Analysis of Four Recent Social Movements

Amelia Ariell

In this essay I analyse four recent social movements; Polish *Solidarity*, the Brazilian *Partido dos Trabalhadores* (Workers Party or PT), feminist language reform, and the climate change movement. The central question I ask is: how have the strategies employed by these movements contributed to their successes and failures? Since the effectiveness of a movement's strategies cannot be understood outside of the social and political context in which they are employed, I will also ask the subquestion: how have the movements' differing sociopolitical landscapes shaped their strategic approach; and constrained or enabled their success? I focus on four key strategies which lead to the attainment of characteristics crucial to the success of any social movement. Conversely, in periods of failure I contend that one or several of these strategic approaches are either absent or have been problematically employed. Firstly I suggest that a movement must balance a *critique* of the dominant social order with an *appeal* to strongly-held values embedded in the movement's cultural traditions, and that if such a balance is maintained this leads to the recruitment of a mass membership and the maintenance of a unified movement. Secondly, the utilisation of existing social networks to mobilise resources leads to the effective mobilisation of people and resources. Thirdly, the development of creative measures to withstand oppression is necessary to ensure movement survival; and lastly the achievement of a balance between engagement with dominant institutions—so as to have an impact—and preservation of a degree of autonomy to avoid cooptation. I analyse each movement in terms of its employment of these strategies, elucidating how they relate to their successes and failures (See tables 1.1 and 1.2).

The term *social movement* connotes a variety of meanings and thus I will begin by clarifying the sense in which I use it here. Borrowing from Craig Jenkins' definition; 'a series of collective actions conducted to bring about change in social structures' (1981: 82); I define a social movement as a *process* of social organisation. A social movement is distinguished from other social organisations by its emphasis on activity, directed toward an idea of *social progress*; a sense of engagement 'in the building of new social worlds' (Wilson 1973: 3). Influential social theorist, Alain Touraine, describes a social movement as a 'collective will' (1983: 5), which shares, as in the words of Craig Jenkins, 'a vision, however dimly articulated, of the alternative order desired and of the basic measures necessary to put it into effect' (Jenkins, 1989: 82; Zirakzadeh, 1997: 4).

The term social movement has been used to refer to activities as diverse as petitions to the State from self-organised segments of society (Judkins, 1983; Schwartz and Shuva, 1992); to those of the German Nazi Party (Arendt, 1951; Fromm, 1941; Hoffer, 1951). However, most contemporary social movement theorists limit the term to a form of political activity that is carried out by the 'nonpowerful, the nonwealthy, and the nonfamous' (Zirakzadeh, 1997: 5) (Jenkins, 1981; Tarrow, 1989; Tilly, 1978). Although I accept this definition it is important to note that it becomes problematic if a social movement achieves such visibility, and attains such a degree of power, that this description is no longer befitting. Furthermore, this definitional tension elucidates that social movements tend to start on the peripheries of the social order; and their success is determined in large part by their capacity to overcome marginalisation and popularise their issue of concern.

This raises the question of what constitutes as a social movement's 'success'. Borrowing from Gamson (1975: 28) and Kitschelt (1986: 66) I identify two key types of success—procedural and substantive. Substantive success involves changes in the dominant sociopolitical order. Procedural success refers to the popularisation of an issue and the sustained, mass mobilisation of the people and resources necessary to achieve substantive success. While in reality the two overlap, this distinction is useful because it attributes a movement's ultimate social impact (or lack thereof) to the incremental (procedural) successes and failures that occur throughout its trajectory. For the purposes of this analysis I focus on four key strategies leading to various procedural and substantial successes, as outlined in the introduction.

Before I comparatively analyse the employment of these strategies by the movements under question, I will first contextualise them with a brief explication of each movement's trajectory. The first, Poland's *Solidarity*, represents the largest and longest-standing popular uprising against a communist-party state during the 1970s and 1980s (Touraine, 1983: 13; Zirakzadeh, 1997: 95). It was prompted by very poor and exploitative working conditions, economic hardships caused by chronic stagflation[*], as well as the government's autocracy and submission to Soviet domination (Touraine, 1983: 13; Zirakzadeh, 1997: 97-8). Initiated with workers' strikes in Gdańsk and the formation of an independent trade union, *Solidarity* quickly spread to become a national movement and a struggle for the democratisation of Polish society (Touraine, 1983: 2). Only a year after its formation, *Solidarity* boasted over ten million members (Zirakzadeh, 1997: 139), comprising 75 percent of the Polish workforce. However, a combination of internal fracturing and government oppression meant the movement was unable to maintain its overwhelming popularity. Nevertheless, many scholars argue that *Solidarity* played a key role in the demise of communist rule and the re-establishment of democracy in Poland (Bronislow and Jenkins, 1995: 324-340; Kemp-Welsh, 1991: 207, 224), with the movement's leader, Lech Walesa becoming the first democratically elected president in 1990.

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[*] Stagflation, a macroeconomic term, refers to the simultaneous occurrence of economic recession and inflation—a combination difficult to remedy since monetary policy to control one exacerbates the other (Encarta, 2003).

The second social movement of this case study is the Brazilian *Partido dos Trabalhadores* (PT), a mass party which emerged towards the end of the Brazilian dictatorship in 1979. Traditionally a highly pluralist, radical party with a strongly anticapitalist stance, the PT sought workers' political independence and a democratic electoral system (Lowy, 1987: 454). After winning a progressively higher share of votes in each national election since 1989 with the PT's founding leader Luis Inácio Lula da Silva (Lula) running as candidate, the PT finally won the executive position in 2002. However, it did so by dramatically altering its traditionally ideological approach to a pragmatic pursuit of vote maximisation, such that the party now represents more of a traditional, moderate political party than a radical social movement (Hunter, 2006;).

The third movement of this analysis is feminist language reform—the collection of initiatives which aim to expose and eliminate sexism from language (Pauwels, 1998: 1). While this has been an international movement, comprising a diversity of languages, from

German to Japanese; for the purposes of this essay I focus on its developments in the English language, as it rose to prominence in the late 1970s, born out of the convergence of the broader feminist movement and socio-linguistics as a discipline (Cameron, 1985: 3). The issue was quickly taken up by other academic fields and became a central concern of the feminist movement. Its popularisation was reflected by a proliferation of academic books (Poynton, 1985); articles (Romaine, 1982; Blaubergs, 1980), studies (Briere and Fisk, 1985; Lanktree, 1983), and text book chapters on the subject, as well as numerous books written for a feminist readership (Spender, 1980; Cameron, 1985). Language style manuals also began to appear during this period (Frank, 1989), taken up by publishers, government bureaucracy and academic institutions.

The final case study I consider is the climate change movement, which has sought a timely and adequate international response to what is arguably the greatest crisis facing us this era. I limit this analysis to the activity of non-state actors involved in the movement, which until recently has struggled to overcome a widespread social inertia vis-à-vis the climate change issue. Since 2003, concern over climate change has finally begun to expand into a mass movement, instigated by a combination of increasingly irrefutable scientific evidence and the recent success of the movement in raising public alarm. This has been reflected in a groundswell of grassroots climate change action, which has prompted policy changes in recent years Gelbspan, 2004: 12; Isham and Waage, 2007).

In analysing the procedural successes and failures of these movements, as they relate to their strategic approaches, the first key strategy I consider is the development of a strong ideological platform. According to Indian revolutionary theorist, P. R. Sarkar, and Italian-

Marxist theorist, Antonio Gramsci, a comprehensive ideology 'generates a powerful, positive psychic flow in the collective psychology' (Sarkar, 1969), which serves to both draw mass support to a movement's cause, and counteract the hegemonic ideas of the ruling elites that uphold the status quo (Bocock, 1986: 76). It is my contention that an effective ideology combines three key aspects—a strong critique of the dominant social order (Eddy, 1996: 52); a somewhat unified and consistent sense of the movement's role and purpose (Melucci, 1992); and a broad and inclusive ethos that appeals to strongly held values already embedded in the movement's sociocultural tradition (Eddy, 1996: 52; Moyer, 2001 in Isham and Waage, 2007: 34-35; Pakulski, 1991: 82). I further argue that a balance between these three aspects is crucial, since criticism of the social order, which is not framed in terms of widely-shared values, falls on deaf ears. However, an ideological platform that overly appeals to the values of its social milieu, to the extent that it sidesteps the articulation of a confrontational and powerful social critique, is impotent to generate significant social change. Likewise, an appeal to widely-held social values may attract a large membership, but unless the movement has a clear sense of its role and purpose, it will not be able to act as a unified opposition.

In the case of *Solidarity*, its capacity to generate the phenomenal membership that it did was in large part due to the broad appeal of its ideological platform, based on a 'uniquely Polish synthesis of Christian and democratic ideals', culminating in the idea of the human right to dignity, which made it possible to overcome the differences separating secular and religious humanists, as well as workers and intellectuals (Cirtautas, 1997: 174). *Solidarity* also utilised popular nationalist symbolism that drew upon the country's history and religion, in order to create a unifying ideological force. For instance, the Internaionale and

God save Poland were played over the loudspeakers of striking shipyards in Gdańsk, and strikers replaced the communist red flag with the national red and white flag. Similarly, white-collar activists issued images of workers kneeling during masses that were held during the strikes in factories and outside the shipyards throughout the country, which had a powerful appeal to other Catholic workers (Touraine, 1983: 38). By tapping into these strong Polish traditions (in 1980, 80 percent of Poles were Catholic) 'everyone regardless of his [or her] world outlook, nationality, or political convictions' could identify with the *Solidarity* ethos (Cirtautas, 1997: 188).

Solidarity leaders were also careful to formulate their critique of the social order in such a way that it related to the prevailing sense of discontent at the time. Recognising that the majority of Poles, while disillusioned, had become somewhat comfortable as employees of the state (Cirtautas, 1997: 189), *Solidarity*'s initial platform was not ostensibly to overthrow the Party's rule (Zirakzadeh, 1997: 173). Rather, it sought the recognition of civil rights and fair work conditions (Touraine, 1983: 40-1).

In Brazil, the PT utilised an ideological platform with broad appeal to meet similar ends. While it adopted a socialist stance, the PT left its party doctrine deliberately open, facilitating the inclusion of a diverse array of leftist groups, Catholics from the liberation wing of the church, well-known intellectuals and near-illiterate workers (Branford and Kucinski, 2005: 25, 29). Critics have referred to this pluralism within PT as a weakness, rendering its ideological standpoint 'vague' and hindering its capacity to govern (Cotrim-Macieira, 2005). However, this approach had the key advantages of avoiding the lengthy theoretical debates common to left movements and expanding its support and recruitment base (Rodrigues, in Devoto and Tella (eds), 1997: 293; Keck, 1991; Branford and Kucinski, 2005).

According to a number of theorists, what unites all PT members is an ethos that combines radicalism, political autonomy and moral conviction (Branford and Kucinski, 2004: 30, 34; Guidry, 2003; Lowy, 1987: 459). As in the case of *Solidarity*, this ideological platform drew from already long-standing cultural traditions, in particular the preceding *Free Union Movement*, which developed in response to worsening factory and work conditions; and the *Christian Base Communities* (CEBs), which became prominent in Brazil during the 1970s (Guidry, 2003: 88). These were hundreds of small organisations, mostly formed by migrants from the impoverished rural north who settled in the major cities in search of work. Through these forms of self-organisation, the migrants sought to collectively meet their housing, sanitary and other needs, compensating for the lack of support they received from authorities. (Branford and Kucinski, 2004: 31-2). These movements cultivated the value of self-governance among the working class, which the PT then appealed to, as reflected in its manifesto which stated:

> The Partido dos Trabalhadores is born out of workers' desire for political independence. They are tired of serving as intellectual fodder for politicians and parties representing the current economic, social and political order...Workers want to organise themselves as an autonomous political force.
>
> (Partido dos Trabalhadores, 1998)

As in the case of *Solidarity* and the PT, feminist language reform has also appealed to already existing cultural values in order for it to gain currency. Although feminist writers have uncovered several isolated critiques of sexist language throughout Western history, it was not until the rise of a broader feminist movement and the emergence of socio-linguistics as a discipline in its own right in the 1960s that a more widespread interest in the relations between gender inequality and language developed (Cameron, 1985: 3). These developments carved out a new set of values, around which feminist language reformers have been able to frame their argumentation.

Similarly, climate change activists have generally pitched their ideological platform on scientific grounds and market logic, appealing to the dominant paradigms in contemporary (globalised) Western, capitalist society. By drawing attention to the mounting and increasingly convincing evidence of global warming, the climate change movement has slowly forced those who have denied it, to concede its existence (Adler, 2007, Hamilton, 2007: 179-182). However, even as public opinion began to reach a consensus on the credibility of climate change science, narrowly defined vested interests have portrayed solutions as economically unviable. The climate change movement has countered these arguments by framing the debate in economic terms, in an effort to reach business elites and policy makers. Perhaps the most influential economic argument for prompting international action on climate change was presented by former chief economist for the World Bank, Sir Nicholas Stern, who designated climate change, ‘as the greatest market failure ever seen’ in a report to the British Government in October 2006 (Hamilton, 2007: 211).

However, it is a compelling argument that, while participants in the climate change movement have framed their stance in terms that have currency in contemporary dominant discourses, they have not balanced this approach with a powerful critique of the current social order. Post-modernist theorists have argued that couching the climate change crisis in exclusively scientific and economic rationalist terms ignores the role that the monopoly of these knowledge systems has played in causing the crisis (Blühdorn, 2000; Glover, 2006; Hajer, 1995; Zimmerman, 1994). It fails to challenge the value systems inherent within these paradigms, which view nature only in terms of its utility value—as something to be managed for human ends. Similarly, it does not challenge the current 'development' ethos, based on intensive industrialisation and limitless growth (Glover, 2006: 2-3).

In the case of *Solidarity*, internal fracturing over a constantly contested and shifting sense of purpose has been the movement's gravest downfall. While *Solidarity* members were initially united over a common desire to establish just work conditions and remuneration (Zirakzadeh, 1997: 137), very soon into the movement's inception, members began to diverge over what they saw as the role and purpose of the movement. While some members wanted to achieve workplace autonomy without undermining the rule of the communist party (Polish United Workers' Party, or PZPR), others wanted to fight for the democratisation of Poland, and independence from the Soviet Union (Zirakzadeh, 1997: 137). These differences had already begun to divide *Solidarity* before martial law was declared and the movement was banned in December 1981.

However, *Solidarity*'s most significant ideological split occurred towards the end of the communist regime, when the majority of *Solidarity*'s national leaders abandoned the movement's original purpose of a powerful trade union and workers' rights and instead advocated the establishment of a free-market economy, private ownership and deregulation of wages and prices (Millard, 1994: 174-8; Ost, 1989: 71-80; Zirakzadeh, 1997: 153). Frustrated, a number of veteran militants broke off from *Solidarity* and formed their own rival labour organisations (Bernhard, 1990: 335; Ost, 1989 71, 86; Ost, 1990: 169; Zirakzadeh, 1997: 153).

Once in power, *Solidarity*'s administration was initially split between those who tried to maintain a consistency with the movement's earlier ethos; and those who were intent on introducing free-market reforms (Cirtautas, 1997: 223). The latter won out, resulting in a massive lay off of workers and a steep increase in unemployment, which undermined the party's working class support base, who voted it out of office after its first term. While corporatist economist, Jeffrey Sachs (1993), maintains that this shift to a market reform reflected a maturation and increased pragmatism on the part of *Solidarity*'s leadership, other theorists have argued that this ideological swing meant that when *Solidarity* was finally in a position to enact policy that could achieve its original goal of ensuring workers' rights, it failed to do so (Ekiert, 1991: 92; Jenkins and Klandermans, 1995: 339).

Although, like *Solidarity*, the PT has also been characterised by constant intraparty ideological contestations, until recently, these have not prevented the movement from acting as a unified political force. Divergent factions have been held together, to a significant degree, by a strong critique of the endemic clientelism and corruption of Brazilian politics, and a clearly defined purpose—to transform Brazilian politics through its own example of better practice and the maintenance of strong links with the poor and working classes (Guidrey, 2003: 92). However, a number of theorists cite the shift in strategic approach by the party's leadership in the mid 1990s, in order to pursue vote maximisation, as a significant departure from the ideological stance that informed the PT in its early years. These theorists view recent clandestine and illegal dealings with traditional PT opponents and the lack of involvement of the poor and working class in PT decision-making as representative of the very corruption, clientelism and political centralism that, until recently, the PT had vehemently opposed (Baiocchi, 2005; Hunter, 2006). They argue this dramatic ideological swing has greatly undermined the coherence of the movement and many traditional leaders have recently left the party (Baiocchi, 2005; Hunter, 2006).

In contrast to *Solidarity* and the PT, whose dramatic ideological shifts have undermined the successes of these movements, the basic critique and sense of purpose in feminist language reform has been relatively clearly defined and remained more or less stable over the movement's trajectory. Moreover, this movement has been highly dispersed, which has meant that, although various approaches have often seen themselves at odds with each other, debate over ideological differences only appear to have deepened thinking on the issue, without undermining the effectiveness of the movement. As such, critiques of sexism in language, as well as strategies to overcome it, have ranged from relatively conservative reform to radical approaches. The reformist view critiques gender-biased language as an outmoded expression of language that must be updated to keep pace with social change. It prescribes reforms that reflect gender equality, such as the replacement of gender-biased pronouns. The radical view sees these reforms as merely cosmetic changes that fail to reach the core of sexism in language. Rather than seeing language as a symptom of sexism, radical feminism views it as a fundamental mechanism of women's oppression. It argues that male-centred language excludes, trivialises and assaults women so that they are socialised into a subordinate role. Radicalism thus has called for a revolution in language, in which it is reclaimed as a weapon for feminist struggle (Cameron, 1985: 74-75).

A comparison of the above movements' ideological platforms elucidates that, of the four selected movements, all have succeeded in framing their ethos in terms of widely-held socio-cultural values. However, with the exception of feminist language reform, they have struggled to develop and maintain a powerful and consistent social critique, as well as a sufficiently unified conception of the movement's role: the climate change movement has up until recently framed its arguments according to what it considered vested interests were willing to take seriously—thus failing to address the larger, underlying issues; *Solidarity* has been marked by intramovement fracturing over ideological differences; and both *Solidarity* and the PT have undergone an ideological 'about-face' on the part of both movements' leadership, which appears to have greatly undermined the movements' capacity to act as a unified force.

The second key strategy that I attribute to the success of a social movement is the utilisation of already formed social networks to mobilise existing resources and facilitate recruitment. This analysis is supported by a number of social movement theorists, who have identified social institutions, such as unions, activist organisations, community groups and churches as forming resource bases, communication networks, and both organisation and leadership skills for social movements (Adam, 1987; Evans and Boyte, 1986; Morris, 1984; Tarrow, 1994).

In the case of *Solidarity*, the Gdańsk workers' strikes that sparked the movement were the result of a convergence of local workers and intellectuals, who drew on an extensive network of contacts, which had been built over several years of protest (Persky, 1981: 6-8). A key player in this network was KOR (Workers' Defence Committee), a group of intellectuals, who had set themselves up in 1977 to provide advocacy, legal aid and rights protection for rebellious workers (Zirakzadeh, 1997: 122;). When the PZPR banned all communication between the Gdańsk strikers and the rest of Poland, KOR spread news of the events through its well-established underground publications; and other white-collar activist organisations produced and smuggled leaflets into other factories. Other pre-existing groups were also mobilised during the strikes, for instance, student movements entered the shipyards playing music to bolster spirits and farmers' organisations provided food for the strikers.

Solidarity also made a strategic decision to build on community ties in the workplace by taking strikes off the streets—where they were predominantly held earlier— and instead organising sit-down strikes in the confines of the workplace. These state-run enterprises represented more than just places of employment, as they often included schooling and other facilities (Cirtautas, 1997: 196). This form of protest facilitated a greater sense of camaraderie and cohesion amongst strikers.

Similarly, PT drew its leadership and much of its early membership base from the *Free Union Movement* that preceded it. Although the main initial focus of the PT was workers' political autonomy, it made strategic alliances outside of the labour movement, with other groups that shared its interests—in particular, the CEBs, left-wing intellectuals and peasant movements. PT's development of *nucleos* was another creative use of already existing social networks to build the movement. These were small, locally-based groups formed through workplace, school, slum and other community affiliations, which constituted the initial base of the PT's participatory, decentralised organisational structure (Lowy and Denner, 1987: 460).

Feminist language reform has also been strategically channelled through already existing social institutions and feminist networks, with a great deal of research and development on gender and language occurring through universities. Sociolinguistics was the first academic field to provide a platform for feminist inquiry into language; however the topic quickly became of broad interdisciplinary interest, signalled by a proliferation of research proposals, lecture courses and exam questions on the subject (Cameron, 1985: 3). Chapters on sexism and language were also written for new editions of textbooks on linguistics, women's studies and other related fields. The broader feminist movement similarly acted as a springboard for feminist language reform. As the issue began to gain currency in the late 1970s, women's conferences began to commonly include a paper or workshop on language (Cameron, 1985: 3). Likewise, a proliferation of books, papers and lectures appeared, written for a feminist readership—the best known of these being Dale Spender's *Man Made Language*. Through the strategic use of media networks, Spender was able to attain a significant degree of coverage, which led to a widespread interest in gender and language outside of the feminist movement.

The climate change movement has also formed out of a convergence of pre-existing social networks. In particular, environmental NGOs have formed international coalitions such as the *Climate Action Network*, which pool resources, share information and coordinate strategies and campaigns (Newell, 2000: 126-7). However, Pulitzer Prize winning environmental reporter and editor, Ross Gelbspan, argues that by classifying climate change as essentially an environmental issue, the movement initially failed to form alliances with a much wider spectrum of activist organisations, such as human rights and international aid and development organisations (2004: 129). Limiting the movement in this way perhaps to some extent explains the negligible impact it had during its first two decades of campaigning. Since the 1990s, however, and especially in recent years, this has turned around, with a much wider involvement of other networks now taking place. For instance, *Greenpeace* has been working together with a law-reform and development NGO to help those affected by rising temperatures and sea levels, such as small island states, to strengthen their stance in international negotiations (Newell, 2000: 143). Other initiatives include joint statements from religious groups calling for prompt government action, protests, and efforts to 'green' school and university campuses (Gelbspan, 2004: 12; Hamilton, Isham and Waage, 2007: 43).

The above analysis investigating the utilisation of already formed social networks to mobilise resources supports the observations of a number of social movement theorists, who have identified that social movements do not emerge from a social vacuity, rather they form 'chapters' in long-standing and identifiable traditions of popular resistance (Tarrow, 1989a, b; Tilly, 1978, 1986; Zirakzadeh, 1989). The success of each of the four movements has been, to a large extent, determined by their capacity to build on these traditions of dissent, as well as harness the resources of community groups that may have previously been apolitical. The effective utilisation of these networks by *Solidarity* and the PT helps to explain their hugely successful recruitment levels, while the climate change movement's failure to think creatively when forming alliances suggests why it has taken so long to get off the ground. The fact that critiques of sexist language could not gain currency until other forms of feminist dissent and sociolinguistics emerged, highlights just how essential these networks are for the formation of fledgling movements.

A third strategy that can be attributed to a movement's success is the development of creative measures to withstand oppression. According to P. R. Sarkar, if a movement genuinely challenges the status quo it will face significant oppression—and if it can survive these attempts to squash it, it is likely to be victorious (Inayatullah, 2002: 20). The nature of this oppression clearly differs according to the social milieu, and thus so do the strategies employed in defence. In non-democratic Poland, under Soviet observance, oppression was relatively severe. In December 1981 the PZPR declared martial law and *Solidarity* was banned, sending the movement underground. Most of its key leadership and thousands of members were jailed and many allegedly beaten and tortured. Although the movement was reduced to only a small number of committed members, it stayed alive and active for the next seven years, largely through the production and distribution of a clandestine press (Zirakzadeh, 2006: 151).

The oppression of the climate change issue by vested interests has played a key role in impeding the generation of a mass movement and an adequate and timely international response. As the issue started to gain public attention in the 1990s, the fossil fuel lobby began a strong and expensive campaign, designed to convince policy makers and the public that the issue of climate change is scientifically uncertain, in order to prevent any public demand for action (Gelbspan, 2004: 39-40, 52; Hamilton, 2007). This campaign has typically paid large sums of money to dubious 'scientists' who, according to the strategy papers of one such coal industry-funded project set out ‘to reposition global warming as theory rather than fact’, targeting, ‘older, less-educated men...and young, low-income women’ (Gelbspan, 2004: 51-52). Similarly leading politicians, especially in the United States and Australia—driven by narrow, national economic interests—have cooperated with the fossil fuel industry in oppressing increasing public alarm. Consequently the movement has turned to pressuring state and local governments of the United States in order to circumvent attempts to block it in Washington. As a result in 2007 more than half the states in the United States had developed or were developing initiatives to reduce greenhouse gas emissions (Isham and Waage, 2007: 22-3).

While these tactics succeeded in oppressing the rise of the climate change movement for over a decade, most analysts agree that this situation has begun to quite dramatically turn around (Hamilton, 2007: 179-92). This is reflected in the tide of positive media attention on the issue and significant shifts in Australian federal (Stevens, 2007) and United States state policy—two countries renowned for their intransigence. While this is partly due to the release of increasingly irrefutable scientific reports, many theorists cite the 2006 release of Al Gore’s film *An Inconvenient Truth*, as instrumental to this turning point (Adler, 2007; Hamilton, 2007: 194; Stevens, 2007: 13). After two decades of struggling to draw attention to the issue, Gore succeeded in raising public alarm with the employment of popular media. In the words of Australian political writer Clive Hamilton, ‘In an age of visual media, the documentary had more impact than any number of newspaper articles and books’ (2007: 194). Al Gore’s film was part of a wider shift in strategic approach in the climate change movement, to turn away from attempts to appeal directly to policy makers and high-emissions industries and instead direct energy towards igniting public concern that could put the necessary pressure on policy-makers. The effects of this seem to be paying off, reflected in a groundswell of 'grassroots and voluntary climate action' in recent years as mentioned earlier (Gelbspan, 2004: 12).

A number of scholars have also documented the various types of fierce opposition that have been mounted against feminist language reform, including: denial that sexism in language exists; objection on aesthetic grounds; trivialisation of the issue; claims that reforms imply censorship and curb freedom of expression; as well as ridicule and personal attack of language reform advocates. These critiques have been conducted through academic journals, public debates and forums, and in particular through the media. (Blaubergs, 1980; Stanley, 1982; Pauwels, 1998: 169-191). A case study by Pauwels (1998: 185-191) of responses in Australian print media to the inclusion of a chapter on non-sexist language in the fourth edition of the Australian Style manual for authors, editors and printers in 1988 illustrates the extent of attempts to oppose and oppress the issue. Pauwels notes the appearance of over 1000 articles, editorials and readers' letters responding to the chapter, the overwhelming majority of which were negative, that were published in Australian national and regional newspapers and magazines in a four-week period following the release of the style manual. Pauwels notes these critiques most commonly took the form of ridicule or attack of alleged 'culprits' of this 'linguistic engineering', citing, for example, a remark in The Australian:

> Do I understand that these granite faced frustrated feminists hate men so much they have derived a whole new language to eliminate any reference to them? (The Australian 13/10/1988, cited in Pauwels, 1998: 188)

Martyna (1980: 142-3) has noted similar forms of ridicule in the United States, citing academics from Harvard, who referred to the issue as “pronoun envy”.

A key strategy of advocates for language change has been to persistently and systematically refute their opponents’ claims. For every column piece, or academic opinion article condemning or trivializing efforts to change sexist language, several responses have been drawn up, rebutting their assertions (Ad Hoc Committee on Sexist Language of the Association of Women in Psychology, 1975: 16; Blaubergs, 1980; Frank, 1989). It has been through this tireless debate that the problem of sexism in language, which began as a marginalised issue, has overcome attempts to oppress it and achieved widespread acceptance.

In the case of the PT, the lure of institutionalised power has been a greater danger to the movement than has overt oppression, which brings me to the final strategic approach I relate to a movement’s success. Each movement has had to strike a balance between engagement in the dominant sociopolitical system, and the maintenance of a degree of autonomy from it. While it has been a long-standing debate between political theorists whether a social movement must be inside or outside the ‘system’ in order to change it, I contend that it must be both. A social movement that does not engage with dominant institutions remains on the margins of the social order, where it has little hope of significantly impacting it. However, if a social movement involves itself with the dominant order to the extent that it loses its independence, it will simply become another ‘cog in the wheel’, undermining its capacity for social transformation.

Jan Pakulski argues that ideally, 'movements pave the way for social transformations … by challenging and de-legitimising established social orders' (1991: 82-83), and by highlighting the 'limits of the system' for enacting social change (1991:62). She argues that even if social movements involve themselves with the dominant political establishment,

> they usually violate the rules of conventional politics by refusing to focus on competition for institutionalised political power…, to make deals and compromises, or to lobby elites…They do not enter into tactical coalitions, and, above all, they refuse to compromise on central moral issues and principles.
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> (Pakulski, 1991: 62, cited in Eddy, 1996: 33)

Although this is perhaps a somewhat utopian ideal of social movement practice, it offers a useful theoretical basis for understanding PT strategy, and how it has come to be coopted into the orbit of established Brazilian party politics. Since the PT's inception in 1979 until the mid 1990s, PT's strategic approach conformed well to Pakulski's description. It began its struggle outside the official political system, whereby it mobilized citizens against the Brazilian military dictatorship in favour of democratic elections (Hunter, 2006: 3; Keck, 1991). Although, after this the PT did take up direct engagement with the newly formed Brazilian democratic system and competed in elections, it did so on the basis that, rather than lobbying those in power to recognise their rights, workers needed the political independence to pursue their own interests and to put an end to economic exploitation (Garcia and Harding, 1979: 91). Determined to avert elite control or co-optation of its movement, its basic strategy was to place its ideological principles above power acquisition

(Hunter, 2006: 10). Reflecting this, Lula repeatedly asserted “We must not let electoral concerns take over the party’s agenda” (translation Hunter, 2006: 7).

Thus the PT engaged in the dominant political system, yet was determined to stand slightly outside it. As such, it pushed a radical socialist political agenda, strongly opposed to foreign capital and neoliberal reforms. Through its municipal governance it developed a reputation that distinguished it from the notorious corruption of other Brazilian political parties, as honest, transparent and committed to social equality. Some observers have argued that during this period, the PT also induced other parties to raise their conduct (Rosas and Zechmeister, 2000).

However, when the PT decided to pursue the national executive position, it took on the character of a formal political party, and was subjected to the financial pressures and temptations inherent in becoming competitive in the dominant political establishment. Some analysts argue this shift does not indicate that the PT has abandoned its original commitment to social equality and political representation of the poor and working classes, but rather that it has adopted a more realistic and pragmatic approach to achieve its goals (Branford and Kuciniski, 2005). However, in order to maintain its hold on the presidency, the PT has been impelled to appease domestic business interests and foreign investment. It has also even given monthly bribes to congressional members in order to maintain their support in the Chamber of Deputies, where the PT only occupies 20 percent of the seats (Hunter, 2006: 23). This has not only undermined the PT’s integrity but has significantly compromised its capacity to act in the interests of the poor. An analysis of its trajectory seems to indicate that, ironically, the PT was in a better position to generate social change and transform politics as a strong opposition than it has been since it assumed the role of national executive.

The experiences of the climate change movement also elucidate the strategic challenge involved in negotiating between political engagement and independence. A number of analysts have noted the greater access to policy-making processes and international negotiations on climate change enjoyed by large, relatively conservative environmental NGOs—as compared to more radical 'political ecology' groups, who have generally been marginalised from these processes (Chatterjee and Finger, 1994; Newell, 2000: 150). Similarly, the capacity of NGOs to acquire technical knowledge and expertise has also accorded them greater influence in negotiating rounds (Rahman and Roncerel, 1994: 241). However, there is doubt over how much impact this mode of involvement has had on pushing the climate agenda forward. The most influential groups are also generally those whose policy prescriptions are more accommodating of government and business interests (Newell, 2000: 148), advocating approaches that, according to Gelbspan (2004: 127), 'while politically realistic, are dismally inadequate to the magnitude of the challenge'. Furthermore, many activists have settled for proposing market-based solutions, believing these to be the only feasible approach in an era of economic rationalism (Gelbspan, 2004: 128). This has meant that until recently, a prioritisation of engagement with the political establishment, to the neglect of taking a more radical line has limited the climate change movement's impact to incremental and insufficient advancements.

By contrast, feminist language reform has managed to transform dominant institutional practices by working through them—a classic example of a reformist approach; changing the system from within. Feminist language reformers have made modest but steady gains through the legal system, for example, the passing of antidiscrimination and equal opportunity employment laws, which have prompted a significant change in occupational terminology in job advertisements and descriptions. In a 1997 survey of 2000 job advertisements in ten Australian newspapers found that only 5.4 percent of the terms and titles used were in a gender-exclusive (sexist) manner (Pauwels, in Pauwels, 1998: 197). Language reformists have also sought changes through educational administration and public services, with studies indicating significantly diminished use of sexist language (Bate, 1978; Markovitz, 1984; Ehrlich and King, 1992). Lastly, reformers have pursued language change in language and linguistics textbooks, most of which, according to a broad survey done by Pauwel were avoiding the use of generic he and sexist occupational terms by 1993 (Pauwels, 1998: 205).

A comparative analysis of these social movements elucidates an important distinction between radical and reformist approaches. More radical social movements, like the PT seek to transform the social order by highlighting, as in the words of Pakulski, the 'limits of the system', as a platform for social transformation. However, ironically these movements tend to run the greatest risk of cooptation into the orbit of the sociopolitical establishment. In contrast, reformist movements tend to work from the outset *within* dominant institutions, pursuing relatively modest, but nevertheless significant changes over time. However, in the case of climate change, the urgency of the issue demands transformation beyond the slow and incremental changes of reformism. The adoption of a rather conservative, reformist approach by the climate change movement helps to explain why it has not come close to achieving the level of change needed to cap emissions. Thus, the shift of the movement's strategy, to work more 'outside' the establishment by building a rising tide of popular dissent, appears to be making more significant gains, as indicated previously. What the experiences of these movements seem to indicate is that while reformist changes are best pursued through the system, where radical change is needed or desired by a social movement, these types of transformations are arguably better pursued by unconventional political means.

A comparison of Solidarity and the PT's trajectory of dramatic successes and failures; with the relatively moderate gains and losses that have occurred throughout feminist language reform and the climate change movement, reflects the shaping influence of their social contexts. Gramsci's theory of hegemony lends itself to an analysis of these divergences. At its most basic, Gramsci refers to hegemony as 'moral and philosophical leadership', which is obtained through the active consent of major groups of society (Bocock, 1986: 11). Gramsci measures the degree of hegemonic rule attained by a social group or class by the extent to which its cultural and ideological belief systems are accepted as universally valid by the general population (Fontana, 1993:140) and form the 'fundamental outlook for the whole society' (Bocock, 1986: 63).

In his analysis of 'advanced' capitalism in the West, Gramsci noted that the dominant class rules more through a well-established hegemony, than coercion or physical force. According to Gramsci, this hegemony takes the form of a general naturalisation of capitalism, in which it is seen as an essential social order, with no imaginable alternative. In such societies, the concept of overthrowing the existing system becomes, for the majority, unacceptable and even unthinkable (Bocock, 1986: 33). As a result, social movements in

Western capitalist societies do not tend to fundamentally challenge the dominant social order. Rather, those with an essentially reformist approach predominate, as in sexist language and climate change movements. These tend to be specific battles fought over particular issues that bring about relatively slow and undramatic change. However the progression of these changes tends to be stable.

In contrast, Gramsci argues that in societies that rule with little popular support, as in the case of communist Poland and the military dictatorship of Brazil, the sociopolitical establishment is more easily contested. In such societies, social movements commonly adopt an ideological platform based on a more extensive and fundamental vision of social transformation. These ideologies tend to be more utopian and idealistic, and lend themselves to dramatic and extensive change. However, they are also characteristically unstable and more vulnerable to reversal or overthrow, as the trajectories of *Solidarity* and the PT attest.

In this essay I have distinguished between a social movement's procedural and substantive success as the incremental achievements (procedural) necessary for a movement to effectively impact dominant social practices (substantive). By breaking down procedural success into four key elements, namely; recruitment of a mass membership, capacity to remain united despite intraparty differences, effective mobilisation of people and resources, survival of oppression and avoidance of cooptation; I have elucidated several key strategies that, if employed effectively, can lead to the attainment of these successes. These strategies are; the development of a strong ideological base that combines a critique of the dominant social order, and a clear sense of the movement's role, with an inclusive ethos that appeals to widely-held social values; the utilisation of social networks that predate the movement; the development of creative measures to overcome oppression; and the achievement of a balance between engagement with, and autonomy from, the dominant sociopolitical establishment. While neither the procedural successes nor the strategies that I identify are meant to be an exhaustive list, their consideration does start to unpack some possible explanations for the substantive successes and failures of the four movements in this analysis.

A consideration of these movements' substantive successes suggests that, in the case of the two international movements – feminist language reform and the issue of climate change – success has been a slow and relatively steady series of modest gains. Conversely, the national movements, Polish *Solidarity* and the Brazilian *Partido dos Trabalhadores*, have experienced dramatic but somewhat fleeting victories – with what appears at present to be almost a reversal of their achievements. Although it can be argued that Solidarity and the PT have instigated some long-standing changes in their social order and thus cannot be considered to have had no substantive success, the degree of their impact has been considerably reduced by the procedural failure to consistently unite diverse intraparty interests into a cohesive force. This downfall can largely be attributed to the ideological 'about-face' on the part of both movements' leadership, in which they abandoned their traditional critique of the social order and their previous sense of the movements' role and purpose. In the case of feminist language reform, its goals have been more moderate and achievable, and thus it has had few, if any significant failures. However, the differences between this movement and the more radical *Solidarity* and PT render simplistic comparisons between them problematic. In the case of highly idealistic movements there is a tendency to measure their successes against what they set out to achieve, thus emphasising the extent of their failure to achieve these lofty ideals. If instead we consider their achievements in comparison to the modest gains of feminist language reform and the climate change movement they start to look more impressive. The capacity of *Solidarity*, for instance, to mobilise 75 percent of its country's workforce in radical protest and to be the first movement to win a concession from an authoritarian communist state to legally form an independent union is a tremendous feat. Likewise there is no doubt that Lula's position as president marks a watershed in Brazilian politics. It is the first time anyone other than the ruling elite, let alone a person from the blue-collar working class has occupied the national executive (Santiso, 2006: 123). That is not to say that feminist language reform does not also have its element of radicalism. Judging by the impassioned reactions it has stirred, it has certainly challenged the status quo. Finally, the trajectory of the Climate Change movement is very useful for illustrating how the elements of procedural success and the relevant strategies I have identified do contribute to a movement's substantive success. In its earlier years, it failed to adequately employ a number of strategies, namely; the effective utilisation of existing social networks, the development of a powerful critique of the dominant social order, and a balance between engagement with dominant institutions and a degree of radicalism. While these shortcomings were reflected in its procedural and substantive failures – as the movement has taken up these same strategies more effectively, the successes have started to follow, as indicated by a groundswell in grassroots activity and changes in government policy.

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