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Rural Landowners, Civil Disobedience, and the Perception of Influence**

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**DEMOCRATIC PURSUIT OF ENVIRONMENTAL JUSTICE
THROUGH ACTIVISM:**

**RURAL LANDOWNERS, CIVIL DISOBEDIENCE,
AND THE PERCEPTION OF INFLUENCE**

MÉLANIE J. ROBIN, B.A.

A Thesis

Submitted to the Faculty of Graduate and Postdoctoral Studies
in Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements for the Degree
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ABSTRACT

The rural revolution, as coined by the Ontario Landowners' Association (OLA), has gained considerable momentum in the past five years. Its activism in the pursuit of environmental justice, initiated by the perception of a government too intrusive into rural affairs, has evolved both externally and internally of governmental decision making structures. The association has moved from primarily using purposeful illegality, such as demonstrations, to active involvement in provincial politics. In this context, the qualitative research presented in this thesis is guided by three research objectives: 1) *to develop a conceptual framework of environmental justice*; 2) *to examine the utility of the components of this conceptual framework within the rural revolution context*; and, 3) *to explore the perceptions of key stakeholders regarding the Ontario Landowner Associations' influence on rural public policy efforts to attain environmental justice*. These three research objectives seek ultimately to address the central research purpose: *To explore the concept of activism as a tenet of environmental justice by examining the case study of the OLA*. The primary focus of the central research purpose, therefore, is on the traits of the OLA, or associated research themes, that have the potential to influence public policy content, its implementation, and its acceptance in rural Ontario. These associated research themes are: the OLA's targeted issues, the OLA's mission, leadership, activism forms, barriers and facilitators to activism, membership, and any additional insights. Four stakeholder groups sensitive to environmental public policy directed at rural communities have been consulted. They are provincial and municipal elected politicians (architects of policy), managers and planners of provincial ministries (implementers of policy), rural and agricultural commodity and interest groups (recipients of policy), and the Ontario Landowners' Association (challengers of

policy). A conceptual framework of environmental justice has been proposed and is presented here. Moreover, the perceptions revealed by the respondents allow for an examination of the utility of the environmental justice ‘instruments’ and ‘barriers and facilitators’ sections of the conceptual framework. Research results show that the OLA’s influence on rural public policy is perceived to be based on the organization’s credibility, which is in turn perceived as dependent upon a combination of the associated research themes. It is hypothesized that these findings not only pertain to the OLA, but have determined the variables responsible for the perception of an effective activism group in general. Furthermore, this research has reiterated the importance of perception studies. These reflections may well transcend the OLA case study and may prove meaningful for all stakeholder groups in the understanding of activism seeking to sustain or reclaim environmental justice. These reflections may also facilitate mutual respect for different points of view and differing contributions to environmental management.

RÉSUMÉ

La révolution rurale, ainsi nommée par l'organisation appelée « Ontario Landowners' Association » (OLA), a pris un élan considérable dans les cinq dernières années. L'activisme de cette association en matière de justice environnementale, ayant débuté par la perception d'un gouvernement trop intrusif dans les affaires rurales, a évolué autant à l'intérieur qu'à l'extérieur des structures gouvernementales décisionnelles. L'association a d'abord utilisé l'illégalité en organisant des manifestations, pour ensuite recourir à une autre stratégie, l'engagement actif dans la politique provinciale. Dans ce contexte, notre recherche qualitative est cadrée par trois objectifs de recherche : 1) *développer un cadre conceptuel du concept de justice environnementale*; 2) *d'explorer l'utilité des composantes de ce cadre conceptuel dans le contexte de la révolution rurale*; et 3) *explorer les perceptions des principaux intervenants par rapport à l'influence de l'OLA sur les efforts pour atteindre la justice environnementale par les politiques publiques rurales*. Ces trois objectifs de recherche tentent de répondre à l'objectif centrale de recherche suivante: *D'explorer le concept d'activisme comme partie de la justice environnementale en utilisant l'OLA comme cas d'étude*. Ce but de recherche se concentre principalement sur des thèmes de recherche connexes, qui ont le potentiel d'influencer le contenu des politiques publiques rurales, ainsi que d'influencer son implantation et son acceptation dans l'Ontario rural. Ces thèmes de recherche connexes sont: les enjeux associés à l'OLA, la mission de l'OLA, le leadership, les types d'activisme, les affiliations, les obstacles et les facilitateurs de l'activisme, ainsi que tous les points de vue additionnels. Des consultations ont été effectuées dans les communautés rurales auprès de quatre différents groupes d'intervenants sensibles aux politiques publiques environnementales: les politiciens élus provinciaux et municipaux (les

architectes des politiques), les planificateurs et gestionnaires des ministères provinciaux (les personnes chargés de l'implantation des politiques), les groupes d'intérêt ruraux et agricoles (les prestataires des politiques) et l'Ontario Landowners Association (OLA) (ceux qui influencent les politiques). Un cadre conceptuel portant sur la justice environnementale est présenté dans cette thèse. De plus, les perceptions des répondants à cette étude ont validé les sections du cadre conceptuel portant sur les instruments de la justice environnementale ainsi que sur les obstacles et facilitateurs de la justice environnementale. Nos résultats de recherche démontrent que l'influence de l'OLA sur les politiques publiques rurales est perçue comme étant basée sur la crédibilité de l'organisation, qui en retour est aussi perçue comme étant dépendante d'une combinaison des thèmes connexes de recherche. Selon notre hypothèse, ces résultats s'appliquent non seulement à l'OLA, mais ils permettent également l'identification généralisée de variables responsables d'une perception de l'efficacité d'un groupe d'activisme. Cette recherche a aussi fait ressortir l'importance des études sur les perceptions. Elle démontre pertinemment que les résultats de l'étude de cas de l'OLA peuvent s'appliquer d'une façon générale à d'autres cas d'organisme activiste. Les réflexions présentées dans cette étude démontrent également que la compréhension du cas de l'OLA est significative pour tous les groupes d'intervenants en activisme qui cherchent à atteindre ou à réclamer la justice environnementale. Ces réflexions pourraient aussi, le cas échéant, faciliter le respect mutuel des différentes perspectives et des diverses approches à la gestion environnementale.

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I would like to thank myself for persevering.

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Finally, I dedicate this thesis to my biggest source of inspiration. When I had nothing left to give, when I wondered if this was all worthwhile, I drew energy from activists everywhere. Whether on Parliament Hill in Ottawa, or in the streets of Tibet; whether placing a vote, or bringing a travel mug to buy fair trade organic coffee (which I can assure you, is a form of activism I engaged in excessively during the completion of this thesis); whether fighting for property rights, or marching for peace – your tireless tenacity, integrity and passion to work towards what you perceive to be just is truly remarkable and motivating. My hope is that this research will contribute, however slight, to a deeper understanding of activism in all its forms, and that activism will become as efficient as possible in working towards true justice.

May the energy we draw upon seldom flicker, may our morals never be compromised, and may our integrity be upheld. May our activism be in the pursuit of sustaining justice that is already present, rather than in reclaiming justice that is lost.

I would not have changed one single thing about my graduate school experience, and am forever grateful.

In solidarity,

Mélanie Robin

Ottawa, Ontario 2008

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**“What activism offers is a broad, radical and revolutionary vision
of what must be opposed in our existing world,
and what might be loved in a future one.”
-Tim Jordan**

CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

1.1 CONTEXT

Any trip down a rural Eastern Ontario highway reveals signage that precipitates interest and fascination. Billboards attached to fence posts and displayed on front lawns state “This land is our land. Stop. Government back off.” The billboards indicate authorship to be one of the province’s many landowners’ associations. Some of the first signs appeared under the direction of the Lanark and Renfrew County Landowners’ Associations and the movement has spread across the province as the Ontario Landowners’ Association (OLA) over the last five years, 2003-2008, and continues to grow. A further electronic journey suggests a rural revolution or “a fight against a loss of rural freedom, rural voice, and a fight to reclaim environmental justice lost” (Hillier, 2006).

‘Environmental justice’ is a turn of phrase used regularly in the discourse and communication emanating from the Ontario Landowners’ Association and its members. But, what does the term really mean? Early investigation has revealed complexity in definition, usage and application. Numerous definitions of environmental justice exist (Bryant, 1995; Bullard, 1994; Hill, 2003; Mitchell, 2002; Schlosberg, 2004), demonstrating that consensus does not exist as to what the concept, that has not been comprehensively described, actually entails. Further, there is a particular lack of the environmental justice concept in the context of public participation and activism in its goals and forms. The link of ‘activism’ and ‘environmental justice’ needs to be adequately examined because this concept is being

expressed in more and more situations involving protest groups and other 'challenge organizations'. Thus this research aims to explore the concept of environmental justice, model its key components, and test its applications in the context of rural activism in Ontario. With 'environmental justice' as my research mantra, it is hypothesized that this expression links a certain perception of the environment, public participation, activism, and public policy in rural Ontario.

Lanark and other counties are living and representative laboratories of the many stresses and pressures currently confronting rural Ontarian municipalities – municipalities striving to retain historical, economic, environmental, political and cultural foundations (Bryant et al., 1992; CANSIM, 2005; Lanark County website, 2006; Ontario Landowners' Association, 2007). More specifically, Lanark County has experienced the shocks of bovine spongiform encephalopathy (BSE) in the cattle industry, the rapid decline in average farm size, the loss of farm units, the loss of participating agriculturalists, the loss of rural business in support of agriculture, and poor pricing conditions for agricultural communities sold intra or extra regionally (Cummings, 2000; Lanark County website, 2006; Ontario Landowners' Association, 2007; National Farmers' Union, 2006; Statistics Canada, 2001; Statistics Canada, 1997; Wilson, 2005). Some inhabitants of the county also perceive themselves as a target area for government intrusion. Government regulatory officers have been described in local and regional media as being overly confrontational with regional sawmill operators, individual poultry and egg producers, and rural bakeries, among others (Ontario Landowners' Association, 2007). Essentially, it is felt that these are difficult times for rural communities. To address these challenges, a 'rural revolution' emerged, under the guise of

various branches of the Ontario Landowners' Association. The Landowners' movement first appeared in Lanark and Renfrew Counties in 2003, and now spans 19 Ontario counties.

The National Farmers' Union, the Ontario Federation of Agriculture, the Ontario Soil and Crop Improvement Association and other prevalent rural and agricultural commodity and interests groups are all represented in Ontario's counties. However, the OLA has become a rural affairs leader. They are seen by many rural stakeholders as central voices considering and championing the broad spectrum of issues and problems confronting rural Ontario, and particularly those perceived as being directly linked to degrading property rights. This status has had considerable political impact. At the municipal level, OLA affiliated candidates for Councilor, Reeve or Warden, were noteworthy in their success in the 2006 election, 86% of OLA candidates running for positions were elected (18/21) (MacMaster, 2006). Success was also prevalent for OLA candidates at the level of municipal council, where 65% of candidates were elected (53/81) (MacMaster, 2006). At the provincial level, the Conservative Party candidate and former President of the OLA won a MPP seat for the riding of Lanark-Frontenac-Lennox and Addington in the October 2007 election.

It is thought that the tragic drinking water contamination in Walkerton, Ontario (2000) was not only devastating for this community, but also forever changed the face of rural environmental regulation and rural land use designation in the province. This increase in rural legislation, viewed by some as governmental intrusion, led to the genesis of the OLA. The insecurity of Walkerton's drinking water supplies was fully exposed by a public inquiry, and this insecurity was considered representative of most rural municipalities dependent on groundwater supplies, by critics of both the Ministry of the Environment and

the budget austerity driven by the government Premier Mike Harris. More than fifty recommendations were brought forward by Chief Justice Dennis O'Connor to regulate human behaviour and to designate land uses for source water protection (O'Connor, 2002a; O'Connor, 2002b).

The recommendations are far-reaching and contentious, and so are the processes and procedures being employed to put these regulations and designations in place. The legislation is perceived by many rural property owners as being representative of a provincial government that is too intrusive into rural affairs, and is not committed to meaningful rural participation in environmental decision making (Ontario Landowners' Association, 2007). Further, initial concern over government's harsh regulatory approach to water resource protection has spilled over into other rural affairs, leading to a rich ledger of rural issues and problems being addressed by the Landowners' movement and challenged by protest group activism. Such problems include and are not limited to: property rights and ownership, wetland designation, the Clean Water Act, and nutrient management (elaborated upon in Chapter 3).

Post Walkerton, the provincial government has passed new legislation, enforced old regulations, and has become sensitive to environmental quality concerns like no other time in Ontario history (O'Connor, 2002b). The Ontario government has also made additional critical decisions in apparent response to the landowners' concerns. In the last few years, OLA identified 'target area' regulations and designations have been retracted or amended, such as deer culling regulations, wetlands designations, and farmer's market health regulations (Table 1-1).

Table 1-1. Ontario Government Regulation and Designation Post-Walkerton, Select Ontario Landowners' Association Issues and Ontario Government Amendments
(Ontario Landowners' Association, 2007; OME 2006; OMAFRA 2006; OMH 2006; OMNR 2006).

Select Ontario Landowners' Association Issues (since 2002)	Ontario Government Agency and Actors Responsible	Ontario Government Retractions and/or Amendments
Deer Culling Regulations	OMNR	May 2006
Farmers' Markets Health Regulations	OMH	May 2006
Nutrient Management Regulation	OME/ OMAFRA	September 2005
Sawmill Waste- EIA Regulation	OME	June 2006
Wetlands' Designations	OMA	January 2005
Source Water Protection and Regulations	OME	August 2006

Given this context, is it possible to identify whether these government policy and enforcement shifts were influenced by rural activism expressed by the Ontario Landowners' Association? In the pursuit of justice through activism, has the OLA been successful at influencing policy? More specifically, research is guided by the following central research purpose: **To explore the concept of activism as a tenet of environmental justice by examining the case study of the OLA.** Given the understanding that activism is undertaken as a means to reclaiming/sustaining environmental justice, this thesis will address three specific research objectives:

1. to develop a conceptual framework of environmental justice;
2. to examine the utility of the components of this conceptual framework within the rural revolution context; and,
3. to explore the perceptions of key stakeholders regarding the Ontario Landowner Associations' influence on rural public policy efforts to attain environmental justice.

To address these objectives, a qualitative research approach involving interviews was used to gather perceptions. Diagnostic field studies and participant observation techniques were also employed. The perceptions presented in the interviews were then coded and

analyzed for content according to an interview coding and interpretation template (Appendix C).

1.2 RESEARCH CONTRIBUTION

By addressing these research objectives, this research makes three significant contributions. First, it fills both a theoretical and knowledge void about the notion of environmental justice, through the proposing of a definition, and through the creation and examination of a conceptual framework. Identifying and enumerating the components of environmental justice is novel. Secondly, only a handful of studies decanting specific instances or groups of rural activism in Canada exist, and little research on this issue has been done in an Ontario specific context. This research uncovers a full profile for one such group, the OLA (describing their genesis, their mission, objectives, etc.). Third, the research sheds light on the perceived effectiveness of such an organization by multiple stakeholder groups. The findings from the research may be applicable to other contexts to help understand the variables that make for influential and effective activism.

1.3 THESIS ORGANIZATION

This thesis is organized in seven chapters.

Chapter II provides a critical and focused literature review. It links the theoretical and applied domains of the research problem, and highlights the connections between environmental justice, public participation, activism, and public policy.

Chapter III provides a full profile for the activism group and case study of the Ontario Landowners' Association.

Chapter IV explores definitions of environmental justice in various contexts, and provides the response to a major information void found in the literature review. This chapter proposes an environmental justice definition that encompasses all understandings of the topic. And, breaking new ground, Chapter IV describes the structure and components of a proposed 'environmental justice conceptual framework' and reveals the approaches and techniques that are being used to reclaim or to sustain justice, including activism through purposeful illegality.

Chapter V describes the research framework, and introduces the methodology, including the main research technique of the interview. The interview method was used to collect perceptions of individuals who are influential in rural policy, from four stakeholder groups. In addition, this section addresses the adequacy of participant observation and content analysis to qualitative research.

Chapter VI presents the interviews and analyzes their content. This analysis is framed by the central research purpose outlined earlier, and associated research themes. Here, the results and analysis serve to address the research objectives by examining the utility of the 'instruments' and the 'barriers and facilitators' sections of the environmental justice conceptual framework from the insight provided in the interviews, and, by exploring the perceptions of key stakeholders regarding the OLA influence on rural public policy, and effectiveness as an activist group.

Chapter VII concludes by reviewing the contributions at the theoretical and methodological levels provided by the research, and explores directions for future research.

CHAPTER 2

LITERATURE AND CASE REVIEW

2.1 INTRODUCTION

“Geographers must reorient the discipline to solve problems defined not by society’s power groups, nor even by socially conscious geographers, but by the disadvantaged groups in society itself.”(Kobayashi and Mackenzie 1989, 6).

The literature relevant to this thesis, and to the creation of the environmental justice definition and conceptual framework, spans several topics. These topics include the general domains of *environmental justice*, its theoretical subject matter, and applied experiments; *public participation* processes associated with environmental concerns such as water resources and other forms of natural resource management; citizen *activism* and the instruments used to challenge public policy dealing with the environment including cases of *civil disobedience*, the *psychology of behaviour* specific to activism, *environmental law and policy*, and, *democracy* and rules of *governance*. The following pages outline this literature and discuss the strengths and limitations of these domains of study, and their relevance to the research.

2.2 ENVIRONMENTAL JUSTICE

The environmental justice literature is evolving into an extremely rich investigation of social adaptation to some of the problems generated by local economic growth and development, among groups who feel they have been ‘victimized’ as a result of natural resources and environmental planning, decision making and management (Bailey, 1995; Bullard, 1990; Hill, 2003; Schlosberg, 1999; Visgilio and Whitelaw, 2003). The principle of

environmental justice has evolved into a social movement, and is maturing in many jurisdictional contexts, including the United States (Bryant, 1995; Fletcher, 2003; Pulido, 1996), Canada, and the province of Ontario (Carmichael et al., 2000; Draper, 1971; Elder, 1975; Government of Ontario 2006a; Government of Ontario 2006b). Activism, in various forms, is found in conjunction with the principle of environmental justice, usually in a context where environmental justice is perceived as lost (Bryant, 1995; May, 2006; Shragge, 2003).

The notion of environmental justice has been studied from several academic vantage points or perspectives, including geography, social sciences, political sciences, and law (Bryner, 2002). Interestingly, according to Bullard (1990), while justice is and has been a penultimate goal in society, it is very hard to make it tangible. Injustices are apparent to individuals who feel themselves to be badly or unfairly treated, while justice is a relative concept far more abstract and more difficult to detect in a society (Simon, 1995). A disadvantage to a certain group may only be apparent relative to the treatment of other groups (Simon, 1995). As environmental justice is a complex topic and difficult to make tangible, there are many environmental justice definitions (Appendix A), or ideas associated with it in the literature. Due to the multitude of environmental justice definitions, this already complex topic continues to be relatively ambiguous as there exists no set standard or components to the concept. This haziness makes environmental justice sometimes difficult to strive for or attain, and therefore, justice may not be served.

The concept may be vague, or considered one-sided through the usage of some definitions:

“...advocacy seeks to ensure that public authorities and mainstream organized interests effectively address

disproportionate burdens borne by historically disadvantaged communities.”(Bullard, 1994)

Moreover, nowhere in the available literature, nor in any of the numerous definitions of environmental justice (Appendix A), is there a reference to the concept of the intrinsic value of nature, or to a conception of justice that may review the relationship between human beings and flora, fauna, and natural systems in and of themselves. Many definitions of environmental justice are anthropocentric:

“...refers to the principle of equitable protection from environmental hazards for all races, ethnicities, and socioeconomic groups, and preservation of natural resources of the people, including indigenous communities.” (Hill, 2003)

Based on a review of these perspectives, and the relevant literature (Bryant, 1995; Bullard, 2005; Hill 2003; Mitchell, 2002; Needham, 2004; Schlosberg, 2004; Simon, 1995), a working definition that attempts to comprise all facets of environmental justice has been crafted:

“Environmental justice is the right to safe, healthy and productive environment (natural and built). Environmental justice acknowledges the environment for both its utility and its intrinsic value. It exudes equity in all its meaning (distributive, social, political and intergenerational), and is the right to proportionately benefit or bare burden to the consequences of one's activities related to the environment. Environmental justice is upheld by opportunities for all peoples to participate democratically and contribute meaningfully to environmental decision making.” (Crane and Robin, 2008)

Work has however been done in environmental ethics, which takes into account the non-human inhabitants of the Earth ecosystem (Davy, 2006), but such work, though pertinent, is beyond the scope of this research. The theoretical and conceptual perspectives of environmental justice have been explored by Bryner, (2002) and geographers Stacey and Needham (1993). Its applications are described by Frickel (2004), May (2006), Mutz et al.

(2002), Paquette (2002), and Shragge (2003) among others. These authors approach the perceived lack of environmental justice as a rallying cry for activism and concrete change. Environmental justice and its central tenets will be explored at length in chapter 4, which is dedicated to the presentation of an environmental justice conceptual framework. Finding its most fertile grounds within activism groups like the OLA, the principle and expression of environmental justice appear therefore to be born primarily in a context of public participation.

2.3 PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

The public participation literature relating to Canadian experience with natural resource and environmental management is voluminous. Its themes include public participation history, public participation in resource sector decision making, public participation evaluation (or the lack thereof), and public participation as a statutory law requirement (Green, 1997; Hartley and Wood, 2005; MacKinnon, 2006; Zaharchenko and Goldenman, 2004). They also include a strong component on activism, concerning both activism theory, and case studies. Public participation is used by some authors interchangeably with activism, but more generally, it is viewed as a process of active involvement and responsibility in decision-making (Matthews et al., 1999). For the sake of this research, public participation will be defined as:

“A key component of management whose objective is the promotion of democracy and accountability through the communication and engagement of an involved citizenry.” (Crane, 2006)

Most authors recognize that effective public participation includes the concept of ‘participatory equity’ (Sadler, 1979; Stone, 2001). Akin to the idea of equity, is its opposite,

discrimination. Social affiliation and context create different accessibilities to participation opportunities, various issues and degrees of discrimination (Stone, 2001).

Arnstein's ladder, perhaps the most sourced and famous of all public participation theoretical models, was the first document that illustrated levels of public participation or citizen engagement as it varies in all its forms: from absolute non-participation, to tokenism, to complete citizen power (Arnstein, 1969). Since the publication of Arnstein's ladder, public participation literature has identified literally hundreds of existing public participation forms including focus groups, information sessions, surveys, and websites (Beierle and Cayford, 2002; Cullingworth, 1984; Sadler, 1979).

The benefits of effective public participation for stakeholder groups are numerous, and are consistently highlighted in the landscape of the public participation literature. These benefits may include a more educated and engaged citizenry, and extend to enhanced environmental justice (Abelson and Gauvin, 2006; Cooper, 2003; MacKinnon, 2006). However, a large part of the literature exposes the barriers to public participation and the frustrations of citizens and community groups attempting to engage in the decision making processes of federal, provincial, and municipal governments, particularly those surrounding water resource management, municipal land use planning, environmental impact assessment, health care and public education (Bryant, 1995; Department of Justice, 2006; Drew et al., 2004; Forbes, 1985; Health Canada, 2000; Ontario Ministry of the Environment, 2007). Turnbull and Aucoin (2006) suggest that governments want submissive and agreeing followers, volunteers, and disciples, rather than real contributors and critics; they suggest that policy elites are reluctant to give up control, using as a justification the notion that citizens are not sufficiently informed. Much of the frustration surrounding public

participation is also attributable to the fact that there is very little emphasis placed on participation in process design, application, and follow-up evaluation of projects and policies (Bryant, 1995; MacKinnon, 2006; Sadler, 1977).

Despite these problems, public participation has shown itself to be of ultimate importance for politicians, planners, and managers who want their policies and programs to be accepted by their constituencies. This is apparent in the response of prominent research and public policy institutions, such as the Canadian Policy Research Networks, and the Institute for Research on Public Policy. They have been recommending stronger research on methodological approaches for public participation architecture and more comprehensive conceptual frameworks that can deal with more complex issues, problems, and their solutions (Arnstein, 1969; Commission on Resources and Environment, 1995).

Public participation is shown to be inextricably linked to environmental justice. For example, principles of ecosystem integrity, a form of environmental justice, are often defined to include the development and implementation of public participation procedures (Stone, 2001). This inter-relatedness is in turn feeding the emergence of activism whenever traditional and institutionalized public participation forms are perceived as intrusive or ineffective (Brown, 2000; Silvey, 2003; Switzer, 2003). A lack of opportunity to engage in public participation leads to perceived degradation in environmental justice.

Numerous authors, including geographers, such as Allan and Hanson (1972), Bay and Walker (1975), Brown (2000), DeCerteau (1984), Lowe and Goyder (1983), May (2006), Paquette (2002), Shragge (2003) and Silvey (2003) suggest that the environmental justice movement is largely a response to the pervasive inadequacy and tokenism of public participation and public participation opportunity. Unfortunately, there appears to be little

attention focused on identifying and testing the key tenets of successful public participation design, and rigorously applying these same tenets in evaluation exercises in a variety of decision making contexts (Draper, 1971; Wilson and Hanna, 1986). The lack of evaluation is stated to be the central reason put forward by those considering themselves to be victims of government. This deficiency is also identified as key inducements for the creation of interest groups and other activist organizations (Martin, 2002; Milbrath, 1965; Pross, 1992; Skelton and Valentine, 2003; Thorburn, 1985). These groups then use a host of passive and active means of challenging public policy (Lowe and Goyder, 1983; May, 2006; Paquette, 2002; Shragge, 2003). Concomitantly, authors reveal there is a dearth of attention focused on the real influence of different forms of activism and types of organizations involved in environmental policy design and amendment (Brown, 2000; Paquette, 2002; Shragge, 2003; Silvey, 2003). Still, activism is initiated based on the desire for justice, and environmental justice in particular is the object of a growing literature.

2.4 ACTIVISM

“Citizens need to pursue innovative means of ensuring government accountability and not to be afraid of using obscure legal methods to achieve this. It was not long ago that sustainable development was unheard of. Citizen action can only serve to stimulate new directions for environmental problem solving.”(Cowling 1997, 45).

Activism is undertaken by groups or individuals when there is a perceived lack of justice (Paquette, 2002). Those who engage in activism question the legitimacy of decision making processes, the law itself, and/or the various government levels, in an attempt to redress a wrong or to regain justice (Cole and Foster, 2001; Fletcher, 2003). Activism, like its aforementioned allied topics of environmental justice and public participation, has been

studied from several disciplines, and is certainly highlighted in geography (e.g., Mitchell, 2002).

The success of an activist movement partially depends upon the strength of its organization and of its surrounding networks, including the important role of public participation in decision making (Beirle and Cayford, 2002). Key literature on activism and environmental justice includes studies of motivating factors for engaging in activism and methods or instruments of action (including public participation), as well as case studies of groups fighting against a perceived environmental injustice (Allan and Hanson, 1972; Jamison, 2003; May, 2006; Paquette, 2002; Shragge, 2003; Switzer, 2003). Activism can also serve as a watchdog, to ensure justice does not need reclaiming, but is sustained (Brown, 1952).

Citizens of a democratic country enjoy certain civil liberties, including freedom of speech (Brown, 1952). A democracy guarantees certain rights and freedoms to people living within it including rights to intervene actively in the governing of society at all its levels. This relates to the point of 'active' and 'inactive' publics, and inactive public as the silent majority (Mitchell, 1989). Though the majority of citizens are generally politically inactive, they have the choice to engage in activism as part of a democratic community. And, though the 'inactive' public may be less overtly involved, they are likely to have been engaged in activism without being aware of it (Paquette, 2002). Activism does not only refer to such robust gestures as running for political office or civil disobedience, but can include seemingly smaller and simpler tasks, such as voting, using a 'travel mug', or signing a petition.

Activism is at its simplest defined as “a behaviour, undertaken by an individual that has the potential to influence management or policy decisions” (McFarlane and Boxall 2003, 79). Community organizing, a facet of activism, involves building a network of people who have similar objectives and who can and will band together to achieve those objectives, where the explicit goal of community organizing is to create networks of support (Martin, 2002; Schlosberg, 1999). All activists, regardless of their activism instrument or cause, are considered and regard themselves as political actors. Activist groups attempt to politicize various issues to bring about change (Wapner, 1996). Activist groups may present challenges and have problems of their own. Predominant problems of activist groups as identified in the literature include their (mis)use of scientific evidence, lack of understanding, (lack of) accountability, and antagonistic relations with other groups (Wapner, 1996).

Activism research has revealed a plethora of activist options or instruments; both within and outside of formal state powers. Most of the time, the primary modes of action chosen by activist groups rest outside formal decision making structures (Dobson, 1990). An important part of the literature consists of the many ‘how-to’ guides that exist for activists, enumerating possible activist options, activist strategies, and possible benefits and consequences of said activist options (Beierle and Cayford, 2002; May, 2006; Paquette, 2002; Tracy, 2002). What the activism literature has yet to explore in depth includes discussions of the effectiveness of activism instruments in different circumstances, what constitutes ‘effective’ activism, and critique of specific activism methods.

The activism instruments described in the literature as a means to reclaiming or sustaining environmental justice are abundant. According to May (2006) and Shragge

(2003), they fall in a number of categories: active action – internal decision making processes (i.e. running for political office); passive action – internal decision making processes (i.e. supporting a political party through membership); active action – external decision making processes (i.e. civil disobedience); and passive action – external decision making processes (i.e. supportive consumptive behaviour). Among other activism instruments, some transcend decision making processes, and stand as musts for most activists; among those are actions pertaining to education, whether in school, in public forum or in the media. Education is a powerful tool to inform or empower the public to change cultural patterns, and to create a social milieu favorable to mechanisms of accountability (Brown, 1952; Porteous, 1977; Wapner, 1996). These activism options are elaborated upon in the environmental justice conceptual framework as ‘environmental justice instruments’ (Chapter 4).

Activism forms are very rarely used singularly, but in conjunction with other methods (Hessing et al., 2005). Often the use of such forms evolve based on the activist’s perception of what forms will bring success (Hessing et al., 2005). People generally prefer to engage in activism within the system as a first option, and if this appears futile and brings only more frustration, activists will engage from within to outside of the decision making structures (Aronson, 1984). Pocklington elaborates:

“When citizens of a liberal democracy have been treated very unjustly for a long period of time, and when they have pursued many avenues of legal redress for their grievances with no success, most Canadians would say that these people were justified in engaging at least some moderate illegal political actions. Typically, Canadians would say that these people are entitled to engage in civil disobedience” (2000, 278).

Interestingly, it is understood that change can only go so far when acting external decision making processes (Shragge, 2003). Control of policy ultimately belongs to the

decision making bodies. And therefore, eventually, when this is realized by the group wishing to make long term, sustainable change, activism will move (back) within decision making structures, where the activists will then have a hand in the decision making process and in governance (Hessing et al., 2005). It is noteworthy that working within the system is commonly less popular with activist groups however, since generally speaking, they are unfamiliar with formal or official decision making systems, making it more difficult and perhaps intimidating for the average citizen to participate in such systems (Porteous, 1977).

The review of the literature suggests that activism as a topic of academic research is relatively new, and that it has not been intensely studied (Wapner, 1996). What forms of activism are effective, and under what circumstances, appears to depend on the circumstances of the 'injustice' and the population affected, which makes it harder to generalize. To date no method of quantifying the effectiveness of given forms of activism has emerged. Even civil disobedience, a form of activism that is most visible, has not been rigorously studied.

2.4.1 Civil Disobedience

The 1848 text 'Civil Disobedience' by Henry David Thoreau is said to be at the genesis of written works on the subject of purposeful illegality, and the inspiration for such activists as Gandhi and Martin Luther King. In his composition, Thoreau explains how and why it is not only reasonable but also sometimes mandatory as a member of civil society to disobey unjust laws imposed by the state – a viewpoint still held in most activism literature today (Jacobus, 1994). Special attention is paid here to this form of activism not only because it is one of the most contentious, but because it is common in environmental justice

cases and in particular because it was and is employed as a primary activism form by the OLA, the case study.

Civil disobedience, an activism instrument considered active and external decision making processes, is defined by Bay and Walker as

“any act or process of public defiance of a law or policy enforced by established governmental authorities, insofar as the action is premeditated, understood by the actor(s) to be illegal or of contested legality, carried out and persisted for limited public ends, and by way of carefully chosen and limited means.” (1975, 15).

Within the steps defining the evolution of options opened to activists, civil disobedience stands at one extreme as the last recourse. John Rawls explains:

“While civil disobedience should be recognized, I think, as a form of political action within the limits of fidelity of the rule of law, at the same time it is a rather desperate act just within these limits, and therefore it should, in general, be undertaken as a last resort when standard democratic practices have failed. In this sense it is not a normal political action. When it is justified there has been a serious breakdown; not only is there grave injustice in the law but a refusal more or less deliberate to correct it.” (1966, 38).

Aronson (1984) explains that aggressive behaviour from a minority is frequently one of the only ways open to that group to get the attention of the powerful majority, be that the apathetic public, decision makers, or both. It should be noted here that though civil disobedience is very effective in achieving some ends, it is a radical and severe activism option, with potentially equally strong consequences, be they negative or positive (Aptheker, 1967). Specific benefits of civil disobedience include group solidarity, and media attention, which in turn educates the public, and can be key in bringing societal and political attention to a concern (Kobayashi and Mackenzie, 1989). But, as recognized by Porteous (1977), one of the weaknesses of civil disobedience is that it is reaction-based to a given set of circumstances, and rarely acts as a means to providing proactive solution. This form of

activism, though sometimes very effective, and considered a necessity in some circumstances, is not sustainable; so other activism tools need to be added to the mix (Hessing et al., 2005). Effective activism groups therefore tend to use civil disobedience as one activism instrument among many, as part of a continuing and long term plan (Hessing et al., 2005).

Having observed activism forums, specifically the activism instrument of civil disobedience, one must now uncover not simply what activism instruments exist, but why would one engage in activism initially?

2.5 PSYCHOLOGY OF BEHAVIOUR AND ACTIVISM

Central to understanding activism, is understanding the reasons behind why one acts in general. Simply put, activism is in response to a perceived threat on the part of the individual (Porteous, 1977). Activism, depending on the context, is in part responsible for shaping social, political (etc.), geographies. The form of activism undertaken, as well as the duration of said activism, the actors themselves, etc., is presumably based on numerous factors – physical environment and resources, social and political climate, and definitely personality. It is clear why one may engage in activism – to pursue justice, whether to reclaim or sustain it – but why would one choose to stand up against what they feel is unjust, and engage in activism? This section will focus on the psychological, or internal (as opposed to external) reasons for engaging in activism.

Brown (1952) states that the enemies of democracy are indifference and apathy. Apathy, hopelessness, and passivity by all accounts are prevalent in today's political sphere, and are even discussed by Thoreau in his 1848 essay *Civil Disobedience* as a reason for societal inaction (Aronson, 1984; May, 2006). Kirk elaborates:

“Membership from political parties in the West is in decline; funding is increasingly derived from corporate donors who, not unnaturally, want a return on their investment; and the political message is mediated through television. Except for the opportunity every four years to cast a vote (and there is evidence that electorates are disinclined even to do that), the people feel, and to some extent are, powerless. The reaction to this powerlessness may be passivity and apathy.” (2004, 16).

And although the literature states the silent majority are politically inactive or apathetic, it is likely they who will be most affected by policy change (Porteous, 1977). Besides prevalent apathy, there is also the notion of what it is to be a ‘good’ citizen. That is, to exercise silence, and not to question the system, or authority regardless of how one may feel towards the state. A societal obligation seems to exist to obey the law (Pocklington, 2000). To engage in overt activism, one is going against the grain of society, as the majority of the population remains relatively complacent with the state (Mitchell, 1989). Therefore, central to the study of the psychology of activism are the variables that determine conformity.

Summarized, conformity is said to be determined by the following factors: personality (higher self esteem makes an individual more confident and therefore less easy to sway in their opinion, etc.), and the constitution of the group in question (experts, the individual’s peers, outsiders, etc.) (Aronson, 1984). It is also explained in psychology texts that often one relies on others as a way of determining reality (Aronson, 1984). As such, we may look to others to see what constitutes appropriate behaviour, and follow suit using them as a guide for behaviour (Aronson, 1984). Given that the majority of society is politically inactive then, it is not surprising that ‘the way to act’, is inaction. Conforming may also be to avoid punishment, or to gain reward. Psychological experimentation has also revealed that in group mentality, as the number of people listening/present increases, the likelihood of

assistance decreases (Aronson, 1984). The more people present, the more the responsibility to act out against a perceived injustice by the individual is diffused, as the individual assumes someone else will act. This being said, regardless of the number of people present, if one believes their action will be helpful, they are more likely to act (Aronson, 1984). Those who believe their actions will make a difference, are likely to engage in activism. Conformity is also in large part determined by the credibility of the primary communicator or leader of a given doctrine: a credible communicator makes for a more successful movement (Aronson, 1984).

Due to the fact that situations that call for activism are usually emotionally charged (for example, issues of religion or livelihood), and that involved individuals are sometimes deeply committed to the issue, irrational and aggressive behaviour can sometimes ensue. The primary emotion behind aggressive and insistent activism (violent or not), is frustration (Aronson, 1984; Kirk, 2004), which may develop when progress towards a goal is interrupted, and especially if the interruption is unexpected or seems illegitimate (Aronson, 1984). Frustration, though the primary emotion initiating activism, is not usually the only sentiment present. The perception of relative deprivation or hardship (when people perceive they are being treated unfairly relative to another person(s), likely leads to feelings of frustration, the primary precondition to engaging in activism (Aronson, 1984).

Though the literature is clear in pointing out what factors are and are not present when one engages in activism, and why one would not engage in activism, little has been explored with regard to why one does engage in activism. Though, the literature does insinuate that those who feel their actions will make a difference, are those who act. It is also hypothesized that certain personality traits are likely found in activists (confidence,

motivated, etc.) (Shragge, 2003). Yet various personal barriers to engaging in activism are identified in the literature. As the purpose of activism is to reclaim or sustain justice, it can be extrapolated that personal barriers are possible hindrances to achieving environmental justice, examples of barriers include: psychological (apathy, etc.), financial and familial. Perceptions of barriers could be reason for one not to engage in activism. By the same token, each of these possible barriers can also be potential facilitators to activism. For example, a psychological facilitator to activism could be the qualities of innate leadership or optimism. A complete list of barriers and catalysts to activism are described and enumerated in the proposed environmental justice conceptual framework (Chapter 4) (Aronson, 1984; McFarlane and Boxall, 2003; Mitchell, 1989; Porteous, 1977; Winter and Koger, 2004).

2.6 ENVIRONMENTAL LAW AND POLICY

Environmental justice typically engages groups on a more local or national scale, rather than international coalitions (Shragge, 2003). This is because these groups usually form in response to law and/or policy that is seen as unjust, unjustified and/or arbitrary, especially when such laws or policies restrict the rights or benefits of part of society. Environmental law may be seen by some as a means to achieving environmental protection as well as successful public participation, and even environmental justice (Benidickson, 2002). Ironically, depending on the view of the individuals, legislation can also be seen as the perpetrator of injustice or hindrance to justice. The extent to which environmental legislation is perceived negatively varies according to the behaviour of the party in power, and the mode of implementation of such legislation. In Ontario, environmental laws and policies highlight the role of regulation as a response to environmental and natural resource problems, as was seen in the response to the Walkerton crisis (Atkinson and Chandler, 1983;

Benidickson, 2002; Estrin and Swaigen, 1993). The importance given by governments to regulation adds credence to the belief in present day rural Ontario that every aspect of their lives, once independent, is now intruded upon by government through regulation and designation (National Farmers' Union, 2006; Ontario Landowners' Association, 2007).

In Ontario, regulation as a governing instrument is more pervasive and more heavily relied upon today than other kinds of policy instruments. This has been going on for more than thirty years, even though there have been calls for major regulatory reform (Doern, 1990). Predominant policy instruments besides regulations include self regulation, taxation, exhortation, expenditure, and public ownership (Doern and Phidd, 1983). Instruments falling within the category of regulations include taxes, tariffs, guidelines, rules, fines, designations, penalties and imprisonment (Benidickson, 2002; Estrin and Swaigen, 1993). For example, even in the pre-Walkerton period, a rural property owner perceived a mammoth list of water resources management legislation. Similar observations can be made in other public policy domains (Estrin and Swaigen, 1993; Hazell, 1999). More than twenty key pieces of legislation and more than 200 regulations control irrigation, wildlife conservation, nutrient management, land use planning, groundwater management, public health, etc. In addition, since the publication of the O'Connor Commission Report (2002), the Ontario government has moved even more dramatically in the direction of regulating human behaviour and rural land use practice with scores of laws and regulations, such as the Clean Water Act (Government of Ontario, 2006b).

Concomitantly, the Ontario government has been compelled over the years to establish and rejuvenate appeal institutions, such as environmental review tribunals and the Office of the Environmental Commissioner, in order to address the perception by citizens of

heavy-handedness from the part of regulatory and other agencies (Wasserstrom et al., 2000). Unfortunately, according to Hessing et al. (2005), these appeal institutions perform their functions too late in decision making processes to make a visible contribution to real public accountability. In addition, the appeal institutions are said to be too onerous for the average concerned citizen or citizen group (Benidickson, 2002).

Major criticism has been brought against such institutions in the provincial legislature's Standing Committee on Social Policy. As an example, the Standing Committee visited several Ontario communities in August 2006 to seek advice from agricultural, municipal, commercial/business, and environmental groups on the new Clean Water Act. The evidence and testimony presented is both rich and severe (Committee on Social Policy, 2006). The Act had passed third reading in the Ontario Legislature on October 19, 2006; it was described in the testimonies to the standing committee as devoid of sensitivity to rural issues and problems, in avoidance of key urban sources of water management malpractice, focusing instead – and unjustly – on the individual rural property owner (Committee on Social Policy, 2006). The president of the Ontario Landowners' Association at the time, Randy Hillier, stated to the Standing Committee that the true danger to both ground and surface water supplies in Ontario is not rural, but urban – the 20 biggest water polluters in the province are government owned facilities (Committee on Social Policy, 2006). As was outlined above, and shall be elaborated upon below, members of the Ontario Landowners' Association feel that they are justified in challenging such government regulations, and governance. It is arguable that they feel the ideas of true democracy and true governance have been lost.

2.7 DEMOCRACY AND GOVERNANCE

“Democracy is the worst form of government, except for all the rest.” (Winston Churchill)

The term *democracy* is derived from the greek word ‘demos’ (the people) and ‘kratein’ (to rule), therefore, ‘the people rule’, or the people have the power (Pocklington, 2000a), the democratic ideal being self-rule (Loenen, 1997). In its most basic sense, therefore, democracy means the right to vote – the citizen right to choose their head of state (Loenen, 1997). Democracy has also been defined as:

“...a commonwealth of political equals, who are free to advance the common good and also their own good by constitutional means,...legislation, brought about by processes designed to make sure that the laws express the well deliberated desires and needs of the people” (Bay and Walker 1975, 19).

A democratic form of government allows dissension – the call for democracy is the most basic principle in public participation and in activism. Democracy justifies intervention by citizens to support or oppose their government. The different activism instruments, internal and external decision making processes, active and passive, are possible options because we are in a democratic society. “The concept of democracy is born of revolution” (Aptheker 1967, 106), and several present day democracies have, in fact, been born out of revolution. The notion of revolution is birthed in the spirit of democracy, and is a quintessential sign that one is indeed exercising democratic freedoms as one is acting out when an injustice is perceived, and revolt is a sign of autonomy and displeasure with current governance (Aptheker, 1967). Injustice is fundamentally the antithesis of what democracy is and what it stands for. An unjust situation divides the people into classes of the favored and disfavored, while democracy seeks to unite the masses for the common good (Simon, 1995).

“Democracies have within themselves the means of ensuring their own improvement just because they do permit differences of opinion. And this is their strength - not the authority which springs from the will of the dictator, but the spirit of free people who realize that, even though they cannot reach the ideal of a perfect democracy, they can only really fail if they cease striving to achieve that ideal” (Brown 1952, 6).

To be a part of a democracy, and have democratic rights, one must be a citizen. The notion of ‘citizenship’ is comprised of many of the themes brought to light in this literature review: justice, equity, and the right to publicly participate and engage in activism. Marshall’s trilogy model of citizenship, considered to be a theoretical construct of citizenship in North America today, states that citizenship is comprised of three rights: civil rights, political rights and social rights (Marshall, 1963; Marston & Mitchell, 2004). Reisman (2005) explains that civil rights include such individual rights as freedom of speech, thought, and faith. Political rights include the liberty to exercise political power or authority (Reisman, 2005). And social rights involve such rights as education, and social services (Marshall, 1963). Like the concept of justice, the idea of ‘rights’ or equity also therefore includes the converse concept of discrimination. Current academics discuss citizenship as being more than simply a ‘legal state’, and argue the links between understanding citizenship rights and environmental justice (Brannan et al., 2007). Being a citizen is said to behave as an active member of the community (Brannan et al., 2007), through activism and public participation. Citizenship appears to be yet another concept where justice, public participation and activism are revealed to be part of a democratic structure.

Governance strategies take on many forms, the far reach of anti-governance being the notion of anarchism – opposed to forms of governance that interfere with innate patterns of cooperation that could immerge naturally (Wapner, 1996). On the polar extreme of the

spectrum, one would find a bureaucracy so convoluted that it is no longer the government that works for the people, but a people who are submissive vis-à-vis government activity, or a democracy resting in political corruption (Gibbons and Rowat, 1976; Resnick, 1984). The notion of 'red tape' is often brought up formally and informally within governance and activism research as an example of bureaucracy run amuck or a step towards corruption, and as a barrier to justice. Considered a bureaucratic pathology, red tape is inefficient and is a hindrance to accomplishing one's objectives. Red tape is not to be confused with a regulation that provides procedural protection (Bozeman, 2000).

Regulation, imposed and enforced by the governing body of the day, can similarly be perceived as a bureaucratic pathology or a weapon wielded by special interests. To right this perceived wrong, through participating in one of many forms of activism, is to exercise one's democratic rights. The OLA is one such example of a group that perceives injustice, and engages in various forms of activism in an attempt to reclaim environmental justice perceived as lost.

This literature review has revealed the complexity and inter-connectedness of the aforementioned topics, and has revealed many insights pertinent to the research, to the field of geography, as well as many unexplored themes. The domain of environmental justice is still relatively new, and though theoretical and tangible components of environmental justice have been identified, a void exists in linking all components. This void will be addressed through the creation of an environmental justice definition and conceptual framework, presented in Chapter 4. Both public participation and activism literature have been thorough in history and in revealing possible forums including civil disobedience. But both domains have yet to address what variables lead to effective activism, what qualifies as effective

activism, and who engages in what is considered successful activism. The Ontario Landowners' Association as an activism organization in both theory and in practice, fits the descriptions outlined in the activism literature. Determining the OLA's perceived effectiveness as an activist organization first requires a deeper study into the organization itself. The OLA case study overview is presented next, in Chapter 3.

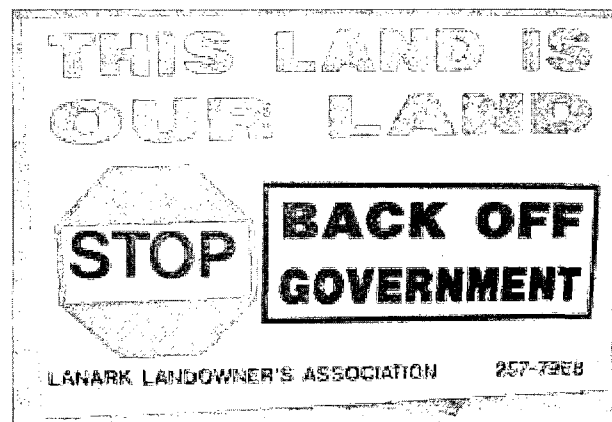
CHAPTER 3

ONTARIO LANDOWNERS' ASSOCIATION AND THE RURAL REVOLUTION

"This evolutionary concept of social change, which appeared to ...sweep across a people and a (usually rural) landscape, change which left distinct traces. We appeared to be living in a revolutionary period, where change was rapid." (Kobayashi and Mackenzie 1989, 4).

In present day Eastern Ontario, we are bearing witness to the novel phenomenon of a rural revolution through the activism of rural landowners. This rural revolution has been initiated by the OLA, an organization whose motto is and whose signage reads 'This land is our land. Stop. Back off government.' (Figure 3-1) (Ontario Landowners' Association, 2007).

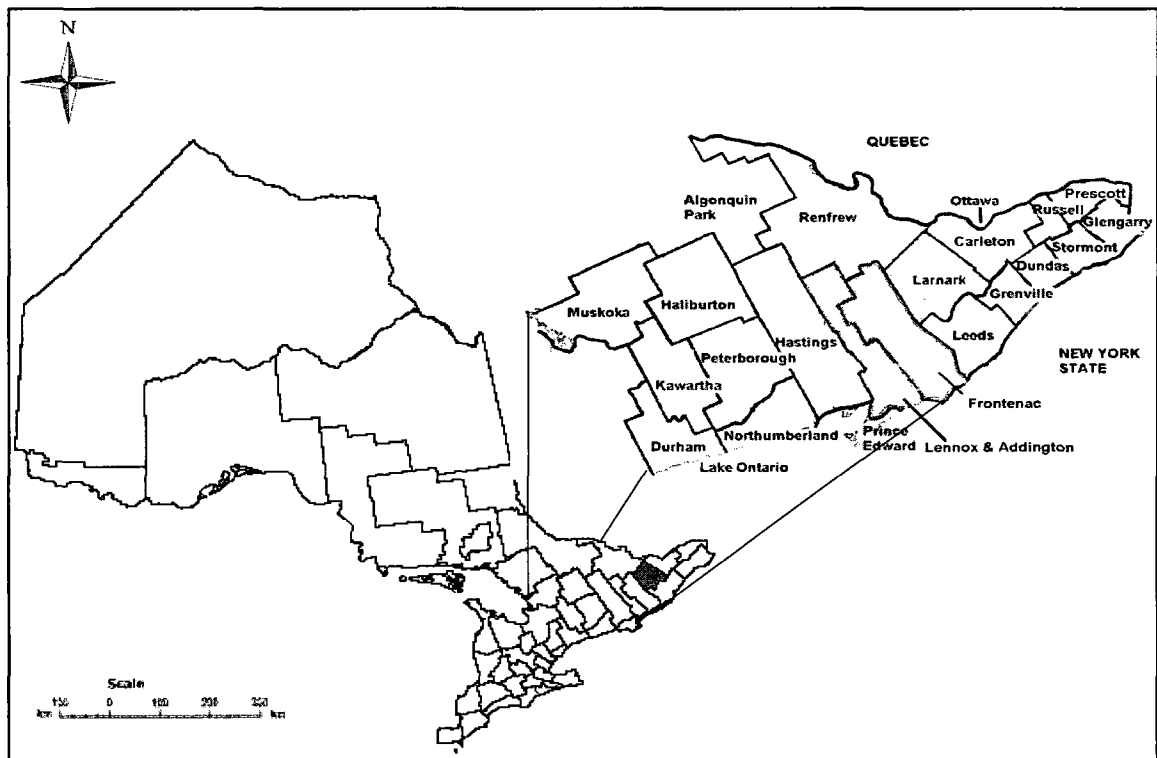
Figure 3-1. Ontario Landowners' Association Signage
(Ontario Landowners' Association, 2007)



The OLA began in 2003 as a few people around a kitchen table in both Renfrew and Lanark Counties. By 2005, the numerous county branches agreed to come together and form the Ontario Landowners' Association. The organization is now present in 19 county chapters

in the province, with over 15,000 members (Figure 3-2) (Hillier, 2007; Ontario Landowners' Association, 2007).

Figure 3-2. Ontario Counties with Select Landowners' Associations



The group consists of an elected executive, consisting of a president and vice president, and a president for each county chapter. The group initially formed in reaction to provincial legislation perceived by the landowners as intrusive; what was perceived as being over-regulation was believed to be in part due to the absence of property rights in the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms (Ontario Landowners' Association, 2007). In the words of the OLA: "We pledge to protect and support any landowner member whose rights to use, own or enjoy property have been, or might be, affected by government activities." (Ontario Landowners' Association, 2007). The full mandate of the OLA is outlined in Figure 3-3.

Figure 3-3. Mandate of the Ontario Landowners' Association

(Ontario Landowners' Association, 2007).

Mandate of the Ontario Landowners' Association:

1. To come to the aid of any landowner whose rights to own, use or enjoy property have been, or will be, affected by government actions.
2. To educate the public that the greatest threat to Rural Ontario is excessive legislation and over regulation and that inclusion of Property Rights in The Charter of Rights and Freedoms is necessary to reverse this trend.
3. To enshrine property rights in The Charter of Rights and Freedoms.
4. To actively support those politicians and governments who demonstrate support for property rights and small government and to work against those who do not.
5. To support, advise, and consult with, Landowners Associations and affiliated individuals and organizations for the purpose of developing policy, objectives, and plans of action.

Essentially, the OLA seeks to reclaim democracy and justice that they perceive as lost (Hillier, 2007; Ontario Landowners' Association, 2007). "The OLA knows that the true role of government is to prevent injustice – not to create it" (Hillier, 2007). The problems faced by current day landowners according to their perspective are numerous, and are inter-related; they include such issues as wetlands designation, rural business regulations, and certainly property rights (Table 3-1). One example, the Clean Water Act, will be decanted in detail here.

The controversy that surrounds the Clean Water Act was briefly highlighted in section 2.6 on environmental law and policy. This Act has been and continues to be a source of much contention for rural landowners, and has proven to be a source of protest for the OLA. Otherwise known as Bill 43, protecting Ontario's water resources is the Act's central purpose. But according to the Landowner Association, this is done in an unjust manner,

Table 3-1. Ontario Landowners' Association Ledger of Rural Issues and Problems
(Ontario Landowners' Association, 2007; The Ottawa Citizen, 2006).

Property Rights and Ownership
Sawmills and Waste Management
Wetlands: Designation and Regulated Use
Nutrient Management and on-farm Practices
Mining and Subsurface Resource and Property Rights
Deer Populations and Culling Regulations
Woodlots' Management and Marketing Regulations
Wells and Well Water Protection
Source Water Protection and its Public Committees
Clean Water Act and Rural Responsibility
Maple Sugar Production and Regulation
Land and Property Assessment
Provincial Policy Statement
Animal Diseases and Compensation
Relationship with Scientists and Policy Makers
Amalgamation
Rural-Urban Stresses and Agricultural Land Use Loss
Urban VS. Rural Values and Environmental Agendas
Political Parties and the Rural Voice
Developers' Influence in Land-Use Planning
Agricultural Commodity Pricing
Farmers' Markets and Public Health
Abattoir Closings and Dead Animal Disposal
Water Regulations and Small Rural Business/ Economic Impacts
Rural businesses and their Regulation, i.e. Bakeries
Public Participation in Decision-Making from 'Above'

through “deceptive environmentalism, and a rising tide of regulated fascism” (Ontario Landowners' Association, 2007). The OLA website enumerates what the group feels are “unjust infringements” of the Act, like the potential seizing of property, the outlawing of activities that are considered threats to groundwater, fines, and governmental control over the enforcement of the Act. Select descriptions of the Clean Water Act made by the OLA are listed below in Table 3-2, representing the group opinion. This is sometimes done using very strong language, and it is apparent to the reader that the OLA holds a very strong opinion against the legislation (distinct from the group's opinions of the protection of water resources in general).

Table 3-2. Select OLA Statements of the Clean Water Act
(Ontario Landowners' Association, 2007).

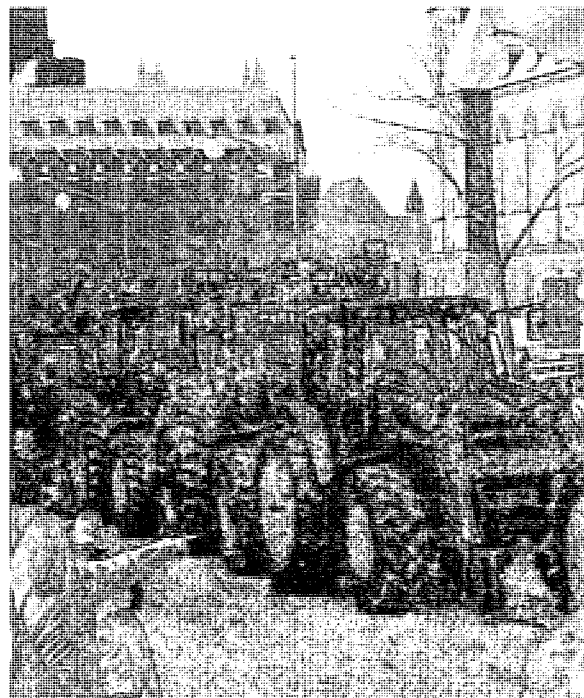
• Section 54 and 58 casts shadows of tyranny, and grants the authorities to use whatever force necessary with police assistance to enforce the Act.
• Sections 54 and 79 authorize bureaucrats to enter any private property without consent or warrant, and empowers bureaucrats to make any excavations, collect samples, evidence, or data and compels people to provide any and all information. "A permit inspector may, for the purpose of enforcing this part, enter property, without the consent of the owner or occupier and without warrant" (Ontario Ministry of the Environment, 2006)
• Section 56 is a vague sweeping encompassing catch-all, and states: "A permit official may cause to be done anything required by it if "in the permit official's opinion, it would be in the public interest to do so." (Ontario Ministry of the Environment, 2006)
• Section 83 grants bureaucrats the authority to seize and confiscate private property without consent, and without payment or compensation, "a municipality or source protection agency may, for the purpose of implementing a source protection plan, may acquire by purchase, lease or otherwise, or subject to the expropriations act, without the consent of the owner, enter upon, take and expropriate and hold any land or interest in land" (Ontario Ministry of the Environment, 2006)
• Section 88 and 89 saves the bureaucrats and government from any legal action initiated by an individual or business to stop any injustice.
• Bill 43 will kill rural Ontario, our democracy, and put an end to justice, under the pretext of protecting our water quality and quantity. There are only two choices during this perfect storm, seek refuge in a high-rise condo, or stand firm and repair democracy's wall of justice, and demand Bill 43 be forever washed away in the bright lights of public interest.

The OLA has engaged and continues to engage in many forms of activism, both internal and external decision making structures. The group presently uses a combination of activism instruments, including but not limited to: websites, the 'Landowner Magazine', political candidacies, and civil disobedience. Initially, the OLA engaged predominantly in purposeful illegality, heading protests and rallies for their causes. Two examples of OLA activism are demonstrated in Figures 3-4 and 3-5 respectively: cows on Parliament Hill, and a rally disrupting traffic flow in downtown Ottawa using a parade of tractors sporting the OLA sign (as was shown above in Figure 3-1).

**Figure 3-4. OLA Activism: Cows on Parliament Hill
(Ontario Landowners' Association, 2007)**



**Figure 3-5. OLA Activism: Tractor Rally in Downtown Ottawa
(Ontario Landowners' Association, 2007)**



Congruent with activism theory, the OLA is following the pattern of what is considered a successful activist organization. After realizing that working outside of decision making, though effective in its own right, can only get the organization so far, it has come to light that an organization, if it wishes to make lasting changes within the system, must operate (at least) partially from within decision making structures. This was demonstrated when several representatives of the OLA succeeded in being elected to political office (Ontario Landowners' Association, 2007).

This chapter discussed one of many potential case studies where environmental justice is invoked as one of the operative principles: the Ontario Landowners' Association and the rural revolution. Due to the arguably rapid growth of the organization beyond Lanark County, it is obvious there is an aspect of the group that resonates with rural Ontarians. This is presumably due to the perception that government intrusion is real and problematic – the perception that there is lack of environmental justice. As the literature reveals, this complex topic needs cohesion. The environmental justice conceptual framework, presented next, attempts to do just this.

CHAPTER 4

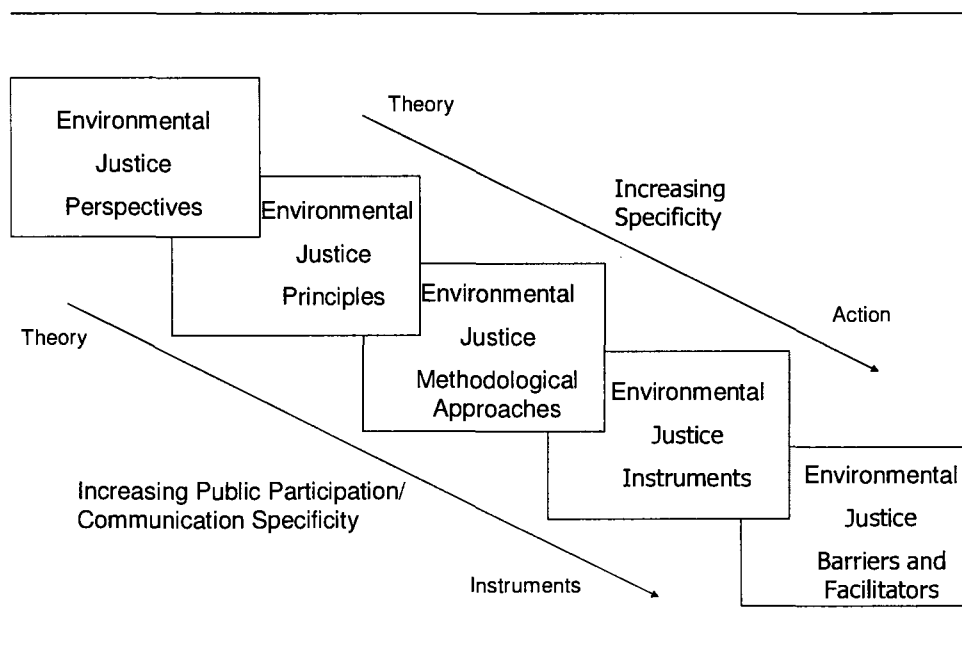
ENVIRONMENTAL JUSTICE CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK

4.1 PRESENTATION OF THE ENVIRONMENTAL JUSTICE CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK

Like all ideologies and social movements, environmental justice can be approached from various angles. Consequently, it is not surprising that the literature review in chapter 2 revealed that environmental justice is a fuzzy and complex concept – after all, environmental justice varies geographically and across social contexts. This research proposes a definition (Chapter 2) and conceptual framework to unite all notions of this complex topic, into one, comprehensive concept. This chapter aims to organize the manifold of environmental justice definitions and tenets by delineating a conceptual framework proposed by Needham and Robin (2006). This model, presented in Figure 4-1, arranges the discourse surrounding environmental justice from its theoretical to practical components in the following ways: 1) by outlining the *perspectives* from which environmental justice has been studied; 2) by highlighting its *principles* or goals; 3) by explaining the methodological *approaches* to its attainment; 4) by linking these approaches to *instruments* or techniques that accomplish a movement towards environmental justice; and finally, 5) *barriers and facilitators* to its realization (Figures 4-1 through 4-4, Tables 4-1 and 4-2). This conceptual framework is based on a compilation of the relevant environmental justice and activism literature (Bryant, 1995; Bryner, 2002; May, 2006; Shragge, 2003; Stacey and Needham, 1993). The last two components proposed for the first time in this research (instruments and barriers and facilitators), have been gleaned from the literature. As such, this model

represents an extension of the literature review, as the concepts found in the literature have been broadened by this study in explicit ways.

Figure 4-1. Environmental Justice Conceptual Framework
(Needham and Robin, 2006)



4.2 ENVIRONMENTAL JUSTICE PERSPECTIVES

The first and most theoretical component in the environmental justice conceptual framework is the environmental justice perspectives (Bryner, 2002). Before environmental justice became a phenomenon of study unto itself, it was studied discretely in a wide variety of academic disciplines and from many differing perspectives. The five perspectives presented in Table 4-1 offer the broad themes of research in which environmental justice has been studied.

Table 4-1. Environmental Justice Perspectives (Bryner, 2002)

Perspectives	Description
Civil Rights	-Identify disparate impacts due to discrimination. -Civil rights law provides legal tools and concepts.
Distributive Justice and Ethics	-Distribute benefits and burdens fairly or equally. -Public policies should produce fair outcomes.
<i>Public Participation</i>	<i>-Devise fair procedures that give voice to all members of the community.</i> <i>-Ensure all groups have the social capital to participate effectively.</i>
Social Justice	-Comprehensively assess the interaction of economic, political, social, and cultural power. -Address disproportionate risks and harms.
Ecological Sustainability	-Require pollution prevention and the conservation of resources. -Eliminate, rather than redistribute, environmental problems.

The public participation perspective is italicized in Table 4-1 because this is the main perspective from which this research is conducted. While, the civil rights perspective refers mostly to studying and defending environmental justice from a legal perspective, and the distributive justice perspective does the same with an emphasis on policy, the public participation perspective combines these tenets – all groups of people should be represented, and policy should enshrine the right of these groups to voice their concerns. The public participation perspective recognizes that, ideally, people who participate in decision-making processes feel equally validated and involved. Importantly, Bryner (2002) separates public participation from social justice and ecological sustainability perspectives. This segregation highlights that, theoretically, environmental justice can be about more than social harm or the protection of natural resources – the ‘environment’ for justice movements can equally be found in policy battles that have spatial referents, like allowing community groups to publicly participate in decision making. The term ‘justice’ connotes both fairness and law;

nonetheless, in this case study, the public participation perspective will be focused upon due to its relation to activism as a means of attaining environmental justice.

4.3 ENVIRONMENTAL JUSTICE PRINCIPLES

Principles are more than just the essence of an idea – they are targets and goals. When dealing with environmental justice in all of its theoretical permutations, it must be recognized that there are diverse goals of these movements that guide advocates into action. Stacey and Needham (1993) have summarized such environmental justice principles into a set of five categories of the goals and needs of these movements: 1) satisfaction of general human needs; 2) maintenance of ecological integrity; 3) achievement of equality and social justice; 4) social self-determination and cultural diversity; and 5) integration of conservation and development. In Figure 4-2, the elements of each principle is outlined; however, it is clear from the principle names that public participation and policy concerns are equally part of an environmental justice model whether they directly include ecological aspects or not.

As such, even the ‘rules of action’ for environmental justice indicate that being involved in decision making processes that affect our lives locally is both an issue of our environments and justice. This is clearly seen in the principle of ‘social self-determination and cultural diversity,’ which has strong links to this study. To endorse the notion of a culturally diverse society involves not only supporting multiculturalism in Canadian society, but also the voices of all types of communities – urban and rural. Subsequently, one element of this principle identified by Stacey and Needham is the notion of ‘endogenous technology and ideas,’ which provide valuable insight as it encompasses the ideas of heritage, or local

Figure 4-2. Environmental Justice Principles (Stacey and Needham, 1993).

1. Satisfaction of Human Needs
 - a. Quality of life and security of livelihood
 - b. Development as a qualitative change
 - c. Growth for meeting a range of human needs
 - d. Organizational response to societal change
 2. Maintenance of Ecological Integrity
 - a. Ecological process and genetic diversity
 - b. Awareness of ecosystem requirements
 - c. Maintenance and enhancement of ecosystems
 - d. Ecological principles to guide decision making
 3. Achievement of Equality and Social Justice
 - a. Equitable access to resources, costs and benefits
 - b. Equality and justice within and between generations
 - c. Ethical and ecologically appropriate development
 - d. Democratic political decision making
 4. Social Self-Determination and Cultural Diversity
 - a. Individual development and fulfillment, self-reliance
 - b. Endogenous technology and ideas
 - c. Culturally appropriate development
 - d. Locally initiated and participatory decision making
 5. Integration of Conservation and Development
 - a. Multiplicity of perspectives, means and strategies
 - b. Blending of sectors
 - c. Resource management for social and economical change
 - d. Accommodation and compromise
-

methods. In this case study, the rural communities are frequently governed by urban groups or government, and though all parties are interested in democratic outcomes, rural groups may not trust input and policies imposed by those viewed as outsiders. Moreover, the element of 'culturally appropriate development' is another warning against wild or 'foreign' development. For development to be culturally appropriate in some regions of Canada and Eastern Ontario, it may have more to do with respecting local and rural subcultures rather than transnationalism, unless this goal is meant to address larger global issues in a Canadian or even international context. Finally, the fourth element of this environmental justice principle of self-determination, 'locally initiated and participatory decision making' sends us back to the perception of the intrusive nature of government through policies and regulations. It re-affirms the notion that local people should have the ability to make decisions in matters concerning them, that they have the ability to contribute to decision making in a meaningful way, and that this is a key component of environmental justice. Evidently, these principles represent a set of possible goals for environmental justice movements that would ideally lead to long-term strategies for its preservation and the next part of this conceptual model will highlight the approaches to its realization.

4.4 ENVIRONMENTAL JUSTICE METHODOLOGICAL APPROACHES

The different approaches to attaining environmental justice outlined by Stacey and Needham (1993) – *strategic*, *systems-based*, *adaptive*, *integrative*, and *pluralistic* – are decision making guides and highlight courses of action (Figure 4-3).

Figure 4-3. Environmental Justice Methodological Approaches
(Stacey and Needham, 1993)

1. Strategic
 - a. Normative, policy-oriented, priority setting, goals definition
 - b. Proactive, innovative, generates alternatives
 - c. Considers range of alternatives and impacts
 - d. Consensus
 2. Systems
 - a. Focused on key points of entry into a system
 - b. Recognized linkages between systems and dynamics
 - c. Recognized linkages within systems and dynamics
 - d. Importance of spatial and temporal scales
 3. Adaptive
 - a. Anticipatory, preventive, dealing with uncertainty
 - b. Experimental, learning, evolutionary, responsive
 - c. Maintaining diversity of options for resilience
 - d. Moderating, self-regulating, monitoring
 4. Integrative
 - a. Participatory and consultative
 - b. Collaborative for the synthesis of solutions
 - c. Integration of societal, technical and institutional interests
 - d. Integration of management processes
 5. Pluralistic
 - a. Multi-sectoral
 - b. Equal attention afforded stakeholder issues
 - c. Encouragement of broad-based public participation
 - d. Regional and/or local level of involvement
-

These approaches can be seen as either descriptive or prescriptive, and are not necessarily mutually exclusive. In other words, it would make good sense for some groups seeking environmental justice to approach their problem from two (or more) different angles. For this case study involving rural residents that have a public participation perspective and a goal of self-determination, it is clear that *pluralistic* approach could be of significant benefit. A *pluralistic* approach submits that there should be ‘encouragement of broad-based public participation’ and ‘regional and/or local level involvement.’ Certainly, in the case of rural residents seeking parity in decision-making, the ‘systems-based’ approach would also offer valuable strategies such as seeking ‘key entry points’ into the policy discourse to enact change. However, other approaches like *integrative*, which promotes the integration of technical and institution interests, or *strategic*, which works normatively, may be counterproductive. While there are a range of approaches any person or group may take en route to achieving environmental justice, these methodological standpoints require implementation through practical techniques and instruments, which form the fourth part of the conceptual framework.

4.5 ENVIRONMENTAL JUSTICE INSTRUMENTS

Any activist group can use one of many tools, or instruments, to achieve environmental justice. The instruments enumerated in this section have been compiled from key publications (Bryant, 1995; May, 2006; Shragge, 2003) and elaborated upon by the results of this case study. These publications and the interviews conducted with the OLA highlighted that activist groups are most successful when they use a diversity of instruments to achieve their goal (principle). As such, it became evident through these readings and field studies that activism can be done either actively or passively, and also takes place either

internal decision making processes or external decision making processes (Figure 4-4). For the purposes of this research, active is defined as ‘an explicit and dynamic behaviour/action’, whereas passive is ‘an implicit and latent behaviour/action.’ Activism internal to decision-making structures denotes ‘following process rules,’ and external to decision-making structures denotes acting ‘outside of traditional institutions and establishments.’ Examples of each form of activism are documented in Figure 4-4 and correspond to the environmental justice perspective of ‘public participation’ and the environmental justice principle of ‘social self-determination’ that are central to this study. Evidently, the list of examples would be far too numerous and almost infinite if instruments for all the facets of environmental justice were included. For example, the instrument of ‘environmental remediation’ would be in a list relating to environmental justice if the perspective was ecological sustainability rather than public participation.

To make further sense of Figure 4-4, concrete examples from my interviews with the OLA that indicate the variety of instruments being used to achieve the ‘social self-determination’ principle of environmental justice will be highlighted. The OLA has had political candidates elected. This technique is definite in expression, and works within the existing governmental institutions, and as such is classified as an ‘active instruments internal decision making processes.’ The OLA also has members that are part of political parties who advocate property rights and rural issues, but do not run as candidates. While these actions are still within existing governmental institutions, they are significantly more reserved in action and, therefore, are classified as ‘passive instruments internal decision making processes.’ On the other hand, the OLA has also participated in protests and rallies on Parliament Hill – nothing is merely implied by these actions, and they are certainly not

Figure 4-4. Environmental Justice Instruments (Needham and Robin, 2005a)

	Active	Passive
Internal Decision Making Processes	1	2
External Decision Making Processes	3	4

1. Internal Decision-Making Processes, Active Instruments

- a. Elected, Political Office
- b. Elected or Appointed Office in Associations/Groups
- c. Litigation Options: Court System Overview; Civil Actions-Judicial Review, Criminal Code Prosecution; Mediation; Administrative Tribunals; Prosecutions-Crown and Private; Interventions; Aboriginal Law
- d. Non-Litigation Options: Freedom of Information; Environmental Assessments; Law Reform; Provincial Options-Environmental Bill of Rights, Auditor General Petition; Federal Options-Attorney General Petition, CEPA Investigation
- e. Formation of 'challenge organizations'
- f. Education and outreach

2. Internal Decision-Making Processes, Passive Instruments

- a. Communications with key political decision-makers
- b. Communications key bureaucrats
- c. Communications with mass media (local, regional, urban)
- d. Communications with allies and relevant constituencies
- e. Political party membership and voting
- f. Education and outreach

3. External Decision-Making Processes, Active Instruments

- a. Demonstrations and rallies
- b. Public petitions
- c. Civil disobedience; purposeful illegality
- d. Formation of 'political candidacies'
- e. Formation of 'challenge organizations'
- f. Education and outreach

4. External Decision-Making Processes, Passive Instruments

- a. Communication with mass media (local, regional, urban)
- b. Communication through advocacy advertising and signage
- c. Communication with allies and relevant constituencies
- d. Education, information and insight gathering
- e. Supportive-consumptive behaviour
- f. Education and outreach

within existing institutions and rules. These acts of civil disobedience are therefore ‘active instruments external the decision-making processes.’ Finally, some landowners have erected signs on their property decrying government intrusion in their lives without their input. These actions are not done inside normal establishments, and while the signs are present, it is an activism tool that is not necessarily actualized without participation from an onlooker. Consequently, this represents the category of ‘passive instruments external to decision-making processes.’

4.6 ENVIRONMENTAL JUSTICE BARRIERS AND FACILITATORS

Lastly, while implementing tools to achieve environmental justice, activists are likely to encounter barriers and facilitators. Again, these have been compiled from key literature (Bryant, 1995; May, 2006; Shragge, 2003), but have also been embellished by the experiences of field studies, and of the stakeholder interviews. The items listed in Table 4-2 can either help or hinder an activist. Rather than exhaustively explain each barrier or facilitator in Table 4-2, I will focus on a few of these items based on the experiences of the interviewees. The OLA, as a volunteer organization, perceived that it was sometimes difficult to devote themselves to the organization to the degree they would have liked. This was due to the perceived barrier termed here as *familial/career*. Those interviewed understood they had prior obligations to work and family life before they could dedicate the time they may have wished to the organization. Career, however, was seen as a facilitator for those who are retired, and therefore had much more time to dedicate to extracurricular activities, like the OLA. *Media* coverage, in terms of quantity

Table 4-2. Environmental Justice Barriers and Facilitators
(Needham and Robin, 2005b)

Number	Barrier /Facilitator
1.	Financial
2.	Informational
3.	Technological/ Scientific
4.	Traditional
5.	Procedural
6.	Legal
7.	Familial/Career
8.	Repercussions
9.	Educational/ Communicative
10.	Psychological
11.	Political
12.	Media
13.	Past Influencing Present
14.	Number of Supporters
15.	Number of Detractors

and level of support provided through the coverage, was revealed by interview respondents as being paramount to an organization's success, a facilitator to justice through exposure. Conversely, the lack of media coverage and/or support was viewed as a barrier for activism. The field studies and interviews also revealed *number of supporters* to a movement or organization as a facilitator, while a lack of supporters was considered a barrier to justice. Supporters, including group members, were considered by the interviewees as a necessary component to the organization's success.

By working from the experiences of the interviewees, this compilation underscores how these barriers or facilitators can affect whether or not an activist deems certain approaches and instruments as productive or counterproductive, and whether or not an activist is likely to participate in pursuing a principle or goal in the future.

4.7 SUMMARY

The environmental justice conceptual framework is central to the research, and is novel to the discipline. The tenets of the conceptual framework – environmental justice perspectives, principles, methodological approaches, instruments, and barriers and facilitators (Figure 4-1) are some of the fruits of the research, and have aided in part to the formation of the interview template. These environmental justice conceptual framework components also subsequently influenced the coding templates for the results and analysis of the research. It was hypothesized that the two new components of the environmental justice conceptual framework (instruments, and, barriers and facilitators), initially based on the field studies and literature, would be confirmed through the interviews. These results are presented in Chapter 6, after a discussion of research methodology, presented next in Chapter 5.

CHAPTER 5

METHODOLOGICAL APPROACH

5.1 INTRODUCTION

The methodological approach used in this research has been informed by the qualitative methodological literature (Cloke et al., 2004; Holloway et al., 2003; Holt-Jensen, 1999; Johnston et al., 1999; Majchrzak, 1984; Northey and Tepperman, 1986; Sproull, 1988), as well as a critical review of the relevant literature (Chapter 2, Literature and Case review). This literature review addressed the first research objective, as it allowed for the creation of the environmental justice conceptual framework (Chapter 4), and, has led to the themes worth pursuing in the interview template (Appendix B) to understand the attributes of the OLA considered influential to rural public policy. The research objectives are:

1. to develop a conceptual framework of environmental justice;
2. to examine the utility of the components of this conceptual framework within the rural revolution context; and,
3. to explore the perceptions of key stakeholders regarding the Ontario Landowner Associations' influence on rural public policy efforts to attain environmental justice.

The methods used to address these research objectives include: participant observation (for example: Bogdan, 1972; Jorgensen, 1989), content analysis (for example: Holsti, 1969; Krippendorff, 1980), interviews (for example: Burhoe, 2002; McCracken, 1988), and data coding and analysis (for example: Berg, 2004; Denzin and Lincoln, 2005). These methodologies as they apply to this research are described in detail below.

5.2 PARTICIPANT OBSERVATION

Participant observation, the first methodological technique used, requires the researcher to be immersed in the setting of the research participants. This technique is utilized to understand context to develop relevant research questions and acceptable methodology given the study area. By being a direct witness to events and decision making situations, the researcher has direct, observational evidence of relations, power dynamics, issue and problem sensitivities, and the information networks that surround them. Direct, face to face contact with potential research partners and subjects establishes higher levels of trust and understanding, while revealing to participants the researcher's goals. The researcher gains deeper insight into the perceptions, attitudes and values of the participants, and is exposed to the economic, cultural, political and social state of the environment or study area (Berg, 2004; Mitchell, 1989). Participant observation increases the experiential, contextual knowledge of the researcher, and increases the possibility of unveiling new or unexpected information and insight that cannot be obtained by remote methods. More specifically in the case of this research, upon engaging in participant observation, many informants reported a form of research fatigue as a result of what they perceived as impersonal surveys that they felt were meaningless and indicated an absence of understanding of the rural situation. The remedy for such fatigue was found to be interpersonal discussions, and listening to the informants – which also meant that the informants could and did provide their own interpretations and judgments rather than fit simplified answers to pre-determined categories. Participant observations took place over the full study period September 2005 to May 2008 (Table 5-1). The majority of field study

and observation opportunities took place in the context of conferences and meetings in rural Eastern Ontario with groups including: local politicians, provincial planners and managers, members of rural and agricultural commodity and interest groups, and members of the OLA — all of whom are stakeholders in rural public policy.

Table 5-1. Select Participant Observations

Date	Event
November 15 th & 19 th , 2005	Ottawa Rural Summit
November 17 th , 2005	National Farmers' Union Convention
January 13 th , 2006	Sierra Legal Defense Fund: Legal Toolkit Workshop
March 8 th , 2006	Alexandria Landowners' Appreciation Luncheon
April 22 nd , 2006	North Glengarry Second Annual Eco-Symposium
May 8-10 th , 2006	Freshwater for the Future Policy Conference
November 21 st , 2006	Canadian Water Network Conference
March 27, 2008	Source Water Protection Committee Meeting
April 30 th , 2008	Natural Heritage Forum, Ministry of Natural Resources
May 6 th , 2008	15 th Annual St. Lawrence River Institute Conference

5.3 CONTENT ANALYSIS

The second methodological technique, a content analysis approach, was selected to identify and analyze the messages contained on a selected set of websites in order to gain insight into the issues and problems stated as needing OLA attention. Websites of the Ontario and Lanark Landowners' Association (www.ruralrevolution.ca), Conservation Ontario (www.conservation-ontario.on.ca), Ontario Ministry of the Environment (www.eme.gov.on.ca), Raisin Region Conservation Authority (www.rrca.on.ca), Ontario Ministry of Agriculture, Food and Rural Affairs (www.omafra.gov.on.ca) were the objects of this analysis. In addition, a search for articles and news items published in daily newspapers (Ottawa Citizen; Ottawa Sun, etc.) serving the eastern Ontario study area was

conducted over the duration of this research. The identification and analysis of issues, problems and discourse sources was organized in an ongoing research dossier.

The methodological techniques mentioned (including the preparatory phase of a literature review), have all led to an understanding of what themes should be discussed in the interviews to gather perceptions of OLA influence, discussed in the next section.

5.4 INTERVIEWS

The third methodological technique of semi-structured long interviews was used to collect the perspectives of the respondents regarding the research themes (Burhoe, 2002; Glock, 1967; McCracken, 1988), and were guided by the interview template presented in Appendix B. The template's information fields are sensitive to each of the associated research themes and their embedded explanatory variables, and respondents were asked to comment on the relative importance of these variables. The template utilizes a thematic structure in order to facilitate discussion and dialogue development.

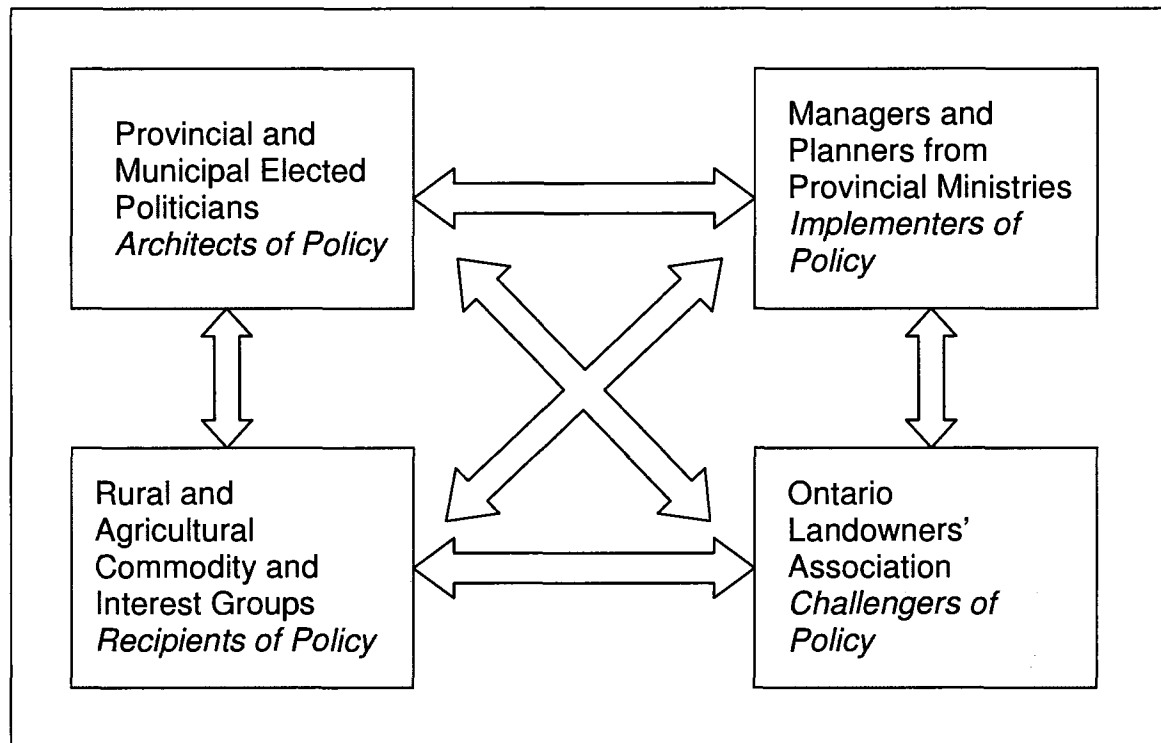
Twelve interviews were conducted over an eight month period in fall 2007-winter 2008. Interviews were recorded, and were supported by note taking. All interviews were conducted with at least one other research assistant. All participants received the interview template in advance, allowing them time to consider the themes. The interviews varied in time from one and a half to three and a half hours. The majority of the interviews were conducted onsite at the participant's office or home in rural Eastern Ontario. Two of the twelve interviews were conducted via teleconference, as winter weather sometimes limited opportunities to engage in face-to-face interviews. All interviews were transcribed verbatim, using speech recognition software (Dragon Scansoft Naturally Speaking 7.0).

There are number of benefits to the long interview technique. The first is the broad, open-ended nature of the questions which are less obtrusive and therefore promote more honest responses. Due to being in-person, a trust is also established between the interviewer and interviewee, and this spurs more in depth commentary. Also, due to the unstructured nature of interviews, there are opportunities for the participant to introduce previously unidentified issues, and allow for the deep exploration of themes. As is the case with this research, the interview technique is complementary and can be used in combination with other methodologies, such as participant observation (Burhoe, 2002).

Negative aspects to the interview technique stem from the possibility that select themes receive extraordinary attention, while others may get inadvertently neglected. To avoid this, every effort was made to explicitly incite discussion of each theme (following the interview template, Appendix B). Moreover, because the interview is typically conducted as more of an informal discussion, if the respondent is not forthcoming with information or is not talkative, this could lead to an interview providing limited information. This did not prove to be an issue however, as all interviewees were very accommodating in what appeared to be a detailed and honest account of their perceptions.

The interviews consisted of respondents from four stakeholder groups (Figure 5-1). The social science research protocol of a minimum corroborative triad approach has been followed. The corroborative triad approach stipulates that at least three independent respondents or respondent groups must be consulted before faith can be placed in any interpretations or residual messages.

Figure 5-1. Interview Respondent Stakeholder Groups



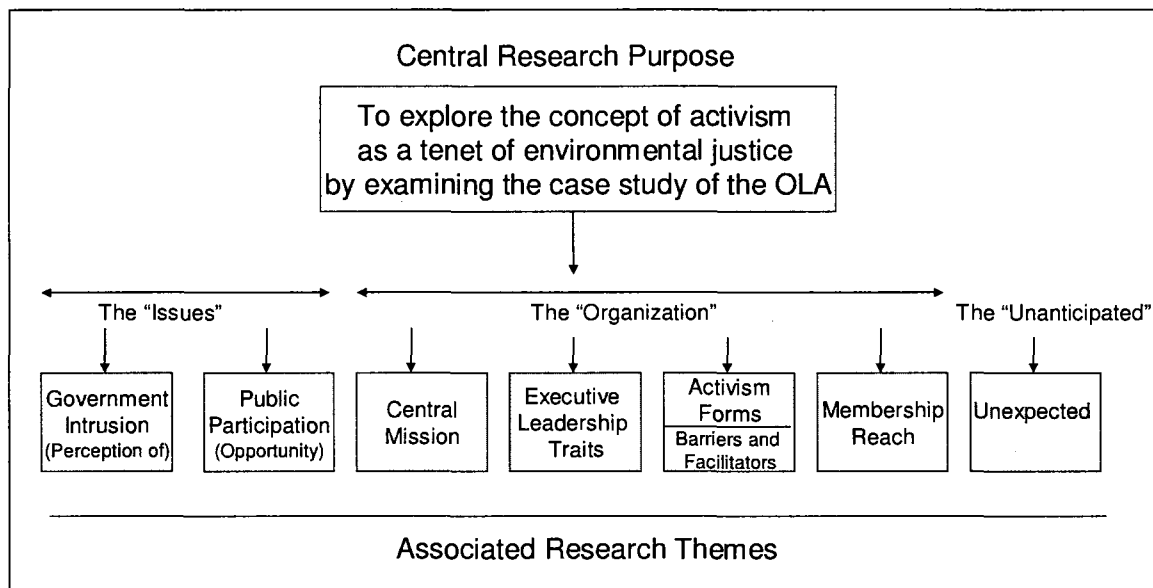
The participants selected for the research represent four strategically important stakeholder group vantage points: the *architects* of policy who include provincial and municipal elected politicians; the *implementers* of policy represented by managers and planners from federal departments and provincial ministries; the *recipients* of policy such as rural or agricultural commodity and interest groups; and the *challengers* of policy who are represented by the Ontario Landowners' Association executives. The stakeholders have been identified through media accounts, government reports, key informants, and community leaders as being the most actively involved in the decision making drama surrounding the aforementioned rural issues and problems. No respondent information on gender, age, ethnicity, etc. are provided in this thesis in order to preserve respondent anonymity. Three representatives from each of the groups were interviewed. It is felt that the sample size is

sufficient for research integrity and logistics, as no new themes were emerging in the final interviews. The groups selected for the research are in the best position to understand the OLA and its potential influence on rural public policy. The methods employed to gather stakeholder perceptions of the influence of the OLA on rural public policy have been a combinatory approach of participant observation, informal content analysis, and interviews. The interviews were guided by use of a template (Appendix B), organized according to research themes, seeking ultimately to tackle the central research purpose.

5.5 CENTRAL RESEARCH PURPOSE AND ASSOCIATED RESEARCH THEMES

The interview template (Appendix B), has been an organizational tool for the interview itself, guided by the associated research themes. The literature review, stemming in part from the central research purpose, has led to an understanding of explanatory variables that will lead to explanations. These explanatory variables have then been turned into associated research themes, and have been, in combination, been used to address the central research purpose. To reiterate, the central research purpose is: **to explore the concept of activism as a tenet of environmental justice by examining the case study of the OLA**. The central research purpose and associated research themes are presented below (Figure 5-2).

Figure 5-2. Central Research Purpose, Organizational Attributes, and Associated Research Themes



5.5.1 Central Research Purpose

This section presents, and is justification for, the specific central research purpose. The central research purpose pivots on perceptions of the OLA as a successful activism organization, and is grounded in a strong research foundation in the field of study of geography, namely, the study of perceptions (Mitchell, 1989; Sewell and Burton, 1971; Myers and Macnaghten, 1998). Geographers have made considerable contributions to our understanding of perceptions in such contexts as urban pollution, agriculture, and water resources management (Mitchell, 1989; Beck, 1992; Saarinen, 1971; Saarinen, 1969; Corral-Verdugo et al., 1971; Stone, 2001). In addition, geographers have been noteworthy in facilitating understanding of marking the behaviour of politicians, public and private sector resource managers, and members of the public. Perception studies provide input into planning and public participation in decision making. Though it is clear that perception

studies will not alleviate all problems, it is agreed that they will aid in decision making, and will facilitate desired results (Burton, 1971).

5.5.2 Associated Research Themes

In the context of the foregoing, the complexity of the central research purpose warrants its separation into more meaningful and manageable components – the associated research themes. The construction of such associated research themes was guided by the literature on political and environmental activism, protest group dynamics that identify organizational attributes, and surrounding themes discussed in Chapter 2. It was hypothesized that these attributes have a combinatorial effect on the Ontario Landowners' Association perceived success. The attributes cluster in two categories, the 'issues' and the 'organization', which are in turn broken down into themes (Figure 5-2). The first category, 'issues', are the *perception of government intrusion* and the *perception of public participation* themes. These themes serve as catalysts for activism and the pursuit of environmental justice. The second category is the 'organization' which represents the institutional or organizational characteristics of the Ontario Landowners' Association. This category is made up of four themes: *central mission* of the protest group; the characteristics of the group's *executive leadership*; the *activism forms* used to challenge government, including barriers and facilitators to activism; and, the breadth of group *membership* attributes. They are believed to be important determinants of an organization's acceptance, mobilization potential and, therefore, of the group's activism effectiveness. An additional category that has been added is '*unanticipated*' variables. As the environment in rural Ontario is a dynamic one, and as the interview technique allows for theme and idea exploration and elaboration, it was anticipated that previously unanticipated variables would

present themselves. These associated research themes are the basis for the interview template, and are discussed below.

Perception of Government Intrusion

The perception of government intrusion has been shown to be a strong motive for activism. The regulation of human behaviour and the establishment of rules for natural resource and environmental use are noteworthy in this regard. Further, the designation of resource use, such as wetland preservation has been a rural affairs target. In essence, government intrusion is viewed as an injustice and an activism magnet, particularly in rural Ontario and other rural contexts, where relative individual and community independence and freedom from government land use and land use practice regulation have been the norm for generations (Aptheker, 1967; National Farmers Union 2006; Ontario Landowners' Association, 2007; Pocklington, 2000; Simon, 1995; Wasserstrom et al. 2000).

Perception of Public Participation Opportunity

Public participation opportunity is central to environmental justice. Environmental justice demands meaningful public participation or participation that has the real potential to affect the decision making of government. Public policy that is imposed from above, and associated with processes perceived as closed or opaque is commonly seen as strong justification for activism (Arnstein, 1969; Cullingworth, 1984; Depoe et al., 2004; Frickel, 2004; Sadler, 1977; Stanbury and Fulton, 1988).

Perception of the Central Mission

The central mission of a group is hypothesized to be a strong activism lure. Activism participants seek out others who share concerns, motives, and a belief in which activism forms are to be undertaken. If the central mission of the organization is perceived

as attractive to many people, then it is presumed that the organization itself will have many supporters. It is the adhesive holding the organization together (Fincher and Panelli, 2001; Silvey, 2003; Switzer, 2003; Woods, 2003).

Perception of Executive Leadership Traits

The leadership traits are hypothesized to be strongly associated with activism success, failure or influence. Such qualities as communication skills, organizational skills, and personal characteristics are noteworthy in this regard (McFarlane and Boxall, 2003; Porteous, 1977; Winter and Koger, 2004).

Perception of Activism Forms or Instruments

The selection of activism instruments is hypothesized to be partially related to both the central mission and the organization's maturity stage. It has been shown that political protest organizations make fundamentally different decisions to work internally or externally to decision making processes, and to employ different challenge instruments – public demonstration versus public political office, for example. Selection of activism is said to be attributed to a series of barriers and facilitators to activism as well, for example: psychological factors, procedural factors, etc. (Jordan, 2002; May, 2006; Paquette, 2002; Shragge, 2003; Tracy, 2002).

Perception of Membership Reach

It is hypothesized that the membership reach across the spectrum of rural affairs ultimately determines the acceptance or standing of an organization within its constituency. In addition, the literature reveals this variable's importance in getting the attention of decision makers because of the persuasive capacity of the organization's singular voice (Bryant, 1995; King, 1963; Matthews et al., 1999; Pendras, 2002).

Perception Attached to the Unanticipated Variables

The relevant case studies' and methodological literature indicates that it is mandatory to develop a methodological approach that can deal with the unexpected perceptions, attitudes, values and/or opinions (Berg, 2004; Denzin and Lincoln, 2005; Kvale, 1989; Mitchell, 1989; Robinson, 1998). It can be expected that unanticipated variables relevant to the research will surface here due to the complex and dynamic nature of the OLA case study.

These associated research themes have broken down the central research purpose into more meaningful components, and will allow the central research purpose to be addressed in a more thorough manner. Upon collecting perspectives from the respondents regarding the associated research themes, the resulting transcripts were then coded and analyzed, following the procedures outlined next.

5.6 DATA CODING AND ANALYSIS

The successful implementation of the interviews provided the information needed to address the associated research themes and understand the relative importance of each theme. Thematic content analysis was used to discover each respondent's perception of each associated research theme. This analysis involved moving horizontally across the content analysis template for each respondent group and through the set of associated research themes (Table 5-2).

Table 5-2. Guide for Comparative Analysis of Key Respondents and Associated Research Themes

Perceptions:	Government Intrusion	Public Participation	Central Mission	Leadership Traits	Activism Forms	Membership Reach	Unanticipated
Ontario Landowners' Association	Horizontal Analysis Among the Variables						
Agricultural Commodity and Interest Groups							
Government Planners and Managers	Vertical Analysis Through Stakeholder Groups						
Provincial Politicians							

The analysis of all the statements is to facilitate a summary statement for each respondent, thereby allowing for a comparison of respondents' perceptions of the influence of these variables. The coding system necessary for the analysis of the perspectives brought forth by the respondents of the interview is found in the interview coding and interpretation template (Appendix C). The interviews have been compared and analyzed based on the organization of the interview template (Appendix B), with special attention afforded to the associated research themes, and other factors including issue consideration, variable emphasis, new information, and key descriptive adjectives. The coding done by the researcher was verified by a second coder who was present at each interview as a research associate. Notes were taken by the research team members present at each interview. Moreover, the researcher and assistant(s) engaged in constant discussion regarding the interview content, essentially pre-coding, discussing what was revealed in interviews, how to more effectively and efficiently conduct the interviews, etc.

The results have been subsequently analyzed within and between stakeholder groups. This analysis involves moving through the interview coding and interpretation template (Appendix C) from each associated research theme through thematic statements for all respondent groups. This was done to develop a summary statement for each theme, and a comparison of perceptions of associated research theme influence and importance among respondents.

The aforementioned thematic content analysis is associated with a set of techniques that aimed to ensure quality and reliability. These techniques include the use of an interview template sensitive to content analysis procedures; the use of verbatim transcripts validated by the respondents; the use of comprehensive theme descriptions built upon the interview template; the construction and pilot-testing of the interview coding and interpretation template; the use of concise content summary instruments linked to the interview coding and interpretation template; and the retention of all coding forms and templates for validity testing and follow-up review. Such techniques have been found by numerous authors to help ensure quality research (Berg, 2004; Budd et al., 1967; Carney, 1972; Denzin and Lincoln, 2005; Holsti, 1969; Krippendorff, 1980; Smelser, 1976). It must be stated that not all of the interview dynamics are uniform, for example, the length of the interviews themselves varying, and/or the depth of consideration given to certain research themes. This was considered in the analysis.

This research was approved by the Ethics Committee at the University of Ottawa. Participants were assured anonymity and were informed of their right to withdraw from the study at any time, and of the right to withdraw any statement(s) from their interview

transcript. All interview respondents were in agreement to the interview being recorded and all respondents verified a transcript of their interview.

The following chapter, Research Results: Application of the interview template, will present perceptions gathered from the interviews regarding the OLA influence on rural public policy. These results will then be reflected upon and discussed in the final chapter, Chapter 7: Reflections and Conclusions.

CHAPTER 6

RESEARCH RESULTS: APPLICATION OF THE INTERVIEW TEMPLATE

6.1 INTRODUCTION

This chapter presents the results of the analysis of the interviews, seeking ultimately to address the central research purpose: **to explore the concept of activism as a tenet of environmental justice by examining the case study of the OLA**. While the first research objective – creating an environmental justice conceptual framework – was addressed in chapter four, using findings from the interviews, this chapter addresses research objectives two and three. These objectives are:

2. to examine the utility of the components of the environmental justice conceptual framework within the rural revolution context; and,
3. to explore the perceptions of key stakeholders regarding the Ontario Landowner Associations' influence on rural public policy efforts to attain environmental justice.

Sections in the chapter will present an analysis framed by the central research purpose, organized by each of the seven associated research themes: perception of issues, perception of central mission, perception of executive leadership, perception of activism forums, perception of barriers and facilitators, perception of membership reach, and perception of additional insights. This organization mirrors that found in the interview template (Appendix B). Each theme will be discussed referencing each stakeholder group: the Ontario Landowners' Association (OLA); the rural and agricultural commodity and interest groups (RAG); the provincial planners and managers (PM); and finally, the municipal and provincial politicians (POL). This will be followed by a discussion of the

utility of the environmental justice conceptual framework within the rural revolution context. The chapter concludes with a summary of the research results, addressing the central research purpose.

6.2 PERCEPTION OF ISSUES

The issues section of this analysis presents both the *perception of government intrusion* and the *perception of public participation opportunity* sections from the associated research themes (Figure 5-2). Here, respondents were asked to identify issues raised by rural Ontario landowners, and were asked about their perceptions of issue validity. Respondents were then asked for their perceptions of rural regulation and designation, and public participation opportunities.

Government intrusion is perceived as manifesting itself in many different ways. These manifestations are all identified in the Ontario Landowners' Association Ledger of Rural Issues and Problems (Table 3-1). All interview respondents possessed a clear understanding of the OLA's issues, such as wetlands designation and compensation, urban versus rural priorities, and constitutional property rights. These issues can be summarized as a perception of injustice, and more specifically, can be described as the notion of intrusive nature of government through "overzealous enforcement" (OLA 3) of rural legislation, that "lacks common sense" (OLA 2). Most respondents found the majority of OLA issues to be valid. What was disputed was the manner in which the OLA protested these issues.

An OLA issue identified by all parties was rural versus urban priorities. According to OLA and RAG respondents, the rural voice is losing its influence as a result of a predominantly urban voter base, making it increasingly difficult to get rural concerns prioritized. The notion of an urban dominated agenda of provincial government was

discussed, and therefore, “the new legislation doesn’t reflect the rural minority” (OLA 3). RAG 2 elaborated by stating “the architects of legislation [politicians] are too far removed from rural affairs. There is a disconnect between the rural people and those who govern them”.

The issue of compensation in the context of wetlands designation was discussed by each respondent. All agreed with wetlands compensation in theory. What was debatable among respondents, however, were the circumstances in which compensation should be awarded, and in what monetary amount. All the OLA representatives brought up “compensation as a partial solution” (OLA 2) to their perception of governmental intrusion and injustice. PM 3 explained that justice can be achieved not only through monetary compensation, but also in other capacities: “...it's not all about compensation, it's about education, it's about outreach. And there's other ways that you can kind of provide some elements of environmental justice outside of just compensation.”

Another issue, brought up by OLA respondents, was a need for “property rights in the constitution, as is the case in the United States” (OLA 1). Interestingly, both RAG 1 and PM 1 brought up the notion of the relevance of fighting for property rights, agreeing with the OLA that they are important, but, “if [property rights are] enshrined in the constitution, aboriginals are more likely/deserving” (PM 1).

The lack of justice in regulation and designation has been shown to be not only the opinion of the landowners, but of all the interviewees — PM 3 emphasizing the lack of justice in legislation, stating: “environmental justice really isn't built into any of our regulatory frameworks.” This quote thus further legitimizes the sentiment of activist groups such as the OLA who are searching for environmental justice to be enshrined in legislation.

The perception of public participation opportunities divided respondents yet again. Though all respondents agreed public participation opportunities exist, the OLA and RAG groups feel they lack sincerity and are frequently tokenism. The rural “voice is solicited and then ignored” (RAG 3), and the available opportunities are “more about convincing then gathering input” (RAG 2). Summarized here by OLA 2:

As I see it, the processes that are available to us, like the public input meetings for the clean water act for instance, weren't designed to get results. They were just designed to fill the need for public input. The process never really provided a real opening to provide input to make change. You were saying there should be opportunity for people to input into policymaking, official plans, regulations. And my comment was, that the process exists very often, but it's tokenism.

The PM and POL interviewees explained they felt that public participation opportunities are readily available, and that it was curious that there are not more participants. In an effort to explain this, POL 2 expressed that most people are just ignorant of the opportunities that are offered. However, as PM 3 said, “[...] historically we built people's perceptions up to be that most of our participation is tokenism,” explaining the perspectives of both the OLA and the RAG. This negative perception of public participation may partially explain why those seeking justice would resort to activism forums external to decision making structures, if activism forums internal to decision making structures (public participation opportunities) are viewed as tokenism.

Not surprisingly, the perception of government intrusion was shared by the members of the OLA and RAG groups, while the PM and POL groups disagreed with this viewpoint. Government intrusion is seen by the OLA and RAG as occurring primarily through regulation and designation. It is also felt among these two groups that there is a certain

anonymity and lack of accountability on the part of government. It is therefore difficult and frustrating to appeal to government, or to know who will be responsible for change: the architects (politicians) or the implementers (planners and managers). This frustration is described here by OLA 2:

Remember who the hell you're fighting eh. It's the city planners, the MNR, the conservation authorities, and like who is really calling the shots? Sometimes you just never really quite find out who is sticking it to you. If it's all of them, or one of them. And who is the government? There's nobody who is going to stick their hand up and say, I did it. I'm a thief. I'm the manager who made the decision, and therefore I'm the thief. So there's no one to grab.

Though the PM and POL groups disagree that government is overly intrusive, it was unexpected to discover that the majority of these individuals felt the enforcement of such legislation unreasonable, and that there is a lack of accountability within government, POL 3 even describing that the “enforcement of the legislation lacks common sense”. What is more, they all went on to describe a feeling of government ambiguity, POL 1 concisely stating “[I] perceive purposeful vagueness on the part of the government. There is a lack of clear goals and objectives”.

Nevertheless, the PMs and POLs 1 and 3 maintained that the OLA was generally misinformed in their perception of government intrusion and that there was a lack of communication and understanding for the legislation put in place. Interviews revealed that the perceptions of the PM and POL groups is that the legislation is put in place for the atypical situations that warrant government intervention, like in the case of traffic violations (PM 2). PM 3 described this, stating, the “legislation exists not for every day circumstances, but for rare instances when the landowner is not a steward of the land”. Landowner frustration is perceived by the PM group and POLs 1 and 3 to be primarily due to a lack of

understanding of the legislation, though these respondents do feel the OLA issues are valid. Every respondent made mention that generally speaking, landowners are stewards of the land. This view is based on personal experience, and the fact that the land is often the landowner's livelihood. Several interviewees went on to describe that they feel the legislation implies a landowner will not engage in environmental stewardship unless it is enforced by law, and that this is "insulting since people know better" (RAG 2), and "people will do what's best for their land for the long term" (POL 3). The OLA, RAG, and POLs 1 and 2 went on to claim that "the regulation and designation enforcement is intrusive to the rural lifestyle" (RAG 3). Still, none of the interviewees were opposed to legislation in principle. Additionally, POL 3 explicitly stated "the catalyst for the increase in rural legislation were the events in Walkerton". A similar sentiment was expressed by most of the respondents, further indicating the perception that Walkerton was the initiation to increased rural legislation in Ontario.

Fascinatingly, all respondents from the OLA and POL groups initiated discussion of the additional underlying theoretical and fundamental issue of the breakdown of democracy, and that this perceived government intrusion is a symptom of this collapse. POL 2 specified that this breakdown is due in part to limited participation, given that most people are unaware of the opportunities available to them. OLA 1 added that not enough people are politically engaged, primarily due to apathy. POL 2 went on to add, "...we've lost our way as to what really is the function and the role of government." The government is (in theory) representative of the desires of the people, but clearly, given the rural discontent, the government has not been representative of the opinions of the rural population. This impression of a breakdown in democracy will be elaborated upon in section 5.8.2.

The interviews revealed many concerns of government intrusion, identified numerous OLA issues and their perceived validity, and views regarding regulation and designation and public participation opportunities. OLA and rural issues were readily identifiable by the respondents (Table 3-1), and, OLA issues were perceived as valid. No respondent was theoretically opposed to the idea of legislation, yet many had difficulty with the rural regulation and designation, primarily due to overly eager enforcement. These issues led to the conception of the OLA, and opinions of its mission are presented next.

6.3 PERCEPTION OF THE CENTRAL MISSION

The interviews sought to gather the perceptions of the respondents regarding the OLA's central mission. Specifically, perception of the OLA mission, perception of issues selected for protest and perceptions of institutional needs filled by the OLA. In brief, the OLA's central mission as stated by the OLA is to reclaim justice perceived as lost by intrusive legislation to property rights (Ontario Landowners' Association, 2007).

All interviewees demonstrated a clear understanding of the OLA's mission, and every respondent outside of the OLA group was of the opinion that their mission is well communicated. PM 3 illustrated this commonly felt sentiment, describing the OLA's message and mission as "delivered in an articulate and forceful manner". All groups understood that the OLA was initiated due to the perception of "diminishing respect for property rights as evidenced by governmental intrusion through increased regulation and designation" (OLA 3). Several interviewees from varying groups stated that the OLA's mission is not only to reclaim justice, but to garner solidarity among rural people experiencing similar problems. All respondents were forthright in their agreement that

“bringing attention to rural issues is generally a good thing” (PM 2), regardless of whether this is done through the OLA or another group (the RAG affiliation groups, etc.).

The OLA interviewees shared a unique perspective of the mission of their group, stating that they felt everyone in rural Ontario is experiencing the same issues and problems, and therefore everyone agrees with the OLA mission. Yet whether they choose to join the OLA is another story, based on other deciding factors, including “being in denial of the situation, or ignoring it” (OLA 1). Each OLA interviewee also made explicitly clear that they do not perceive themselves or the organization as anti-government, nor as anti-regulation. This opinion differed drastically from most other interviewees, who stated that the OLA felt precisely the opposite way. For example, according to RAG 1: “the OLA is anti-government, and they would like to govern themselves”. Both the RAG and PM interviewees felt that the OLA desired free reign of their property. PM 1 elaborated this point by going on to describe that “one should not be allowed to do what one wants with one's property” (PM 1), implying this as an OLA goal.

The issues selected for protest, enumerated in the Ontario Landowners' Association Ledger of Rural Issues and Problems (Table 3-1), were perceived as valid by every respondent. Opinions diverged, however, when discussing how issues were protested, some disagreeing with the activism forms employed by the OLA. For example, RAG 2 stated: “I would not engage as part of the OLA because their style is far too aggressive”. This endorses the OLA viewpoint that though rural people generally do agree with their mission, whether they engage with the group or not differs, partially based on activism forms that the group employs.

The OLA is perceived by every respondent as filling an institutional need in that there is no other group exclusively dedicated to property rights. The OLA is viewed as a 'rural affairs leader' by the POL and PM groups (and by the OLA themselves). The respondents concur that the OLA is considered attractive to rural landowners because they are allegedly getting results, and are results based. The OLA representatives also feel they are filling an institutional need in that other rural and agricultural organizations are considered ineffective, mainly because they won't contest government because they are government funded. The OLA feels that they are partially filling an institutional need therefore, not just for property rights, but for rural groups that are not supported financially by government. This being said, the PMs, RAGs, and POL 1 feel the OLA to be perpetuating mythology to further their mission, PM 3 describing the OLA as "dishonest in some of their messaging". All respondents (besides the OLA) find the activism forums employed by the OLA to further their mission, to be too aggressive generally speaking, RAG 2 even describing the organization as "bullying". All respondents agreed that ultimately, there will always be an institutional need for groups like the OLA, as described by PM 2 for the purposes of "protesting government, keeping it in check, and letting the government know civilians are willing to be active".

On the whole, respondents were able to identify the mission of the OLA, as fighting for justice by way of property rights. All agreed that the OLA is filling an institutional void, as, prior to their genesis, there existed no association dedicated to property rights. Contention lay in the activism forms used to push the OLA's mission. Many respondents reported feeling that the OLA's tactics are too aggressive. Several respondents shared

thoughts that activism groups, like the OLA, have purpose not only in reclaiming justice, but in sustaining it as well.

6.4 PERCEPTION OF LEADERSHIP TRAITS

The third theme discussed in the interviews was that of leadership traits, perceptions about traits most important to leadership, and opinions regarding the relation of leadership to group success. It is worth noting that all respondents, with the exception of the PM group, are elected and appointed leaders in their own stakeholder domain, and can therefore speak about leadership both theoretically and experientially.

The desired leadership traits for the OLA or any activist group as reported by respondents were generally speaking quite similar within and across stakeholder groups. For example, according to PM 3, good leadership traits include: “communicative, passionate, good orator, extroverted, educated, and credible”. As similar themes reemerged when discussing leadership, reported traits have been summarized into five groups: intelligence, communications skills (good orator, debater, writer, etc.), credibility, dynamism (charismatic, motivated, passionate, extroverted, confident, etc.), and virtuosity (honest, ability to relate to people, diplomatic, committed, sincere, humble, etc.).

A good leader was considered imperative to the success of a given organization, PM 3 exemplifying this by stating “leadership is really what dictates how effective a group is going to be at what they're trying to achieve.” Quality of leadership was said to directly affect success, popularity, and growth of an organization, further demonstrating an inter-related nature of all the associated research themes.

The idea of leadership evolution was described implicitly and explicitly by many stakeholders. All made the point that change in leadership within an organization is

important to sustain the organization, and that it is important to get other view points in power. A change in leadership was also indicated by most respondents as being important to stay fresh and to provide different strengths and weaknesses in the leadership role as an organizational tactic. “The successor in leadership has the benefit of learning from their predecessor's mistakes” (OLA 2). A new leader can attract new members that previous leaders would not have drawn to the organization. This is another example of a link between associated research themes, linking membership to leadership. Evolution of the organization was also said to be in part due to the evolution of the leadership. It was felt among many respondents that as an organization matures, so too should the leadership. Several interviewees made the comment that the infancy of an organization requires a dynamic and attention grabbing leader, a “spark plug personality” (OLA 1), and once a membership base is sustained, leadership should take on a more managerial style, explained here by POL 2: “[an organization] need(s) to begin with a leader and proceed to a manager at a more mature stage in the organization's life”.

Interestingly, many additional insights were provided from the OLA group when prompted with the associated research topic of leadership. An opinion shared by all three of the OLA executives was that there were no other obvious choices for leadership, so they took this initiative upon themselves. OLA 1 stated: “no one else was stepping up, so I figured maybe the best person to do something about it was myself.” Furthermore, they each stated that had they not stepped up personally, or if they needed to bow out of leadership, that one of many other candidates, each of whom are passionate about the issues and the OLA, could fill their shoes. These statements may reveal insight into the perceived success

of the OLA: that their leadership includes self-starters, many of whom share the same landowner values, and idea of what justice entails.

All respondents agreed that leadership and leadership evolution were imperative to a group's success and sustainability. Opinions of desired leadership traits were alike within and among stakeholder groups, and were grouped into the following five categories: intelligence, communication and understanding, credibility, dynamism, and virtuosity.

6.5 PERCEPTION OF ACTIVISM FORMS OR INSTRUMENTS

Environmental justice instruments (the fourth component within the environmental justice conceptual framework), or activism forms, were discussed at length in the interviews. This section will reveal respondents' perceptions of activism, simultaneously exposing perceived activism forums, reasons for activism instrument selection and perceived role of activism in decision making, and, allowing for the comparison of these perceptions to the environmental justice conceptual framework.

When asked about activism forums that exist, each individual implicitly or explicitly recognized the four categories of activism as identified in the environmental justice conceptual framework (Figure 4-4): external and internal to decision making structures, active and passive. "When I think of activism, I don't just think of getting out there on the picket line. I think about other things too, like donating money to a cause, or voting" (PM 2). Each reported having personally worked inside decision making structures, but only the OLA, RAG groups, and POL 2 admitted to working external to decision making structures. Those interviewed as members of the OLA, RAG and POL stakeholder groups are all members of at least two other activist groups (beyond the capacity in which they are being interviewed), demonstrating an engagement in activism within several capacities. All

interviewees agreed, that regardless of the activism forums they had personally employed or would be willing to employ, all activism instruments are legitimate. PM 3 summarizing this by stating: “there are circumstances that warrant the use of all activism forms”. Though all activism instruments are seen as valid, activism instrument selection is based on several factors.

Activism instrument selection is reported to be based on the perception of what will ultimately bring success to the group. Success for an organization is dependent upon the group’s intention, or the organization’s mission. Activist success was reported to be dependent upon a balance of factors, broken down here as: activism instrument hierarchy, evolution, instrument credibility and group objectives.

Most respondents alluded to the fact that there is an activism hierarchy, and that different forms of activism are more effective for different purposes. To elaborate, they each vouched that ultimately there exists more power when engaging in internal decision making processes activism, because they are operating within decision making structures and are “helping to create solutions, [as opposed to] protesting from outside on the sidewalk” (OLA 2). This activism hierarchy is described here by OLA 3, who discusses the activism evolution of former OLA president Randy Hillier:

The way to effect change is not to interface with the field agents because it's not an effective way of having an impact on the legislation and the laws, and implementation. The effective way of making that change is to become involved in the government which controls the legislation, and the lawmaking, and the agents. And I perceive that's what he [Hillier] is doing. And he's done that through the democratic process.

Also, activism instrument hierarchy was thought to be in part revealed due to liaisons or connections to effective activism. PM 3 made this clear: “the system would work better

for me because of the position that I'm in and the networks that I have.” This statement also implies that internal activism forums are better suited for use by those who already work within decision making structures. Yet, all this being said, all respondents but one declared they would be willing to engage in activism external to decision making structures if they perceived it would be more conducive to success. All declared the value of making a stance outside of the system, but claim that making one's opinions known can also happen internally. “Making a fuss for a cause can happen within the system too” (RAG 3).

As well as activism hierarchy, the idea of activism evolution was discussed by all respondents. According to the OLA and POL 2, activism groups should start by attracting attention using activism forums external to decision making processes, and progressively move to work internally. Once these activism instruments have been selected and utilized, an evolution to activist mechanisms designed to change policy from within the system is perceived as effective. Yet, some felt the opposite tactic to be more effective: to first act internal to decision making processes, and next resort to activism forums external decision making structures. RAG 2, who's opinion was shared with the RAGs and PMs, said that “dialogue should be attempted first [acting within the system], and if this fails, proceed to other kinds of activism [outside the system]”. PM 1 explicitly stated that activism forums external to decision making processes “should only be used when activism within decision making processes have failed”. RAG 3 succinctly explained the shared sentiment that though there is merit to all activism forums, an organization must eventually aim to work internal decision making structures: “ [the activism] needs to get to a point where you are a voice at the [decision making] table.”

All interviewees stated that activism evolution is evident and important because certain tactics, though initially effective, can gradually become ineffective. “Activism saturation can occur” (RAG 2). The respondents generally believed in a multi-activist instrument approach, where strength is in a diverse activism form implementation strategy. Constant protesting is perceived as having limited value, whereas choosing battles garners more respect for an organization. And, if protest is perceived as used too frequently as an activism instrument, it will lose its effectiveness. “If they [OLA] are out there hollering all the time, no one’s going to listen to them anymore” (RAG 1). One member of the OLA declared that to remain a healthy organization, the OLA will need to continue to show activism evolution. One such example is as the OLA has grown, though it initiated in activism external to decision making structures, there has since been the formation of a political action committee, designed to work internally. “[The OLA] will mature over the next year, it will show itself in different capacities” (OLA 1). Regardless of the stakeholder’s perception of activism evolution, it is clear evolution has occurred and that different activism mechanisms are considered valuable by respondents.

Instrument credibility played a role in activism selection, as some activism instruments are viewed as ineffectual, or are only considered appropriate in certain circumstances. According to OLA 1 for example, “petitions are a waste of time and do not initiate change”. When discussing activism form selection specific to the OLA, respondents described why they were not members of the group using the reasoning of activism instrument selection influencing group credibility. It is interesting that although it is agreed rural issues do affect them, and all described the issues brought up by the OLA as valid, they would not join the OLA due to activism forum selection. Two of the three RAGs, POL 1,

and all PMs find the OLA too radical, not credible, and therefore ineffective, PM 2 even stating “some rural people feel like civil disobedience is bad manners.” POL 1 reiterated the choices of activist forums being too radical, using the example of wetlands designation: “to destroy something of value the way they have attempted to destroy wetlands is absolutely wrong”. RAG 3 would join the OLA but desires a political career eventually, and perceives an affiliation with the OLA in a membership capacity as a possible hindrance to future credibility in politics, due to the activism forums the group employs. Moreover, this view of the OLA being too radical was implied by many of the interviewees as affecting membership. Membership size may expand because of activism routes employed and their perceived validity, and vice versa. Nonetheless, according to all interviewees, engaging in activism in and of itself, regardless of the outcome, is perceived as partially “solving the problem” because group solidarity is strengthened (OLA 1).

For sustainable activism however, it was reported that there must be the perception that the change is attainable, is happening, and that it is due to the group's efforts—there must be steady and constant encouragement that the group effort will bear fruit and objectives will be met. Selection of activist methods is based on these set objectives, which is usually synonymous with success for an activist group. For example, the OLA executives each stated that they perceive success, in their mission and as an organization, as when change has been demonstrated. OLA 1 elaborated, that success is “when there has been a change in legislation or a change in the behaviour [of regulatory officers], or when they have gained media attention”. Activism instrument selection specific to the OLA has been based on objectives, and what will achieve desired results. Press coverage is seen as a victory by the OLA respondents, and thus they deem the activism forums that receive media attention

as effective. For example, before the conception of the OLA, the OLA interviewees had joined other rural and agricultural groups to incite change, but had found them weak in terms of achieving goals and changing legislation. All three wanted to act in an “active, more aggressive way” (OLA 2) to make long term, sustainable change. The OLA therefore became an attractive activism instrument selection, when it was perceived to initiate the objective of real change where other organizations had failed.

Activism was said to have several different roles in decision making. All agreed that it was important to have activist organizations within society, and that activist organizations are good whether one agrees with the group’s views or not because it gets people thinking. “The more attention that is drawn to the democratic process [through activism], the better off we are” (POL 1). PM 2 elaborated this point, stating, “activism groups are important because they let the government know the public is concerned and is watching”. This sentiment was also expressed specifically regarding the OLA: “They [OLA] are expressing their right to participate in the [democratic] system. And I think if everybody participated, we might have less frustration than we have” (POL 1).

Additional thoughts from the POL group include the belief that there is a fundamental breakdown in democracy occurring, as is shown by the lack of participation in activism forums, especially in voting and political party membership. According to POL 2:

“Numbers of people who were members of a political party in this country, all political parties – provincial, federal, communist: less than 2%. 52% of people thought there was value in casting their ballot; 48% thought there was no value. Number of people who go to a town council meeting – you know, they're only expecting 40 or 50 people in a community of 10,000 to be significantly motivated to come out to local council. We've got some problems, because democracy is not a once a year activity. Democracy is participation.”

This sentiment reveals again the apathy that is perceived by so many of the respondents as rampant in our society, and in their view, points to the notion of a fundamental breakdown in democracy.

Interestingly, the PMs, RAGs, and two of the POLs share the viewpoint that activism groups other than the OLA are viewed as more credible and more successful by the government. This is due to the perception that an organization loses credibility if the activism options employed are solely those outside formal decision making structures. The PMs, RAGs, and two POLs then went on to explain that the OLA has gained credibility since it has engaged in other activism forums, including activism internal to decision making processes. This implies, as was found in the literature, that sustainable and credible activism organizations use many activist options (Shragge, 2003). Therefore, activism groups that engage in a wide array of activism forms are viewed as more credible, making a bigger impact in decision making.

Perhaps more than any other associated research theme, the perception of activism instruments demonstrated the extremely interrelated nature of all the associated research themes. Every interview explicitly or implicitly revealed that all other associated research domains directly depend on activism, and vice versa. More specifically, the interviews have revealed that the activism forms employed are based on perceptions of what will bring success, by means of weighing the merits of the different activist approaches. Activism instrument selection was based on a number of factors, including: activism hierarchy, activism evolution, instrument credibility, and activist objectives. And, the activism forums selected by a protest group were identified to be important to the group's success and credibility. Every respondent agreed that activism (both internal and external to decision

making processes), is legitimate and beneficial for a healthy society, and was able to identify many of the activism forums identified in the environmental justice conceptual framework. Finally, the interviewees each admitted that for sustainable change, one must engage in activism within decision making structures.

6.6 PERCEPTION OF BARRIERS AND FACILITATORS

The fifth component of the environmental justice conceptual framework, barriers and facilitators, were discussed in the interviews. Depending upon the circumstances of the activist and depending upon their goal, one condition can be either a barrier or facilitator to achieving justice, or both. Covering all respondents' opinions about each barrier and facilitator highlighted in Table 4-2 would be lengthy. Although all barriers and facilitators in the table were mentioned in the interviews, this section will focus on a select few in order to understand respondents' opinions, and whether these specifically affect the OLA. Specifically these are: procedural factors, career and familial factors, psychological factors, and communicative factors.

Procedural barriers identified by the OLA and RAG groups includes the view that the provincial government, which they consider to be urban focused, is making decisions and legislation, that does not reflect an understanding of rural affairs. RAG 2 stated this concisely: "the architects of legislation [politicians] are too far removed from rural affairs. There is a disconnect between the rural people and those who govern them". The point of governmental 'red tape,' was also brought up as an example of a procedural barrier, OLA 2 stating that activism forums within decision making processes a barrier to environmental justice in and of themselves, "[...] because there's no one to talk to, and it takes too long to get feedback".

A further barrier to activists in the OLA, RAG and POL groups relates to career and family circumstances, primarily due to time restraints. Conversely, POL 3 described retirement as a facilitator to activism in politics, having lots of time to be engaged. Another interesting career facilitator was that of the PM position working internally within the decision making processes. PM 3 made this point by stating: “the system would work better for me because of the position that I'm in and the networks that I have. [It's] easier for me than for most people.” This implies that it is easier to operate within the decision making processes to achieve legislative change if one works internally (in government), and conversely, would be more difficult to make legislative change working external to decision making structures.

Psychological barriers were mentioned numerous times in numerous ways by all respondents, and included such notions as apathy, denial with respect to the rural issues, feeling disempowered from decision making processes, lack of motivation, and frustration. POL 1 even joked that these feelings are “the most prevalent commodity we have.” On the contrary, empathy, compassion, and the power of positive, confident thinking/attitude were reported as necessary for success. POL 2 perceives that the greatest barrier to successful activism is unrealistic expectations. If one has impractical expectations of their fellow group members, or of the outcome of a given project, and they are not met, this can hinder progress. Oppositely, if one has realistic expectations, as described here by OLA 2, this can facilitate activism: “having the expectation that everyone will contribute differently – in different ways, and for different amounts of time – to the organization [OLA], and not holding everyone to the same level of involvement and the same kinds of activism, is realistic”.

The notion of communicative skill (or lack thereof) was also discussed, as being a factor affecting successful activism. An important point revealed by RAG 2 is the example of communicative barriers that “few rural people are internet savvy or even have internet access”, yet this is how the majority of the other stakeholder groups communicate, revealing a communicative disadvantage for most rural people. POL 1 made the point that though the internet is an amazing source for information and a means of quick communication, it can also be a barrier in that “there is an information overload, and that having too many things to worry about, think about, focus on, etc, will lead people to not care and is [in part] responsible for society's prevalent apathy”. In addition to discussing potential communicative barriers and facilitators for activist groups, each of the PMs also identified barriers and facilitators that exist for themselves when dealing with activist groups (particularly the OLA). It was implied that among government employees, there is a reluctance to communicate with the OLA, for fear of being misquoted or for fear of manipulation of what was said. PM 3 even described the relationship with the OLA as “pretty adversarial.” This implies another barrier for the OLA, if they are perceived as unreasonable or undesirable to work with by the governmental employees, or, the implementers of the policy, they are unlikely to make headway within decision making structures.

POL 2 feels that with creativity and imagination one can overcome perceived barriers, and that understanding the possible benefit of engaging in activism outweighs any possible barriers. POL 2 further explained that one must focus on presenting solutions versus presenting problems. This was reiterated by OLA 1, who when asked about barriers to activism, stated: “we don't look at barriers as such anymore, but accept them and move

on.” This point in and of itself reveals, like in the leadership section, confident and energetic thinking is a facilitator that is significant to overcoming obstacles, and to activism group success.

All the barriers and facilitators determined in the environmental justice conceptual framework were mentioned in the interviews under the subheadings of the associated research themes. The insights from the stakeholders presented here, concerning procedural factors, career and familial factors, psychological factors, and communicative factors, allowed for further examination of the utility of the ‘barriers and facilitators’ section of the environmental justice conceptual framework.

6.7 PERCEPTION OF MEMBERSHIP REACH

Membership reach was revealed in the literature to be a significant theme in determining the popularity and perceived effectiveness of an organization. In the interviews, respondents were asked about their perceptions of representational characteristics of a legitimate activist organization in general, and about the representational characteristics of the OLA more specifically.

The significance of studying membership when exploring the concept of activism was summarized by RAG 1, who stated: “the organization is only as good as the membership.” When discussing the representational characteristics of a successful organization, several respondents made the point that it is membership quality, not quantity that matters. According to RAG 2: “It is better [for an organization] to have few dedicated members whom are engaged”, then many members who are not. RAG 2 reinforces this point, stating that “the Ontario Federation of Agriculture has far more people then the OLA,

and are not getting as much publicity” (recalling here that media attention is perceived as successful activism).

The extreme importance of solidarity that group membership brings, to ensure that members do not feel alone in their plight or opinion, was brought up by nearly every respondent, regardless of their personal activism involvement. OLA 2 further explained this purpose of activism organization membership, stating “a lot of the time all one really needs is moral support”. Membership was also said to be dependant on the perceived legitimacy of a group through leadership and activism forums employed.

The representational characteristics of the membership of the OLA, as compared to those of the membership of a legitimate activism group, are presented below. All respondents including the OLA themselves perceived the OLA as having a small but very active, dedicated, and loyal membership base, reaffirming the quality versus quantity membership sentiment. Interestingly, opinions diverged even within stakeholder groups when discussing whether group membership numbers would climb, fall, or remain steady for the OLA.

The OLA interviewees demonstrate real confidence in the sustainability and growth of the organization, stating that there exists a solid number of OLA members, and new Ontario county chapters are continuing to emerge. Moreover, according to the OLA, other provinces are said to be showing interest in starting their own landowner associations. OLA 2 attributes the popularity of the group to the fact that “there is no corner of Ontario that is immune to the problems we fight”. POL 3 goes even so far as to call the OLA movement a “common sense revolution”. According to OLA 3, “while other rural groups have lost

purpose, the OLA purpose is clear”, and therefore, so too is the purpose of the OLA membership. POL 2 and 3, as well as PM 1, agree that the OLA will continue to grow.

But the RAGs, POL 1, and, PMs 2 and 3, each stated that not only do they believe there to be a limited number of potential recruits given that the organization is only relevant and appealing to rural landowners, but that the OLA has reached a maximum membership. These interviewees suggest there was an initial novelty in the movement, a “herd mentality,” but that “this has worn off and the OLA will not continue to expand” (PM 2). POL 2 confirmed this view, stating: “[The OLA] hit what I believe was the maximum number of members under that aggressive style. If the association was to grow it would have had to appeal to a broader group.” POL 1 even suggests that “the OLA’s militancy may repel people”. This quote supplements the inter-related nature of membership being partially dependant on activism forums. Despite these opinions, due to the perceived loyalty of the OLA membership, all but two individuals predicted that the OLA will be a long lasting organization. As is reflected in the literature, respondents have also identified that people are joining the OLA because they want a sense of group solidarity. RAG 2 describes those who connect through the OLA as wanting “to join the bandwagon and be in a group that listens to their woes and understands their predicament”.

In sum, activist membership reach according to the interviewees is about quality, not quantity. This interview group was divided on the future of the OLA, and the state of its membership. Membership was reported to be linked to the perception of the other associated research themes, including leadership and activism instruments. OLA membership is perceived to be based on it’s uniqueness, in that no other group stands exclusively for property rights, and partially based on the perception that the OLA is results oriented.

6.8 ADDITIONAL INSIGHTS

As is the case in qualitative studies, the researcher must be prepared for the possibility of unanticipated results, presented here as ‘additional insights.’ Upon reviewing the interviews and the perceptions of the respondents, unanticipated reoccurring themes emerged when discussing the associated research themes, and warrant specific consideration. These themes, presented below, include: media, democracy, rural versus urban distinction, perception, motivation and emotion, and communication and understanding.

6.8.1 Media

Media was confirmed to be one of the barriers and facilitators in the environmental justice conceptual framework, and was brought up repeatedly as being paramount to the perceived effectiveness of an activist organization. PM 3 affirmed this point, stating the media is “important to successful activism, and that successful activism is dependent upon a basis of correct information”. The OLA respondents declared that any press coverage was constructive, regardless of whether the association was presented in a positive or negative light. OLA 1 affirmed the vital role of the press, stating “the press is an ally”, and that “any publicity is good publicity, and is drawing attention to the issues”. Conversely, POL 1 explained articles featuring activism outside of decision making processes is considered contentious, and so “the media loves the OLA, because it sells”. RAG 3 was in partial agreement, stating that the media is sometimes an ally, but that it sometimes “sensationalizes the bad apples and portrays landowners as poor stewards of the land”, when in reality, this is perceived by all stakeholder groups to be a very small percentage. This is said to perpetuate public fear that rural landowners are not stewards of the land, and feeds into false

perceptions of increased environmental and health risks. As is the case for any activist group or cause, the media is responsible for how the group's mission and overall organization is presented to the general public. POL 1 and RAG 2 both brought up the point that local, rural community newspapers are the most popular means of getting information in rural settings. Regarding the *Ontario Farmer Magazine* for example, POL 1 stated "I know very few active farmers who aren't subscribers." OLA 1 also made mention of the tool of the internet being hugely beneficial to activism. Compiling these perceptions, this analysis has revealed that the media is central to societal perceptions of the influence of the OLA on rural public policy.

6.8.2 Democracy

The respondents made many rich comments about the fundamental breakdown of democracy, explained by OLA 1 as the need for an examination of "the fundamental nature of our democracy as it exists today". A further justification for this research into activism, a component of democracy, was provided by OLA 3: "We are not spending enough time as a society analyzing the aspects that led to those revolutions, and to those desperate instances where people were forced to rebel against their government for whatever reason". The democratic exercise of activism, as a way of retrieving justice perceived as lost, is summarized succinctly by OLA 1:

When you see a quote by Jefferson or somebody like that, to think it's a silly old guy, 200 years ago, look at the archaic language, that sort of thing. But their thoughts were so clear, and the cautions of what would happen if we let government to its own devices. And that's my message I think, to people. It's to tell them that is exactly what we are doing. We've let government to their own devices, and they've become an entity unto themselves. That the master servant relationship is upside down. Government intrusion is a symptom of the

degradation. The degradation is caused by all those other things: the apathy; the comfort; the selfishness; and not caring what's happening to your neighbours.

RAG 2 elaborated on OLA 1's point about the master servant relationship between the people and the government being upside down, giving the example that those in government are “employees of the electorate in other provinces, versus here, where we attempt to take the power back from the deciding politicians.” Democratic legislation is seen as “feel good” legislation, or “pacifiers” according to POL 2, so that the government is perceived as taking steps toward solutions. POL 2 went on to discuss that part of fixing problems in democracy has to do with creating legislation with objectives that ensure accountability of the government. This comment brings into play the subject of the government anonymity and lack of accountability discussed by OLA and RAG respondents in the issues associated research theme. From the perspective of a politician, POL 1 explains that governing is not easy: “what we need from the people is not there. There's a vacuum. The feedback isn't there.” This suggests that the breakdown of democracy is not the fault of the government, but due to the apathy of the people. Regardless of the stakeholder group, each felt there has been a fundamental breakdown of democracy, and that activism groups are emerging partly in response to this perceived problem.

6.8.3 Rural Versus Urban Distinction

All the OLA and RAG stakeholders, as well as two of three POL respondents, made definite reference to urban versus rural distinction in many contexts. The primary mention of the lack of urban understanding of rural issues concerned the fact that urbanite Torontonians were and are creating rural legislation, when it is perceived that they have little understanding of rural issues. Another point mentioned by all three OLA respondents was

the notion that rural people have a stronger sense of property rights than the urban population, and that generally speaking urbanites are more apathetic to the property rights movement. These sentiments were captured by OLA 1, who noted that "...urban people...ever since they put a couple houses close together, have been surrendering notions of property rights slowly but surely to the point that what is happening out there just doesn't resonate with them." Many interviewees also discussed the difference in the rural versus the urban way of life, for example RAG 2 describing urban people as communicating predominantly through emails, and rural people communicating primarily through telephone calls and the local newspaper. This was presented as problematic when the stakeholder groups try to interact, when each group's preferred method of communication is different. The point of the 'rural' versus 'urban' ways of life led to the recording of this noteworthy distinction, brought up numerous times and ways in the interviews.

6.8.4 Perception

OLA 1, when asked about the nature of intrusive government, began by saying, "it's a perception thing." Perception was mentioned in every interview as very subjective depending upon the person, and their inclusion in the given stakeholder groups. In general, every respondent demonstrated a good understanding of the other stakeholder group's perceptions, but may not have acknowledged their perceptions as accurate. One's perception is their reality.

Understanding the importance of perceptions versus reality regarding activist forums and governmental intrusion was discussed by OLA 3, who stated, "we've all got perceptions of what criminal intent is." This implies that though some individuals may not agree with the activism forums employed by the OLA, feeling their actions may be criminal, others

may not agree with the legislation put in place, viewing this as intrusion and as the true criminal offense. RAG 3 brought up the additional insight of the importance of interacting with those who may have differing perceptions than oneself, as a way of bringing balance and ultimately coming to compromise:

I force myself to read articles that I disagree with. And I need to force myself to listen to points of view that I don't like in order for me to have a better, balanced position. Birds of a feather flock together. It's one of the problems with the OLA, we'll all sit around, and we gripe and gripe and gripe because we all share the same gripes. Nobody's bringing a balance to the picture, and it becomes difficult. Can you imagine sitting in a room of disgruntled farmers? And trying to bring a balance? If we don't force ourselves to expand our boundaries, we're automatically going to think we're right.

The interrelated nature of perceptions and attitudes was discussed in the literature review, revealing that perceptions lead directly to attitudes. Linking perceptions, activism and apathy, POL 2 described the importance of an attitude change, and therefore a perception change, in achieving justice.

The biggest thing that needs to be done is an attitudinal change. That we do things and instill the belief in people that their participation is valuable. Politicians, we have to empower them to take back their authority. We have to speak to the bureaucracy and explain to them what is their proper role. Of assistance, not just enforcement. To me, it's attitude. We have to change the attitude of government.

Studying perception was revealed by all interviewees to be paramount to an understanding of the notions of environmental justice, government intrusion, and the success of the activism groups and instruments, such as the OLA.

6.8.5 Motivation and Emotion

Motivation (or lack thereof) for activism was brought up several times by several respondents, touching on points revealed in the psychology of activism literature review. All three OLA respondents mentioned feeling anger when discussing their perception of injustice. This anger was not only shown to be directed at the government and the perception of intrusive legislation, but blame was also towards the average landowner – for “letting it happen” (OLA 1). Motivation for activism in rural spheres by the OLA and RAG groups was implicitly and explicitly expressed as being in defense of what they loved and cared about: property, agriculture, and even Canadian sovereignty. Lack of motivation, beyond apathy, was described by RAG 3 as “people letting their minds go into neutral”, not thinking for oneself, and a lack of common sense. A lack of motivation for initiation of action from the part of the bureaucracy was described by POL 1 as “being [due to] the society in which they function,” as they do not want to be considered liable for any wrong doing, and the easiest way not to be accused of wrong doing, is by doing nothing at all. POL 2 went on to state that a de-motivator is the disempowering of people through process, making them believe there is little they can do to change the situation. POL 3 indirectly stated that one is more motivated to engage in activism if it is considered familiar or “normal” for that person, for example, if one is witness to their friends or family being activists. Other motivators brought up by the RAG group was the perception that activism would make a difference in helping one's own situation, or another's. Interestingly, the main motivator for leadership and activism according to RAG 3, was quite simply to enjoy what one was doing!

Emotion, often the fuel for activist motivation, was revealed by the interviewees to be key themes in the understanding of activism in the pursuit of justice.

6.8.6 Communication and Understanding

Of absolute importance, was the notion of clear communication and understanding of viewpoints between the stakeholder groups in the pursuit of justice. OLA 3 discussed the importance of keeping the lines of communication open between all stakeholder groups to express freedom of thought and opinion, and “to have these opinions ruminated upon by the organization to be considered fairly and equitably”, to understand the essence of what the other party is conveying. Interestingly, not only the importance of communication was brought to light, but RAG 2 discussed the importance of the method of the communication, stating that not all rural residents have internet access, and if they do it is likely dial-up service (and therefore slow and inconvenient). RAG 2 went on to discuss how ‘government’ (politicians and planners/managers) utilizes email as a primary means of communication, while different methods of communication are used in rural landscapes: “in the country, people call each other”. This was corroborated by the evidence even within the sample of twelve people interviewed: one does not have the internet or an email account, and two are on dial-up service, making internet access difficult.

It has been shown that if one wants to communicate with a given stakeholder group, one should comply with their preferred method of communication for efficient and respectful interaction, and if they do not, this may contribute to a breakdown in communication between the groups. PM 2 described the importance of communicating the facts clearly, while maintaining a good rapport with the group one is communicating with, stating: “you’ve got to be hard on the issue and soft on the relationships.” POL 1 described the unanticipated variable of landowner frustration as being in large part attributable to an information overload. In his opinion, due to the internet, and the ease with which one can

receive information, “nobody can assimilate everything that's out there, so we pick and choose what's pertinent to us. Everything today goes faster, we have to get more done in a day. So nobody, or very few people are sitting there and reflecting on the information” (POL 1). The importance of communication and understanding appears imperative to understanding others' perceptions in an activist context, and, as was explained in previous sections, perceptions are key to discovering what is considered just.

6.9 EXAMINATION OF THE UTILITY OF THE ENVIRONMENTAL JUSTICE CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK

The second research objective – to examine the utility of the components of the environmental justice conceptual framework (Chapter 4) within the rural revolution context – was addressed in the previous sections through collecting participants' perceptions of environmental justice instruments (activism forums) (Figure 4-4) and their perceptions of environmental justice barriers and facilitators (Table 4-2). All the environmental justice instruments as revealed by the literature and described in the conceptual framework, and their classifications (internal decision making processes, external decision making processes, active, passive) were identified and articulated repeatedly by the interview respondents. No new environmental justice instruments were revealed. The environmental justice barriers and facilitators were all also identified both implicitly and explicitly by the interviewees. Here, stakeholders seemed to have difficulty identifying more than a few examples of barriers or facilitators, but when prompted about others (e.g. familial), they acknowledged their importance. No barriers or facilitators were identified by the respondents during the interviews that had not been previously noted. Given that no previously modeled environmental justice instrument or barrier or facilitator was described by any of the twelve

interview respondents suggests that according to the interviewees, all environmental justice instruments, barriers and facilitators have been identified by the environmental justice conceptual framework, thereby furthering the utility of the theoretical construction.

Interestingly, the discovery that perceived barriers and facilitators lead to activism instrument selection, and that activism selection leads in part to activism group credibility, brings new understanding to the environmental justice conceptual framework. Initially it was thought that the framework moves from theoretical to tangible components of environmental justice: from ‘perspectives’ to ‘barriers and facilitators’. But, based on the information revealed in the interviews, the framework also moves from the tangible ‘barriers and facilitators’ to the theoretical determinants. The barriers and facilitators to environmental justice determine the environmental justice instruments employed, and so on, up to environmental justice perspectives (Figure 4-1). This concludes then that not only does the theoretical perspective from which one is approaching environmental justice help to attain or sustain it, but that conversely, environmental justice barriers and facilitators can be a first component, in explaining and determining environmental justice instruments, methodological approaches, principles, and perspectives.

6.10 SUMMARY

This chapter used a coding and interpretation template to analyze the interviews (Appendix C). By gathering and analyzing the perceptions revealed by key stakeholders in creating and interpreting rural public policy, the second and third research objectives have been addressed.

The second objective has been revealed in the previous section, ‘Examination of the Utility of the Environmental Justice Conceptual Framework.’ The third objective is

reviewed here, organized with a brief summary of each associated research theme. These research objectives seek ultimately to address the central research purpose: **to explore the concept of activism as a tenet of environmental justice by examining the case study of the OLA**. Regardless that the interview template (Appendix B) provides only limited direction related to each research theme, it was impressive that the points discussed by respondents were strikingly similar.

Overall, the respondents were able to identify all the OLA issues, and, generally speaking, perceived them to be valid. What was disagreed upon is how the regulation and designation (farmers' markets, wetlands, etc.) is protested by the OLA (elaborated upon in the activism section). Nevertheless, most respondents did agree that the legislation is enforced in an over zealous manner. Several respondents made the point that they perceive there to be a fundamental breakdown in democracy, and that this is in part related to the apathetic behaviour of most of society.

With regards to the mission theme, like the OLA issues, all respondents were able to state the basic principle of the mission as reclaiming justice through property rights, and all respondents agreed the mission was appropriate. Most of the disagreement was found to lie in how the mission of the group is promoted. All respondents shared the perception that the OLA is filling a void. Prior to the formation of the group, no organization existed that was dedicated to rural property rights. Three respondents from separate stakeholder affiliations stated that there would always be a need for organizations like the OLA, not only for reclaiming justice, but also in maintaining or sustaining it.

Next, leadership of an activist organization, including the OLA, was deemed by every respondent as important to the group's success and credibility as an organization. Most

respondents mentioned the notion of leadership evolution, and that a change in leadership periodically was important for the group's sustainability. Common themes emerged as to the types of leadership traits that are desired for activism group executives. These traits can be grouped into five main categories: intelligence, communication and understanding, credibility, dynamism, and virtuosity.

In terms of the activism theme, the forums chosen by a protest group were identified by every interviewee as important to the activist group's success. Respondents went on to agree that all activism forums (both internal and external decision making processes) are valid in specific contexts, however, differences were identified between stakeholders as to which activism forms are appropriate in which contexts. For example, some viewed civil disobedience as appropriate any time (RAG 1), while some would only resort to civil disobedience as a last alternative (PM 2). Reasons for the choice of a given activism forum selection were activism hierarchy, activism evolution and the significance of diversifying activism methods, instrument credibility, and activist objectives. Every respondent agreed that while working external to decision making processes may lead to greater publicity and awareness of the issues (e.g. protests leading to media coverage), ultimately it only gets the activists so far. To get lasting legislative change, one must use environmental justice instruments internal to decision making processes.

Subsequently, barriers and facilitators as identified in the literature and subsequently in the environmental justice conceptual framework were all discussed in the interviews. Many barriers and facilitators were mentioned while explaining opinions regarding other associated research themes. Examples of barriers and facilitators brought up continually in the interviews were procedural factors, career and familial factors, psychological factors,

and communicative factors. Interestingly, a psychological barrier and facilitator discussed was the notion of expectations, and being realistic about what one can accomplish. In this same vein, the facilitator of accepting the perceived barriers and working with them, as opposed to being hindered by them, was mentioned.

Group membership is perceived by the interviewees to be about quality, not quantity. In other words, that it is better to have a small number of dedicated, passionate, and loyal members than many unmotivated followers. People are perceived to have joined the OLA partially because no other group is standing up for property rights, and partially because other rural and agricultural groups are considered ineffective. There was no overarching sentiment as to whether the OLA will be sustainable as an organization, or whether they will grow, stagnate, decline, or cease to exist all together.

Finally, additional and concluding insights included the themes of media, democracy, rural versus urban distinction, perception, motivation and emotion, and communication and understanding. Media was brought up by all respondents as being a key factor in determining how an activist group is perceived by society. Moreover, the OLA perceives the media as an ally, suggesting that any media coverage, be it positive or negative, is good because it brings attention to their issues. The notion of a breakdown in democracy was raised by a few individuals as being an important theme, suggesting that public apathy is ultimately responsible for this perception of increasingly intrusive legislation, and increasing governmental control. And, that the increased regulation and designation is what has lead to the formation of such activism groups as the OLA. Rural interviewees also made mention of the rural versus urban distinction with regard to decision making. The main point discussed here being that urban people who know little of rural

issues are creating the rural legislation, leading to ineffective regulation and designation. Perception was brought up time and again by every interviewee as important to activism and environmental management. For example, one's perception will allow them to determine in what activism forums one will engage. The respondents viewed motivation for activism as a worthwhile topic. Reasons to act or to be inactive were seen as based on motivation. And finally, notions of communication and understanding among stakeholder groups are perceived as imperative to success, for all parties. It was inferred that lack of understanding spurs frustration. It was perceived that this frustration, within and among stakeholder groups, could be alleviated through clear communication.

This analysis has addressed the second research objective by examining the utility of the environmental justice conceptual framework designed for this study (Chapter 4). It was found that the interviewees identified all the 'environmental justice instruments' (activism forums), and 'environmental justice barriers and facilitators' identified by the literature and the researcher. Further, no additional components were identified suggesting that the framework is comprehensive, at least within the context of the rural revolution.

This chapter has also addressed the third research objective by exploring the perceptions of key stakeholders regarding the Ontario Landowner Associations' activism and influence on rural public policy efforts to attain environmental justice. In summary, it has been demonstrated through evidence from the interviews and their analysis that the aspects of the OLA as an activism group perceived to be the most important to its influence on rural public policy, is the group's credibility. The OLA's credibility, and ultimately their influence as an activism group, is based on how the attributes of the group itself, and how these attributes are perceived by those judging the OLA's success. How others perceive the

OLA's mission, OLA leadership, OLA activism instruments selected, and the OLA's membership, all contribute to the OLA's credibility as a protest organization. Moreover, the OLA attributes (mission, leader, activism forums, and membership) are all shaped by what the OLA perceives to be barriers and facilitators to effective activism. Barriers and facilitators to environmental justice determine OLA attributes, the attributes thereby determining the group's credibility.

Therefore, the OLA attribute perceived to be the most important to its influence on attaining environmental justice, is the group's credibility as an activism organization. Credibility of an activist organization has been shown to be due to a combination of influential factors: perception of issues, perception of central mission, perception of executive leadership, perception of activism forums, perception of barriers and facilitators, perception of membership reach, and, perception of additional insights. These factors are keeping with the template (Figure 5-2). Additional factors that have been found to affect OLA include media, democracy, rural versus urban distinction, perception, motivation and emotion, and communication and understanding. The contributions at the theoretical and methodological levels provided by these research results, as well as future research avenues, are presented next in Chapter 7: Reflections and Conclusions.

CHAPTER 7

REFLECTIONS AND CONCLUSIONS

7.1 INTRODUCTION

There is intense discontent in rural Ontario, as revealed by OLA signage, protest, and even political candidacies. The increased rural legislation indoctrinated post Walkerton has lead to a perception of injustice – and a subsequent recourse for action through the formation of this activist group. A comprehensive overview and full profile of an activism group previously unexplored, the OLA, has been exposed. And upon exploring the topics of activism and environmental justice within the OLA context, voids in the research were apparent. This case study of the OLA was therefore used to explore these complex concepts.

To address these issues, this research involved the development of a conceptual framework, has described a qualitative analysis of perceptions of the OLA's influence as an activism group, has presented a review of environmental justice research to date, and has proposed an environmental justice definition and conceptual framework, in an effort to understand the organization and the concepts. Thus the overall goal of this research was **to explore the concept of activism as a tenet of environmental justice by examining the case study of the OLA**. The specific objectives of this research were:

1. to develop a conceptual framework of environmental justice;
2. to examine the utility of the components of this conceptual framework within the rural revolution context; and,
3. to explore the perceptions of key stakeholders regarding the Ontario Landowner Associations' influence on rural public policy efforts to attain environmental justice.

This chapter will summarize the research findings in the context of the above objectives, followed by a discussion of the theoretical, methodological, and substantive contributions of the study, and a discussion of future research avenues.

7.2 SUMMARY OF FINDINGS

To address the first research objective, an environmental justice conceptual framework was developed based on a review of the literature. The proposed framework includes five components (Figure 4-1). The first three, which were developed prior to the commencement of this thesis, are: environmental justice perspectives (Table 4-1) (Bryner, 2002), principles (Figure 4-2) (Stacey and Needham, 1993) and methodological approaches (Figure 4-3) (Stacey and Needham, 1993). Two additional components of the framework stem from the literature review as notions of how environmental justice can be logistically reclaimed or sustained and the factors that may affect the likelihood of this occurring. In the conceptual framework these are represented by components four (environmental justice instruments; Figure 4-4) and five (environmental justice barriers and facilitators; Table 4-2).

Qualitative interviews with 12 key informants were conducted to address research objectives two and three. Three people were interviewed from four stakeholder groups related to rural public policy: politicians; government planners and managers; rural and agricultural commodity and interest group representatives; and OLA executives. Findings were used to examine the utility of the conceptual framework (objective 2), and to explore perceptions of key stakeholders regarding the Ontario Landowner Associations' influence on rural public policy efforts to attain environmental justice. The interviews exposed respondents' perceptions of the seven associated research themes: issues, central mission,

leadership traits, activism forms, membership reach, barriers and facilitators, and unanticipated variables.

The associated research themes were shown to be inextricably linked. Firstly, OLA and rural issues were readily identifiable by the respondents (Table 3-1), and, OLA issues and concerns were perceived by respondents as being valid. Secondly, the OLA mission was reported to be clearly understood by the interviewees, and the organization itself was identified as filling an important need among rural property owners, as well as filling an important need for property rights and rural activism. Thirdly, a range of leadership traits identified as being desirable to an organization were identified by respondents. These traits have been grouped into five categories: intelligence, communications skills, credibility, dynamism, and virtuosity. Leadership was seen as a key variable in determining group credibility and success. Fourthly, and in recognition of the 'environmental justice instruments' section of the conceptual framework, the interviewees identified all activism forums, as well as all four activism form categories: external and internal decision making structures, active and passive. The interviewees agreed that activism forum selection was a key component in a protest organization's success and that each activism forum can be valid in the pursuit of justice, depending upon the context. Many respondents alluded to a notion of activism evolution, noting that ultimately lasting change will occur only if activism takes place within decision making processes. Fifthly, and in examining the 'environmental justice barriers and facilitators' section of the conceptual framework, the interviewees as a collective implicitly and explicitly identified all barriers and facilitators outlined in the framework. Barriers and facilitators were viewed as directly correlated to activism instrument selection (for example, one may choose activism forums that are minimally time

consuming if they have little free time, etc.), mirroring what is revealed in the literature and what is presented in the environmental justice conceptual framework. Sixthly, membership reach was understood as being directly dependent on the types of activism instruments used and on the effectiveness of the leadership of the group. Finally, several unanticipated research themes emerged from the interviews. These themes include the importance of media in activism, perceptions of a fundamental breakdown in democracy, rural versus urban distinction and priority setting in provincial legislation, perception research, activist emotion and motivation, and the importance of communication and understanding.

The interviews revealed that although all stakeholders agreed with OLA issues, not everyone agreed with the leadership tactics and activism methods used by the group to seek justice. The inter-related nature of the associated research themes has revealed that the success of the OLA, and of any activism organization, has to do with the perception of a combination of the associated research variables. It has been shown that the credibility of an activism organization determines an activism group's perceived influence on public policy.

7.3 RESEARCH CONTRIBUTIONS

7.3.1 Theoretical Contributions

The theoretical contributions of this research stem from the lack of conceptual cohesion within the environmental justice literature and the need for a comprehensive conceptual framework. Based on the environmental justice, public participation and activism literature, clear components and numerous definitions of environmental justice exist, but they lack consistency and cohesion. To address this, this research summarizes disparate literatures in order to develop a more comprehensive definition of environmental justice and a conceptual framework (Figure 4-1), that reflects current understandings of the concept.

The framework presents environmental justice as a series of components, moving from the theoretical to the applied. Associated with this, a comprehensive list of categories and forms of activism (environmental justice instruments) are outlined (Figure 4-4), along with an inventory of possible environmental justice barriers and facilitators that an activism group may face (Table 4-2). Findings demonstrate that the activism form possibilities and potential barriers and facilitators revealed in the literature were confirmed by the interviewees, further examining previously unexplored aspects of an environmental justice conceptual framework.

7.3.2 Methodological Contributions

Methodologically, this research has reinforced our understanding of the importance of open-ended interviews as a valuable qualitative research tool within environmental equity and activism research. The fatigue associated with questionnaire research that was reported to exist among many rural residents in the study area further highlights the importance using of this more personal, in-depth data collection tool. Broad themes were explored and discussed in an informal setting, and the respondents felt at liberty to discuss issues openly. This research also demonstrated the utility of participant observation when dealing with dynamic situations and relationships, allowing insights into the rural Eastern Ontario context that would have otherwise remained unknown. Interestingly, a transcription tool was inadvertently discovered. Speech recognition software was revealed to be an extremely helpful tool, more than doubling the efficiency rate of transcription. This finding has obvious implications for future research and for future researchers in interview analysis.

A number of methodological limitations can be identified. For example, only one activist group (the OLA) was used as the case study to examine activism in the pursuit of

justice. The context of the OLA is unique, complex and dynamic thereby making it somewhat difficult to generalize the environmental justice framework and interview findings to other contexts. While this research is a synthesis of information regarding perceptions on this activism group specifically, it is felt that the framework is sufficiently general to be useful in a range of environmental justice contexts. Future research may wish to seek whether the attributes for successful activism, etc. are similar in other activism organizations' contexts (elaborated in future research avenues, section 4.6).

7.3.3 Substantive Contributions and Potential Applications

The substantive contributions of this research are linked to the wider, fundamental goal of environmental justice. In the context of the research, the goals were to better understand these concepts in general, and, to better understand these concepts specific to the rural revolution and the OLA.

General understanding of possible activism forums, and possible barriers or facilitators to activism in reference to environmental justice have been discussed through a conceptual framework. This is a substantial contribution as a guide to those seeking to engage in activism forums, for they can refer to the conceptual framework to see what activism instruments exist, and what barriers or facilitators may be encountered to achieve greater equity. Any perceived influence on public policy by an activism group is determined by a combination of variables (associated research themes), ultimately identifying the group's credibility and therefore success. It is felt that the findings from this research vis-à-vis the OLA can in theory be transposed to other activism groups and contexts in order to understand their influence on public policy. This study has determined what variables are required to identify activism group credibility and perceived success, be it from the view

point of government (politicians and/or planners and managers), or activists themselves (rural and agricultural commodity and interest groups and/or the OLA).

7.4 FUTURE RESEARCH AVENUES

The investigation of the OLA's impact on rural public policy as an activism group, as well as environmental justice in a conceptual framework, has filled knowledge voids in the field. Yet, further study would be beneficial to deepen understanding in these areas.

An environmental justice conceptual framework has been proposed in this thesis based on the literature, and whose utility has been examined using the OLA case study. Future researchers could attempt to elaborate upon the framework by approaching it from an environmental justice perspective other than that of 'public participation', as has been done here. Moreover, research could be dedicated to further examining the utility of, or challenging the framework, by applying it to other environmental justice and/or activism case studies.

Here, activism methods along with possible barriers and facilitators to utilizing specific activism forums have been outlined. Future work towards developing this knowledge into an activism tool selection guide should be pursued. Such a guide could aid activists in their selection of activism instruments – instruments that are suited to the specific contexts and desired outcomes of the group. Another important related area of work could look at what forms of activism are the most effective in a given set of circumstances in order to obtain a specific outcome. To date, no method of quantifying the effectiveness of given forms of activism has emerged. For example, this research has revealed that one important benefit of civil disobedience in the OLA context is that it attracts media coverage. A better understanding of the effectiveness of this and other activism instruments could be

expected to lead to a more effective allocation and distribution of resources (human, financial, etc.) for activist groups.

In the end, this research has revealed that regardless of stakeholder group affiliation, there exists a desire for the same end goals of equity and justice. It is clear that an understanding of the motivation for activism, on the part of all stakeholders, may lead to less frustration among all parties, thereby expediting the consensus building process. As a result, it is hoped that this research and its findings may inspire sister studies to reveal like goals among stakeholders in other activism case studies, leading to greater understanding, communication and compromise among stakeholders in other environmental and political contexts, contributing ultimately to enhanced environmental justice for all.

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APPENDIX A. DEFINITIONS

Action Theory	A term employed by Werten (1993) to urge geographers to focus their inquiry on actions rather than space. Geographers should focus their attention on actions and processes in space and how these are related to the agents' understanding of the subjective, social and physical worlds. (Holt-Jensen, 1999).
Active	Explicit/dynamic behaviour/action
Active	Doing what is prohibited (Bay and Walker, 1975).
Activism	"a behaviour, undertaken by an individual, that has the potential to influence management or policy decisions" (McFarlane and Boxall, 2003).
(Scientist Environmental) Activism	"scientists' collective political responses to the degradation of ecosystems and human communities."(Frickel, 2004).
Attitude	"An opinion that includes an evaluative and an emotional component." (Aronson, 1984).
Behaviour	"The overt action performed by the individual in response to an environmental or self-generated stimulus, and mediated by the subsystems discussed...(except in the case of reflexes) the individual clearly evaluates the stimulus before selecting the appropriate response." (Porteous, 1977)
Civil Disobedience	"any act or process of public defiance of a law or policy enforced by established governmental authorities, insofar as the action is premeditated, understood by the actor(s) to be illegal or of contested legality, carried out and persisted for limited public ends, and by way of carefully chosen and limited means"(Bay and Walker, 1975)
Community Development	Democratic participation of people done within boundaries shaped by power relations already in place. (Shragge, 2003)
Community Organizing	"...an effort to (mobilize) people to combat common problems and to increase their voice in institutions and decisions that affect their lives and communities." (Pendras, 2002).
Community Organizing	"...building an enduring network of people, who identify with common ideals and who can act on the basis of those ideas." (Martin, 2002).
Democracy	from the Greek word 'demos' (the people) and 'kratein' (to rule), therefore, 'the people rule', or the people have the power (Pocklington, 2000).

Democracy	"...a commonwealth of political equals, who are free to advance the common good and also their own good by constitutional means,...legislation, brought about by processes designed to make sure that the laws express the well deliberated desires and needs of the people" (Bay and Walker, 1975).
Discrimination	"...a distinction, whether intentional or not but based on grounds relating to personal characteristics of the individual or group, which has the effect of imposing burdens, obligations, or disadvantages on such (an) individual or group not imposed upon others, or which withholds or limits access to opportunities." (Simon, 1995).
Designation	Act of Identifying
Ecotage	Environmental Sabotage (Switzer, 2003).
Education	"The act of imparting knowledge or skill." (Aronson, 1984).
Environment	"Any condition or influence outside the organism, system, or whatever entity is being studied." (Porteous, 1977).
Environmental Justice	"...institutional policies, decisions, and cultural behaviours that support sustainable development, that support living conditions in which people can have confidence that their environment is safe, nurturing, and productive, and that support communities where distributive justice prevails." (Bryant, 1995).
Environmental Justice	"...advocacy seeks to ensure that public authorities and mainstream organized interests effectively address disproportionate burdens borne by historically disadvantaged communities." (Bullard, 1994).
Environmental Justice	"Environmental justice is the right to safe, healthy and productive environment (natural and built). Environmental justice acknowledges the environment for both its utility and its intrinsic value. It exudes equity in all its meaning (distributive, social, political and intergenerational), and is the right to proportionately benefit or bare burden to the consequences of one's activities related to the environment. Environmental justice is upheld by opportunities for all peoples to participate democratically and contribute meaningfully to environmental decision making." (Crane and Robin, 2008).

Environmental Justice	“refers to the principle of equitable protection from environmental hazards for all races, ethnicities, and socioeconomic groups, and preservation of natural resources of the people, including indigenous communities” (Hill, 2003).
Environmental Justice	The right to a safe, healthy, productive and sustainable environment for all, in which ‘environment’ is viewed in its totality, and includes ecological (biological), physical (natural and built), social, political, aesthetic, and economic components. Environmental justice refers to the conditions in which such a right can be freely exercised, through which individual and group identities, needs, and dignities are preserved, fulfilled, and respected in a way which provides for self actualization and personal and community empowerment (Mitchell, 2002).
Environmental Justice	“Environmental Justice is a relational state in which societal decision-making is fair and equitable. It is a state in which victimization and the number and kind of negatively impacted groups are minimized. It is a state in which governmental and non-governmental management processes observe its philosophy and serve its goals.” (Needham, 2004).
Environmental Justice	“equity in the distribution of environmental risk, recognition of the diversity of the participants and experiences in affected communities, and participation in the political processes which create and manage environmental policy.” (Schlosberg, 2004).
Environmental Racism	“It is an extension of racism. It refers to those institutional rules, regulations, and policies or government or corporate decisions that deliberately target certain communities for least desirable land uses, resulting in the disproportionate exposure of toxic and hazardous waste on communities based upon certain prescribed biological characteristics. Environmental racism is the unequal protection against toxic and hazardous waste exposure and the systematic exclusion of people of colour from environmental decisions affecting their communities.”(Bryant, 1995).
Environmental Racism	“policies, practices, or directives that differentially affect or disadvantage-intentionally or otherwise-

	individuals, groups, or communities based on race or colour.”(Bullard, 1990).
Equity:	
Cumulative Equity	“How environmental risks accrue over time in particular industrialized communities” (Fletcher, 2003).
Environmental Equity	(based on concept of distributive justice) “All social groups should be equally protected.”(Hill, 2003).
Environmental Equity	“Equal protection of environmental laws.”(Bryant, 1995).
Geographical Equity	“Physical or spatial location of benefits and burdens.”(Fletcher, 2003).
Intergenerational Equity	“Environmental burden on future generations.”(Fletcher, 2003).
External Decision Making Structures Activism	Following contrary process rules
Humanistic Geography	“...an understanding of the human world by studying people’s relations with nature, their geographical behaviour as well as their feelings and ideas in regard to space and place.”(Tuan, 1976).
Internal Decision Making Structures Activism	Following process rules
Justice	“...the just state of affairs is that which each individual has exactly those benefits and burdens which are due to him or her.” (Simon, 1995).
Law	“rule of conduct or action prescribed or formally recognized as binding or enforced by a controlling authority.”(Estrin and Swaigen, 1993).
Natural Law	a ‘right’, defined by Grotius as “...something self possessed and conceivably separate from God’s will, i.e. use rights to establish contractual foundations for social life (Wasserstrom et al., 2000).
Opinion	“...what a person believes to be factually true.” (Aronson, 1984).
Participation	“Processes of involvement, shared responsibility and active engagement in decisions which affect the quality of life.”(Matthews et al., 1999).
Permanent Revolution	(In scientific theory) “The idea that an active science should always fight against the establishment of ruling paradigms.” (Holt-Jensen, 1999).
Politics	“set of intense processes that determine who gets

	what, when, and how.” (Visgilio and Whitelaw, 2003).
Propaganda	“The systematic propagation of a given doctrine.” (Aronson, 1984).
Public Participation	a challenge to the traditional management of government policy (Beirle and Cayford, 2002).
Public Participation	“Public Participation is a key component of management whose objective is the promotion of democracy and accountability through the communication and engagement of an involved citizenry. (Crane, 2006).
Public Participation	“activities of individuals intended to influence the attitudes and behaviour of those empowered to make decisions whether they consist of the daily exercise of discretion or grand strategic decisions embodied in new statutes”(Stanbury and Fulton, 1988).
Radical Geography	“The study of the radical changes that may occur in the way societies are organized. The objective is to foster changes in current society and therefore in its social geography.”(calls for both revolutionary theory and practice)(Holt-Jensen, 1999)
Regulation	A rule/order issued by an executive authority
Revolution	“...an historical process leading to and culminating in social transformation, where in one ruling class is displaced by another, with the new class representatives, as compared to the old, enhanced productive capacities and socially progressive potentialities.” (Aptheker, 1967).
Rural	“...earning one’s living from the land and/or carrying out activities related to the land, and understanding and/or taking an active interest in wildlife, farming, etc. and their consequences regarding preservation, conservation, and ... having an in-depth knowledge and understanding of the countryside and country matters” (Woods, 2003).
Social Mobilization	“The bottom-up involvement of citizens in the planning and development of their local communities.”(Holt-Jensen, 1999).
Social Movement	“A network of informal interactions between a plurality of individuals, groups and/or organizations, engaged in political or cultural conflict on the basis of a shared collective identity.”(Diani, 1992).
State-Society Synergy	“A theory of social capital formation that seeks to

	explain state action toward community development through the creation of 'ties that connect citizens and public officials across the public private divide'."(Frickel, 2004).
Tactic	"A calculated action determined by the absence of a proper locus...the space of the tactic is the space of the other. Thus it must play on and with a terrain imposed on it and organized by the laws of a foreign power. It does not have the means to keep to itself, at a distance, in a position of withdrawal, foresight and self-collection; it is a maneuver...within the enemies' field of vision and within enemy territory...It operates in isolated actions, blow by blow...it must vigilantly make use of the cracks that particular conjunctions open in the surveillance of the proprietary powers." (deCerteau, 1984).
Vision	"...is naming long term objectives of the organizing process and how they connect to the type of society we would like to see."(Shragge, 2003)

APPENDIX B. INTERVIEW TEMPLATE.

This template was distributed to the respondents in advance of the interview.

INTERVIEW SUMMARY

Date:

Time:

Place:

Parties in Attendance:

RESPONDENT'S PROFILE

- Who/ Why/ What/ Where
- Career/ Profession
- Residence
- Age
- Affiliations (company, activist involvement, government, etc.)

ASSOCIATED RESEARCH THEMES

THE ISSUES

- Perception of the issues and problems (kind)
- Perception of the issues and problems (validity)
- Perception of government intrusion
- Government regulation of behaviour
- Government designation of land use
- Opportunity to participate in decision-making
- Your perception of rural public participation
- Provincial decision making (Ontario Ministry of the Environment, Ontario Ministry of Agriculture and Food, Ontario Ministry of Natural Resources, etc.)
- Municipal decision-making
- Agricultural commodity and interest groups
- Other

THE ORGANIZATION

Perception of Central Mission

- Goals and Objectives
- Issues and Problems (Selection)
- Validity
- Attempt to Fill Void
- Other

Perception of Executive Leadership

- Personality
- History
- Communications Skills
- Relationships/Liaisons
- Other

Perception of Activism Forums

- Internal Decision Making
- External Decision Making
- Active
- Passive
- Other

Barriers and Facilitators

- Financial
- Informational
- Political
- Familial/Career
- Legal
- Other

Perception of Membership Reach

- Local/Regional/Provincial
- Select Rural Interest Groups
- Growth in Numbers
- Growth in Diversity
- Other

Additional Comments or Instructions

APPENDIX C. INTERVIEW CODING AND INTERPRETATION TEMPLATE.

Capture and record descriptive phrases/statements for all discussion points and include in summary tables. Be sensitive to polarity (Positive and Negative). Be sensitive to the explicit and the implicit. Be sensitive to the construction of a typology. Highlight and Record Additional Insights.

ISSUE INVENTORY

- What issues and problems are identified?
- What issues and problems are discussed?
- What merit or validity is attached to the issues and problems discussed?
- What is the level of concern about regulation (if discussed)?
- What is the level of concern about land use designation (if discussed)?
- What is the perception of public participation in key decision making processes attached to the provincial government and linked to rural affairs?

THE ORGANIZATION

Central Mission

- What is the perception of the central mission?
- What is the perception of issues and problems, the selection for protest?
- What is the perception of the institutional need being filled by the Lanark Landowners' Association/ Ontario Landowners' Association?

Executive Leadership

- What traits do you view to be the most important for group leadership?
- What traits do you perceive as being the most important in the context of the Lanark Landowners' Association/ Ontario Landowners' Association?

Activism Forums

- What do you see as being the roles of activism groups in environmental decision-making?
- What are the benefits and costs of activism groups working internally or externally to decision-making processes?
- What are the benefits and costs of being passive and/or active in decision-making processes?
- What are the conditions under which the above strategies are selected?

Barriers and Facilitators

- What barriers exist to community group participation in the decision making of the provincial government?
- What facilitators or supports exist for community group participation in the decision making of the provincial government?

Membership Reach

- What representation characteristics do you consider to be necessary before a group can claim to be a legitimate, community organization?

ADDITIONAL THEMES/INSIGHTS