CHAPTER I: INTRODUCTION

1.1 Social Movements, Support for Activism and Tourism: What's the Connection?

Since scholars began studying social movements, the major questions have remained the same: Who participates in social movements? Why do people participate in social movements? As a result of nearly 100 years of research, the ways in which these questions have been answered have gone through many changes. Prior to the 1960s, social psychological models of social movements viewed participants as culturally deviant and structurally dislocated (Smelser 1963; LeBon 1960[1895]). The individual was the focus of study. Social psychological theorists argued that people participated in social movements because they were frustrated, irrational, social outcasts who had no other recourse but to go outside the usual institutionalized social structures to attempt to implement change. For example, participants in the French revolution did so because they were social outcasts with flawed personalities. This theoretical perspective proved inadequate during the 1960's, when people from a variety of socio-economic and educational backgrounds who were neither irrational nor social outcasts became activists. At that time, researchers began to emphasize issues of power and social structure in the study of social movements, the foremost researchers being the resource mobilization perspective (McCarthy and Zald 1973). Resource mobilization theorists argued that people who were excluded from routine access to power participated in social movements to implement social change and this participation was a rational way to maximize scarce resources. More recently, researchers have argued that resource mobilization theorists may have over-corrected social psychological theory by underestimating the role of the individual's social psychological characteristics (Gamson 1992).

Some theorists have begun to connect both individual characteristics and the structural characteristics of social movements as a way to understand who participates in social movements and why (Ferree and Miller 1985; McAdam, McCarthy and Zald 1996; Zald 1992; Shweder and Fiske 1986). In order to capture the complexity of social movements, analysts are utilizing concepts from a wide variety of perspectives. This study contributes to this scholarship by utilizing theoretical concepts from both the social psychological and resource mobilization perspectives to explain social movement participation and support for activism.

I used two concepts from social psychological theories of social movement participation for this study. They are self-efficacy and consciousness-raising. Self-efficacy is defined as one's sense of ability to overcome obstacles in life (Wiggins et al 1994). Proponents of social psychological explanations of social movements argue that a high level of self-efficacy is an important prerequisite for social movement participation (Kelly and Brienlinger 1996). For example, highly efficacious workers who witnessed unfair labor practices would be more

confident in their ability to help implement change in labor practices through participation in a union or other pro-labor organization.

Consciousness-raising is defined as an experience or series of experiences whereby individuals come to recognize the larger, structural elements at work that create socio-economic stratification and where she/he is located within those structures (Gamson 1988). In other words, consciousness-raising is a realization that there is an "us" versus "them" (Gamson 1988). For example, a woman may have an experience at a NOW rally that helps her recognize that her lack of promotion, poor wages, and difficulty in qualifying for a loan to purchase a home are a result of socio-structural forces that systematically oppress women. She is suddenly aware that she is no longer a lone victim, but one of many women (us) striving to overcome long-standing structural supports (them) for men in the workplace. From her consciousness-raising experience, this woman sees the utility of both support for activism (Klandermans 1992) and participation in social movement organizations in order to fight to change those structures. Some social psychological social movement theorists propose that before individuals participate in social movements or develop support for activism, a consciousness-raising experience must occur. These two social psychological concepts that focus on the values and ideology of the individual involved in social movements will be used to assure the inclusion of the role of the individual in this study of social movement participation.

The primary concept from resource mobilization theory that I used in this study was that of networks. Individuals and organizations that are linked together through one or more social relationships form an individual's network. Resource mobilization theorists contend that networks of support developed through participation in social organizations, schools, work, religious affiliations, and civic groups affect social movement participation and support for activism. Individuals are influenced by their structural networks (Hannon, 1990), but in turn are drawn to networks that support their pre-existing ideologies (Friedman and McAdam, 1992). To illustrate: My participation in social movements may be influenced by academic experiences, work environment, and participation in social organizations, but I also tend to study, work, and socialize with individuals and groups of people with whom I share ideological and social values. The concept of networks assures the role of structure in my research.

Nearly all studies using both social psychological and resource mobilization social movement theories test their theories of participation in a specific social movement organization (Barkan et al 1995;Chapman 1987; Hirsch 1990; Klandermans and Oegema 1987; Modav 1993). For this study, I was more concerned with overall social movement participation and support for activism. I wanted to contribute to the literature by looking at how one component of society can potentially change social movement participation and support for activism. That component is travel and tourism, specifically alternative travel and tourism.

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Tourism comprises a major expenditure of discretionary time and income in the United States and many other western societies. In 1997, tourists in the U.S. spent nearly 400 billion dollars (U.S. Travel Data Center 1998). Tourism is the world's largest employer. The bulk of revenue generated from the tourism industry is derived from mass tourism. Mass tourism is a large-scale, well-developed industry with specific channels of communication and distribution, and an established infrastructure of transportation, accommodation, and food service (Fridgen 1991). In mass tourism, hosts generally are of a lower socio-economic status than their guests (Hall 1994).

Tourism has been studied for its economic impacts (Martin and Uysal 1990; Mathieson and Wall 1982), environmental impacts (Boo 1989; Farrell and Runyan 1991; Wall and Wright 1977), cultural impacts (Smith 1989; de Kadt 1979; Chambers 1997), and social impacts (Brayley, Var, and Sheldon 1989; Milman and Pizam 1987). Rarely has tourism been explicitly examined as a possible catalyst for social movement participation (Tonkin 1995; Hall 1994; Light and Wong 1975). Those who have studied tourism and its relationship to social movements usually focus on the perspective of the "hosts," or citizens of the destination community. For example, Modavi (1993) studied Native Hawaiians' organized attempts to limit the development of golf courses that were destroying the indigenous habitat. Hitchcock (1997) documented activism among Bushmen in Zimbabwe who protested against increases in tourism such as distributing flyers informing tourists that they were not welcome.
Traditionally, the primary focus of academic research was mass tourism. More recently, another form of tourism has gained the attention of social researchers because of its growth and uniqueness from more traditional mass tourism. It is most commonly known as alternative tourism (Romeril 1994; Wheeler 1992) and will be referred to as such in this study.

Alternative tourism may be defined as "a form of tourism that advocates smaller scale tourism in terms of number of tourists and the dimensions of tourism development " (Fridgen, 1991: 347).   Sub-categories of alternative tourism include eco-tourism (Boo 1989), affinity travel (Capell 1997), edu-tourism (Holdnak and Holland 1996), adventure travel, science tourism (Fridgen 1991), and volunteer tourism (McMillon 1993). Organizations involved in alternative tourism include -- but are not limited to -- Habitat For Humanity, YMCA, and the Earthwatch Institute. Proponents of this type of tourism also place it under the umbrella of sustainable tourism, an "environmentally sensitive and socially responsible development of the tourism industry" (Godfrey 1993). For the purposes of this study, the focus within alternative travel was volunteer tourism, a form of alternative tourism that can be defined as short-term (1-2 week) trips where participants pay to work on a research project, learning about the research as they donate their time. This may include excavating at archaeological sites, researching maternal health, documenting environmental degradation, or preserving indigenous culture and folklore.

Volunteer tourism can be very goal-oriented and challenging. Participants may learn basic research skills, data collection techniques, or interviewing methods. They may learn how to unearth dinosaur bones in Montana, count species of fish in a coral reef, or interview elderly Dominicans about their family history (Earthwatch 1998). As participants develop skills, their confidence may increase. In this study, I test whether such volunteer tourism experiences increase participant's overall self-efficacy, social movement participation and support for activism.

Volunteer tourism also provides opportunities to meet people from different social and geographic backgrounds who may have similar interests and values. This might provide opportunities to form network ties that might never have been developed had individuals not participated in volunteer tourism. These network ties might lead to new sources of information and opportunities for social movement participation. In this study, I test if volunteer tourism experiences add to participants' overall networks, and hence, their social movement participation and support for activism.

Exploring alternative tourism as a means of encouraging social movement participation is an empirical representation of the theoretical argument made by Tilly (1978) that the activities of everyday life – work, family, and in this case, leisure activities – are extremely influential to social movement participation and support for activism. Examining the effects of participation in an alternative tourism on social movement participation and support for activism will contribute to the sociological literature in a number of specific ways. First, my research may clarify what encourages or discourages individuals' types and amounts of participation in social movements. Second, this research may help to identify experiences that change support for activism.

More specifically, I will examine how and in what ways network ties, self-efficacy, and consciousness-raising (all theoretically important precursors to social movement participation and support for activism) are affected by participation in an Earthwatch expedition. First, through interaction among its participants, alternative tourism may broaden and facilitate network ties among individuals involved in various social movements that otherwise would not occur. Second, by challenging participants both physically and mentally, an Earthwatch expedition may be an important component in the formation or strengthening of self-efficacy. Third, for those previously uninvolved in social movements, alternative tourism may provide a consciousness-raising experience for individuals unaware of social injustices that exist outside their sphere of everyday life, increasing their support for and participation in social movements.

This study also will contribute to the theoretical literature on social movements in another way. Examining social movement participation and support for activism in this way attempts to resolve the limitations of both the resource mobilization and social psychological explanations of social movements by combining

elements of each. Resource mobilization theory assures inclusion of some of the structural forces that affect who participates in social movements and why. Social psychological theory assures inclusion of the individual, and more importantly, individuals' ideas about themselves and their ability to bring about change. Empirically, the study is groundbreaking in that if alternative tourism is found to change social movement participation and support for activism, the results of the analysis could be used to promote alternative tourism as a means of encouraging organized social action. Additionally, social movement organizations may recognize the potential power and influence of alternative tourism and other leisure pursuits on participants.

Over 1,000 organizations participate, promote, and/or develop some form of alternative tourism (McMillon 1993). I identified one organization to obtain respondents for this study: Earthwatch Institute. I chose Earthwatch Institute because of its size (seven offices worldwide), its membership (over 50,000 participants since its inception in 1972), the variety and number of sociologically-relevant expeditions available through Earthwatch, its longevity, its accessibility, and its representatives' willingness to cooperate. While no known research has been conducted on the Earthwatch expedition experience and its effects on participation in social movements in the United States, Weiler and Richins (1995:33) found that among Australians participating in Earthwatch, 52% of Earthwatch team members are "very active in environmental and special interest organisations". Sampling Earthwatch volunteers was practical and logical -- they are the most appropriate group given the research question.

1.2 Research Question/Problem
The elements of social movement participation are diverse, dynamic, and complex. This research seeks to add to our knowledge of what affects peoples' support for activism and participation in social movements by examining the effects of one area of everyday life: leisure, specifically tourism. The question this research seeks to answer is: how and in what ways does participation in alternative tourism change social movement participation and support for activism? Specifically, does participation in an Earthwatch expedition
  1) affect participation in social movements?
  2) facilitate, support, or strengthen support for activism?
  3) facilitate, support or strengthen network ties among individuals
       involved in social movements?
  4) increase perceived self-efficacy?
  5) provide a consciousness-raising experience?

This study consisted of several steps. I first analyzed social movement support and support for activism among individuals before they participated in an Earthwatch expedition, then analyzed social movement support and support for activism among individuals after they participated in an Earthwatch expedition, and finally analyzed and explained the changes between the pre- and post-

expedition surveys in social movement participation and support for activism in terms of the Earthwatch expedition.

I measured social movement participation and support for activism to address the limitations of both resource mobilization and social psychological explanations of social movement participation and support for activism. I utilized resource mobilization theory as a foundation for sub-questions regarding network ties. I drew from the social psychological theory to explain changes in consciousness-raising, self-efficacy, and support for activism.

1.3 Limitations and Delimitations

Every study has limitations. This study will not examine why individuals participate in Earthwatch expeditions (motivations), the Earthwatch organization as a social movement, the effects of social movements on Earthwatch, the effects of Earthwatch expeditions on social movements in host communities, or how Earthwatch expeditions differ from mass trips in affecting social movement participation and activism identity. Each of these possible topics possesses its own merit, and I hope to examine them later.