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I am submitting herewith a dissertation written by Patricia Allen entitled "Voluntary simplicity: An organizational analysis." I have examined the final copy of this dissertation for form and content and recommend that it be accepted in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy, with a major in Social Work.

Catherine Faver

Catherine Faver, Ph.D., Major Professor

We have read this dissertation
and recommend its acceptance.

Sherry Cable, Ph.D.

Suzanne Kurth, Ph.D.

John Nolt, Ph.D.

Accepted for the Council:

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Dean of the Graduate School

VOLUNTARY SIMPLICITY: AN ORGANIZATIONAL ANALYSIS

A Dissertation Presented for
the Degree of Doctor of Philosophy
The University of Tennessee, Knoxville

Patricia Allen
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DEDICATION

This dissertation is dedicated to my husband, Ron Halcrow, whose support, help and humor have carried me through the writing process. From the coffee he delivered to me at my computer each morning to the unswerving belief in my ability, he has consistently proved to be a most steady and loving companion.

It is also dedicated to my dear friend, Margaret Travinek, who has been my biggest fan for the past fifteen years. She has been a confidant and advisor, always with my welfare as her primary concern. Her version of eighty-four years of living is full of life, humor, hope and spirit.

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ABSTRACT

People who live in the modern western society enjoy the benefits of a "post-modern" life and also reap the negative consequences. Environmental degradation, intrusion of public entities into private life, and alienation are just a few. The purpose of this descriptive study was to analyze organizations that were members of a network promoting voluntary simplicity.

New social movement theory guided this study. A survey was mailed to organizations across the US and 97 were returned. Data analyzed included organizational characteristics, goals, tactics and style of participation. Ideology of organizations and changes over time were also addressed. Specifically, organizations' orientations regarding four issues were studied: expressive/instrumental; fighting intrusion of public entities into private areas of life; prefigurative/active tactical style and the importance of democratic process and member input.

Results indicated that while the organizations used expressive tactics, goals were fairly equally distributed between expressive and instrumental aims. Goals were more focused on addressing social justice issues than preventing intrusion. A prefigurative style was found in the area of tactics. The importance of democratic process and the importance of member involvement were each compared to the importance of outcomes/successes. Democratic process scores were higher than outcome scores, but the difference between the two was not statistically significant; member involvement scores were also higher than outcome scores, but here the difference was found to be statistically significant.

Paired t-tests and the Wilcoxon non-parametric test were used in this study. Organizational characteristics such as age and size (budget, number of employees and number of members) were presented, as well as the presence of a spiritual focus and religious affiliation. Qualitative reports were compiled on ideology and in the area of changes over time.

The findings of this study are important to social work for several reasons. In the area of social change, tactics and organizational functioning are examined. Voluntary simplicity also has implications for individual and community well being.

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LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

GMO	Genetically Modified Organisms
IRB	Institutional Review Board
IWW	International Workers of the World
NSM	New Social Movement
RM	Resource Mobilization
SMO	Social Movement Organization
VS	Voluntary Simplicity
VSO	Voluntary Simplicity Organization

Chapter One

INTRODUCTION

Statement of the Problem

Attempts to live simply have been present in the American landscape since the founding of the country. While there have been studies addressing various aspects of voluntary simplicity, thus far no one has attempted an organizational analysis of the phenomenon. This study proposes to fill this void, using new social movement (NSM) theory as the foundation for the analysis of voluntary simplicity organizations (VSOs).

There is little disagreement that people suffer in various ways as a result of living in a capitalist economic structure. Weber (1930/1996) describes the "iron cage" in which modern workers find themselves entrapped; Marx (1857/1976) deplored the alienation that followed the exploitation of labor. Even "affluent" members of society can find themselves suffering from stress, lack of leisure time, and impoverished relationships (Nolen, 1994). Beyond this consequence of our economic system, however, lie other areas of abuse and distress. Poverty (Bottomore, 1985), homelessness, and hunger are interwoven with capitalism. Environmental degradation accompanies the economic growth that follows from American's consumption habits.

Development, both national and global, is seen as one cause of the problem. Some activists who approve of the capitalist system nevertheless react against the tremendous abuses it creates. These abuses include inequality, poor health, environmental degradation and, when powerful groups seek to earn a profit despite opposition from locals, abuse of human rights. One writer calls the urge toward

development a "revolution from above," meaning that it is led by elites and does not include opinions or input of ordinary people (Horowitz, 1991, p. 357). The costs of development, they claim, are paid for by those at the bottom - the poor and workers. One advocate for simplicity, Tom Bender, referred to workers as "energy slaves," competing with their labor against the cheap work of fossil fuels (Bender, 1977). More recently, with the advent of globalization, it has become obvious that they also compete against each other to determine who will do the work more cheaply. The case of the *maquiladoras* (Mexican factories employing mostly women) is just one example; affluence in the "developed" nations can only be supported through exploitation of workers in the poorer countries.

Voluntary simplicity is one response to this set of conditions. Simplicity has been present in the discourse of the United States since its founding. A brief and selective history of several American versions of simplicity is presented in this paper in order to provide a richer understanding of the importance that simplicity has had in much of the American experience. The ethic has waxed and waned; but its continuous reappearance signifies a belief system that just won't disappear, despite the varying forms it takes. "Puritan simplicity," for example, was part of a an attempt to create a new society while the "Cult of Domesticity" in the early 1800s, was orchestrated to preserve the status quo and systems of domination. In other instances, as with the Nashville Agrarians, the movement has been an attempt to prevent the encroachment of development.

The present day version of simplicity grew out of several movements of the 1960s: the Hippie movement, Feminism, and the Ecology movement. The 1970s saw a proliferation of publications addressing the "new" movement, and in 1981 Duane Elgin published the first book describing the phenomenon, *Voluntary Simplicity* (Elgin, 1981/1993).

Archival sources were used in this study to describe goals and tactics of the modern day variant of simplicity. Social movement theory is useful in this analysis, especially new social movement theory, because it addresses issues that appear to be present in individuals' and organizations' interest in voluntary simplicity.

Since the 1950s, several theories have held dominance in the study of social movements. The social upheaval of the 1960s forced sociologists (many of whom had been active in these movements) to see the phenomenon from a different perspective. Resource mobilization theory and its variant, political process, were born. These theories saw movement emergence and survival as being most affected by financial and political resources and opportunities. The frame alignment theory in the 1980s brought a renewed interest in how people perceive events and in ideologies. In the 1990s, the new social movement theorists articulated a new framework for analyzing social movements. New social movement theory proposed that social movements of the late 20th century were qualitatively different from previous versions in that they arose in reaction to a different set of grievances, held a different mobilization base, and used different, more culturally oriented tactics. This study will rely on new social movement theory in its analysis of these simplicity-focused organizations.

Relatively few studies have attempted to analyze voluntary simplicity. Nolen (1994) looked at personal reasons for involvement, and Moeller (1986) studied migration to rural areas (one in particular) in the search for a simple lifestyle. Scherch (1997) examined the sustainable living movement in Eastern Tennessee, which is to some degree informed by the tenets of voluntary simplicity, while others have looked at these beliefs through the "green consumption movement" (Darnovsky, 1996) and in home economics education (Frazier, 1985). Thus far, no study has examined voluntary simplicity (VS) and its importance for social work; the use of new social movement (NSM) theory in this pursuit is also a new addition.

Purpose of the Study

This study will analyze simplicity-focused organizations using new social movement theory as a framework. Further, historical background is presented in two areas: a selective history of simplicity as a movement in the United States, and a brief "historical situating" of modern conditions surrounding the simplicity of the late twentieth century. The organization will be used as the unit of analysis, and these organizations will be randomly selected from the mailing list of the Center for a New American Dream, a clearinghouse, or umbrella organization, for individuals and organizations interested in simple living.

New social movement theory proposes that social actions of today are different from those of previous time periods. The importance of identity as a reason for participation and the need of organizations to provide a sense of collective identity in order to attract members are main contentions of the theory. Also, the theory proposes

that these social movement organizations will be concerned with protecting individuals and communities from "intrusion" by large, impersonal, "public" entities. It is also claimed that the tactics utilized are different from those of previous eras. "Prefigurative" tactics seek to challenge the status quo more through influencing opinions and adding to the public discourse than by directly challenging powerful public and private entities. New social movement theory suggests that this is the style of tactic relied on today. Finally, the question of style of participation also rests on the issue of identity. When people want to feel a sense of belonging, or collective identity, they may stay involved only if the organizations give them a real sense of involvement, possibly through the use of a more democratic (as opposed to hierarchical) style of functioning.

There are four hypotheses along these lines. If identity is paramount in this movement, we should see an expressive (rather than instrumental) bent, and goals would be focused on preventing public entities from intruding on people's personal life space. An example of this type of goal is found in people's efforts to protect the environment from degradation. Another prediction of new social movement theory is that modern movements have a "prefigurative" style of tactic. This would be found in tactics seeking to change public consciousness and individuals' thinking, rather than the more direct strategies such as attacking public issues through legal means. The last hypothesis seeks to determine if member input and a democratic style are more important in the VS movement than successes/outcomes. Qualitative data on the ideology of the organizations, which would give some insight into the ideology of the entire movement

and social movement sector, are also sought. Finally, changes over time are also examined.

Organizational characteristics will be analyzed in order to categorize them according to several variables: size (measured in terms of budget, membership and number of employees), age, website maintenance and the presence or absence of a spiritual focus will be requested. The mission statements and an open-ended question regarding the importance of voluntary simplicity will be used to understand the ideology behind the organizations. Grievances are examined through a request for goals of the organization and tactics are also considered.

Significance for Social Work

In two ways, this study is important to the field of social work. First, social work has always been a discipline that is concerned with social action and social change. This tradition is one that, like simplicity itself, has appeared in different guises in different historical periods. This study addresses one avenue for social change that may inform social work practice, organizations' concern for social change. The second reason for the importance of this study to social work lies in the area of individual and community well being.

Simplicity as a way of life, as described through archival sources, is in one regard an attempt to empower people to consciously choose the conditions under which they live. Social work has a tradition of empowerment that has reacted to influences existing in each era. This empowerment is the result of an interplay between the power that people hold and the power held by dominant forces in a society (Friere, 1970, cited in

Simon, 1994). These organizations are concerned with both social change and voluntary simplicity, an ethic that addresses individual and community well being, and therefore can offer valuable information for the field of social work.

For some time, one of the controversial issues in social work has been the debate over the profession as being inherently conservative or liberal (Sarri & Meyer, 1992). Some social workers have urged a social reform agenda for the profession while bemoaning the intense focus on psychotherapy and individual interventions (Specht, 1990). Feminist social workers have charged the profession with the task of developing new and increasingly inclusive conceptions of society and our work (Collins, 1986). One fruitful avenue for broadening these conceptions is the inclusion of organizations and social change as an area of study. These organizations may represent a "collective challenge" to the existing social order, particularly where there are issues of unequal distribution of power (Meyer and Tarrow, 1998), and they seek to challenge aspects of the dominant ideology.

Social work itself began with a commitment to social reform and the early social workers addressed larger social issues such as public sanitation, child labor, and inadequate building codes (Trattner, 1994). Immigration, urbanization and industrialization had created significant environmental problems that had consequences for individuals and communities, and social workers strove to articulate the issues of their time in a way that would draw attention to the abuses and also to propose potential solutions.

In the late 1950s, Ralph Pumphrey claimed that social welfare had dual motivations: compassion and protection. The protection he referred to was in the area of seeking change, not only for individual clients, but for the larger community (Pumphrey, 1959/1980). A contemporary of Pumphrey, Clark Chambers, defined three different forms of activity that social workers should engage in to promote these agendas. They are: (1) identifying, analyzing, and interpreting social needs; (2) advancing standards against which public policies are measured, and (3) using special techniques and competence to find an orderly solution to complex problems (Chambers, 1963/1980).

Today's problems are not the same as those that existed at the turn of the century. Certainly poverty, homelessness, racism, and economic inequity existed then as they do at this point in history. Now, however, the landscape that surrounds the individuals affected by these blights is different. Our economic system - capitalism - has continued to create new social problems such as environmental decay while exacerbating existing ones. The immense amounts of money and power that corporations wield are used to lobby for preferential treatment from government. Often, this power results in money being shifted away from public welfare programs and into policies that either overtly or covertly aid large corporations. The "welfare state" is being dismantled; our environment is in danger of being seriously, perhaps irreversibly harmed, and the globalization of the production process oftentimes results in jobs leaving the US and workers in other "peripheral" countries being exploited. Social workers must be flexible and creative in response to these developments, never forgetting our mandate to promote social justice.

According to Simon (1994), recent decades in social work have been informed by a social reform ethic that places the role of "social and organizational reformers" (p. 186) in the foreground for social workers. The use of the ecological perspective, which "offers a conceptual framework that shifts attention from the cause-and-effect relationship between paired variables...to the person and situation as an interrelated whole" (Compton & Galaway, 1994, p. 118), mandates that social workers focus not only on particular clients, but also on the larger social environment. No social work analysis is complete without the inclusion of larger societal arenas that surround our clients, including neighborhood, community and state; even national and international issues are salient. Germain and Gitterman (1980), in urging the profession to rely on the "life model" for practice, extend the focus of social work to both social and physical environments, including problems of both spheres, such as poverty and pollution, which they define as affecting people's adaptive capacities.

As Chambers points out, it is one of the tasks of social work to *identify* needs - as society changes, so do people's problems and needs. The politics of poverty in the United States are about inclusion and exclusion; how goods and risks (including environmental) are distributed is a question of race, class, gender and power. Economic justice is easily recognized as falling within the parameters of social work; environmental justice is beginning to appear as an appropriate area of concern. The National Association of Social Workers has taken a recent stand on environmental issues. A concern about the effects of environmental destruction, particularly on health, oppressed populations, children and social work practice has been articulated (How green is social

work?, 2000). Social Work Speaks reports: "Social workers have always had a special responsibility for the needs of the disadvantaged and oppressed. Given the modern realities and dangers, the environment must be incorporated into the profession's advocacy agenda" (How green is social work?, 2000).

Some authors (Sarri & Meyer, 1992) have charged that social work is inherently conservative, working more toward shoring up the dominant ethic than to empower disenfranchised groups. The Progressive era social workers of the early twentieth century have been described as seeking both social justice and social control (Link & McCormick, 1983). In working for social justice, social workers need to stand somewhat apart from both society and our own work, in order to examine both critically. Only in so doing can we even attempt to ensure that we will be working for empowerment and justice, and not inadvertently (or intentionally) furthering a dominant ethic that remains unjust and non-inclusive. While there is ample evidence for the paternalistic, status quo position of the profession in many instances, the empowerment tradition is equally present and more urgently needed today than ever.

Voluntary simplicity is appropriate for social work study. Salient issues for simplicity adherents include protection of the environment, economic redistribution, defense of the private sphere of life from intrusion by the public and human rights. It is one "orderly solution" that has the potential to effect change in both individuals and in the larger community. Having identified this strategy for change, it is perhaps part of the solution to today's social problems and as such it merits being examined in light of "standards" for public policy and as having potential to meet social needs.

There is a utopian quality to voluntary simplicity, in that the ethic seeks to create an ideal society previously unseen. Utopian communities have been praised for providing a model for a better life (Kanter, 1973). This is a role that social work has played in the past, envisioning such ideals as protection of juveniles in the court system, public sanitation, improved health and mental health services for citizens and the abolition of child labor.

Social work includes an organizational level of practice. Human service organizations are said to be "...viewed as symbols of the caring society, a manifestation of the societal obligation to the welfare and well-being of its citizens" (Hasenfeld, 1992, p. 3). Social workers come into contact with human service organizations on a regular basis in helping individuals to obtain benefits. Oftentimes, social workers are employed by these same organizations, which promote social welfare and at times deter the delivery of services. In working with communities, though, social workers come into contact with a myriad of different organizations, aimed at human service needs, community issues, and change. One social work function is to help coordinate the organization and community macro systems with the individual client system (Kirst-Ashman & Hull, 1997). Since social change is one of the mandates of social work practice, organizations' concern with social change is also significant for the profession. Much has been written for social work on organizations that deliver human services, but there is little information in the profession on social change organizations. This study seeks to begin to bridge this gap in knowledge through an examination of organizations that are

concerned with larger issues of social change and individual well being. The organizations responding to the study represent both concerns.

If our profession is to be more than a handmaiden of the dominant interests promoting social order and harmony, we need to address both the problems caused by our economic system and solutions that arise. The twin goals of social change and individual and community well being are both important for social workers, and this study addresses both of these issues.

Chapter Two

REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE AND ANALYTICAL FRAMEWORK

Introduction

Social movement theory evolves because the old theories are not sufficient in some way. Either social movements themselves change in some qualitative way, or the theories themselves become inadequate because of testing and realization of omissions by other theorists. Social movements in the latter part of the twentieth century are explained by several versions of social movement theory.

This section will present a description of several recent versions of social movement theory. Resource mobilization/political process (RM) social movement theory developed in the US to explain more than the collective behavior model could explain. Framing theory arose in response to what were seen as omissions in the RM model, in that it elevated the importance of ideology and meaning for movement participants. At about the same time as these theories were dominant in the US, a social movement theory which came to be known as New Social Movement theory (NSM) was evolving in Europe. This was in reaction to the previous Marxist theories in use to explain social movements; theorists saw the economic reductionism inherent in the Marxist theory as limiting and therefore unable to fully explain the types of social movements that existed.

Resource Mobilization and Political Process

Tilly (1978) helped to move the field away from focus on social psychological explanations of social movements and toward a view of movements which encompassed the importance of resources and the formation of organized groups. Resource

mobilization (RM) emerged in the 1970s as a major new perspective. McCarthy and Zald (1977) critique their predecessors: "...sociologists, with their emphasis upon structural strain, generalized belief, and deprivation, largely have ignored the ongoing problems and strategic dilemmas of social movements" (p. 1212). They describe the theory as being concerned with the dynamics and tactics of social movement growth, decline, and change, the resources that must be mobilized, the external environment, and tactics by entities outside of the movement to control its behavior (McCarthy and Zald, 1977). Pichardo (1999) comments: "In essence, resource mobilization theory is a search for the rational basis of social movement participation and formation" (p. 96). Buechler (2000) contends that "Resource mobilization theory may be roughly divided into two camps" (p. 35). His classifications include: (1) the entrepreneurial version, which in effect is a melding of economic and organizational theory and (2) the political process version, which emphasizes a study of favorable political opportunities. Both of these approaches explain social movements in terms of the availability of a variety of resources: political, financial, membership availability and others.

One articulation of the entrepreneurial version of the theory is attributed to the work of John McCarthy and Mayer Zald (1977). They sketch the "emerging" perspective in three areas. First, they contend that underlying grievances are always present in society, and therefore, are not seen as important factors in mobilization, and that support may come from both believers and non-believers in the cause. Second, they focus on social movement organizations, which they contend must deal with a number of simultaneous tasks: mobilization, dealing with the external environment, and achieving

goals through tactics. Third, the authors emphasize the importance of communication with the society surrounding the social movement and organization (McCarthy & Zald, 1977). The salient point for this study is the first one – that grievances may or may not be present. As Buechler puts it, the theory oversimplifies the role of grievances, and downplays the role of ideational factors in general. The reality is more likely that grievances need some organization in order to become a social movement, and that social movements need grievances.

In fact, grievances, along with values and ideology, were all relegated to at best a marginal place (Ferree, 1992). All societies engender many grievances, RM theorists contended: they are the result of structural conflicts. As a "given," grievances were not seen as important; rather, the important factors for the RM theorists are the resources available to and the political environment surrounding the movement. People become involved based on the costs and benefits of participation. Fireman and Gamson (1979) critique this resource mobilization perspective of grievances with their rejection of the "utilitarian" logic in social movement theory, referring to the "free rider" problem. Free riders are those individuals who gain something from a social movement despite their lack of involvement. If individuals participate only for their own good ("selective incentives"), then movements where the group that benefits is larger than those that participate should not do well. Instead, the authors argue, grievances that may have a positive result for a large segment (or all) of society attract many participants.

The resource mobilization theorists rejected such issues as ideology as being of importance in the creation or understanding of social movements. Mueller (1992, p. 5)

cites Schweder and Fiske's (1986/7) critique of RM: "By taking grievances, goals, and preference structures as givens, resource mobilization neatly sidestepped the controversy over the explanation of 'subjective experience' and such 'things' as meaning, intentions, ideas, values and emotions." Buechler (2000) points out that there is a truth in the resource mobilization perspective on ideology: it is much easier for aggrieved groups to rally around an ideology of injustice than it is to mobilize resources to fight that injustice.

The "political process" version of resource mobilization is credited to the work of Doug McAdam (1982) and Charles Tilly (1978). McAdam (1988, p. 126) summarizes the approach as follows:

> ...the political process model emphasizes two sets of macro structural factors believed to facilitate the generation of social insurgency. The first is the level of organization within the aggrieved population; the second, the political realities confronting members and challengers at any given time. The first can be conceived of as the degree of structural 'readiness' within the minority community and the latter, following Eisinger, as the 'structure of political opportunities' available to insurgent groups (Eisinger 1973).

Tilly's (1978) version of the theory focused on the area of politics and the state as the most salient arena of activity. Another hallmark is the belief that movement phases should not be studied separately, but rather as a process (Kebede & Yates, 1999). One criticism of the political process model was the over-focusing on the importance of the state, relatively ignoring the importance of culture (Goodwin & Jasper, 1999). Goodwin & Jasper also contend that political process theorists start with a movement and work backward, finding political opportunities in every instance; therefore, the theory explains too much.

One of the main contributions of resource mobilization/political process theories is their success in obliterating the distinction between social movements and other, more political forms of mobilization for change, such as political parties. These theories also served to remove the label of "irrationality" that was previously assigned such actions, and demonstrated that social movements are only one form of mobilization and organization for action (Garner and Zald, 1987).

Stoecker (1995) provides a succinct history of the critique of resource mobilization theory. "

> Critics charge that RM theory neglects social movement 'identity,' assuming that (1) ideas, beliefs, and values are a given and constant influence (Mueller 1992), (2) individuals are self-interested rather than immersed in collective identities (Mueller 1992; Ferree 1992) and (3) movements are either expressive *or* instrumental (Whittier and Taylor 1989).

Buechler (1993) comments that the resource mobilization framework "...appears to be coming under increasing challenge in the form of new issues ...which cannot readily be resolved within this framework" (p. 219). He charges that social movement theory needs to elevate the importance of culture and "symbolic lifeworld" and explains: "The formation of grievances and the articulation of ideology are inseparable from cultural processes of framing, meaning and signification which are prior to any utilitarian calculation of costs and benefits" (p. 230). Likewise, Stoecker (1995) demonstrates in her study of an "umbrella" organization, that "...neither identity not structural variables by themselves can explain social movement dynamics" (p. 124).

Buechler (2000) sums up the criticisms of resource mobilization theory as follows: the theory oversimplifies the role of grievances, downplays the role of

ideational factors in general, overstates the importance of formal organizational structures as opposed to informal or decentralized networks, contains overly rational assumptions about movement participants, proposes an individualistic orientation to what is essentially a collective process, is inattentive to the role of collective identity, and has done little to acknowledge the internal diversity of many movement groups. The minimization of the role of ideas, beliefs, and ideology, as well as grievances and culture, were other limitations of the theory seen by Mueller (1992). Overall, the emphasis on instrumental, politically oriented action and economic issues was insufficient for a complete understanding of the complicated phenomena of a social movement.

Framing Theory

In the mid 1980s, framing theory, largely the work of David Snow and Robert Benford, re-introduced certain concepts into the discourse on social movements. Issues of culture and ideology had long been ignored in social movement literature. Frame alignment is described as: "..the linkage of individual and SMO [social movement organization] orientations, such that some set of individual interests, values and beliefs and SMO activities, goals and ideology are congruent and complementary" (Snow, Rochford, Worden & Benford, 1986, p. 472). More simply put, it is a recognition that events may have different meanings for different people (Gusfield, 1994). The theory began as a social psychological form of analysis, and the meaning of the term "frame" became diffuse.

The frame alignment theorists brought the area of ideology back into the foreground. Meanings, values and beliefs of individuals and individual social movement

organizations moved into the foreground. The term "frame" was borrowed from Goffman, to describe the blueprint that people use to interpret the world around them. In this way, individuals locate the ideas and beliefs in the world around them that make sense (Snow, Rochford, Worden & Benford, 1986). Movement participation was examined to ascertain if people became involved in movements because of a "fit" between the individual's world view and that of the social movement (Snow, Rochford, Worden & Benford, 1986).

In its more recent forms, the theory was broadened to encompass "master frames." Snow and Benford (1992) describe master frames as encompassing the broadest possible meanings of social movements. Swart (1995) describes a more "...macro form of frame alignment...whereby the collective action frames of a specific movement are used to adapt the master frames within a cycle to the movement's unique social and historical situation" (p. 469). Recall that frames are the interpretations that people make of what is going on around them; thus, master frames are widespread beliefs about how to see the world. Grievances and ideologies are grouped under larger "umbrella" frames such as oppression, injustice, or exploitation where several movements can be categorized. One of the contributions of the frame theorists, therefore, was the re-introduction of issues such as ideology and beliefs into the study of social movements. Recently (Williams & Kubal, 1999), there has been an attempt to connect frame alignment with an even larger, macro approach. The study of culture becomes essential in understanding collective action frames. Polletta (1999) suggests that researchers

should pay more careful attention to the cultural traditions and ideological principles that guide activists' behavior.

New Social Movement Theory

Overview

Arising from European social theory and political philosophy (Buechler, 1995), New Social Movement (NSM) theory is concerned with the intrusion of the state into private spheres of life (Klandermans, 1986). One of the hallmarks of late capitalism is the erosion of the boundary between public and private life, where rationalization and the media have left few areas of previously private life untouched, and which impacts on individuals' sense of identity. New social movement theory claims that today's social movements react to this unprecedented historical situation in particular ways that may not have been either likely or fruitful in the past. Therefore, the movements that occur today represent a reaction to modernity, and, as the social movements that preceded them, are informed by the values of the age (McAdam, McCarthy & Zald, 1988).

Certainly previous movements shared some of the features of the "new" social movements (Tarrow, 1988), but the term "new" is intended "...to emphasize the specific difference between the dominant patterns of social conflictuality before the 1960s and thereafter, not to signal that the specific forms of contention were unique in any world-historical sense" (Steinmetz, 1994, p. 179). Contemporary movements, according to Melucci (1995), are neither old nor new, but represent a synthesis of various levels of social structure, and he calls for an understanding of the many different levels involved and how they combine to create a single unitary entity.

The "new" movements, which resulted from the alternative movements of the 1950s and 1960s, are said to differ from previous actions in several respects. One way is that membership is not based on social class (Olofsson, 1988; Cohen, 1985), but on shared grievances and a search for collective identity. In this regard, the theory represents a refutation of Marxism, with its economic and class-based focus. Other, more symbolic issues are instead proposed as important in the formation and maintenance of social movements.

For example, the theory proposes that culture (Touraine, 1985) plays a central role in modern movements. At the turn of the twentieth century, social movements sought to improve people's standard of living. Two ways in which movements addressed these goals were in improving working conditions and striving to give workers more of the profit derived from their labor. Today, though, material needs are not as pressing for most people.

The problems that individuals encounter in modern life have to do with other, more expressive issues. One such problem is in the intrusion of the media and technology upon private life. These resources provide ready-made ideas and symbols that may be experienced as being devoid of a true connection with the real life that people live. In this climate, social movements "...are no longer spurred by the images of an ideal society but by the search of creativity" (Touraine, 1985, p. 779). Thus, movements may arise in defense of social and cultural life. Hirsch (1988, p. 50) writes: "Their aim is, in sum, individual emancipation, the recovery of civil society, freedom from bureaucratic control and suppression, self-fulfillment, and 'the good life.'"

Likewise, tactics and goals also differ from previous movements, in that both may not be directly focused on political targets (Melucci, 1980). Avoiding overt political actions, tactics generally work outside of the parliamentary political system, using unconventional means such as the politicization of everyday life (Steinmetz, 1994). Through living a lifestyle that speaks for itself both in protest of this intrusion and defense of creativity, people feel that they are fighting back. Social movements today, the theory proposes, make use of this fact in seeking to affect a lifestyle change for participants. Cultural tactics such as events, cartoons and reading materials are one way that movements can both attract participants and give people a vehicle for their protest.

The issue of identity, both as a grievance of new social movements and as motivation for continued participation is paramount. According to the theory, this central informing principle leads to a style of participation that is non-hierarchical, with grievances that address people's alienation and need to belong. Tactics, similarly, are expected to be non-traditional, in that political entities will not be targeted directly and confrontationally, but instead, people's connections to each other and a cultural, prefigurative style should predominate.

Identity

Social movements in every age must recruit members in order to grow and survive. For new social movements, the theory proposes that the basis of recruitment is the overarching concept of identity. People in modern society suffer from this anomie in several ways. In private life, they feel intruded upon by public entities, and this intrusion interferes with individuals' sense of community. One way that people obtain a sense of

belonging and reclaim a personal sense of identity is through participation in a social movement. Modern social movements, the theory contends, respond to this need for belonging by offering a place where participation is meaningful and direct. Social movement organizations (SMOs) must likewise generate a sense of collective identity in order to attract potential members. They can do this in several ways: by eliciting member input, by organizing ways for constituents to interact with each other, and through the use of cultural tactics. People who are feeling starved for a sense of belonging are therefore attracted as members. Of course, the particular grievances and goals of the movement also represent the basis for mobilization, but given several options for participation, new social movement theory proposes that people will opt for inclusion in a network where they feel a sense of belonging.

The issue of intrusion of the public into private spheres has been the subject of much theoretical work that has informed new social movement theory. Habermas, for example, moved theory away from economics and toward a less reductionist theory of social change. "The application of the Marxian theory of crisis to the altered reality of 'advanced capitalism' leads to difficulties," he wrote in the preface to Legitimation Crisis (1973, p. xxv). In Habermas' view, two realities clash in the life of individuals: system and life-word. The "system" represents a reality that is external to the individual, and it takes on a life of its own; as structures grow, they become more and more distant from individuals' daily reality. The life-world, on the other hand, represents an internal point of view, composed of culture, society and personality. Culture serves to reproduce the

life-world, and as societies become more and more rationalized, there is more separation between culture, society, and personality (Ritzer, 1996).

Crises can occur in different forms at different points in these systems (Habermas, 1973), some of which are the result of cultural traditions being weakened. The system, in the form of capitalist logic of the late 20th century, intrudes into people's lives in several areas. The media are one such avenue, establishing ideologies and setting agendas of success and leisure for people. It is through media that the crisis of overproduction in late capitalism is most easily seen in the culture of the United States. People are bombarded with media messages promoting certain forms of leisure, consumption, and competition. Another area for crisis is labor, where workers are subject to the domination of managerial techniques that can lead to a sense of invisibility and powerlessness. This ideology of domination is "...the real subsumption of labor under capital such that labor can no longer conceive of its mental side and can only see itself as a detail of large-scale industrial production" (Aronowitz, 1992, p. 93).

One example of a collective response to such a crisis is found in the women's movement. Women have been dominant figures in the private dimension, where they perform most of the work of the home, family, and community, while men have traditionally been the dominant force in the public areas of economy and government. The feminist movement and the "women-centered" model of community organizing (Stall and Stoecker, 1997), for example, use networks of the household and community, extending them into public spheres. This model is one response to the intrusion of the

public in to private spheres of life, using what might be called an indirect approach to affect the political aspect of the public sphere.

Aronowitz (1992) offers another example of a reaction to the crisis of intrusion, and cites William De Fazio's *Longshoremen*, a film about a group of workers who are not needed in the workplace, and yet have sufficient union benefits that there is no immediate necessity of finding other work. The men find meaning in their lives through socializing at the union hall with their fellow workers, and through becoming more involved in their families in terms of labor and relationships. In other words, the men have been able to take back control over their "life system" and have relegated consumerism to a marginal place in their lives.

Melucci (1989) proposes that the formation of a collective identity is one of the most important tasks of a social movement. Two types of participants are found: those affected by the problems resulting from modernization, who can come from any social class, and members of the "new middle class" – well educated people who work in the service sector (Klandermans, 1986). For the individual who feels both intruded upon by the "system" and at the same time may be experiencing a sense of isolation, being part of a collective identity can become a source of power and solidarity. "Being a collective agent implies being a part of a 'we' who can do something" (Johnston & Klandermans,1995, p.99), creating a sense of empowerment. Mueller comments that social movement participation can become a "transformative" experience, where the self becomes linked to the larger social construct (1992, p. 16). Collective identities may be seen as being embedded in three layers: organizational, movement, and solidary group

(Johnston and Klandermans, 1995, p. 100). The longshoremen referred to above, for example, established a collective identity through two of these vehicles: they used the organization of the union hall and developed a rich solidary group.

Identity-based social movements gained popularity in the 1950s and 1960s (e.g., Civil Rights, the Women's Movement, the Gay Liberation Movement). This was one arena where political consciousness and identity interact (Lindio-McGovern, 1999). There were shortcomings of these movements, in that they defined the limits of participation for the rest of society. Despite these shortcomings, they were effective in creating a "moral revolution" which changed social and cultural practices (Aronowitz, 1994). This is accomplished through participation in a small, local network, through membership in an organization that represents an ideal to which they subscribe, and through (albeit sometimes indirectly) a larger social movement, and, finally, a "social movement sector."

Style of Participation

The importance of identity leads toward a style of participation that is direct and not aimed toward the support of a hierarchical and representative form of organization (Melucci, 1980). Today's social movements appear often as organizational forms that are non-hierarchical, where roles are not highly differentiated, and with a democratic ideology of organizational functioning (Steinmetz, 1994).

If people sought to participate actively in the political system, they may become of its inadequacies. Therefore, participation is potentially dangerous to the state, and participation is discouraged (Habermas, 1973). The formal institutions and

representatives who make decisions for people do so with relatively little concern for the well being of individual citizens. Habermas (1973) refers to this apolitical stance required of citizens as "civic privatism."

The result of this situation is that individuals are left feeling powerless (Johnston and Klandermans, 1995). Pushed out of the political arena, people may be attracted to a social movement where their participation is encouraged and valued. The theory states that people participate in new social movements in order to feel a part of something, and stay involved only if they feel that their input is important.

Grievances and Goals

Grievances may be a necessary but not sufficient set of circumstances for the formation of a social movement. This is the area that is most easily recognizable to the public. When questioned about some better-known social movements, lay persons in Europe explained the phenomena simply, in terms of their grievances (Kriesi, 1988).

Social movements tend to cluster at certain points in history (Swart, 1995), and it appears likely that they react to different sets of circumstances in each era. Among other issues, the general cultural climate can be conducive or inhospitable to mobilization efforts (Gamson, 1988). Some authors have connected all grievances to the dominant economic system (Castells, 1983). At certain points in the past, movements were indeed more apt to address economic crises, oftentimes produced by unregulated capitalism.

In late capitalism, the crises that people react to are often of a less "urgent" nature than those of the late nineteenth and early twentieth century. While "suddenly imposed grievances" may encourage quick and voluminous social movement participation (Walsh,

1981), recent social movements are mobilized around grievances that are long-standing. With the state intervening in the economy, political and economic crises are generally less severe than in the past.

For new social movement theorists, grievances assume a central role. Klandermans (1986) explains that the approach sought to explain the rise of a new type of movement due to the appearance of new grievances that are qualitatively different than grievances of prior historical eras. The theory, with its emphasis on cultural, symbolic and identity issues, addresses a different kind of crisis: the intrusion of the system into the private areas of life. Buechler (2000) explains that the social movement may not *arise* from these chronic crisis conditions, but nevertheless can provide people with a venue in which to reflect on the conditions of society. Through participation, people become part of a collective identity, and can work to improve society through collective action.

The grievances that coincide with the present historical period are in reaction to the problems created by the circumstances of late capitalism. According to the theory, they should address the intrusion of the state, or protecting quality of life, and other, more public problems created by late capitalism, such as degradation of the environment and poor community planning.

New Social Movement theory predicts that social movement organizations today look more toward symbolic rather than material (instrumental) goals. Having expressive, cultural goals, however, does not preclude the importance of political issues also. Buechler (2000), for example, states that he has argued against any approach that dichotomizes political and cultural aspects of a social movement. Instead, he claims, all

movements necessarily have both cultural and political dimensions. Organizations can have multiple goals (Ray, 1993); some may be symbolic, while others may be more instrumental. While the goals of new social movements may be aimed to a greater degree at the cultural aspects of living, focusing on larger, more diffuse issues such as defense of the "life world," the goals of specific organizations may be diffuse. For example, there may be a cluster of specific issues (such as fighting the building of a new mall) that coincide with a larger ideology involving the defense of a way of life that either has already been achieved by a community or is otherwise desirable.

Ideology

Ideology has been seen as an "orphan" in social movement literature (Buechler, 2000). Part of the difficulty theorists have with ideology is the position it has been relegated to as a precursor of movement activity. The role of ideology in social movements has been stressed by some theories and diminished in importance in others. Recent work (Buechler, 2000) has stressed the idea that ideology, along with the creation of collective identity, should be seen more as a process that is ongoing and interactive in new social movements than a starting point. The exclusion of ideology from the study of social movements limits researchers' understanding of the broad role of ideas in social activism (Buechler, 2000). Williams (1995) calls for the field to see the issues of culture and ideology as a necessary part of the study of social movements.

A working definition of ideology will be a set of values and norms that rationalize behavior (Brinkerhoff et al, 1999). Social movement ideology(ies) may reflect and include dominant beliefs in any culture, or may represent, at least in some part, a

"countervailing" ideology. Getting new beliefs into the public discourse is one of the functions of social movements.

Some theorists have sought to identify the types of ideologies employed in social movement activity. Rudé saw ideology as being an influence in the type of social action that occurred. He identified two types of ideology: (1) inherent, which people are raised with, live in their everyday lives, and is based on experience, and (2) derived, which are new ideas that come from outside sources, such as listening to speeches or hearing sermons, or the printed word (Rudé (1980) cited in Fisher & Kling, 1987). The idea here is that the type of ideology informs the type of social movement that occurs. Fisher & Kling also present the ideas of Evans and Boyte (1986, in Fisher & Kling, 1987). Evans and Boyte suggest that most movements for transformation of society come more from the inherent ideology suggested by Rudé than by the derived type. Chu (1999) found that organizational styles and ideologies shaped the oppositional movements in Taiwan and South Korea.

For new social movement theorists, the area of ideology and beliefs plays a central role. Melucci (1995) states that one of the productive areas of analysis for social movements, based on the importance of collective identity, is ideology. The theory proposes that new grievances are formed and new desires arise from the modern social situations that people find themselves in. These ideologies, associated with the post-modern era, include a desire for community, self-actualization, and personal, as opposed to occupational, satisfaction (McAdam, McCarthy & Zald, 1988). Swidler (1995) points out that "theoretical ideas" focusing on larger issues may be more valuable for social

movements than those that focus on specific gains (p. 34). In general, the beliefs of new social movements have been termed "anti-modernistic" in that they represent a break with traditional capitalist society (Klandermans, 1986, p. 21). The changing ideologies in the US today are reflected in social movement activity. Ideology is seen as the drive behind both goals and strategies.

Tactics

The issue of "tactical innovation" is an important one for the future study of social movements, raising two issues: how activists choose the particular tactics they rely upon, and the effects of certain tactical choices (Meyer, 1999). All social movements use tactics, and the type of tactic chosen involves several factors. Movements choose tactics that help them to achieve goals while moderating their relative powerlessness against the social institutions that surround them. (McAdam, 1983).

New social movement theory proposes that political tactics of modern social movements are different than those used in the past. According to the literature, tactics of "new social movements" that seek to influence politics are indirect in nature, often using a cultural approach (Williams, 1995). Through the use of cultural tactics, movements can "...symbolically challenge the logic of dominant power relations" (Buechler, p. 204). Culture is an area that cannot be infiltrated by large impersonal systems (Offe, 1985).

Cultural tactcs are not uniformly effective; their power relies on the context in which they are used. For example, a religious movement, with a certain public image of morality and being above ordinary politics could lose its validity with the public should

the tactics become overtly political Williams (1995). Nevertheless, the theory proposes that the use of these tactics predominates in new social movements. One term used to describe this less offensive style of political action is "prefigurative politics."

The designation "prefigurative politics" is attributed to the work of Antonio Gramsci and Alberto Melucci, whose work shifted the field of social movement theory and research away from economics and toward culture. It indicates a move away from the idea that a movement had to be overtly political, challenging the state directly, in order to have the possibility of success. In some social and historical places, such direct action is either not permitted or not likely to emerge due to other factors. Instead, participants attempt to create on a small scale the type of world they are struggling for (Stall & Stoecker, 1997). As such, there is a utopian quality to the approach which has been described as a cultural revolution (Epstein, 1991).

Prefigurative politics means several things: participation is an end in itself, and helps to develop consciousness, ultimately on a global level; participants resist "colonization" of the life world (Habermas, 1984); there is a shift from protest to lifestyle politics, and every area of action becomes a site for "micro" struggles over everyday life (David, 2000). The larger question here concerning the "social movement sector" today is whether prefigurative or more direct techniques are used when addressing political issues. A more specific question for this study is which type of tactic the organizations of the voluntary simplicity movement utilize.

Authors have referred to a duality of "types" of action engaged in by social movements using various terms. Ray (1993) created two categories: "defensive" and

"offensive." Defensive movements are concerned with traditional ways of life, and offensive movements create the conditions for people to reclaim the lifeworld. He also states that at times of relative political stability, movements work to construct identities and a sense of solidarity; on the other hand, in a time of political upheaval, social movements may take on a more political form (Ray, 1993). New social movements have been described as being at the same time "offensive" or proactive and "defensive" or reactive. Kriesi writes:

> On the one hand, the liberation from traditional bonds has opened up new opportunities for the realization of individual autonomy, and, with these new opportunities, new aspirations for the realization of individual lifestyles have arisen which are articulated (offensively) by the so-called NSMs. On the other hand, the awareness of new kinds of intrusions into the newly acquired action-spaces and the precariousness of the recently granted autonomy have grown as well, and this growing awareness is articulated (defensively) by the very same movements (1988, p. 357).

The tactics of NSMs, therefore, are not necessarily overtly oppositional. Buechler (2000) writes: "a politicized form of oppositional consciousness has become an almost taken-for–granted element of everyday experience in many communities – In the absence of political opportunity, this consciousness may be predominantly expressed in cultural terms of dress, language, music, mannerism, and demeanor" (p. 132). Ray (1993) cites instances where a protest movement has even included such cultural features as song and dance.

McAdam, McCarthy & Zald (1988) report in their synopsis of social movement research that they believe that the focus of this set of theories had been overly concerned

with legislative action as the only legitimate form of movement outcome. They state that recent researchers have focused their efforts more on outcomes that are indirect, such as changes in the public's perceptions of the social issue under consideration.

The analytical framework that follows is a synopsis of the particular areas of exploration for this study. Four hypotheses are proposed, which seek to explain the types of goals, tactics, and style of participation of organizations defined as being interested in voluntary simplicity.

Analytical Framework

New social movement theory is useful in this analysis of simplicity-focused organizations. The importance of identity and defense of the private sphere of life are both foundations of new social movement theory. Tactics of new social movements may be more expressive and "prefigurative" than those found in social movements of previous eras. Goals and grievances are said to address the intrusion of the "system" into the "life sphere." The organization has been chosen as the unit of analysis for the study because it creates the most possibilities for measuring these variables.

Since resource mobilization theory moved the focus of attention for the study of social movements away from the individual and toward the organization, researchers have seen the organization as a viable unit of analysis. Too often, though, the use of the organization led to studies interested only in goals and power relationships (Touraine,1985). The organization can be the source of much more information than merely these instrumental issues. Further, it has been suggested that social movement

organizations are "carriers of the mature movement....[they] serve to aggregate people and resources in service of the 'cause'" (McAdam, McCarthy & Zald, 1988, p. 716

Zald and Ash (1966) theorize that the association that is found between institutionalization and conservatism is not the only possible set of circumstances for social movement organizations. They believe it may be that this relationship was found based on the particular cases examined and the frame of reference of researchers doing the work. This study will seek to observe the process used by organizations, exploring styles of operation that should reveal a traditional hierarchy or more participatory functioning. The organization is not simply an "instrumental" aspect of the social movement, and the orientations of the SMO can reveal much about the movement itself. As Buechler (2000) states: "...there is a growing recognition that movement organization is as much a 'cultural' as a 'political' phenomenon" (p. 204).

Concerns regarding the issue of identity, including both the expressive/instrumental continuum and prefigurative tactics can be discerned from information on organizations. The nature of grievances as addressed through goals is also available through organizational information. Finally, a participatory style is observable through data attained from organizations. Issues of ideology were virtually ignored by many researchers in the past, leading Buechler (2000) to refer to this area as the "orphan" of social movement research, and this study seeks to include this vital dimension. Organizations function with ideology (as noted, for this study, in mission statements) as the underlying rationale for their existence. For all of these reasons, the organization appears to be the ideal unit of analysis for this study.

The organizations that responded to the study did not all have simplicity as a top priority, and approximately 13% of them were government entities. In the case of these governmental entities, it is possible that a particular person in authority at the organization was responsible for entering the name of the organization on the membership list of CNAD. It is also possible that these governmental organizations themselves do embrace the tenets of simplicity, having been influenced by public interest. Nevertheless, an interest in simplicity was established for all of the organizations through their inclusion on the membership list for CNAD, and that interest was further justified through their participation in the present study.

This study is designed to shed light on the national phenomenon that simplicity presents today. It would have been difficult if not impossible in a pragmatic sense to contact individuals throughout the country who were believers and adherents of simplicity. Even if membership lists had been obtained from each organization, it is possible that every member was not indeed interested in simplicity, particularly since many of the responding organizations do not appear to be primarily concerned with simplifying life. The organization, therefore, is established as the most appropriate unit of analysis for this study.

Collective identity

New social movement theory proposes that people in the post-modern era become involved in social movements because of a search for both individual and collective identity. The theory underlying this proposal involves the intrusion of what has been referred to as the "public sphere" into formerly private areas of life. When the "life

sphere" is intruded upon, a crisis ensues. One way that people may seek to correct this insult to their identity is through involvement in a social movement. The literature has also raised the issue of how a social movement may go about serving this function.

Social movement organizations will behave in certain ways if they are concerned with the development of identity. The first way involves two orientations that are not necessarily distinct and separate, but rather ends of a continuum. "Instrumental" refers to goals, beliefs, and tactics that are more active and task-oriented. "Expressive" describes an orientation that works toward providing integration and emotional support for adherents (Brinkerhoff et al, 1999).

Organizational goals, ideology and tactics will each help to reflect the leaning of the organization in this regard: are they more expressive or instrumental? Goals addressing social justice issues such as poverty and equality are seen as instrumental; those aiming at individual well being and quality of life issues are on the expressive end of the continuum.. Instrumental vs. expressive concerns are also found in ideology, in that beliefs of the organization can be categorized according to this continuum. Tactics is another area where the actions of the organization will elucidate this orientation. An example of an instrumental tactic would be any aimed at legislative change; one that would indicate a more expressive bent would be those that are religious or cultural.

The second orientation that will expose a concern for identity is found in a prefigurative style. This style would be found in both ideology and tactics used by the organization. As described above, "prefigurative" tactics will not seek to overtly and directly address political issues, as in legislative and economic campaigns. Instead,

tactics will aim to change members' and the public's consciousness regarding issues. Tactics such as education, collaboration/networking and cultural events would be evidence of this orientation.

Intrusion of the Public into the Private Sphere of Life

A second tenet of new social movement theory is that movements represent a reaction to the intrusion of the "system" into the "lifeworld." The question here is whether voluntary simplicity is a reaction to such intrusions. This study will seek to determine the presence or absence of a response to intrusion through an analysis of organizational goals. Goals are the other side of a coin from grievances: what movements are unhappy about in society, they seek to change via their goals. Those that would reflect a grievance of intrusion would address individual well being and protection of lifestyle. This could include protection of the environment, where quality would have a fairly direct impact on individuals' lifestyle, and a concern for community. A lack of concern with the issues of intrusion is found in those goals related to social issues affecting all people, such as gender and racial equality, and poverty.

Prefigurative Politics

While it would probably not be fruitful to focus on tactics as the central issue in the study of social movements (Touraine, 1985), this aspect of the organization can be an aid in revealing its broader perspective. Tactics should reveal whether or not a prefigurative orientation underlies the voluntary simplicity movement. The prefigurative tactics such as those developed and employed by the feminist movement have been included in the description of social movement sectors (Ray, 1993; Garner & Zald, 1987),

and are seen as more likely to exist in social movement organizations in the era of "new social movements." Educational tactics are seen as predominantly prefigurative, in that they represent an attempt to influence individuals' perceptions and public understanding of an issue. Cultural tactics would also fall into this category.

Ideology will also reveal if a prefigurative style is dominant. Mission statements are being used in this study to reveal ideology of the organizations. While mission statements may not fully equate with ideology, they should contain some evidence of the ideological orientation of the organization. The beliefs of the organization on worthwhile tactics, outcomes sought and worldview would be contained in these statements.

Style of Participation

New social movement literature proposes that new social movements will reflect a style of participation that is non-hierarchical and democratic, and where input of members is both sought and valued. When members have input into ideologies, goals, and tactics, we can assume a participatory style. The review of the voluntary simplicity literature did not reveal an overt position on member involvement or democratic process. This study seeks to uncover whether or not this orientation is part of the functioning of the social movement organizations in the voluntary simplicity movement. A two-step process will be used to answer this question. First, Part IV of the questionnaire will be analyzed. This section asks respondents to rate the importance of the following to the organization: Outcomes/Successes, Democratic Process, and Input of Members. Second, at three different points in the survey, a question is asked about changes over time, and

these questions are followed by a request for information on member input into these changes.

While there is little information in the voluntary simplicity literature on this issue, I am proposing that voluntary simplicity organizations do have a participatory style of functioning. My assumption of this stance has to do with the concern with identity and life politics shown by the VS literature and predicted by NSM literature.

Changes Over Time

The character of change over time is an area where this study seeks to expand upon the new social movement theory. As operationalized by Garner and Zald (1987), the size, structure, issues and ideology of the organization, when considered over time, should show changes that reflect an understanding of the process of change in the larger movement and add to our understanding of the larger social movement sector. This study does not propose a hypothesis concerning either the presence of change or the type of change occurring; it is a purely exploratory area of inquiry. The three sections of the survey concerned with change over time address changes in mission statements, goals, and tactics, as well as member input into these changes.

Hypotheses

While this study cannot answer all of the questions posed by the literature, it will address several of them. I propose four hypotheses, based on the literature review of social movements and voluntary simplicity.

1. IDENTITY: The organizations will demonstrate more of an expressive than instrumental orientation, based on an analysis of goals, tactics, and ideology.

2. INTRUSION OF THE PUBLIC INTO THE PRIVATE SPHERE OF LIFE: The goals of voluntary simplicity organizations will involve the defense of the private sphere of life, or the protection of a way of life. These goals may be specific or more diffuse, and may include both instrumental and expressive dimensions, but will be aimed at lifestyle more than economic, political, or social justice issues.
3. PREFIGURATIVE POLITICAL STYLE: The organizations will reveal a style of functioning that is prefigurative. The tactics utilized by voluntary simplicity movement organizations will be less immediate and more geared toward adding to the public discourse.
4. PARTICIPATORY STYLE: The organizational style of voluntary simplicity movement organizations will be democratic, or more interested in process than in immediate outcomes. Respondents will report that their organizations value member input and democratic process over outcomes/successes.

Other Issues

The study will also perform a more exploratory examination of several other issues. Clarification on changes over time is requested in the areas of ideology (mission statement), goals and tactics. An exploratory examination of these qualitative responses should help the field in adding to an understanding of the nature of changes over time for SMOs. Ideology of the organizations will also be examined, using two sections of the survey. First, mission statements will be used to obtain a sense of the underlying worldview of the SMOs responding, and

second, a question on the importance of VS to the organization ends the survey. Taken together, these sections should reveal something of the ideological stance of the organizations.

Chapter Three

METHODOLOGY

Introduction

This study is designed to test four hypotheses regarding goals, tactics, and style of participation of voluntary simplicity organizations in the United States. Additionally, information about organizational characteristics and changes over time, and an exploration of the ideology of the organizations are also sought. Because the organizations surveyed cover a large geographical area (the United States), a survey methodology was chosen. The economics of collecting information from such a large population prohibits in-depth, personal interviews. The survey (see Appendix A) was conducted through the mail using the methodology of Dillman et al (1974). This methodology, therefore, is chosen on the basis of several factors: cost, efficiency, and information desired.

Archival sources were also used to add to the understanding of voluntary simplicity in the year 2000. The survey included areas for qualitative input on the part of respondents, and some of these responses included organizational material from which information was extracted.

This chapter presents a brief description of the archival sources used, as well as a synopsis of the pilot study conducted in New York in the fall of 2000. A description of the data collection process follows. The subjects of the study, organizations and their representatives, are looked at. The measurement and instrumentation used in the study are delineated, and data analysis methods are described, including the handling of

missing data. Four hypotheses are operationalized, and the use of qualitative data is explained.

Archival Sources

Several archival sources were used for this study. Recent books on voluntary simplicity were included in order to elucidate this newest version of simplicity and some of the grievances it addresses. Newsletters, brochures and written mission statements of organizations defined as being simplicity focused in Network to reduce overconsumption: A directory of organizations and leaders (New Roadmap Foundation, 1994/95) were also included. The Internet was utilized as a resource since it is the source of much information available to participants and potential participants. Respondents to the survey often included their own newsletters, brochures and other information about their organization, and these were also utilized in ascertaining the ideological stances of the organizations.

These sources of information were seen as essential to the study in that only in this way could an accurate picture of present day simplicity be attained. These represent the "front line" of the organizations in recruitment of members and in promotion of the ethic of simplicity and all of its aspects. Unfortunately, some of these sources (such as brochures) may not be available to the reader in the exact format that I am reporting. The use of the Internet likewise has its limitations. Websites come and go; the sites that I found may be changed, or not even available to the reader who wishes to follow up.

The Survey

A mailed survey methodology was chosen since the study proposes to obtain information from organizations across the United States. Attempts were made to make the questionnaire easy to complete and to make items clear; the survey was given a cover page in order to briefly offer a rationale for conducting the study, to make the survey more attractive, and to record a number for maintaining records of returned surveys.

This methodology has the advantage of reaching large numbers of respondents over a large geographical area, and to assess the characteristics of a large population. Descriptions of the organizations were made possible in this way, and conclusions about the organizations could be drawn. Further, the cost of conducting this research is considerably reduced through the use of this process. One disadvantage of the mailed survey is the inability to tailor each request for information to the individual organization receiving it. Although areas of the survey requested qualitative input and the addition of items that differed from those listed, the respondents were nevertheless given certain choices in each of the four parts of the questionnaire for a response. The validity of the set of responses is also a weak point for survey research in general (Rubin & Babbie, 1997). The tendency of responses to include only those who were initially willing to participate is another weakness. Even with follow-up letters and new copies of the questionnaire mailed to non-responders, the returns tend to include more acquiescent responders.

Variables

Organizational Characteristics

Organizational characteristics were requested in order to categorize the responses. The position of the respondent gave insight into the knowledge that the respondent had of organizational history and functioning. Year of founding was included to determine whether this was variable was noteworthy in assessing the sample. Then, items regarding the size of the organization followed, beginning with the yearly budget for the last fiscal year. A request for information on constituent base was next. There were four open-ended sections of this item; the respondent was asked to fill in the number of members, electronic subscribers, an "other" category (for mailing lists such as for newsletters) and total number of constituents. Next, the number of employees (broken down into two categories, full time and part time) was requested. After this series of size-oriented items, the respondent was requested to answer two closed-ended questions: if the organization maintained a website and if there was a spiritual focus or concern. Two follow-up questions were added to the spiritual concerns if the answer was "yes": (1) did the organization represent a *particular* religious denomination, and, (2) if yes, which? Part I also included a request for information on the mission statement of the organization. The respondent was requested to either write the mission statement or attach it. Finally, a request was made for information on "changes over time" in mission statement, and input of members into these changes.

Goals

Part II listed fifteen different goals, with three choices for a response on each goal: "Not a goal," "A minor goal," or "A major goal." The fifteen goals suggested were: (1) sustainable development; (2) small-scale farming; (3) consumption of locally grown products; (4) reducing consumption; (5) recycling; (6) protection of the environment; (7) promotion of environmentally friendly transportation alternatives; (8) improved relationships with others; (9) spirituality; (10) reducing individual debt; (11) more peaceful/fulfilled experience of life; (12) reducing poverty; (13) promoting equality; (14) preventing/objecting to environmental racism and (15) influencing corporate behavior. Open-ended responses for "other goals" are also requested. This section, too, ends with a request for information on change over time, and member input into these changes.

These goals were combined to form two sets of scales, used to test hypothesis 1 and hypothesis 2. The scales were constructed through a process that took into account the face validity of the choice of items included and the deleting of items from the scales that did not appear to either adequately describe the concept being tested or that did not sufficiently complement the other items on the scale. Two religious items, for example, were not included in the scale measuring prefigurative tactics, although at first blush these items appeared to belong in this scale. The fact that these two items significantly lowered the alpha score of the scale indicated that they were not appropriate for inclusion.

For hypothesis 1, goals #1,2,3,4,5,6,7,10,11,14 and 15 made up an "instrumental" scale in that they are all task-oriented, involving direct actions to be taken by the organizations. Of these, numbers 1 through 7 involve environmental and agricultural/sustainable issues, and therefore are not seen as being geared toward issues of integration or emotional support, but rather toward changing the external environment. This is also true of goals 10 (reducing individual debt), the "social justice" goals and the goal of influencing corporate behavior. These items all appear to measure the construct of "instrumental" (task-oriented) in that they each appear to add to the definition of the concept. Cronbach's alpha for this scale is .8555.

Goals # 8,9 and 12 are "expressive" and used to construct a second, opposing scale. These goals are all aimed at providing emotional and integrative support to individuals, and so were seen as having face validity for the concept of "expressive." They include relationships, spirituality and a peaceful experience of life. This scale received a Cronbach's alpha score of .7495.

Both of these scales were created on the basis of face validity for the concepts being measured, and the Cronbach's alpha for each was sufficient to warrant their being seen as reliable.

This section was also used in constructing a scale to measure "intrusion" and "non-intrusion" orientations of the organizations that is the subject of hypothesis 2. Items that measured a concern with intrusion of the life sphere by the public were #1,2,3,4,6,8,9,10 and 11, and these items were seen as fitting together in terms of face validity for the construct. The issue of intrusion would be reflected in concerns for

preserving a lifestyle and protection of physical space. Therefore, both individually and community oriented goals were included. Goals number 1-3 reflect concerns with sustainability and an attempt to reinforce local farming and consumption efforts; goal #4 is indicative of the intrusion issue since it addresses people's reducing consumption, consciously choosing a style of life not supported by the media. Protection of the environment (#6) is included in this scale since this is an important area where people attempt to resist the intrusive problems caused by corporations. Goals #8-11 involve individuals' experience of life. The remaining goals on the survey (#5,7,12,13,14 & 15) were seen as representing "non-intrusion" concerns. What these goals all have in common is an "outward" focus on changing that is not resistive or protective of a way of life, but rather a more "offensive" style of changing society. Therefore, this scale, too, was seen as having a face validity for the concept.

The reliability of each of these scales was also measured through the use of Cronbach's alpha. The alpha score for the "intrusion" scale, which contained 9 items, was .7703. The alpha score for the scale of "non-intrusion" items (6 items) was .7553. Both of these alpha scores are considered sufficient for reliability.

Tactics

Part III tests the importance of fourteen different tactics to the organizations. The respondent has the same three choices for responses on each tactic as in Part II: "Not a tactic," "A minor tactic," and "A major tactic." There is also a section for an open-ended response to "other tactics." The tactics listed were: (1) organizing boycotts of companies/products; (2) media campaigns promoting the use of "green products;" (3)

distribution of educational materials to constituency; (4) educational media presentations; 5) networking with other organizations; (6) setting up conferences; (7) organizing letter-writing campaigns to the media; (8) religious services; (9) organizing religious retreats; (10) electronic "member bulletin board;" (11) organizing letter-writing campaigns to elected officials; (12) media presentations advocating governmental action; (13) organizing constituents for attendance at Legislative meetings and (14) cultural events. As in Parts I & II, the section concludes with the same request for information on changes over time and member input into these changes.

Tactics #1,2,3,4,12 & 13 (six items) were included in an "instrumental" scale and also used to test hypothesis 1. Face validity of these items was established in considering the definition of "task-orientation" that defines instrumental behaviors of organizations. These educational and legislative-oriented efforts are more task-oriented. Reliability was tested through Cronbach's alpha, and the score for this scale was .6825. An "expressive" orientation was measured by tactics #5,6,7,10,11 & 14, a total of six items. The expressive tactics include electronic "bulletin board," where members can communicate individually with each other, networking and conferences, where people can meet and interact with each other, letter writing and cultural events. These tactics support either individual's emotional life or add to a sense of social integration, and are therefore seen as having face validity. Religious events (tactics #8 & 9) were not included because of the lowered alpha score they produced. These two items received high numbers of responses that indicated they were "not a tactic." As it stands, the reliability for the expressive scale is measured through Cronbach's alpha, which was .6170.

The tactics were also used to measure a "prefigurative" orientation of the responding organizations. Prefigurative tactics are those that seek to educate the public, make connections between people, foster collaboratoin and influence public opinion through cultural means. Seven items measured a "prefigurative" orientation: #2,3,4,5,6,7 & 14. Face validity was established for this scale in that each of the items appeared to add to a description of the concept. All of these tactics (educational, conferences, individuals communicating with each other, and cultural events) seek to influence attitudes and behaviors by changing people's opinions of issues. The "religoius" tactics, #8 & 9, along with #10 (electronic bulletin board) were omitted from this scale because their presence lowered the reliability of the scale in terms of the alpha level significantly. The "active" score included tactics #1 ,11,12 & 13, organizing boycotts, organizing letter-writing campaigns to elected officials, media presentations advocating governmental action, and organizing constituents for attendance at Legislative meetings. Each of these are seen as more directly involved in changing society, and the scale is therefore seen as having face validity for the construct of "active." Each organization received a score for the importance of each of these categories, and the distribution of scores was confirmed as normal.

Reliability of both scales was established through the use of Cronbach's alpha. The "prefigurative" scale received an alpha score of .6857, and the "active" scale received an alpha score of .8224.

Style of Participation

Part IV tests style of participation, and requested that the respondent rate each of three variables: successes/outcomes; democratic process and involvement of members. These are measured on a three point scale: "Not important," "Somewhat important," and "Very important."

Two of these (importance of democratic process and importance of input of members) tested a participatory style of functioning. Participatory refers to the inclusion of members in decision making and other areas of organizational functioning. Therefore, these two items were each seen to have face validity in measuring the concept of "participatory." The responses for each of these variables were compared against the outcome/successes data for the organizations. There is no measure of reliability for these scales, due to the low number of items, and they were not tested for normality.

Pilot Study

A pilot study was conducted in August 2000 in order to test the survey instrument being mailed. Organizations received the survey and a cover letter which indicated that this was a pilot study and asking for feedback regarding the survey itself. The organizations were not chosen from the mailing list of the Center for a New American Dream. Instead, five simplicity organizations that are native to New York were contacted, and three responses were received. Several changes were made to the survey instrument as a result of feedback received, which were intended to add to the ease of completing the survey and its clarity.

Following the completion of these changes, the survey was submitted and approved by the Institutional Review Board at the University of Tennessee.

Subjects

The unit of analysis for this study is the organization. The survey was mailed to each of the randomly selected agencies from the mailing list for the Center for a New American Dream (CNAD) with the request to have it completed by a person in authority at the organization. Wherever possible, it was addressed to a person in authority, as reported by CNAD. Of the 384 organizations chosen, 60 did not list a contact person. These surveys were addressed to "Executive Director." Each survey was mailed with a cover letter (see Appendix A) addressed to the contact person or "Executive Director," a numbered copy of the survey, and a self-addressed, stamped envelope for returning the survey.

The cover letter explained the purpose of the study to the person receiving the survey and requested participation. This letter also reminded the respondent that no names or addresses were requested, unless the person was requesting a copy of the results. If a copy of results was requested, the person was asked to indicate this at the end of the survey and include a name and address. The respondent was also assured that every effort would be made to ensure confidentiality of responders. The cover page of the survey had the following heading: "Completion of the survey indicates you consent to participate in this research."

Because this survey is regarding the beliefs, values and behavior of organizations, not individuals, an individual letter of consent is not appropriate. This research fell into

"category 2" in that it was survey research and posed minimal risk to subjects. A "Form A" was filed with the University to assure that the human subjects responding to the questionnaire would not be harmed. This was approved by the IRB in October 2000, and the first mailing of the survey went out at the end of that month.

Respondents of the survey all reported their position in the organization. Table 1 shows the percents of each category of respondent. More than one-half of the respondents were directors of the organizations, and every other category in the questionnaire was also represented. The "other" category received responses such as "President," "Past President, present Treasurer," and "We don't have a director. We're non-hierarchical." Interestingly, there were not many responses indicating a non-hierarchical style of functioning. The "Professional" category included such positions as "Editor," "Administrator," and "Staff Liaison." In general, the responses indicated that the people completing the form were indeed well acquainted with the organization.

Table 1

Position of Respondents

Position	Percent
Director	55.7%
Assistant Director	7.2
Public Relations	4.1
Professional	8.2
Managerial	15.5
Other	9.3
TOTAL	100.0
	N = 97
Missing	0

Data Collection

The survey was originally mailed on October 26th & 27th 2000. Three hundred fifty-four organizations were randomly chosen from a list of organizations from the Center for a New American Dream database. Located in Takoma Park, MD, CNAD's goal is to encourage Americans to have more fun, with less "stuff." The mission statement explains that it is "a not-for-profit organization dedicated to helping individuals and institutions reduce and shift consumption to enhance quality of life and protect the environment" (http:www.newdream.org/main/about.html2000). It is a membership-based organization that seeks to build a strong network of organizations and individuals seeking to promote sustainability.

The membership database received from the webmaster at CNAD contains the names of seven hundred and eight organizations, and the original random sample selected included 354 of these. A second random sample of 30 organizations was subsequently selected. Because of the large number, the agencies were assigned a number, and a sample was randomly chosen to receive a survey. Organizations that were not based in the United States were excluded from random sampling. The survey did not request that the responder write the name of the organization on the form; rather, each survey was coded with the number assigned to the organization.

A self-addressed, stamped envelope was included with each survey mailed, and this was the method suggested for return of the survey. Because the survey requested information on the mission statement of the organizations, some responses were received

in large envelopes provided by the organization, with the survey and additional information included. Each mailing included a cover letter (see Appendices B and C).

Within the first month, 30 of the first group of surveys were returned as undeliverable. Because of this, 30 different US-based organizations were again chosen randomly from the original database and were sent an initial mailing of the survey. Therefore, two sets of mailings were sent to two different groups of organizations, both chosen at random from the same database. A second mailing of the survey was sent to the first group of organizations on November fifteenth, and a first mailing of the survey was sent to the second group (30) of organizations between November 13, 2000 and November 17, 2000. A second mailing was sent to this group on December 12, 2000. In all, then, 384 surveys were mailed including both mailings. The second mailings included a new cover letter (see Appendix C). A total of fifty of these surveys were returned as undeliverable. Therefore, the total amount sent and presumably received was 334.

Of these 334 surveys, 117 were returned. Twenty-two of these were refusals to participate in the survey. Ninety-seven of them were completed surveys. One other respondent did not return the survey, but sent a mailing with the mission statement of the organization included. The 97 completed surveys represents 29.04% of the original 334 presumed to be delivered.

Instrumentation

The survey consisted of five pages: a cover page and four pages of items. The cover page of the survey briefly describes the purpose of the study, and also states that no

names should be reported on the form. The survey consisted of four major sections, with sub-sections for recording changes over time in three areas: mission statement, goals, and tactics. Both closed and open-ended questions were used.

Part I of the survey requested organizational characteristics of the organizations: position of respondent, year of founding, budget, number of members, number of employees, website and spiritual focus or concern. Part II gathered data on goals of the organization and Part III requested information on tactics. These sections also requested the respondent to offer "other" goals and tactics that may not have been included in the list. Part IV asked respondents for their opinions on the style of functioning of the organization. The qualitative parts of the survey were: mission statements, changes over time and the importance of voluntary simplicity to the organization.

Data Analysis

Missing Data

Data from each organization were used in testing all four hypotheses. Each hypothesis was tested by comparing two opposing scores assigned. For each of the pairs of scores compared, when missing data accounted for more than 5% of the total score, cases were deleted.

Hypotheses

Hypothesis 1

The first hypothesis, concerning the importance of identity to the organizations, was tested by comparing "instrumental" and "expressive" orientations of the

organizations. This hypothesis was tested using two different sets of scales, one composed of goals and the other composed of tactics.

Both goals and tactics were input on a scale of 1-3. A "1" corresponded with a "not a goal/tactic" response; "2" represented "a minor goal/tactic," and "3" indicated "a major goal/tactic." Each organization received an "instrumental" score and an "expressive" score for goals and another for tactics. These scores were arrived at by averaging the responses for each organization. Higher scores indicated a higher degree of importance for the organization.

Therefore, Organization X might have responded to the eleven instrumental items with 4 "Not a goal" responses (1), 5 "A minor goal" (2) and 2 "a major goal" (3) answers. These responses could be averaged to produce a score on the "instrumental" scale for the organization. In this example, that score would be a 1.82, or the mean of all of the responses. Likewise, each organization received an "expressive" score for goal, scored in the same way.

The goal scales were both normal distributions, and therefore, a paired t-test was used to compare the means. The distributions for both tactics scales were also normal, and again a paired t-test was used. In both cases a non-directional test was chosen as a difference in either direction would be significant.

Hypothesis 2

Hypothesis 2 tested organizations' concern with intrusion of the public into the life sphere. The goals section was also used in testing this hypothesis, with the two scales constructed. Using the same process that was used for hypothesis number one, each

organization was given a score on each of these orientations, and, following a confirmation of a normal distribution for each scale, a paired t-test was used to test for statistical significance.

Hypothesis 3

The third hypothesis, that these organizations rely on a "prefigurative" style of tactic, was measured using two subsets of the "tactics" section of the survey. Because the distribution of the scores met the test for normality, a paired t-test was used to determine if the difference between the two scores was statistically significant.

Hypothesis 4

Hypothesis 4, proposing that the organizations would report a participatory style of functioning, was tested using responses from Part IV of the survey. Because of the small number of items comprising each of these scores, a Wilcoxon non-parametric test was used to test for statistical significance of the difference between the democratic process and outcomes, and between member involvement and outcomes.

One other area provides some information on this hypothesis. The information received in the "changes over time" section included a section for respondents to indicate whether or not members had input into changes. These data are displayed as percents in order to give some insight into the actual behavior of the organizations regarding member participation.

Qualitative Data

Two main areas were explored using this survey for qualitative data: ideology and the nature of changes over time. The ideology underlying the organization's behaviors

was requested in two different areas. Mission statements were requested, and ninety-two were received (91 from organizations completing the survey; one organization sent a mission statement only). Likewise, the importance of voluntary simplicity to the organizations was requested and added to the exploration of ideology. Changes over time includes the areas of mission statement, goals and tactics, and respondents were asked to report the nature of the changes and whether or not members had input.

Other than these two main areas of qualitative data, the survey also requested open-ended information on "other" goals and tactics. These responses are reported for two reasons: to add new goals and tactics to those requested on the survey, and also to add to the responses received. In other words, some of the "other" goals and tactics will essentially be similar to the items already listed.

Chapter Four

HISTORICAL REVEIW

Introduction

This chapter addresses two historical issues. The first is a brief history of simplicity in the United States. It is included for several reasons: (1) to honor the belief that no social phenomenon can be fully understood apart from its history; (2) to present a comparison of the present-day version of simplicity with the forms that preceded it, and (3) to give the reader a sense of political, social, and economic situations that in the past supported the ideology of simplicity. As previously stated, this is not intended to be a complete review of simplicity in the US; rather, it is meant to serve as a highlighting of certain manifestations of the simplicity ethic, which demonstrate principles that are important to this analysis. The first of these is simply the idea that simplicity has at times arisen as a significant social phenomenon and at other times has almost disappeared from the American discourse. Second, the belief has at times been interwoven with political agendas (Republican simplicity), while at other times it appeared more as a cultural response to social conditions (Transcendentalists). Different versions of simplicity utilized different tactics. Third, the set of circumstances that led to the evolution of voluntary simplicity is presented. Fourth, archival sources are used to present a snapshot of the roots, goals, and tactics of voluntary simplicity.

The second area presented in this chapter is a historical situating of the voluntary simplicity movement of 2000, the subject of analysis for this study. While this summary will be brief, it is intended to serve as a description of the economic and cultural

backdrop surrounding today's version of simplicity. Social movement literature reveals this as an important area that has received too little attention in research (Buechler, 2000; Garner and Zald, 1987).

Particular social and historical situations also have an affect on the discipline of social work. For example, the charity organization movement of the 1880s both inspired and constrained the actions of early social workers. The understanding that problems caused by industrialization and urbanization had a negative impact on a tremendous number of city dwellers led to the formation of bureaucracies that oversaw the administration of aid to the poor. These organizations, formed to organize and promote assistance, nevertheless handicapped the efforts of many early social workers in promoting a superior/inferior relationship between workers and their clients (Lubov, 1980). Social workers' role of empowering individuals and communities has changed with new ideas arising and new political opportunities presenting themselves at different points in its history (Simon, 1994). The social and political/economic conditions of today likewise present a new set of circumstances for the profession to consider. Social work in the post-modern era must respond to economic conditions that privilege some and omit others from the affluence. Individuals and communities are affected by this set of circumstances in many ways. For example, people may experience a sense of alienation and communities may suffer a sense of powerlessness over their own development.

It is here where simplicity and the social change organizations that promote it become a valid area of study for social work. Concerned with the dual issues of social

change and individual well being, the profession is enhanced through knowledge of social circumstances, their effects on people and communities, and potential solutions.

History of Simplicity

Simplicity has been interwoven with the fabric of American political and cultural life since the Pilgrims landed in Massachusetts. Certainly the Native Americans who predated the Europeans lived a life of simplicity; they had not as yet developed other alternatives. In its long life and many forms on this continent, simplicity has served to both preserve the status quo and escape from it. There have been a few times when it was a part of a larger movement for social reform.

I use *In Search of the Simple Life*, by David Shi (1986), to organize the information because it is the definitive text on the history of the simple life in the United States. A proviso, however, needs to be added. Shi reports the mainstream ideology that for the most part was articulated by privileged white males. Certainly others through the centuries truly lived a life of simplicity and possibly even recorded their experiences. Minorities, the poor, women, slaves - these groups were perhaps forced on a large scale to live simply; their experiences are not reported here, but the absence of them is noted. Shi's point of view as influenced by dominant ideology in the history of the United States is exposed through his omissions. Nevertheless, he presents an organized and clear picture of the more widely known aspects of the simplicity ethic through time, and so his analysis proves useful here, though limited.

This is not meant to be an inclusive history of simplicity in the United States. It is a selective accounting of certain historical eras and the simplicity trends that

accompanied them. I have selected certain of these eras in order to point out similarities to the present day voluntary movement and also to highlight differences. A historical comparison can add to the understanding not only of the roots of the modern day version of simplicity, but also to the unique social situation that surrounds the ethic today.

Spiritual goals have been a part of the search for simplicity at some points in history; the Puritans and Quakers shared this belief. At other times, the "simple life" ethic has been paramount as an end in itself, as in the Transcendentalist and domestic simplicity eras. The "republican" simplicity supported by Jefferson was agrarian and had political overtones. It was not until the simplicity of the progressives appeared that the environment came into play, and at this point the focus was not on environmental degradation. In the early part of the twentieth century, the Nashville agrarians again brought agriculture to the foreground in advocating a simple life, but this time it was accompanied by a protest of development. At points, the ethic was almost non-existent in the public discourse; the 1920s and 1950s are two examples. In the 1960s, with the appearance of much social movement and protest activity, the modern day version of simplicity was born.

Pious Simplicity

The United States was founded in the late seventeenth century by groups of people with political and spiritual convictions. The experiment of traveling to the "New World" was an attempt to create a society that would support these views. The major social movements of the day in Europe were the Protestant Revolution and Quakerism, and both Puritans and Quakers influenced the early colonies with their views of

simplicity. Each group had its own version of the ethic and its own method of promoting the idea of simplicity.

The Puritans sought to create a model society in which simplicity would inform worship, styles of clothing, manners and speech (Shi, 1986). Like the ancient Greeks, the Puritans actively sought the "middle way." To some degree, this simplicity was legislated, as in the case of the sumptuary laws. Brought to the new world from England, where, coincidentally, the last of the laws were repealed before the Puritans set sail, these laws were most prevalent in the Massachusetts Bay Colony (Hunt, 1996). They were directed against the evils, seen as interconnected, of luxury, fashion, and dressing above one's station (Warwick, 1965, in Hunt, 1996). In his journal, John Winthrop, the first governor of the Massachusetts Bay Colony, wrote a series of resolutions on living, including his own personal desire to live a simple life. He was a member of the English ruling elite who had traveled to the New World with his family after falling into debt. It is noteworthy that his journal was influential in subsequent years in the Massachusetts as a model of what the purpose of the colony was at the outset (Dunn & Yeandle, 1996).

The Puritans, in seeking to control the political arm of the new colonies, lost their hold on simplicity but otherwise influenced the dominant ideology. Their political ambition was part of the motivation for the journey to the New World, and they took over immediately as the ruling class. As their political and social influence flourished, simplicity was left behind. The Quakers, who eschewed political activity, were more able to maintain a simple lifestyle, but lost influence over the larger society.

Puritan simplicity had two complementary goals; on the one hand, it sought to promote an ethic of simplicity that would have an impact on individual lives; on the other hand, there was an overt political agenda. Tactics appear to have been more legislative and political than prefigurative, and no one appeared to be concerned with issues of intrusion. The simplicity of the early days of the republic was challenged following the Revolution. A new order was being established, and the new nation had a struggle over ideology.

Republican Simplicity

From the latter part of the sixteenth century through the early 1800s, a simplicity existed that had a new, political agenda. The "old order" of Thomas Jefferson and Samuel Adams sought to create a nation that would remain agrarian and simple (Segal, 1999). This Jeffersonian view of simplicity had a moral component. Based again on the classical version of Greek culture, the "middle way" was seen as the ethical way to live. It is interesting to note that this "moral" view of life was best articulated and fought for by a man who owned slaves at the time (Jefferson). Perhaps his own "agrarian ideal" could only be supported by the exploitation of people who held little power. One is left to wonder about the simplicity of slaves' lives, and what their words would be regarding this "morality." Benjamin Franklin, one of the "old order," fostered a utilitarian brand of simplicity, based mainly on economic profit. He saw a virtue such as frugality as a means to an end - and that end is to *appear* virtuous to others so as to increase one's profits. This view of simplicity was denounced as morally repulsive by Max Weber at the turn of twentieth century (Weber, 1930/1996).

This version of simplicity again had overt political goals and used political tactics. Prefigurative tactics were also found to the extent that writings of the time promoted the belief. In the end, the adherents of "republican" simplicity fought a losing battle against the forces of change and growth led by Alexander Hamilton (Shi, 1986).

Transcendental Simplicity

The mid-nineteenth century saw the rise of another form of simplicity - the transcendental movement. Led by the voices of Thoreau and Emerson, the Transcendentalists were for the most part young, radical, middle class and highly educated. They spearheaded attempts both at withdrawing from the world and communal living. Raised in privilege, these writers had the luxury of retreating from the world and espousing the ethic and joys of simplicity

Henry David Thoreau lived from 1817-1862. He left Harvard in 1837 and immediately began keeping a journal, at the suggestion of his friend, Ralph Waldo Emerson (Bode, 1979). His young manhood was spent in attempting to be a poet and support himself, and he lived for a time with Emerson and his wife. In 1845 he moved into a hut beside Walden Pond, where he remained for two years, finally moving back with the Emersons in 1847.

In "Walden" he writes:

> The grand necessity, then, for our bodies, is to keep warm, to keep the vital heat in us. What pains we accordingly take, not only with our Food, and Clothing, and Shelter, but with our beds, which are our nightclothes, robbing the nests and breasts of birds to prepare this shelter within a shelter, as the mole has its bed of grass and leaves at the tend of its burrow. ...The luxuriously rich are not simply kept comfortably warm, but unnaturally hot; as I implied before,

> they are cooked, of course, a la mode (Bode, 1979, p. 269).

The moral component in his writing was both explicit and implicit; he poked fun at those whose lives depended much upon material pleasures, while at the same time celebrating the simple things in life. Nowhere do we see an understanding of the lives of those who had no choice regarding simplicity.

Emerson expounded a similar philosophy. In "Self-Reliance" (1841) he condemns the reliance on material things. One can see whom he is addressing here: the wealthy white male.

> And so the reliance on Property, including the reliance on governments that protect it, is the want of self-reliance. Men have looked away from themselves and at things so long that they have come to esteem the religious, learned, and civil institutions as guards of property, and they deprecate assaults on these, because they feel them to be assaults on property. They measure their esteem of each other by what each has, and not by what each is. But a cultivated man becomes ashamed of his property, out of new respect for his nature (McDowell, 1949, p. 209).

The attempt of the Transcendentalists to redress the imbalance between materialism and freedom from the confining restraints of "property" also included attempts at communal living, such as Fruitlands and Brook Farm. Communes and this utopian vision have always been a part of the American landscape (Segal, 1999). Life on the communes was the most tangible attempt to return to a life of rustic simplicity of the era. These efforts eventually failed, yet the experiments were not without charm and attraction. The romanticism of the ideal did not translate well into daily work; as Nathaniel Hawthorne (during his stay at Brook farm) put it: "...One thing is certain. I

cannot and will not spend the winter here. The time would be absolutely thrown away so far as regards any literary labor to be performed...This intrusion of outward necessity into labors of the imagination and intellect is, to me, very painful..." (Hawthorne in Arvin, 1967, pp. 79-80).

The Transcendental form of simplicity relied largely on withdrawal techniques, signaling that issues of intrusion may have begun to appear. Prefigurative tactics were used to promote the belief and to educate the public about the possibilities and rewards of simplifying life.

The nation was about to enter into a Civil War, and the forces of immense industrialization were readying to change the culture even more drastically. Those who had time and interest in the philosophical pursuit of a simple lifestyle would see their voices and influence recede. Perhaps slaves and their sympathizers celebrated the change in focus from one of ideological musings of educated men to that of action.

Progressive Simplicity

Still another version of simplicity existed in the latter part of the nineteenth and early part of the twentieth centuries. The cities that resulted from the forces of industrialization and urbanization brought many problems. Social reformers of the time (the early social workers) sought to improve conditions within the city for the mass of poor people who had no choice but to remain within the urban environment. Adherents of the Progressive version of simplicity saw the separation from nature that a city life entailed as a major problem. Women had widened their sphere of experience through volunteering during the Civil War, and were more present in the work force. Political

corruption, abuses of the environment by railroad and lumbering concerns and exploitation of laborers (oftentimes children) by big business helped to kindle a spirit of reform.

Life for the average American was becoming increasingly complicated, and the simplicity of the Progressive Era involved a desire to "return to nature." The rustic life was idealized, not as an alternative to city life, but as a healthy temporary alternative for the city dweller. A new longing for simplicity emerged, and in this incarnation reformers such as Teddy Roosevelt backed the ethic. A natural outdoorsman, Roosevelt had been interested in the natural life since childhood (Whitelaw, 1992). He called for a return to a "strenuous life" for people whom he felt sought money rather than real experience.

This was the first time, though, that simplicity was connected with conscious consumption. Whereas the Transcendentalists condemned property, this incarnation of the ethic appeared at a time when consumerism was on the rise as a result of increased production, advertising, and the use of credit. A consumer movement had begun along with labor reforms. An uncluttered domestic life, material contentment, an aesthetic appreciation for the plain and functional and a preference for handicraft rather than mass production were its hallmarks, along with a return to the vigorous life that only nature could afford. For example, the arts and crafts movement in England and the US fought against the ugliness and artificiality of modern urban life (Shi, 1986).

There was a craving for real and immediate experience that led urbanites into the woods for hiking, camping and other pursuits. The Boy Scouts organization was founded on such a notion: that boys growing up in a city atmosphere needed some real connection

with nature in order to develop into the kind of men that this country admired (Levy, 1944). Simplicity during this era once again had a distinctly masculine edge to it, and moved from being a rather utopian pursuit of the Transcendentalists to more of a desire to return to a mythical idealized past. The progressives used active tactics such as legislative advocacy and the founding of organizations. As with the Transcendentalists, the issue of intrusion of society into a private way of life was addressed through creating situations for people to return to nature and escape from their industrial, urban daily life. As World War I dawned, the Progressive version of simplicity took a step backward on two counts: the war and financial prosperity.

Simplicity Between the Wars

The stock market crash of 1929 brought Depression and a newfound interest in simplicity, this time through both federal programs and private coalitions of thinkers. The federal program, the Division of Subsistence Homesteads, represented an attempt by public officials to restore a Jeffersonian sort of agrarian simplicity through a highly structured, planned organization. The Division of Subsistence Homesteads was under the auspices of the Department of the Interior. Created through the New Deal, these were large federal bureaucracies and failed rather quickly. Problems such as too much red tape, troublesome residents and cost overruns were some of the causes. Where cooperation and collective thinking were necessary for their success, the ethic of individualism interfered with the operation of the communities (Shi, 1986). Simplicity in this context was deeply intertwined with political and economic conditions.

One group that voiced their anti-industrial and anti-growth opinions was based in Tennessee. The "Nashville Group" was clustered around Vanderbilt University, and became known as the "Nashville Agrarians." These southern intellectuals protested the intrusion of northern, urban-industrial culture into their region of the country. The south had long been on the receiving end of the North's abuses of the environment for no reason other than the material desires of wealthy Northerners. This was mainly a movement designed to preserve a Southern way of life, and demonstrates the importance of culture in the formation of a social movement. One of the contributions of the group in terms of consumerism is that the members articulated a critique of the culture and values developing in the North.

Greenbelt simplicity also prospered at this time. The creation of public parks and green areas through New Deal programs was part of a national effort to provide sites for outdoor recreation. The "garden city" movement that had begun in England in the 1800s was copied on a small scale in the United States, but made no real headway in the early 20th century (Arnold, 1971). This was a simplicity aimed to improve the life of affluent citizens. The commuter railroad had made it possible for many prosperous people to move out of the cities, and it was considered desirous to maintain a rural atmosphere even with an increasing population (Arnold, 1971).

These simplicity-focused arrangements primarily used legislative means to achieve an end. The New Deal used some of the tenets of simplicity to solve economic and social problems. In the case of Greenbelt Simplicity, the goal again appeared to be a protection of life-style against intrusion of industrialization and urban life.

World War II brought with it a renewed interest in restricted consumption for the war effort, but the simplicity ethic did not resurface until the 1960s.

Early roots of Voluntary Simplicity

In the 1960s, with continued abundance, the social unrest begun in the 1950s produced many movements for change. The Civil Rights movement, the Student movement, the Women's Rights movement, and the Gay Rights movement, among others, characterized the decade. Simplicity, dormant in the previous decade, moved again to the foreground. Voluntary simplicity is rooted at least in part in the Hippie movement of the 1960s. Along with the Ecology movement, the hippies brought a new interest in simplicity.

Books that had been virtually ignored during the 1950s, such as Scott and Helen Nearing's *Living the Good Life* were rediscovered, along with attempts at communal living and a return to a simple life. Unlike so many previous utopians, they combined the practical with the visionary. They presented a utopian version of self-reliance and socialism combined, and they were very much in support of work and relying on one's own labor, while at the same time in support of community activity and support for those in need. The Nearings had left the city during the Depression for a new, simpler life in the country. They had three objectives: (1) economic - to be free of "markets;" (2) hygienic - to maintain and improve health; and (3) social and ethical - to remove themselves from various forms of exploitation (Nearing, 1954/1970). As the 1970s approached, the stage was set for a generation to adopt some of these principles, and the

proliferation of literature with themes of a return to nature, simplicity, self-reliance and ecological living.

Experiments in communal living were the main expression of simplicity in the 1960s. Many communes with different formats were established. Like Brook Farm and Fruitlands a century before, they reminded society of an ideal that was being lost - buried under the weight of increasing material possessions.

Duane Elgin dates voluntary simplicity from the 1930s, with the work of Richard Gregg (Elgin, 1981/1993). Gregg was a student of Mahatma Gandhi, and wrote several volumes on non-violence. Apparently it is Gregg who first coined the term "voluntary simplicity." While simplicity was seen through the centuries as a choice (at least for some), the "voluntary" added to the ethic places an emphasis on the consciousness required in the second half of the 20th century to live a simple life. Merriam Webster's Collegiate Dictionary defines "voluntary" as "done by design or intention...having the power of free choice" (Mish et. al., 1996, p. 1324). As such, this "voluntary" social movement excludes people who live simply without a choice. Class, gender, and ethnicity are all issues that might affect one's ability to "choose" a life of "voluntary simplicity." The term, then, implies some degree of abundance and material well being.

Gregg taught a lifestyle of non-violence and simplicity. Elgin reports that he advised avoiding "exterior clutter...in order to secure greater abundance of life in other directions" (Elgin, 1981/1993, p. 23). Along with simplicity, he was an advocate of training in non-violence; he suggested that oppressed populations be taught to control anger and fear and focus instead on love as a means to achieve power. He writes: "Love

is stronger than fear and anger; for one reason, because it is able to manipulate and guide their [the oppressor's] energy. It is more intelligent and far seeing, as it were. It is also stronger because it is a more inclusive sentiment than fear or anger or hate" (Gregg, 1935/1944, p. 73).

Elgin himself, who first published *Voluntary Simplicity* in 1981, writes of living more intentionally and purposefully as a condition of a voluntarily simple lifestyle. When one simplifies one's life through possessing less, the distraction of material goods allows for focus on an inner life, which for Elgin is the more rewarding (Elgin, 1981/1993).

The Environmental Movement emerged in the 1960s and 1970s. Earth Day, first celebrated on April 22, 1970, represented a new height of environmental awareness. By the early 1970s, Americans had accepted that environmental quality was a problem (Dunlap & Mertig, 1992). As the more radical politics of the 1960s waned, a skepticism grew regarding the consumer culture and anxiety over the environmental degradation that accompanied economic growth. Writers such as Rachel Carson, Barry Commoner and Paul Erlich brought these issues to light, causing Americans to question their indiscriminate spending practices. The Arab Oil Embargo of 1973-4 and inflation and recession gave more impetus to the cause of ecological simplicity. Most Americans were forced to spend less and consume less energy. Also, the deepening of world hunger spurred religious groups to address such concerns. In 1973 an ecumenical council on world hunger drafted a credo of simplicity that addressed the problem. The "Shakertown Pledge," as it became known, was meant for modern America, and the relationship

between a spiritual life and the material life once again received national attention (Shi, 1986).

The 1970s saw a proliferation of publications addressing the new movement. *Rain* was published from Portland, Oregon and contained reflective essays that addressed an everyday suburban kind of simplicity. Volume 1, No. 1 of *Rain* appeared in October 1974. It was subtitled "Monthly Newsletter of Eco Net." The first edition carried a short essay describing the magazine's intention. *Rain*, it explained, was a "monthly bulletin board....We emphasis (sic) environmental/energy related and communications kind of information...." ("Introduction," 1974, p. 2). This volume is laid out in alphabetical columns, each containing information on diverse organizations and advertisements for books, services, organizations, and products. Here are some samples: a reprint of an article entitled "Food and Fuel from Trash;" The Institute for Local Self-Reliance; a newsletter entitled "Small Town: Newsletter of Small Towns Institute." Brief quotes, such as "The loaf of bread you bought today costs as much in energy as you would consume if you were to drive your car 40 or 50 miles" (*Rain*, 1974, p. 4) dot the pages. By 1980, the publication had changed somewhat. In the Aug./Sept. edition of *Rain*, articles on "Organic Design: Facilitating Community Planning, " "Energy Co-ops" and "Intensive Agriculture Revisited" filled the pages, with very little of the advertising that comprised the initial edition.

Tom Bender, the publisher of *Rain*, wrote a lengthy essay in 1975 in which he laid out some tenets that became associated with the nascent voluntary simplicity movement. They were: stewardship, not progress; austerity, not affluence; betterment,

not biggerment; tools, not machines; independence and interdependence; work, not leisure, and enough, not more (Shi, pp. 304-309, 1986).

Jimmy Carter brought a kind of morality to the presidency during the 1970s that has not been seen since. He was an environmentally friendly leader (which, coincidentally, correlated with a decline in environmental movement participation). He called on the nation to make a commitment to simpler living and spirituality. According to Trattner (1994), one of the popular themes of the bi-centennial year concerned the idea that America had to accept the reality of limits to power, resources, and economic growth. Carter was unable to stem consumption and consumerism; materialism, boosted by the corporations that bombarded Americans with ads inviting them to consume, reigned. Some were in tune with the president, however, and they formed the first adherents of voluntary simplicity.

Voluntary Simplicity appeared in 1981, and was written to explain and elucidate the development of the movement that had begun during the previous decade. The volume served as the first definitive statement in two ways. First, it acknowledged that something was happening and that it had a name; secondly, it set forth "beliefs" that were connected with the movement.

The early roots of voluntary simplicity reflect mainly prefigurative tactics and goals preventing intrusion. As society became more and more complex, and capitalism more and more advanced, simplicity adherents reacted with attempts to protect a way of life that was "...outwardly simple, inwardly rich" (Elgin & Mitchell, 1977, p. 201).

The remainder of this section describes recent literature and other archival sources on voluntary simplicity from the 1970's to the present. Books, pamphlets, newsletters and Internet websites are utilized to present a picture of beliefs being promoted. Grievances and goals are described, followed by an analysis of the tactics utilized in the latter part of the twentieth century.

Present-day Voluntary Simplicity

Goals

The goals of the movement are not presented as discrete topics in the literature. Rather, they often dovetail and complement each other. Spirituality, for example, has been linked to financial and economic matters. Social justice issues such as reducing poverty and hunger are interwoven with spirituality and simplifying life. The salience of the intrusion of the public sphere into the private and how the movement aims at "defending" the lifeworld can be seen in every area addressed by the movement.

Sociological literature on the voluntary simplicity movement from the late 1970s to the present is not plentiful. The information that appears is in the form of the many journals that support a simple lifestyle and magazine articles that elucidate the tenets of the belief. Several books attempted to encapsulate the ethic, some with a particular emphasis, such as Christianity and simplicity. Beginning in the 1970s, information began to appear more regularly on simplifying life, and this central theme became interwoven with those of the environment, spirituality, economics, health, social justice and agriculture.

Many authors attempted to define voluntary simplicity in 1977. Duane Elgin and Arnold Mitchell presented one such attempt. They wrote:

> The essence of voluntary simplicity is living in a way that is outwardly simple and inwardly rich. This way of life embraces frugality of consumption, a strong sense of environmental urgency, a desire to return to living and working environments which are of a more human scale, and an intention to realize our higher human potential - both psychological and spiritual - in community with others (Elgin & Mitchell, 1977, pp. 200-201).

In that same year, the Center of Science in the Public Interest in Washington D.C. suggested several reasons for simple living. They were: an appreciation of nature, solidarity with the world's poor, relational, ecological, health, economics, spiritual, and social and political action (The Futurist, 1977). In *No More Plastic Jesus*, Adam Finnerty defines two dimensions of simplicity: a "private" dimension, including inner life and spirituality, and a "social" dimension, where the ecological crisis and social justice issues such as world hunger are adopted by adherents (Finnerty, 1977). This description in particular speaks to the life sphere/public sphere issues raised in the previous section.

Simple Lifestyle

Obviously, a simple lifestyle has been and continues to be one of the ethics of the voluntary simplicity movement. The defense of the private sphere is most apparent in this goal of the movement. The reasoning behind the advocacy for a change in lifestyle goes beyond the overconsumption issue. On a personal level, individuals are adversely affected by living in a consumer culture, possibly even becoming *less* happy with more material goods (Dominguez & Robin, 1992; Schmookler, 1991; Segal, 1999). Voluntary simplicity adherents claim that Americans are underfulfilled and overworked (Freligh,

1996). Social relations can be neglected in a consumer society, with the result that the areas of life that give satisfaction and happiness tend to get reduced when people are busy pursuing high-consumption lifestyles (Durning, 1993). Stress and isolation increase as people get caught not only on the treadmill of production, but also on the treadmill of credit debt and overwork. One of the expressive goals of the voluntary simplicity movement is a return to a focus on an "inner" life. One author describes what happens when people let themselves experience "emptiness:" "...it is essential to becoming *who we really are*...the silence [is] needed to cultivate ourselves as unique persons (Heffern, 1994).

A typical book on simplifying one's lifestyle is Simplify your life by Elaine St. James (1994). She is also the author of Inner simplicity, Living the simple life, and Simplify your life with kids. Simplify your life is a compilation of 100 ways to "Slow Down and Enjoy the Things That Really Matter (title page). Some of the categories included are: household, your life-style, your finances, your job and your health. Life-style suggestions such as "move to a smaller house," "drive a simple car," and "sell the damn boat" point to reducing consumption. The author suggests that people move toward activities such as: "Watching a sunset. Watching a sunrise. Taking a walk on the beach or through a park or along a mountain trail" and that adherents seek improved relationships in such suggestions as "Spending quiet time with our children.... Spending quiet time with our spouse" (p. 61).

Environment

Environmental degradation and ecology are seen as intertwined with a culture of consumption and what has become known (through the public discourse of the movement) as "overconsumption." While previous versions of simplicity also addressed the environment, as in Progressive simplicity, it is with the intention of *saving* the environment, not just enjoying it, that simplicity adherents since the 1970s have reduced their consumption.

E. F. Schumacher, the author of *Small is Beautiful*, concerned his writing, among other things, with the intersection of the economy and the environment. In an article in *Rain* published in 1975, a work he wrote in 1962 was reproduced. "Conscious Culture of Poverty" stated:

> Some mathematical enthusiasts are still content to predict the economic "growth curves" of the last thirty years for another thirty or even fifty years, to "prove" that all humankind can become immensely rich within a generation or two. Our only danger they suggest, is to succumb, at this glorious hour in the history of progress, to a "failure of nerve." This presupposes the existence of limitless resources in a finite world; an equally limitless capacity of living nature to cope with pollution, and the omnipotence of science and social engineering (Schumacher, 1975, p. 16).

Environmental interest increased in the late 1960s, with public concern experiencing a "peak" on Earth Day, 1970 (Dunlap & Scarce, 1991). This "new" social cleavage was incorporated into the voluntary simplicity belief system from the outset. One of the foremost grievances of the movement is the destruction of the ecosystem.

A frequently mentioned goal in this area is sustainability, defined simply as a concern with human beings interacting with the environment in a way that will not deplete it.

One version of this theme is in the "sustainable development" ideas of involving community with planning for development. This tactic includes participation of community members, enhancing people's sense of a collective identity. For example, according to literature from the Global Action Plan, (New Road Map, 1994/95), the organization assists communities in setting up "Community Lifestyle Campaigns." The campaign is described as: "A new municipal policy instrument for conserving resources, reducing waste and improving environmental quality." In Chattanooga, Tennessee, the campaign was kicked off in September, 1995. It was set up through "visioning" with community leaders, where participants focused on the Chattanooga of 2030, should they attain their goal of sustainability. The work is done by grass-roots organizations, and neighborhood "Eco-teams" that work together to reduce waste and energy use and learn to consume more wisely (Chattanooga Times, Wednesday, 9/20/00, reprinted by Global Action Plan).

Sustainable industrial growth is the focus of another voluntary simplicity organization (New Road Map Foundation, 1994/95), the Center for Economic Conversion, located in Mountain View, California. This organization proposes that industrial buildings and infrastructure be designed to "...optimize the efficient use of resources and to minimize pollution generation" (Lowe, 1997).

The movement also promotes sustainable goods. Withdrawal tactics are evident in consumers being advised to spend "green" dollars, boycotting products that are not environmentally friendly (Taylor, 2000). Green "sanctuary" is promoted by Earth Letter, the publication of Earth Ministry in Seattle (Network to reduce overconsumption, 1994/95). This Green sanctuary movement came out of a Quaker Church *ecology-theology* Council in the mid 1980s, and supports recycling, habitat conservation, energy conservation, environmental education, and environmentally oriented worship (Mulligan, 1999). Earth Ministry also proposes sustainability as "the great new factor of our time" (Gibson, 1998, p. 5). Sustainability is seen as a critical goal for humanity, along with economic justice. An "Eco-village" was the goal of the Plymouth Institute of Wisconsin in 1997 (Journal of the Plymouth Institute, 1997). This effort became an instrumental issue, as the organization had difficulty in obtaining governmental permission to proceed with the plan, but the ultimate goal is of a prefigurative, expressive quality, in giving people a model of sustainability.

The use of chemical fertilizers, pesticides and genetically altered crops is attacked in an article by Donella Meadows in 2000. Long an adherent of simplicity in northern countries as a method of improving conditions for those in other parts of the world, Meadows has been an author and spokesperson against such offenses. From the outset, some authors and voluntary simplicity adherents had seen the issue this way: economic activity and a culture that advocated consumption were important culprits in the destruction of the environment.

This "culture of consumption" that surrounds the average American is a keystone in the list of grievances addressed by the movement. It is described as being almost undetectable to most people who live in it, like many other aspects of culture. Meadows (1991) describes her return from living abroad for a period of time as a young woman. She saw with horror the lifestyle of abundance and waste she had been living as a child and teenager, but the more shocking realization was that she hadn't realized she was living any lifestyle at all at the time. Much of the literature attempts to point out to readers the cultural reality that the writers feel continues to remain invisible.

Adherents use data to convince others that unprecedented overconsumption by the wealthiest, mostly northern countries creates an environmental problem that is also without precedent. Durning (1991), for example, reports statistics for the United States which demonstrate the rise from 1950 until 1991: per capita energy climbed 60%; car travel more than doubled; plastic use multiplied twenty fold; air travel jumped twenty-five fold. During the same time, Japanese consumption increased even more rapidly. A report on the "State of the World" in 1987 claimed that things were worse than ever regarding the building of a sustainable society (Bhargava, 1987). As of 1989, the top countries in economic output were: United States (26%); USSR (14%); Japan (11%); West Germany (5.1%) and France (4.1%) (Meadows, 1991).

Dominguez & Robin, two very visible spokespersons for the movement, challenge this value of consumption. Their goal is a lifestyle change, enlisting people to reduce consumption. In 1992 they wrote: "Having challenged and confronted this sacred cow called the right to consume, we can look at another kind of 'right'. We have

absorbed the notion that it is *right* to buy – that consuming is what keeps America strong" (Dominguez & Robin, 1992, p. 18). *Your Money or Your Life* begins with an examination of the concept of "enough" (Dominguez & Robin, 1992). By consuming less, people can achieve several things: cease contributing to environmental degradation; focus on other areas of life that bring satisfaction, such as family and community; attain a deeper sense of peace and spiritual well being and become active in social justice causes (Dominguez & Robin, 1992).

Spirituality

Both Eastern and Christian spiritual traditions were cited in the first description of the movement (Elgin, 1981/1993). Simplicity itself has Biblical roots in both the Old and New Testament (Foster, 1981). The tactics employed in the spiritual area also involve the defense of the lifeworld, or private sphere of life. Methods of celebrating holidays in a simple way are offered through several channels. The Presbyterian Hunger Program, for example, has been issuing a booklet for several years entitled "Whose birthday is it, anyway?" Tips are offered for a "Simpler, More Meaningful Christmas," including avoiding debt, having a lottery around giving gifts, and giving gifts of yourself, not "stuff" (Whose birthday is it, anyway?, 1997 edition). This publication contains stories of simple Christmases, and "Christmas games" for families to play, alongside of reflections for the Advent season.

The *Ministry of Money* is a Maryland-based Christian organization whose slogan is: "Growth in Discipleship; Compassion for the Poor; Global Stewardship." It proposes a simple lifestyle that is based on the moral use of wealth. The tactics of the organization

include the spread of ideology through their newsletter, and organized activities designed to alter individuals' worldviews. In 1982, the organization organized its initial "Pilgrimage of Reverse Mission," a trip to impoverished areas in Asia in order for people to be "called out of their comfort zone" (McClanen et al, 1999, p. 1). One purpose of the trip is in order to help participants obtain "...a new and growing awareness of ourselves as 'first world' oppressors; to discover ways in which we might bring about changes in evil structures and systems" (McClanen et al, 1999, p. 1).

Economics

Reduction of debt is one of the more common targets of the voluntary simplicity movement. The belief is that alongside of the material things, Americans receive some unwanted problems. The "systemic" problem of debt is endemic in the US, the literature constantly reminds us, and the problem intrudes into the lifeworld. In the 1980s, authors reminded their adherents of the magnitude of the problem. Consumer debt in the United States tripled and credit card purchases quadrupled (Boundy, 1994). Savings rates have declined, while the national level of debt has risen. Debt to consumers was more than $735 billion in 1990 (42% more than in 1985 and 146% more than in 1980) (Dominguez & Robin, 1992). In 1999, personal savings in the US dropped below zero for the first time since the Great Depression (Thrush, 2000).

The nine-step plan proposed as a goal by Dominguez and Robin for simplifying one's life begins and ends with financial matters. All other rewards of a simple lifestyle flow from this central issue. The tactic here involves educating people in methods of reducing their spending and thereby increasing their joy. Both of these aims can be seen

as another defense of the lifeworld. After making "peace with the past" (of spending habits), the reader makes monthly tabulations of expenditures, evaluates how money is spent, learns to minimize spending and maximize income, and save money. Debt reduction is a website connection in the voluntary simplicity network – the *Concentric Credit & Debt Management Services* is listed on the database links site. This service offers help in consolidating debt without loans, budgeting and avoiding bankruptcy. One of the reasons given for reducing spending by the *Ministry of Money* newsletter is: "As an exercise of purchasing power to redirect production away from satisfaction of artificially created wants toward the supplying of goods and services that meet genuine social needs" (Ministry of Money Newsletter, 2000, p.11).

Another financial goal of the movement is in the area of work. According to Elgin (1981/1993), people who live a simple lifestyle are more likely to find employment as small business owners. Dominguez and Robin propose a job-hunting checklist that includes having a clear purpose in choosing a job, coupled with intention or willingness to perform the job. The end result, if the journeyer values the "life energy" that will be invested in employment, is that she will choose wisely and receive fulfillment from the position she chooses.

Health

Improved health is another goal found in the voluntary simplicity literature. Alternative medicine, natural foods and natural birth are just some of the practices supported by the literature. The Optimal Family Health Newsletter, published by *Six Directions* in Utah includes information on pre-and peri-natal psychology, conscious

conception, sexual ecstasy and breastfeeding (Fall, 1997). Tactics here include network building and education of the public. Database links at www.simpleliving.com reveal twenty-five websites for information on health. The topics range from food products such as herbs and juices to personal products like essential oils, soaps and cosmetics to be made at home, and bath products. Alternative healing methods – Reiki, natural asthma and allergy relief, and stress relief products are also found.

Social Justice

Issues of social justice such as reducing poverty and hunger and promoting gender and racial equality are also found in the literature. As early as 1977, one adherent of the movement wrote of the need for those of us in the richest areas to become sensitized to the plight of the poorest people in the world (Van Dam, 1977). The Ministry of Money reports regularly on issues such as peace and reducing poverty. One cover-page article in 1997 comments: "Our world may finally be saying no to war, but this evil [starvation] beggars war" (109th Newsletter, August, 1997). Included in its "Declaration From Overconsumption," the New Road Map Foundation (www.newroadmap.org) suggests that overconsumption is a "catastrophe for humanity" in that people all over the world need to be brought up to a sustainable, sufficient lifestyle.

Agrarian Concerns

The earliest publications of *Rain* included references to solar greenhouses (p. 4), and food distribution and marketing (p. 12) (*Rain*, 1977). In 1980, the same publication addressed "Intensive Agriculture" (*Rain*, 1980). Today, the "simplicity chat room" hosted by the Circle of Simplicity includes a "Gardening and Farming Board" that

advertises "Share your favorite tricks and tips for gardening and farming. Find out how others grow their own food" (www.simplicitycircles.com). The Society of St. Andrew, with four regional offices nationwide, works with farmers to glean leftover, less attractive produce to feed the poor. Their "Harvest of Hope" project brings people together for worship, gleaning, nutrition awareness and study (Harvest of Hope pamphlet).

Tactics

Collective Identity

Tactics utilized by the movement are indirect, prefigurative, address issues of collective identity and support the "defense" of the private sphere of life. Prefigurative political tactics involve the spread of ideology and the creation of a collective identity. The three layers of collective identity proposed by Johnston & Klandermans, (1995), (organization, movement and solidary group) are all addressed by the voluntary simplicity movement networks. The next sections describe the tactics found to be utilized by the movement.

Collaboration/Networks

The Internet is one of the major ways in which the voluntary simplicity movement of 2000 (like so many other movements) interacts with participants and the public. One example of the Internet being used to promote a collective identity at the organization and movement level is found at the website for the Center for a New American Dream, the source of the mailing list for this study. Through the website, www.newdream.org, the individual interested in either learning more, becoming involved, or meeting others with similar interests can find all of these possibilities. The New Roadmap Foundation also

hosts a website (www.newroadmap.org) that offers links to fifteen other organizations. Through the simple living website, people can go to a "links" database (www.simpleliving.net/links) which has connections to over 200 different organizational sites promoting various aspects of the movement.

This same network of websites offers many opportunities for people to connect with others and to develop a solidary group. Discussion boards are available at the simple living website, (www.simpleliving.net), where interested parties can comment upon eighteen different topics. These topics include bartering, job posting, a chat room and a "circle of simplicity" where members can leave various messages to readers and replies can be made via e-mail. This website also includes a study group option containing listings of voluntary simplicity groups and circles.

Prefigurative Politics

The Internet also facilitates the spread of ideology. Many of the publications and websites for the movement advise reducing the amount of material things people own. One such site is the "Seeds of Simplicity" which is a non-profit organization that works to enter the tenets of the voluntary simplicity movement into the public discourse. Their home page statement begins with: "Millions of comfortable people around the country are choosing the freedom of having less 'stuff' to worry about. Being happier with fewer trappings is easy when it saves you money, benefits the environment, teaches children meaningful values and helps others in need. Best of all, simple living delivers the personal satisfaction that only comes when you decide how much is enough for you. Less time spent on material goods means more time spent with family, friends, children,

nature and unlocking the real passions and values of your life" (www.seedsofsimplicity.org). This focus on a "simple life" is really concerned with changes in the life world and the "private" sphere of life, and VSOs work to spread this ideology.

Cultural tactics, part of the prefigurative model of political activity, are also present. Some examples are cartoons promoting a simple lifestyle and "web stories" of those reducing consumption. At the New Roadmap Foundation website one can swap recipes or place a personal ad.

Journals, books, magazine articles and other literature also point to this prefigurative style of tactic which attempts to both encourage a collective identity and spread ideology through the medium of culture. The letter of introduction from the Center for a New American Dream invites potential members to become part of the network of "like-minded individuals" where one can "share ideas and resources through our on-line conversations, and learn how to make your voice heard monthly...." In a recent article (Meadows, 2000), Donnella Meadows points the way toward alternative methods of agriculture. She reminds her audience of the tactic used by agricultural industry spokespersons – the TINA syndrome. TINA is an acronym, which stands for "There is no alternative." When industry representatives speak or write, Meadows points out, the reader is led to believe that their way of accomplishing the task of feeding the world is the only way. Meadows is engaged in an ideological war here, in which she is articulating a countervailing belief system, educating the reader about the competing ways of dealing with the task of feeding the world: organic methods. In general, there are

few references to direct, offensive political action, but many to withdrawal from practices that are environmentally or personally harmful.

Education

Since the publication of Voluntary Simplicity (Elgin, 1981/1993), books, articles and training materials on lifestyle simplification have become more commonplace. In 1999, one author prefaced his book on simplicity with "I take it as a given that there is a widespread desire for a simpler way of life" (Segal, 1999, p. xiii). Another example is found in Alternatives for Simple Living, which was founded in 1973 as a protest against the commercialization of Christmas. Beginning in 1975, this organization sponsored a bookstore providing resources on simple living. According to the website for the organization, it is a "non-profit organization that equips people of faith to challenge consumerism, live justly and celebrate responsibly" (www.simpleliving.org). The catalog the organization maintains for resources on simplicity contains 24 categories, ranging from "community building" to "peace and justice" to "worship." Under the "simple living" category, 15 books are found for sale.

Data are frequently used to shore up adherents' opinions on the situation. This is a part of an indirect tactic that seeks to change reader's opinions and spur them to make lifestyle changes. Thus, education and the use of data are often interconnected.

The "step-by-step" e-mail offered by the Center for a New American Dream is a monthly set of suggestions for both simplifying life and protecting the environment. In June, 2000, for example, the mailing instructed individuals to try "cold washing and line drying," citing data on global warning and electricity production producing greenhouse

gas emissions. In July, 2000, the same mailing offered advice on "declaring independence" from junk mail, educating readers on the increase in paper consumption and the problem of disposing of 34,000 truck-loads of unwanted junk mail each year. The "Dollar Stretcher," another list-serve e-mail, offers weekly advice on spending less, improving items that people already own, and avoiding advertising come-ons for products that cost more and give the same service. The purchase of laundry detergents that are in pill form is one example; these "pills," the list serve advises, cost 38 cents per load as opposed to plain powder, which costs between 24 and 25 cents per load.

Historical Situating of Voluntary Simplicity 2000

Introduction

Garner and Zald (1987) and Buechler (2000) call for a historical situating of any social movement analysis. While resource mobilization theorists focused on the importance of the political opportunities, the importance of historically situating particular movements has been seen as having a broader usefulness. History and society are formed by the same processes (Castells, 1983), and as such the structure of any society must rely on the shape of that society's path of development. Social movements change as society changes, and in turn they have the power to change society. Each social movement is both constrained by its place in history and at the same time privileged by it. Even the Marxists, for whom changes in the history of a society always result from a class struggle, see history and the dialectical process as inseparable (Castells, 1983; Hall, 1988).

While simplicity as a movement has spanned many historical periods in the history of the United States, and remained in abeyance for others (as in the 1950s), the voluntary simplicity movement of today is different than any of its predecessors. This difference can be attributed at least in part to the different set of macro circumstances. Thus, this survey of circumstances today, albeit brief, will serve to orient the voluntary simplicity movement under scrutiny historically.

Fordism

A society is profoundly affected upon by the dominant economic system, and for the modern day western world, and increasingly the entire globe, capitalism reigns. Fordism, the system of production and consumption that has dominated the United States since the early part of the twentieth century, is characterized by mass production and consumption. Hallmarks of Fordism include: mass production of homogeneous products; inflexible production technologies and standardized work routines, and the growth of a market for products governed by Keynsian economic policies (Ritzer, 1996). In addition, Fordism results in increased productivity and mass education provided by a welfare state (Clarke, 1990). Clarke (1990) explains: "Collectively, these institutions, which finally came together in the 1950s, define a virtuous circle of rising living standards and rising productivity, rising wages and rising profits, economic stability and social harmony" (p. 73). State regulation of economics has been an issue since Adam Smith, and states' roles in regulating capitalism have been apparent since the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries in advanced countries (Robinson, 1996). Keynsianism economic policies resulted from the Great Depression of the 1930s: "John

Maynard Keynes raised state intervention to regulate capitalism and offset its internal contradictions to theoretical status, and also developed practical monetary, fiscal, tax, and other policies to achieve this regulation" (Robinson, 1996, p. 346). With state intervention in the economy, life becomes more stable for the citizenry.

Further, Fordism is accompanied by social disintegration and individualization and the diminishment of the cultural richness of workers' lives (Hirsch, 1988). The Fordist system required and thus produced a new type of worker. Stability, always a requirement for capital accumulation, was also important for production. Workers who were spending their energies with drink or women were not as productive as the system required. Gramsci refers to the "new type of man suited to the new type of work and productive process" (1971 [1929-35], p. 286). This puritanical thrust, for Gramsci, attacks people at the most basic level, reducing them to parts of a well-functioning machine.

In the 1960s, change began which would permanently alter some social structures. Massive riots in black ghettos along with the Civil Rights, Women's Liberation, Student and Gay Liberation movement impacted greatly on society. This decade, in fact, saw the launching of a new version of "voluntary simplicity." Other grassroots mobilizations, ranging from welfare rights to rent strikes turned America into a battleground (Castells, 1983). Basic economic mechanisms, however, were not altered, and in fact the political climate became more conservative (Touraine, 1985). The decline of Fordism began in the 1970s, sparked with the oil crisis of 1973 and the decline of the American automobile

industry, along with the rise of the Japanese model of automobile production (Ritzer, 1996). Changes were occurring culturally and economically, although they were gradual.

Post-Fordism

While there may be no clear defining line of demarcation between Fordism and Post-Fordism, most theorists agree that there is a shift (Hall, 1988). Ray (1993) succinctly recounts the various terms for this change of circumstances and their authors. He writes of "...the belief, widespread in the social sciences, that western capitalism has entered a new phase of development which is variously called 'post-industrial' (Bell, 1974; Melucci, 1989); 'post-Fordism' (Aglietta, 1979), 'post-modernity' (Lyotard, 1991), 'high modernity' (Giddens, 1991), 'disorganized capitalism' (Lash & Urry, 1988); or 'programmed society (Touraine, 1981)" (pp. 59-60). Although each of these descriptions is unique, there are certain common characteristics. Each points to a reduction in a bi-polar class conflict and the growth of "new" classes, the expansion of certain cultural aspects of life, increased consumption, a focus on leisure, and new types of social protest (Ray, 1993). Technological development has resulted in production which can be accomplished piecemeal, with different tasks being performed in different places and assembled in yet another site (Castells, 1983). These new strategies of production require greater autonomy on the part of workers, and a reduction in corporate bureaucracy. Thus, the interests of workers can no longer be attended to by large trade unions, and workers, no longer part of such a large entity, may experience difficulty in feeling a sense of collective identity (Clarke, 1990).

Giddens (1991) sums up the situation this way:

> In high modernity, the influence of distant happenings on proximate events, and on intimacies of the self, becomes more and more commonplace. The media, printed and electronic, obviously play a central role in this respect. Mediated experience, since the first experience of writing, has long influenced both self-identity and the basic organisation of social relations. With the development of mass communication, particularly electronic communication, the interpenetration of self-development and social systems, up to and including global systems, becomes ever more pronounced. The 'world' in which we now live is in some profound respects thus quite distinct from that inhabited by human beings in previous periods of history. It is in many ways a single world, having a unitary framework of experience (for instance, in respect of the basic axes of time and space), yet at the same time one which creates new forms of fragmentation and dispersal" (pp. 4-5).

Individuals become more 'atomized' and less connected with each other, and lives become increasingly intruded upon by external forces. Collective identities are weakened, and class-consciousness reduced, with a shift toward more cultural aspects of life (Hall, 1988). This greater emphasis on the cultural reminds us of the 'new social movement' theorists who insist that the 'history' of today requires 'new,' more culturally-oriented social movements. Globalization has had an effect on every country, and the impact in North America includes a spark of material concerns and increase of ethnic movements (Rousseau, 1999).

Implications

There is a crisis inherent in this set of circumstances. While it is not the dramatic, economic type of crisis that dominated the early part of the twentieth century, it is nevertheless a crisis which affects individuals and to which people attempt to respond.

Increased consumption (some would say 'overconsumption') is one of the hallmarks of this set of circumstances, and lifestyle movements tend to expand in consumer societies. Issues such as media policy and investment patterns are difficult for people to affect, and therefore, even organized groups may avoid direct political action (Garner & Zald, 1987).

An ideology including "limits of growth" is a hallmark of movements arising in response to post-Fordism (Buechler, 2000). One such response is the modern day variant of the voluntary simplicity movement. The purpose of this study is to examine the movement at a national level. Are the grievances that the movement seeks to redress those of this 'new' set of circumstances? If so, we would expect them to be of a less urgent, more culturally oriented nature. Do the individual organizations target political goals, using political tactics, or does the movement tend to use the tools that present themselves today: cultural, indirect, prefigurative techniques? This movement of the 'post-modern' era is bound to be different from previous versions, and this study aims to add to an understanding of this difference. Just as with early versions of simplicity, it can be assumed that the historical situation of the United States today has had a particular effect on the movement, and voluntary simplicity, in turn, must seek to affect some part of this larger, macro picture.

Chapter Five

DATA ANALYSIS

Introduction

The data received are compiled first according to the sections of the survey. Organizational characteristics are organized and presented here in order to orient the reader to the type of organization that responded. This section was the first to appear in the survey, and responses indicated that many different types of organizations were represented in the responses. Next, the research questions regarding expressive/ instrumental orientation, goals of protecting private life from intrusion, prefigurative tactics and the style of participation are tested and results of the four hypotheses presented. Finally, the qualitative data are presented: ideology as operationalized through mission statements and the question on the importance of voluntary simplicity, and changes over time.

One troubling finding in the set of responses that was the presence of governmental organizations. Of the ninety-seven responses received, thirteen were governmental entities. Five of these were federal agencies, and eight of them were state-run. I have chosen to include these organizations in the data for several reasons.

These were included as members of the simplicity-focused Center for a New American Dream, the umbrella organization that furnished the names for the study. If social movements and their organizations are the agitators for change, then the inclusion of governmental organizations, which represent the dominant power structure, is questionable. Individuals, though, responded to the survey on behalf of their

organizations, and individuals may also join mailing lists such as the one utilized for this study. One of the propositions of new social movement theory is the existence of a "new" middle class, made up of educated people who are employed as management in the service sector, and who are themselves interested in the development of collective identity. The theory states that new social movements are *not* class-based, and therefore, we could expect many different people and organizations to express interest. Another possible explanation is that government organizations may seek to glean ideas from outside "change" organizations.

Organizational Characteristics

Age of Organization

Categories for year of founding are shown in Table 2. The oldest organization was founded in 1856, and the most recent was just begun in the year 2000. The mode of the distribution was 1990, with 5 organizations founded in this year. What is interesting here in terms of new social movement theory is that a large cluster (almost one third of the responses) of organizations was established between 1985 and 1994. New social movement theory literature began to appear at approximately this time, describing a different kind of social movement and social movement organization, along with "new" goals and tactics. This study will help to show whether or not the theories developed did indeed reflect the reality of the organizations.

Table 2

Year of Founding

Year	Percent
1995 +	8.3%
1985-1994	32.3
1975-1984	16.7
1965-1974	18.8
1955-1964	4.2
1945-1954	5.2
Pre-1945	14.6
Total	100
	N=96
Missing	1

Size of Organization: Budget, Membership and Number of Employees

Budget

Budgets ranged from $0.00 to $42,000,000.00, and the distribution was skewed to the left. Because of the shape of the distribution, the median ($500,000) is probably the best indicator of an accurate central figure for the area of budget. There were two modes for the distribution: $150,000.00 and $450,000.00.

Table 3 presents these data in groupings. The two large groupings fall in the lowest and highest categories, demonstrating that the sample included large numbers of relatively small organizations (more than one quarter of the responses) and organizations with budgets of over one million dollars. The smallest budgets make up almost three-tenths of the distribution; two organizations operate with no budget and one has an annual budget of $500.00. The smaller budgets also fall much closer together

Table 3

Budget

Budget	Percent
0 - $199,999	28.4%
$200,000 - $399,000	12.3
$400,000 - $599,999	12.3
$600,000 – $799,000	4.9
$800,000 - $999,999	4.9
$1,000,000 +	37
Total	100.0
	N=81
Missing	16

($0.00-$199,999.00) than the larger budgets ($1,000,000.00-$42,000,000.00), creating the long tail to the right.

Membership

The survey requested four types of information regarding membership: (a) number of members; (b) electronic subscribers; (c) other (e.g., newsletter subscribers) and (d) total number of constituency. Each of these categories of membership will be reported here, beginning with the number of members and total number of constituency. Just as with budgets, membership information that was received varied greatly.

Table 4 is a synopsis of parts "a," number of members. The range for data was 0-4,300,000. As in budgets, the distribution for this variable was skewed to the left, with a long tail to the right. The median (700) is a better representation of centrality. By far, most of the organizations had memberships on the lower end of this scale, with more than one-quarter of the organizations reporting 200 members or fewer. Approximately one-half had memberships of 600 or fewer.

Table 4

Number of Members

Number of members	Percent
0-2,000	72.3%
2,001-4,000	3.1
4,001-6,000	4.6
6,001-8,000	1.5
8,001-10,000	3.1
10,001 +	15.4
Total	100.0
	N=65
Missing	32

Table 5 displays the results for the total constituency. It is important to note that "Total Constituency" is not necessarily the sum of the other three categories. Respondents were free to complete any or all parts of this item.

The range of the data was 4,299,960 (min: 40; max: 4,300,000). Again, this distribution was skewed to the left with a long right tail. The median, which is likely the best representation of central tendency, was 2132. There were several very large responses, and several respondents indicated that large numbers of constituents represented the population of the state in which the organization was housed (e.g., a state park) or the residents of an area for which their efforts were directed (e.g., environmental efforts for a body of water). For the most part, though, the total constituencies of the organizations were more modest. One-third of the sample reported constituencies of 1,000 or under, and almost one-half reported constituencies of 2,000 or under. The most frequently mentioned number of total constituents was 500, with 5 responses.

Table 5

Total Constituency

Number of constituents	Percent
0-1,000	33.3%
1001-2,000	15.4
2,001-4,000	12.8
4,001-6,000	7.7
6001-8,000	1.3
8,001-10,000	5.1
10,001+	24.4
Total	100.0
	N=78
Missing	19

The difference between these two sets of data (members & total constituency) is made up of the other two possible responses: "electronic subscribers" and "other." Explanations of "other" that were offered included: supporters; subscriber donors; newsletter; catalog and quarterly paper. This category received 36 responses, with a range of 9425 (M = 2182.28; SD = 2022.44). Electronic subscribers received 16 responses. The lowest response was 50, and the largest 20,000 (range = 19950).

Employees

The "employee" category consists of two categories: a total number of employees, including full-time and part-time workers, and the full-time employees only. Table 6 reports the total number of employees: full-time and part-time together. The part-time employees' number of hours of work per week is unknown; this information was not requested since it might have presented too much difficulty for the responder to compute.

Table 6

Total Number of Employees

Number of Employees	Percent
0-10	59.6%
11-20	12.7
21-30	7.5
31-40	3.2
41-50	4.2
51+	12.8
Total	100.0
	N=94
Missing	3

The information obtained gives a broad picture of the size of the organization in terms of its employees – some organizations employed only part-time workers.

The distribution of total employees reveals that almost three-fifths of the organizations employ ten or fewer people, and the distribution is skewed to the left with a long right tail. Almost three-quarters of the respondents indicated that the organizations they represented had twenty or fewer employees. The median (8) is the best measure of central tendency for this "size" distribution also. The mode of the distribution is 1, which is seen twelve times.

The number of full-time employees only is shown in Table 7. As in the previous distributions for size of organization, the distribution is skewed to the left with a long tail to the right.

Table 7

Full-time Employees

Number of employees	Percent
0-10	67.4%
11-20	6.5
21-30	6.5
31-40	4.4
41-50	4.3
51+	10.9
Total	100.0
	N=92
Missing	5

As in the responses for total number of employees, over three-fifths of the responses described organizations that had ten or fewer full-time employees, and almost three-quarters of the organizations employed twenty people or fewer. The mode, with 14 responses, is zero (0), reflecting the large number of organizations relying on volunteers or part-time employees only. The range is 720 (0-720).

The size of the organizations is measured using the three preceding variables: budget, membership and number of employees. Budget is seen as the driving force behind size; it should correlate with both number of employees in the amount available for salaries, and number of members, in that money is both received from members and needed in order to recruit new members. Another factor here is that the larger government-run agencies represented tend to have both high budgets and high numbers of constituents. Each of these distributions was skewed to the left, with long right tails.

Correlation Among Dimensions of Size

Pearson Product Moment Correlations Tests were conducted on these three variables (budget, number of employees, and members). All tests were significant. Correlation for total number of employees and total constituency was r = .362** (significant at the 0.01 level, 2–tailed). Each of these variables was then correlated with budget. Correlation of budget and total employees is r = .957** (significant at the 0.01 level, 2-tailed), and the correlation of budget and total number of constituency is also significant at the 0.01 level, 2-tailed, r = .365**.

In summary, I conclude that the distributions for these variables describe a fairly diverse group of organizations. The very small organizations, with few employees and a modest budget outnumber the large, governmental bureaucracies that employ large numbers of people, have very large budgets, and whose target constituency is a large group in a geographical area. These three variables have been demonstrated to correlate positively with each other.

Spirituality

The number of respondents (N=96) reporting that their organizations had a spiritual focus or concern was fairly small. Further, of those who did respond positively to having a spiritual focus, a very small percent indicated that their organization represented a particular religion. Twenty-six organizations reported a spiritual focus or concern (26.8%); of this group, nineteen reported that the organization represented no particular religion, and 5 reported that it did. This number is broken down as follows: two Catholic, two Buddhist, and one Jewish. Two did not respond to the religion item.

Internet Technology

Ninety-two responses were received for this item. A large majority of the respondents (84.5%) reported that their organization maintained a website. Of those who responded negatively to this item (10.3%), several reported that they were in the process of creating a website. Five respondents did not answer this item.

While 82 respondents reported the existence of a website, only 16 indicated that the organization had electronic subscribers. The smallest number of electronic subscribers reported was 50; the largest was 20,000. The median for electronic subscribers was 500, and the mode was not helpful since all 15 responses were different from each other. This brief look at Internet technology for these organizations reveals some degree of sophistication in the large percentage that report the use of working websites, and this is one way of disseminating information. The electronic subscriber technology is one way of educating members and the public that appears to be underused.

Goals, Tactics and Style of Participation

Goals

Survey Goals

The survey asked respondents to indicate the importance to their organizations of 15 different goals. These goals were used in two of the scales created with these data for measuring hypotheses. They were a part of the "instrumental" and "expressive" scales used in testing Hypothesis 1, and were divided again to create two scales to measure Hypothesis 2, which looked at organizations' concern with intrusion of the "public"

sphere into the "life" sphere. The total raw score percentages for responses for these fifteen variables are presented in Table 8.

The data are arranged in descending order according to the column entitled "A major goal." Therefore, we can see that the most frequent response to "A major goal" was "Protection of the environment" and so on. Missing data are noted in the farthest right column.

Protection of the environment received the most favorable response from participants in the survey, with almost 100% of the responses indicating that this was a goal of the organization.

More than three-quarters responded that sustainable growth was a goal. The top three items, in fact, were part of the scale used to measure respondents' attitudes toward issues of intrusion. Expressive items and instrumental items appear to be equally distributed when observing the "major goal" category. The instrumental items take the top two positions, but also the lowest four.

Other Goals

The survey requested that responders add goals to the list that their organization pursued and which were not listed. Of the 97 organizations responding, forty-seven reported at least one "other" goal. A total of 108 "other" goals were reported.

These goals covered a wide range of areas, some of which were mentioned in a broader sense in the survey. For example, one additional goal offered was "Clean up the [name of river] River." This goal could possibly have been reported in the survey as "Protection of the environment" but was more specific in two ways – a particular body of

Table 8

Survey Goals

diverse orgs; does this reflect diversity of work?

Goal	% Not a goal	% A minor goal	% A major goal	% Total	N Missing
Protection of the environment	2.1%	12.6%	85.3%	100.0% N=95	2
Sustainable development / growth	17.6	22.0	60.4	100.0 N=91	6
Improved relationships with others	19.6	33.7	46.7	100.0 N=92	5
More peaceful/ fulfilled experience of life	40.2	22.8	37.0	100.0 N=92	6
Reducing production of garbage/waste (recycling)	25.8	39.3	34.8	100.0 N=89	8
Reducing consumption	31.5	38.0	30.4	100.0 N=92	5
Influencing corporate behavior	34.0	37.1	24.7	100.0 N=93	4
Consumption of locally grown products	57.1	23.1	19.8	100.0 N=91	6
Environmentally friendly transportation	33.0	47.3	19.8	100.0 N=90	7
Reducing poverty	59.3	24.2	16.5	100 N=91	6
Spirituality	65.9	18.7	15.4	100 N=91	6
Promoting equality	40.2	45.6	13.3	100 N=90	7
Preventing/objecting to environmental racism	41.1	45.6	13.3	100 N=90	7
Small-scale farming	68.1	18.7	13.2	100 N=91	6
Reducing individual debt	82.2	10.0	7.8	100 N=90	7

water was mentioned, and "clean up" was the target goal. Nevertheless, the additional goals reported were categorized – some augmenting the same categories mentioned in the survey, and others adding new categories of goals.

Table 9 displays the responses in fourteen separate categories. Environment, social justice, sustainable development, individual well being, health, education and human relationships were the most frequently mentioned.

Environmental concerns lead the list of "other' goals. Thirteen of these "environmental" responses actually indicate the *tactic* of education about the environment and human relationships to the earth. Protection of the environment, often

Table 9

Other Goals

Topic	%Total
Environment	43.5%
Social Justice	12.2
Sustainable Development	9.3
Individual Well-being	8.3
Health	6.5
Education	4.6
Collaboration/human relationships	3.7
Research	2.8
Agriculture	2.8
Legislative/Advocacy	1.9
Safety	1.9
Spirituality	.9
Transportation	.9
Financial	.9
Total	100.0
	N=108

specific targets, is the second most frequently cited goal (N=11) in this category. Included are wild trout, steelhead, and Lake [name of lake]. Other, broader topics such as "wildlife, water quality, open spaces, natural resources and roadless areas are also mentioned. Environmental legislative issues (N=5) included wilderness designation, study of environmental laws, reform of grazing on public lands and removal of dams. Under a "restoration" category of environmental concern, three specific targets are cited: [name of river] River, salmon & steelhead, and dry prairie restoration. Environment and sustainable development together account for more than half of the responses. The "sustainable development" category included 4 major topics: community/green housing. energy, habitats and culture. Social justice issues include some of those mentioned in the survey itself: equality and poverty. Other social justice concerns are added: animal rights, peace, prison reform and the war on drugs. The individual well being category is large, but five of the nine responses were offered by one agency. The "research," "education," and "legislative" general categories were all reported either as NOT being aimed at environmental issues or the target was not indicated. The responses for the agriculture category included: "Ag" literacy, food crop & native biodiversity, and stopping GMO [genetically modified organism] foods.

Tactics

Survey Tactics

Fourteen different tactics were targeted by the survey, with space for respondents to insert "other" tactics that were not mentioned. The 14 items were used in testing hypothesis 1, expressive vs. instrumental orientation of the sample, and hypothesis 3,

organizations' prefigurative style. This set of variables can be roughly broken down into six categories: economic, educational, networking, legislative, religious and cultural.

The total raw scores for these fourteen variables are presented in Table 10. The table is organized in descending order of frequency of responses for "a major tactic," since this should reveal the relative importance of the tactics to the respondents. The percentages read across the table for each tactic item.

Educational and networking tactics, used in constructing the prefigurative scale, were first through fourth place. The instrumental policy tactics are grouped together in this table, near the middle of the chart. Economic tactics fall with religious tactics toward the bottom of the table. Interestingly, as the "Electronic subscriber" responses in the member data, the "Electronic member bulletin board" did not receive high positive responses.

Other Tactics

Respondents were offered blank spaces in which to add "other" tactics – those that may not have been mentioned on the survey. Thirty-eight surveys contained a response to this question, and a total of 71 tactics were offered. Many of the responses were more specific tactics reflecting the broader items listed in the survey; others represented these broader tactics, however, were slightly different than those offered in the survey. For example, although the survey had three items geared toward legislative tactics, respondents offered nineteen additional options in this category. Table 11 is a synopsis of the responses under this category.

Table 10

was this directed toward cigarette activities or all org activities

Survey Tactics

Tactic	% Not a tactic	% A minor tactic	% A major tactic	% Total	N Missing
Distribution of educational materials to constituency	5.2%	12.5%	82.3%	100.0% N=91	1
Networking with other organizations	3.1	21.6	75.3	100.0 N=97	0
Educational media presentations	16.8	34.7	48.4	100.0 N=95	2
Setting up conferences	22.9	42.7	34.4	100.0 N=96	1
Organizing letter-writing campaigns to elected officials	60.4	30.2	19.4	100.0 N=96	1
Media presentations advocating governmental action	60.6	24.5	14.9	100.0 N=94	3
Organizing constituents for attendance at Legislative meetings	58.9	27.4	13.7	100.0 N=95	2
Organizing letter-writing campaigns to the media	60.4	30.2	9.4	100.0 N=96	1
Cultural events	52.8	36.0	11.2	100/0 N=89	11
Electronic "member bulletin board"	60.2	31.2	8.6	100.0 N=93	4
Media campaigns promoting the use of "green products"	70.2	23.4	6.4	100.0 N=94	2
Organizing religious retreats	89.5	3.2	7.4	100.0 N=95	2
Religious services	90.2	5.4	4.3	100.0 N=92	5
Organizing boycotts of companies/products	89.5	10.5	0.0	100.0 N=95	2

Table 11

Other Tactics

Topic	%Total
Education	39.4%
Advocacy	26.8
Networking	16.9
Interpersonal Relationships	7.1
Research	4.2
Financial	2.8
Cultural	2.8
Total	100.0
	N=71

As with the previous data, the "other" tactics responses were dominated by educational issues, with more than one-third of the responses. The education responses included: discussion courses in worksites and churches; internships; cultivating (ecological, economic, cultural, global) literacy; educational store; newsletter, and public programs.

Networking tactics offered under this title did include some technological tools – two respondents mentioned websites. Other respondents cited clubs, organizing watershed groups, partnering with business and organizing service projects.

Advocacy or legislative action tactics accounted for more than one-quarter of the responses. Some of the responses aggregated under this sub-heading are: writing appeals; legislative liaison to communicate with legislature; lawsuits; administrative advocacy; lobbying, and even "civil disobedience."

Financial issues ranked on the lower end, as they did in the first set of data, and cultural tactics were only mentioned two times in this area. Religious tactics were not mentioned at all in the "other" section of the survey. Research was mentioned three times.

Style of Participation

Part IV of the survey requested opinions about the importance of three variables to the organizations: democratic process, involvement of members and outcomes/ successes. Each item had three options for a response: not important, somewhat important, and very important. There were some missing data, and a few respondents replied that the item was not applicable to their organization. For example, several of the respondents indicated that the organization they represented was not a membership organization. Table 12 presents the entire set of data. Almost three-quarters of the respondents rated outcomes/successes as "very important" to their organizations, and more than one-half felt that involvement of members was very important.

Table 12

Style of Participation

Item	% Not important	% Somewhat important	% Very important	Total	N Missing
Outcomes (successes)	1.1%	18.9%	75.8%	100.0% N=95	3
Involvement of members	4.2	31.6	57.9	100.0 N=95	5
Democratic process	13.7	36.8	41.1	100.0 N=95	5

Hypotheses

Hypothesis 1

Hypothesis 1 states that the goals and tactics of the responding organizations would have an expressive rather than instrumental style. Expressive is defined as being concerned with issues of emotional support and social integration. The instrumental orientation is defined as those behaviors and goals that are more active and attempt to make a direct impact on the structure of society. This hypothesis was tested two ways: first using goals and then using tactics. Mean scores for each scale were compared using a paired t-test.

Using goals, hypothesis 1 was not supported. As predicted, the mean score for "expressive" goals (M = 1.93247, SD = .64811) was higher than that of "instrumental" goals (M = 1.86254, SD = .45044). Contrary to prediction, however, the difference was not statistically significant (t (74) = .991, df = 73, p = .325, two-tailed, 95% CI = -.07071 to .21058).

Tactics were also used to test hypothesis 1. Here, hypothesis 1 was supported. As predicted, the mean score for expressive tactics (M = 1.88462, SD = .42946) was higher than for instrumental tactics (M = 1.75425, SD = .36995). This difference was statistically significant (t (78) = 3.337, df = 77, p = .001, two-tailed, 95% CI = -.05258 to .20814).

Hypothesis 2

Hypothesis 2 stated that the goals of the organizations would involve a defense of the "life world" from intrusion by the public sphere. "Intrusion" goals were broadly

defined to be those activities that were directed toward protecting the way people live in their private lives, and "non-intrusion" goals were those that were directly concerned with changing some "public" level of society. Mean scores for "intrusion" and "non-intrusion" scales were compared with a paired t-test.

Hypothesis 2 was not supported. It was hypothesized that the mean intrusion score would be higher than the mean for the non-intrusion scores. A non-directional hypothesis was tested because a result in either direction would be important. As predicted, the mean intrusion score (M = 1.92345, SD = .43676) was higher than the mean non-intrusion score (M = 1.84903, SD = .51993). Contrary to prediction, however, this difference was not statistically significant (t (74) = 1.895, df = 73, p = .062, two-tailed, 95% CI = -.003958 to .15268).

Hypothesis 3

Hypothesis 3 predicted that the organizations' tactics would be predominantly "prefigurative" rather than "active." Prefigurative tactics are defined as those activities that seek to change public and individuals' consciousness. It is opposed to "active" tactics, which are defined as being direct actions that seek to more immediately change public conditions. Once again, organizations' "prefigurative" scores were compared with their "active" scores with a paired t-test.

Hypothesis 3 was supported. The hypothesis stated that the mean prefigurative score would be larger than the mean for the active scores. Again, a non-directional hypothesis was tested because a result in either direction would be important. As predicted, the mean prefigurative score (M = 2.03188, SD = .38308) was higher than the

mean active score (M = 1.40705, SD = .51929). Also as predicted, this difference was statistically significant (t (78) = -10.941, df = 77, p = .000, two-tailed, 95% CI = -.73854 to -.51111).

Hypothesis 4

Hypothesis 4 was tested using a Wilcoxon test due to the small number of items. This hypothesis predicted that the organizations would have a democratic, inclusive style of participation where member input would be more important than outcomes/successes. The importance of democratic style was compared to outcomes as reported by the respondents, and member involvement was also compared to outcomes.

When comparing democratic style to outcomes, hypothesis 4 was not supported. It was predicted that the mean score for democratic participatory style would be higher than that of the outcome variable. A non-directional hypothesis was tested since a difference in either direction would be important. Contrary to prediction, the mean democratic process score (M rank = 21.79) was lower than the mean outcomes/success score (M rank = 23.81), and the difference was statistically significant (Z = -4.515, p = .000), two tailed.

In testing the difference of means between importance of member involvement and outcomes/successes, a non-directional hypothesis was used to determine if there was a difference in either direction. As predicted, the mean for importance of member involvement (M rank = 21.62) was higher than that for outcomes/successes (M = 21.45). As predicted, the difference was statistically significant (Z = -2.373, p = .018).

The "changes over time" sections of the survey can also add some information to this hypothesis. A total of forty-six of the responding organizations indicated that some changes (mission statement, goals, and/or tactics) had been made since the organizations' founding. Of these, thirty-three reported that members had some input into these changes. Thirteen indicated that members had no input. A "participation" score was arrived at for each organization by averaging the "democratic process" score and the "involvement of members" score. The mean participation score for all organizations reporting that members had input ($\underline{M}$ = 2.6061, $\underline{SD}$ = .6344) was higher than the mean score for the organizations reporting that members were not involved in changes ($\underline{M}$ = 2.2308, $\underline{SD}$ = .6330).

Qualitative Data

Ideology

The ideology of the organizations is studied through two sections of the survey. The first method is through the mission statements obtained on the organizations, and the second is through the final question of the survey, an open-ended request for the importance of voluntary simplicity to the organization.

Mission Statements

There are ninety-two mission statements included in this analysis. Seventy-one organizations included the mission statement, either written on the survey or enclosed in a publication. Another twenty mission statements were taken from websites for the organizations, making a total of 91. One organization sent a response that included a publication with the mission statement, with no survey, and this was included in this

section. Therefore, the data reported here consist of 92 mission statements from organizations that completed the survey, and one mission statement from an organization that did not. Many of the mission statements included a variety of themes, and, as in the voluntary simplicity literature review, they were difficult to separate. Table 13 displays main themes found in the mission statements; these generally represent the "goals" category.

Two-fifths of the mission statements had environment as a salient issue. These environmental missions will be further subdivided. One-tenth of the responses revealed community issues to be important, and often, this category included sustainable development as a part of the mission.

Table 13

Mission Statement Themes

Theme	Percent
Environment	41.3%
Community	12.0
Research/Education	7.6
Other	7.6
Health	6.5
Sustainability	6.5
Social Justice	4.3
Recreation	4.3
Well-being	3.3
Spirituality	2.2
Financial	2.2
Peace	2.2
TOTAL	100.0
	N=92

All of the themes mentioned in the voluntary simplicity literature are present here, and the inclusion of research/education is indicative of the importance of these tactics to the organizations.

The environmental responses included several themes: protection of a particular area or natural resource, preservation/restoration of natural resource, environmental education (e.g., "eco-literacy"), appreciation of nature, environmental legislation, business concerns and recycling and waste reduction.

These mission statements can also be categorized according to the themes in the hypotheses. Protection of "life sphere" against intrusion from the public sphere is seen in many of the statements; expressive vs. instrumental styles are also seen. Prefigurative and active tactics are both present. There is very little mention in the mission statement about the involvement of members or democratic process, however, many of the statements did indicate a concern for people and communities.

Forty-two (45.7%) of the mission statements indicated that the organization worked in at least some way to prevent or fight the intrusion of large, impersonal institutions into the way people live. Of these, seventeen contained some evidence of an expressive orientation, while fourteen appeared to be instrumentally oriented. Seventeen of these "intrusion" responses were also seen as having a prefigurative stance, and twelve were seen as active.

Mission statements categorized as fighting intrusion included those that were working to keep some land areas beautiful and clean for people to enjoy: "To protect and restore wild trout, native steelhead and the waters they inhabit throughout [name of state]

and to create high quality ongoing opportunities for the public to enjoy." Ironically, five of the organizations that fall into this category were state-operated. One government organization reported working "...with others to conserve, protect and enhance fish, wildlife and plants and their habitats for the continuing benefit of the American people."

Some of these "intrusion" mission statements clearly combined environmental concerns with those of protecting individuals' way of life. One response, for example, indicates that the organization "...is one of the oldest and most successful environmental groups in the [name of geographical area]. Credited with forcing [name of state] and [name of state] to begin cleaning up over 1,500 polluted waters, closing two nuclear power plants, forcing the city of [name of city] to abate over six million gallons of raw sewage annually discharged to local rivers....[name of organization] continues today, working for clean water, clean air and habitat needed to protect fish, wildlife, and human health."

Alternative lifestyles are also included in this "intrusion" category. These range from thrifty living ("Promote thrift as a viable alternative lifestyle") to "...ecologically designed "community" based housing that is co-owned and co-managed by the residents...." Two of the responses in this category represented religious organizations. One Jewish Congregation included in its mission statement that the members are "...determined to make the process of reconstructing Jewish civilization a responsible, communal undertaking." Others simply desired to offer a beautiful retreat setting to people: "Offer a retreat opportunity in a place of great beauty and serenity...."

The mission statements were also examined for an expressive/instrumental orientation. Evidence of expressive concerns was found in twenty-one of the responses, while an instrumental orientation was apparent in sixty of them. This large difference helps to explain the fact the Hypothesis 1, predicting a more expressive style, was not supported when measured using goals.

Expressive mission statements often included words such as "beauty, balance, harmony, serenity, dignity, peace, and enjoy." Many of the responses addressed concerns of helping people to feel socially integrated, and connected them with social justice causes. The [name of organization], for example, states that it "...unleashes the human spirit: it empowers people to discover their vision, express their leadership and work together to solve hunger's root causes." Another response indicates that its mission is "To bring inner work of the heart into outer service in the world." Recreation, often in connection with protection of the environment, is also frequently included in this expressive classification. One mission states: "[name of organization]'s purpose is to provide a clean and beautiful outdoor setting for people of all ages and backgrounds while having a fun and educational experience in the natural world." Leadership training and experiential education are also accounted for. One organization reports that its mission is "To provide [geographical area] Youth Service Organizations with professional wilderness leadership training...so that these adults, may enjoy, with the youth they service, the power & beauty of [name of state] wilderness." Another reports that it is dedicated "...to the education of children and adults in understanding the

relationships between living things and their environment, thereby fostering an appreciation of the land and all life that depends on it."

Instrumental or action-oriented ideologies predominated, accounting for more than three-fifths of the responses. Actions supported and promoted by the organizations varied. Research and scientific actions were present in thirteen of these responses. These were mostly, but not entirely, scientific research agendas. One statement indicates that the organization exists "...to provide timely, accurate information to the public on matters that affect the environment, human health, and communities...." One public agency replied that for more than 100 years it has "...provided earth science information needed to understand and manage the Nation's energy, land, mineral, and water resources." Other research agendas include public policy ("Dedicated to protecting the ecological integrity of the [geographical area] National Marine Sanctuary through policy research, education and citizen action") and special agendas ("...the [geographical area] Peace & Justice Center is dedicated to research, education, and action in nonviolence as a way of life and as a means for personal and social change").

Prefigurative interests were present in forty-three of the ninety-two responses (almost one half). These organizations, often using instrumental means (62.8%), sought to infuse an idea or way of life into the mainstream of public discourse. Education was the most frequently mentioned tactic. Twenty-five of the responses include education as a tactic (not necessarily the only tactic); two include demonstrations and another three mention collaboration or coalition. Others were not easily categorized; words such as

"promote, ensure, protect, achieve, provide, encourage and foster" described the organizations' intent.

Educational tactics dovetailed with a prefigurative stance more than any other did. One example is: "The mission of Ecology Action of [name of state] is to educate and empower people to create a healthier environment by reducing waste, reusing materials, and recycling." Although most of the prefigurative, educational statements concerned the environment, not all of them did so. Education was also used as a tactic where other issues were concerned: "The [name of organization] is an educational organization dedicated to learning and teaching the philosophy, practices and principles of living that are self-empowering for individuals within the general aim of establishing decentralized, ecologically-sound, self governed and humane communities."

These educational tactics are combined with demonstration and collaboration in several instances. One organization reports that is it is recognized as a leader in the [geographical area] in efforts to "...research, demonstrate and educate people about sustainable living practices." Another explains that its mission is to "...foster dialogue, education & collaboration about environmental issues in the [geographical area] region."

Confrontational, "active" tactics were found in thirty-three of the responses, approximately three-quarters of the number for the prefigurative stance. These organizations aim more toward immediate change in society, and environmental issues are often the focus. One simply states: "Our mission is the preservation and restoration of the magnificent natural attributes of the [geographical area] waters, forests, wildlife, and landscape for the enjoyment of present and future generations." Other goals were

addressed through these active tactics: racism, communities' economic health, agriculture, human health, and emergency coordination services.

Some of the mission statements contained both prefigurative and active orientations. For example, one organization's mission statement reads: "The protection of the natural, historic, agricultural scenic & recreational resources within the [name of state] communities of [names of three communities]. This will be done by securing conservation easements, property on which these resources are present and by promoting the need for conservation through education & related activities."

Importance of Voluntary Simplicity

The other set of responses used to evaluate organizations' ideology was found in the last question on the survey: "Why is voluntary simplicity important to your organization?" Sixty-four responses were received.

Main themes found in these responses were: environment (N= 21); quality of life (N= 10); overconsumption (N= 5); sustainability (N= 5); social justice (N= 4); community (N= 2); corporate control (N=2) and local consumption (N=1). These responses mimicked the voluntary simplicity literature review.

The general environment responses sometimes were interconnected with other concerns. For example, one respondent wrote: "It can serve as an organizing theme from which numerous environmental/agricultural topics of discussion can spring from."

Another commented:

> This program empowers youth to be positive change agents for their communities. Living simply is one of the constant theme that arises as we learn about and take + action towards our environment. We believe that living simply is

> something an "effective, responsible, global citizen" should do.

One more example of an interconnected response is: "To reduce environmental impact, and human & animal suffering."

Others of this general environmental category were simple, direct references to environmental concerns:

(1) "Environmental sensitivity goes hand in hand with simplicity," and

(2) "Helps reduce pressure on environment & natural resources."

Some of these environmental responses concerned a particular geographical area, as in "To protect Lake [name of lake] we must do everything we can to protect the environment around us. Reducing traffic, encouraging bike and pedestrian trails, etc. are all very important."

The second most frequently mentioned category of responses, with ten responses, was quality of life. Two of these responses addressed spirituality, one of them quite succinctly: "It's a spiritual response to a spiritual problem." Two other examples in this category are:

(1) "Emphasize relationships with personal responsibility, and community responsibility rather than dependence on corporations," and

(2) "To maintain and enhance quality of life for our current community and future generations."

The issue of overconsumption was mentioned five times. Some of these responses connected overconsumption with other issues such as gender equality, global poverty and the price of energy. The following response is exemplary of the answer set:

> Consumption of the top 20% of people on the planet is devastating the earth. While millions don't get their basic needs met. Every person has a right to the basic necessities of life. Overconsumption by some leads to impoverishment of others.

The responses addressing sustainability were direct and simply stated. One respondent wrote: "We feel voluntary simplicity is essential to living in a sustainable world – if we do not offer voluntary simplicity now, we will simply be forced into involuntary simplicity late, as earth's resources are depleted."

Social justice issues accounted for 4 of the responses. One answer, connecting social responsibility and environmental issues, read: "In order to be socially responsible, we need to 'walk the walk.' It is critical to develop an awareness of our affect on the environment so that others can join in protection of our own planet." In general, social activism/justice responses were not specific, but rather more general references to action. One response, for example, referred to the low wages earned by the staff in an attempt to be socially responsible.

The issue of community was the dominant theme in two responses. One read:

> VS is an important facet of 'community.' Living through cooperative decisions about use of resources, sharing responsibilities, and the use of the common house that minimizes duplication of tools, equipment & appliances, cars, etc.

While this response refers to shared housing, the other "community" response concerns community development for low-income communities "...through local participation and control...."

The agrarian response was:

> Our emphasis on branding and prepared and processed foods disrupts the link between our local food producers and local food consumers. It also allows consumers to avoid confronting the consequences of their actions: e.g., labor, environmental effects, pollution from transportation, etc.

The response on "corporate control" describes the limits of voluntary simplicity: "We will not solve the 'overconsumption' problem by trying to convince people to use less. It does not work fast enough, as at anywhere the scale of use-reduction needed." This respondent feels that the appropriate solution would aim at the cause of the problem: corporate control.

Some other answers were vague: "It will tend to support common sense;" "Less work, more accomplished" and "It fits well with our mission and is consistent with many of the clients we serve." One response here referred to "involuntary" simplicity: "...our 'needs' have increased, we've jokingly said we've finally joined the 20th century, as the 21st century looms ahead – simplicity can be 'involuntary' in some regards – making do with less or 'doing more with less.'"

Ideology: Summary

The collective behavior theorists saw ideology as a fundamental part of understanding any collective action. The role of ideology diminished with the resource mobilization and political process theorists, who saw it as a "given" for all movements, and therefore, relatively unimportant. It is included in this study in order to present a more complete picture of the movement being studied. The values and beliefs that underlie a movement reveal something of the historical setting in which it takes place,

and help shed some light on *why* the social movement develops in the way it does. Community and sustainable development as well as quality of life issues were also see as a significant portion of the responses. These qualities are all found in the voluntary simplicity literature. Another study following this one might inquire as to where individual participants obtained the ideology that informs their participation – if it is "inherent" or "derived," (Rudé, 1980).

Changes Over Time

Frequency of Change

Three sections of the survey requested information on organizational changes over time. These requests followed the sections on mission statement, goals, and tactics. First, the respondent was asked to report on whether or not there had been a change in these three areas since the organization's founding. Next, if the response indicated that there had been a change, two questions were asked. The first of these concerned the nature of the change, and the second requested information on member input regarding the change.

Forty-one (42.3%) organizations indicated that there had been some change in mission statement since their founding; thirty-two (33%) stated that there was a change in goals, and twenty-eight (28.9%) reported a change in tactics. In short, fewer organizations reported change than reported no change, and both tactics and goals changed less frequently than mission statements.

Nature of Changes

Respondents were requested to indicate the nature of changes made in each of the three areas reported above. These responses were examined for the orientations that were tested in the hypotheses: instrumental/expressive orientation; goals geared toward protection of private life (intrusion goals) and prefigurative tactical style. Style of participation, that is, member input and democratic process, was not found in these responses.

Mission statements. Forty-one respondents offered information on changes made in their organizations' mission statements. The most frequently mentioned theme that was reported was the addition of sustainable growth and development issues (N=6), with environment (N=3), recreation (N=2), social justice (N=3), agriculture (N=1), community (N=1) and culture (N=1) also being mentioned. Sustainable issues included agriculture, communities, and smart growth. One respondent wrote "Originally a general book publisher. Now focused on sustainable living." Environmental issues included two mentions of land management and one that cited "...always protection of the sanctuary."

Both expressive and instrumental aspects were found, sometimes together in the same mission statement. The instrumental mentions (N=21) were more than three times the frequency of expressive orientations (N=6); three responses included both. Instrumental concerns addressed goals of sustainable living, land management, agriculture, health and farming, and tactics such as programs and methods. Expressive responses included recreation and the inclusion of people and communities being added to the mission statements. One answer indicating a change in purely expressive terms

stated: "Cross-cultural exchange has changed to cross-cultural awareness." One example of a response including both instrumental and expressive indications stated: "We now include people and communities. Our previous ms. spoke only to the natural world."

Goals reflecting a protection of the private areas of life (intrusion) were found eight times in the responses. These included the sustainability responses and those indicating protection of certain natural areas. One of these responses indicated what the mission statement changed *from*, but not what the mission statement changed *to*. It reads: "We started as an organization opposed to building the western bypass freeway." All of these "intrusion" responses referred to instrumental goals and/or used instrumental tactics.

Prefigurative (N=5) and active (N=4), confrontational tactics were mentioned almost equally. All of the prefigurative responses were also coded as instrumental, and one of this group was both instrumental and expressive. Active responses were twice found along side of an expressive style, as in this response: "Now manage fish and wildlife resources not only for wildlife benefits but for the benefit of people who use and enjoy them as well." One response connected active and instrumental orientations, and one included active tactics with instrumental and expressive conditions.

Six of the responses indicated that mission statements had been broadened, and four revealed a more narrow focus. One respondent simply reported: "Rewritten, expanded, updated," while another answered: "It has been simplified, focused."

Of all forty-one responses, fifteen reported some information on the mission statement prior to the changes indicated. Three of these indicated what the mission

statement had changed *from*, with no indication of what it had been changed *to*. Some of these responses were not very clear, as in: "We have a mission statement. Did not in the past." Others offered some insight into the direction of change, such as: "Broadened program assistance from agricultural erosion control to natural resources management."

One response referred to "people and communities" being added. This may or may not be referring to a style of participation; it may simply be a reference to an expressive concern for the well being of people and communities.

Overall, the number of responses for changes in mission statement was too small to make generalizations. As in other areas of the survey, the themes of sustainable living and environmentalism were mentioned most frequently. Therefore, this information serves to support the importance of these issues to the sample of organizations.

Goals. Thirty-two respondents offered specific information on the nature of changes in goals. Some of the responses (N=9) reflected expansion of previous goals. Additions of environmental goals were mentioned in seven of the responses, and each of these represented an expansion of prior environmental goals. One respondent noted: "We began with forests. About 6 years ago we added the [name of river] River Program." Another answered: "Less emphasis on forestry, more on land protection. Used to be 50-50." Sustainable growth was the topic of another of these "expanded" responses, and gender issues were added to another: "Our primary goal has always been to end hunger, but we've come to see that transforming the status of women must happen if we are to succeed in our primary goal."

Instrumental goals were added in 19 of the responses, and expressive goals added only twice. One of these expressive additions included an instrumental aspect also. The one purely expressive response indicated that the change was an expansion "...to address building cultures of peace."

Protection of private life from intrusion of external entities was found in eight of the 32 responses. All of these had an instrumental slant, as in this example: "As greater knowledge of ecosystem needs have evolved, park specific goals have shifted to restoration practices."

Of all responses received, eleven indicated what the previous goals had been; three of these did not report the changes that had been made. These included a change from an expressive orientation, a change from issues of intrusion, and a change from a health-related goal. The other eight responses that included both past goals and changes made varied greatly in theme. Some themes found were: environment (expanded or other environmental issues added); government programs (expansion); changes sought in one geographical area to changes sought internationally, and "Expanded from technical building issues to community participation planning, i.e., 'community design.'"

As in the changes in mission statement section, the sample for the changes in goals is relatively small, and cannot be used to generalize in itself. Noteworthy aspects of this sample of responses are the salience of environmental issues, and the high incidence of instrumental goals added.

Tactics. There were twenty-seven responses to the request for qualitative input on changes in tactics. This set of responses also offers little data in each category. The

trends found here remain the same as in the larger section on tactics, with educational (N=4) and networking (N=4) tactics leading in frequency of mentions. One response included both of these and legislation: "Utilization of partners and volunteers, friends groups, environmental education, outreach, congressional relations, etc." Other themes found in this section were legislative (N=3), technology (N=2), cultural (N=2), corporate negotiations (N=1), economic (N=1), and media (N= 1).

As in the changes in mission statement and changes in goals, an instrumental slant on tactics (N=14) outnumbered expressive mentions (N=6) by more than two to one. Three of these were responses included evidence of both.

Those responses coded as prefigurative (N=12) were three times as prevalent as those indicating a more active, confrontational tactical style (N=4). An instrumental orientation was found in nine of the prefigurative responses, and five of them were seen as including expressive aspects. Two of them included both instrumental and expressive evidence, as in one that included "creating access" (instrumental) and "collaboration" (expressive). All of the "active" responses had an instrumental side to them (e.g., "tours of co-housing, book published"). One response was seen as both active and prefigurative: "Educational outreach, diversity of services offered land users."

Qualitative Responses: Conclusion

This brief exploratory examination of responses is a small foray into areas where more research has been called for (Garner & Zald, 1987; Buechler, 2000): ideology and changes over time. Ideology was operationalized through mission statements and organizations' statements on the importance of voluntary simplicity. The changes over

time responses included changes in mission statements, goals and tactics. Some of these responses did not fall into the categories sought, and were too vague to offer any insight regarding changes. At times, the respondent indicated what the mission statement, goals or tactics had changed *from*, without an indication of what the change was. It would most likely not have been productive to include more questions in this area, as the survey itself may have become too long and difficult to complete. In short, more research is needed in these areas.

Summary

This study concerned the voluntary simplicity movement in the United States in the year 2000. Voluntary simplicity is the most recent in a long line of societal attempts at simplicity, and differs from previous attempts. Today's version includes a long list of concerns: environmental protection, reducing consumption, individuals' finances, social justice, health, spirituality, agriculture and sustainable development. The literature indicates that it is concerned with both "inner" life and more public concerns. One mission statement received in the study puts it succinctly: "To bring inner work of the heart into outer service to the world."

New social movement theory was used as the theoretical framework for analyzing these organizations. This theory addresses the issue of identity, and proposes that present-day movements are more concerned with social integration functions than with instrumental, active attempts to attack societal problems. This concern with identity results in movements and social movement organizations whose focus is more expressive than instrumental, that is, more concerned with individuals' emotional life than with task-

oriented actions. Another form this takes, according to the theory, is that social movements existing in an age of public intrusion into private areas of life respond by attempting to prevent this intrusion. In this sense, they are seen as more reactive and less proactive. This orientation is evidenced in goals addressing spirituality, individual well being, protection of the environment and consumption of locally grown products.

New social movement theory also predicts that social movement organizations existing today use tactics that are "prefigurative" in nature. Prefigurative politics may be described as actions that attempt to change individuals' and public consciousness on subjects, rather than overtly and directly attempting to change social institutions. Organizations utilizing this style would rely more on educational and cultural tactics than legislative and economic ones.

Finally, the theory proposes that the new social movements employ a style of functioning that is more process than outcome oriented. Democratic principles and member involvement are seen as an end in themselves, and outcomes or successes are of secondary importance. This process coincides with the issue of identity in that it is suggested that people become involved in a social movement more to feel that they are a part of something than to actually accomplish a major, instrumental outcome.

Results

The proposal that the organizations would demonstrate more of an expressive style of functioning was supported when testing tactics and not supported in the area of goals. To understand these results it is important to note that goals and tactics are different phenomena. Two possible explanations for these outcomes come to mind.

First, goals may be more visionary and future-oriented than tactics, in that they address the long-range picture of the organizations. Therefore, organizations may focus more on concrete, instrumental issues in the area of goals than in the more quotidian tactical area. The area of tactics, thought, is the workaday realm of organizational functioning that is limited by budgets, political environment, competition with other social movement organizations and other restraints. The second explanation is that the tactics may be more expressive because this is the form that has been most successful to the organizations over the years. The softer, less offensive tactics may be a part of why social movement organizations survive over time.

Another hypothesis was that the organizations would demonstrate a concern for the intrusion of public entities into private life. The responses did not support this contention. Instead, the sample of organizations is divided, possibly at the intra-organizational level, between a concern for these intrusion issues, in protection of the private, personal experience of life, and a more aggressive, outward orientation concerned with changing social institutions.

Another proposal of the study was that the organizations would demonstrate a prefigurative type of tactic. Prefigurative scores were higher than active scores, and the difference was statistically significant. Of these prefigurative tactics, education and networking predominated in the sample.

Finally, it was proposed that the organizations would demonstrate a style of functioning that was democratic and concerned with input of members. This hypothesis was supported when comparing the importance of outcomes/successes to the importance

of member involvement, and was not supported when comparing the importance of outcomes/successes to democratic process. Also, the beliefs of organizations about participation were compared to their actions in allowing member input into changes. Organizations that placed higher importance on member input and democratic process were more likely to involve members in decisions.

Qualitative responses were used to examine ideology and changes over time. Mission statements and responses to the question on the importance of voluntary simplicity each contributed to the study of ideology. Both mission statements and the importance of voluntary simplicity revealed that a concern for the environment and sustainable development, along with other themes found in the voluntary simplicity literature (individual well being, health, spirituality, overconsumption and social justice).

The themes examined in the hypotheses were sought in two of these areas: mission statements and changes over time. An instrumental style was seen far more frequently than an expressive one in each of these areas. In mission statements, instrumental goals and tactics were found three times more than expressive ones; in changes in goals, instrumental goals were mentioned 19 times, while expressive goals were mentioned only 2 times. Instrumental tactics were part of changes made in 14 of the cases (51.9%), while expressive tactics were seen only 6 times (22.2%).

A concern with intrusion of public entities into people's private life space was found in mission statements, changes in mission statements, and changes in goals. Almost one-half of the mission statements addressed this issue; changes in mission statements reflected that this was a concern in 8 (19.5%) of the responses. Changes in

goals revealed this concern with intrusion to be present in 8 (25.8%) of the responses. While hypothesis 2 was not found to be statistically significant, it appears from this qualitative examination that a concern with intrusion is present to some degree in the ideology and goals of these organizations.

Prefigurative political tactics were found in the mission statements in the changes in mission statements, and in changes in tactics. In the case of mission statements, this prefigurative style was seen in 46.7% of the responses, while active tactics were found in 35.9%. In the "change" categories, though, prefigurative tactics were seen only slightly more frequently than active ones. These prefigurative tactics were noted more in conjunction with instrumental activities than expressive ones.

This study of organizations identified as being interested in voluntary simplicity has implications for new social movement theory as well as for the field of social work. While NSM theory was useful in this analysis, it was found that its utility was limited. Perhaps the failing lay in the fact that NSM theory arose in Europe to describe the social movements occurring there, and this study addressed organizations in the United States. People's concerns with quality of life issues and the particular goals and tactics regarding social change both have salience for social work.

Chapter Six

DISCUSSION

Limitations

Survey Design

One limitation of the study lies in the survey design. The goal of the study was to provide insight into voluntary simplicity at the national level, using the organization as the unit of analysis. While there is no way to ascertain whether or not the sample is representative, 33 states were accounted for in the responses. This range could not have been accomplished with a study of smaller scale. Seven geographical areas of the US were represented: northeast, southeast, south central, north central, southwest, Rocky Mountain, and Pacific coast. Twenty-eight responses (28.8%) were from the northeast, defined as being bounded by Pennsylvania and Washington DC in the south. Eight organizations responded from the southeast (Florida, Georgia, North Carolina, South Carolina and Virginia), and ten from south central states (Alabama, Arkansas, Kentucky, Missouri, Mississippi & Tennessee). The north central states (Illinois, Michigan, Ohio & Wisconsin) accounted for eight responses. Four organizations from the southwestern states of New Mexico (N=2) and Texas (N=2) also replied to the survey. The Rocky Mountain States of Colorado (N=9), Montana (N=3) and Wyoming (N=1) accounted for 13.4% of the responses. Responses from the Pacific Coast (including Hawaii, N=3) represented 26.8% of the sample. The largest number of responses came from California (N=17), followed by Colorado (N=9), New York (N=6) and Massachusetts and Ohio,

each of which accounted for five of the responses. This synopsis reveals that the US was fairly well covered in the set of responses.

The shortcoming, though, of survey research in general and of this study in particular, is in the response rate. While an attempt was made at maximizing response rate, the actual response rate attained was 29%. This number was not unusual for a mailed survey, but it nevertheless limits the generalizability of the study.

Governmental Organizations

Some of the organizations responding to this survey were fairly large governmental entities. An examination of the data reveals that eight of the respondents represented state-level agencies, and five of the organizations were federal. Finding such organizations as members of a voluntary simplicity network was surprising. I chose to include these organizations in the data since they did support the wisdom of living simply, by virtue of the fact that they were on the membership list for CNAD. These organizations, though, were not found to be *primarily* simplicity-focused. The principles of living simply were necessarily only an adjunctive aspect of other work.

This raises the question of why governmental organizations would be found on this membership list and why they would respond to the survey. NSM theory suggests one explanation in defining the "new middle class". Klandermans (1985) proposes the existence of this "new" middle class composed of well-educated persons working in the service sector. This description fits most of the respondents in this survey; large majorities were directors or other professional employees of the organizations. It seems reasonable, then, to conclude that the organizations are members of the VS network not

because of some desire on the part of the government to simplify life, but because of the motivation of individuals in a position of power to choose this involvement on behalf of the organization.

Another, complementary explanation also exists. Many of these organizations were concerned with environmental protection, recreation and land management, and thus, they may be concerned with the effects of overconsumption on the environment. This would also constitute another area for research, in following changes over time of governmental agencies. Do they respond to changes in historical conditions with changes in focus? The Division of Subsistence Homesteads, for example, represents a government reaction to the financial crisis at hand during the Depression.

There would be merit in deleting these governmental entities from the main data analysis and instead grouping them together and conducting an analysis specifically of these organizations. In fact, there are likely other groupings of *type* of organization found in the responses. Religious organizations, or those that ranked high on strictly "simplicity" goals are two possible categories.

Omissions

Two variables were omitted from the original survey that respondents added in the "other" categories of goals and tactics. Because health concerns was found only infrequently in the archival sources, this goal did not appear to be a significant concern of voluntary simplicity. Surprisingly, health issues were then added 7 times to the list of "other goals," a total of 6.5% of the responses.

Research was a tactic omitted from the original list, and, along with legislative and financial issues, was offered as a response under "other goals" also. Some of the responding organizations were in fact primarily research-focused. A few of these were governmental entities, but some were public interest groups. Research was added three times to the list of "other" tactics, a total of 4.25% of the responses. It was also added three times as a goal (2.8% of the responses).

Discussion

Implications for Theory and Research

New Social Movement Theory

New social movement theory was developed in Europe to challenge a theoretical foundation that, based primarily on Marxist principle, elevated the importance of economics over cultural factors. The theory proposed that people do not necessarily become involved in social movements for economic gain, but rather in order to obtain a sense of collective identity. This concern with identity was seen as a result of the social alienation produced by late capitalism. The theory described "new" social movements as not being class-based, and defined a "new" middle class, educated people working in the public and service sectors.

The question about new social movement theory that arose in regard to this study was its appropriateness for social actions in the United States. Tenets of VS such as simple life, emotional well being, and spirituality appear to address the issue of collective identity and to appeal to people across class lines. Individuals' desire to simplify life and a concern with belonging both appear to spring from a single source: alienation resulting

from life in the "post-modern" era. The evidence that was provided by this study did not seem to support that belonging and intrusion were important factors for these organizations. The difference between expressive and instrumental goals was not significant, and goals protecting individuals and communities from intrusion were not significantly higher than non-intrusion goals. Perhaps those seeking to simplify life are not interested in "belonging," or it may be that these individuals find a sense of belonging on a smaller, community level rather than through joining an organization.

Cultural Resources

The study did not specifically test the premise of NSM theory that modern movements use cultural tactics to achieve social and political change (Williams, 1995). The results, though, did indicate that this style of tactic was an important one. Almost one half (47.2%) of respondents indicated that their organizations employed cultural events as a tactic for change. The study of cultural tactics is relatively new in social movement literature, and this area is one that warrants more theory and research. Also, theory could speculate on the use of cultural tactics in certain social contexts and when addressing certain goals. For example, the question arises as to whether goals of preventing intrusion of external forces into private life result more in the use of cultural tactics than those goals addressing social justice issues.

Implications for Social Work

This research has implications in two areas of social work practice: social change and the well being of individuals and communities. Social work practice addresses social problems and issues related to the physical environment, organizations, cultures, social

institutions, natural networks and funding sources (Mattaini, Lowery & Meyer, 1998). Moreover, the social reform agenda of social work has implications for individual well being and empowerment (Simon, 1994).

Social Change

Social workers consider themselves to be "agents of change" and as such, they are mandated to address change on many different levels. Individual, community, national and even global issues have been identified as areas for social work intervention and advocacy. The present study has social change implications for social work on three different levels: the empowerment of individuals and communities, well being, and social workers' understanding of organizational processes and types of social change, particularly whose interests are served. When social workers advocated for children's rights at the turn of the century, for example, they neglected to take into account the rights of the mothers and other workers who suffered similar abuses.

Empowerment. The social work mandate to protect individuals and communities does not imply that social workers should perform services without the input of individuals and communities. Using special techniques to find orderly solutions must include input by constituents. Another social work mandate is that workers help people to empower themselves by taking control of their lives and their communities. This tradition of empowerment in the profession (Simon, 1994) reacts to and is informed by the historical situation. In this particular place and time, social workers are called upon to be social and organizational reformers (Simon, 1994).

Democratic process and input of members were both addressed in this study. Based on the ideas of new social movement theory, the importance of both of these issues was tested. Social workers also concern themselves with these two ideals. Even when working with individuals, social workers are exhorted to involve the individual in formulating her own sense of the problem and potential solutions, and in choosing her own set of actions on her behalf. Outcomes are important in the field of social work, but supporting input from the clients served is even more important. It was predicted that the organizations responding to this survey would value both democratic process and input of members over outcomes or successes. The results showed that democratic process was not more important than outcomes, but that member input was more important.

What does a social worker do with this knowledge? First, it is important for social workers to be reminded that democratic process and member input are valid areas of inquiry. Second, these areas are held as important by some organizations, and research could help to uncover this orientation. This study involved social change organizations; a follow-up study might test the types of organizations that value these beliefs. Human service organizations could also be studied for the way they value these two important social work values. Third, the tradition of empowerment demands that individuals and communities be made aware of their right to member input and to be involved in the process of running certain organizations. Other studies are needed to look at the impact of democratic process and member input on outcomes and successes.

Organizational processes. The study used organizations as the unit of analysis and studied goals, tactics, style of participation, ideology and changes over time.

Organizations are considered to be a valid area of involvement, research and action for change in the field of social work. This work has been guided by new social movement theory, which could be helpful to social workers in examining these same aspects in local organizations. Social workers can help to guide the analysis of organizational processes and functioning. Through examining what types of tactics are effective in meeting member goals, social workers would be working for community and individual well being.

While this study did not address the issue of successes/outcomes of organizations, it does offer some insight into the type of tactic chosen. Prefigurative, consciousness-raising tactics predominated in the sample, particularly education and networking. Social workers are charged with educating the public on issues and researching areas that will add to public understanding of pertinent issues. Adding to the public discourse is an action that has more far-reaching implications than helping one individual client at a time.

Type of change. In the 1950s, social workers' concern with social change was directed at the protection of individuals and communities (Pumphrey, 1959/1980). This study addressed the issue of what kind of social change that modern day organizations seek, and how those organizations achieve their goals.

The issue of protecting personal lives and communities from "intrusion" by outside entities is specific to the modern era. This study tested whether or not organizations seeking social change address grievances that are concerned with the issue of intrusion. Results showed that the responding organizations did not primarily address

these "intrusion" issues. Instead, they appeared to have goals directed more toward other issues, such as social justice and everyday community functioning. If intrusion issues had been significant, there would have been more emphasis on individuals' well being (peaceful experience of life, improved relationships, spirituality) and direct protection of specific lands and bodies of water. This conclusion is important for social workers who are working with individuals and communities in search of change.

This data established that organizations' ideology, goals and tactics changed over time. Social workers for the most part look at successes and outcomes in organizations. The value of this study is to highlight that the issue of intrusion may be of importance for some people. If people have a felt need to address this issue, community organizers can help them to articulate this through working to have their voices heard in existing organizations or by facilitating the formation of new organizations.

Well Being

Individual well being. This study has addressed the issue of identity, where member input is seen as valuable. Social movements give people a sense of belonging, where they can feel that their contribution is important. This is one way that individuals work to avoid the alienation and powerlessness brought about by life in a post-modern society. When people suffer from a sense of alienation and do not feel a part of a larger group (collective identity), their mental health suffers in a way that is different from other situations. Just as the VS movement is in reaction to a "post-modern" set of circumstances, mental health issues are also affected by these conditions. One of the hallmarks of social work practice is the person-in-environment principle. Involvement in

a social movement may help people to feel that they are part of a group. Solidary groups, it has been noted (Aronowitz, 1992), help people to cope with the personal difficulties of modern life.

While social workers would not necessarily recommend participation in a social movement as an antidote for anomie, they might nevertheless help individuals to seek areas for community involvement that would increase a sense of belonging and empowerment.

Community well being. Community is another area for social work intervention. Social workers have worked on the community level since the earliest days of the profession. Early social workers advocated for particular, often urban communities, conducting research, educating the populace and helping communities to advocate for important improvements. The problems facing communities today are different than those of one hundred years ago. Whereas at the turn of the twentieth century public sanitation and building codes were needed, at the turn of the twenty-first century communities are more often suffering from lack of cohesion and powerlessness over intrusion from larger entities.

This study found that the topic of community was mentioned in 12% of the mission statements. Community housing, sustainable community development, intentional communities, economic well being of communities as well as efficient and reasonable transportation systems were all cited in this set of responses. This is an under-researched area in social work, and this study could help to move community well being more to the forefront of social work practice.

Conclusion

This study has used voluntary simplicity organizations as the unit of analysis in an examination of goals, tactics and style of participation. Much work remains to be done in this area. First, while simplicity as an ethic has been present in American culture almost continuously since the Pilgrims arrived, it has waxed and waned in popularity, and each new cycle revealed different goals and tactics. The Transcendentalists, for example, relied on a style of withdrawal from modern life and prefigurative tactics in their many writings educating the public on their ideas. In the Progressive era, more instrumental means were used to create opportunities for city dwellers to leave the city for short periods of time and enjoy nature.

The organizations surveyed for this study were found to use prefigurative tactics more than confrontational, active measures, and were fairly evenly divided in expressive and instrumental goals and tactics. While a concern with the intrusion of public entities into the private area of life was noted, it was not found to be a significant theme in the goals of this movement. This study also began an exploration of how social movements change over time, and included the area of ideology.

Social movement theories evolved over the twentieth century in a path that crossed individual motivations, resources available, political opportunities available, meanings attributed to "frames," cultural resources and the importance of identity. The most recent of these theories, new social movement theory, is itself not without challenges from within and without. More studies need to be conducted to test the

validity of new social movement theory for US movements and social change organizations.

It is hoped that this study will help to broaden the scope of practice for social work in the early part of the twenty-first century. The post-modern conditions of this historical period present new problem areas for people and also offer new avenues for social reform and social change. The role of organizations in social change merits more attention from social workers. Voluntary simplicity is one challenge to the dominant ideology, and social workers can utilize this challenge through the study of voluntary simplicity organizations.

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APPENDICES

Completion of this survey indicates your consent to participate in this research.

The Voluntary Simplicity Survey

This survey was constructed to measure characteristics of "voluntary simplicity" organizations. Your organization has been identified as having a focus that falls into this category: an interest in reducing consumption, simplifying life, protecting the environment and/or concern for issues of social justice.

Someone who is knowledgeable about the history, mission, goals and tactics of the organization should complete this survey. ***Please complete it as soon as possible!*** It should take only a short time to complete.

NO NAMES SHOULD BE REPORTED ON THE FORM; EVERY EFFORT WILL BE MADE TO ENSURE CONFIDENTIALITY OF RESPONDERS.

The information you provide will help to further the understanding of the nature of the voluntary simplicity movement. Your cooperation is greatly appreciated.

Note: Please forward a copy of a brochure, newsletter or other materials that describe your organization to: Patricia Allen, 245 Academy St. Bayport, NY 11705, or enclose same with your return survey.

Number:_____

Voluntary Simplicity Survey

Please answer each question as completely as possible. Use "DK" for "don't know" and "NA" for "not applicable."

Part I

1. Level of authority of person completing this form: *(Check one)*

   a. ____ Director b. ____ Assistant Director

   c. ____ Public Relations

   d. ____ Professional staff, other than managerial. What position? _____

   e. ____ Managerial (other than above). What position? _____

   f. ____ Other (please explain) _____

3. When was the organization founded? Specify ***year***. _____

4. Yearly budget (last fiscal year): _____

5. Constituent base:

   a. Number of members:_____

   b. Electronic subscribers: _____

   c. Other: ***(describe - e.g., newsletter subscribers)*** _____ Number: _____

   d. Total number of constituency: _____

7. Number of employees:

   a. full-time (32 hours per week or more): _____

   b. part-time (less than 32 hours per week):_____

8. Does the organization maintain a ***website?*** Yes ❑ No ❑

   If so, please include the address:_____

10. Does the organization have spiritual focus or concern? Yes ❑ No ❑

11. If so, does the organization represent a *particular* religious denomination? Yes ❑ No ❑ If yes, which? _____

12. Mission statement of organization: (*Please write or attach*)

_____

_____

_____

13. Has the ***mission statement*** changed since the founding of the organization?

    No ❑ *Please go to Part II*

    Yes ❑ *Please go to Question # 14*

14. A. What changes have been made?

_____

_____

B. Did members have input into this (these) change(s)? No ❑ Yes ❑

Part II
Please indicate with a check mark which of the following are ***GOALS*** of your organization.

	NOT a Goal	A minor Goal	A major Goal
1. Sustainable development/ growth	❑	❑	❑
2. Small-scale farming	❑	❑	❑
3. Consumption of locally grown products	❑	❑	❑
4. Reducing consumption	❑	❑	❑
5. Reducing production of garbage/waste (recycling)	❑	❑	❑
6. Protection of the environment	❑	❑	❑
7. Promotion of environmentally friendly transportation alternatives	❑	❑	❑
8. Improved relationships with others	❑	❑	❑
9. Spirituality	❑	❑	❑
10. Reducing individual debt	❑	❑	❑
11. More peaceful/fulfilled experience of life	❑	❑	❑
12. Reducing Poverty	❑	❑	❑
13. Promoting equality	❑	❑	❑
14. Preventing/objecting to environmental racism	❑	❑	❑
15. Influencing corporate behavior	❑	❑	❑
Other goals:			
a. _____		❑	❑
b. _____		❑	❑
c. _____		❑	❑

16. Have the ***goals*** changed since the founding of the organization?
    No ❑ *Please go to Part III*
    Yes ❑ *Please go to Question # 17*

17. A. What changes have been made? _____

_____

_____

B. Did members have input into this (these) change(s)? No ❑ Yes ❑

Part III

Please indicate with a check mark which of the following are TACTICS used by your organization.

	NOT a Tactic	A minor Tactic	A major Tactic
1. **Organizing boycotts of companies/ products**	❑	❑	❑
2. **Media campaigns promoting the use of "green products"**	❑	❑	❑
3. **Distribution of educational materials to constituency *(e-mail or otherwise)***	❑	❑	❑
4. **Educational media presentations**	❑	❑	❑
5. **Networking with other organizations**	❑	❑	❑
6. **Setting up conferences**	❑	❑	❑
7. **Organizing letter-writing campaigns to the media**	❑	❑	❑
8. **Religious services**	❑	❑	❑
9. **Organizing religious retreats**	❑	❑	❑
10. **Electronic "member bulletin board"**	❑	❑	❑
11. **Organizing letter-writing campaigns to elected officials**	❑	❑	❑
12. **Media presentations advocating governmental action**	❑	❑	❑
13. **Organizing constituents for attendance at Legislative meetings**	❑	❑	❑
14. **Cultural events**	❑	❑	❑
Other tactics:			
a. _____		❑	❑
b. _____		❑	❑
c. _____		❑	❑

15. Have the **tactics** changed since the founding of the organization?
    No ❑ Please go to Part IV
    Yes ❑ Please go to Question # 16

16. A. What changes have been made?

_____

_____

_____

B. Did members have input into this (these) change(s)? No ❑ Yes ❑

Part IV

Please assess the relative importance of the following for your organization:

	Not important	Somewhat important	Very important
Outcomes (successes)	❑	❑	❑
Involvement of Members	❑	❑	❑
Democratic Process	❑	❑	❑

Describe why voluntary simplicity is important to your organization:

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

That's it! Thank you for your participation in the survey. Let me know if you would like a copy of the results of this study and I will forward it to you.

245 Academy Street
Bayport, NY 11705

October 2000

Name and Address

Dear Director,

The Center for a New American Dream has identified your organization as one that promotes a simple lifestyle. As a doctoral student at the University of Tennessee, I am requesting your participation in a study of Voluntary Simplicity organizations.

The enclosed survey has been designed to be completed in about 10-15 minutes. ***Won't you please*** take a few minutes to fill out the questionnaire for your organization? If you as the Director are unable to do so, please pass the survey along to someone in the agency who is knowledgeable about every aspect (including history) of the organization. The information compiled will help us to gain a better understanding of the mission and goals of Voluntary Simplicity organizations.

In order to insure confidentiality, no names are requested on the survey and the data on the organizations will be reported in aggregate form. No organizations will be identified in the report of the study.

If you would like a copy of the results of the study, please complete the enclosed card and return it with the survey. If you have questions, please feel free to call me (631-472-4281). Thank you for your time and assistance.

Sincerely,

_____

Patricia Allen
Doctoral Candidate

245 Academy Street
Bayport, NY 11705

November 2000

Name and Address

Dear Director,

Several weeks ago you received a questionnaire for a study of Voluntary Simplicity. As of today, your completed questionnaire has not been received. If you have already completed and mailed it, thank you! In case you haven't yet replied, I am enclosing another copy of the survey. W***on't you take a few minutes right now to fill it out?***

The information you provide will help us learn about the mission and goals of organizations involved in Voluntary Simplicity. In order to ensure confidentiality, no names are requested on the survey and the data on the organizations will be reported in aggregate form. No organizations will be identified in the report of the study.

If you would like a copy of the analyzed data, just complete the enclosed card and return it with the survey. Thank you very much for helping us to gain a better understanding of Voluntary Simplicity.

Sincerely,

_____

Patricia Allen
Doctoral Candidate

VITA

Patricia Anne Allen has been employed in the field of social work since 1973. After graduating from the State University of New York (SUNY) at Stony Brook in 1982 with an MSW, she was certified as a social worker in New York State. In 1988, Ms. Allen applied for and received her Registered Certified Social Worker (RCSW) certification in New York State, qualifying her as a clinical supervisor. She has extensive post-graduate training in the family, systems and strategic therapy.

In May, 1996, Ms. Allen received an MS degree from the University of Tennessee in Sociology. Her dissertation for a Ph.D. in social work addressed issues of social change, social movements, and individual well being.

Ms. Allen has worked as a social worker in the fields of corrections, alcoholism, mental health, and community organizing. She has taught courses in alcoholism education and has been a field supervisor for student social workers. Ms. Allen has also taught courses at the college level in both social work and sociology. Presently, she is an instructor of sociology at SUNY Farmingdale, and is employed as a social worker for the state of New York.

Her research interests lie in the areas of gender, racial and class issues in the mental health field, and social change organizations and networks.