myself. But to most members of the public in Newfoundland, when they think of environmental groups they think of groups that are attacking their

traditional activities, especially the harvesting of harp seals.

Samantha, an older woman working for an environmental group, explained that the Greenpeace campaign has created a problem for the progression of the movement as a whole. Because this issue took place several years before local environmental groups began organizing, when they finally did, they were faced with the negative associations that environmentalism conjured in people's minds. These groups have had to continuously try to undo the negativity that has been festering since the 1970s. Samantha suggested that this one issue has probably damaged the acceptance of environmental groups by the general public, and made the public hyper sensitive to any group that is unfamiliar to them.

2. The current environmental movement in Newfoundland

Despite the problems that resulted from the anti-seal hunt campaign, environmental groups were able to make some headway. During the interviews, each respondent was asked how strong she/he thought the environmental movement in Newfoundland was compared to other places. Although it is hard to make any final determinations based on these responses, there were a number of commonalities in the replies.

Most respondents felt that the environmental movement in Newfoundland was not very strong, especially compared to other places. However, I found that respondents generally answered this question positively. For instance, they would comment that the movement was not very strong, but that it was getting stronger, or that it had a great deal of potential. Thus, there seemed to be a burgeoning aspect to the movement, with most

respondents viewing it as something that is new and constantly growing. There was also optimism expressed about the people working in environmental groups. However, while current group members may be working hard, the problem seemed to be building interest in environmental issues so that more of the general public would become involved.

On several occasions, respondents noted that they would have expected the environmental movement in Newfoundland to be quite strong compared to other places, specifically large cities. Large cities are so far removed from the land that citizens' livelihoods generally do not depend on it, and thus, there may be no urgency felt to protect the environment. On the other hand, Newfoundlanders have traditionally been tied to the land for their livelihood. In theory, this would produce stronger advocates for environmental protection because people would understand the importance of protecting the land. Greg, a university professor and member of an environmental group, explained the difference between Newfoundland and larger cities:

> If you live in Newfoundland...you're going to have a very different environmental movement than if you live in Montreal or Toronto, even Halifax I expect. It's going to be because the rural roots are never very far away, either culturally or physically.

Claire, a young woman working for an environmental group, explained that there is a different environmental ethic in Newfoundland, and so Newfoundlanders have a different relationship with the environment. She explained that:

> I think it's just a utilitarian relationship with the environment, so there's no need to set it aside and preserve it. There's not that kind of environmental ethic. I think there's an ethic of conservation, but I think it's different from an urban - the typical environmental movement.

However, despite this close tie that Newfoundlanders have traditionally had with the environment, it does not seem to have translated into environmental activism. Kate, a woman who has lived in Newfoundland her whole life and worked for an environmental group, stated that:

> I find it odd that for a people that are so connected to the land and live off the land, whether its industry or recreationally, that there aren't more environmentalists or more people speaking out about the environment. I find it's a very fringe group of people that call themselves environmentalists.

Simon, a university professor also thought that it would make sense for Newfoundland to have a very strong environmental movement, but that this is not the case. He explained:

> I always thought we could generate the strongest environmental perspectives...not from New York City or Toronto but from Bonavista Bay, because we depend on those fish and we're going to protect them. We're going to kill them, we're going to fish them and we're going to protect them. And we have no other way to deal with that. So I always looked to Newfoundland to have the strongest, and not necessarily from academia or someone from the Natural History Society, but from the fishing communities. And it's hard, and I can't really generate that, I can't really find that.

Current environmental groups

In order to get a better understanding of environmental groups in Newfoundland, as well as to have a general list to consult for my interviews, I wanted to create an extensive list of environmental groups currently existent in the province. I began my search with the Newfoundland and Labrador Environment Network (NLEN), which is a network of environmental groups in the province. It was formed in the late 1980s as a way to connect non-governmental organizations for the purpose of networking and communicating. The NLEN website states that:

> The goal of the NLEN is to facilitate communication between non-government environmental organizations and assist with initiatives through non-advocacy means; as well as position the NLEN as a point of contact for municipalities, government departments, media and the public on environmental issues, including environment as it relates to human health, and environment as it relates to nature tourism.

The NLEN is part of the Canadian Environment Network (RCEN), and so provides its members with the ability to draw on Canada-wide resources as well. Thus, the NLEN is a good place to start for any kind of environmental information, including, groups, current projects and campaigns, contact information, etc. I first approached the NLEN to find out if there were a complete list of current environmental groups in the province. Unfortunately, there was not, and the current membership of the NLEN hovers consistently around 30 members, only a fraction of the total number of groups within the province.

From the information gained from the NLEN, as well as through an extensive internet search, I located sixty-six environmental groups in Newfoundland. The two main areas for environmental activity were in the St. John's area, where a large number of groups were located, and on the west coast of the province, where fewer, but still a significant number of groups exist. Although I did as thorough a search as I could, it is impossible to provide an exact number of environmental groups currently in the province. This is because, like anywhere, there are different kinds of groups working at different levels of society and thus, some are more visible than others. Almeida and Stearns discuss both a local grassroots level and a social movement level. They state that:

> We define a local grassroots environmental movement (LGEM) as a movement

> fighting a particular instance of pollution in a geographically specified region....LGEMs have a limited range of goals that are tied to specific pollution problems. A social movement is a broader struggle (usually national) that involves a formal organization(s) or a federation of loosely affiliated networks....Social movements have a wide range of goals directed at fundamental social and political reform...(1998:38).

This is a useful way to categorize groups acting in Newfoundland because it makes the distinction between those groups that take on specifically Newfoundland issues and those that work on issues that are applicable anywhere. The groups that were more visible and easier to locate in my search were typically those that were part of larger social movements. This included large groups, such as the Protected Areas Association, Canadian Parks and Wilderness Society, the Sierra Club, Conservation Corp and the Nature Conservancy. These groups work on general issues, such as global warming, that are applicable anywhere in the country or the world. Many of these groups have more than one branch or have national counterparts. The benefit of having a national counterpart is that there is a greater pool of resources from which to draw, including funding and information. These groups also tend to be more well known and so may be viewed as more credible. One respondent explained that having a national counterpart meant that groups were more established and thus less likely to fizzle out.

Groups with national counterparts may focus less on local issues and more on the issues determined by the larger group. The downside to this is that it may hinder them from addressing the truly local issues because their priorities have already been set. However, focusing on these local issues is where local grassroots groups come into play. Local groups are those based in Newfoundland that take on Newfoundland specific

issues. Many of these are small and very localized. For instance, there are groups in the province that have formed to protect specific rivers or trails. The Northeast Avalon ACAP was, for example, created to address issues of local sewage, with another branch on the west coast dealing with the same issue. This group, however, has recently branched out to address wider issues of watersheds. While the ACAP is fairly well known, having been in the media quite often, many of the other grassroots organizations are not as visible or well known to the public. These groups were difficult to locate in my search because they are often very small, lack resources, and thus, do not have websites or other means of communicating with the public. It also may not be as important for them to be as visible as the larger groups since the issues on which they work are so localized.

Members of environmental groups

Environmental groups attract a wide range of people within the community as members. While there is no way to make generalizations about the kinds of people who join Newfoundland environmental groups, interview respondents did bring up a number of points worth noting. The first was that there are a significant number of university professors, both current and retired, involved with environmental groups in the province. These professors can use their professional skills to help groups that would otherwise not have access to this kind of expertise.

The second noteworthy group involved in environmental groups in Newfoundland were young people. Several respondents explained that students from university have

been increasingly involved with environmental groups, both as general volunteers and in leadership positions. This increase in student participation may correspond to an increase in environmental activity at Memorial University in recent years. The student environmental group, currently called Project Green, has been getting more and more active recently. This increased student participation is helping to revitalize the environmental community, according to Karen. She explained that environmental groups in the past had typically been composed of the same people and so the recent influx of university students meant "new blood coming in." This could help sustain environmental groups into the future. Karen explained that, "when I talked before about a lot of volunteer burnout, there were no new faces coming along to help keep the momentum going and recharge the collective batteries of groups." Thus, the increased student participation in environmental groups may help these groups survive into the future and ensure that the environmental movement in the province continues to grow.

Bill, a middle aged man who worked for an environmental group, suggested his own categorization of members of environmental groups, which I think is interesting to mention. His first category was academics, which included professors, retired professors, and students (although he did recognize that students could be a group by themselves). The second category he described was people who were mostly from away and who have come to the province and taken an interest in Newfoundland environmental issues. The third group, which is the minority, but which Bill thought was the most important group politically, was what he called regular Newfoundlanders. This included people who have

worked in the fishery, forestry, or the offshore oil industry, and who have first hand knowledge of environmental degradation or the environments that could be harmed. He claimed that it is this group to which politicians are most likely to listen.

Conclusion

This section has provided a brief overview of environmental groups in Newfoundland with the purpose of painting a picture of the past and current state of environmental work in this province. The information presented in both this chapter and the last have provided the background necessary to make sense of this research. In the following section I will present the data gathered in the interviews as well as discuss what they mean for the environmental movement in Newfoundland and how it has responded to the offshore oil industry.

Chapter 6: Explaining Activity

The purpose of this research is to explain the environmental movement's response to the offshore oil industry in Newfoundland. In order to do this, the main factors that helped and hindered the environmental movement must be drawn out from the thirty-seven interviews that were conducted. This will be done by examining the data gathered in the context of the theoretical framework described in chapter two. This framework is based on the assumption that there are always grievances in society around which social movements can arise, and thus the explanation of social movement activity requires examining other elements: resources, political opportunities, and frames.

Although conceptually distinct, resource mobilization, political opportunities, and framing are not mutually exclusive. There are constant overlaps and interactions among them, making it impossible to fully discuss one without reference to the others. However, discussing each separately is the clearest and easiest way to approach the data gathered in the interviews. Therefore, in part one of this chapter I will discuss framing, including how both the oil industry and the environmental movement are framed in Newfoundland and how these frames have influenced action in response to the offshore oil industry. Beginning with frames is a logical starting point in the context of this research because the discussion will include significant background information about both the offshore oil industry and the environmental movement, which will help set the context for subsequent sections. Understanding frames can also contribute to the explanation of why groups either do or do not use resources or opportunities to get involved in offshore oil related

issues. Part two of this chapter will explore the interview data gathered on resources, including funding, time, volunteers, and organization, as well as how these factors affected action. In part three I will present the data gathered about political opportunities, including those opportunities which groups thought they could take advantage of, and those which they saw as closed to them.

The specific order in which the data are presented was chosen because it would require the least amount of repetition and it enables me to present the data in as logical and orderly a fashion as possible. It must be stressed, however, that this order does not denote the priority of any one theory, nor does it represent a claim that one factor precedes the others in real life. As previously stated, all factors are interrelated and only together can they be used to explain social movement activity. Thus, I will conclude this chapter with a brief discussion of how theories analyzing frames, resources, and political opportunities are related and why they are all indispensable for a thorough understanding of the environmental movement's response to the offshore oil industry in Newfoundland.

1. Framing

A frame in social movement literature refers to the way in which an issue is packaged and presented. This frame can guide and shape the way people perceive an issue, and therefore affect whether or not they mobilize to take action. The literature on framing suggests that for a group to form and/or take action around an issue, its members must share a common frame: there must be an agreement that something is a problem and that something can be done about it. If not, it is unlikely that individuals will use the resources

and opportunities available to them to address the problem.

Thus, in order to investigate the current response by environmental groups in Newfoundland to the offshore oil industry, it is necessary to explore how the offshore oil industry is perceived both by members of environmental groups in the province and the general public. However, exploring frames only provides part of the picture. As previously explained, no one theory presented in chapter two can be used in isolation to explain social movement activity. Therefore, the absence of a shared frame does not necessarily mean that action will never arise. Frames can be changed or re-aligned by using resources and opportunities, factors that will be addressed in subsequent sections of this chapter, and this is a strategy that groups can employ to garner support for an issue. Thus, understanding frames, the way both the industry and the environmental groups are perceived, is a legitimate first step in the explanation of why environmental groups in Newfoundland did or did not use resources or opportunities available to them to work on offshore oil issues.

The industry

The impact that the offshore oil industry is having on Newfoundland's economy has already been described in detail in chapter four. The industry has not only increased provincial government revenues, but also increased the number of jobs within the province, something that has been a priority to the government and Newfoundlanders as each offshore project has been developed. Nearly all respondents agreed that the benefits of the offshore oil industry were economic: the industry is providing both jobs and

revenue, two areas in which the province has historically struggled. Bill explains the hope that many people attach to the industry:

> The offshore oil industry is framed as the economic saviour or godsend for this place. It's what's sort of filling the gap. This is the new Newfoundland, supposedly, the new kind of economy for this place, and it's filled the void that's been left since the 1992 cod moratorium. It's come on stream since then. It's gotten a lot of support politically. Danny Williams and his Atlantic Accord supposed victory, that's also still hot on everyone's minds. There's a real let down in terms of how government dealt with fisheries and how it negatively affected the province. But a lot of people see with the oil and gas and Danny Williams' victory in The Atlantic Accord that it's starting to right some of the wrongs of resource management in this province.

As Bill stated, the 1992 cod moratorium left many people out of work, and this was in a province that has historically had high rates of unemployment. Thus, jobs are always a priority in Newfoundland and the offshore oil industry is providing jobs, meaning that fewer residents will have to leave the province to find work. Kate explained the importance that Newfoundlanders attach to anything that will create jobs in the province:

> Jobs always win over. That's always the card they play - that we can't speak out against this and if you do you're wrong and you hate Newfoundland because Newfoundlanders don't have any jobs and we're poor and we need the jobs. It doesn't matter if it destroys our local environment and only gives people a job for 3 to 5 years. It doesn't matter. You shouldn't speak out against it because we need jobs. It means I can delay moving to Alberta for another 3 years.

This passage reveals the jobs versus the environment mentality that appears to be shared by many Newfoundlanders: that they have to choose between creating jobs or protecting the environment, but not both. Craig, a university professor, explained how he thought Newfoundlanders approached this choice: "Maybe there is an environmental impact, but god dammit we need the jobs. So it's present. People are a little sensitive, but

jobs are important." Philip, another university professor, explained the Newfoundland mindset, but as it relates to forestry, an issue that has also incited the debate between jobs and the environment: He stated that:

> People are worried about jobs...in forests, rather than worrying about cutting forests at higher rates than they are regenerating, and we will have stripped them in 10 to 15 years, people start screaming as soon as any effort is made to put aside any portion of the forest. People think only in short term...The general average person is more concerned about eating today or tomorrow than thinking about if there will be food 30 years from now. The closer you are to the frontier, the more likely you are to take the attitude that we've got to use it now.

Similarly, Conrad stated that, "People's main concern is how they're going to put bread and butter on the table for their kids next year. So they're less concerned about the environment." Clearly, jobs are a priority for Newfoundlanders. There was general agreement among respondents that while the public may, in theory, agree that the environment needs to be protected, they are more concerned about jobs and fulfilling their immediate needs. Because people think that they have to choose between jobs and the environment, Kate suggested that popular support for environmental issues is lacking. She explained that, "The broader public support hasn't been there because we're all just trying to survive and make a dollar and live here. That's the general attitude I find." Therefore, because of the historically weak economic state of the province and the effect this has had on people, protecting the environment may not be getting much attention from the general public, and so the environmental movement suffers.

Although the benefits that respondents suggested were derived from the industry were primarily economic, Bill explained that these benefits represent more to the people

of Newfoundland than simply money and jobs. Because of its historically poor economy, Newfoundland has suffered the stigma associated with being the province often depicted as constantly begging for a handout. Bill explained that he hoped the offshore oil industry would alter this depiction and thus change the mindset of Newfoundlanders as well as the view of the rest of Canada's view regarding Newfoundland:

> On people's minds is the idea that this province is dependent on someone else to make a go of it here - Ottawa. And people resent that whole idea and what comes with it. The lack of independence is what it's really about. We have to go hat in hand and beg for work and depend on EI as a way of life here. If we can move into economic sectors like oil and gas, that could help us become more independent and shift away from always having to go to Ottawa and having that little brother complex, which I don't think is healthy for anyone and creates a lot of social tension and resentment and despair. Essentially, it's not economically sustainable, or sustainable on a community basis or a family basis. It's why we see out migration, because people can't live that way forever.

Based on this statement, it is not surprising that the offshore oil industry is framed as a 'saviour' in Newfoundland. Although there are, no doubt, problems associated with the industry, the benefits seem to outweigh any problems for many Newfoundlanders. Hanna, a woman involved in offshore oil issues in the private sector, explained that:

> Any way you want to look at this, if people want to talk about disadvantages, I don't think you're going to hear anyone in Newfoundland and Labrador say that any of the disadvantages outweigh the advantages of having the industry here.

Focusing on the advantages of the industry is fairly easy in Newfoundland because a) the industry is so far offshore that people do not have to think about it on a daily basis unless it is in the media and b) if it is in the media, the coverage is often centered on economic benefits. Based on this, it is understandable that the general public views the offshore oil industry in a positive light. It also seems unlikely that there would be much support for

any action taken against the industry because the public might perceive this action as a threat to their livelihood.

Thus, the way the offshore oil industry is currently framed in Newfoundland poses a challenge to environmental groups interested in pursuing offshore oil related issues. If a group were interested in pursuing such issues, they would first need to align their frame regarding the offshore oil industry with the public's. The challenge of this would be to show the public that jobs and a healthy environment are not mutually exclusive. However, this would likely prove difficult because the basis of the dominant frame is deeply rooted in the social and economic history of the province, areas about which residents are quite sensitive and passionate.

Before I began the interviews for this research, I had expected to find much more anti-oil industry sentiment among members of environmental groups. I was correct in-so-far as they were critical of the industry, of the government, and of the current management of the industry, but I had anticipated that this critical perspective would translate into disapproval for the industry's presence in the province. However, throughout all the interviews, only one respondent thought that Newfoundland would fare better without the oil industry. Nevertheless, despite most respondents' acceptance of the offshore oil industry, they also expressed reservations about it, both socially and environmentally.

One of the non-environmental concerns articulated about the offshore oil industry regarded distribution of wealth. Clearly, the oil industry is contributing to the provincial

economy, but there were concerns about who is actually benefiting. Philip worried about the "disparity between salaries paid to oil workers and other workers in the province. Related is the number of senior positions with the oil industry who are international workers who don't pay taxes to Canada, let alone Newfoundland." Similarly, Sam explained that, "There are good jobs. There are some good well paid jobs. The more immediate effect has been to make a greater separation between the high paid people in Newfoundland and the low paid."

There was also a concern that the economic benefits from the oil industry have been concentrated in the Northeast Avalon, with the rest of the island receiving little if any benefit. This is specifically problematic for outports because they were hit hardest by the fishery closing and so desperately need economic improvement. Sam explained that:

> Statistically the average income has gone up because of the high wages paid by the oil companies, so that St. John's appears to be more prosperous, but at the expense of the outports. And I think that's the most immediate negative effect of the offshore oil industry from a sociological perspective. There is a bigger difference between the rich and the poor when you get down to it.... The effect is lots of money has tended to stay with the more wealthy and hasn't trickled down, especially in the outports, which has encouraged them to come into St. John's. St. John's is growing and is relatively prosperous, but in the outports, there's just no one left.

Similarly, Greg stated that:

> Most of the benefits, such as they are, are within 100 kilometers of where we're sitting. So oil doesn't mean diddily if you live beyond Clarenville or the northeast coast, it means nothing. In terms of employment, I guess it means something, not even a lot. In terms of Hibernia, it doesn't even mean a lot in terms of provincial government coffers.

Despite the influx of money from the industry, it may not be benefiting the lives of as

many ordinary citizens as some had hoped. However, as illustrated in the previous section, because the industry provides some jobs, and jobs are often seen as first priority, it is the number of jobs and increases in pay that often get the most attention rather than the distribution of benefits. Therefore, the dominant frame for the oil industry, whereby it is perceived as vital for the province's economy, shapes the central issue focused upon (jobs), which in turn structures how people perceive the industry's presence in Newfoundland as well as what kinds of actions they would (or would not) be willing to take against it.

Another concern expressed among respondents was that the short term benefits from the industry were blinding people to long term concerns. Respondents worried that the government and the general public are focusing too much on the oil industry's development and the benefits it is supplying in the present, and putting too little thought into what will happen when there is no oil left to develop. Philip, who is both a member of an environmental group and a professor, stated that:

> The Offshore Petroleum Board is far more concerned about development of the industry than potential environmental damage. The short term seems to have higher priority than long term. In the case of the whole province, we've been on the brink of financial disaster for the 40 plus years I've been here. Always seem to be on the brink, so I think there is real pressure to dam the torpedoes full speed ahead on development.

Both Ken and Joe also worried that a short term perspective was causing people to put too much hope in the oil industry's ability to benefit the economy today without giving adequate thought to the future. Ken explained that:

I think most people envisage something like a 20 to 25 year span, unless they find

> significant new oil fields, which they haven't done in quite a while now. The proven oil resources that are out there might last 20 to 25 years, and then we know they're gone. We're building our future, so to speak. And everyone is thinking we've got this bright future in Newfoundland now and we don't have to worry anymore because we're an oil rich province. It is an amazingly short time span that we're looking at when you think about it compared to how long we've been here already. So that's one concern I have. 25 years is not a long time.

Similarly, Joe stated that:

> The scary part about the oil is that 20 to 22 years from now there may not be any oil. Then where do we turn? I don't mean to paint a doomsday picture, but to me it's certainly not all rosy... The offshore in general is looked at as a great panacea, it's going to rescue the Newfoundland economy. I think we've been a bit too vigorous in pursuing it and forgetting about everything else.

While respondents accepted the need for the short term economic gains being supplied by the industry, they were not blinded by them and rather suggested solutions that incorporated both the economic benefits of the industry and a long term perspective.

Craig stated that:

> I personally have issues with the way our society uses energy as a whole - our attitude towards it. I'm not going to quickly say that we don't need it and we don't need offshore oil development, but I would submit that we squander that resource. There's this attitude that we have to get it now and we have to have it all. It's like huge demand, huge pressure, lets get it now.

Regardless of the fact that Bill felt strongly about ocean pollution, he still accepted the industry, but suggested that we should be:

> using those resources to reinvest in sustainable economies or institutions. Great if it is a temporary use of oil and gas resources. But it will only be temporary, that's the nature of it. The question is, how will the resources be funneled back into sustainable long term economic development initiatives?

Thus, although members of environmental groups accepted the industry, something that originally surprised me, it was not a blind acceptance based solely on

potential economic benefits. Members of environmental groups recognized the necessity of short term benefits but wanted the government to plan for the long term as well. The offshore oil industry could be incorporated into such a plan by using some of the revenues to begin economic activity that would provide for the province when the oil industry is gone.

However, although the offshore oil industry will only provide economically in the short term, it is still generally framed as an economic saviour that will provide for the province into the future. It is framed as if this short term industry can save the province from its long history of economic problems. It seems that because of this history, and because people are desperate for improvement, they are willing to accept anything that will provide immediate economic gains. This proves problematic for any group wanting to address issues related to the offshore oil industry. Thus, the challenge for environmental groups interested in these issues would be to align the dominant frame with their own so that people begin to think about and plan for the long term future of the province.

Environmentally, the main concern regarding the offshore oil industry was pollution. This included the potential for a large disastrous oil spill, which could happen either on the production platform or during transport. The number of government precautions or regulations in place to prevent oil spills seemed irrelevant to some respondents because the risk that something will go wrong is always present. Ken, a university professor and long-time member of environmental groups, explained that:

> I never believe these experts when they say these things because accidents are by nature the unexpected. It's what you can't anticipate that... the nature of reality is that a weird fluke of events happens and you're looking at that situation.

In addition to accidental spills, deliberate dumping during transportation was also a concern, such as the deliberate dumping of oily bilge water. Although illegal, ships may dump bilge because it is cheaper than disposing of it legally. Due to the increased traffic offshore resulting from the growing oil industry, incidents of bilge dumping will likely increase. Thomas explained that:

> Spills are always a problem. Although it should be pointed out that the biggest source of oil in the environment is not the production, it's transportation. So the largest source of oil into the marine environment...is through the transportation network, which is not really the same as the production and movement offshore.

Deliberate dumping can also take place legally. Current regulations allow that a certain amount of oil can be dumped into the ocean. However, there were objections among respondents to this policy. Philip argued that this form of dumping should not be tolerated because there are alternative options available that would mean less oil in the ocean. He stated that:

> They are dumping production water and pumping in sea water into oil fields. Why aren't they re-injecting production water that is already contaminated with things instead of dumping it into the ocean, which puts oil and minerals into the ocean which could be re-injected into the ground if they were forced to?

Craig, a university professor who had worked briefly in the oil industry years ago, explained that the process by which the regulations regarding legal dumping were established were politically motivated rather than based on environmental effects:

> So what they've done is that they can meet the 40mg per litre. That's what the industry can meet. They can't meet the 15 with the operational discharges. So

> that's what the regulations are set to. I find that problematic. Find out what's acceptable and set the regulation and industry will meet it. Don't say, what can you meet guys? What can you meet? Oh, 50? We'll set that to the regulation. I find that concerning. I think it's driven by political, financial pressure.

Therefore, the fact that an oil company is following regulations may not necessarily ensure that the environment is being protected. It does, however, absolve the industry from legal responsibility if any environmental damage does take place as a result of legal dumping. It is also beneficial to the industry's image because the industry has followed regulations, regardless of whether these regulations, in reality, are causing environmental damage.

Many respondents were also concerned about the lack of independent (non-oil company) observers on the offshore platforms and the implications this had both for the environment and for those groups and individuals concerned about the environment. A lack of observers means a lack of information about what takes place in the offshore. This makes it difficult for those interested to adequately assess the offshore situation and decide if there are grounds for concern. Simon, a university professor, explained his unease about the effects that the massive offshore structures are having on the marine environment. These structures are giant foreign objects in the offshore and could potentially be significantly affecting the ocean ecosystem. Simon explained that:

> When an oil platform first comes into production it has a flare that goes up because of the pressure in the field under the ocean. And when it first comes online it takes a long time to regulate that. That flare is incredibly high when it first comes on. When Hibernia did that it was the first artificial light of that magnitude on the Grand Banks since the formation of the planet earth as far as we know. And all those nocturnal creatures that are attracted to light and heat, like seabirds... I've had calls of tens of thousands of birds when it first came on.

30,000 birds flying around that platform was the estimate.

However, despite the suggestion of environmental impacts, because there is little information available regarding these platforms, it is difficult to determine their effects on the area. Simon stated that:

> You have all these oil company guys sitting there...and there's nobody, an independent environmentalist, like from the Natural History Society or from the university, who would be independent from that, independent from that process, and whose responsibility it would be to the environment and not for just the oil. And so those things [the initial flare] happened and are done and gone and what were the consequences of that?

With no independent observers on the platforms, oil companies are left to self report any problems that arise. However, workers on the platforms are trained for the oil industry and not the natural sciences. Thus, there is no one on the platforms properly trained to recognize any adverse environmental effects from the industry. Furthermore, even if a problem were recognized, such as a spill, it is in the company's best interest not to report that spill if possible. Although the regulations stipulate that oil companies are to provide the CNLOPB with reports of all oil spills, because there are no monitors, companies can choose what information to submit. Conrad explained that:

> The laws about disclosure say that we're not allowed to know the amount of oil or the location of specific events. But a summary is provided by the CNLOPB. They are provided with information from the company. So the company is essentially monitoring its own pollution and deciding which information it wants to provide to the CNLOPB.

This situation is problematic not only for the environment, but also for the general public because it means that the public cannot get specific information on these spills.

Even if a worker did recognize a problem while offshore, she/he would not likely

act as a whistleblower since this could compromise her/his job. Simon explained that he had received anonymous letters from offshore employees suggesting that, despite the legislation, oil companies do not share all information they have with the CNLOPB:

> We have anonymous letters from crew members out there about spills and spin doctoring of what's happening. And they can't give us that information because in fact they're working for the man in that situation, so they don't have any option to do that. So that's the problem. And those are the observers you have now. If they see something they're in deep do-do as far as the company is concerned. That's why it has to be independent.

Carl, a former member of government, but now working in the private sector, also said that he had reason to believe that the oil companies were misreporting. However, he explained that it was difficult to investigate any of these allegations because there were only oil workers out there:

> In the case of the Offshore Petroleum Board, they have a set of regulations that say that when you're drilling there is going to be an amount of oil that is spilled. That's just a fact of life. So there are allowances for those kinds of things to happen. So if there are allowances for it to happen and there are no observers, then what you'll find is there had been lots of suggestions of underreporting and misreporting for a number of years. Complaints would come in, but you couldn't investigate it very well because there is really no one out there. And it's well known that if you're employed out there, what goes on out there stays out there. Or else you don't have a job anymore.

Consequently, many respondents wanted the government to require independent monitors on board the offshore platforms. Conrad explained that, "Monitoring your own pollution, you're in a conflict of interest. You can't monitor your own adherence to the law. There has to be some kind of surveillance and some kind of enforcement." These monitors would not only be trained to spot any problems in the offshore environment, but would also act as a watchdog on the industry so that any spills or problems would be

more likely to be reported. Many respondents also wanted the government to make more information about the offshore available to the public. Charles stated that:

> I'd like an immediate reporting of every single incident, whether a release of oil... and it should be public. So not a post fact summary where that information is included amongst others. I don't want to use the term buried, but it's secluded or generalized. But as incidents occur they're available and not only available but that the media is apprised that they have occurred.

If this information were released, concerned groups could more easily comment on environmental impacts from the offshore oil industry. However, the way reporting is currently structured, environmental groups may feel that they are constantly hitting a wall when trying to comment on the industry. If they know in advance that certain types of information are unavailable, environmental groups may choose not to get involved in the first place. Thus, the extent of action taken against the industry may increase if the public were given access to more information regarding the offshore environment.

Not only were respondents troubled by the fact that inadequate monitoring of the offshore meant inadequate information is available to the public, but they were also concerned that adequate baseline data have never been collected. This information, according to respondents, should have been gathered before any structures were built in the offshore. Carl stated that:

> My biggest concern is that we really don't know what it was like out there prior to all of it starting. And what kind of effect has it had and will it have? When my grandkids are 50 years old, what changes will be out there? You probably are aware that even now there's a lot of concern about baseline data, environmental data that should have been collected out there but hasn't been...The recommendations were there for each successive drill program that there should be more data made available. The companies were not very interested or forthcoming in allowing that, and the Offshore Petroleum Board, who is supposed

> to be the go between, seemingly to a lot of people in Newfoundland were in the pockets of the oil companies and the drilling industry themselves.

Without baseline data, current conditions cannot be compared to earlier conditions, and hence it is difficult to determine the environmental impacts of the offshore industry. Craig argued that he sees no sufficient reason why better information cannot be collected. Oil companies invest billions of dollars into development, but very little toward studying the environment. He stated that:

> Once again if you look at the budget allocated to environmental stuff and compare that to the budget allocated to any other component of the industry, it's a joke. The number that comes to my mind recently is, I think the exploration bill for the Orphan Basin was 600 million dollars. And I don't think they spent more than a couple hundred thousand on ground truthing and evaluation of environmental issues. You're going to spend 600 million dollars to find out if maybe there's oil there, but not going to spend even a percent or two of that to find out what the environmental, what's the environment like there? Because we don't know, there's no data.

He continues with his interpretation of why the industry does not invest more money into studying the environment:

> I've been at meetings where I've been told the reason that the oil industry doesn't do something in a certain way is because they want to be, it's very precautionary, they want to make sure they don't compromise the amount of oil they produce from the reservoir. But when that topic comes up with regard to, 'do you know what's happening with regards to the environmental impact?' And in that area not knowing is almost as good as it not being a problem. So in a sense they don't use the precautionary principle there. There are things they could do, but because it costs money and there's no direct correlation between environmental precautions and cash flow, they're not so compliant.

If the information is nonexistent, it is difficult for anyone to argue convincingly that the industry is having negative effects on the environment. Thus, by skimping on investments on baseline data, oil companies are essentially protecting themselves from future

scrutiny. This makes it particularly difficult for groups concerned about the environment, because even if they were sure of negative impacts, with inadequate evidence they may not be taken seriously. This may then act as a deterrent to groups and people interested in getting involved in offshore oil issues.

Framing theory suggests that people have to agree that something is a problem before they will become involved in action to address it. Clearly, members of environmental groups in Newfoundland agree that there are problems associated with the offshore oil industry. Thus, lack of concern about the environmental effects of the industry cannot be used to explain why environmental groups here have not taken action. However, as the previous section illustrated, the general public does not seem to equally share this concern about the environmental impacts of the oil industry. Therefore, to gain public support for any campaigns they may wish to wage, environmental groups would have to attempt a frame alignment process.

Before conducting the interviews I had expected that respondents would predominantly blame the oil companies for the problems they associated with the offshore oil industry because it is the oil companies that are directly responsible for environmentally harmful activities. However, I found that although respondents were concerned about the environmental impacts of the industry, most accepted and even expected negative behavior from the industry. Oil companies are primarily concerned with maximizing profits and polluting is often cheaper than not polluting. Therefore, companies will continue environmentally damaging behavior unless forced to behave

otherwise. Heather explained that, "The industry is just doing what they're told to do. They are just doing the regulations." If the regulations were different, oil companies would act differently. Thus, proper regulations and enforcement, both of which are the government's responsibility, are what is needed to protect the environment. If the environment is currently being polluted, the government is to blame for not properly regulating the industry. Jennifer stated that, "The oil and gas industry is just going to do whatever. They're not the biggest problem. The biggest problem is with the actual government - the Boards."

Consequently, I found that there was much less negativity associated with the oil companies and much more associated with the government than I had originally expected. In fact, in one case, the respondent put great faith in the industry, stating that if it were properly pressured it would make beneficial changes in its actions. Joe, a government member with experience with the offshore oil industry stated that:

> In favor of them [the industry] I think they would even step up what they're doing and how much they are doing, i.e., whether it's exercising or having the right equipment or standard operating procedure, if they were more pressured into it. But they're not pressured into it.

The problem, according to Joe and several others, is that although it is government's job to pressure the oil companies, they are not adequately doing this. Jonathan, a member of a long-standing environmental group, stated that:

> They won't spend the money. They're not going to do that until they're forced to do it by law, which is government's role. And the government is not taking, in my opinion, a strong enough role in this because our environment, our fish and our aquatic populations, are at risk. And our shorelines are at risk. So the oil companies have to step up to the plate and be a little better environmental partners

> with the people in the province than they have been. And that's government's role, and they are failing in that role.

Similarly, Simon stated that:

> It's just the government taking responsibility. It's really quite simple. The legislation is there that would probably allow it. The Atlantic Accord allows for big loopholes which are being used by the oil companies, but in fact there are ways to close those loopholes and to deal with it. It's just not being done. It's just that there have to be standards for environmental protection that are imposed by the government because we have a government to do that. We don't have oil companies to do that. We have government to do that.

Jennifer argued that the government has not fulfilled its role to protect the environment because the regulations regarding offshore management are deficient. She claimed that the CNLOPB's mandate contradicts itself by including both the development of offshore oil and the protection of the environment. However, because development and job creation are the government's priorities, the environment often gets relegated to the back seat:

> As a federal authority responsible for the environment, the CNLOPB is a big problem. Basically it's a conflict of interest. They want oil and gas exploration so they set up this board to do that. But then they also give them all the other responsibilities of protecting the environment and everything else. And I just don't think you can ask one body to do those things, because it's a conflict. And so what happens is that really their main client is the offshore oil and gas industry.

Thus, as Jennifer's remark suggests, the dominant frame respecting the offshore oil industry is shared not only by the people of Newfoundland, but the government as well. The implications of this are, as she argued, that the government is likely to put more weight on development than they do on environmental protection. The dominant frame respecting the oil industry is clearly deeply ingrained in the social and economic fabric of

the province, which only adds to the challenges faced by environmental groups hoping to gain public support for oil industry campaigns.

Environmental groups

The framing literature suggests that groups are constantly engaged in framing battles with other organizations and actors. Each group tries to convince the public to adopt its frame so that it can gain supporters for its cause. However, how the groups themselves are framed can play an important role in their ability to win these battles; public perceptions of groups will influence which frame they adopt. Thus, it is necessary to explore the way environmental groups in Newfoundland are framed and the effects this has on their ability, and their perceptions of their ability to take action respecting the offshore oil industry.

Respondents generally thought that it was the government's responsibility to regulate the offshore oil industry and to ensure that it does not negatively affect the environment. However, many of these respondents also thought that the government has failed to do this and thus environmental groups must, in turn, apply pressure to the government to do its job properly. Thomas, a university professor who had also been involved in environmental offshore issues, stated that:

> My belief is that the only way science can happen in a situation like this, with a fairly strong proponent, is for there to be an equally strong environmental group pushing for a strong regulatory regime. If there is no countervailing pressure, then it's almost impossible as a scientist to do much.

Environmental groups can pressure the government to enact and enforce stricter

legislation because of their position in society. Lou, a member of government, explained the role that environmental groups play in his work: "I find them good to deal with for the most part. Sometimes they're kicking you, but that's not always a bad thing either. It keeps you on your toes and trying to keep you current to the issues too." Environmental groups are predominantly volunteers, and so individuals are not restricted in the same way as, for instance, members of government or the private sector. While the government is restricted by legislation and regulations, environmental groups are not and can thus speak more freely and critically. Lou explained that because of this, environmental groups can approach issues from a different perspective, which is often beneficial:

> There are issues that interest groups can raise that government can't. We deal with things within legislation. And we can move things up the line within our own departments but we can't go out in the media and discuss certain things that happen. Interest groups are not bound by the same rules.

Clearly, respondents saw a legitimate role in Newfoundland for environmental groups. Although individuals involved with environmental issues shared this frame regarding environmental groups, it is not necessarily shared by the general public. A majority of respondents explained that the anti-seal hunt campaign, which began in the 1970s, has had a lasting negative impact on the public's perception of the environmental movement in the province.[3] Conrad, a university professor, stated that:

> Environmental groups are associated with Greenpeace, which I think is a great organization myself. But to most members of the public in Newfoundland, when they think of environmental groups they think of groups that are attacking their traditional activities, especially the harvesting of harp seals. So it's not just that

3 For a more detailed account of this history, please refer back to chapter five.

> there's lack of awareness of the issues and lack of support for environmental groups for issues, it goes further than that. There's an active hatred of environmental groups, to the point where if you go to some of these communities and identify yourself as a member of an environmental group you might get run out of town.

Kenneth stated that, "The problem for environmental groups has always been, up to recently, that environmental or conservation groups has always been a dirty word." Kate claimed that, "Especially in rural Newfoundland people equate environmentalism with 'you don't want us to kill seals'." Thomas explained that:

> It's a difficult place to do this type of work for sure. We had the disastrous way the anti-seal hunt issue was handled in the 70s and 80s by the US and British environmental organizations that made it really difficult. All you have to do around here is say you're interested in an environmental issue and they'll immediately accuse you of being Greenpeace or something like this. And for years that was enough so you couldn't say anything. The reputation was so bad around here because of that one issue. You couldn't speak to a lot of other really pressing environmental issues that most people in Newfoundland, if they could see beyond that one issue, would probably be agreeing with you.

Thomas makes an important point, stating that if the public had not been so affected by the Greenpeace campaign, most would likely support the work of environmental groups.

The negative association with environmental groups in Newfoundland has led some individuals to be wary of calling themselves environmentalists or being associated with an environmental group for fear that the public would not support them. Jennifer explained that she has specifically avoided referring to herself as an environmentalist because:

> Environmentalist has come to mean quack. If it actually meant environmentalist I wouldn't mind but it means quack now. So if they interview someone and call them an environmentalist it's meant to indicate that whatever they're saying should be treated not as serious. If they're represented as a biology professor at

York University it would sound different.

Similarly, Conrad worked on environmental offshore issues but had never become involved with an environmental group. He was aware of the negative connotation associated with environmental groups and stated that, "I think I have more credibility if I'm seen as an independent loose cannon than if I'm a member of a group." While some respondents suggested that the negative image of environmental groups may be improving in the St. John's area, they thought that it would still pose significant problems elsewhere in the province.

Frames play an important role in explaining the action taken by environmental groups in Newfoundland in response to the offshore oil industry. It is clear that environmental groups are concerned about the environmental effects of the industry, as demonstrated earlier in this chapter. However, they also shared with the general public the belief that the industry should remain in the province because of its positive economic impacts. Thus, the challenge for environmental groups is to align the dominant frame, in which the industry is accepted, with its own, in which the industry should remain but be managed with its short term nature and potential environmental problems in mind. Environmentalists would also likely have to alter the frames associated with the environmental movement. However, as also revealed in this chapter, both of these tasks would prove difficult because of the deeply rooted nature of the dominant frames regarding both the oil industry and the environmental movement.

2. Resources

Resource mobilization theory is based on the assumption that resources are necessary for groups to act, and therefore making sense of social movement activity requires an examination of these resources. Also important to this theory is the examination of social movement organizations because of their ability to mobilize and organize resources in order to make them effective. Therefore, explaining the Newfoundland environmental movement's response to the offshore oil industry requires considering the resources currently available to environmental groups as well as those they feel are still needed to accomplish their goals. Also crucial is an examination of how both individual groups and the environmental movement as a whole are organized to make use of these resources.

Funding

Funding was undeniably the most cited resource affecting a group's ability to get involved in issues related to the offshore oil industry in Newfoundland, and lack of funding appeared to be universally problematic. Carson, a middle aged member of an environmental group, stated that, "In Newfoundland all the environmental organizations are really struggling right now funding-wise. Funding is a really big issue. The drive is there but the money is not." Similar to resource mobilization theory, members of environmental groups believed that money was needed for them to become firmly established and to fully work towards their goals. This money would also allow groups to acquire further resources that would facilitate action. For example, having paid staff members is an effective way to ensure the stability of an organization. Several

respondents in environmental groups stated that one of their first priorities with further funding would be to hire office staff to complete basic tasks, such as answering the phone and writing and submitting grant applications. Kelly explained why this was so important: "You spend a lot of time writing proposals rather than working on getting together with oil and gas people for example." Similarly, Philip explained that in order for a group to be effective it needs money for several staff members:

> If everything is done by volunteers it's exhausting - continuous, all encompassing. All the time you're willing to put into it isn't enough. Until you get to the stage where you get an organization that can afford office and staff, it's hard. You can apply for a grant - but what if you get the grant? If you hire someone on short term it means a volunteer has to make sure it's being done right – supervision - so it's still burning out volunteers.

Having paid staff would free volunteers to focus on action rather than office work and in theory make the group more effective.

However, although there was near universal acknowledgment that environmental groups require further funding to accomplish their goals, acquiring this funding was a challenge. Money can sometimes be collected through membership fees and donations, but most groups cannot subsist on this alone. Therefore, as suggested by resource mobilization theory, due to their resource-poor state, most groups in Newfoundland rely on outside sources for funding. These sources could include government, private organizations, or industry. Although a majority of respondents recognized that obtaining funding was problematic for environmental groups everywhere, several thought that Newfoundland groups faced greater challenges. Carson attributed this disparity to the fact that Newfoundland is on the periphery of Canada, and that in contrast to places like the

Yukon, Newfoundland may not always be viewed by outsiders as somewhere in need of protection. Although not necessarily true, Carson felt that funders see Newfoundland as already pristine and thus environmental groups here are in less need of support than other places.

Bill explained that it can also be difficult to find funding for ocean-related projects, which is clearly problematic for an island. He explained that while many environmental issues in Newfoundland concern the ocean, securing funding to address them is often difficult because most funders concentrate on terrestrial issues. He stated that:

> If you look at the kind of funding opportunities for environmental groups across the country, there is not a lot of money for marine conservation…Can't offer a breakdown, but I'd venture that over 75 to 80 percent of funding goes into terrestrial conservation initiatives... That's a big impediment for groups that want to move into marine environment and conservation.

He also explained that many of the issues related to the ocean in Newfoundland are contentious, such as the establishment of marine protected areas, and that funders prefer to avoid controversy.

Contrary to resource mobilization theory, political opportunities theory argues that accepting outside funding is dangerous because it sets limits to the way money can be used and thus detracts from a group's ability to accomplish its goals. While, ideally, funding could be spent at the receiver's discretion, respondents' answers suggested the contrary; funders do not simply write blank cheques. Rather, funding is typically granted for specific types of projects, and in order to secure this funding, groups must tailor their

applications to fit the project. Claire, a young woman working for an environmental group, explained that:

> We follow the funding. So there's a funding pot for a specific thing. It's frustrating. We often go for that because of the way funding is given. It leaves a bad taste in my mouth really, but when you're struggling with funding...The funders have a lot of control over what you do, despite your mandate.

As Claire suggested, the process of obtaining funding in this manner often means that environmental groups deviate from their mandates. While funding received from outside sources allows groups to work on environmental issues, it does not necessarily allow them to work on the issues of their choosing. Funders gain a great deal of power to advance their interests at the expense of the particular interests of environmental groups. Consequently, projects undertaken in Newfoundland may not be those deemed important and relevant by environmental groups here, but rather, those deemed acceptable by funders. Although insignificant in some cases, in others, the interests of the funders may be antithetical to the goals of environmental groups. As previously explained, environmental groups are inherently trying to change the status quo, thus fundamentally threatening those organizations in whose best interest it is to maintain the status quo. Because giving money to environmental groups allows outside organizations to exert some degree of influence over these groups, to some extent donors can keep environmental action within 'the box' and thus help maintain the status quo. An obvious example of this would be an environmental group taking money from an oil company, such as the Shell environment fund. We would not expect the receiver of such funds to use this money to combat the oil industry. Therefore, by contributing money to the

organization, Shell would be helping to protect itself from a group of actors that could potentially target them.

The previous example of Shell's contributing money to an environmental group clearly illustrates how a funder can consciously guide an environmental group away from taking serious society-altering actions and thus undermine the environmental movement's overarching goal. This guidance, however, is not always so blatant or even intentional, but rather is a result of the structure of funding allocation that is built into our current society. As already explained, the way most funding is currently granted puts limits on how environmental groups can spend their money. Funding is provided for specific projects but not necessarily for the pressing issues in an area. Kate, a young lifelong resident of Newfoundland and local environmental advocate, explained that:

> I find groups work on what they can get some funding for, and so it may not be stuff that's really relative to here or they may be things that might be relative to here but they may be more end of pipe solutions, so things like cleanups rather than stopping pollution in the first place.

Similarly, Bill explained that, because of this funding system, the environmental movement is structured to fight fires rather than dig to the root of the problem. He stated that, "Basically you can fire fight and you can jump from one issue to the other. You fight issues as they come in front of you. But that's not really a good way to work. Hard to get anything done jumping from issue to issue." Thus environmental groups can help to mitigate immediate problems, but cannot do much to strike at the root of the problem. This kind of environmental work constitutes little more than administering bandaids and does little for the overall goal of the environmental movement. Since the structure of

funding is ingrained in and a product of our current social system, environmental groups are automatically affected, regardless of the intentions of the funder. Therefore, although not necessarily a deliberate plan by a specific organization, the funding structure often keeps groups from accomplishing their goals and keeps their action within limits that maintain the status quo.

Clearly funding plays an important role in a group's ability to take action, and the funding available for environmental groups in Newfoundland plays a key role in explaining their responses to the offshore oil industry. While many respondents stated that with further funding they would likely get involved with offshore oil issues, attaining this level of funding is difficult. Not only is this the case because funding for environmental projects as a whole is limited, but also because of the industry's widespread acceptance in this province. Funders from outside the province may not want to become embroiled in a controversial issue. Local funders may not want to support any action that may undermine the industry. Both may have an interest in maintaining the status quo.

People

Lack of funding has implications for other resources needed by environmental groups as well. As noted earlier, one of these implications is that there are few paid staff members within environmental groups, and so volunteers are relied upon to run the organization. However, while respondents praised volunteers for their dedication and passion regarding the issues, relying on them completely to run an organization poses problems to the

group's ability to take action. Thus, examining the issues faced by environmental groups in Newfoundland respecting volunteers is an integral part of explaining how these groups have responded to the offshore oil industry.

One of the most obvious problems with a volunteer-run organization is that it is often difficult to recruit enough members. Respondents explained that generating adequate interest among the general public about environmental issues has been a challenge and may be even more so for issues related to the offshore oil industry. Since individuals often feel that they must choose between jobs and the environment, they may forgo involvement with a group whose activities could interfere with the industry's ability to provide jobs and revenue for the province. Compounding this problem is the historically negative frame associated with environmental groups, which may cause skepticism of their work among the public.

Volunteer recruitment may also suffer in Newfoundland because the general public is unaware of the work being done by environmental groups, or even that they exist. Throughout the interviews it became clear that even people involved with environmental issues were not always aware of what environmental groups were doing. Respondents in environmental groups that had been involved with issues related to the offshore oil industry sometimes claimed to be the only group conducting such work. Also, respondents outside of environmental groups who had worked on environmental offshore oil issues were sometimes unaware of the work being done by environmental groups on similar issues. In fact, some respondents were oblivious to the existence of

environmental groups in this province to begin with. Hanna, who worked in the private sector on offshore oil issues, stated that, "I don't really know of any environmental groups. I've never been contacted by an environmental group." Similarly, Conrad stated that:

> I don't know very much about them [environmental groups] and they're not very highly visible. Like when there are a bunch of oily birds that wash up on the beach and the odd time that the news is talking about this, I don't see any press releases being issued by any Newfoundland environmental groups. They're invisible to me... So it may be entirely my fault. But I think the public might feel in the same position. Environmental groups do not have a very high profile here, other than the St. John's harbor ACAP, which everyone knows about because every time they drive down town...Other than that you don't often hear environmental groups' spokespersons talking in the media.

If environmental groups have such low visibility even among those who work on offshore oil and environmental issues, it is reasonable to assume that people in the wider community may lack knowledge of them as well. Consequently, if individuals in the general public were interested in becoming involved in issues related to the offshore oil industry, they might be unaware of the opportunities that exist. Thus, lack of visibility adds a hurdle to the ability of environmental groups to recruit volunteers from the general public. If offshore oil does not top a group's agenda, there may be insufficient numbers of volunteers in a group to take on this issue.

A third reason that volunteer recruitment may prove difficult in Newfoundland is the lack of urgency surrounding problems associated with the offshore oil industry. Because the oil platforms are hundreds of miles offshore and people are not confronted by them daily, it can be easy to forget their presence. Conrad stated that, "something

that's offshore where it's difficult to see is more difficult for them [the public] to latch onto than something that is on land where people can see it..." Unless there is a major issue covered by the media, such as an oil spill, it is easy for people to ignore the platforms and their potential environmental problems and focus instead on the benefits highlighted by the media.

It is clear that recruiting volunteers is problematic for environmental groups and that this poses challenges for their ability to become involved with offshore oil issues. However, even with adequate numbers of volunteers, it can still be problematic to completely rely on them to run an organization. Volunteers typically have other responsibilities and obligations, such as jobs and families, which may take priority and limit the time they can devote to environmental endeavors. Also, according to key respondents, volunteers involved with one environmental group are likely volunteering in several groups at once. While this can be advantageous because members become familiar with each other, and hence more comfortable working together, it can also contribute to volunteer burnout as volunteers try to take on several projects at once. Therefore, an organization based completely on volunteers runs the risk of lacking continuity and fading over time. Bill explained that the, "ability of volunteers to push issues is limited. It means that if any one person or couple of people drop out or get burned out and have to step away, it can leave a big gap. We're not really on solid ground."

Relying completely on volunteers can also limit the issues on which a group can

become involved. Because volunteers have a variety of backgrounds, groups may lack members with adequate training to work on some of the issues that interest them. This may not matter in some cases, but in others, such as offshore oil, the issues can be quite technical and, without proper knowledge, involvement may prove difficult. While the oil industry can hire people already competent in oil industry issues, volunteers in environmental groups and organizations do not always have the time to learn the necessary information on their own. Consequently, as Jennifer stated, "If you can't spend enough time with something, it's frustrating because you'll never know enough to feel confident. You miss a lot of things that happen that you could have noticed. When you know that it's always frustrating." This imbalance between the expertise of the oil industry and environmental groups creates a challenge for groups interested in fighting the oil industry. They may find it too difficult to construct an argument that would hold up against the 'industry experts'. Hanna, a member of the private sector, explained her frustration when people speak out about an issue without proper information:

> [Nutcases who speak] irritates me to no end. When you work your buns off to get informed on a subject and some Joe blow gets up and spits numbers that don't exist and opinions that have no scientific evidence. He does it why? Because he can. And we have to do everything in our power... it's hard to do damage control on something like that. You can only go back to scientific evidence or information.

Due to the limited time that volunteers can devote to environmental issues, the issues on which they choose to work will likely be those viewed as most likely to succeed. Thus, the way group members perceive their chances for success affects their choices about the issues on which they become involved.

Social movements require people. According to the political opportunities theory, even with just this one resource, movements can be successful. However, with insufficient numbers of volunteers, groups and organizations will find it difficult to accomplish their goals. The fact that environmental groups in Newfoundland have trouble recruiting members means that those they have recruited will likely address projects already begun and which are viewed as having better chances of success.

Organization

Resource mobilization theory emphasizes the importance of social movement organizations in order to explain social movement activity, because resources must be organized before they can be used to accomplish goals. If resources are not organized, they will remain scattered and will accomplish nothing. In order to address the current research problem, it is important to consider organization. In this section I will discus the way both the individual organization of environmental groups and the organization of the environmental movement as a whole have affected how environmental groups here have responded to the offshore oil industry.

Bill explained that it was not until the late 1980s to mid 1990s that environmental groups in Newfoundland became organized, including having boards of directors and staff members. This kind of organizational structure can help groups gain strength by allowing them to be more focused and unified in their action. However, it can also limit them from pursuing certain projects because, regardless of which issues individual members may want to pursue, it is often the board of directors that makes the final

decision. Illustrating this, when asked whether he thought his group would continue work on offshore oil issues, Phillip stated that it "depends on who is on executive and who remains active in organizations."

Organization can also influence what resources are available to groups. Larger groups with many members often have a greater stock of resources. This is sometimes because they have a larger national counterpart that provides support, both financially and in terms of information and expertise. Thus, being tied to a national organization saves a provincial group both time and other resources because they do not have to start from scratch with each new campaign. Claire explained the benefits of being associated with a larger organization:

> Having the strength of the American organization behind you, you can do a lot of things that wouldn't be feasible otherwise because they respond on a financial basis. If I had to fund raise my salary and for projects, it wouldn't have worked. So this has given a little more leeway financially to tie us over. It gets the project running sometimes.

Similarly, Carson explained how other chapters of his organization have helped the Newfoundland branch:

> Then the chapter has an Atlantic chapter. They've been good. I've got a lot of help from Meredith who works there. Anytime you've got a problem she'll know the answer. Saves you having to reinvent the wheel. And she knows people. That's a resource too. That's what the idea of it is. To be able to network with different people. It's amazing. Talking to other people representing groups in New Brunswick, Nova Scotia, and it's exactly the same issues, not exactly...but very similar. And there has been the same sort of responses from local politicians. You can share experiences with those who have gone through this kind of stuff who are trying to raise these issues. It's very useful. You're not as isolated.

On the other hand, smaller completely local groups must be more self reliant, finding

independent funding and doing research for their projects. This requires far more money and volunteer time than if a larger organization were supporting them. Thus, it is these smaller groups that have a greater risk of fading over time. Ken had recently begun working with a local group with a national counterpart and stated that he hoped this would lead to further opportunities and a more permanent organization in the province.

Although several respondents claimed that there was good communication among environmental groups in the province, this did not seem to hold true with regard to the offshore oil industry. Respondents' comments regarding how groups had responded to the oil industry predominantly fell into three categories: a) they were the only group involved in these issues, b) they were not involved and knew only one group that was, or c) they were not involved and no other groups were either. Although there were very few groups that had been active in offshore oil issues, they did not seem particularly aware of each other's actions or interests. Respondents throughout the environmental community expressed concerns about the industry and even stated their interest in increasing involvement with these issues. However, lack of communication among groups with similar interests may be leading to less activity than there could be. Because groups are unaware of their mutual interests, they do not see the potential to build coalitions and pool resources to take action on these issues. This lack of communication and fragmentation among groups could be due to the limited availability of resources. Resources allow groups both to become more visible and to track the activities of other groups.

According to the resource mobilization theory, it is the availability and organization of resources, including people and funding, that can explain social movement activity. It is clear that resources play a significant role in the activities of environmental groups in Newfoundland. Among these resources, funding posed the largest barrier because there is so little of it, it is difficult to get, and because it is usually allotted to specific projects. Groups tend to follow the funding and, as a result, their actions are to some extent, guided. This not only means that relevant local issues may not be addressed, but also that environmental actions move away from anything that disrupts the status quo. Finding sufficient numbers of volunteers also posed problems for groups. People are the basis of volunteer organizations, and without them other resources cannot be used. Finding volunteers specifically interested in offshore oil issues could prove even more difficult because of how the industry is framed in the province. People may choose not to get involved with these issues because they want the industry's economic benefits and think that they have to choose between jobs and the environment. Thus, clearly, the availability and organization of resources plays a significant role in explaining the environmental movement's response to the offshore oil industry in Newfoundland. However, it is still only part of the picture.

3. Political opportunities

Political opportunities theory takes the study of social movements outside of the group to examine the political and social structures within which groups act. This external political environment provides groups with both opportunities and hindrances to action. However,

any objective opportunities that exist must be subjectively perceived before they can be taken advantage of. Even when opportunities exist, if they are not viewed as opportunities by group members they will not be pursued. Meyer states that, "opportunities must be perceived in order to be meaningful, and the perceptions of opportunities are culturally constructed" (Meyer 2002:15). Similarly, McAdam explains that, "The fact that groups fail to exercise this potential much of the time is more often attributable to their shared perception of powerlessness" (1982:31). Thus, perceived opportunities are a significant factor in explaining how the Newfoundland environmental movement has responded to the offshore oil industry. As previously explained, the individual theories used in this research do not work in isolation, and this will become especially clear in this section. The opportunities perceived by respondents were noticeably influenced both by how issues were framed and the resources available to them.

Opportunities resulting from position in society

A person's position or role in society can provide specific opportunities for her/him and thus for the group in which she/he works. For example, people in government have opportunities that members of environmental groups do not, and vice versa. Government has access to greater resources, in addition to the power to make changes to laws and regulations. On the other hand, the government is restricted by these laws and regulations and therefore it cannot always act on the same opportunities available to environmental groups. Charles suggested that his government job limited his opportunity to comment

critically on the offshore oil industry. He explained that several years ago he felt more free to speak out, but that now he feels unable to criticize the industry even as an individual or member of an environmental group. Lou, a member of government, explained that environmental groups have a specific role in society, particularly because they can say and do things that government cannot. He stated that:

> We deal with things within legislation. And we can move things up the line within our own departments, but we can't go out in the media and discuss certain things that happen. Interest groups are not bound by the same rules. Not to say they would stretch the truth, but they can put their own flare to a situation and present it much more different than I could as a civil servant. I have to deal with all of the facts vs. personal opinion and everything else. And sometimes interest groups don't necessarily deal with facts. They can present ideas as they see fit. And that can serve a role as well, because it can increase the profile of an issue, rightly or wrongly. It gets the politicians' interest and catches their eye if it's in the evening news. As I mentioned, interest groups don't always stick to the facts. They slant it more by personal opinion, which may be totally not based on facts. And being a government civil servant, when you present the facts, that may conflict with their personal opinion. They may not accept it even though you've put the science in front of them to disagree with what they're saying.

This respondent offers an important point. While many environmental groups attempt to gain headway by focusing on the scientifically proven facts of an issue, others make use of emotion. For instance, the Greenpeace anti-seal hunting campaign made heavy use of seal images that were intended to induce an emotional response from the public. Although not necessarily based on fact, this strategy was effective in recruiting supporters for the campaign. However, according to Lou, the government cannot use such strategies and is bound by "the facts". Although environmental groups are sometimes frowned upon or even discredited for tapping emotion, Lou accepted that this strategy has its place.

Academics and others with expertise in offshore oil also provided opportunities for environmental groups that otherwise could not easily be taken. Greg, a university professor who was involved with several environmental organizations, explained that, "I'm in kind of a strange situation in that I study what I do in terms of a volunteer and I volunteer what I study. We in university have resources and can help. We can't do these things for them but we can help them." Simon, another professor, believed that his university position provided him with opportunities to comment on the oil industry because his livelihood was independent from it. He received no money from the oil industry and so felt free to criticize it. He stated that, "It's only because, I think, I'm a tenured professor at MUN. I don't have to take that route. I'm not a consultant. I don't have to make my living getting money from those oil companies."

The opportunities available to different groups in society, such as government, environmental groups, or the private sector, are affected by the role these groups play in society as well as the roles of the individuals within them. For instance, the expertise brought to an environmental group by a university professor can allow it to take opportunities that would otherwise not likely have been available. Groups of actors, whether environmental, government, or private sector, have different opportunities available to them to further their goals based on who is part of their group. However, the make-up of a group is influenced by other factors, such as resources, and these factors can create a power imbalance. For instance, because oil companies have vast resources, they can hire experts who may be much more knowledgeable than someone volunteering

for an environmental group. As noted earlier, feeling that one's argument will not be taken seriously may discourage some people from getting involved in action. Furthermore, if people feel that they have nothing to contribute to a group, for instance if they do not have particular skills or knowledge, they may not join.

Opportunities with government

Because most respondents believed that it was government's responsibility to create and enforce legislation regarding the offshore oil industry, it follows that groups concerned about the environmental impacts of the industry would lobby the government. However, whether or not they do this is affected by how they perceive available opportunities. Although respondents generally accepted that opportunities to express their concerns about the oil industry to the government existed, they were not necessarily convinced that it was worthwhile to take them.

One of the government-provided opportunities for groups in Newfoundland to become involved in offshore oil issues is the intervener funding program, through which the government provides money for third parties to comment on the environmental assessments of the offshore projects. This opportunity is the result of the Canadian Environmental Assessment Agency (CEAA) regulations regarding major projects. Thomas explained the opportunity provided by these regulations:

> If the project is big enough it becomes a Canadian Environmental Assessment Agency (CEAA) project, which means it's handled by Ottawa and not just by the local environmental agency. So these [offshore oil projects in Newfoundland] were large enough that they were under CEAA. And what CEAA allowed them to do was that they had money for interveners. Environmental groups are typically

> high in motivation and low in funding here. So this is a real chance for them to organize the research they need to try to speak up in ways that are effective because they are based upon sound information.

Government intervener funding provided an opportunity for some groups to act in response to an issue that concerned them. Phillip stated that his group had discovered the funding at a time when members were just becoming interested in offshore oil and thus it provided them a chance to get involved:

> I think it goes back to Terra Nova. We contemplated it and a few were concerned with what seemed to be quite a cavalier attitude toward oil development. And regulations in Newfoundland were far behind in the North Sea or Gulf of Mexico. We started trying to find out what's going on, what regulations were. And someone noted that there was a sum of money set aside for people to assess proposals for offshore. So we applied for examination of environmental assessments and we did a fairly thorough job of trashing the original proposals.

Most groups that took advantage of this funding could do so because they had expertise, mostly academic, available within their group. This expertise could also provide the opportunity for groups to submit other comments, either as written documents or speeches at public hearings. However, due to the complicated nature of many offshore oil issues, groups without such expertise may not be able to take such opportunities. Heather explained that:

> You need experts to examine oil spill monitoring, etc. There are pieces [of information] the public could understand pretty easily and try to get information on oil pollution issues if available. It's hard for environmental groups to get into it because you need an expert who can then explain it to others.

Similarly, Craig stated that:

> To get involved meaningfully you need the right people. There's this opportunity/problem/question. We've got this pool of people, let's put the two together. But just sort of members of the public, it's not that easy for them to get

involved simply because the issues are extremely complicated.

However, barriers to such resources as intervener funding still existed for those groups with expertise available. Regardless of intellectual resources, with inadequate supplies of other resources, groups may still lack the ability to take certain opportunities. For instance, despite academic involvement, if these academics were too busy with other projects, they may not have adequate time to prepare comments. Craig explained that the obstacles were:

> time, just time. Because even now you've got to fit it in between the cracks and sometimes there's time for that and sometimes there's not. Even this last project, we were up until 1:00, 2:00 getting it ready to get into the CNOPB. It's like, on top of everything else, you have to do it.

Although the intervener funding program provided an opportunity for groups to receive funding for commenting on offshore oil issues (probably one of the only such opportunities available), it also forced these comments to remain within specific parameters. Groups had little choice regarding the nature of their responses because they were restricted to discussing a document that essentially took development for granted. Therefore, although intervener funding led to environmental groups' involvement in offshore oil issues, it cannot be taken as an indication that the environmental movement with regard to the oil industry has been particularly active. In fact, I would argue the opposite. Groups taking this money were participating in an activity that had no chance of raising fundamental critical issues and instead only helped to maintain the status quo.

Another issue to consider regarding a group's ability to take available opportunities, such as commenting on the offshore oil industry, is access to information.

As explained in part one of this chapter, many respondents felt that the available information about the offshore oil industry was inadequate. This included specific details of oil spills, such as who was responsible, the amount spilled, and where and when it was spilled. While current regulations require oil companies to submit these data, the public cannot access them specifically. There were also complaints that current regulations did not require adequate baseline data collection prior to the building of offshore structures. Lacking adequate information is problematic if groups are interested in assessing the impacts of the industry on the environment because it limits groups to very general arguments that may not stand up against those posed by the resource-rich oil industry. Thus, lack of information may deter groups from getting involved in offshore oil issues in the first place.

Although several groups and individuals participated in either the government's intervener funding program or another form of public comment, many expressed doubt as to whether the government seriously considered their recommendations. Therefore, although opportunities existed, respondents did not necessarily perceive them as worth taking. For instance, Phillip stated that:

> We have had regular meetings with ministers of the environmental and parks and resource development. We try to meet with them occasionally when we can or have issues we think warrants. They are always very pleasant, but it doesn't mean anything comes of it. But politicians generally are pleasant. When you meet with ministers they are always pleasant and they profess to be listening and say they'll consider written things. But how do you know? If nothing happens does that mean that they weighed your contribution or tossed it? How do you know? You don't.

Charles described an experience in which he had made suggestions at a public hearing,

and had been assured that they would be incorporated into plans, but later concluded that this never occurred. Similarly, other respondents felt that documents submitted to the government were simply thrown aside and ignored. Jonathan also explained an experience in which the government solicited his input, but never made use of his suggestions:

> The question is will they listen to what we say? What will they do with it from there? Who looks at it? I don't know. Maybe they put it in the outhouse. I don't know what they're using it for. But it doesn't seem to be used at this point for anything that we've asked them to use it for.

Thus, it seems that the government provides opportunities for groups to supply input on offshore oil, but that these opportunities are closed-ended: there is an opportunity to open the door, but on the other side there is just a brick wall. Some respondents suggested why this might be the case, and their comments again indicate the importance of the dominant frame regarding the oil industry. Phillip explained that:

> Often you are having to change minds that are already made up and that's hard. Particularly with offshore, the state of mind seems to be that we want to develop offshore and get as much income as we can to get out of the current financial crisis.

Likewise, Kelly explained that the interests of government were heavily influenced by the industry. The government wants development and this is reflected in its actions. She stated that:

> The powers that be tend to favor them [oil companies] because there's so much money involved - tax revenues. You don't like treading on the toes of major political parties and donors. Danny Williams is the hero of Newfoundland because he's gotten some concessions out of Newfoundland. So it's hard on that level getting up and lobbying for these types of things. It's what has to be done. In Newfoundland it's hard to do because you're going to take a lot of flak.

Similarly, Heather commented that the government's current preoccupation with oil industry development restricts opportunities:

> Because of the joint federal-provincial thing in Newfoundland, when you're trying to get information the only person you can complain to is the Minster of Natural Resources who has a complete interest in the oil industry. There is no one to go to like the auditor general.

The experiences that environmentalists have had with the government regarding offshore oil issues have shaped their perceptions about the value of getting involved. The previous statements reveal that respondents understood the large power imbalance between their interests and the interests of the government in promoting development. Thus, they felt that involvement on a government level would do little good. Bill stated that:

> One of the concerns in any environmental work is the big imbalance between views of what we might bring to the table as a community group with a couple hundred members in our organization and a board of directors and a few staff that work on an issue versus your big multi mega corporation. There's a serious power imbalance and those power imbalances are at the table everywhere that we work.

Bill explained that, even if environmental groups were given the chance to get involved, it would make little difference. He stated that:

> In the offshore I would imagine that in terms of the politics of decision making processes, if an NGO had the opportunity to get involved in it, I would be surprised if it were given the opportunity to have real influence on decision making processes in terms of defining sensitive marine areas where offshore oil exploration and drilling and development would be put off limits. I'm sure it would be a big racket.

Mark, a student involved with several environmental groups, explained the attitude engendered by these experiences. He explained that:

> It's seen as too big of a fight, a fight that can't be won in Newfoundland, because so many people are in support of the jobs created and the money created by the industry. And I think it's seen that with the resources and the support that exists right now, that maybe smaller battles can be won at this point. I think it's too intimidating for people because benefits do exist from the industry that would be too hard to fight.

Although this does not mean that groups will not attempt involvement with the government if the opportunities exist, they may not continue to take them in the future if they continuously feel that it is not worth the effort.

Conclusion

After having examined the findings in the context of the relevant theoretical perspectives, I will now briefly return to the theoretical framework from chapter two, in which I argued that framing, resource mobilization, and political opportunities were all necessary to understand the environmental movement's response to the offshore oil industry in Newfoundland. The relationships between theories have at times throughout this chapter become evident because it is often impossible to discus one factor within the confines of only one theory. However, it is worth discussing how some of the most significant findings fit within the combined theoretical approach and what implications this has had and will continue to have on the actions taken by environmental groups. In this way we can view the situation of Newfoundland as a whole and make sense of the current environmental movement's response to the offshore oil industry.

Framing theory states that people must share optimism regarding a problem's solution before they will take action to address it. In Newfoundland, there are several

factors that have hindered group members from sharing optimism regarding their ability to campaign successfully against the offshore oil industry. The first is that the dominant frames concerning both the oil industry and the environmental movement have significantly hindered optimism about such action. The oil industry is framed as a saviour in Newfoundland, a view shared not only by the general public, but by the government as well. This frame is evident and acted upon throughout society, both socially and in government policies, making it difficult for other views to come forward. Environmental groups, while not completely opposed to this frame, do not agree with its unconditional acceptance of the offshore oil industry and instead question this industry's current and future management. Because there is a conflict between the dominant frame and the views of environmental groups, these groups would likely have a difficult time gaining public support for a campaign against the interests of the oil industry. Although groups could attempt a frame alignment strategy so that the public would be more inclined to support their actions, group members often felt that this would be too difficult because of the widespread support for the industry. Contributing to this perception is the fact that many respondents thought that environmental groups were also hindered by some members of the publics' views about environmental groups, i.e., that their actions will cost the province jobs and take away people's means of supporting themselves.

The experiences that group members had with government also influenced their perceptions about the possibilities for success in issues related to the offshore oil industry. Respondents felt that although the responsibility lies with the government to

ensure the protection of the environment from the offshore oil industry, it was not doing this satisfactorily. Therefore, respondents believed that environmental groups should pressure government to do its job better. While many acknowledged that opportunities were available to do this, such as through intervener funding, meeting with members of government, and preparing written or oral comments, they did not feel optimistic that taking these actions would lead to any changes. It was often implied that this was because the government supports the dominant frame and already had its mind made up about how development would proceed. Thus, opportunities existed, but they were not necessarily viewed as opportunities worth taking. This contributed to a feeling among respondents that taking on offshore oil issues would be too big a fight to be successful.

The previous examples illustrate the perception among environmental groups that the power imbalance between themselves and the interests represented by the dominant frame were too great; groups felt that taking on offshore oil issues would be far too difficult. Because of this perception, many opportunities that were available were not necessarily seen as opportunities by groups and so were not taken up. Although these perceptions were influenced by the dominant frame, all the factors (frames, resources, and opportunities) are constantly interacting and thus perceptions about opportunities can change if any of the other factors change. For instance, many respondents who were concerned that the fight against the industry would be difficult, also believed that with further resources they might be more successful; with additional resources the power imbalance could shift in their favor and allow them to be more successful. Thus, more

resources would change group members' perceptions, make them feel more optimistic about their ability to succeed, and so cause them to become more inclined to take opportunities that had not previously seemed open to them.

Although more resources could change perceptions and thus action, the reality described by respondents was that resources are difficult to come by, particularly funding. Not only was funding hard to acquire, but even if it were acquired, it would likely be for the specific project the funding agency wishes to undertake. In Newfoundland, one of the only sources of funding specifically for issues related to offshore oil is the government's intervener funding program. Although many groups would ideally have liked to see considerable changes in the way the offshore industry is managed, the intervener funding did not provide for this. Instead, it provided the opportunity to comment on a document that assumed development would proceed in a certain way and this was not a receptive venue for alternative views to be expressed.

Although political opportunities theory argues that opportunities are available for groups with few resources, environmental groups in Newfoundland did not perceive these opportunities, and this posed further limitations on their ability to act. This was the case not only because it meant that alternative opportunities would not be taken, but also because groups' perceptions that funding was required for them to act led them to "follow the funding", which forced them to play by the funders' rules and thus lose a degree of control over their actions. However, if they perceived alternative opportunities, they would have more freedom to pursue their preferred interests. Because the intervener

funding was an opportunity regarding offshore oil, and because interested groups were unlikely to get other funding for such work, several groups took this opportunity. Consequently, the bulk of action taken so far in Newfoundland has been guided by the interests and ideology of the government, which prioritizes development. The implication of the current Newfoundland situation is that the little action that is taking place is being guided toward the status quo, with few opportunities for action being perceived that would interfere with the current operations of the oil industry. This is problematic because the environmental movement as a whole is trying to change the status quo. Thus, the Newfoundland environmental movement may be experiencing a situation such as described by Ramos:

> there is debate over whether organizations mobilize people to act contentiously or instead to participate in dominant institutions. Piven and Cloward (1991), for example, caution that formal organizations get co-opted and generate greater participation in the polity, rather than contentious action against it. These concerns are echoed by a number of people who look at the role civil society plays in stable states. These researchers associate the presence of organizations and their resources with greater participation in dominant institutions rather than protest (cf. Fukuyama, 1995; Putnam, 2000). As a result, although resource mobilization may lead to contention, it may also contribute to incorporation into dominant political processes.(2006:213).

Despite the interest and concern about the offshore oil industry among respondents, this concern clearly has not led many groups to take actions directly against the industry. The situation, as it stands in the province, leaves one feeling discouraged at the possibility of more radical and significant changes being implemented with regard to the offshore oil industry. However, as reiterated throughout this thesis, frames, resources, and political opportunities are constantly interacting to make up the present situation, and

exploring these interactions can not only help explain the current situation, but suggest possibilities for change as well. I have already discussed how changes in available resources, specifically funding, can alter perceptions regarding possibilities for success. However, as also discussed, because the funding structure is already in place and groups act within it, there is little they can do to change this situation.

Kurzman, however, describes another possibility for altering perceptions regarding opportunities that may prove a more useful and attainable strategy in this province. He explains that:

> Individuals are more likely to participate in the protest movement when they expect large number of people to participate. The critical mass approach implies that individuals calculate opportunities, not simply in terms of changes in the structure of the state...but primarily in terms of the strength of the opposition [environmental groups] (1996:154).

Kurzman explains that regardless of whether there are actual changes in objective opportunities, perceptions of these opportunities can change if individuals come to feel that a cause has gained support. When individuals feel that a cause has become stronger, they see opportunities they had not previously seen and are more likely to act on them. This can eventually lead to the actual opportunities changing. Similarly, Gamson and Meyer state that movement activists':

> job is to convince potential challengers that action leading to change is possible and desirable. By influencing perceptions of opportunity among potential activists, organizers can actually alter the material bases of opportunity (1996:286).

Environmental action could expand in response to the offshore oil industry in Newfoundland if environmental groups felt that the cause had gained support. Although

nearly all respondents were concerned with the environmental effects of the offshore oil industry, they were not particularly aware that others interested in environmental issues shared these concerns. If people do not feel that there is enough support regarding an issue, they will not likely become involved with it because it would be too big to tackle alone. However, through better organization and communication, interested individuals could become aware of others with similar interests. Connecting with others and knowing that there is a wider concern could lead people to see and take opportunities that had previously not seemed open to them. Interested individuals might then see opportunities for pooling resources, forming coalitions, or starting a group devoted to offshore oil. When interested individuals have organized themselves and their interests into a group, their perceptions about the strength of the opposition may change because they are now strong and can take action. They could then move to the streets or use the media to attempt one of the frame alignment processes discussed in chapter two. This could help them to gain more public support. It is in this way that the environmental movement may still have some influence on the offshore oil industry in Newfoundland.

Chapter 7: Conclusion

The offshore oil industry in Newfoundland and Labrador has brought with it a new hope for the people of the province. The long history of a struggling economy, on top of the closing of the cod fishery in 1992, left a void in the economy that many had hoped would be filled by the oil industry. Over the years, the industry has clearly brought changes to the province, boosting GDP and providing some employment. However, along with these economic benefits, there is the reality that the oil industry now operating in Newfoundland has been responsible for environmental disasters and degradation worldwide. This is often overlooked in Newfoundland as people focus on the industry's giant pocketbook. Even environmental groups, which have taken on the industry around the world, have done only cursory work on the issues in this province.

This research has addressed the apparent lack of action taken by environmental groups in Newfoundland in response to the offshore oil industry and has sought to explain the action that has and has not taken place. In other words, the purpose of this research has been to explore how the environmental movement, which exists on a worldwide scale, has emerged in Newfoundland in response to the offshore oil industry. This has required investigating what factors, specific to this place, have influenced and shaped this emergence. The investigation was based on a theoretical framework that combined theories of framing, resource mobilization, and political opportunities. Although sometimes used on their own to explain social movements, I have argued that using them together provides the best approach to explaining social movement activity in

Newfoundland. Data were gathered through thirty-seven interviews which were conducted with people involved with environmental issues in the province. This included individuals, as well as members of environmental groups, government, industry, and the private sector. Questions revolved around ascertaining how frames, resources, and political opportunities have impacted environmental groups' responses to the offshore oil industry. Interviews were semi-structured, making use of open-ended questions in order to give respondents the opportunity to provide in-depth information about the factors influencing their actions.

Clearly, environmental groups in Newfoundland were concerned about the impacts of the offshore oil industry on the environment. Although essentially all respondents agreed that the industry was currently a necessary and beneficial aspect of the provincial economy, they also believed it should be managed differently so as to better protect the environment. This not only included more stringent regulations and enforcement regarding oil spills and pollution, but also more government transparency. Groups wanted greater access to the information they need to properly assess what impacts the industry is having on the environment. However, groups also advocated more radical changes, such as using current oil revenues to plan for a future without oil. Clearly there is concern about environmental impacts among groups, but there is also a great deal standing in the way of their taking significant action.

The environmental movement in Newfoundland faces several obstacles that limit the actions that are both possible and taken by groups. The dominant frame regarding the

industry is a significant force in the province and shapes groups' perceptions about their ability to gain public support for oil industry campaigns. Compounding this problem is that many respondents also believe that some of the public may not support environmental groups in general, regardless of the issue, because of Greenpeace's anti-seal hunt campaign. Both of these perceptions contribute to the idea that groups would not be successful in taking action against the offshore oil industry. Respondents did feel that with further resources, specifically funding, they could be more successful in taking on the industry. However, acquiring further funding for any project in this province is difficult, and because of the way funding is allocated, environmental groups' actions are channeled away from anything that might threaten the status quo. Environmental groups and organizations in Newfoundland would likely find it difficult to acquire funding for a project that had, at its core, altering the current development strategy for offshore oil in the province.

Although the current situation looks grim based on all of the challenges faced by environmental groups, there is still hope. As described earlier, this research is based on a theoretical framework that incorporates framing, resources, and political opportunities, and argues that all three are necessary to understand the current situation in Newfoundland. Although exploring the current state of Newfoundland in the context of these theories can shed light on some discouraging factors, it can also suggest avenues for change. All three theories and their corresponding factors are constantly interacting. A change in one factor can lead to a change in the others and thus alter both the objective

opportunities for success as well as perceptions about the opportunities for success.

Before starting this research I had expected to find that members of environmental groups were concerned about the environmental impacts of the offshore oil industry in Newfoundland. However, this expectation was based on my own background with environmental groups in Maine, as well as my study of the environmental movement throughout my university education. While I was correct that there were concerns, I had anticipated finding a greater amount of criticism of the oil industry and hence activism against it. In retrospect, this idea now seems naive to me. The economy of this province has been so troubled, and its people so stigmatized throughout the country, that it is not hard to understand why there seems to be near universal support for the offshore oil industry. This case study of the Newfoundland environmental movement has illustrated that part of Ziraksadeh's definition of a social movement in which he explains that social movements are heterogeneous entities. People often base their ideas about the environmental movement on well known campaigns and how the movement has become manifest in well known places. However, the environmental movement appears in different ways throughout the world: different people involved, different specific campaigns, and different tactics all make up this heterogeneous movement. The environmental movement in each location is embedded in social structures and local cultures and thus manifests itself in different ways throughout the world.

Areas for further research

Throughout this research several issues have arisen that could serve as the basis for further research. First, this research has opened the door for comparative work. This case study has looked specifically at the environmental movement in Newfoundland. However, addressing the movement in Newfoundland has required a broader exploration of the barriers that apply to other kinds of groups as well. Further research could be conducted in which the barriers faced by environmental groups in Newfoundland are compared to the barriers in other locations and for other kinds of social movements. This may provide a better understanding about the influence the specific place and its history has on the ability of groups to form successful social movements.

The second area in which further research would be valuable is the actual versus perceived ideas regarding the public's view about the offshore oil industry and the environmental movement. Throughout this research, respondents voiced their belief that the public would not support a campaign against the offshore oil industry. They also stated their belief that 'environmentalist' was a word with negative associations. These were the perceptions of respondents. In the context of this research, it was these perceptions that were important because they determined and shaped action; regardless of what the public may actually think about environmental groups and campaigns against the oil industry, what mattered were the respondent's perceptions. It would be interesting and useful to explore how correct respondents were in their assumptions about the public's views. What does the public really think of environmental groups, and would

they support action against the industry? Research on these issues would reveal the extent to which environmental groups are taking advantage of existing opportunities for action. It could also demonstrate more convincingly the importance and influence that perceptions have on action. For instance, if the public were actually more supportive than environmental groups thought, we would see potential for greater action that was being stunted by false perceptions.

A third area for further research is an exploration of the funding situation in Newfoundland. Many respondents suggested that funding was a major barrier, and that obtaining funding was a factor keeping them from becoming involved with offshore oil issues. It was also explained that any funding that was available for environmental groups was often not for projects which they had chosen. Thus, further research could explore the objective situation regarding funding by looking at what funding opportunities are available and for what kinds of projects. This could then be compared to what environmental groups would ideally like to have funded. Looking at the overlap in these two areas would provide a better understanding of how much environmental groups are being guided by their current sources of funding and how many, if any, of their original goals they are achieving.

Policy implications

The offshore oil industry in Newfoundland is now an established part of the province and the government hopes that it will fuel the economy well into the future. Because of society's current dependence on fossil fuels, it is likely that the industry in Newfoundland

will continue to be developed. The following are policy recommendations based on this assumption.

First, it is imperative that proper environmental studies are done on the offshore environment. This includes studies of the ocean environment prior to a field's being developed, as well as continuous studies of the area after development and production have begun. Such information would provide the opportunity to study the impacts of the industry on the offshore environment. It would also provide the opportunity to study the cumulative environmental effects of offshore projects on the environment. Ignoring cumulative effects and addressing only the environmental issues associated with a particular project should not be tolerated. Only with continuous monitoring over time can the real impacts of the industry be known.

Second, there must be independent monitors posted offshore. These monitors should be trained to look for environmental or wildlife effects from the industry as well as any oil that may have been spilled into the ocean water. It is not acceptable to allow oil companies, who have an interest in not reporting problems, to monitor their own activity. Their self interest is too great and thus they cannot be expected to volunteer all relevant information. All spills and environmental damage must be documented and submitted to the proper authorities. Furthermore, any information gathered by independent monitors, as well as any information provided to the CNLOPB about environmental problems, must be accessible to the public. This would allow citizens, scientists, and environmental groups to assess and comment on the environmental effects of the industry. It would also

provide the opportunity for the offshore situation to be assessed by an independent third party rather than simply by government and oil companies, both of whom have an interest in developing the offshore in the current manner. A third party may also recognize a problem that was overlooked by others.

Finally, the government needs to implement more long-term strategies and goals with regard to the offshore oil industry. This would include a way of ensuring that the economy does not deteriorate again when the oil industry is gone. Oil revenues should be invested in economic activities that are long-term, environmentally friendly, and economically beneficial to the province. This could include focusing on the local level by helping communities make full use of their individual strengths and resources. Based on these policy suggestions, the offshore oil industry, although perhaps not ideal for the province, could provide economic and social benefits for the people of the province currently, as well as into the future.

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Appendix One:
Interview Schedule

A. Individual Background:

I would like to begin by getting some information about your individual background and your role in the group/organization with which you work.

1) How long have you been working with this group/organization?
2) Do you have a particular position or role?
3) Is it paid or volunteer?
4) What are your main duties and responsibilities?

B. The offshore oil industry in Newfoundland:

In this section I would like to ask you some questions about the offshore oil industry in Newfoundland.

1) What is the first thing that comes to your mind when I mention the offshore oil industry in Newfoundland? Just briefly.
2) Do you think there are benefits associated with the offshore industry's presence in the province? If so, please explain.
3) Do you think there are problems associated with the offshore oil industry's presence in the province? If so, please explain.
4) Do you think there are environmental problems associated with the presence of the offshore oil industry in the province? If so, please explain.

5) Do you think that government regulations regarding the offshore industry are adequate? If not, please explain.
    i. What kinds of changes would you like to see implemented?
    ii. Whose responsibility is it to make these changes?
6) How strong do you think the environmental movement is in Newfoundland? (Is it a fairly active community? Is it very vocal? Is it very effective?).

C. Environmental Groups and the offshore oil industry:

Now I would like to specifically discuss your group/organization's response to the offshore oil industry.

7) Is your group directly involved with environmental issues associated with the offshore oil industry? If yes, go to question 8. If no go to question 15.
8) Please briefly explain the group/organization's involvement with environmental issues relating to the offshore oil industry.
9) Have you or your organization encountered (problems, difficulties, resistance) to working on this issue? If so, please explain.
10) Would you or your organization be able to accomplish more if you had more resources, such as more money, volunteers or staff, etc.? Please explain.

11) Would you or your organization be able to accomplish more if the political structure/situation were different in Newfoundland? (If there were more opportunities for your group to become politically involved). Please explain.

12) What about culture? Does this influence your ability to accomplish more? If so, how?

13) Are there other factors that would cause your groups involvement to change?

14) Do you find that you are able to adequately inform the public about the offshore issues on which your group/organization works?

15) If no to question 13, what needs to happen in order to change this?

16) Please explain why your group has not become involved with the offshore oil industry.

17) Would your group's involvement in offshore oil issues change if you had further resources? (such as volunteers, staff, etc.) Please explain.

18) Would your group's involvement change if the political situation were different? Please explain.

19) Are there any other factors that would cause your group to become involved in these issues?

D. Current organization:

In this section I would like to get some information about the organization with which you are currently working.

20) In what issues is the group currently involved?

21) What are some of the main strategies used by your group in order of importance? (Such as letter writing, direct action, public education).

22) What kinds of resources are available to the organization? (Probe for: money, volunteers, space, access to media).

23) From where does your group receive funding?

24) What kinds of political opportunities for action are there in Newfoundland?

25) How open is the political situation in Newfoundland for environmental groups to become involved?

26) Are there any structures or political opportunities not open to the group/organization?

27) Who are the group's allies? (Probe: Elite, government, Citizens, media)

E. Organization Background:

In this section I would like to get background information about the organization with which you work.

28) What does your group/organization hope to achieve?

29) Does the group have a formal structure? If yes, please describe. If no how is it organized and responsibilities allocated?

30) How many members are there?

31) How many women vs. men?

32) What is the status/class of people in the group? Professional?

33) Are members locals or province-wide?

34) What are some successes of the group?

35) What are some failures of the group?

Appendix Two
Consent Form

My name is Leah Fusco and I am a graduate student at Memorial University. I am currently conducting interviews as a part of my Masters thesis. This thesis is being conducted under a larger project undertaken by professors in history and sociology and funded by Canada's Independent Humanities and Social Sciences Research Council. Please read the following carefully before deciding whether or not to proceed with this interview.

Purpose of research: The purpose of this research is to explain the extent of the reaction of environmental groups in Newfoundland to the offshore oil industry in the province. It is based on the observation that while the offshore oil industry has developed in recent years, the environmental communities' response to it has not. Therefore, the goal of this research is to explore how environmental groups are responding to the offshore oil industry and why. This will mainly be done through interviews with members of environmental groups in Newfoundland.

The interview process: The interview should take approximately one hour. Your participation is completely voluntary and you may end the interview at any time. You are free to decline answering as many questions as you choose. You may also feel free to suggest any additional information or ask questions as often as you like. All information you provide will be kept strictly confidential unless written permission is obtained from you. Your identity will not be revealed to any organization or appear in any report. If there is a possibility that you can be identified despite my precautions, I will seek your permission before making use of the information in my work. Due to the care taken to preserve anonymity, there should be no harm associated with taking part in this interview.

If you agree to have the interview recorded on tape, the information you provide may be transcribed in whole or part, and used in academic talks or publications. After being transcribed, the tape containing the interview will be erased. The transcript will be kept in a locked filing cabinet accessible only to the co-investigators and their research assistants. When the project is over, the transcription from the tape will be destroyed unless you agree that it may be placed in an archive. If you agree to the interview but not to the tape recording, notes will be taken and retained under the same conditions as for the transcripts. At the end of the project these notes will be destroyed. It is my hope that these assurances of privacy and confidentiality will allow you to provide answers that are as complete as possible.

This project has been certified as meeting appropriate ethical standards by the Interdisciplinary Committee on Ethics in Human Research at Memorial University. If you