

**SOCIAL CHANGE COMMUNICATION IN THE SERVICE OF
THE SUSTAINABILITY EDUCATION MOVEMENT IN BC**

by
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of the Requirements for the Degree of
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Abstract

This project studied the communication challenges of the BC Sustainability Education Movement and formulated a communications framework and guideBlog to address these challenges. Designed to assist movement members in developing holistic and comprehensive communication plans for advancing movement goals, the framework and guideBlog were developed by applying current social change communications theory and community capital models to the challenges and barriers presented at the “How Sustainability Education? A Solutions Summit” event. While participating directly in the development and delivery of the event, the author conducted the research, which provided the foundation for the framework and guideBlog. The guideBlog includes specific recommendations for action for each of the barriers identified by participants, and reviews effective approaches and strategies, tools and resources, case studies of successful approaches and a sample plan based on the framework. This Action Research Project was conducted for the BC Working Group and Network on Sustainability Education.

Keywords: Social change communication; sustainability education communication; sustainability communication; environmental communication; green communication; BC sustainability education

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This report and masters project is dedicated to the
inspiring sustainability education movement
in British Columbia, Canada.

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1. A Movement Speaks: An Action Research Project

1.1. What Is Action Research?

Action research put simply in the words of Rory O'Brian is “learning by doing”—a group of people identify a problem, do something to resolve it, see how successful their efforts were, and if not satisfied, try again” (1998, p. 4). Action research is a form of praxis, research completed with the primary goal of taking immediate action based on what has been learned. It is practical, contextual and solutions centered. O'Brian (1998) expresses the inherent people centered approach of action research saying that it:

...aims to contribute both to the practical concerns of people in an immediate problematic situation and to further the goals of social science simultaneously. Thus, there is a dual commitment in action research to study a system and concurrently to collaborate with members of the system in changing it in what is together regarded as a desirable direction. Accomplishing this twin goal requires the active collaboration of researcher and client, and thus it stresses the importance of co-learning as a primary aspect of the research process. (p. 5)

This co-learning and active collaboration ensures that researcher and client (or community organization in this case) are contributing to the research design throughout the project. As well, this approach ensures that the final actions taken, as a result of the research, are given back to the community where the research was conducted.

The working principles of action research are presented by Stringer and Dwyer (2005) in their book “Action Research in Human Services”. They point out that the:

...key principle is that of relationship, for when relationships are wrong, it is hard to accomplish the desired outcomes of any project. Communication is also a central feature of action research, enabling all participants to remain informed and in harmony with the different activities in which people are engaged. The principle of participation signals the need to ensure that people are actively engaged in the work of the project, gaining energy from the resulting feelings of ownership and accomplishment. Finally, the principle of inclusion speaks to the need to ensure that all people whose lives are affected or who have an effect on

the issue investigated are included and that all significant factors having an effect are taken into account. (pp. 14-15)

Steven Kemmis's 4-step model for action research (plan, act, observe, reflect) was utilized in this project due to its practical and simple approach (O'Brian, 1998, p. 6). The focus of action research is cyclical with reflection leading to further planning, planning leading to further action and action leading to more reflection and further research insights. Action research is "...chosen when circumstances require flexibility, the involvement of people in the research, or change must take place quickly or holistically" (p. 9).

The action research model was chosen for this project because the project required flexibility in research design and outcomes, collaboration with all of the stakeholders and was intended to solve an immediate problem.

The following sections of this report are a personal reflection by the author on the process and experience of this action research project and are, therefore, written in the first person in a conversational tone to reflect the participatory nature of the author's involvement in the research.

2. The Project: Communication for Sustainability Education in BC

2.1. The Question

This action research project tried to find solutions to communications problems. The sustainability education movement in BC was not reaching the general public, policy makers and the media in a way that made sustainability education a priority for these groups. I wanted to find out what the key communication barriers for the movement were and what solutions could be developed to improve the situation.

So the project began by asking the question, “How could the field of social change communication contribute to the success of the sustainability education movement in BC?” Several questions followed this one, driving the project as it developed. These questions included:

- What are the major challenges of this specific movement in this specific context?
- What is holding the movement back that a good social change communication strategy could assist with?
- What further research in this field could assist the movement in succeeding to advance sustainability education in BC?

2.2. The Hub of the Movement: Why the BC Working Group and Network on Sustainability Education?

With these questions, I approached the BC Working Group and Network on Sustainability Education (BCWG), also known as walkingthetalk. The BCWG is “a social network for individuals, organizations and government to collaborate in order to move sustainability education forward in British Columbia” (BCWG, n.d., p. 1). They are a virtual hub for sustainability education proponents in BC. They provide a social networking site for members, a regular newsletter and events that bring people from

across the Province together. They can be found at their website, <http://www.walkingthetalk.bc.ca>.

I choose the BCWG for this project because at the time they were funded by the BC Provincial government to act as a hub for the movement and had members from every sector of the education system in BC represented within their working group. The BCWG acts as a representative of the BC sustainability education movement and acts as a major connector of organizations and individuals. Working with the BCWG meant that I would be able to work with members of the whole education sector as well as the Ministries of Education and Advanced Education (which were also represented on the working group). Since I wanted to study the communications barriers and problems within the sustainability education movement, the BCWG seemed a good choice to focus my research on.

After a constructive brainstorming meeting with Janet Moore and Maggie Baynham, from the BCWG on November 17, 2008, we decided that there was indeed a need to study the communications challenges of the movement and that the best way to do this would be to participate directly in the planning and implementation of the upcoming event “How Sustainability Education? A Solutions Summit”, which would bring together sustainability education advocates from across the province to brainstorm how to advance the movement.

My role as researcher and participant was to:

- Assist with the design of the Summit,
- Observe the culture and communication challenges that arose as the planning process developed,
- Probe the event participants for qualitative feedback through survey questionnaires before and after the Summit
- Document the event and the collective challenges presented during the event by participants, and
- Present the findings to members of the BCWG post event along with recommendations and solutions designed to address the communications specific challenges that arose through the whole process.

Our hope was that with a large subsection of the movement attending this event, we would be able to get a clear idea of what the major challenges were and develop solutions to address these challenges. The event then, it could be said, provided something similar to many focus groups taking place simultaneously during the day with representatives participating as a cross section of the whole movement.

2.3. Action Research and Methodology

The planning for the Summit began in late December 2008 and from this moment on I documented the Summit planning process, identified challenges, potential solutions and applied research along the way to assist with the design of the Summit in order to answer the project question (“How could the field of social change communication contribute to the success of the sustainability education movement in BC?”).

The research design and process was developed and conducted in ongoing collaboration with BCWG members. Throughout the process the main organizers of the Summit (all of them members of the BCWG) were involved in guiding the research. They provided ongoing input into the development of the research question, the approach to answering the question and to the development of methodologies for data collection. Survey questions for example were rewritten and edited by Summit planning members and the Coordinator of the Summit was heavily involved in all aspects of the project from beginning to end. This was a project truly done in the service of an organization and was indeed a mutual learning experience that benefited all those involved.

For this project I had four primary information and data collection periods:

- *The first* was before I approached the BCWG and before the planning of the Summit. I conducted an environmental communication literature review to learn about the themes and concepts associated with environmental and sustainability related communication and organizational culture change processes to provide a base of knowledge to work with. This knowledge assisted with the eventual design of and implementation of the event including message design and promotions, event structure and delivery (including the use of change agent mentors and highly visual green event components) and media relations efforts.

- *The second* was during the design of and planning for the Summit. I immersed myself in the planning committee in order to observe the challenges that arose during the development of a major Provincial event. Although I have been a member of this movement for many years, I have never taken the time to document my experiences in these types of situations and reflect on this documentation in light of current research. This approach proved to be quite useful, garnering a rich and helpful analysis of the internal organizational communication challenges of this movement. All of these observations contributed to the development of the survey questions and my communication recommendations post event.
- *The third* was during the event itself. During the event I had three photographers including myself document the event in great detail. I collected all the notes from all the small group tables and whole group dialogues, as well as sent out a pre and post survey to all the Summit participants. All of this information was coded for themes that covered the major challenges of the movement and the related suggested directions for movement advancement. These themes were compiled in the “How Sustainability Education? A Solutions Summit” Report which I wrote and presented to the BCWG members post event. These themes were also presented at the October 21, 2009 event “Transformative Learning: Building Resilient Communities Through Sustainability Education” which will include delegates from the BC sustainability education movement and the Ministries of Education and Advanced Education.
- The *fourth* was after the event and focused on the development of communications related recommendations based on a second shorter literature review and a review of potential formats for effectively presenting the recommendations and design examples to movement members.

2.4. How Sustainability Education: A Solutions Summit Event and Results

2.4.1. How Sustainability Education: Summit Planning Process Reflection

During the planning of the Summit, I took notes on the planning process in order to identify communications and movement cultural challenges that were impeding movement success. The following were key observations coming out of my notes. I believe these key observations show some common challenges faced by a diverse movement trying to achieve collective goals through a collaborative process and speak to the movement’s organizational communication challenges.

1. The movement struggles significantly with inclusion of all groups during collaborative actions and with clashes of group cultural and procedural norms. In particular, during the planning of this event the youth groups struggled significantly with the faculty and staff of the advanced education groups, as well as with some of the Ministry and Business representatives. This resulted in a significant amount of tension and disagreement between the youth groups and the rest of the representatives on the Summit planning committee. It also resulted in the unintended exclusion of upper administrative representatives from both the K-12 and advanced education sectors due to a planning process and event design that became very focused on youth needs. The final result was frustration on the part of all groups in the planning process and a further schism between these groups shortly before and after the event was delivered. Discussions post event focused on trying to find a balance between collaboration between all groups for collective action and the need for sector and group specific events and processes to ensure group specific needs and goals are met. Therefore within my recommendations I have suggested that each interest/sector/age group gain a better understanding of the other group's needs and cultures to better collaborate in the future.
2. The planning of the Summit was done by a committee of representatives of the BCWG including youth/students, faculty members, K-12 and advanced education staff, teachers, Ministry staff and one business representative. Each of these members was separated geographically and by time from each other, and therefore the majority of the meetings (all except for one) were done via conference call, videoconference and email. Therefore, the majority of the event planning was done via online and telephone technologies. While this created the usual miscommunication problems that can occur from a lack of face-to-face contact, it also became clear that not everyone was comfortable using or understood these technologies. Frequently during committee meetings the conference call system did not work, leaving some people out of the meeting entirely and in some cases stopping the meeting in its tracks. Working by email also caused its own problems with a portion of the committee members working during the day and another portion working at night (many times youth and faculty members). Time delays in information sharing and event design feedback made for uneven opportunities for participation and confusion and frustration over collaborative design and planning processes. For example, a planning document would be sent out in the morning of a weekday and by the time another member had read the email and had time to respond, they would find that the document had already been edited and resubmitted. The youth groups were particularly frustrated with lack of time to contribute feedback and the coordinators were frustrated by the lag in time required to obtain feedback from all committee members. What I observed was not only a difference in working styles and time available to the different groups but also a process that attempted to rely almost completely on online media which caused more problems than it solved. Therefore within my recommendations I have included the need for more face-to-face dialogue between groups (both in general and for planning purposes) and the need for skill-building around online communications

technologies so that the movement can better utilize these technologies for collaborative planning.

3. There is a great need within the movement for an understanding of who makes up the movement and what is being done across BC. A great deal of the focus during the planning stages of the Summit was on collecting names of individuals and organizations across BC for an invitation list for the event. During this process we collected over one thousand names of active “change agents” within the movement. This demonstrated a much larger network than first expected and also than was represented on the walkingthetalk network website which is designed to connect all of these individuals. Indeed during the event many participants mentioned the need for a networking or “hub” website to fulfill this purpose showing that many people within the movement were not aware of the walkingthetalk site and its services. Therefore, within my recommendations I suggest that continuing support for the walkingthetalk network site (via Provincial funds) and promoting this site for use as high priorities for effective communication within the movement. Specifically, additional outreach strategies such as the one conducted to compile this list of “change agents” should be pursued on an ongoing basis.

(It must be noted that after the Summit event the BCWG has undertaken a strategic planning initiative to address many of the above observations and is continuing to work on improvement in these areas.)

2.4.2. How Sustainability Education? A Solutions Summit Report

After consulting with the BCWG Summit planning members, conducting research, consulting further, and assisting with design and implementation of the Summit, I assisted by collecting qualitative data from participants on the challenges facing the movement. This resulted in the “How Sustainability Education? Solutions Summit Report” (Bonfield, 2009). An excerpt provided below describes the Summit, the 8 Action Themes that came out of the dialogue at the Summit and surveys and the methodology for the development of the 8 Action Themes.

At the 2007 event titled “Why Sustainability Education”, participants from post-secondary, K-12 and other public sector organizations developed the 10 Principles of Sustainability Education. These principles provided a guide for educators and learners on what sustainability education should look like in practice. In 2009, the BC Working Group and Network on Sustainability Education posed a new question to participants at their follow up event titled “How Sustainability Education? A Solutions Summit”. This question asked, “How can we build a cohesive movement

for sustainability education in BC?” The answers to this question are reflected in 8 action themes, which serve as a roadmap to education as sustainability.

The answers to this question are reflected in 8 action themes, which serve as a roadmap to education as sustainability:

1. *Radically redesign the education system* so that the 10 Principles of Sustainability Education are integrated into the foundation of the education system in BC.
2. *Involve everyone* in every sector, at each institution, in all parts of the province.
3. *Communicate and Connect* with each other, with sustainability education opponents and with the general public to keep a transformative discourse alive and collectively write a new story about education and its place in our society.
4. *Collaborate and Share* with each other. Working together rather than reinventing the wheel. Developing and sharing best practices together, coordinating projects and resources and keeping each other updated on successes.
5. *Cultivate Leaders/Change Agents* to increase the number of confident, capable and engaged individuals within the movement.
6. *Develop common planning & measurement processes and tools* to reduce work and allow for cross sector organization and project comparisons.
7. *Develop new funding and resource strategies* to sustain the movement and ensure the legitimacy of sustainability education within the system.
8. *Collectively advocate for policies* that support top down AND bottom up change within the education system.

These action themes were developed out of the major recurring dialogue threads emerging from the April 27th Summit. The themes emerged through a daylong dialogue involving students, staff, faculty, teachers, administrators, operational managers, business leaders and non-profit staff. The action themes reflect the collective effort to brainstorm and problem solve the way to “how”. (p. 4, italics mine)

The “8 Action Themes for How: A Roadmap to Education as Sustainability” was developed by coding the entire collection of notes from the dialogue (over 100 pages of text). This includes the individual table notes from each round and whole group notes from the Vancouver session, notes from each of the regional dialogues and the pre & post survey completed by participants. Coding is a qualitative method that develops categories (which are then grouped into themes) out of texts of conversations, interviews, survey responses, meeting notes, dialogue sessions and other human interactions. The themes resulting from the

coding, reflect a common thread within the discourse of the Summit participants before, during and after the Summit. (p. 12)

2.4.3. Action Focus 3: Communicate and Connect

The 8 Action Themes each provided in depth feedback from participants on what the challenges were, what possible solutions could be applied to these challenges and what the priorities were for action. Considering my focus was on the communication challenges of the movement, I decided that providing recommendations for Action Theme 3 and developing a communications guidebook for movement members was the best course of action and the most helpful contribution to the movement post event. This communications guidebook would address the challenges presented under this action theme heading and provide some examples of the direct application of the related recommendations.

Below are two excerpts from the “How Sustainability Education? Solutions Summit Report” describing Action Theme 3, Communicate and Connect:

Communicate and Connect with each other, with sustainability education opponents and with the general public to keep a transformative discourse alive and collectively write a new story about education and its place in our society. (Bonfield, 2009, p. 4)

Key Question: How do we ensure that our mutually created discourse continues to be transformative?

This action theme embraces the need for a transformative discourse, one that weaves a new story about our place in the world, what makes a good and prosperous society and why and how sustainability education can get us there. Many participants discussed developing tools and approaches for collective and collaborative visioning. They also urged us all to reach out beyond the institutions and organizations we are members of and talk with the people in our communities and within the wider public sphere. To do this well, we need a common and accessible language to work with. Sustainability is a complex and sometimes confusing concept and the better we are at helping people connect the concept of sustainability with their own lived experiences, the more likely our discourse will be truly transformative.

Communication is the starting point for involving everyone, since how we communicate, can make the difference between engaging people and alienating them. If we can't communicate with each other, we can't work

together. Participants discussed developing strong relationships within and outside the movement, building systems and tools for ongoing networking and dialogue, creating our own media and messaging outlets and going out into our communities to speak face to face with people directly. Learning and teaching members of the movement about interacting with the media, developing marketing materials and engaging in effective public relations was also deemed important. Finally, there was an emphasis on communicating hope and celebrating successes as a central theme of all communication efforts. While climate change and other environmental crises are a serious threat to us all, and we all need to be aware of this fact, scary messages of this type do not always get people engaged effectively. Participants recommended that we pair the facts with inspiring messages of hope and possibility as much as possible....

Questions

- How do we collectively develop a common language to speak to each other with?
- How do we create a metanarrative/new story to connect agendas?
- How can we keep the dialogue, conversations and brainstorming going?

How do we get our message out to the general public and decision makers? (Bonfield, 2009, p.16)

After reflecting on the themes listed above, I tried to group them into distinct categories (based on those I came across in my literature review within the environmental communication field) to give my recommendations and the companion guidebook some structure. After reading some work by Pierre Bourdieu (1986, 1989) on different forms of capital, I believed that applying the concept of capital as categories of communications development was a useful approach for providing a framework for movement members to think more holistically about movement communication and how they might develop their capacity to utilize communication more effectively over time. Therefore I developed a communications version of the Community Capital Framework used in Sustainable Community Development, focusing on those forms of capital that are most relevant to the communications field.

2.4.4. Communications Capital Framework

The following is an overview of a framework for communications planning, which will assist movement members in the development of more comprehensive and effective strategies and will empower them to move beyond basic information, news media and marketing models.

The Communications Capital Framework is based on research in the field of environmental and sustainability communication and is modeled after the theoretical concepts of alternate capital sources which has been used in community capital models for sustainable community development. The theory for most of the following discussion on forms of capital for this framework was taken from the work of Pierre Bourdieu (1986, 1989), a pioneer in this field. The concept of utilizing many forms of capital as a framework for asset development comes from the work in sustainable community development, by Mark Roseland in his book "Toward Sustainable Communities: Resources for Citizens and Their Governments" (2005). In this book, communities are encouraged to develop and utilize all the assets within the framework to mobilize communities toward the goal of a sustainable community. The Communications Capital Framework is meant for the same purpose to offer a framework that movement members can utilize to mobilize the movement and advance sustainability education in BC. The Communications Capital Framework is not designed with the assertion that it is a completely unique theoretical framework but instead was put together as a way of organizing what I believe to be critical areas of asset development for effective social change movement communication for the sustainability education movement in BC.

The Communications Capital Framework has been used to develop specific recommendations for the movement which form the basis for the communications guidebook *and* it can also potentially be used to develop plans and evaluation criteria for communication strategies in organizations wanting to advance sustainability education in BC.

The Communications Capital Framework utilizes the concepts of social, political, human, cultural, and symbolic capital. The framework is based on the assertion that all of these sources of capital need to be considered and developed as assets within the movement in order to develop communication strategies that are most effective for

movement advancement. The capital concepts within this framework are also informed by environmental and sustainability communication theory and practice.

2.4.4.1. Framework Components

2.4.4.1.1. Social Capital

Social capital in this framework represents the capacity of movement members ¹ to obtain useful resources through the development and ongoing maintenance of social networks and ties. The use of the term “social capital” for this framework is based on Alejandro Portes’s (1998) review of the term and the more poignant definitions developed by prominent sociologists in his 1998 article “Social Capital: It’s Origins and Applications in Modern Sociology”. In this article, he quotes Pierre Bourdieu who he felt provided the most theoretically refined introduction of the term. Bourdieu “...defined the concept as ‘the aggregate of the actual or potential resources which are linked to possession of a durable network of more or less institutionalized relationships of mutual acquaintance or recognition’ (Bourdieu 1985, p. 248; 1980)” (Bourdieu, quoted in Portes, 1998, p. 3).

The ties and social networks that produce social capital have both benefits and downsides. Both strong and weak ties can produce benefits for the individual but they can also exclude others from enjoying these benefits and/or limit the individual from enjoying benefits that could potentially be accrued by other ties and group memberships. Members of the sustainability education movement in BC need to be well versed in both the benefits and downsides of the pursuit and possession of social capital.

Social capital is included in this framework for three reasons. *First*, because the development and maintenance of social ties and networks requires deliberate investment by individuals and this investment includes the utilization of strong interpersonal communication skills. Members need to be aware of the benefits of their current networks, learn to increase the potential for accruing benefits from these networks and attempt to increase networks and ties that provide increased access to social capital. The *second* reason this concept is included in this framework is because it

¹ Movement members include individuals, organizations and umbrella organizations within the movement.

is important to see how social capital can produce human, cultural and political capital resources for the movement. Portes discusses how the 'capital' in social capital can many times come in the form of access to educational opportunities, membership in notable organizations or status and power that would greatly benefit the movement as a whole. *Third*, movement members need to be acutely aware of the potential negative affects of social capital such as exclusion of outsiders from group access to social capital, suppression of group members who excel or succeed in ways that are outside of group norms, demands for group conformity within the movement and the downward levelling norm that keeps group members at the same level as others (Portes, 1998, p. 15-17). If each member of the movement has access to strong social capital sources and the movement itself is a source of social capital for movement members, the chance of success for achievement of movement goals could be greatly enhanced.

The discussion reflected in Action Theme 3 around relationship building, outreach, connections and mainstreaming sustainability education points to the need for the understanding of and intentional development of social capital by movement members.

Building Social Capital: Recommendations for the Movement

Four overall recommendations come out of this component of the framework for this movement. *First*, the movement needs to develop a strong group identity, which current and new members can ascribe to so that solidarity, social norms and trust within the movement can be achieved. *Second*, movement members need to be self and movement reflective so that the movement does not become too insular and exclusionary of potential new members. *Third*, movement members need to become adept at building relationships with others. This means that movement members need to develop skill sets around and capacity for rapport building, negotiation and dialogue, conflict resolution and problem solving within the movement and between movement members and outside parties. *Finally*, movement members should consider consciously developing and utilizing social relationships for the benefit of the movement. Each member has the potential to build the social ties, which could advance the movement and should make an effort to increase these ties. Priority for expanding the social network would be with those in positions of power and influence. Thought leaders,

government employees, artists, technicians and others would all contribute valuable assets to the movement.

Specific recommendations below focus on actions to build social capital but also improve group culture conditions so that outside members feel comfortable creating ties with movement members and contributing to movement goals.

1. Each organization should support and participate actively in the development and betterment of the BC Working Group and Network on Sustainability Education as a representative of the movement and central focus of political and symbolic power.
2. Support and utilize the walkingthetalk social networking and information sharing website.
3. Increase the knowledge base within the movement on social capital theory for better utilization of capital in relation to movement networks and ties.
4. Include in training and education sessions, information on relationship building, interpersonal communication, dialogue and negotiation skills.
5. Offer as many opportunities for movement members to meet face-face for planning initiatives so that stronger more meaningful relationships are built. This will increase the likelihood that movement members will work together and new members or other citizens not part of the movement can be included, further building potential social ties and the related social capital.
6. Conduct an assessment of the internal culture of the movement and its potential barriers to outsiders.
7. Have all members consider carefully the rhetoric and language used to describe the movement and its goals and review how this framing of the movement might attract or detract potential new movement members.

2.4.4.1.2. Political Capital

Political capital in this framework represents the capacity of movement members to gain influence over political processes for the purposes of furthering movement goals. This includes appropriate representation in the media to get issues on the agenda, at public dialogues, within and through the government and as thought leaders with lobbying power in communities across BC.

Regina Briner and Heidi Wittmer (2000) distinguish between instrumental and structural political capital.

Instrumental political capital is defined in the actors' perspective as the resources which actors can use to influence policy formation processes and realize outcomes in their interest. Structural political capital is defined in the public perspective and refers to variables of the political system which condition the actor's possibilities to accumulate instrumental political capital and to use it effectively. (p. ii)

Without connected, articulate, knowledgeable and respected thought leaders with instrumental political power, the movement as a whole cannot communicate internally or externally with much legitimacy or further its goals in the political arena. This will also result in the movement continuing to be underfunded, under resourced, deficient in human capital and lacking in symbolic power. While political capital can be developed through the use of economic capital, the focus of this section is on how the developed social capital (discussed above) can be converted into political capital for movement utilization.

Converting Social Capital into Political Capital

Briner and Wittmer (2000) list the following transformations of social capital into political capital as viewed in practice in case studies from the Thailand forest conservation reform movement:

- *Electoral leverage.* "Actors such as NGOs and POs, which dispose of a high level of social capital in the form of organizations and networks, can try to convert it into instrumental political capital in form of electoral leverage" (p. 13).
- *Direct participation in the legislative process.* "The social capital of the supporters of the People's draft allowed them to make sure of this possibility and collect more than 50,000 signatures, a process, which definitely requires a high degree of organization and logistical support" (p. 14).
- *Disruptive leverage.* The disruption of the economic system in some way whether through blockades, boycotts etc which requires a large network oriented towards a common goal (p. 15).
- *Negotiations between peak organizations* based on the built social capital of an organization with other organizations, these organizations were able to lobby and negotiate with the government as a collective, increasing their voice and power considerably (p.15).
- *Lobbyism.* "It appears justified to assume that social capital held by this group in the form of elites...may have been useful for building up political capital by lobbying" (p. 16).

- *Strategic Use of Scientific Knowledge.* “The alliance between academics and the grassroots-oriented NGO and PO movement is a distinctive feature of Thai politics, which has been described as a ‘third force.’” (p. 16).
- *Politicizability and Use of Ideological Resources.* Built social capital in the form of networks and relationships with journalists and media groups can greatly assist a movement in politicizing an issue of interest and placing it in the centre of the public discourse. Being able to draw on these resources while piggy-backing on symbolic frames can be of great use to the movement (p. 17).
- *International influence and iso-morphic pressure.* Built networks and relationships or memberships in global organizations and agreements such as the UN’s Decade of Education for Sustainable Development (2005-2015) can assist with mobilization of instrumental political capital (p.18).
- *Discretionary Administrative Authority.* Networks and relationships with government bureaucrats and administrators can be converted into political capital with high potential for impact including agenda creation and Bill formation (p. 18).

Building Political Capital: Recommendations for the Movement

Besides utilizing social capital to leverage political capital, literature in environmental communication focuses a great deal on the need for better public participation processes and greater representation and opportunities for citizens to have their voices heard in public forums. The need to address public participation models and for better representation in public forums is also important for the sustainability education movement in BC. In order for the movement to advance its goals, it must ensure it has respected, articulate and informed voices speaking on the movement’s behalf in public forums and political debates.

1. Take stock of the forms of social capital that movement members have access to that can be converted into political capital specifically.
2. Prioritize which forms of social capital may need to be developed and which ones can be converted in the near and medium term future. For example, the vast network of respected academics in BC could be mobilized to get sustainability education on the agenda for the next federal election. A few individuals in the movement may be the ones with many connections who could build the momentum.
3. Provide training on effective public speaking and utilization of message frames.

4. Track public forums on political issues in BC and inform members of these opportunities to attend and represent the voice/perspective of sustainability education.
3. Connect with and inform those respected and influential individuals who might have access to many of these forums (or the development of them) and communicate the movement's goals, story frames and connection to other political issues which might be listed as higher on the agenda at the current time.
4. Develop community forums across BC to connect and communicate with BC citizens. Educating and empowering citizens across BC will likely increase dialogue and a favorable public discourse around sustainability education.

2.4.4.1.3. *Symbolic Capital*

Symbolic capital in this framework represents the capacity of movement members to exercise symbolic power and legitimately deconstruct and reconstruct a vision of social reality, which better aligns with the movement's goals and values. This includes understanding the complexity of the public discourse surrounding the movement's values and having the capacity to intercede in this discourse to ensure that movement voices and central principles are interjected into the public dialogue. This also includes the capacity of the movement to develop a common language, set of symbols and shared frames of reference for communicating about the movement and its goals. The development of a strong theory that appropriately describes the world in a way that is compatible with movement values is of utmost importance.

Pierre Bourdieu (1989) asserts that symbolic power is the power to name, classify and group social and objective reality. If a group has symbolic power and therefore can name and classify social phenomena, it also has the power to decide what the natural and common sense actions of that thing or group is. Symbolic power then, is the power to legitimately reclassify the social world. Therefore, the movement needs to focus on entering the symbolic struggle by reconstructing the classifications and groupings that render the objective structures of society in a particularly natural or evident way which hinders the progress towards a sustainable society. The movement needs to 'make the world strange' in the eyes of the voting public in BC and present a vision of a world that both makes better sense and directs action towards the realization of this vision.

Bourdieu (1989) discusses what:

...appears to be a universal property of human experience, namely, the fact that the familiar world tends to be 'taken for granted,' perceived as natural. If the social world tends to be perceived as evident....this is because the dispositions of agents, their habitus, that is, the mental structures through which they apprehend the social world, are essentially the product of internalization of the structures of that world. (p.18)

As mentioned previously, the movement needs to make the current symbolic representation of reality 'strange'. Specifically, it needs to redesign the theory of the 'good life', 'progress', 'success', the purpose of human societies and most important, the education system in our society. The movement needs to question and deconstruct and then reconstruct how education fits into this new world vision, what it means to get a good education, what productive knowledge is and how symbolic capital is produced. The movement also needs to reclassify the symbolic representations of nature, consumption, economy, industry, and social equity relations to better illustrate what sustainability means.

Bourdieu (1989) describes how symbolic struggles such as this develop. He says that these struggles are a negotiation of personal and group identity as well as the negotiation of descriptions and explanations for social phenomena and social structures and who has the power to define and describe. He tells us that:

Symbolic struggles over the perception of the social world may take two different forms. On the objective side, one may act by actions of representation, individual or collective, meant to display and to throw into relief certain realities: I am thinking for instance of demonstrations whose goal is to exhibit a group, its size, its strength, its cohesiveness to make it exist visibly...On the subjective side, one may act by trying to transform categories of perception and appreciation of the social world, the cognitive and evaluative structures through which it is constructed. The categories of perception, the schemata of classification, that is, essentially, the words, the names which construct social reality as much as they express it, are the stake par excellence of political struggle, which is a struggle to impose the legitimate principle of vision and division, i.e., a struggle over the legitimate exercise of what I call the 'theory effect.' (pp. 20-21)

Bourdieu (1989) also asserts that one cannot gain symbolic power without already having built symbolic capital. Symbolic capital is what an individual can “cash in” for symbolic power. The ability to legitimately name and classify the social world cannot be done with any effectiveness by one who has not built up symbolic capital in previous battles. In other words, not just anyone can exercise legitimate naming power. He tells us that:

To change the world, one has to change the ways of world-making, that is, the vision of the world and the practical operations by which groups are produced and reproduced. Symbolic power, whose form par excellence is the power to make groups (groups that are already established and have to be consecrated or groups that have yet to be constituted such as the Marxian proletariat), rests on two conditions. Firstly, as any form of performative discourse, symbolic power has to be based on the possession of symbolic capital. The power to impose on other minds a vision, old or new, of social divisions depends on the social authority acquired in previous struggles. Symbolic capital is a credit; it is the power granted to those who have obtained sufficient recognition to be in a position to impose recognition... Secondly, symbolic efficacy depends on the degree to which the vision proposed is founded in reality... The ‘theory effect’ is all the more powerful the more adequate the theory is. Symbolic power is the power to make things with word... In this sense, *symbolic power is a power of consecration or revelation*, the power to consecrate or to reveal things that are already there. (Bourdieu, 1989, p. 23)

One builds symbolic power through the legitimating systems controlled by the state, which can grant credentials that allow individuals to exercise symbolic power.

A credential such as a school diploma is a piece of universally recognized and guaranteed symbolic capital, good on all markets. As an official definition of an official identity, it frees its holder from the symbolic struggle of all against all by imposing the universally approved perspective... The legal consecration of symbolic capital confers upon a perspective an absolute, universal value, thus snatching it from a relativity that is by definition inherent in every point of view, as a view taken from a particular point in social space. (pp. 21-22)

The sustainability education movement has a great deal of symbolic capital legitimized by the current social structures and ‘common-sense’ construction of our social reality. Recognizing the immense amount of symbolic capital held by this movement is the first step in the mobilization of symbolic power for the re-visioning of

our social world. It is not only within the movement's power to reconstruct the common-sense view of the world and the social structures that support it, the movement is particularly well placed with a large stock of symbolic capital to carry out this work. The collective symbolic capital of the sustainability education movement in BC, mobilized for a common cause would go a long way towards developing a vision of an education system that contributed to a more just, economically stable and environmentally healthy society.

In fact, there are always, in any society, conflicts between symbolic powers that aim at imposing the vision of legitimate divisions, that is, at constructing groups. Symbolic power, in this sense, is a power of 'world-making.' 'World-making' consists, according to Nelson Goodman (1978), 'in separating and reuniting, often in the same operation,' in carrying out a decomposition, an analysis, and a composition, a synthesis, often by the use of labels. (Bourdieu, 1989, p. 22)

One of the most important assets for this movement to build upon and utilize for movement gain is that of symbolic capital and the symbolic power that can be accessed through this form of capital.

Movement members need to be both aware of the potential embedded symbolic power inherent in their access to symbolic capital through the legitimating power of the education system *and* learn how best to utilize this symbolic power for the reimagining of the world and the place of education in society through a lens of sustainability.

Building Symbolic Capital: Recommendations for the Movement

Overall many movement members have access to symbolic capital and merely need to understand how to translate that into symbolic power. The movement also needs to gain a better understanding of and control over the symbolism and discourse surrounding sustainability education in BC so that they can exercise their symbolic power for the advancement of the movement in a collective and deliberate manner. In order to do this they need to develop a shared set of symbols and discourse frames, and communicate these symbols and frames in a collective and consistent effort in all avenues for communication. This includes messages delivered through the dominant and alternative media, through cultural events and products, through public participation and political communication and in person through social networks.

Specific Recommendations include:

1. Organize regular dialogues both within the movement and as outreach avenues to the general public, which encourage visioning and future planning and help movement members and citizens in general to continue to articulate a shared discourse.
2. Develop a shared definition of the term sustainability and provide this common definition in all communications documents.
3. Follow the recommendations of the 2006 and 2009 Sustainability Poll research conducted by James Hoggan and Associates in collaboration with the McAllister Opinion Polls consulting group on how to communicate about sustainability including using vivid imagery, making sustainability personal and practical, avoiding jargon and remaining hopeful and positive.
4. Include the “Ten Principles of Sustainability” produced by participants of the “Why Sustainability Education” event in 2007 in all communications documents. This should be the shared definition of sustainability education.
5. Develop fact sheets and media backgrounders on the “Ten Principles of Sustainability Education” and the common definition of sustainability created in recommendation #1.
6. Develop and share common communication story frames for each priority audience in BC. Communications professionals working for education organizations and those responsible for developing and implementing communications should work with each other across BC to develop consistent frames to promote. This could be done with a common list-serve or through a blog format or other social networking tool.
7. Collectively compile an annual success stories compendium, which represents examples of what the movement sees as sustainability education and allow for what Bourdieu discusses as “theory development”.
8. Include in education and training of movement members, important concepts for ‘world-making’ such as framing and message design and delivery (vivid, concrete, relevant etc), rhetoric and discourse deconstruction and development, audience segmentation and targeting, and risk communication.

2.4.4.1.4. Cultural Capital

Cultural capital in this framework represents the capacity of movement members to understand and leverage the three states of cultural capital as described by Pierre Bourdieu (1986). These three states are the embodied state, the objectified state and the institutionalized state.

The accumulation of cultural capital in the embodied state, i.e., in the form of what is called culture, cultivation, *Bildung*, presupposes the process of em-bodiment, incorporation, which insofar as it implies a labor

of inculcation and assimilation, costs time, time which must be invested personally by the investor. (p. 18)

For example, this would consist for this movement of the ability to speak a language of one or more of the immigrant groups in BC.

Bourdieu (1986) describes the objectified state of cultural capital as "...material objects and media such as writing, paintings, monuments, instruments, etc" (1986, p. 19), which are materially transmissible. Movement members should actively be cultivating these material objects to increase the number and value of these objects and in relation the value of the subject they described or portrayed (i.e., the movements goals and values). Specifically movement members should contribute actively to the arts through photography, graphic arts, music, performance and film.

The institutionalized state of cultural capital is that which can be formalized, standardized and certified, such as all forms of accreditation in the education system. This form of cultural capital (also implied as symbolic capital above) would be most familiar to most movement members. A focus on the development of sustainability education programs, courses and content is a primary goal of the movement itself. The movement should promote these new programs, courses and content as a valuable asset to the BC education system that can be converted into real economic benefits for the province.

Building Cultural Capital: Recommendations for the Movement

Having the capacity to understand how each level of culture impedes or advances the movement is of utmost importance. Communicating effectively to advance the movement must take into consideration such things as the dominant values, perceptions and beliefs of the mainstream public, sub-culture beliefs such as in religious or counter-culture groups and the shared language and experiences of each culture with which the movement is attempting to communicate.

Although cultural capital is usually referred to as an asset that is developed by individuals (as is social capital), the collective cultural capital of many individuals within the movement will be influential and will increase the amount of cultural influence and

symbolic power held by the movement itself. Educating the movement members and ensuring access to cultural resources might not be a great difficulty for the movement considering it is an education movement. What might be an important focus is expanding the forms of culture that movement members have knowledge of and proficiency in. Art and Culture have a significant influence on public discourse. The more opportunities for the development of cultural artifacts which promote sustainability education the better.

Specific Recommendations include:

1. Educate members on contemporary cultural forms and the power of these forms to influence public opinion and discourse (such as advertising, formal education, popular music, fashion, celebrities etc).
2. Encourage the framing of education as cultural capital in the public discourse, which could be one of the ways to increase the relevance and value of sustainability education.
3. Focusing specifically on the cultural capital accrued from an education with a focus on sustainability will also increase the respect this form of education receives (i.e., it is the education of the future, provides skill sets that our new economy requires etc.).
4. Educate and encourage movement members to become proficient in and able to produce art and cultural artifacts such as music, paintings, films, books, magazines, radio shows etc to increase the number of cultural artifacts being produced with the frame of sustainability education.

2.4.4.1.5. Human Capital

The focus on human capital in this framework is on the set of skills and knowledge that may or may not be institutionalized and fit under the institutionalized state of cultural capital as outlined by Bourdieu. Human capital is described in Roseland (2005) as "...the 'knowledge, skills, competencies and other attributes embodied in individuals that facilitate the creation of personal, social and economic well-being'... Human capital is formed consciously through training and education and unconsciously through experience..." (2005, p. 8). Human capital in this framework, to set it apart of cultural capital, is more technical skill specific. In this framework the focus is on increasing the numbers of people and organizations within the movement who have a solid set of technical, strategic and community empowerment communication skills.

Examples of Human Capital Investments Required by the Movement

Media and Design

Investments need to be made in the capacity of movement members to gain access to the dominant media and develop alternative media of their own. Access to and knowledge of the available tools and resources for media production and public relations efforts can make the difference between having movement voices heard, ignored or disregarded.

Information Technology

Investments need to be made in the capacity of movement members to effectively utilize the new information technologies available. Basic awareness of social networking media, video and web conferencing tools, blogging and online document sharing is not enough. Building information technology based human capital would mean that movement members feel highly competent in the use of these technologies and processes and can utilize them freely for movement communication.

Dialogue and Negotiation

Investments need to be made in the capacity of movement members to effectively initiate and facilitate dialogue and negotiation processes and contribute meaningfully in situations where dialogue is the form of public or government communications with the movement.

Building Human Capital: Recommendations for the Movement

Due to an overall lack of capital to hire communications and technology experts to specialize in promoting the goals of the movement in BC, it is recommended that the movement build human capital to increase the numbers of movement members skilled in media and information technologies. Where there is skill in this area (usually the youth portion of the movement), there is great work being produced to further the movement. A potential approach then would be for the youth groups to educate the rest of the movement on these technologies and processes.

Specific Recommendations:

1. Arrange for basic media and communication training for movement members (Potentially run as communication and media workshops across BC designed by communications professionals as volunteers) or as online modules.
2. Arrange for the training of movement members in the development of story frames, press release formats and speaking to the media.
3. Arrange for the training of movement members in website and online media design.
4. Educate members on writing for radio, newspapers and television.
5. Provide training on social networking and online communication such as Facebook, Twitter, Ning and blogging, which have become popular spaces for public communication and viral marketing.
6. Provide training on the development of podcasts, video production and distribution online. The video from the “How Sustainability Education? A Solutions Summit” event is a great example of the potential of expertise in this area.
7. Arrange for training of movement members in design principles and Adobe Creative Suite.
8. Arrange for the training of movement members in basic photography.
9. Arrange for the training of movement members in information technology such as webcasting, video conferencing, online document sharing and telephone conferencing.
10. Partner with SFU Centre for Dialogue to provide training and skill building in dialogue, negotiation and facilitation.

3. BC Sustainability Education Communications guideBlog

3.1. Why a Blog and the Purpose of the guideBlog

The Communications Capital Framework and the recommendations developed within it forms the basis of the Project, which is the BC Sustainability Education Communications guideBlog (Le Roy, 2009). The Communications guideBlog is designed to communicate to movement members about the Communications Capital Framework, and the associated recommendations and design examples. It is also designed to fulfill some of the recommendations by providing education for the development of human capital in sustainability communication topics and allowing for inter-movement dialogue. It also offers a sample plan for the BCWG, provides design examples, an interactive interface and a living document format which can continue to evolve long after the submission of this project.

I believe that the blog format will better serve the purpose of providing a guidebook for the movement than a standard and quickly dated PDF publication because of its interactive and reflective format. The blog will allow for continuing discussion of communication strategies and allow for a conversational format, which will assist with continuing a transformative discourse.

The blog has two roles, the first is to supply educational content in the form of a guidebook and therefore serve as a tool for the movement. In this role, it also offers opportunities for linking to other related resources directly such as videos, other online training and education and related news media so that it acts as a portal to sustainability communication tools and resources. The second role is as an active example of an approach for the movement to take. The blog is not only a tool for movement members but also a part of the process of communicating and advancing a transformative discourse by allowing for discussion, debate and sharing of ideas through the open blog format.

The purpose of the guideBlog (Le Roy, 2009) is not to replace the walkingthetalk website which is primarily a site designed to assist with networking, information sharing

and event notice distribution but to be a companion resource that movement members can reference and contribute to over a longer-term basis.

3.2. Components of guideBlog

Currently the guideBlog (Le Roy, 2009) has several components. This may change as additional authors contribute in the future but, for now, the blog focuses on these areas for continuous improvement:

1. Overview of the Communications Capital Framework and why it might be useful for the movement.
2. In depth discussions of each of the forms of capital, which make up the framework.
3. Posts discussing the recommendations for the movement which are based on the qualitative data collected before, during and after the Summit within the bounds of the framework.
4. Sample recommended communications plan for the BCWG.
5. Design examples based on the sample communications plan for the BCWG.
6. Links to stories and examples of sustainability education.
7. Links to resources on sustainability communication theory and approaches.
8. A YouTube video bar showing recent related videos such as the one from the “How Sustainability Education? A Solutions Summit” event.
9. Links to related blogs that offer complimentary information such as the DeSmog Blog.
10. A news feed showing recent sustainability education stories.
11. Links to local, BC and Canadian media.

Although the blog format is meant for regular posts of discussion and new information and does not operate like a traditional website, blog viewers can search the blog for topics with the “search” function and browse the top labels to find specific topics (such as social capital recommendations).

3.3. Future of the guideBlog

The blog format is designed for storytelling and conversation by individuals but, as has been effectively shown by the successful DeSmog Blog (<http://www.desmogblog.com>), a blog is a great way to have multiple authors and contributors and, at the same time, keep the content up-to-date and relevant over the longer term. This blog (through WordPress.com) has the ability to have up to 100 different authors and unlimited comments on posts so that the Communications guideBlog can begin as a project by one person but grow to fill the needs and express the expertise of movement members. I expect that it will fill with many more stories of sustainability education, that its communication guidebook component will better develop over time and that it will encourage more dialogue around the tools that the field of communication can bring to the sustainability education movement in BC. I hope that movement members will first come to the guideBlog to learn and then continue by contributing to the development of the framework, to the design examples, to the stories of success and continue an ongoing dialogue in an open source format.

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