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**Moral Frameworks and Policy-Making:
Enacting Appropriate Decision-Making
in the
Green Party of Aotearoa New Zealand**

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ABSTRACT

Policy-making has become a central practice of Western society as policies themselves become a fundamental part of neoliberal governance. This thesis argues that paying attention to the moralities which generate policy-making practices is an important focus for the anthropology of policy. Using Bourdieu's (1980:12) Practice Theory, which argues that "the social world is made and remade through the actions of people," I explore the ways in which the Green Party of Aotearoa New Zealand's policy-making practices reproduce their Charter Principle of Appropriate Decision-Making. By examining the work of the Policy Committee, the Party membership, and Caucus in the policy-making process, I argue that balancing the four principles of what I have called Green decision-making – consensus, democracy, congruence, and electoral safety – are part of the moral project of enacting the Charter Principle of Appropriate Decision-Making. Making sense of the Greens' policy-making shows that their practices generate and are generated by the doxa of the moral Principle of Appropriate Decision-Making. Working from the level of practice and foregrounding moralities is important for the anthropology of policy because they offer additional entry points for understanding the work of policy-makers, the meanings which constitute their social worlds, and their policies.

Key words: Anthropology of policy, Practice Theory, moralities, policy-making, Green Party of Aotearoa New Zealand.

DISCLAIMER

Policies, documents, and their content referred to in this thesis do not necessarily reflect the view of the Green Party of Aotearoa New Zealand, unless specifically referred to as 'ratified policy'.

They are confidential to the Green Party and not for dissemination or publication, except by myself, who has been given permission to do so for the purposes of this research.

All names of participants that appear in this thesis have been changed.

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CHAPTER ONE: INTRODUCTION

We as a Party, not just the Policy Committee, are willing to work really hard to find consensus so that we take everybody along. It's not just one of the principles we parrot, 'cause practically, this policy-making process is a pain in the ass, you know? We do it for love, we don't do it for fun! [Laughs]... But democracy is a pain in the ass; it really is a civic-minded impulse. And in the same way we'll scratch and claw to get our consensus, we'll do the same thing in Parliament. Just try and make it a better place (John).

We are discussing no small matter, but how we ought to live (Socrates, in Plato's *Republic*, c.390 B.C.).

Policy has become a central organizing feature of Western Society, providing an important means through which societies and subjects are made. *Making* policy, then, is a central practice which creates social worlds. There are many different ways to make policy, and this thesis explores the way in which the Green Party of Aotearoa New Zealand makes its policy. As John highlights above, the Greens' policy-making process can be a 'pain in the ass' – it takes a lot of time, energy, and work to do. Yet, Greens are immensely proud of their processes; they see the time, energy, and work they put into making policy as a *good* thing to do and the *right way to do it*. As well as detailing *how* the Greens make policy, then, this thesis also explores *why* they do it in the way that they do.

This research focus arose because I wanted to explore a central feature of the way the Greens view their policy-making process, which John conceptualized when he exclaimed: "We do it for love, we don't do it for fun!" Throughout my participant-observation with the Policy Committee, the body responsible for policy-making, and during interviews with its members, the idea that the Greens find their policy-making processes frustrating but that they are also totally committed to the principles which drive it was repeated often. Henry, for example, told me: "The tedious, going through everything, and consulting everybody about it, although it's a tedious business, I think it's actually the *right way* to do it, and we've just got to live with the tediousness of it." Lana stated: "It has its frustrations with being very proper and process-oriented, almost pedantic at times... but it's good; I'm glad I'm involved in it." The

relationship Greens have with their policy-making is centered on it being a practical realization of their Charter Principle of Appropriate Decision-Making and, as such, is part of the moral project of enacting the Charter. The Charter is the generating principle of the Greens' social world and, as a moral framework, shapes the structures, practices, and agents of the Party in a direct and explicit manner.

Exploring moral projects and moralities as objects of research has recently received attention in social anthropology, yet the discipline does not yet have an agreed-upon theorized conception of morality except in the most general terms. In the philosophical field, morals are "first order beliefs and practices about good and [bad] by means of which we guide our behavior" (Hinman 2008:365). Moral principles, therefore, are the set of standards by which we *should* act (Pojman and Fieser 2012:3). Thus, "[m]orality has a distinct action-guiding, or *normative*, aspect" (Pojman and Fieser 2012:4, emphasis original). Anthropological literature defines moralities in a basic manner as: "a set of principles and judgments based on cultural concepts and beliefs by which humans determine whether given actions are right or wrong" (Heintz 2009a:3). Because of the inherently social nature of normative rules about right and wrong action, "moral rules are felt to be obligatory... following them seems an attractive thing" (Laidlaw 2002:314). Thus, moralities are socially contextual sets of rules, judgments, and values which guide persons as to the 'good' way to act or be.

Moralities are distinguished from ethics in that, unlike ethics, they do not require reflection or reflexivity on the part of the agent in order to determine what is the correct thing to do or way to be. Drawing on the work of Foucault, the anthropology of morality¹ generally holds the position that an ethical moment requires the agent to objectify their situation (to leave the state of embodied dispositions) and to then choose the right or wrong solution. Thus, as Foucault states:

¹ The anthropologies of moralities and ethics began with Edel and Edel's (1968) *Anthropology and Ethics: The Quest for Moral Understanding*, although earlier anthropologists had also addressed the issue more briefly (for example, Firth 1953). Volumes such as Edel and Edel's (1968), as well the two edited collections of ethnographies (Heintz 2009b; Howell 1997) address moral issues or frameworks in particular social contexts or cross-culturally with a view to understanding the "transmission of moralities, moral obligation and moral responsibility, and the relation between morality and normatively more generally" (Heintz 2009a:14). A secondary stream of the anthropology of moralities is concerned with exploring what morals and ethics mean for agents' experientially and how they can be conceptualized within the anthropological discipline (Faubion 2001; Laidlaw 2002; Robbins 2007; Zigon 2007, 2008, 2009).

Thought is not what inhabits a certain conduct and gives it meaning; rather, it is what allows one to step back from this way of acting or reacting, to present it to oneself as an object of thought and to question it as to its meaning, its conditions, and its goals. Thought is freedom in relation to what one does, the motion by which one detaches oneself from it, establishes it as an object, and reflects on it as a problem (Foucault 2003:23).

Thus, in this thesis, moralities are culturally contextual non-reflective sets of rules, judgments, and values, while ethics is the objectified reflection on moralities by an agent.

The Green Party's moral framework is outlined in the Principles of the *Green Charter* (The Green Party of Aotearoa New Zealand² 2011d). The *Green Charter*, for the Greens, is 'how they ought to live'. Its Principles are the upmost delineation of what the Greens are about – it is the Party's founding document which outlines its view of how the world ought to be shaped and what their actions should be in it. There are four Charter Principles: Ecological Wisdom, Social Responsibility, Appropriate Decision-Making, and Non-Violence (Green Party 2011a:1):

Ecological Wisdom: The basis of ecological wisdom is that human beings are part of the natural world. This world is finite, therefore unlimited material growth is impossible. Ecological sustainability is paramount.

Social Responsibility: Unlimited material growth is impossible. Therefore the key to social responsibility is the just distribution of social and natural resources, both locally and globally.

Appropriate Decision-making: For the implementation of ecological wisdom and social responsibility, decisions will be made directly at the appropriate level by those affected.

Non-Violence: Non-violent conflict resolution is the process by which ecological wisdom, social responsibility and appropriate decision making will be implemented. This principle applies at all levels (Green Party 2011d:1, emphasis original).

The preamble to the Charter also outlines the fact that the Green Party recognizes Maori as Tangata Whenua of New Zealand and *Te Tiriti o Waitangi* as the country's founding document (Green Party 2011d:1). This, along with the four Charter Principles, is the moral framework of the Green Party which is imbued with a strong moral force: it shapes the Party's structures, practices, and agents in a direct manner.

² Referred to hereafter as 'Green Party'.

Despite the importance of the Charter to the Party, few members know the details of its origins. One of my key informants about Party history remarked, “I would be surprised if the leadership knew [where it came from]... There’s not that much questioning” (Val). Tony, another key informant, told me that after the first Green Party conference in 1989 at Kaiteretere, the Charter was simply “taken as read.” Val surmised that it was likely to have been compiled from principles of international Green parties and the New Zealand Values Party, a position supported by Dann (1999:24). Val suggested that at the Kaiteretere meeting, “They [members present] sat down and battered it out, and that was the consensus of the people there... they all agreed they could live with it, and I think it worked very well.” In spite of the Charter “almost getting to the realms of the mythical... ancient history,” the particulars of its development were not viewed as important because the Charter is the unquestionable center of the Party³: “You join the Greens, you sign up to the Charter” (Val).

This thesis explores the enactment of the unquestionable Principle of Appropriate Decision-Making in the Green Party’s policy-making. The Principle of Appropriate Decision-Making is a critical driver of the entire process of policy-making, including both the process itself and the practices it generates in the policy-makers. Because the Principle is contained in the Charter, enacting it is a moral project. Enacting it in turn reproduces the morality of the Charter. The practices generated as part of this moral project, though, are relationally complex and can be problematic at times, requiring agents to balance many factors in their decision-making. The result is an intricate process of policy-making that compels agents to constantly ethically reflect on their actions and processes to ensure they are ‘doing’ appropriate decision-making.

As Val suggested, the Greens’ Charter Principle of Appropriate Decision-Making reflects similar values to those espoused by both the German Green Party, *Die Grunen*, as well as the New Zealand Values Party. *Die Grunen’s* “Four Pillars” of Ecology, Social Responsibility, Grassroots Democracy (*Basisdemokratie*), and Non-Violence are “entrenched as the original and defining Green Party principles”

³ After reading my draft, Louis wrote in support of this conclusion: “The Charter was reviewed as part of the Strategic Planning process in 2002-2004 and there was widespread agreement no changes were needed after the preamble relating to *Te Tiriti* was added.”

worldwide (Dann 1999:24; see Parkin 1989). Appropriate Decision-Making is similar to *Die Grunen's basisdemokratie*. Poguntke (1994:4-5) explains *Basisdemokratie*:

As a normative goal, grass-roots democracy means, for the Greens, that lower organizational levels should have as much autonomy as possible and that individual party members (or supporters) should have a maximum of participatory opportunities at all organizational levels and in the parliamentary activities of the party... It means that all higher ranks should be in permanent communication with the rank and file. Ideally, all political initiative should come from below.

Complementary to the influence of *Die Grunen* was the democratic decision-making practiced by the New Zealand Values Party which preceded the Greens from 1972-1989. Values is generally seen to be either the loose forerunner or the "direct" predecessor to the Green Party (Wilson 2010:498; Dann 2003:374). This can be seen in the similarity between the Green's Appropriate Decision-Making and Values' 'Subsidiary Principle', which states: "No decisions should be assigned to higher levels of the organizational structure if they can be made just as efficiently at the lower level" (Values 1974, cited in Dann 1999:207). Additionally, members of Values sought to undertake consensus decision-making with the aim of 'maximizing participation' by members in decision-making processes and structures (Dann 2008:182). To develop their Principle of Appropriate Decision-Making, the Greens drew upon *Die Grunen's* idea that participatory democracy should be squarely at the center of Green political parties, as well as their local and historical links with Values and its Subsidiary Principle.

1.1 Appropriate Decision-Making and Green Decision-Making

Our Principle of Appropriate Decision-Making says that most decisions should be devolved down to the lowest level practical. Doesn't mean everything needs to be made at the lower level, that's just wrong. It's not a mandate, it's an urge, and that's how you keep your politicians honest... It's our means of disciplining [MPs] to keep true to the Principles and that makes it easier for people to say, 'You deal with it, and I'll just get on with my life' (John).

The overall idea of having consensus in the Party is something that we should do even if people aren't engaging with it. I think that keeping some of those processes is important to the fact that we're a democratic Party. And sometimes democracy is more of a process; even if democracy isn't getting engagement, it's still important to keep the process (Antony).

Appropriate Decision-Making is at the center of the Green Party's policy-making, providing both the generating moral principle and structure of the process. As one of the four Charter Principles, Appropriate Decision-Making states that "for the implementation of ecological wisdom and social responsibility, decisions will be made directly at the appropriate level" (Green Party 2011d:1). As a reflection of John's statement at the beginning of this section, Appropriate Decision-Making compels but does not bind Green Party members to ensure that decisions are made by the appropriate people at the lowest level possible. Appropriate decision-makers are context-dependent, meaning that they vary depending on several factors such as the decision being made and how substantive the decision is. The result is that determining who the decision-maker ought to be under the Charter Principle requires constant negotiation and the outcome ranges from a single member, a delegated body, or all Party members who wish to participate. Thus, Appropriate Decision-Making compels Greens to ensure decision-making power is exercised by the right people. Beyond this, however, 'Appropriate Decision-Making' is empty of directives.

Despite the lack of directives it contains, Appropriate Decision-Making as a *moral principle* is doxic (unquestionable) in the Green Party: Party members are so invested in the Principle that to be disinvested becomes unimaginable. The fact that decision-making should be done 'appropriately' is taken for granted by Greens who view it as the singular way to reach agreements; for who in the Party could conceive that decisions should be made *inappropriately*? However, because Appropriate Decision-Making is largely empty of directives, it is important to make a distinction between the moral principle and the practices and structures it generates. This is because, sitting alongside the complete acceptance of the Principle, there is constant discussion about the Principle by members when negotiating how to apply it in practice. Thus, while the moral value of the Principle of Appropriate Decision-Making is doxic, the actual practices and processes of enacting it are not doxic and require constant work and ethical reflection among Party members to 'do' it.

In order to give some direction about how to enact Appropriate Decision-Making, the Greens work with a secondary set of principles, which I have called *Green decision-making*. They are: consensus, democracy, congruence, and electoral safety. These four principles are always at play in Green decision-making, but tend to become foregrounded and backgrounded in a triennial fashion based on the New Zealand

Election cycle. Practices and processes which constitute Green decision-making are orthodox as opposed to doxic: the Greens recognize that there are other ways to make decisions, but that 'Green decision-making' is the 'right' process they ought to invest in.

One of the four principles of Green decision-making is *consensus*. All decisions in the Green Party are made by the process of consensus. This term has a very specific meaning. Formally, consensus is reached when everyone in a group has one of the following four views: they

1. Agree with the proposal completely;
2. Agree with the proposal with reservations;
3. Neither agree nor disagree with the proposal; or
4. Disagree with the proposal but are prepared to allow it to go ahead.

Consensus is a state of *shared acceptance* rather than unanimous wholehearted support. People may, for example, seek to have their disagreement noted [in the minutes] but allow a proposal to proceed... A consensus does *not* exist where one or more members in a group disagree with the proposal and believe it ought not to proceed (Green Party Annual General Meeting 2011, June 04).

Consensus is a process which produces the collectivity of Green Party. The Greens are predisposed to act as a collective driven by their primary moral values and consensus helps achieve this collective community by ensuring that decisions are made with the consent of all members who are taking part in making it, thus enlisting them in the moral project of appropriate decision-making. By both working from and reinforcing their shared moral values every time a decision is made, the Greens reproduce their collectivity and the values which define it.

For this reason, even though there are processes by which members can stop proposals proceeding, they are rarely used. When a person or group wishes to stop a proposal proceeding, they are said to 'block consensus'. When this happens, discussion continues as the members work to reach a consensus agreement. However, if "a consensus process on a motion is not achieved after reasonable attempts," a vote can be passed with a seventy-five percent majority (Green Party 2011a:14.1,14.2). Any person who disagrees with the vote or the consensus decision can have "their objection included in any minutes recorded" (Green Party 2011a:14.2). Vote-taking is extremely rare in the Party. Some participants proudly told me that the only time a vote had been taken was when the members were

deciding whether to enter into the Alliance coalition of 1991; however, other members debated this and told me there had been other votes at Annual General Meetings, but rarely on Executive and Policy Committee. Nonetheless, voting was rare enough that most members did not even consider it an option. In my fieldwork period, there was never a case of a vote being taken. Sometimes people suggested that they would think about blocking consensus if the proposal stayed as it was, but further discussion always resulted in a consensus agreement. This meant that there was never a case of someone actually blocking consensus.

The lack of blocking consensus was discussed by James, who told me that the option to block was really a “safeguard, because anyone who disagrees is never really probably going to block consensus.” Blocking consensus does not happen because to do so would mean the person blocking the proposal is removing themselves from the moral project of appropriate decision-making; in effect, this removes them from the Green collective community (see Bale 2003:287). While people sometimes say that they are thinking about blocking consensus, they rarely actually do because this suggestion provides a sufficient signal to members that there is disagreement among the group and there needs to be further discussion about the proposal. During my fieldwork, further discussion always resulted in consensus. This is why James referred to blocking consensus as a ‘safeguard’: it indicates to members that there is some disagreement that needs to be worked through in order to reach a decision and, in doing so, prevent the possibility that a member removes themselves from the Green community.

A second principle of Green decision-making is *democratic decision-making*. The process of democracy in the Green Party is not clearly articulated in the same way as consensus. Democracy in the Party is used to identify who should be able to exercise decision-making power. Generally, for Greens, power should be dispersed among the greatest number of people possible, at the de facto appropriate ‘level’. However, members also recognized that such a wide dispersal of power was not always appropriate because, for example, it was not practically feasible or too time-consuming. This meant that members agreed by consensus to invest limited power in bodies to undertake decision-making on their behalf. For example, the Policy Committee was given “[responsibility] for the development and ratification of Party policy and processes,” by Party members (Green Party 2011a:11.1). This was an appropriate site for the exercise of decision-making power as it had been agreed to by members and was, therefore, able to be classed as democratic decision-making.

Democratic decision-making was also defined by its opposite, an *inappropriate* exercise of decision-making power. An inappropriate exercise of decision-making power occurs when either too much power was invested in a body or because power is invested in the wrong body. This was defined by members mainly by comparing the Green Party's processes to other parties' processes. Lana remarked proudly: "it's so democratic, which is what I love about [policy-making] in the Greens. In other parties, you might get a small group who dictate policy but, in ours, if you want to, you can have your say." Antony, building on his statement at the beginning of this section, continued on:

If you look at it in contrast with other political parties... even though they may be, in some sense, democratic in that they have some processes for electing people higher up, in terms of the practical outcomes... the average member of those parties would have no say in what happens. So what you have is a few people making decisions, and I think making very bad decisions, and I think that the more people you involve in the decision-making process, the better decisions you'll make and the better the outcome will be, ultimately, for the public.

Therefore, the Green Party's principle of democratic decision-making urges them to create processes which allow members to be involved in all decisions, rather than members simply electing people who go on to make all decisions on their behalf. Exceptions to this are seen where the membership has agreed to delegate some powers to elected representatives. Yet, when this happens, members give representatives more limited decision-making power than other political parties do (see Debnam 1994), ensuring that general Party members are still able to influence the outcomes of policy decisions. As John identified in the opening quote of this section, democratic decision-making is directly linked to the Principle of Appropriate Decision-Making because both compel the Party to engage in 'devolving' decisions down to the lowest level practical. Because of this close link, democratic decision-making is also a moral value, meaning that democratically-made decisions are good, while decisions which are not made by a responsible delegated body or are made with inappropriately exercised power are bad.

The third part of Green decision-making, *congruence*, is concerned with the *type of decisions that can be made*. Congruence refers to the fact that decisions in the Green Party must reflect several factors to ensure they are coherent, practical, and take previous agreements into account. Primary to congruence is that decisions

must reflect the Charter Principles of Ecological Wisdom, Social Responsibility, Appropriate Decision-Making, and Non-Violence, in addition to recognizing *Te Tiriti o Waitangi* as New Zealand's founding document and Maori as Tangata Whenua (Green Party 2011d:1). Decisions must also reflect the wishes and direction of a majority of the general membership to ensure there is no significant break between the membership and delegated bodies, also meaning that the collectivity of the Party is preserved. Under congruence, agreements must also reflect up-to-date research (for example, Law Commission Reports) so that decisions "make sense" based on current knowledge (Marlene). Finally, decisions must also make practical sense, meaning that they must be feasible to implement. It is the responsibility of the delegated bodies to ensure decisions can be actualized.

The final component of green decision-making is *electoral safety*. This refers to the fact that decisions must not be 'politically risky' or jeopardize the electoral success of the Party. This component is always an important factor in decision-making, but becomes foregrounded in Election year. In the year of the General Election, all political parties become focused on campaigning in order to achieve the greatest electoral success and political power possible. In the two intervening years, this intense focus is relaxed and, in the Green Party energy turns in the first year to which issues to address, and to resolving those issues in the second. While electoral safety waxes and wanes in importance, in an Election year this component also entails ensuring decisions which *gain* the Party electoral success are made. Thus, during my fieldwork which was undertaken in the period leading to New Zealand's November 26, 2011 General Election, making decisions that were, firstly, not risky and, secondly, would gain electoral political capital, was of primary importance.

As I will show throughout this thesis, Green decision-making takes a lot of work to do and this is because tensions arise over which principles to prioritize. Consensus is not a part of the contest because it is a 'legislated' process enshrined in the Party's Constitution and cannot, therefore, be challenged as an inappropriate practice – it is simply a part of how decision-making is done. Whether to prioritize democracy, congruence, or electoral safety, on the other hand, must be negotiated when a proposal does not meet the requirements of all of these principles. For example, if the membership decides they would like something which could be politically risky, delegated bodies must decide whether to prioritize democratic decision-making or electoral safety. As will be discussed, negotiating between the

features of Green decision-making creates a lot of the work of Green Party policy-making.

1.2 Understanding the Moralities of Policy-Making

Policy and morality are intrinsically linked because “policies encapsulate the entire history and culture of the society that generated them,” meaning that “policies codify social norms and values” (Shore and Wright 1997:7). In this thesis, I will show that not only do policies themselves codify moral frameworks, but the *processes* by which policies are developed also codify and reproduce such frameworks. By doing this, I will highlight the importance and centrality of moralities for understanding policy-making, an idea already suggested by Vike (1997) and Zinn (2011). In order to show how processes codify and reproduce moral frameworks, I have worked from the level of *practice* – the everyday activity of agents. Doing so has allowed me, firstly, to work from the assumption that policy-making is primarily an *activity*, requiring agents to *do* things to create policy; and, secondly, to understand my participants’ shared understandings about what they do. As a result, detailing my participants’ practices has built the groundwork for grasping the ways in which their cultural valuing of the Charter generates their policy-making, thus foregrounding the intrinsic link between policy activities and moralities.

To make sense of this, I have used Bourdieu’s Practice Theory because it offers a conceptual toolkit for understanding the Green Party’s policy-making processes. Bourdieu (1980:12) argues that “the social world is made and remade through the actions of people.” By working from the level of action, researchers discern the logic of the social world practice produces by examining *how* things are done in order to learn *why* they are done. This thesis draws primarily on Bourdieu’s concept of *doxa* to explain the unquestioned nature of the generating moral force of the Principle of Appropriate Decision-Making. When the social structures of an agent’s world and the agent’s embodiment of those social structures immediately match, there is *doxical* experience. The effect is that “everything seems obvious and goes without saying [and the agent] attributes to the world a deeper belief than all beliefs (in the ordinary sense), since it does not think of itself as a belief” (Bourdieu 1998:81). I also make use of Bourdieu’s concept of *orthodoxy* – “a bogus restoration of *doxa*” which tends “to impose acceptance of the established order as natural” (Bourdieu 1977b:116-177). Because *orthodoxy* exists in relation to *heterodoxy* (the critique of

the orthodox), a field of opinion is opened and discursive exchanges occur between agents as the right course of action is determined (Deer 2008:123). It is in this space, I argue, that the ethical reflection required to balance the priorities of Green decision-making occurs. For my analysis, I have framed practice, doxa and orthodoxy with Bourdieu's analogy of 'the game' which offers a way of thinking about the social world with a sports game metaphor because of the likeness between the two.

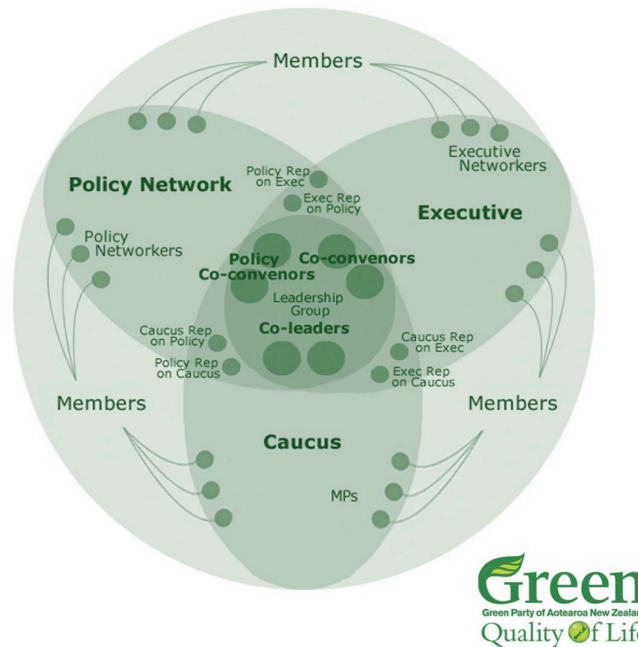
1.3 The Organization of the Green Party of Aotearoa New Zealand

Like policies, political parties are central in the organization of the Western world. Because of this, as well as the fact that they can be thought of as having their own cultures built upon their central principles and practices, "the case for investigating them anthropologically is indisputable" (Shore 1985:284,285). However, examinations of internal party processes are rare, even in the political sciences (Scarrow, Webb, and Farrell 2000:144; Lawson 1994:x; Katz and Mair 1992:2). Of the few studies which do examine the internal lives of parties, even fewer address democratic processes within parties, and "policy-making tends to have been overlooked" (Scarrow, Webb, and Farrell 2000:114). Consequently, most writing about Parties tends to be from an etic perspective and mainly addresses their electoral and political situations. This is the case with writing about the New Zealand Green Party too. Most research about the Greens takes a comparative approach, either comparing the Greens with other political parties in New Zealand (Mulgan 2004; Rainbow and Sheppard, 1997), or with international Green Parties (Dann 2008; Bale and Bergman 2006a, 2006b; Bale and Dann 2002;). Analysis of the Greens and their Alliance years is also found in Miller's (2001, 2003, 2006, 2010) collections on politics and government in New Zealand, but these chapters are also etically-focused and more concerned with understanding the Greens as part of a broader political system (Wilson 2010; Bale 2003; Trotter 2001a). Less attention, then, has been paid to the "inward-looking face" (Charlot 1989:361) of the New Zealand Greens; this thesis aims to begin filling this gap.

The Green Party's organizational structure (see Figure 1) reflects its Principle of Appropriate Decision-Making. The Party is divided into three wings, or "petals" as the Greens refer to them, each of which has different responsibilities. This division of responsibility ensures that decision-making power is exercised by several bodies,

with each wing acting to check and balance the others. It also ensures that decision-making power on the Executive and Policy Committee is exercised by the membership, who are represented by the Networkers they elect onto each wing.

Figure 1: The Green Party of Aotearoa New Zealand’s Organizational Chart



Source: (Green Party 2012c:1).

The Executive is the “Party’s administrative body, responsible for the day to day overall administration of the Party. [It is] instructed by and answerable to the membership, Province, and Conference” (Green Party 2011a:9.1). Its tasks include, for example, setting the Party’s budget, signing-off spokespeople, and making submissions on behalf of the Party. It is explicitly excluded in the Green Party’s Constitution from “exercising it’s governance powers in relation to policy... [although the Executive] can comment, engage, et cetera, on policy” (Louis). While there are representatives who liaise between the Policy Committee and Executive to keep each other updated about important matters, during my fieldwork there was very little contact with Executive. This is why the relationship between Policy Committee and the Executive is not examined in this thesis.

Caucus is the Party’s Parliamentary wing and its role is “to organize and co-ordinate the Green Party’s parliamentary activities” (Green Party 2011a:12.1). It only exists

when the Party has Members of Parliament (MPs), who are bound by the *Party-Caucus Agreement* (Green Party 2009b⁴). The relationship between the Policy Committee, and Caucus is a central nexus in the Party's policy-making because, while the Committee oversees the creation of Party policy, it is Caucus who are tasked with being the public face of that policy.

The Policy Committee, which is the policy-making body of the Green Party, was the wing where I was situated during my fieldwork. In the Constitution, its stated task is to "be the Party's policy making body, responsible for the development and ratification of the Party policy and policy processes" (Green Party 2011a:11.1). To do this, the Committee has monthly conference calls by phone, face-to-face meetings four times per year, and the Policy Network Email List. Its policy-making processes are set out in a 2007 document titled *Policy Guidelines* (Green Party 2007; see Appendix A). The *Policy Guidelines* also set out the purpose of the policy process as such:

The purpose of the Policy Process is to produce high quality policy that will effectively communicate the vision and policies of the Green Party to the people of Aotearoa/New Zealand and interested people from overseas. The process needs to be clearly understood and trusted by the membership of the Green Party and balance the following objectives:

- Participatory and democratic;
- Efficient; and
- Effective (Green Party 2007:3).

Working toward this purpose are the Policy Committee's thirty members. It is led by two Policy Co-Convenors who are elected by the Party membership at the Annual General Meeting each year. Like all roles in the Party, the Co-Convenor position is 'gender balanced', meaning that there is one female and one male at all times. The Policy Co-Convenors are responsible for managing the Party's policy development, running the Policy Committee, and organizing the Policy Conferences⁵ (Green Party 2007:2). The responsibilities of Policy Co-Convenors are divided between the two positions, although in practice this division is not strictly maintained. The Policy Programme Coordinator is charged with coordinating "the Policy Programme and

⁴ I have not provided the full URL for pages in the non-public Green Party MyGreens section of its website.

⁵ Policy Conferences are three-day events when Green members gather to develop Party policy. Following an Election year, a National Summer Policy Conference is held. The year after that, two separate conferences are held simultaneously, one in the North and one in the South Island.

the policy process,” while the Policy Committee Coordinator oversees “the organization and management” of the Committee (Green Party 2007:2).

There are twenty-two Policy Networkers on the Committee. Policy Networkers are elected by their Province into the role and are, again, gender balanced. Each Province is allowed two Networkers, except for Auckland Province which is allocated four because it has a higher number of electorates (Green Party 2007, June 04:11.2.3). When decisions cannot be reached by consensus, Networkers are the voting members of the Committee because they are representatives of the membership. As well as ratifying policy, Policy Networkers are “responsible for encouraging participation of the provincial membership in the policy process and representing the views of these members on the [Policy Committee]” (Green Party 2007:2). This means that while Networkers are able to exercise decision-making power on the Committee, they do so on behalf of their Provincial membership and with its wishes in mind.

Besides the Policy Co-Convenors and Policy Networkers, there are a number of additional administrative and representative roles on the Committee. One key role is the Strategic Policy Advisor. The Strategic Policy Advisor “is responsible for providing support to the Policy Co-Convenors in the areas of policy development and coordination of the policy process” (Green Party 2007:2) Part of the work of the Strategic Policy Advisor includes drawing up the policy documents and incorporating feedback into them. Caucus is allocated a representative on the Committee, and the two Co-Leaders of the Party also sit on it (Green Party 2007:1). Likewise, Executive has a representative and their Co-Convenors on the Committee. Te Roopu Ponamu, the Maori Network of the Green Party, has a representative on the Policy Committee as part of the Committee’s responsibility to Te Roopu Ponamu’s aim to “actively support and advocate for the inclusion of a Maori dimension in all Green Party processes, policies and practices, in the context of a reciprocal relationship of aroha” (Te Roopu Ponamu and Green Party 2011:1, emphasis mine). The National Administrator is also on the Committee to provide support with clerical tasks (Green Party 2007:2). Finally, the Constitution also permits the Policy Committee to appoint additional members or create working groups to which “it may delegate any of its powers and duties... as it considers necessary for the administration of the Party’s affairs” (Green Party 2007a:11.4-11.4.1). These are the people I worked with during my fieldwork.

1.4 Thesis Chapter Outline

This thesis consists of eight chapters. Following this introductory Chapter, Chapter Two explores the theoretical framework I have used to understand policy-making in the Green Party, focusing on the anthropology of policy and Bourdieu's Practice Theory. Chapter Three discusses how this research was undertaken by exploring how the Party and I reached an appropriate decision about whether and how it could be done. The history and processes of the Party's policy-making are discussed in Chapter Four. The following three chapters – chapters Five, Six, and Seven – outline my research findings. In Chapter Five, I discuss what the Policy Committee does and, through the case study of the Population Policy Amendment, detail the work they undertook to balance democratic decision-making, congruence, and electoral safety. Chapter Six explores one of the key relationships the Policy Committee has – with the general Party membership. Via the case study of the developing Men's Policy, I explore the tension between democratic decision-making and congruence. Then, continuing with the development of the Men's Policy in Chapter Seven, I return to discussing the tension between democracy and electoral safety to explore the relationship between the Policy Committee and Caucus. Finally, in Chapter Eight, I will discuss the overall moral project of appropriate decision-making in the Green Party's policy-making and show how Practice Theory opens up a useful framework with which to explore policy processes for the anthropology of policy.

CHAPTER TWO FOREGROUNDINGS AND BACKGROUNDINGS: THE ANTHROPOLOGY OF POLICY AND THE THEORY OF PRACTICE

Theory offers a framework for making sense of the social world. As Bourdieu emphatically argued, theoretical concepts should be put in motion and made to work (Bourdieu and Wacquant 1992:228). In this Chapter, I outline the concepts and ideas that I will draw upon to analyze the Green Party's policy-making. I begin by outlining the academic field I have situated this research in – the anthropology of policy – and discuss the relationship between policy and moralities as well as the importance of practice for understanding policy work. In the second section, I detail Bourdieu's Theory of Practice, which is the theoretical lens I will apply to the role of moralities in policy-making. Drawing on these two intellectual fields has enabled me to develop a framework to make sense of what the Green Party's policy-makers do and how their actions make and remake their social world.

2.1 The Anthropology of Policy, Moralities, and Practice

The anthropology of policy is a field which focuses on critical research about policy, policy processes, and the wider social stories they tell. The field arose from calls during the early to mid-1980s for more direct research about policy and processes, and to make anthropology more relevant to decision-makers and policy studies (see Chambers, 1977, 1985; Cochrane et al. 1980; Hinshaw 1980; Weaver 1985a, 1985b). Recognizing the need to study policy, the anthropology of policy developed into a dedicated field as the importance of policy in changing political systems became more central under increasingly neoliberal and bureaucratic systems of governance (Shore and Wright 1997:4). The field's aim was twofold: firstly, it was "devoted to research into policy issues and processes and the critical analysis of those processes" (Wedel et al. 2005:31); and, secondly, to approaching "policy as a lens through which to study processes of political transformation, [making] the field of research... a 'social and political space articulated through relationships of power and systems of governance'" (Shore and Wright 1997, cited in Shore and Wright 2011:11). Policy was to be the research object through which anthropologists could study wider questions about power and governance in the changing sociopolitical

world, as well as the ways in which policy was used as a technology to interpellate subjects and create legitimate understandings of the world via discourse (Shore and Wright 2011:15-17).

For the anthropology of policy, the research object – in a very wide sense – is *policy*. Within the field, the definition of policy continues to be debated, partially because its meaning is context-dependent (Colebatch, Hoppe, and Noordegraaf 2010b:13). In an interview with Duraó (2010:604), Shore states that “policy includes all those ideas and codified formulas that governments use to bring about their particular political visions.” Wedel et al. (2005:35) suggest a wider conception by focusing on the term’s usage:

The term [‘policy’] is commonly used as a shorthand for a field of activity... for a specific proposal... or a piece of government legislation. Elsewhere, it is used to describe a general programme or desired state of affairs or, alternately, as a label to describe outcomes or what governments actually achieve. These uses are consistent with what has become the standard modern sense of the term as understood as a ‘course of action adopted and pursued by a government, party, ruler statesman etc, or any course of action adopted as expedient’.

This series of usages is reiterated in Colebatch et al. (2010b:12), but they go on to explain that

In some of these uses, policy refers to something specific and tangible that is expressed in a document, but used in other ways, it is more diffuse and has to be inferred from practice, so we find people distinguishing between ‘formal’, written policy, and tacitly-understood unwritten policy. Or they may play one usage against the other...

Common to all of these definitions is the idea that policy is a noun, a thing that can be *adopted* and *enacted* – this is partly what allows them to exercise power as technologies of governance. As technologies of governance, policies construct and reflect social worlds by structuring relations between actors and groups, defining normal and abnormal, and creating “new webs of meaning” (Shore and Wright 2011:1,3).

Focusing on policy is important because it is increasingly central to governing worldwide and because of the role the narrative of policy plays in organizing the social world (Okongwu and Mencher 2000). This narrative is one of ‘authoritative instrumentalism’ which suggests that the process of government and governing

bodies is “a pattern of systematic action oriented to particular collective concerns... Governments recognize problems and make decisions to bring public authority and resources to bear upon these problems, with ‘policy’ as the expression of these decisions” (Colebatch, Hoppe, and Noordegraaf 2010b:11)⁶. However, the “fundamentally political” nature of policy is hidden by the narrative of authoritative instrumentalism because the normative judgments involved in determining policy are masked by a discourse of linear rationality (Shore 2010:217-118; Wedel et al. 2005:34). A key task of the anthropology of policy, then, is to unmask the normative assumptions contained in policy, and to challenge the narrative of authoritative instrumentalism. Examining the moralities that shape policy creation is a key part of ‘unmasking’ the normative assumptions involved in policy-making.

Policies and moralities are inherently linked. Shore and Wright (1997:7) state that: “In many respects, policies encapsulate the entire history and culture of the society that generated them,” meaning that “policies codify social norms and values.” As technologies of governance,

[b]oth policy and morality attempt to objectify and universalize ideas. Both are guided by broader sets of cultural ideals (or rather, by an underlying philosophy and rationality). Both are also located in the realm of ideas, outside the individual yet manifest in individual thoughts and actions. However, whereas morality is explicitly concerned with ethics, policy purports to be more pragmatic, functional, and geared to efficiency (Shore and Wright 1997:10).

Because policy is objectified and universalized under the narrative of authoritative instrumentalism, it is set outside the realm of morality. This denies “the roles of human agency and politics in policy processes” and legitimizes actions outlined in policies so as to have the effect of disabling resistance except by challenging “the principles upon which [the] policy decision was putatively founded” (Shore and Wright 1997:10-11). In this thesis, I will show that not only do policies themselves codify moral frameworks, but the *processes* by which policies are developed also codify and reproduce such frameworks. By doing this, I will highlight the importance and centrality of moralities for understanding policy-making.

In this regard, I will be drawing on ideas from Vike’s (1997) examination of the conflict surrounding a proposal to reorganize aged care in a Norwegian community.

⁶ For discussions about cyclical, rational models of policy-making, see Colebatch (2010), Jann and Wegrich (2007), Andrews (2007), and Griggs (2007).

Vike (1997:196) argues that the conflict surrounding a 1987 proposal to close down the community's aged care facility occurred because of contestations of knowledge as well as "contradictory perspectives of society." The proposal was made by the Municipal Authority who, drawing on ideas of formal rationalization in the Weberian sense, "sought to operationalize morality so as to make it subject to administrative control... in line with the categories of individuals and resources" (Vike 1997:196, 207-209). Those opposing the proposal, on the other hand, "foregrounded the significance of morality as a quality of the political community and as an aspect of social relations in a broad and concrete sense" (Vike 1997:196). The conflict, then, was generated by conflicting moralities of rationalization and non-rationalization.

Most relevant for this thesis is Vike's (1997) examination of the Labour Party's moral framework. As part of wider processes that affect many left-wing parties – including Green parties (see Frankland, Lucardie, and Rihoux 2008) – the local Ulefoss Labour Party was influenced by institutionalization such that "the relationship between formal, rational administration and the informal aspects of political participation seem[ed] to be one of multiple contradictions" with "fluid boundaries" (Vike 1997:204). As a result of the Municipal Authority's proposal, the moral community of the Labour Party, espousing the values of solidarity and equality, came under threat (Vike 1997:205). However, the Labour Party was able to reproduce its moral community in spite of the threat because of its multifaceted social networks whereby the leadership was involved with the membership multiple relationships (Vike 1997:205). Additionally, Vike (1997:199) states, that because members stressed the importance of their values, the key symbols of the Party's moral discourse, such as equality, "were generally seen by members as somehow beyond politics." Moreover, the Party's history was imbued with its own moral and agential force which was "drawn from the way members construct[ed] a link of identity between the heroes of the past and the here-and-now" (Vike 1997:205). Thus, Vike's examination of the internal morality of the Labour Party demonstrates that members were able to adhere to and maintain their moral system when it faced challenges.

As well as creating communities, moralities also generate practices. Vike (1997:196) argues that the Labour Party's moralities of 'common sense', 'individual experience' and 'coming together' drove the members to oppose the Municipal Authority's proposals in several different ways. Members used three main strategies to protest: firstly, "the rejection of key symbolic and procedural aspects of administrative

discourse;” secondly, changing meeting agendas “from a discussion of procedural details in the plan to a question of why old people were being ‘thrown into exile’;” and, finally, attacking “the underlying rationality of the plan itself” (Vike 1997:210-211). The practices generated by the Party’s moralities and strategies included leaving meetings and using ‘vulgar’ language, as well as crying in the meeting when the proposal was passed by the Municipal Authority (Vike 1997:210, 213). Vike’s Chapter shows that understanding the moralities which generate the practices of those involved in policy formation, including those who resist the formation of policy, provides anthropologists with a framework with which to gain a deep understanding of both ‘the native’s point of view’ and why things happen in the way that they do.

Drawing on a similar framework, Zinn (2011:228) recounts protests against the creation of a nuclear waste storage facility in Scanzano, Italy, arguing that they were successful because residents of Scanzano were able to alter the ‘moral economy’ by “reconfiguring the concept of a ‘common good’.” While resistance originally centered around the geographical location of the facility, it later developed into opposition to the policy-making process itself as residents began to protest against their lack of involvement in the decision (Zinn 2011:228). Because residents were excluded from decision-making processes, they were forced into “active participation” which allowed residents to reverse the moral economy from the rational, universal common good advocated by the government to the particular and plural common good advocated by themselves (Zinn 2011:241).

Protest against the nuclear waste storage facility and the decision-making process surrounding it was sparked by the 2001 ‘Objective Law’, which placed decision-making power at high levels of government, particularly with the Executive Branch, resulting in lower, regional levels of government only being ‘consulted’ (Zinn 2011:229). In 2003, Legislative Decree 314, which identified Scanzano as the location for the nuclear waste storage facility was passed during the night by “immaculate conception” without being noted on the Cabinet agenda (Zinn 2011:230). In doing this, the government assumed that the subjectivity of Scanzano residents was “rational and free,” meaning that they would accept the government’s argument that hosting the facility in their region was in Italy’s national interest and therefore the common good (Zinn 2011:232). In fact, the residents did not operate with this subjectivity. Instead, they “acted by reversing the moral frame” by “demonstrating that the government was by no means ‘universal’ and... bore its own particularism,” meaning that it was not the rational actor it claimed to be. Thus,

claimed the residents, Scanzano had been chosen as the facility's site because, for example, it was left-wing and not a region where Berlusconi holidayed (Zinn 2011:235, 236). In doing this, Scanzano residents drew on a collective subjectivity "as embedded in history and society, a subjectivity here denied by the government's policies" (Zinn 2011:234). As a result, they were able to reconstitute the common good to one which must take "into account their historical specificity, one which directly referred to the historical and social position of their collective subjectivity" (Zinn 2011:237).

Reframing the moral economy in this way generated, and was generated by, practices by residents which reinforced the particularism of Scanzano. Residents drew on two key local histories: the "figure of the brigand" to symbolize unity, and the 1940s peasant revolt against land reform to symbolize the Scanzano interpretation of 'development', a contrast to the North's industrial progress (Zinn 2011:236-237). These particular histories led to practices which celebrated the residents' localized subjectivity, such as using their own dialect and playing traditional music during protests (Zinn 2011:239). This meant that even though there were internal divisions, the Scanzano residents were able to present a united, and particularly Scanzano, subjectivity (Zinn 2011:239). Like Vike's (1997) study, the story of the Scanzano revolt highlights the importance of understanding the interaction of subjectivity, moralities, and policy-making for anthropology.

In my thesis, I will draw on the assertion from Vike (1997) and Zinn (2011) that understanding the moralities of those involved in making policy can give us insight into the 'native's point of view' as well as why events unfold in particular ways. However, Vike (1997) and Zinn (2011) both draw on 'moral economies' (Scott 1985) to discuss resistance to policies and the effect of opposition on policy outcomes. My project is different in that I have focused on processes which are, for the most part, not in dispute, and because there is a singular morality guiding policy-making for the Greens (the morality of the Charter). Therefore, my research also draws ideas presented by Scholes (2011) in her account of ethical considerations for agents working in the New Zealand public policy field.

Scholes' (2011) Chapter examines ethical issues that public policy agents ought to consider for their work, drawing mainly on utilitarian ethics, rights theory, and virtue ethics. As the primary concern, she notes that in a very general sense, "the purpose of public policy is as a means for the state to provide for the public and account for

the provisions made” (Scholes 2011:148). However, Scholes (2011:148-149; 156-159) asserts, this concern should be problematized by policy agents because the conception of who constitutes the public and what provisions should be made varies according to the ethical framework an agent is working with. Additionally, writes Scholes (2011:159-160, 161-164), public policy agents ought to consider both the effect that working as a politician or policy analyst will have on them as a person (for example, they may be required to act against their own personal morals), as well as the ethics of the policy process, such as the appropriate degree of transparency and the demand for political neutrality in the public sector.

Most relevant to this thesis is Scholes’ assertion that the practices of public policy agents are constrained by the structure of the system they operate within. She states: “the form and features of this policy making, by and large, are not up to the policy agents involved. Instead, there is a structured process to be followed... features of bureaucratic process can impact on the abilities of agents to appropriately develop policy” (Scholes 2011:152). Scholes (2011:152-154) identifies three main constraints public policy agents operate under: firstly, the pressure to develop and implement policies by the end of the three-year Election cycle; secondly, pressure from public and media to develop policies on issues of public concern, and the requirement to balance this pressure with more considered and in-depth consultation; and, finally, internal “implicit pressure to present policy options in a light that favors their minister’s preferences.” These constraints lead Scholes (2011:155) to conclude that “the bureaucratic process of public policy decision making constrains agents across several levels of authority. Parts of the decision-making process... present ethical difficulties for agents developing and implementing public policy.” In framing my research, I draw on Vike’s (1997) and Zinn’s (2011) assertions that moralities are an important center for the analysis of policy and policy-making processes and on Scholes’ (2011) claim that the constraints placed on policy-makers by the structures they work within are also important for understanding what policy agents do. Neither of these are new ideas, but, in contrast to much of the anthropology of policy’s use of governmentality as an analytical method, I will approach them through the lens of Bourdieu’s Practice Theory.

In order to explore and critique policy and its worlds, the anthropology of policy has largely adopted a Foucauldian governmentality approach (Walsh 2004:3; see Foucault 1976). As an analytical perspective, a governmentality approach “defines

the [the governing body's] role as one of coordination, one that gathers together disparate technologies of governing inhabiting many sites" (Bratich, Packer, and McCarthy 2003:5). In opposition to earlier Weberian approaches to power, governmentality utilizes Foucault's concepts of disciplinary power, technologies, and 'conduct of conduct' to understand how power works to shape populations (Dean 2010:28; Bratich, Parker, and McCarthy 2003:4). This leads to a conception of governance which suggests "that governing is the outcome of a complex interweaving of both official and non-official organizational forms, that often mobilizes different frameworks of meaning and rationales of action" (Colebatch 2010:31). Foregrounding the role of governance and governmentality, the anthropology of policy views policy itself as a key technology with which "the forces and capacities of living individuals as members of a population, as resources to be fostered, to be used and optimized" can be molded (Dean 2010:29; see Shore and Wright 1997:5-6). Thus, this anthropological focus looks to the effects of policy through a lens of governmentality (for examples of the Foucauldian approach, see Shore 2011; Muller 2011; and Mosse 2005).

As a result of this focus, practice is often backgrounded in analyses in favor of discourse, subjectification, and technologies. Hoppe and Jeliaskova's (2006) *How Policymakers Define Their Jobs: A Netherlands Case Study* offers one example where the authors say they will talk about practice, but marginalize actual practice in their content and analysis partly because their methods do not easily lend themselves to an analysis of what agents actually do in their work. Using Q Sorts and interviews to garner how policy makers understand their roles and the documents they produce in the Dutch Ministry of Education, Sciences, and Culture, Hoppe and Jeliaskova (2006:35) state that they "focus [on] practices of policy formulation." However, rather than providing a description and analysis of those practices, the authors develop typologies of the workers' self-images and the policy documents they formulate. Noting briefly that "[i]n their own practice, policy analysts are forced to make choices and set priorities," Hoppe and Jeliaskova (2006:43) conclude by drawing out the practical implications of their findings before discussing policy-making in a governance framework more generally. Despite an intent to focus on practice, practices themselves are backgrounded in Hoppe and Jeliaskova's analysis, partly because Q Sorts and interviews are not methods which allow the researcher to be "where the action is" (Bernard 2006:344).

Focusing on practice is essential for the anthropology of policy because policy-making is an *activity* – it requires agents to *do* things. As Noordegraaf (2010:45) states: “policy comes from real people and human action, so it makes no sense to separate policy dynamics from acts and experiences.” Furthermore, focusing on practice is an essential component of unmasking the normative assumptions involved in policy-making because “it is widely noted (particularly among policy practitioners) that the systematic accounts of the policy process found in textbooks and reflected in official representations often diverge from actual experiences involving the policy process” (Colebatch 2010:38; see Colebatch, et al. 2010a also). For these reasons, in my research I contest Feldman’s (2011:37) assertion that

[His participants’] work routines [were] not the stuff of exciting or exotic ethnography: revise this draft of a concluding statement; contact that official to clarify his comment on ‘x’; see what direction a more senior staff member wants to take on a particular item of discussion, etc.

In the Green Party, it is exactly these routine practices which make for a fascinating ethnography. Detailing the revision of drafts, the clarification of meanings, decisions about whether a comma change altered the meaning of a sentence, and whether a sentence should read ‘*a*’ birth rate or ‘*the*’ birth rate, all laid the groundwork for understanding why the Greens pay such close attention to these minute, routine, and seemingly mundane details. Indeed, with this thesis, I aim to show that a focus on the routine practices of policy-making *are* exciting (if not exotic) because they provide an entry into the wider cultural norms and values codified within them.

Research like this thesis, which foregrounds the work and worlds of policy-makers, is scarce and “there is currently no established body of knowledge” about their practices (Colebatch et al. 2010b:23). A focus on the activities of policy-making calls for an practice-based account which foregrounds the meanings policy-makers share (Colebatch et al. 2010b:18,21). As part of this, anthropologists, as always, must seek an understanding of their participants’ cultures and worldviews, including the sense of the world they make through their practices (Shore 2010:219; Wedel et al. 2005:34). This is what this thesis seeks to do: to build from an examination of the Green Party’s policy-making practices to an understanding their sense of their world, using Bourdieu’s Practice Theory as an theoretical framework with which to do so.

2.2 Bourdieu's Theory of Practice

Practice Theory is a relatively recent social theory which addresses “the production of social subjects through practice in the world, and of the production of the world itself through practice” (Ortner 2006:16). It emerged during the late 1970s and early 1980s with the goal of bringing together the two major paradigms at the time, structuralism and interpretivism, to “conceptualize the *articulations*” of constraining, enabling, and shaping relations between agents’ practices and the structures of their social worlds (Ortner 2006:2, emphasis original). Structuralism alone was seen to lack the ability to account for the subjective meanings of culture whereas interpretivism was seen to lack adequate recognition of the objective structuring forces of culture (Ortner 2006:1, McGee and Warms 2008:482; Barnard 1990:59-61,65). Bourdieu described his move toward his dialectical Practice Theory in this way:

I wanted initially to account for practice in its humblest forms... by escaping both the objectivism of action understood as a mechanical reaction ‘without an agent’ and the subjectivism which portrays action as the deliberate pursuit of conscious intention, the free project of a conscience positing its own ends and maximizing its utility through rational computation (Bourdieu and Wacquant 1992:121).

Bourdieu, then, sought to rethink the division between structuralism and interpretivism which saw structure or agency respectively as the determining factor in social life by creating a theory which took into account both. The relationship between structure and agency was then rethought of as dialectical rather than deterministic in either direction (Robbins 2008:40). In doing so, Bourdieu

Restored the actor to the social process without losing sight of the larger structures that constrain (but also enable) social action. It ‘grounded’ cultural processes – discourses, representations, what we used to call ‘symbol systems’ – in the social relations of people ‘on the ground’ (Ortner 2006:3).

It is Bourdieu’s attention to the actions of people ‘on the ground’ without separating them from the social structures which shape those actions that I draw upon in this thesis. Bourdieu’s Practice Theory offers a framework for analyzing both action and structured agency in the dialectic of social life.

Bourdieu (1993:271) argued that “one cannot grasp the most profound logic of the social world unless one becomes situated in the specificity of an empirical reality”

through the study of practices. For Bourdieu, practices – the observable actions of agents – should be the object of study because “the social world is made and remade through the actions of people” (Bourdieu 1980:12; Maton 2008:62). This occurs because, while societies do have structures which shape how agents ought to act, “their practical activity involves a constant adaptation to circumstances that involves going beyond the rules” (Calhoun 2003:287). Thus,

Seemingly fixed objective structures have to be created and reproduced; apparently voluntary subjective actions depend on and are shaped by objective conditions and constraints; knowledge and action constantly inform each other, rather than theory guiding practice by a fixed set of rules (Calhoun 2003:287).

Practices, then, are “the site of the dialectic” of the objective structure of a society and an agents’ internalization of those social structures (Bourdieu 1980:52). Focusing on practice allows researchers to move beyond an examination of the objective structures, such as those espoused by the narrative of authoritative instrumentalism in policy-making, to what agents actually do. Examining the empirical reality of the Greens’ policy-making praxis is necessary for understanding the logic of their social world as well as how their world is made and remade through their practices.

Practices are not arbitrary but are instead shaped, in part, by what is doxic in the social worlds agents inhabit. When the social structures of an agent’s world and the agent’s experience of those social structures immediately match, there is doxical experience⁷. The effect is that “everything seems obvious and goes without saying [and the agent] attributes to the world a deeper belief than all beliefs (in the ordinary sense), since it does not think of itself as a belief” (Bourdieu 1998:81). As a result, the arbitrariness of what is doxic is misrecognized and it becomes the naturalized, unquestionable generator of taken-for-granted practices (Deer 2008:123; Swartz 1997:125; Mahar et al. 1990:n.14; Bourdieu 1977a:164). Bourdieu’s concept of doxa is central to my analysis of the Green Party’s policy-making practices. For the

⁷ In his work, Bourdieu does not provide a lengthy or sustained elaboration of the meaning of doxa and his usage of the term changes over the course of his writing (Crossley 2005:71). He does, however, apply the theoretical concept in several of his key works, including *Outline of a Theory of Practice* (1977a), *Practical Reason: On the Theory of Action* (1998), and *Pascalian Meditations* (2000), among others. The main change that has occurred in the use of the concept is that it is now considered that there are habitus-specific and field-specific doxa, in addition to doxa which transverses many fields and habitus (Chopra 2003:426).

Greens, the Charter Principle of Appropriate Decision-Making is doxic because its “facticity” is accepted and felt as reality (Bourdieu and Wacquant 1992:73). The ‘fact’ that decisions should be made appropriately is “not... beyond challenge, but before any possible challenge” (Calhoun 2003:291). Practices generated by this doxa make the Greens’ social world and, in return, those practices reproduce the doxa of the Principle of Appropriate Decision-Making.

When the social world does not appear self-evident, orthodoxy and heterodoxy structure the world. Orthodoxy is “a bogus restoration of doxa” which tends “to impose acceptance of the established order as natural” (Bourdieu 1977b:116-177). Because it only tends toward doxa, “orthodoxy refers to a situation where the arbitrariness of *doxa* is recognized by accepted in practice. The ‘rules of the game’ are known and played accordingly” (Deer 2008:123, emphasis original). In this thesis, I have used orthodoxy to conceptualize Green decision-making. The principles of Green decision-making are not doxic because they can be questioned and because their arbitrariness is recognized. Nonetheless, they are accepted as the ‘right’ considerations to ethically reflect on when making decisions and, because they support the doxa of the Principle of Appropriate Decision-Making, reproduce the objective and practical social world of the Greens’ policy-making. This orthodoxy exists in relation to heterodoxy – the critique of the orthodox which “depends on the recognition of the possibility of competing beliefs and the emergence of such competing beliefs, which entails a move from practical action to discursive exchanges and the emergence of a field of opinion” (Deer 2008:123). Thus, because orthodoxy and heterodoxy, rather than doxa, structure Green decision-making, ethical reflections through discursive exchanges are generated. As I will show throughout this thesis, the result of these discursive exchanges is that the orthodoxy and doxa are reproduced by and through the practices of the Green’s policy-making.

Doxa, orthodoxy, and heterodoxy structure the *field* of the Greens’ policy-making. In the same way Bourdieu sought to escape the determinism of structure or agency, with the concept of field Bourdieu makes “the opposition between reproduction and transformation, statics and dynamics, or structure and history, vanish” (Bourdieu and Wacquant 1992:96). He defines the field in two ways: firstly, “in analytic terms, a field may be defined as a network, or a configuration, of objective relations between positions;” and, secondly, “as a space in which the effect of a field is exercised, so that what happens to any object that traverses this space cannot be

explained solely by the intrinsic properties of the object in question” (Bourdieu and Wacquant 1992:97,100). In my thesis, I have primarily used the second meaning of field as the Greens’ policy-making field is a space in which its effects are exercised through the practices which make and remake the doxa and orthodoxy of the field. The effect is also exercised through the field’s objective structure which is contained in the *Policy Guidelines* (Green Party 2007). These set out the relations of the field, particularly the objective positions of the Policy Committee, Issue Groups, and Caucus in the policy-making process.

A relational focus is central to the study of fields because, Bourdieu argued,

To think in terms of field is to *think relationally... the real is the relational*: what exists in the social world are relations – not interactions between agents or intersubjective ties between individuals, but objective relations which exist ‘independently of individual consciousness and will’, as Marx said (Bourdieu and Wacquant 1992:97, emphasis original).

These relations are objective and hierarchical. Constructing them analytically is a “lengthy and arduous” task as the research must work in an “endless to and fro movement” to determine both the specific capital⁸ at work in a field, as well as the specific logic of the field (Bourdieu and Wacquant 1992:108). This thesis does not focus on capital because it was not the most analytically relevant concept for understanding Greens’ policy-making. It does, however, focus on the ‘logic of the field’ which, in the Greens’ case, is based upon the doxa of the Principle of Appropriate Decision-Making and the orthodoxy of Green decision-making.

While the concept of field does speak to the structure of the social world, Bourdieu sought to integrate the dynamics of structure and agency with his concept of habitus. He stated that “to speak of habitus is to assert that the individual, and even the personal, the subjective, is collective. Habitus is socialized subjectivity (Bourdieu and Wacquant 1992:126). Bourdieu describes habitus in several different ways; however, most often habitus is used to refer to

Systems of durable, transposable *dispositions*, structured structures predisposed to function as structuring structures, that is, as principles of the

⁸ Capitals form the “currency” of a field’s logic of practice which agents can ‘possess’ and are generally categorized as economic, cultural, social and symbolic (Grenfell 2008:223; Moore 2008:105). They “confer power over a field... and over the regularities and rules which define the ordinary functioning of the field, and thereby over profits engendered in it” (Bourdieu and Wacquant: 1992:101).

generation and structuring of practices and representations which can be objectively 'regulated' and 'regular' without in any way being the product of obedience to rules, objectively adapted to their goals without presupposing a conscious aiming at ends of an express mastery of the operations necessary to attain them and, being all this, collectively orchestrated without being the product of the orchestrating action of a conductor (Bourdieu 1977a:72, emphasis original).

This definition highlights the unconscious nature of habitus, which indeterminately works to predispose agents (collective or individual) to generate certain practices over others, and which works to reproduce the social structures and habitus already at play (Bourdieu 1980:55; Bourdieu 1984:466). While habitus is durable in that it is resistant to change as well as transposable across a number of fields, it is neither static nor uncontested (Webb, Schirato, and Danaher 2002:6,38). Rather, "it is an *open system of dispositions* that is constantly subjected to experiences, and therefore constantly affected by them in a way that either reinforces or modifies its structures" (Bourdieu and Wacquant 1992:133, emphasis original). Nonetheless, reproduction is the more probable mode as agents' social encounters and actions tend to reinforce the existing structures of the field. This is because "the *habitus* – embodied history, internalized as second nature and so forgotten as history – is the active presence of the whole past of which it is the product" (Bourdieu 1980:56, emphasis original). Thus, habitus is the collective legacy of its historical reproduction which is misrecognized in the present by agents as 'what is natural' rather than 'what is historically constituted'. What the habitus is then, is the *dialectic of the internalization of externality and the externalization of internality*" (Bourdieu 1977a:72, emphasis original).

Habitus is inseparably related to field⁹. While habitus can be transposed across fields, when an agent enters a field they have not before been a part of, they must work to acquire the appropriate habitus for that field. Agents can do this because habitus are, in a sense, learnt through practical engagement in a field, which also works to reproduce the field:

Produced by the world of inculcation and appropriation that is needed in order for objective structures... to be reproduced in the form of the durable, adjusted dispositions that are the condition of their functioning, the *habitus*,

⁹ Bourdieu outlined the relation in his equation: "[habitus)(capital)] + field = practice" (Bourdieu 1986:127). Thus, both habitus and capital generate the condition of the field, and vice versa, resulting in the production of practices. None of these relationships are deterministic in nature, but can rather be thought of as shaping, predisposing, or conditioning.

which is constituted in the course through which agents partake of the history of objectified institutions, is what makes it possible to inhabit institutions, to appropriate them practically, so as to keep them in activity... but at the same time [to impose] revisions and transformations (Bourdieu 1990:57).

Thus, in order to operate successfully in the field of Green policy, agents need to acquire the appropriate habitus. The habitus of the policy field is an 'appropriateness-attuned' habitus which predisposes members to reproduce the doxa of the Principle of Appropriate Decision-making and the orthodoxy of Green decision-making as part of the moral project of enacting the Charter. Being inculcated with such field-specific habitus "*contributes to constituting the field as a meaningful world, a world endowed with sense and value, in which it is worth investing one's energy*" (Bourdieu and Wacquant 1992:127, emphasis mine).

Habitus and field tend to reproduce each other, resulting in 'fit'. Fit occurs "when habitus encounters a social world of which it is the product, it is like a 'fish in water': it does not feel the weight of the water, and takes the world about itself for granted" (Bourdieu and Wacquant 1992:128). In other words,

Habitus being the social embodied, it is 'at home' in the field it inhabits, it perceives it immediately as endowed with meaning and interest. The practical knowledge it procures may be described... just as the 'right opinion', 'falls right', in a sense, without knowing how or why, likewise the coincidence between disposition and position, between the 'sense of the game' and the game, explains that the agent does what he or she 'has to do' without posing it explicitly as a goal, below the level of calculation and even consciousness, beneath discourse and representation (Bourdieu and Wacquant 1992:128).

The result of this fit is that the agent is imbued with a *practical sense*, by which Bourdieu means:

An acquired system of preferences, of principles of vision and division..., a system of durable cognitive structures... [and] schemes of action which orient the perception of the situation and the appropriate response. The habitus is this kind of practical sense for what is to be done in a given situation – what is called in sport a 'feel' for the game, that is, the art of *anticipating* the future of the game, which is inscribed in the present state of play (Bourdieu 1998:25, emphasis original).

Therefore, an agent imbued with a habitus which fits with the conditions of their field, attains a practical sense of how to act and react in the field. Agents who have a good practical sense in that they are able to 'feel' the game well, master the game

and move to higher positions within the field. This practical sense is prereflective, not a conscious calculation (Calhoun 2003:292).

In order to develop a practical sense an agent is required to *invest* in the competition at play in the field. By investment, Bourdieu (1998:77) wrote that he means “to ‘be there’, to participate, to admit the game is worth playing and that the stakes created in and through the fact of play are worth pursuing; it is to recognize the game and recognize its stakes.” This requires both “an *inclination* and an *ability* to play the game” (Bourdieu and Wacquant 1992:118, emphasis original). Investing in the logic of a field is a condition of entry into it and, accordingly, entrants who do not accept the “fundamental presuppositions” (*doxa*) of the field are barred from entering (Bourdieu 1980:68; Calhoun 2003:291). Consequently, when agents enter into the Green Party’s policy-making field, they recognize that the game is worth playing and its stakes are worth pursuing. In this investment, the members come to acquire the appropriateness-attuned habitus which provides the dispositions necessary to play the game.

Bourdieu captured the way his theoretical concepts can be used to understand the social world in his analogy of ‘the game’. Ortner (2006:5) states that “the idea was that, once one figured out the game – that is, the configuration of practices involving the players in question, its underlying logic, and its cultural goal – the puzzling elements would make sense.” I use Bourdieu’s analogy as a central means of analyzing Greens’ policy-making because it offers a way to make sense of their practices, the underlying logic of the field, and the strategies which work, through habitus, to reproduce the field. Bourdieu explained his analogy thusly:

We can indeed, with caution, compare a field to a game (*jeu*) although, unlike the latter, a field is not the product of a deliberate act of creation, and it follows rules or, better, regularities, that are not explicit or codified. Thus we have *stakes* (*enjeux*) which are for the most part the product of the competition between players. We have an *investment in the game, illusio...* players are taken in by the game, they oppose one another, sometimes with ferocity, only to the extent that they concur in their belief (*doxa*) in the game and its stakes; they grant these a recognition that escapes questioning. Players agree, by the mere fact of playing, and not by way of a ‘contract’, that the game is worth playing... and this *collusion* is the very basis of their competition (Bourdieu and Wacquant 1992:98-99, emphasis original).

Bourdieu argued that the social world is like a game “in its stubborn fusion of rules, individual behavior, and strategy. The anthropologist must attend to all of these

dimensions” in order to understand the social life and practices of their participants (Moore 2004:321). Accordingly, the central aim of my thesis is explore ‘the game’ of Greens’ policy-making.

2.3 Conclusion

Combining the research focus of the anthropology of policy with Bourdieu’s Practice Theory offers a framework for making sense of the Green Party’s policy-making. The anthropology of policy highlights the centrality of moralities for understanding policy and the ways in which they codify the “social norms and values” of the cultures they encapsulate (Shore and Wright 1997:7). Bourdieu’s Theory of Practice offers a way of moving from policy to people whereby anthropologists can understand how moralities are internalized by agents who become predisposed to acting in certain ways. This offers another window through which the anthropology of policy can examine the dialectic between the structures policies objectify and the subjectivities of agents in the social world.

Most importantly for this thesis, by utilizing Bourdieu’s Practice Theory, the anthropology of policy can move away from focusing on policies themselves as objects of study toward an analysis of the ways in which *processes* of policy-making also codify the social norms and values of the cultures policy-making practices encapsulate. This entails a move from analyses primarily based on technologies of power to analyses of actions. Because it is actions of people that make and remake social worlds, empirically grounding research in the activities of participants is essential, and anthropology, with its preeminent method of participant-observation, is well placed to do this. Using Practice Theory, anthropologists are able to not only understand practices but also to make sense of the meanings participants create through them. In doing this, another analytic way of approaching policies and policy-making is opened up for the anthropology of policy.

Drawing on Bourdieu’s Practice Theory, I will argue that the Policy Committee are the masters of the policy-making game. Members of the Committee possess what I will call an appropriateness-attuned habitus which generates and is generated by practices which always reproduce the doxa of the Principle of Appropriate Decision-Making. Because of their masterful practical sense, their moments of ethical reflection always result in the ‘right’ action. Moreover, as the nexus of the field of

policy-making, operating at the intersection of the general Party membership and Caucus, the Committee has the ability to define the relations between players in the field. When doing this, their practical sense enables them to balance the principles of Green decision-making appropriately and, in doing so, reproduce the field's doxa.

The field of the Green Party's policy-making and the practices and habitus of agents who inhabit it are generated by the doxa of the Principle of Appropriate Decision-Making because, upon entering the field, agents invest in the moral force of the Charter and accept the game and its stakes. Yet, while the Principle of Appropriate Decision-Making is doxic in the field, the principles of Green decision-making only tend toward doxa and, accordingly, are consequently orthodox in that their arbitrariness is known but nonetheless accepted as the 'right' way to make decisions. As a result of this, a space for heterodoxy is opened up around Green decision-making. It is in this space that ethical reflection through discursive exchanges takes place in order to determine the right action. Carrying out the 'right' practices in the game of Green Party policy-making reproduces the doxa of the Principle of Appropriate Decision-Making and the orthodoxy of Green decision-making.

CHAPTER THREE: HOW I APPROPRIATELY GAINED PERMISSION FOR RESEARCH

I think that [the policy process] can take people through the full gamut of emotions. I think it can be entirely frustrating, enjoyable, and everything in-between. I think it brings a lot of people together. I think it teaches people to agree to disagree; that you get to a point where, 'Yes, you've had your say, it's time to stop now'. I think there's a lot of learning for other life situations that happens by being involved in the Green Party policy process and, yes, I have to say that dealing with frustration is probably tops! [Laughs]. I think patience is also quite important (Val).

Sometimes people get overloaded because we actually don't do consensus decision-making anywhere very well; some people might, but generally in society, this [Green Party] level of consensus decision-making is not what's done... So sometimes you get frustrated... I just go, 'Yep, that's okay because our society has not taught people how to be like this'. And so we have to teach people every time they come to the AGM because they unpack it the rest of the year! [Laughs]. I kind of have to hack it out to them and remind people! (Jenny).

The story of how this research came to happen is about how agents become invested in making decisions appropriately when they enter into the Greens' policy-making field as well as how Green decision-making happens in practice. As Val and Jenny indicate above, appropriate decision-making is a learned ability which requires agents to develop a practical sense of how to do it. Developing a temperament suited to playing the game of Green decision-making can be very frustrating, as I found. My frustration as I began to invest in a way of making decisions I had never encountered before was compounded by the fact that the Policy Committee was also working out how to make an appropriate decision for a request they had not encountered before: for me to undertake open-access research with them. Because the Committee does not have a process for making a decision about research requests, members had to rely on their habitus' practical sense of appropriateness in order to make a good decision. As I entered into the field of Green policy-making, I too became imbued with this practical sense and invested in the moral project of enacting the Charter Principles. This Chapter traces

through how decisions which enabled me to undertake this research were made appropriately with the principles of Green decision-making.

3.1 Entrée to the Policy Committee

My initial challenge when beginning this research was finding out who I should approach first to see if it would be possible. This was compounded by the fact that I had never been involved with a political party and knew nothing about the Greens' internal organization. As, basically, a member of the public, I looked to make contact with the people who I thought were the decision-makers in the Party: the Members of Parliament (MPs). When I talked to the MP who I later interviewed, he was very enthusiastic about my research which, at that stage, I had intended to be about the interaction of New Zealand's neoliberalism and a non-neoliberal political party when making policy. He identified some policy-making issues he thought would be good to research, and later told me during the interview that he supported my research because he was

really interested in having a really open discussion 'cause there's so little literature in New Zealand around the Green Party. So that's why I really, really encouraged our Caucus, and I was on the [Executive] call, to really open up 'cause I don't think we've got anything to hide. I think openness is good and we've actually got a good story to tell that we should be proud of (MP).

Despite his enthusiasm, the MP told me he did not have the mandate to approve the research and I should talk to the Policy Co-Convenors about it.

A while later, I phoned Sharon, one of the two Policy Co-Convenors, to introduce myself and my research. One of Sharon's first questions was whether or not I was a Green Party member. At that stage I was not, but did not have a good reason as to why not, so I awkwardly rambled on for a while about 'a possible conflict of interest'. As I tried to build my legitimacy as an 'insider', I explained that I had been to a meeting and some events with the Greens' local branch. I asked for more detail about how the Policy Committee worked because I was not sure whether participant-observation could be done with the Committee as it did not have a bounded geographical location where I could easily 'go' to do research. After Sharon explained that there were monthly conference calls, an email list, as well four face-to-face meetings per year, I felt confident that a qualitative anthropological study

could be done. I offered to email Sharon an informal information sheet (see Appendix B) and she finished by saying she would discuss it with Steve, her fellow Policy Co-Convenor.

In the early stages of my research, I decided to sign up as a Green Party Member. Initially, this was sparked because one of the first questions I was always asked as I met new Greens was, “Are you a member?” I quickly realized that becoming a member was essential to becoming part of the Greens’ community and gaining rapport. I have also always been a Green supporter. In the two Elections I have voted in now, both times I’ve voted Green because they are the Party with whom I share political values. This is why I decided I should just become a formal Party member rather than awkwardly stumbling around with a lengthy explanation of how I was a voting supporter but hadn’t joined.

At the same time as meeting with the MP, I was also becoming involved with the local branch of the Green Party. It was they who initially explained the policy process to me although, because it is so complex, I did not understand what they were telling me at the time¹⁰. There was a lot of laughter among the group present as Pauline explained the flow of policy documents out and back to the Policy Committee. I also seized the opportunity to become more involved with my regional Greens by attending the Provincial Annual General Meeting with two other Branch Members– Evita and John. Part of the meeting’s agenda was to elect people for representative positions. The Policy Networker for the Province retained his position from previous years but, as each Province is allocated at least two Policy Networkers, Evita leaned over to me and whispered, “Can I nominate you?” After I replied yes, she did so. Pauline seconded the motion saying that it would be good for my research too. I said that would be fantastic as long as everyone understood that I would be undertaking the role in a dual position – as a researcher and as the networker for the Province – and that I was not sure if the Policy Committee would allow that. Pauline stated that it was an issue for the leadership to decide. The motion was passed and I was elected as a Networker, pending a decision from Policy Committee that it was appropriate.

Two days later, I called Sharon again to apologize for not talking to her about becoming a pending Policy Networker beforehand because I felt somewhat

¹⁰ I later conducted interviews with eight members of the local branch, but have had to omit them from this thesis because of scope.

uncomfortable about getting elected onto the Policy Committee while she and Steve were still making a decision about what to do with my research proposal. Sharon told me that she had not had a chance to talk to Steve and she suggested that we talk about the research on the April Policy Committee Conference Call. Later that day, Sharon sent an email to the Policy Network Email List telling them about my election to the Policy Networker role as well as my research. She attached the informal information sheet I had sent her earlier and wrote that “we have to discuss whether we are okay with her being involved in the [Policy Committee] at the same time as doing her research” (Sharon). This sparked the start of a long discussion with the Policy Committee about the how to decide whether the research should go ahead and what the conditions of the research should be.

3.2 Appropriate Decision-Making in Action

The first person to reply to Sharon’s email was Mark and he immediately raised the issue of *who* could make the decision about permitting my research to go ahead. He wrote:

I think that we need to think about who is responsible for making the decision first, and what decisions we can make under the Constitution. We, as policy networkers, can't give her a binding direction not to do her research at all. Only the province can decide who is a Policy Networker for that province (Party Constitution, 11.2.3), and so Policy Committee doesn't have the power not to allow her to be a Policy Networker. Section 4.4 of the party Constitution says that only paid up members can hold office; section 4.5.2 says someone ceases to hold office "when the person ceases to accept or abide by the rules of the Party as determined by the Executive"; so Executive could theoretically decide that her research, or parts of it, are inconsistent with the party rules and so impose conditions, with termination of membership as the ultimate sanction...

However, I expect that the respective ethics committees [of Massey University and the Association of Social Anthropologists of Aotearoa New Zealand] probably need consent from participants; it seems that both the Green Party as a legal entity, and each of us individually are participants in the research. Granting approval for Green Party as a legal entity (or any part of it) falls outside of the constitutional role of the Policy Committee under section 11.1 - it isn't the "development and ratification of Party policy and policy processes". Rather, it relates to an agreement between the party, Jess, and an external ethics committee, and so is an administrative decision which must be made by Executive...

As for individual participant consent: it would be inappropriate to use party resources such as time on Policy Committee calls for this consent, as it

relates to a series of individual agreements between each individual member of the Policy Committee, Jess, and an external ethics committee, and not the collective business of the Policy Committee or the party. I therefore suggest that Jess contacts Policy Committee members individually for their consent as individuals, and that the matter be referred to the National Executive for a decision with respect to consent from the party, and any action Executive might want to take to stop the research if they decide it is outside of the rules...

I have a few submissions to make to Executive in respect of this, and also as my own personal response to Jess:

I would like to see a legally binding commitment in respect of the following things:

- * that the research is entirely passive and observational with respect to formal party processes, including the consensus process (and so doesn't involve any interference in the policy process). This wouldn't prevent Jess from participating in the consensus process as a policy networker for her province, but would prevent her from altering the way she participates for the purposes of the research.

- * that no deception is used to conduct the research.

- * that confidential information (any information which has not been released publicly) is not disclosed to any person who is not a party member without the prior consent of the party Executive. This would protect draft policy positions which are not yet ratified and released policy, or which did not become ratified policy, as well as individual member contributions (Mark).

In the very first email about my research then, the *primary concern* is making a decision appropriately – “I think that we need to think about who is responsible for making the decision first, and what decisions we can make under the Constitution,” writes Mark. Mark indicated that there were three places where decisions needed to be made: firstly, with respect to the permissibility of the overall research, this decision ought to be made by the Executive, in negotiation with myself and the Ethics Committees; secondly, with respect to individual members of the Policy Committee, this decision ought to be made by the members themselves. Of course, Mark's suggestions in these respects are usual practice for anthropology as researchers enter into group situations (Whiteford and Trotter 2008:57-69).

I did feel discouraged when I read Mark's suggestion for a third place where a decision had to be made in order to undertake my research: in a legal agreement between myself and the Party (via the Executive) with conditions set by the Policy Committee members and Executive. I was also concerned about what a “legally binding commitment” might mean, especially as I considered most issues that would be included in such a document were already contained in the Association of Social Anthropologists of Aotearoa/New Zealand's (ASAA/NZ) *Principles of Professional*

Responsibility and Ethical Conduct (1992) as well as Massey University's *Code of Ethical Conduct for Research, Teaching and Evaluations Involving Human Participants* (2010) to which I was (and continue to be) bound. Additionally, my research was considered 'Low Risk' under the Massey University Human Ethics Committee's processes, so I felt that a legally binding commitment was not reflective of the risk the University considered the research posed.

Several other emails about the research were received over the list in the following days. The General Secretary wrote in to confirm that "sign off" for the research would need to come from the Executive following the Policy Committee's agreement to undertake it. Malcolm stated: "I agree with Mark's final point about being confidential, but the research would surely not be valid if she used deception, or adjusted her behavior. I welcome research being done. We might learn from it, gain some ideas, or get some beneficial publicity." Peter also wrote in, firstly to state that "a full explanation was given to the [Provincial] AGM" about my research and needing to gain permission from the Committee and, secondly, to advocate for confidential information remaining so:

I think we must insist that any Policy Committee deliberation or debate that is made in a way that is not public must remain confidential to the committee. The Committee can and must request an undertaking to respect confidentiality. Is the research primarily about how the policy development process works or about the nature of the policy that is developed? At no stage should any information be disclosed that can not be obtained by reading the published committee minutes.

Steve, taking a facilitation role, suggested a method for how the discussions could proceed. He wrote:

I like the contributions that I am reading so far about this. I am also encouraged by Peter's statement that he's been through something similar and that issues can be resolved... I agree with Mark/General Secretary that ultimately it's Exec who decides and I am happy to take it there when we have general agreement both individually and collectively about the rules of play. We could potentially put Mark, Malcolm, Peter and the two [Policy Co-Convenors] on a Skype conference call to hash out some parameters, if that would help? I'm not seeking to shut anyone else out who is interested, and all [Policy Networkers] should jump into this conversation. Any other ideas/concerns out there? (Steve).

My feeling of anxiety about whether the research would be possible if the Policy Committee did not allow me to use non-public information grew. I became frustrated,

too, as I was finding it difficult to reconcile the MP's earlier feedback that he thought making the policy-making processes public would not be an issue and that research about the Party would be a 'good' thing with the Policy Committee's reluctance to make their processes public. This concern for confidentiality is typical of New Zealand's political parties, who generally "regard themselves as private organizations" (Vowles 2002:420). At this stage of the research, I was very much an outsider. Having never been part of a political organization, I was not able to grasp the risk of making the confidential processes and information of a private organization available to the public as well as rival political parties and interests. At the time, I found myself writing in my fieldwork diary that confidentiality of draft documents seemed like a "non-issue to me." I was completely incorrect on that count, of course, as eight months fieldwork with the Greens taught me.

In response to the discussions on the Email List, I sent an email which addressed some of the Policy Networker's concerns and also linked to both codes of ethics to which I was bound (see Appendix C). Peter was the first to reply to my email and again raised the issue of confidentiality, saying:

We must be free to develop our policy in a way that enables robust discussion, the acceptance or rejection of a point of view. Many may see this as division in the party. It is in fact the strength of the party that we can do this. We must do our debating in a place that is safe for all of us. When the policy becomes an historic fact, it is ok to write the history but it is not yet history... I do not want to prevent the research but the right of the members of the committee to speak confidentially must be preserved. I will need some assurance that confidentiality will not be breached before I can support your proposal.

In his email, Peter also suggested that it "might be useful" for him to meet my supervisors and discuss confidentiality together. After giving Peter a phone call that afternoon to discuss his concerns further, Peter suggested that the course of action we should take should be to briefly explain the research on April Policy Committee Conference Call that night, state that we have arranged a meeting between him and my supervisors to take place before the May Policy Committee Conference Call, and that I should be discreet about what I disclose in the meantime.

On the Policy Committee Conference Call that night, I introduced myself and outlined that my aim was to understand what Policy Networkers do, the processes of the Committee and how it interacts with members. Peter talked about the Provincial AGM meeting where I was elected and his plan to meet with my

supervisors. He said that “the main worry was that the research could have an impact on reasonably robust discussions from time to time.” I replied by saying that confidentiality could be an issue, but the advice I had had from the MP was that it was not a high risk situation. I also argued that any political risk would be dependent on how the research was written up and reported. I offered the Policy Committee the right to view any drafts of my work if they desired.

Dean, a Policy Networker, outlined that the two main concerns seemed to be that “wearing two hats [as a Policy Networker and a researcher] can become difficult” and that the Policy Committee does not “want to see us agreeing to anything that’ll reduce trust or capacity for feedback” from the membership. He wanted “to see a strategy on how we would mitigate it.” It was suggested that there could be limitations to the Policy Networker role I could undertake; however, Sharon responded that she did not think the “voting issue [would] make a big difference because we don’t vote much anyway.” Steve said that he “agree[d] that voting isn’t important, but it’s important to make explicit how we’d deal with it in a conflict situation.” Steve suggested that the email-based discussion about the conditions that ought to be imposed on the research should continue and noted that “it will have to go to Exec and they’ll have to look at putting explicit safeguards in place like what Peter, Dean, and Mark [have] already mentioned.” There was further discussion about the fact that I would not be undertaking clandestine research and whether a sponsor-client research relationship would allow the Greens to embargo my thesis if necessary. I talked about the methods researchers can use to prevent harm, such as omitting information, because of anthropologists’ primary responsibility to their participants. As the conversation turned to individuals deciding whether they would like to participate in my research, Sharon asked whether I would “work around some agreeing and some not?” I replied that it would be fairly easy to do because I could leave out their individual statements, but I would include them in such statements as ‘The Policy Committee agreed that...’, for example. Julie stated that she felt that “if all concerns can be addressed, this is great opportunity for our method of discussion and consensus decision-making process to be used by other people.”

Rounding off the discussion, Steve suggested “as a proposal to go forward” that the Policy Committee should, firstly, continue to investigate safeguards in order to run a formal process via Executive and, secondly, meet with my supervisors. It was also decided that Steve would take my proposal to the Executive Co-Convenors “to work

out how it can happen at that end, and they'll put the pieces together before making a formal decision." Finally, it was agreed that Steve would join Peter in meeting with my supervisors. Thus, as part of making an appropriate decision about whether to proceed with my research, it was concluded that the Executive must give formal permission, but only once the Policy Committee was satisfied with the provisions, which would be negotiated between Peter, Steve, my supervisors, and I, before being taken back to all members of the Committee.

The meeting took place at Massey University in Palmerston North with Steve using Skype to join from Auckland. The Head of School also joined in the meeting. I started by outlining the meeting's aim: to come to an agreement about the terms and conditions under which the research can go ahead that could then be taken to the Committee and Executive. We worked through the concerns raised on the April Policy Committee Conference Call agreeing that Steve and Peter would have access to my drafts to monitor for risky topics and I would include a disclaimer about Green Party draft policies. We also agreed that Policy Networkers would let their members know the research is happening, and an embargo would not be sought because "we've all got to publish" (Steve). Furthermore, we also agreed that I could gather information from the conclusion of the meeting pending formal permission from Executive, and, finally, that all names used in this thesis would be (and are) pseudonyms. Later that afternoon, I drew up outcomes of the meeting into an agreement with the formal Information Sheet and Individual Consent Forms attached (see Appendices D and E).

The next set of decisions about my research took place at the June Policy Committee Face-to-Face meeting in Auckland. There, Steve introduced the item of 'signing-off' on my research emphasizing, with my wholehearted support, that there was no way my thesis would be finished by the November General Election so would not be public by then. Peter stated that the research is interested in process rather than content, although I added that I would be using content to trace through how the processes work. There were three issues raised by Policy Networkers at the meeting we had to work through: how many Issue Groups I was sitting on, group versus individual consent, and whether 'strategic information' had a definition. As a result of these discussions, two amendments were made before the Agreement was finalized (see Appendix F). The first clarified the processes surrounding Issue Groups under Point Eight, which was altered to read:

Jessica will be allowed to participate on some Issue Groups (IG). The process for obtaining consent from IG members will be to first gain permission from the IG Convener or appropriate representative, and then contact individual members from the IG to reach a consensus on consent. If interviews are undertaken with individual IG members, individual consent forms will be signed.

The second amendment was an addition of a point which read: “Jessica will be wearing ‘two hats’ during the research period – a ‘researcher’s’ hat, and a ‘participant’s’ hat. Where no permission for her to be a researcher is given, she may still wear the ‘participant’ hat.” Following these amendments, Steve declared the group was “gracefully moving toward consensus.” Not all Committee members were present at the June Policy Committee Face-to-Face meeting and I later followed up with non-present Policy Networkers, although they raised no objections.

The main method by which the Policy Committee and I worked out how to decide whether and how my research should be undertaken was to *talk* about the decision explicitly. From the outset, we had to decide *who* was the appropriate decision-maker leading to the conclusion that three bodies were: the Executive, the Policy Committee as a group, and individuals who wanted to participate in interviews or who did not want to be included. We also had to work out *how* to go about making the decision. For the Policy Committee group, this was done by delegating Peter and Steve to reach an agreement about the conditions of research with me and my supervisors, reviewing this agreement with Committee members and making changes, and then by reaching consensus that the research could proceed under the conditions set out in the agreement. When gaining individual permission, I asked members if they would like to do an interview and provided an Individual Consent Form. I also omitted parts of their interviews they asked me to not include in this thesis. No one from the Policy Committee explicitly opted out of my research, but I have minimized the presence of members who did not sign individual consent forms. In doing this, I ensured that I did gain the voluntary informed consent of participants which, while not explicitly stated as an ethical need in any of Anthropology’s codes of ethics, is implied (Fluehr-Lobban 2003:165). Thus, while acknowledging that the consequences and findings of ethnographic fieldwork cannot always be predicted, the Policy Committee and I negotiated an agreement whereby approval was explicitly and voluntarily given as part of appropriately approving my research and with safeguards, such as reviewing drafts, included to mitigate against consequences which could harm the welfare, dignity, and privacy of individual participants, the Policy Committee, and the Green Party itself.

I was not involved in the decision-making process regarding Executive. A few months after the June Policy Committee Face-to-Face Meeting though, Steve let the Committee know that my research had been approved by the Executive. I was not party to the Executive discussions; nonetheless, when I asked an Executive Member about how they had reached the decision that the research could proceed, he replied that it was because, in essence, I had become an 'insider':

[Laughs] The discussions in most of these things revolve around [bossy tone] 'Who is she? What does she want? What is the risk? What happens if she writes something nasty about us and it comes out before the Election?' Followed by people who said, 'Well, we've met her and etc, etc'... Look, with so many of these things what you actually do is you say, 'I met them, they seemed alright. Yeah, what the hell?' We've always been very open, that's part of the philosophy is that if you have to do it behind closed doors, you have to ask 'Why am I doing it?' At the same time, we're risk adverse... So from that point of view, it did become an issue of how this information might be used... But interestingly enough, I mean it wouldn't have happened if you hadn't been a Party member and if you hadn't been part of Policy... There isn't a particular vetting system. We rely a lot on what other people have to say. There's a lot of people in there, if they say 'I know this person and that person's alright', and if Donna says, 'I think they're alright', I'm probably going to say, 'Well, if Donna thinks they're alright, they're alright' (Executive Member).

Overall, then, the formal consent was given by Executive because they *trusted* that I, as an involved Party member and because I was 'alright', was not going to write a thesis which could be used inappropriately to damage the Party in the public sphere. This was aided by the fact that the Green Party *does* support open government which includes "[f]reedom of information, and openness of government and its procedures... [as] essential principles in the creation of a more democratic society" because "[p]eople have the right to participate in government decision-making as partners" (Green Party 2012e:1). As part of the Green Party's philosophy applied to their own organization, Appropriate Decision-Making compels the Party to be open about its own information and procedures because, as the Executive Member stated, "If you have to do it behind closed doors, you have to ask 'Why am I doing it?'" Transparency and openness are seen by members to be an essential condition of Green decision-making being able to happen in an appropriate manner; thus, part of the reason the decision was made to go ahead is because the Party believes that its processes, firstly, are good, and secondly, that being open about what it does is part of good democratic process.

After permission was gained from the Executive, I was able to start the fourth process of gaining consent from Issue Groups by sending members of the groups the Information Sheet and asking for them to 'opt-out' if they did not wish to participate by writing to the Policy Co-Convenors. The Policy Committee and I chose to do an 'opt-out' consent because of the number of people on the Issue Groups I was given permission to access and because all members have been given pseudonyms and have had identifying features removed. There was only one objection received from a member who wrote that they felt the 1080 Issue Group was not representative of the way most Issue Groups in the Party worked because of the heated divisions within it. Others I talked to in the Party were proud that the 1080 Issue Group reached consensus on the issue as it shows that the Party can successfully work through divisive topics. Nonetheless, I chose not to study the 1080 Issue Group as there were others that were suitable and to which no objections were raised : The Men's Policy Issue Group, the Recreational Drugs Issue Group, and the Resource Management Act Issue Group.

3.3 The Research

Anthropology is well-suited to exploring the points of view of policy-makers because of its places emphasis on emic understandings. Shore and Wright (2011:8) emphasize that:

What gives anthropology its analytical edge is precisely its capacity to understand the meanings and subjective understandings of policy makers and, at the same time, to challenge the received wisdom and think outside of the conventional policy box... Social anthropologists are particularly experienced at tracking the genealogies and flows of policy and their impact on people's lives and everyday behavior. But they are equally good at examining the meanings that those policies hold for those actors whose lives they touch and the cultural logics that structure those 'policy worlds'. To paraphrase Clifford Geertz (1973:5), we take the analysis of policy to be 'not an experimental science in search of a law but an interpretive one in search of a meaning'.

It is precisely anthropologists' attention to the local point of view that allows them to grasp how policy and policy-making work in practice as well as the meanings and effects those practices generate. To 'grasp the Greens' point of view', I used three main methods: participant-observation, qualitative interviews, and archival research. These allowed me to gain a dense, situated, knowledge.

I undertook participant-observation with the Policy Committee for a period of around seven months. During this time I received nearly 1,000 emails over the Policy Network Email List. These included mundane and everyday emails, such as whether pizza would be okay for lunch at a Face-to-Face Meeting, membership feedback that was forwarded from Policy Networkers, and policy discussion among Committee members themselves. Additionally, there were also several events where members met in one location as well as phone-based monthly conference calls. I took fieldnotes while on the conference calls and, at the August Policy Committee Face-to-Face meeting, members present kindly let me tape record sections of the meeting. Being able to directly observe and participate in the workings of the Policy Committee quite literally allowed me to be “where the action is” – an essential part of research for the study of practice (Bernard 2006:344).

The second main method I used was qualitative interviewing. At the time of interviewing, I had only a general idea about what my research interests were, so I had only a few preselected topics to talk about as is usual for this type of interview (Bernard 2002:203; Chadwick, Behr, Albrecht 1984:103). I always began with seeking a narrative by asking participants how they became involved with the Green Party as well as their particular role. As I got further into my research and my focus narrowed, I was able to ask questions that were more focused around what I learned was important during my time as Policy Networker. This meant that, over time, my interview questions altered slightly from a focus on what the process *is* to how that process *relates* to other wings of the Party. My interview topics also depended on who I was talking to, meaning that my conversations with participants were both fluid and flexible (Mason 2002:225). For example, some interviews consisted mainly of historical recollections, while other barely drew on the past, focusing on the present. This meant that interviews drew on the abilities of the participants to offer insights into the areas they were most familiar with and wanted to talk about most, leading to many ‘aha’ moments and contributing immensely to the depth of knowledge I was able to gain (Gerson and Horowitz 2002:211).

I interviewed many people during my research. Before I narrowed my focus, I interviewed eight members of my local branch, one MP, a facilitator of the consensus process, a high-level Party administrator, and one candidate who was running for Parliament in the Election. It was not until later in the year (August, mainly), that I interviewed ten members of the Policy Committee. At that stage, I felt

that seeking to interview members of the Issue Groups would be too lengthy and provide too much more new information than I could attend to, even though it would have been good to gather some emic insight about how they understood the policy-making process. As a compromise, I sent a message to members of the Men's Policy Issue Group asking them to send an email with their thoughts about it and the policy-making process. However, from this, I received only one reply. Nonetheless, several people I talked to were members of Issue Groups as well as occupying other positions in the Party, so I was able to garner their views on the topic.

Finally, I was able to look through two sets of Green Party archives¹¹. Because there is a lack of academic literature about the Green Party of Aotearoa/New Zealand, having access to Party Documents was invaluable. Participants told me stories about the history of the Party which provided emic insights which, used alongside unpublished documents, allowed me to tie these histories to material changes in the formal processes.

3.4 Conclusion

The six-month process of gaining permission to do my research introduced me at the earliest stages to how much *work* making decisions appropriately takes. In the same way Val and Jenny highlighted at the start of this Chapter, I found it *immensely* frustrating because I was not an appropriateness-attuned decision-maker who was invested in the game of doing so. As part of appropriate decision-making, the Committee and I firstly had to work out *how* to decide to make a decision. The existing Party processes which contain guidelines for how to ensure appropriate decision-making is happening in practice do not include guidelines for approving research so we had to make the appropriate processes as we went. We secondly had to work out *who* was the appropriate decision-maker, deciding in the end that there were multiple levels at which we had to seek consent: individual Policy Committee members, the Policy Committee as a collective entity, the Executive, and individual Issue Group members. Furthermore, we had to decide *what* we were going to be approving. This was done by drawing up the Agreement, a task appropriately delegated to Steve, Peter, and I, and then rechecked with all Committee members. Finally, all of those levels then had to *make* the decision to be

¹¹ Thank you to Michael and Tony.

involved in my research.

It was not until much later in my involvement with the Greens that I understood *why* we had to make a decision about my research in this way. This period of negotiation was one whereby we were all enmeshed in a process of making sure a decision was made on the basis of consensus in a democratic process. Additionally, we had to make sure our decision was congruent with both the relevant Party processes, such as gaining formal permission from the Executive, as well as with the relevant research processes, such as adhering to Codes of Ethics. Finally, we had to ensure that signing off on the research would not entail a lot of political risk for the Party. Therefore, only when all the principles of Green decision-making were addressed were we able to move on to ratifying the decision to carry out my research.

Making decisions in this way requires people to be *invested* in doing so. This story of how the Greens and I reached a decision is also a story about how I became invested in the game of the Greens' policy-making. This conscious moment occurred when I decided to join the Green Party. As Val told me, "You join the Greens, you sign up to the Charter." I had initially decided to join in order to gain rapport with the Greens but, although I did not realize it at the time, much more significantly this moment also signaled my entry into the field and game as well as my investment in enacting the Charter Principles as a moral project. However, even though I had entered the field, it was a long time before I gained the practical knowledge required to make decisions appropriately. Becoming inculcated with the habitus necessary for acting in the field took a long time. But, it was only by becoming inculcated with an appropriateness-attuned habitus and being enmeshed in the game of the field of policy-making as a Policy Networker that I was able to understand the doxa of the Principle of Appropriate Decision-Making and the constant ethical reflection of Greens' on whether their actions are appropriate. This is why, looking back as I write, I am no longer frustrated at the process by which I appropriately gained permission to do my research as I was at the time, but am rather acutely aware of the complex negotiations and balancing that took place to ensure a decision which enacted the Charter Principle of Appropriate Decision-Making and Green decision-making occurred.

**CHAPTER FOUR:
THE GREEN PARTY OF AOTEAROA NEW ZEALAND AND
ITS POLICY-MAKING PROCESSES:
AN OUTLINE OF THE FIELD.**

Understanding how a party organizes itself allows us a glimpse into a party's true nature. It permits us to look beyond the persona deliberately cultivated and projected to the voters at election time. It also enables us to look beyond the activists' exalted claims of ideological commitment and purity to see how deep those claims run when faced with the ideology-sullyng problems of political survival. The organization of the party is where the rhetoric meets the reality. It is the nexus between beliefs and action (Taggart 1996:110)

The internal organization of the Green Party, including the Party's policy-making processes, is built upon the Charter Principles. Since its establishment in 1991, the principles applied to the policy-making process have not changed. This Chapter traces the Party's policy-making history, mainly as told to me by Val, Tony, and Louis to provide context for an account of the current processes. They all remembered the early days of policy fondly, laughing as they told me stories about how the fast-paced rise of the Party and slow development of processes created frustration and fun. Therefore, even though there are proclamations that the policy-making process "seems to be an artifact of amateur activist origins" and "anarchistic," members I spoke to were proud of it because their policy process and its development is a history of their principles in action (Dann 2008:195; Trotter 2001b:15). The Greens' principles have shaped a general policy development process whereby policy proposals pass through several stages of consultation with the Party's general membership before being drafted into a policy and ratified by a designated body. In tracing through the history of policy-making and explaining the current policy processes, this Chapter will outline the objective structure of the field and highlight the role of Appropriate Decision-Making in the processes.

4.1 The History of the Policy Making Process

The Green Party was formed from a loose confederation of environmentally-minded people only six months before the 1990 General Election that the group decided to contest (Green Party 2011e:1; Wilson 2010:249). This meant a sense of chaotic urgency as members worked quickly to campaign, leaving no time to develop any formal processes:

Part of the difficulty was that because that very first meeting [of about thirty people] was in May and we were fighting an Election in October, it wasn't until after the Election that we really had any processes at all. I mean, it really was a think-on-your-feet, make-it-up-as-you-go-along business. Which was actually quite liberating. The worst thing that could've happened is we'd've got people into Parliament! [Laughs heartily]. It was liberating and it was very interesting and there was something very amazing about working from a philosophy because you just basically had the Charter and you kept going back to the Charter: "How does the Charter deal with this?" So that was good (Tony).

As Tony highlighted, when the Greens' spokespeople needed to talk about policy during the campaign, they had to refer to the Charter because the Party did not have any policy as such. To find a way to make policy, several working groups were set up during the Election campaign and given the responsibility of outlining "an effective way of working, to ensure policy [was] developed" (Green Party 1990:15). These groups drafted a three-year plan for policy development which was to be ratified at the Party's first meeting (Green Party 1990:15). Even at the outset of the Party's policy-making, the Greens acknowledged that "The catch is policy, like the song says, *'it don't come easy'*. It requires hard work on research, investigating and writing by party members" (Green Party 1990:15, emphasis original).

It was not until after the 1990 Election, in April 1991, that the Party was able to develop a way to formalize the start of a policy-making process when they met in Palmerston North to discuss "Where to from here?" (Val). The meeting

agreed that [they] should draw on detailed policy material already available Eg. Values, UK Greens, Die Grunen, etc. However, [they also acknowledged they] needed to agree to a simple policy platform to ensure [their] candidates [were] adequately backed up. This would generally not be detailed, but should look at principles and short, simple policies. Some areas [did] require detailed policy and [they] should be those areas that are of the greatest concern to the public (Green Party 1991:4).

Each of the twenty-three regions was assigned a policy area to develop a draft policy paper about; for example, employment or international relations (Green Party 1991:4). The Palmerston North meeting ran out of time to formalize a process for ratifying Party policy. However, it did result in a discussion document which outlined a proposal for the process in preparation for a Policy Development Weekend.

The discussion document set out in principle the policy-making process the Party continues to use today. Broadly, Policy Working Groups of interested members were to be formed for different policy areas to develop a draft policy on their topic. Then, the draft policy was to be “circulated to all branches for discussion and comment” (Green Party 1991: 15). Acting “like a select committee,” the Policy Working Group would redraft the policy based on the branches’ feedback “to produce a clear, consistent document for conference which is supported by consensus” (Green Party 1991:16). Points of disagreement and options were to be included in the second draft so the Green Council – the annual meeting of the regions – could discuss and ratify them (Val). At the Green Council, members would decide to either accept the policy, reject the whole policy, or accept the policy in principle and return it to the Policy Working Group for further work (Green Party 1991:16). To avoid stagnation on policy development, the discussion document suggested that: “[The Greens] believe the principle should be established that people who have not taken part in the long process which leads up to the conference should not be able to hold up consensus at [the conference]” (Green Party 1991:16). Thus, in the first year of the its organizational development, the basic process of the Party’s policy-making was established: Policy proposals were developed by interested members, circulated among the wider membership for feedback, amended as necessary, and later ratified as Party policy at the Annual General Meeting.

Practically, it was very difficult to ratify policy with this process. At the Green Council, members who attended had rarely read the prepared documents, and discussions about policy took up a lot of time – “it all got very, very painful,” recalled Val. She surmised that “we had a lot of work that had been done but no results because we didn’t have a process for *getting* results and also policy always got knocked off the agenda because the Constitution took precedence” (Val). As a result, policy ratification was removed from Green Council agendas and vested in the Policy Committee.

During the late 1990s, changes in technology meant the policy process became faster as more people got computers and email. Previously, the Party used the postal service and, later, four fax machines located around the country. Val shared: “Everything was done by mail, cut and paste; most people had typewriters, not computers. So it was *literally* cut and paste... it was quite interesting watching this change to now; everything is happening electronically.” For this reason – because nobody had email – it was not until the mid-1990s that the regional networking systems were set up whereby there were people elected in each region to communicate between regional members and central bodies.

The development of Party processes and its policy-making was sidelined when Greens became a member of the five-party Alliance in November 1991 to contest the 1993 General Election (Dann 2008:186; Green Party 2011e:1). For policy, entering the coalition meant that the internal development of policy processes were put on hold as Green Party Co-Leader and Alliance Deputy Leader Jeanette Fitzsimons took over Alliance’s policy development (Val). The Green Party’s internal policy-making processes went through very minor changes during the Alliance period. In 1994, when there were thirty policies, a second phase of policy formation was called for (Robertson and Maddison 1994:1). Robertson and Maddison (1994:1) argued that there was “a wide variety of style and format” among the thirty policies: “Some are very tight on policy whereas others are more akin to discussion documents. Some are idealistic whereas others are very much more down to earth. Some are highly detailed while others make generalizations.” Fifteen Policy Coordinators were appointed to oversee the redrafting of policies into the new format which was based on Fitzsimons’ Energy Policy for the Alliance. The format of policies was reworked to include an introduction, goals, numbered policies, and reasons why they were needed (Robertson and Maddison 1994:1). The new format, the authors stressed, did not alter the fact that the policy content reflected “Green philosophy” (Robertson and Maddison 1994:1).

During the early 1990s, nearly all of the Greens’ focus was on the Alliance and its policy. Fitzsimons and the Greens worked hard to ensure Green policies were picked up by the Alliance and communicated to the public. Tony told me:

Policy started to come into its own... [when] we went into the Alliance because we had to make sure that our voice was heard. And the Alliance had to be set up in such a way as to make that happen because... we made it very clear that unless we had a process whereby we could work [policy]

through [the Green Party's policy process], then, 'No, sorry'; we weren't going to be cooperative.

But, because the Greens' focus shifted to directly engaging with Alliance's policy instead of their own,

By early 1996, the internal Green Party policy process had become moribund. There was no active Green Policy Convenor and almost no Green Policy Networkers. The Green Council had ceased to meet within a short period of the Alliance being formed as it represented an extra layer in the system. The Policy Committee – an ad hoc sub-committee of the Green Council with no constitutional authority – no longer existed. The final attempt to organize a meeting of this 'Policy Committee' saw only two people attend... The National Executive has taken on the role of Green Party governance within the umbrella of the Alliance Council. [Because of all this,] Policy-making within the Greens as an independent process has virtually ceased (Louis).

As they were preparing to leave the Alliance, the Greens reinvented their policy processes. They decided to adopt the canon of Alliance policy, which "cleared the decks of a body of half-developed policy from the early 1990s" (Louis). A new Policy Convenor was appointed in 1996 and work began toward preparing Party policy for the 1999 General Election campaign (Louis).

The process of policy-making was "remodelled" to reflect the organization of the Executive whereby "grass-roots decision-making was combined with a national perspective," with Policy Networkers being the voting members of the Policy Committee (Louis). The first of the Greens' Summer Policy Conferences began in 1996 with the aim of being "a place for Greens to gather... progress some policy, talk about issues, decide what needed to be done... it was like a Green Haven from the Alliance" (Val). By 1998-1999, the Summer Policy Conference had developed into the form still used today with workshops on areas needing attention being held to provide members the opportunity to feed directly into their development. The conferences were restructured around the three-year Election cycle. In the year following an Election, a National Policy Conference was held. In the second year, they were split between the North and South Islands. Finally, in the third year, no Policy Conference was held as campaigning for the Election was given precedence.

Further changes occurred after the Greens left the Alliance in 1997 and the Mixed Member Proportional electoral system was introduced (Norman 2005:8). The Greens began a process of "formalizing" during 1997 as it moved toward a more

professional mode of organization and practice in preparation to contest the 1999 Election (Bale 2003:287). Changes which had happened in practice were formalized in the Party's Constitution. This included ending the Green Council, introducing the current Provincial system, and vesting responsibility for policy-making with the Policy Committee. During the 2001 Constitutional Review, the Policy Committee formally became the third, sovereign wing of the Green Party, alongside the Executive and Caucus. As Louis summarized,

This period saw the acceptance and codification of policy-making as a separate function from organizational governance and political leadership. The 'grass-roots' approach to policy-making was formalized... with a clear process separation between the initial development of policy by interested people and the process of consultation through Provincial Networkers leading to finalization and ratification by the Policy Committee.

By 2001 then, Policy Committee's relationship to Caucus and the Executive was formalized and outlined in the Party's Constitution.

Also during 2001, after the Policy Committee had been separated from the Executive, a discussion document about the Green Party's policy process was completed in order to "put forward suggestions for how the Policy Committee and the Green Party [could] establish an effective and efficient policy programme and process" (Burke and Grant 2001:1). This document outlines the current core principles of the Green Party's policy process: to be participatory, democratic, efficient, and effective (Burke and Grant 2001:5). The authors state:

It is crucial for the Green Party that the policy process be participatory and democratic. Party members should be actively encouraged to become involved in the development and review of policy. These principles need to be balanced by an efficient process that works effectively to produce robust policy in the timeframes required (Burke and Grant 2001:5).

The Policy Committee's commitment to working to balancing the principles of their policy process was reinforced at their November 2002 Policy Committee Face-to-Face meeting, where the Committee stated they wanted:

- "Grassroots ownership of the policy, that is as wide as possible, including wider community ownership;
- Policy that is defensible democratically – democratically accepted;
- Consistent with other documentation and the Charter;

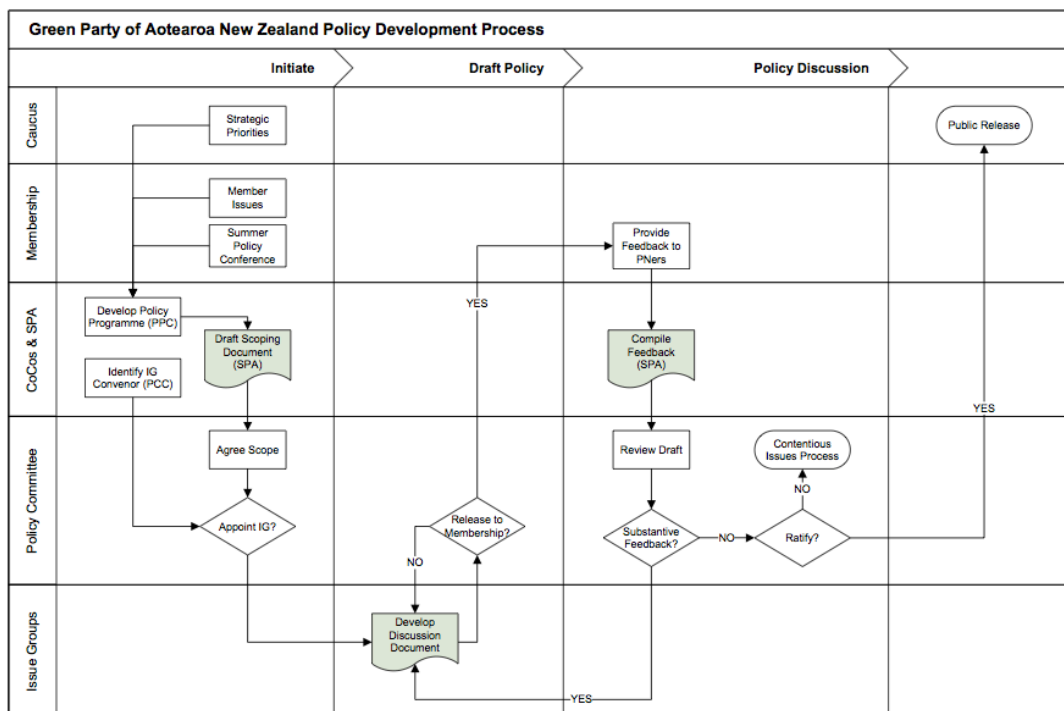
- [A] [r]atification process that [is] as participatory as possible, where people have the choice to take part (Green Party Policy Committee 2002:4)

Thus, as will be discussed throughout this thesis, the Greens acknowledge that *balancing* democratic participation with efficiency and the need to ‘produce robust policy’ is an ongoing task which is inherently built into the structure of their policy-making process itself.

4.2 The Current Policy-Making Process

The lasting principles of democracy, participation, efficiency, and effectiveness first detailed in 2001, continue to shape the Greens’ policy-making process (see Figure 2) as outlined in the current *Policy Guidelines* (Green Party 2007). This document outlines the processes by which policy-making should occur in the Party, including the two main processes: the full policy process and the urgent policy process. I will discuss these two processes here and address other processes, such as amendments, where needed.

Figure 2: Green Party of Aotearoa New Zealand Policy Development Process



Source: (Green Party 2012b:1)

4.2.1 The Full Policy Process

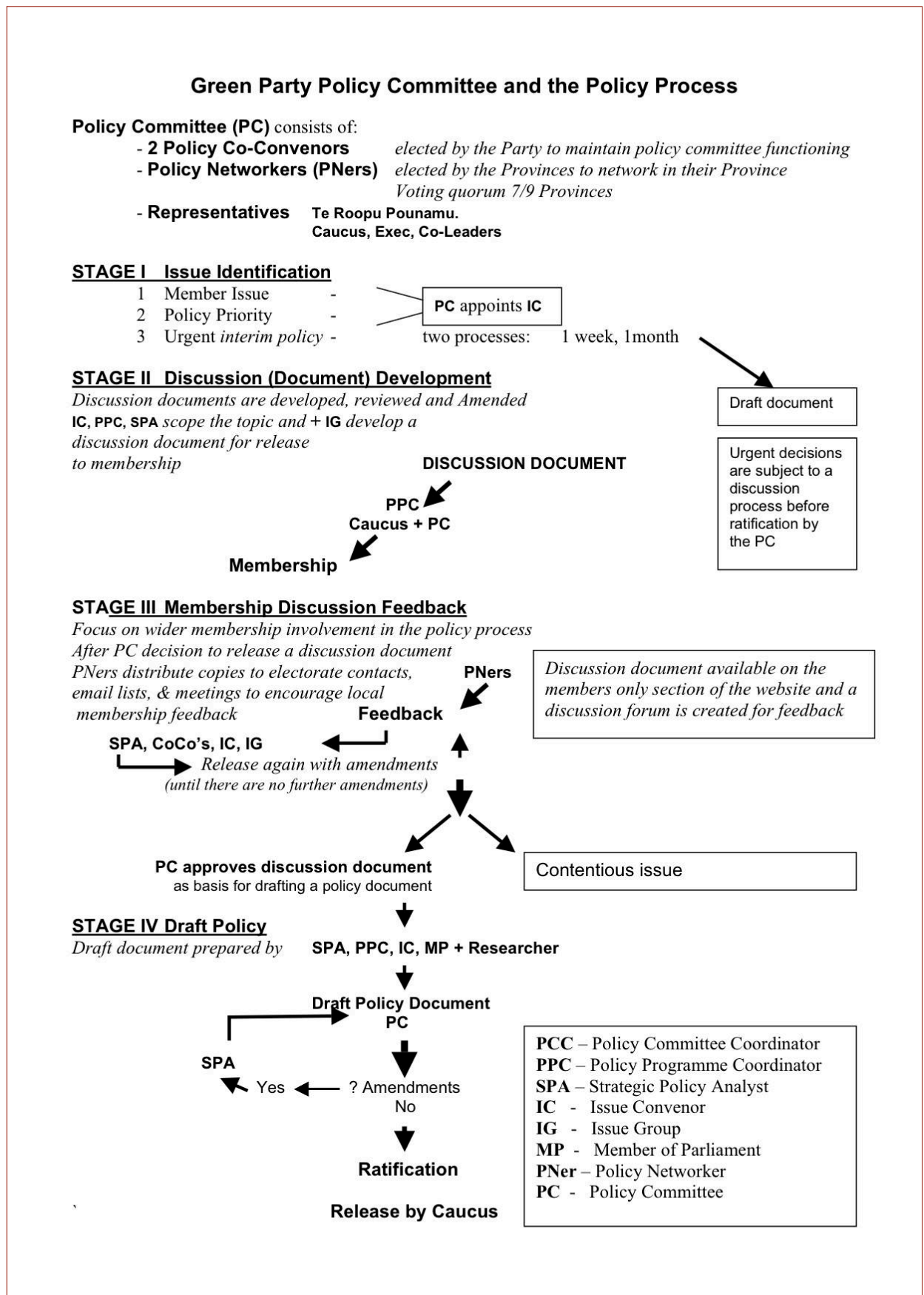
The Full Policy Process is the main policy process of the Green Party, used to create and develop new policies and major amendments to existing policies. There are four stages in the Full Policy Process (see Figure 3): issue identification, discussion document development, membership feedback on the discussion document, and draft policy ratification. All of these stages are structured by the Principle of Appropriate Decision-Making and work to balance democratic membership participation, efficiency, and the production of 'robust' policy.

The first stage of the policy-making process is called "Issue Identification" (Green Party 2007:4.1). Issue identification refers to the process whereby people and groups can call policies and matters which need consideration to the attention of the Policy Committee who will then decide whether or not to develop a resolution to the issue raised. There are three ways issues can be brought to the Committee's attention: they can be identified in the policy program¹², be identified by individuals or groups of members or 'outsiders', or, finally, be raised by Caucus (Green party 2007:2).

The principles of democracy and participation can be seen in the multiple avenues a member can take to pursue their policy issue, even if the Policy Committee initially rejects it. As the first step, the *Policy Guidelines* state that the member, group, or "outsider" "should give a written description" of the issue to one of their Policy Networkers who will then consult with the Strategic Policy Advisor about whether it has already been addressed in Green Party policy or if it is already in development (Green Party 2007:4.1). The Policy Networker will then report back to the member(s) about the issue's status. If the issue has not been addressed in ratified policy, "the [Policy Networker] will take it to the [Policy Committee] for discussion" who will "decide whether to initiate action on the policy issue or not" (Green Party 2007:4.1). If the Committee decides to take action on the proposal, an Issue Convenor is appointed to oversee the initial stages of its development (Green Party 2007:4.1). However, if the decision is to not pursue action, the Policy Program Coordinator will report the reasoning back to the member(s) who raised the issue.

¹² The policy program is a "timeline for the development, amendment or review of policy areas and issues" which are "consistent with policy priorities identified in the Green Party Strategic Plan" (Green Party 2007, June 20:2). The program is set out by the Policy Program Coordinator, Caucus, and the Executive.

Figure 3: The Green Party Policy Committee and the Policy Process



Source: (Green Party 2006:1).

Following this, as a second step, if the member feels the Policy Committee's decision is incorrect and still wishes to raise the issue, then the member's Policy Networker asks the Province to sponsor it (Green Party 2007:4.1). If the Province decides not to sponsor the issue, the Policy Networker and Strategic Policy Advisor work with the member "to initiate a nationwide discussion forum" (Green Party 2007:4.1). From this, "if there is either Provincial or other significant support for the issue" then the Policy Committee must re-examine their decision about the issue's development. This process enshrines participatory democracy as the Committee is bound to reconsider its decisions if there is wide membership disagreement with them; if there is enough support for a proposal to go ahead, the Policy Committee must consider doing so because it reflects the wishes of the Party members.

If the Committee has decided that it should address an issue, it moves to the second stage of policy development: drawing up a discussion, review or amendment document. This stage of policy development is tasked to Issue Groups, a key site for enacting the principles of democracy and participation in the process. Issue Groups work online under the guidance of an Issue Convenor "to develop official Party policy in a certain topic area" (Green Party 2010a:1). Members of the group are self-selected and can "participate as actively or passively as they wish" (Green Party 2011b:1). Issue Groups can include any Party member, MPs, Parliamentary Researchers, and "external individuals or groups" who are approved by a Policy Convenor (Green Party 2008a:1). Members work online over a forum or email list to discuss what the Greens' policy should be on their topic

The process for Issue Groups is designed to allow the members as much self-direction as possible. Before a Group is set up, the Policy Program Coordinator and Issue Convenor will agree upon the scope, timing, and format of the document (Green Party 2007:2). Then, the Issue Convenor, guided by the *Issue Convenor Guidelines* (Green Party 2010b) and the *Policy Document Development Guidelines* (Green Party 2008a), facilitates an Issue Group to produce a draft document. The discussion continues until the Group can produce a document to take to the wider membership for consultation or until they run out of time. While the Issue Group ought to reach consensus about their draft document, if there is disagreement among the group, the different proposals are included in the final document to "enable the membership to consider the issues" (Green Party 2007:2)

When the Issue Group has completed the discussion document, it goes through a series of reviews before being released for consultation among the membership. The Issue Convenor takes the discussion document to the Policy Committee for review and they suggest any changes that are needed. If required, changes are made by the Issue Convenor, the Strategic Policy Advisor or the Policy Program Coordinator (Green Party 2007:2). After that, the discussion document is sent to Caucus and the Media Unit for consideration. The *Policy Guidelines* (Green Party 2007:2) notes that “due to MP and Caucus involvement earlier in the process, it is unlikely there will be major disagreement on the content of the document at this stage.” If there are disagreements, however, the additional viewpoints are also included in the discussion document by the Strategic Policy Advisor (Green Party 2007:2). Finally, in the last stage of before membership consultation, the Policy Committee will decide on its Conference Call whether to “release” it to the membership for feedback or not (Green Party 2007:3).

Once the document has been released to the membership, it enters stage three. In this stage, Policy Networkers “facilitate discussion and feedback from the membership in their province” over a predetermined period of time (Green Party 2007:2). The standard time period for feedback is between six weeks and two months, although the Committee has the authority to determine the length of consultation at its discretion (Green Party 2007:2). General Party members provide their view on the policy proposals. After all their feedback has been collated, any reasonable changes they suggest are made by the Policy Program Coordinator, Strategic Policy Advisor, Issue Convenor, and sometimes in consultation with the Issue Group (Green Party 2007:2). If substantive changes were made to the proposal, the discussion document is put out for consultation with the membership again although, this time, the members can only comment on the changes that were made to the original discussion document (Green Party 2007:3). If the members continue to fundamentally disagree about the discussion document’s content, then the Policy Committee will not approve it and the contentious issues process will be initiated (Green Party 2007:5). Conversely, if the membership indicates they agree with the amendments, the Policy Committee approves the discussion document and sends it to the Strategic Policy Advisor who formats it into a draft policy document (Green Party 2007:3).

The process for draft policy documents is broadly the same as for discussion documents and this is the final stage of the process before the policy becomes

ratified. The draft policy document is drawn up by the Strategic Policy Advisor in consultation with the Issue Convenor, parliamentary researcher, Member of Parliament, and Policy Program Coordinator (Green Party 2007:3). The draft policy document is then reviewed by the Policy Committee before it is released to the membership who can again provide feedback on the amended points. If supplementary issues are raised by the membership, these go into the issue identification stage (Green Party 2007:3). Members' feedback is incorporated into the draft policy document by the Strategic Policy Advisor if required, and then rechecked by the Policy Committee (Green Party 2007: 3). Once this is done, or if no amendments are necessary, the policy is ratified by the Policy Committee at its next meeting (Green Party 2007:3). The main difference between these two processes is that draft policy documents are not sent to Caucus for 'consideration' before release to the membership for consultation. Rather, only the ratified policy is expressly sent to Caucus, and the "Policy Co-Convenors report to Executive that the policy has been ratified" (Green Party 2007:3).

If a fundamental disagreement occurs within the membership about a policy proposal, the contentious issues process is activated (Green Party 2007:5). This process allows the Party to democratically decide which policy they would like to pursue. The first step of this process is that the members(s) who oppose the proposal "prepare an alternative document that sets out the reasons for their disagreement and suggested changes" (Green Party 2007:5). Then, both the 'disagreement' document and the original document are taken to Provincial members by their Policy Networkers for consultation "to get a provincial view on the issue" (Green Party 2007:5). After reporting back on the provincial view to the Policy Committee, Policy Networkers will vote by Province as to which document they prefer to ratify (Green Party 2007:5). As an alternative, the Committee could "attempt to resolve the issue through consensus at a Party conference. [However,] this approach [is] only... used for extremely contentious policy issues that have the capacity to affect Party unity" (Green Party 2007:5). Therefore, when there is disagreement within the Party, the first resolution process used is democratic decision-making and, secondly, as a last resort, a face-to-face discussion where members can reach consensus.

The Principle of Appropriate Decision-Making is clearly evident at all stages of the full policy process, which places most directive power with the membership because they are deemed to be the appropriate level at which to develop policy. From the

outset, members can advocate which policy issues should be worked on and contribute to the outcome of the policy content via participation in Issue Groups and providing feedback on documents. The Policy Committee ensures that the final policy reflects most members' views by aiming to achieve broad approval of the policy by working through disagreements between members. Therefore, while the Policy Committee (itself comprised of representative Party members) exercises formal decision-making power by releasing and ratifying policies, they are bound by the *Policy Guidelines* (Green Party 2007) to ensure the policy they approve reflects what the general membership wants. For the Greens, this is appropriate policy-making.

4.2.2 The Urgent Policy Process

The second appropriate way to make policy decisions in the Green Party is with urgent policy process. This process was used several times during my fieldwork period as the development of policy needed for the Election campaign often required quick decisions. Unlike the full policy process, the urgent policy process can only be initiated by the Policy Committee or Caucus to bring issues needing pressing attention and quick decisions “due to parliamentary pressure” to the Policy Committee (Green Party 2007:2). To do this, the Co-Leaders or Caucus Representative on the Policy Committee must “get agreement from at least one of the Policy Co-Convenors that “the urgent process is the “appropriate process” to use (Green Party 2007:4). Two different processes can be used under urgency, depending on how soon a policy position is needed.

If a policy position is needed *within one week or less*, then at minimum one Policy-Co-Convenor, the Party Co-Leaders or the Caucus Representative on Policy Committee, in addition to as many Policy Committee members as can be contacted can make a decision on the issue (Green Party 2007:4). The Policy Co-Convenors must then inform the Policy Committee of the decision within forty-eight hours. If a policy position is needed in *one month or less*, the Party Co-Leaders or Caucus Representative present a position paper of their own making to the Policy Co-Convenors who will decide if an urgent process is appropriate. If it is deemed appropriate, the position paper is passed on to Policy Networkers who take it to their provincial members for feedback over a set time period (Green Party 2007:4). After the members' feedback is collated, the Committee will then “hold a conference call

with the Party Co-Leaders and/or the Caucus Representative to make a decision on the issue based on the response from the provincial membership.” However, if a conference call is not possible, only those members of the Policy Committee that can be contacted in time (though always including at least one Policy Co-Convenor) will decide on the issue with the Co-Leaders and/or Caucus Representative (Green Party 2007:4).

However, for both of these urgent processes, the interim policy is put out for the membership to review following a decision. To do this, the Strategic Policy Advisor draws up a draft policy document from the position paper which is then released for consultation with the membership (Green Party 2007:4). If the membership does not object to the interim policy, then the Policy Committee ratifies it at its next meeting. However, if the membership does object, the Strategic Policy Advisor will construct a discussion document so the policy can go through the full policy process (Green Party 2007:4). What this means is that even in the case where urgent policy decisions need to be made quickly by a small group, these decisions are always reviewed by the membership who are able to direct a change to them. It should be noted, however, that the Policy Committee, as constituted by Provincial representatives and having the guidance of the Strategic Policy Advisor, is a good judge of whether a policy is consistent with the general direction of the membership; as such, it is extremely unlikely a policy that is inconsistent with the Charter, ratified Green Party policy, or the membership’s wishes would pass through the urgent process. Thus, even though the Policy Committee exercises greater decision-making power under the urgent policy process than the full policy process because of time constraints, they still always consult with members about the policy and take their directives into account. The urgent policy process, then, allows the Committee to be efficient and responsive to Caucus’ needs, while still being democratic.

4.3 Conclusion

The objective structure of the policy-making field is set out in the *Policy Guidelines* (Green Party 2007) which details both the formal relations between the Policy Committee, Issue Groups, and Caucus, as well as the formal policy-making processes. However, the field, is not unpopulated and as agents enter into the field and experience its effects they either tend to reproduce or reconfigure the field through their practice. As this history has shown, the structure of the field of policy-

making has tended to be reproduced, with remarkably little change in its overall structure. This is because the principles which generate the structure of the field – Appropriate Decision-Making and Green decision-making – have shaped it from the outset and have not changed in value for the agents in the field. Consequently, because the doxa of Appropriate Decision-Making and the orthodoxy of Green decision-making are made and remade through agents' practices, the structures which are generated by and reproduce the doxa and orthodoxy are also durable.

The durability of the Green's concern that decisions regarding policy are made appropriately can be seen in the current policy processes. At all stages, feedback from the general Party membership is sought to give decision-makers directives about what members want with regard to policy content. Currently, formal decision-making power is exercised by the Policy Committee who release documents to members for feedback and ratify policy. This pluralistic system allows the Party to appropriately balance its principles of democracy, efficiency, and the production of robust policy (congruence) within its objective structures. However, as we will see in the next three Chapters, balancing the principles of Green decision-making in practice requires a lot of work from members of the Policy Committee and can, at times, be difficult.

CHAPTER FIVE: THE PRACTICES OF THE POLICY COMMITTEE

The Policy Committee is the policy-making body in the Green Party which is “responsible for the development and ratification of the Party policy and processes” (Green Party 2011a:11.1). As such, their practices and the meanings they share are central to understanding policy-making in the Green Party. Through an exploration of both what the Policy Networkers of the Committee said they do and what they actually do in practice, this Chapter will show how the Committee works to enact the Principle of Appropriate Decision-Making when it creates policy. Using the case study of the Population Policy amendment, I will detail the immense amount of work the Policy Committee does to ensure they are making appropriate decisions by negotiating among the four principles of Green decision-making: consensus, democracy, congruence, and electoral safety. This will build the case that the Policy Committee members are guided by an appropriateness-attuned habitus which prompts them to always ethically reflect on whether they are enacting Green decision-making principles as they navigate the intricacies of their policy-making practices and work to make appropriate decisions.

5.1 Guardians and Critics: A Dual Role

Members of the Policy Committee understand that they have a dual role: to be “guardians of the process” (Steve) and to critically evaluate the content of policy. There is often a tension between these two roles as Committee members attempt to negotiate between upholding a high degree of general Party membership input into the process under their guardianship role, and ensuring they make sound, politically palatable policy under their critical role. This dual role was evident when Committee members talked to me about what they do.

The first time I heard the phrase ‘guardians of the process’ was at the June Policy Committee Face-to-Face Meeting. Steve asserted to the group that the role of Policy Networkers was “not to make policy – a realization that disappoints some when that are elected – but, rather, Policy Networkers are guardians of the process.” The

processes Steve was referring to in his statement are those contained in the *Policy Guidelines* (Green Party 2007). By drawing the group's attention to the primacy of the *Policy Guidelines*, Steve was gently reminding them that it is not the individuals on the Policy Committee who make policy but rather that the membership directs the Committee as to the policy they would like to see developed and ratified.

However, the Policy Committee is not bound to do exactly as the membership wishes, and this results in the second role of the Committee: to be critical about policy content. The Policy Committee evaluates members' feedback and input to ensure that the policies they are developing are congruent and electorally safe. Marlene described what she did under this part of the Policy Networker role to me:

I was... very active in debating the policy itself rather than the process; so I would question and challenge people's assumptions behind their reasoning and say, 'Well, is this consistent? Look at what our other policy says', and so on... When there isn't consensus among the membership... we work through that feedback and say 'Is it reasonable? Is it actually based in fact?'...And if we decide not... we may decide, 'Actually, it's not grounded enough to block the policy going ahead (Marlene).

Criteria by which Policy Committee members should evaluate policy are not outlined but, in these quotes, Marlene highlights several factors which guide the Committee when thinking critically about policies: consistency with the Charter and other policies, whether the proposal could be realized in practice, and up-to-date research.

There is an inherent tension between these two roles which Policy Committee members constantly negotiate. On one hand, their guardianship role entails the Committee being directed by the wishes of the membership to ensure democratic decision-making at the appropriate policy-making level is occurring; on the other hand, because there is usually not consensus among the membership on policy proposals or because the members' wishes are deemed unreasonable under their critical role, the Policy Committee sometimes chooses to reject members' views. The Policy Committee constantly negotiates, then, between democratic decision-making and congruence as part of enacting Green decision-making. As John said to me, "We've got to find that balance between pushing out [to the members], and doing it ourselves."

When I talked to Policy Committee members about what their role was, they usually talked about the guardianship role, which meant they emphasized the networking they did between the Policy Committee and members when seeking feedback. For example, Antony defined being a Policy Networker as 'linking': "There's the dealing with the Province and the people via the Province, and then there's going back the other way and actually dealing with the Policy Committee, obviously." Henry reflected Antony's definition, saying:

My understanding of the job is to be the link person between the Policy Committee and the membership... it's really just that channel of communication... I see it very much as an administrative function in which I chip in my own views from time to time, but it's really to try to give the other people around an opportunity to speak as much as me.

Betty, conversely, highlighted the critical role of Policy Networkers more than Antony and Henry. She said:

It's inviting the membership to take part in the process, also being very conscious of the things that are involved in it. It's knowing what the policy is about and therefore looking at it constructively to say, 'Well, are there any issues with this? Is it consistent with the Charter?' Which is absolutely the bottom line (Betty).

Thus, the guardian-critic tension shaped Policy Networkers' views of what their position entailed.

When I talked to Policy Networkers about *what they did*, however, the critical role was nearly absent as they largely talked to me about how they engage with their Provincial membership and report it back to the Committee. This is only a small part of the work Policy Networkers actually do. During my fieldwork, and as a Policy Networker myself, the work also consisted of participating in monthly Policy Committee conference calls, three-monthly Face-to-Face meetings, planning the Summer Policy Conference, preparing for an organizational review, keeping the Green Party's canon of policy up-to-date, and keeping each other updated about the significant life events of Committee members, such as births and honeymoons. Alongside these major tasks sat smaller mundane concerns necessary for the functioning of the Committee, such as deciding what we should have for lunch at a Face-to-Face meeting and what format to send files in over the email list. Additionally, the 'pedantic' work of the Policy Committee, such as deciding whether a comma change in a sentence would also alter the sentence's meaning, occupied

a lot of its time. In fact, what the Committee called pedantry – the very careful attention to minute detail in a policy document – occupied so much of the Policy Networker’s energy that it became an inside joke. The Policy Committee was often referred to among its members as “the Home of Pedantry.”

Part of the reason, I believe, that Policy Networkers did not primarily talk about these tasks because they are not contained in the *Policy Guidelines* (Green Party 2007) and there is not a ready explanation of them; in fact, when people ask me what a Policy Networker does, I tell the same stories the Networkers told me because it is easier and simpler to explain the process rather than the practices. I also believe there is a focus on liaising because Networkers feel that their most important task is the ‘linking’ role as it ensures a democratic and participatory policy-making process is happening.

The practices Policy Networkers described to me generally followed the same pattern. When a policy document is being sent to the membership for feedback, the Networker in charge of emailing in a Province will create an email introducing the attached document to members and asking for their feedback on it. They will then forward any feedback they receive to the Policy Network Email List. Sometimes, Networkers will discuss policy at branch meetings, but this has mixed results in terms of members’ interest. James was one Networker who followed this general pattern. In our interview, he described what he did:

I send an email out. I first craft the [presentation of the] policy and craft the questions around that, trying to make them neutral, and make them controversial, and try to get a response. If you send out a policy document that asks ‘Is this okay?’, I find that you only get answers back that really want a change, compared to those that are happy with it. So I try to phrase questions to facilitate feedback and make things easier... I send them out to Branch Policy Contacts [a member in each branch who is meant to “drive discussion”] and they’re *meant* to circulate them through the branch. I know what I do in my own one; I actually go and have a sit-down session and we always put feedback in. And that, hypothetically, is what should happen in other branches, but it doesn’t. So we’re looking at replacing it by going around to each branch meeting... once or twice to show how policy discussions can and should happen (James).

Lana also undertook similar practices to James. She found her task challenging at times because, even though she had a high number of Greens in her Province, she had trouble getting feedback from them. She said:

I have offered to go to meetings of various branches and I've offered to facilitate various discussions, and I have people ring me to discuss things. But they never take it up. And I think it's probably because it's Election year, but even so. I think that people aren't terribly interested in policy in [my Province]; most are more interested in poli-*tics* and that side of the game almost... I send [policy] out in the monthly [Provincial] newsletter and say, 'These ones are being done, here's the link to the website, call me if you want to discuss or if you want me to come to a meeting'. But I know there are some others who put in a lot more detail; not just the title of the policy but 'This is what we're discussing and these are the key points and stuff'. So I've done that a few times now. Like with the alcohol one, I've said it covers issues such as licensing and this and that, in the hope that that would peak people's interest and get more feedback... I got four or five that time, sometimes I get nothing or one or two. I even got one from [an MP] (Lana).

When I participated as a Policy Networker, I followed a very similar pattern of practice. Gerry, my fellow Networker, and I decided to divide the tasks networking between us following my election to the role. As a result, I had the job of sending out policy documents to the Province. I would first create an email which emphasized the importance of members' feedback in creating Green Party policy. I would also summarize the policy proposal under question and ask members to send their responses to Gerry or I by the deadline. I would send this to the Provincial Email List, which has all Provincial members with a titled role on it, and then ask the Branch Convenors on the email list to forward my email to their branch members. Finally, I would forward any email feedback I received to the Policy Network Email List. This circular email chain meant that all Provincial members could be easily reached for feedback despite the large geographical area which precluded Gerry and I from attending all branch meetings to discuss policy proposals. Over the year, I sent five of these feedback emails. When my local branch meetings were held within the deadline, I also talked to members present about the policies, or asked them to check their emails and send a reply. Seeking feedback was the activity I spent the least amount of time on as a Policy Networker, but it was central and understood as important for ensuring that the *Policy Guidelines* (Green Party 2007) were being followed and that policy was being made with the input of general Party members. Networking provincially is a necessary activity for ensuring the Party's policy-making process is democratic and participatory.

What these descriptions of networking practices highlight are the ways in which Policy Networkers undertake their task of being "responsible for encouraging participation of the provincial membership in the policy process and representing the views of these members on the [Policy Committee]" as part of the *Policy Guidelines*

(Green Party 2007:2). As a result of this, Networkers generally described the ways in which they maintained, managed, and expanded the links of communication between their membership and the Policy Committee to encourage members' participation in policy-making. In doing so, Networkers reproduced the Principle of Appropriate Decision-Making by making sure direction about policy content was being sought at the right level – from the general membership.

5.2 The Population Policy Amendment

The Population Policy amendment¹³ decision offers a good case with which to examine the work the Policy Committee does to ensure it is making decisions appropriately. The ratified Population Policy applies the Charter Principle of Ecological Wisdom to populations. Generally, the Policy states that the population of the Earth should not exceed its carrying capacity. It also includes specific measures to address this in New Zealand, such as seeking to reduce per capita and total ecological footprints, and being a responsible international citizen by “accepting its share of climate change refugees particularly from Pacific Island countries” (Green Party 2011c:1.2,5.2). Whether or not to make amendments to the ratified Policy was discussed at the late-August Policy Committee Face-to-Face meeting¹⁴. The timing of this discussion was significant as it was very close to the beginning of the Election campaign period, so a decision had to be made quickly. The justification for the changing the Policy was that during the 2008 Election campaign, it had been widely misinterpreted by the media and the Green Party was forced to defend itself after National, Act, and the Maori parties likened it to China's 'One Child' Policy, stating that it was the first step toward population control (see Trevett 2008, and for the Green Party's response see Locke 2008). The Policy, therefore, had been politically 'risky' in the past. During the discussion, an immense amount of work was done to negotiate a balance between democracy, congruence, and electoral safety while using the consensus process to make a decision about changes to the Population Policy. Practicing appropriate decision-making, in this instance, required a lot of effort from the Committee members.

¹³ A policy amendment is another policy process available under the *Policy Guidelines*. It enables ratified Green Party policy to be updated in order to ensure the accuracy and relevance of the policy (Green Party 2007:7).

¹⁴ I was kindly given permission to tape-record the discussion by members present.

The particularly risky section of the Policy was point 2.3. It read: “The Green Party will support initiatives to raise public awareness regarding the issue of sustainable global population levels among parents and potential parents” (Green Party 2011c:2.3). To eliminate the political risk, the Greens’ Parliamentary Team had requested it be removed altogether. However, the Issue Group that originally created the Population Policy disagreed with the Parliamentary Team’s proposal to remove the policy point. Instead, they suggested that the policy point be reworded and shortened to: “The Green Party will promote initiatives to raise public awareness regarding the issue of sustainable global population levels.” This wording of policy point 2.3 was the proposed amendment under discussion.

Before policy point 2.3 was discussed, however, the Committee had a pedantic discussion about whether “birth rates” needed to be preceded by “a” or “the”¹⁵. This discussion concerned the introduction to the section proposed for amendment, which read:

In the last century, New Zealand has gone through a "demographic transition" from high birth rate and high mortality rate to low birth rate and low mortality. This means that people are having fewer babies and are living longer. This drop in birth rate has been a worldwide trend in countries with good education, health and welfare services... (email to Policy Network Email List, August 23, 2011).

Lucy sparked the discussion by commenting: “I have just one question about this too. Where it says ‘From high birth rate’ should it not be ‘from *a* high birth rate?’” It took a while to find which part of the proposal Lucy was talking about, and then to clarify, “So is it the first, second, or third sentence?” (Steve). “First sentence,” confirmed Jake. Lucy added, “Well, it’s in the first sentence, and also in the third sentence. I’m wondering if it should be ‘drop in *the* birth rate’.” “A high birth rate,” suggested Donna. “That’s what I’m not sure about, whether it needs the qualifiers of *a* and *the*,” continued Lucy. Jake said, “Well, the first one does need it.” “An *a*?” clarified Steve. “Yep,” Jake confirmed. Lucy continued the discussion, saying, “It’s in that sentence twice: ‘from *a* higher birth rate’.” Sharon mused, “‘From high birth rate and high mortality to low birth rate and low mortality rate’. Do you want to put ‘*a*’ in

¹⁵ This is an example of an administrative update which is a process used to ensure a policy “still ‘makes sense’ because changes in government policies, legislation, or new knowledge may have occurred since the policy’s ratification” (Green Party 2007:5). Administrative updates are also used to clarify wording, grammar, and format. They can be made by the Policy Committee and do not need to be released to the membership for consultation if the updates are not ‘substantive’ (Green Party 2007:5).

front of all those ‘birth rates’?” Steve said, “I think just the first one and you can get away with it.” “Yeah, I think just the first one needs it,” said Jake in support. Lucy questioned, “Oh, really? Okay.” Andrew opposed Steve and Jake, saying, “I think you have to do both.” Lucy continued, “Well, it feels like it should either be ‘the’ or ‘a’ birth rate, or ‘birth rates’, and I’m not sure exactly which.”

Mark said he thought the existing wording was “a mistake” and Donna countered, “I actually think it’s an overly verbose sentence.” This was met by laughter from the group – like the need to pay pedantic attention to detail, the lengthy and convoluted wording of some of the older policies was both frustrating and funny. The group had just talked about this problem in the discussion before the Population Policy Amendment, causing Jake to exasperate, “Are we getting into this?!” “We’ve done it again!” laughed Lucy. Donna brought the conversation back to the Population Policy wording, saying, “When demographers talk generally, they talk about high birth, high mortality, low birth, low mortality, and it’s quite a standard acceptance. So you don’t need rates so many times.” Sharon replied, “Yeah... it may be accepted in the technical context, but that’s going to confuse lay readers.” Jake agreed with Sharon and continued, “‘*The*’ and ‘*a*’ hasn’t been used in Wikipedia... it says, ‘countries by birth rate’, not ‘countries by *the* birth rate’... And I take Wikipedia as the source on everything.” At this statement, there was loud laughter from Jake and others in the group, followed by Steve sarcastically joking, “They’re right on everything, aren’t they?” More laughter ensued, until Jake asked, “So apart from that, is everyone...?” Sharon replied, “I’m not sure, did we actually agree to what we were going to do there?” Lucy stated we hadn’t, which Sharon confirmed, “I didn’t think we did.” Before a decision was made, however, Donna sparked the beginning of the conversation about policy point 2.3 by saying, “I don’t think this is actually a good time to be sticking this around in public.” The debate about ‘a’ and ‘the’ was a particularly pedantic discussion about minor detail and, as a result, Policy Committee members found it somewhat funny (in retrospect); there are references to ‘a-s’ and ‘the-s’ by Committee members throughout the following conversation used in a joking manner to highlight their pedantry.

Donna’s statement effectively moved discussion about the Population Policy amendment to policy point 2.3 and which policy-making process would be appropriate to use to make any changes. Following her statement that the Population Policy should not be ‘stuck around’ in public, Donna proposed that the amendment for policy point 2.3 should be ratified under the urgent process in the

interim and reviewed by the membership after the Election. There were murmurs of agreement from other Committee members, and Steve elaborated on the political risk stating, “It was used as a stick at the last Election... and there’s no reason to put that stick back into the hands of the same idiots.” Myra drew attention to the membership’s involvement in the amendment, saying, “The [Population] Issue Group are basically comfortable with the proposed amendment as the group of people who have the most vested interested in developing the policy in the first place.” She also said she was “very worried about taking up to much of [the membership’s] energy and time looking at documents.”

The conversation continued with assertions from Donna and Jake that the members in their Provinces were not interested in the proposed change, arguing that the people they had talked to do not think the change, as well as other similar changes released for feedback during the Election campaign, were significant enough to be sent out. In doing this, both Donna and Jake were suggesting that the change was not substantial enough to be sent to the membership for consultation, meaning the urgent process was appropriate to use. This sparked Steve to evaluate the tension between the guardian and critical roles, as well as the pedantic focus of the Policy Committee. He asked Jake:

Right, [your Province is] just like ‘get on with it?’... [Jake confirms] I appreciate that, ‘cause I also agree that, again, this is that tension where they say, ‘No, no, no; we trust you, get on with it; unless...’ We [the Policy Committee] see it as a substantive update because we are policy-obsessed; we are the pundits! [Laughs]. Whereas they go, ‘What?! You’re arguing over an ‘a’ and ‘the’ in front of birth rate?! Go away!’ [Laughter among group].

The discussion then became more focused on whether the urgent process could be used or whether the proposal was ‘substantive’ enough that it needed to be released to the membership for consultation before the Committee made a decision to change the existing policy. Deciding whether a change is substantive is an important part of the policy process because significant and important changes should be sent to the membership for feedback to ensure democracy occurs. Myra began the discussion when she stated that the assessment of substantiveness was “a political judgment in a way, whether our feeling for how the membership is guided, whether it actually represents a change in the general direction that the membership are heading in, or assuming as being the outcome, or actually taking a different tack.” She continued on to say that the Population Policy amendment proposal was “carrying on in the same direction but tweaking it a bit. And it’s

substantive in the sense that it politically makes us less vulnerable, but it's not likely to meet with any major resistance from the membership." Later, we returned to this discussion, when Jake asked whether we could ratify the amendment as an administrative update. However, Myra replied that the proposal was

more than administrative, but probably doesn't *quite* meet the threshold for needing to send it out at this time, so I think the urgent process is a better way to go with this. Administrative I would keep to things like updating the dates in the policy, updating the names of departments, removing policy that's no longer relevant or has already been implemented... Or a grammar change that we've considered just makes it clearer, that we've picked up. But other than that, if you start moving beyond that, that's moving away from administrative to 'we need to assess whether this is substantive or not'. And if it's substantive, then is it substantive to the degree that it justifies membership consultation? So there's two steps along the way.

The discussion moved onto the particulars of the urgent process contained in the *Policy Guidelines* (Green Party 2007) as the group began to work out whether it was appropriate to make an interim change to the Policy and consult with the membership on it after the Election. Mark initiated the discussion by saying that he thought neither the urgent nor the administrative processes were appropriate to use for the proposal because there was "no clear reason why it should be urgent; there hasn't been anything that's happened in Parliament, for example." He concluded that he thought "it would be an abuse of process" to ratify the document urgently or as an administrative update. Jake agreed and pointed to the technical wording of the *Policy Guidelines* (Green Party 2007) saying, "it looks like urgency is only allowed or intended to be allowed under Parliamentary pressure." Steve and Donna replied that the Policy Committee had the authority to undertake an urgent process if they wanted to because they were responsible for all policies and policy processes under the Party's Constitution. Steve continued, "the question is, is it an abuse of power? It's a fair question." Sharon clarified Steve's question, asking, "is this an abuse of the purpose that the urgent process was created for in that it is not urgent, it's merely something that we think that our membership might not want to be hassled about at this time?" Here, then, the Policy Committee was reflecting on what needed balancing in terms of being able to decide which process to use for the amendment: the technical process as outlined in the *Policy Guidelines*, the intent of the process, and their authority over policy processes as contained in the Party's Constitution. In this discussion, the Committee was working out which factors needed to be taken into account to determine whether they were making an appropriate decision.

Highlighting the need for electoral safety, Steve worked to build the case for using the urgent process by saying that the Committee needed to consider the political pressure to change the Policy, which was implicit: “You could easily *make* an argument that we have been under pressure by parliament to clean the politics out of this particular policy. So there is parliamentary pressure, it’s just whether it’s urgent or not; which is a fair question.” He said the argument could be made that “we’re ten weeks out from an Election, we have an agreed change, therefore it’s kinda urgent that we kinda do that now and ratify it later.” Myra supported Steve’s assessment: “It’s campaign pressure, it’s a political risk pressure in an Election period, so I think it does qualify.” Steve continued on from Myra’s statement: “I lean toward it qualifying; we haven’t had a formal request from our Co-Leaders, we haven’t had a formal request from our [Policy] Co-Convenors, or from a particular Province [as the *Policy Guidelines* state we need], but we certainly have had conversations from all those angles.”

Jake, however, challenged Steve’s interpretation of the *Policy Guidelines* by asking, “Excuse me for being stupid, but can someone point out in these *Guidelines* where it states that [the Policy Co-Convenors] *can* start this process? ‘Cause I’m looking in there and it states that ‘People responsible are the Co-Leaders or Caucus Representative to initiate this process’.” Steve responded, “Okay, yeah. I guess the assumption always was that it was the Leadership Group¹⁶, as opposed to specific Co-Leaders, but you’re right.” Jake added, “It says that they must present a position paper to [the two Policy Co-Convenors].” Donna stated that that was what the proposed amendment was. Steve continued: ‘Yes, and that was actually to prevent *them* from abusing the process! [Steve laughs loudly, others chuckle]. Of course, the other thing is, in terms of policy, we are supreme.” Jake agreed, “We can change these *Guidelines*;” to which Steve replied, “Exactly.” Donna concluded, “Guidelines are precisely that; they’re not set in concrete, they’re just guidelines.”

Steve stated that the Policy Committee’s conversation about the proper process showed that they were doing appropriate decision-making. By stating this, Steve was highlighting the way the Committee was negotiating between the aspects of Green decision-making, reflecting which principles they should prioritize in order to ensure their decision about the amendment was appropriate. He went on to say that

¹⁶ The Leadership Group is comprised of the Green Party Co-Leaders, Policy Co-Convenors, and Executive Co-Convenors.

“because we are supreme, we need to talk about it. But our hands are not tied.” He directed conversation back to the Population Policy proposal, saying that ratifying it under urgency and then going back to the membership after the Election, “as we do according to our *Guidelines*,” was something the Committee had done “for the previous two Elections... we’ve done all sorts of crazy shit in the lead up to Elections!” Donna confirmed that it “actually goes all the way back to the nineties,” and Steve reiterated, “This is not anything out of the ordinary we’re talking about doing.”

Jake asked Steve what he thought Policy Committee should do about the proposal, since Steve was also on the Campaign Committee who had asked for the change. Steve replied:

These are substantive changes, but to me they’re not *radical* changes and, to me, all this is doing is putting a damp cloth over a potential little flare-up and if we go through a proper membership process after the Election, I’m happy. Because I do see it as substantive; I’m not arguing that at all, it is substantive, but I don’t think it’s a *radical* shift in direction and therefore I don’t think we’re actually abusing any powers by ratifying now and cleaning up after the Election. In fact, this is the first Election we’ve had where we haven’t had a *laundry list* of things we’ve had to go back to the members about after the Election.

Most members present agreed with Steve that the amendment was substantial but not radical. Sharon suggested that if the Policy Committee thought there was a chance members would oppose the amendment, then it should be released for consultation but, if the Committee judged that there would not be opposition from the membership, Sharon suggested “we should just ratify it under this interim process.” Jake affirmed this by saying “the seven Policy Networkers who are required to [reach quorum to] ratify it would probably be a barometer of the membership.” Steve supported Jake’s assertion, but drew attention to the tension inherent when a representative body is operating in a democratic system:

That is correct; we are a delegated body, absolutely right... and that’s the natural tension of our policy process, is trying to keep it democratic while at the same time saying, ‘Well actually, we’re delegated; let’s get on with it’. And how do we not abuse either direction, ‘cause you’re right, maybe it’s abuse of our members to go out with horribly boring word changes [Group laughs]. But you’re right; it is almost absurd when there is a delegated authority to represent [the Province] on the ‘a-s’ and ‘*the-s*’ of policy.

The conversation again returned to the Population Policy amendment as Mark stated that he agreed that we “shouldn’t be sending out non-substantive changes... but this [proposal] seems to me like we’re deliberately avoiding the elephant in the room even though our membership have decided that we should try to discourage parents by talking to them...” Steve said he agreed, but added that he would be happy to ratify it in the interim with the proviso that we would take it to the membership after the Election. Steve asked if people were “happy” to do that while acknowledging it was a substantive change. Three members replied yes but Mark expressed his opposition to the content changes in the proposal. Sharon replied that they had talked to some members about the content – the Issue Group – and they “did not feel that this new wording meant anything different from what they were thinking when they wrote the original one, even though it technically means something slightly different.”

Julie entered the discussion for the first time at this point and asked Mark if he would like to record his disagreement or would block consensus. However, Mark disputed Julie’s attempt to move toward reaching a decision because, he stated, he thought it was important to have the discussion on the Policy Committee if the change was not going to be sent to the membership before ratification. Mark raised another objection – that the MPs elected would be bound by the change under the *Party-Caucus Agreement* (Green Party 2009b) before the membership had had a chance to participate. This was quickly rebuffed by Donna and Steve who argued that the change placed fewer restrictions, in terms of policy, on the MPs instead of more.

Steve returned to Mark’s concerns by saying that some members and the Issue Group had been consulted, and, “at the moment, I don’t think anyone else in the room has that same content concern as you; I’m just wondering if you are happy to let it go?” Mark asked for a straw poll¹⁷ “of the room just to see if anyone does feel the same way.” Steve replied, “Sure!” Mark stated his position, which was:

I’m also uncomfortable with the process ‘cause I know that if I feel this way there’s other members who haven’t been consulted who would feel that way.

¹⁷ Straw polls are one of the main methods used in the consensus process when there is disagreement among members. They are an informal vote which “tests the floor” to see how much agreement or disagreement there is within the group (Jenny). In doing this, they allow members to evaluate the level of disagreement and, from there, work out other appropriate strategies for reaching an agreement.

Obviously, if everyone in the room feels that the process is okay, and that they disagree with me on the content, then I would like to have my objections recorded but I won't block consensus. If there's other people who agree with me, then I think [Speaking quietly] that I would want to block consensus.

Steve conducted a straw poll based on the Population Policy proposal's content and Mark was the only Policy Networker to object. Seeing from the straw poll that 'everyone else in the room' felt that the content was 'okay', Mark chose to have his concerns recorded in the minutes but did not block consensus. In doing this, Mark indicated that he still disagreed with the content change of the Population Policy amendment but was willing to let the proposal proceed. Therefore, a consensus decision was reached that the changes proposed in the Population Policy amendment were appropriate.

As Steve began to formulate the question for the straw poll on process, Jake interrupted and said, "I'm planning on voting no, not 'cause I'm unhappy [but] because I have concerns." Steve replied, "Well, vote against it, because then we can look at alternatives. There's more than one way to slice this cat so I'm not that fussed about it. Sorry, it's a horrible expression and I've used it since I was knee high to a grasshopper! [Laughter]. But it is a horrible expression." This sparked a series of jokes which lightened the atmosphere of the meeting. Peter quickly responded – referencing Steve's imposing stature – "Tall grasshoppers!" Lucy added, "You were very advanced for your age!" Steve joined in the joke as he repeated, "God, it is a horrible expression!" "Either that or they have much bigger grasshoppers!" added Karen. Steve replied, laughing, "We've got big grasshoppers in [my home country]!" This brief exchange of jokes eased the mood of the group, which had become slightly tense as the discussion became more serious when blocking consensus was posited by Mark. By doing this, the Committee was reinforcing their collectivity following the threat of a split via blocking consensus because members shared an understanding that they were tightly-knit enough to joke at Steve's expense without causing offence.

After the laughter died down, Steve brought the group back to the discussion by asking Jake if he had an alternative process proposal. Jake replied:

I'm happy with the process to go ahead, I'd just like to note that I have some concerns 'cause I fear that this could be abused. I don't think it's being abused in this case, but I think this process could be abused in some

situations so I want to note my concern I'm not one hundred per cent on this process.

Kate clarified, "You feel we're setting a precedent for future abuse?" "Possibly," Jake replied, "It's more that I want to put that I don't want this process to become a matter of regularity; but I'm very happy with it being used in this particular case." Myra outlined the solution to Jake's concern: "It's about always asking ourselves... 'How big is the change that we are putting through this process and are we really comfortable and sure that this is something that's consistent with our existing policy and direction and so on?... I think that's very appropriate.'" Steve affirmed, "I think asking these questions, just as we're doing now, and flushing this out just as we're doing now, is appropriate process. So I totally take on board what you're saying 'cause you're right; we're always at risk of becoming a little clique that decides everything." After further comments, Steve continued, saying that feedback from Issue Groups gave us "a very clear steer about what's reasonable and what's not."

Steve straw polled the group about whether we were happy with the urgent process being used. Mark voiced his opposition saying, "I'm unhappy with process; I do consider it to be a bit of an abuse of the process 'cause I do see this as being a substantive change as I've discussed earlier, and I really think that I would like to see things like this go out to the membership." Steve asked Mark, "You don't think going out to the membership after the Election is adequate?" "I think that it gives the membership a lot more input if they go out before the Election given that's what we're campaigning on essentially," replied Mark. Steve contested this assertion, saying he would, "personally, make the opposite argument – taking all facilitation hats off – I would say actually we're gonna get a response from the membership if we do this even after the Election and they're gonna ignore us before the Election." Two members in the room voiced their agreement with Steve; Donna said, "I wouldn't dare put it out at my end," while Peter agreed, "No, we've got an Election to win."

Mark clarified his position to the group, saying he would "rather that we didn't [use] this process as an alternative of waiting until after the Election before doing anything at all." Steve clarified, "So keep the status quo?" "Yes," replied Mark, "as in, not change the policy under any process until after the Election and then if there's interest in changing it, to look at doing anything then. That said," he continued, "since everyone else seems to be in favor of this process, I would not block

consensus.” Mark’s objections about process were recorded in the minutes and Steve concluded the discussion by stating: “This is the essence of Policy [Committee], isn’t it? Kicking these things around the room? That’s our job is to kick this stuff around the room, ‘cause if we had hard and fast rules and lines, we wouldn’t be able to do our job and it would be very boring.” Thus, as a result of ‘kicking’ democracy, congruence, and electoral safety ‘around the room’, the decision was reached by consensus (with opposition from Mark noted in the minutes) to make the proposed amendments to the ratified Population Policy with the urgent policy process. By negotiating between the aspects of Green decision-making explicitly and at length until consensus was reached, the Policy Committee made their decision appropriately.

5.3 Conclusion

From this Population Policy amendment case study, as well as Policy Networkers’ discussions about their roles and practices, it is clear that making policy in the Green Party requires the balancing of many different factors in order to ensure it is made appropriately. Policy Committee members experience a tension between three of the four aspects of Green decision-making: democracy, congruence, and electoral safety. As the *Policy Guidelines* (Green Party 2007) entrusts them to do, Committee members must actively encourage members to participate in policy-making and take the membership’s feedback into account in their decisions so that their policy process is democratic. However, as the body responsible for the quality of Green Party policy, they must also ensure that policies are practical, scientifically sound, politically palatable, and congruent with the Charter Principles and other ratified policy. When there are plural or multiple views among the membership, or if the membership is asking for non-congruent or politically risky policy, the Policy Committee must necessarily reject some members’ views. This means that democracy then becomes a matter of degree from greater membership input to lesser membership input. Consequently, the Committee must always work to find a balance between greater and lesser democracy when making sure policies are congruent and electorally safe. To do this, they must ethically reflect on what is the right course of action to take by discussing how to balance the principles of Green decision-making, as was shown in the case study of the Population Policy amendment.

This practice of ethical reflection through discursive exchange is indicative of an appropriateness-attuned habitus. This habitus imbues members with a practical knowledge about the appropriate course of action to take to reproduce the doxa of Appropriate Decision-Making. It does this in three main ways: firstly, this habitus guides Committee members to follow the *Policy Guidelines* (Green Party 2007) while simultaneously evaluating whether the *Policy Guidelines* are appropriate to follow for the decision they are making. Secondly, an appropriateness-attuned habitus guides members to reflect on who the appropriate decision-maker is and how that person or group will make it on a case-by-case basis each time a decision is required. Finally, their habitus predisposes Committee members to carry out practices that reproduce the orthodoxy of Green decision-making. The appropriateness-attuned habitus, therefore, is a habitus which tends to reproduce the policy-making field through the generation of appropriate practices. Because of this reproductive tendency, the Committee have mastery in their ability to play the policy-making game and constitute their world as meaningful in that it has the purpose working toward the moral project of enacting the Charter Principles.

This Chapter has highlighted the of complexity of internal practices which are undertaken by the Policy Committee. However, the Policy Committee also undertakes practices in relation with two other bodies which operate within the policy-making field: the general membership and Caucus. In the next Chapter, I will turn to exploring the first of these two relationships by examining how the committee undertakes appropriate and Green decision-making with Party members who are involved in policy-making.

CHAPTER SIX

POLICY-MAKING AND THE MEMBERSHIP: DEMOCRACY AND CONGRUENCE

In this Chapter I explore the first of the Policy Committee's key relationships: its relationship with the general Party membership in the policy-making process. Members have two main opportunities to contribute to policy-making: being able to participate on an Issue Group and by providing feedback on released documents via their Policy Networkers. I will begin this Chapter by exploring how the Policy Committee views membership involvement in the policy-making process before looking at how the relationship works in practice when I trace the inclusion and exclusion of references to violence as the Men's Policy developed. This Chapter will highlight the tension between democratic decision-making and congruence that exists in policy development. As I will show, the Policy Committee has to do a lot of work under the orthodoxy of Green decision-making to balance prioritizing the wishes of the membership and ensuring that the policy the Party develops is congruent.

6.1 The Policy Committee and the Membership

Green Party policy is directed by its members who are the 'appropriate level' of decision-making with regard to the general direction of the Party's policy. The Policy Committee refers to the wishes of the membership when they are deciding whether to ratify policy and, if there is strong support for a policy among the membership, they are likely to approve it to become formal Party policy. With this pluralistic system, the Greens' policy process is democratic and allows the Committee to ensure that 'good' decisions are made. However, problems can arise if there is tension between the democratic and congruent aspects of Green decision-making. This can occur when there is membership support for policy which is not deemed to be consistent with congruence or electoral safety. It can also occur if there is too little membership participation in policy development, meaning that the Policy Committee has to non-democratically make decisions on the basis of only a few members' feedback.

Democratic and consensus-based practices were an explicit concern for Policy Networkers. Antony stated:

The overall idea of having consensus in the Party is something we should do even if people aren't engaging with it, so keeping some of those processes is important to the fact that we're a democratic Party. And sometimes democracy is more of a process... even if democracy isn't getting engagement, it's important to still keep the process. Obviously, it'd be better if people engaged more.

Antony's quote highlights that even though democracy as a principle structures the policy-making process, in practice those democratic processes are under-utilized by the membership. As a proportion of total members, the number of Greens who participate in the policy process is generally low. This is not a recent phenomenon. Val told me, "There is *absolutely nothing new* about not getting responses. The excuses for not doing the policy sometimes lead me to wonder why we actually have a process at all and why I didn't just sit down and say, 'Okay, this is it!'" John, talking about Issue Groups, reflected Val's appraisal, saying: "When the members aren't interested in participating, it falls over. It's a process that's very democratic – it's actually a really good process – but when the members aren't interested [it doesn't work], and it's usually just a boredom factor."

Despite low levels of membership engagement, the Committee understood that members valued the *ability* to contribute to policy-making as part of being a democratic organization, even if they did not exercise their right to contribute in practice¹⁸. Betty said to me: "I think it's the idea that anybody in the Green Party can contribute to policy; in practice, they don't." Lana stated: "The membership does have a chance to feed back, so if they choose not to, that's fine. I think that's where the critical role of a Policy Networker is to actually get it out there [to the members]." Thus, making sure that members were *able* to contribute via Issue Groups and providing feedback was an important task for Policy Networkers to undertake in order to reproduce a democratic process, even if those channels of communication were not used.

Low membership engagement with the policy process indicated the membership's trust that the Committee would make policy that was consistent with their wishes

¹⁸ This was confirmed by my interviews with local branch members, few of whom contributed actively to the process by providing feedback or participating in Issue Groups, but who nonetheless felt that having the ability to do so was extremely important.

and direction, a situation which the Committee relied upon to effectively make policy. Steve repeated throughout the year that the Policy Committee had to “find that balance between pushing out [to the members for feedback] and doing it ourselves, which is what most of the members want us to do.” He told me that the members generally thought, “Come on, we trust you [Policy Committee], we trust you. Until we see something we don’t like, we trust you’... They’re like, ‘No, no, get on with it’. And that ebbs and flows like any organization, that trust.” As indicated in the previous Chapter, the Committee’s unrelenting attention to appropriate and Green decision-making made it highly unlikely they would do ‘something the membership doesn’t like’.

The trust members invested in the Policy Committee was partly based on the understanding that the Committee would mitigate the potential risks of low membership participation. The risk was seen to be that, because the policy process is “membership driven, because it requires people to participate, if people don’t participate then it’s vulnerable to being ‘hijacked’, for want of a better word, by interest groups” (Dean). This was emphasized by Marlene who warned that “some Issue Groups can come up with policy that’s not actually reflective of where the membership is at, or even where the rest of our policy is at because they’ve got such a narrow approach to it.” To protect policy decisions from interest groups, the Policy Committee paid careful attention to congruence, to ensure that appropriate decisions were made.

The principle of congruence is used to evaluate members’ feedback on policy because the membership rarely reaches consensus on proposals. Marlene described to me what happens when the Committee exercises congruence in its decision-making:

When there isn’t consensus from the membership and they provide detailed feedback, we work through that feedback and say, ‘Is it reasonable? Is it actually based in fact?’ Because sometimes they make really wild claims about some things, so I go back and research it and talk to experts in the area: ‘Is what they’re saying true? Will this actually happen if we go ahead with this policy?’ And if we decide not, then I’ll present that counter-take and we may decide, ‘Actually, it’s not grounded enough to block the policy going ahead’.

The Strategic Policy Advisor is a key worker with regard to congruence as the person who collates members' feedback and incorporates it into policy documents. She explained her role to me:

All this feedback comes in [on the released document] and I collate the feedback. And then I have to evaluate which bits of the feedback are actually relevant to the document, because sometimes members put in very vague, unspecified, general kind of comment [such as] 'Oh, we should be more assertive', but don't actually specify how they want to see the wording made stronger or more assertive or softened... I am also quite strong at looking at the reasoning. If a member can provide reasoning for their position, or cross-reference to other policies, that will carry a lot more weight than if it just says, 'I don't agree' or 'I agree'. That doesn't carry a lot of weight; it helps a bit but the most valuable feedback is where people have really thought about the issue and provided a reasoning for it (Strategic Policy Advisor).

Because of this role, the Strategic Policy Advisor is one of the key people who judges the membership's wishes and direction on the basis of her access to their feedback and discussions. While she constantly draws on this knowledge, she also works to ensure that the policies are in line with the Green Party's Charter, existing Party policy, and expert opinion. This meant that often during Policy Committee conference calls, her expertise was called upon to provide the Committee with direction and advice when making decisions.

Feedback from the membership is gained from two primary processes: setting up Issue Groups so members can be directly involved in developing policy proposal documents, and seeking members' feedback on policy documents. The success of participatory policy processes like these is mixed (Hoppe 2011:164). At the June Policy Committee Face-to Face Meeting, Issue Groups were described as "broken" and "not functioning," as well as either "good" or "a disaster" with "not much in the middle." It was also acknowledged that when they did work they had tackled some "nasty policy issues," such as 1080 use, and been "productive in a really interesting way." The view that the success of Issue Groups was highly variable was repeated throughout the interviews I undertook as well; for example, John told me, "I think it's a great idea that doesn't work very well in practice; well, sometimes it works brilliantly, don't get me wrong." There are many reasons why Issue Groups are a mixed success. During her interview, Marlene told me:

How well they function depends on how good the Convener of the Issue Group is at actually leading the group and summarizing the core issues and

pointing to a direction. And the people actually on the Issue Group, whether there's a representative enough range of views on the Issue Group... All I can say is that there's this huge diversity... The biggest problem... is that about three-quarters of them die from lack of participation; and then you have the other extreme where you have huge amounts of participation and huge amounts of discussion, and then [that] puts people off who've got completely overloaded with the emails who are not used to a large volume of emails, so they start leaving the Issue Group.

Sharon, who had the responsibility of “[keeping] an eye on the Issue Groups,” identified an additional problem:

One of the failures has been actually in not getting many Issue Groups going. You've chosen four Issue Groups that you're looking at, there were probably only another four that you could've done...in the last three years. If you look at the list of the ones that were supposed to be, it's about twenty. So about twelve kind of didn't really happen.

She went on to say:

For one reason or another we didn't manage to get Issue Groups working. Except for a few that took off basically through themselves. The three that you could almost call 'Runaway Issue Groups' that powered themselves... as in I didn't power them, were Assisted Dying, 1080, and [Recreational] Drugs. Assisted Dying actually didn't power itself, it was powered by [the Issue Convenor] who was very keen to make it work. But the other two, 1080 basically there was a huge enthusiasm in it for people who really wanted to... see it happen. (Sharon).

These evaluations indicate that while Issue Groups are one of the main policy-making bodies of the Green Party, they have variable success because of the quality of facilitation, the range of views held by members on the group, and whether there is a 'critical mass' of participation which results in neither too much nor too little discussion. Even though Issue Groups are one site where democracy and membership participation are clearly enacted, they did not always function well in practice.

This general picture of the relationship between the Policy Committee and the membership highlights the interaction of congruence and democracy. While the principle of democratic decision-making is enshrined in the policy process, the Party membership does not always exercise their right to provide feedback because they trust that the Policy Committee will ratify policy which reflects their general wishes and direction. The Committee practices congruence in its decision-making, both to protect against interest groups unduly influencing policy content as well as to ensure

policy decisions are in line with what the membership indicates they want on the basis of past decisions and the Charter. The effect of this is, as I will show in the case study of the Men's Policy, that Committee members must ethically reflect on how to balance democracy and congruence as part of Green decision-making.

6.2 The Men's Policy: Tracing Violence

The Men's Policy¹⁹ provides a good example of the balancing of democracy and congruence when determining policy. Additionally, it is illustrative of *how* members participate in the policy-making process in Issue Groups and by providing feedback on released documents. In this largely descriptive section, which traces the inclusion and exclusion of references to violence as the Men's Policy progresses, it is possible to show how the relationship between the Policy Committee and membership works to produce policy under the orthodoxy of Green decision-making.

There are four key documents in the Men's Policy's development:

1. *Men's Policy – Valuing Men: 2009 Summer Policy Conference Discussion Document* (Green Party 2009a);
2. *Men's Issues Workshop Report* (Green Party 2009d);
3. *Men's Policy – Valuing Men: Draft Discussion Document* (email to Policy Network Email List, April 29, 2011); and
4. *Men's Policy – Valuing Men: Draft Policy Document* (email to Policy Network Email List, June 30, 2011).

The first, the *Summer Policy Conference Discussion Document*, was written to provide background information for members to talk about during the conference workshop, while the *Workshop Report* provides the notes of that workshop discussion. The Issue Group which was established after the Summer Policy Conference produced the *Draft Discussion Document*. After that document was released to the membership, members' feedback was incorporated into the *Draft Policy Document*, which was amended by the Strategic Policy Advisor.

For context, work on a Men's Policy was initiated after the 2008 Election, when the Party received requests from Men's Groups about what policy points the Green Party had pertaining to men and men's issues. While the Strategic Policy Advisor

¹⁹ The Men's Policy is not ratified Green Party policy; this section traces its development up to the draft policy stage.

gathered relevant points from ratified policy, it was decided that the Party should explore the scope of a Men's Issues policy for the 2011 Election. A workshop was set up at the 2009 Summer Policy Conference which resulted in the group of five men present recommending that a Men's Policy Issue Group be "established to develop policy in this area" (Green Party 2009d:1). In June 2010, the Issue Group began work on a draft discussion document and, with the conversation dying out in March 2011, sent the points they had agreed on to the Policy Committee for review. The Policy Committee released the document to the membership for feedback and discussed the policy proposals among themselves before feedback was closed and work on the *Draft Policy Document* began. Although not driven at the outset by the membership, there was support for this policy from many members in the Party and the policy did progress through the formal policy process over three years, meaning that some members had contributed a significant amount of time and energy to crafting the final *Draft Policy Document*.

The discussion I have chosen to examine here centred around the inclusion or exclusion of violence perpetrated by men, particularly violence toward female partners, and men as victims of violence in the Men's Policy. While Party members initially wanted 'violence' included in the Men's Policy, other members later reversed this and deliberately excluded it. At the very first stage of the Men's Policy's development, the Summer Policy Conference Workshop recommended that violence *should* be addressed in a Men's Issues policy. They stated that it needed to address "men as both perpetrators and victims" and "emphasize treating people without violence, and shared responsibility" (Green Party 2009d:1). Later, the Issue Group decided to exclude violence from the policy in discussions about the policy's Vision²⁰ statement and *Valuing Men as Parents*.

In the first conversations about violence, Ed, the Issue Convenor, introduced the topic to the Men's Policy Issue Group by asking what they thought of the proposed Vision in the *Summer Policy Conference Discussion Document* (2009a). In that document, the proposed Vision read:

The Greens envision a world where men's experiences and ability to contribute positively towards a healthy, safe society free from violence is recognized, valued and supported. Men are valued as fathers, caregivers,

²⁰ The Vision is a section contained in all Green Party policy documents which has the purpose of outlining "in general terms the ideal future goals or outcomes for the policy area" (Green Party 2009c:1).

workers, and volunteers and are able to lead healthy and fulfilling lives (Green Party 2009a:1, emphasis mine).

Ethan was the first to answer Ed's question. Earlier, he had written that he was "interested in... providing support for male victims of domestic violence." Ethan stated that he thought "the first sentence [of the proposed Vision seemed] unduly focused on violence." He continued:

I would quite like us to mirror the first sentence²¹ of the women's policy, and phrase the absence of violence in the positive as applying to everyone:
'The Greens envision a world where men's experience, knowledge, wisdom, work and contribution is recognized, valued and treasured. The Greens want a peaceful, healthy world where men are able to live fulfilling lives' (Ethan, emphasis mine).

There was agreement from the group that Ethan's suggestion was good and it was very nearly the final wording used. Members of the Issue Group wrote in support of Ethan's Vision. For example, Matt replied. "That looks good to me," while Mike concurred with Ethan's reasoning:

I tend to agree with Ethan's comment. The word violence (to me) seems to conjure up negative connotations. Having been involved in a variety of men's groups that have allowed the public to 'search for the negative', the groups have opened themselves up to negative branding. Let's keep the vision statement very positive in its message!

Paul agreed with Ethan's suggested Vision, but disagreed with Mike's assessment that violence 'seemed to conjure up negative connotations,' writing:

We create and make our world. Even aggression can be positive a part of our culture in the context of sport, when protecting others or even when changing a corrupt or damaging system. We don't have to presume to apologize for aspects of masculinity.

Recognizing that the group who had commented agreed that Ethan's reworking of the Vision was good, Ed suggested the group had reached consensus on the topic. He closed off discussions, giving a twenty-four hour window for members to suggest any further changes to the Vision.

²¹ The second sentence of the Women's Policy is excluded from Ethan's proposed Vision because it includes a reference to violence, stating: "We want all women to be safe from violence, abuse and ill health" (Green Party 2011f:1).

Following a short discussion about the addition of the words ‘loving’, ‘passion’, and ‘strength’, the Vision was finalized and written into the *Draft Discussion Document*. It read:

The Green Party envisions a world where men’s experience, passion, knowledge, wisdom, work and strength are recognized, valued and treasured. We want a peaceful, loving, healthy world where men are able to live fulfilling lives (email to Policy Network Email List, April 29, 2011, emphasis mine).

This final version was very nearly Ethan’s proposal. There were slight changes in the inclusion of formalized policy language such as ‘The Green Party’ as opposed to ‘The Greens’, and the addition of the words ‘passion’, ‘strength’, and ‘loving’. From this discussion, it is clear the members on the Issue Group explicitly worked to exclude references to violence in their Vision and reached a consensus on its removal.

The second discussion about the exclusion of violence centred around parenting. The 2009 Summer Policy Conference Workshop had not recommended altering the new policy points on this topic suggested in the *Summer Policy Conference Discussion Document* they had talked about. That new section, titled *Family Violence*, read:

While serious violence in the home is predominantly perpetrated by men, situations where the woman who is the more violent partner in the relationship can end up being ignored by the current systems. Police may not prosecute or require the woman to leave the property when they are called, men may minimize the offending that is done against them and don’t even call the police. Men in these situations can be afraid of leaving the home because they believe their children are at risk. The violent partner in these situations may be the most likely one to use a range of hostile actions to exclude fathers from the lives of the children following separation (Green Party 2009a:4).

Recognizing that “responding to [violence against men]... would require a range of approaches,” the 2009 *Summer Policy Conference Discussion Document* stated that “at the core of it is ensuring men have the option of significant on-going care of their children” (Green Party 2009:4). From this, there was a recommendation that a policy point be included which stated, “Shared parenting arrangements are the default arrangements on separation unless a couple agrees to do otherwise, or [are] directed to do otherwise by the Family Court” (Green Party 2009:4).

On the Men's Policy Issue Group, shared parenting arrangements following separation was one of the most widely discussed topics. Concerning the issue of violence, the first comment was a question about whether 'Family Violence' "belong[s] in a parenting section," suggesting that it did not (Loren). Ed replied that he agreed with Loren about "the violence stuff being in there," and asked, "Are the rest of you okay with it being removed? I think many men would be offended that that is a focus when we are talking about parenting." Iain wrote to the group, saying, "Men need to be healthy role models before we can put children first. The horse needs to come before the cart. Many New Zealand men have been affected by the mixed messages and violence, perceived or real, they experience as children." This led Iain to recommend a men's fellowship programme.

Following some discussion about parenting arrangements, Ed enlisted 'violence' in support of his proposal for shared and equal custody following separation as the *Summer Policy Conference Discussion Document* had recommended (Green Party 2009). He wrote, "Some relationships are violent, and both parents are fine as carers when they aren't together. There is some research to support this perspective, and anecdotally I've heard a few stories" (Ed). Over a month later, after the Principles of the parenting section were collated by Ed, Gerald wrote the final comment about men and violence: "[This policy] should not mention family violence. It is well covered elsewhere in policies on non-violence. This is a men's policy. Not a family violence policy." Finally, then, the group decided to remove the preamble concerning Family Violence the *Summer Policy Conference Discussion Document* had suggested, but to retain the policy of shared and equal custody following separation. As a result of these discussions on the Men's Policy Issue Group about violence, no references to it were included in the *Draft Discussion Document*. Working on the basis that there was consensus for its removal, exclusion was considered the democratic outcome by Party members.

The exclusion of violence was further supported by the fact that no feedback was received from the membership suggesting that it should be included after the *Draft Discussion Document* was put out for consultation. In total, thirteen pieces of feedback were received by the Policy Committee, from both groups and individuals. It focused mainly on three areas: *Men and Health Outcomes*, *Valuing Men as Parents*, and *Men and Lifelong Learning*. The lack of a desire to include violence therefore suggested the membership tacitly approved its exclusion.

As members' feedback was being emailed in, on the Policy Committee the Men's Policy was being discussed critically. Three Policy Networkers, myself included, raised congruence concerns about whether the Policy as a whole was appropriate. The reasoning was that the policy points could be included more neatly in other policies, large parts of the discussion document were cut from other policies and so were repetitive, the proposals seemed to have been unduly influenced by the interests of fathering lobbies, and a Gender Policy would be more appropriate, for example. These critiques were acknowledged by the wider Policy Committee but the fact that they suggested the Policy should be discontinued was rejected. Myra and Peter argued that there were male-specific issues, such as health issues, which should be included in a policy about men's issues. Additionally, there was wide support for the policy among the general membership. As a result, it was deemed inappropriate to stop a policy being developed after an Issue Group had developed a draft discussion document because of the time and energy the membership had invested in getting to that point. In this case, then, the fact that the policy had been developed democratically was prioritized over the congruence concerns of three Policy Networkers, leading to the Policy's continuation.

However, congruence concerns about the Policy's content, rather than the policy as a whole, led the Committee to decide to include a section about violence. The congruence concern was raised by Jake, who wrote that violence should be included because "Nonviolence is one of our Charter principles, after all." He also raised additional considerations about men and violence. Firstly, "Men are more likely to be abusive. How about we commit to doing something about that, or at least recognize the problem?" Secondly, "Men are also victims of violence, from both other men and women. Apparently there's very few of these men's refuges in New Zealand, so how about we commit to supporting these programs?" And, finally, "It's also been suggested²² [Link to newspaper article] that men could go and stay at refuges to get away from their wives and children by a High Court judge as a way of avoiding violence and of getting help" (Jake). As a result of Jake's email and another members' feedback, the decision was made to include issues of violence in the *Draft Policy Document*.

Finding a balance between the wishes of the general membership who indicated they would like violence excluded from the Policy and the Committee's congruence

²² Jake linked to Hill's (2011) *Men's Refuges Plea*.

concern was the task of the Strategic Policy Advisor. She judged her work to be a “substantive change” to the Issue Group’s *Draft Discussion Document* which involved dividing the *Valuing Men as Parents* section into three subsections, titled *Maintaining a Work/Life Balance*, *Family Care Arrangements*, and *Family Violence*. She wrote that

‘Family violence’ was put in at membership request as two members identified it as a significant gap and felt it would be disingenuous not to acknowledge the issue in the men’s policy. I agreed with this feedback but confess that I found this section challenging to wordsmith as I had to be mindful of the discussions that were held on the [Issue Group] and elsewhere about the issue (Strategic Policy Advisor).

The new section on *Family Violence* drew from the *Summer Policy Conference Discussion Document*, and read:

Violence in the family is a significant problem in today’s society and is damaging for everyone involved. Both men and women are perpetrators and victims of violence, however men figure far more prominently as perpetrators in the statistics. One issue for men is that they can have difficulty finding a safe place to stay to get away from their partners and children during periods of stress.

The Green Party supports:

1. Measures to reduce the cycle of violence (see Women’s Policy);
2. Funding for child-inclusive Men’s refuges for male victims of domestic violence;
3. Establishing Men’s centres for men to ‘de-stress’ away from the pub or home (email to Policy Network Email List, June 30, 2011)

The decision was made by the Policy Committee to include this *Family Violence* section in the *Draft Policy Document*. At this stage, the discussion between the membership and the Policy Committee about the Men’s Policy ended and instead, as will be examined in the next Chapter, discussions between the Policy Committee and Caucus about it began.

The pattern of inclusion-exclusion-inclusion of ‘violence’ in the Men’s Policy reveals that there are substantial changes in documents created by different groups as the policy develops. Because each stage is developed democratically by interested members, *who* is on those groups matters significantly to the content of the policy document. This non-ratified policy developed through the full policy process, going through the stages of issue identification, discussion document development, membership feedback, and draft policy development. This shows that the Green Party’s policy-making processes do, in fact, produce policy and, moreover, follow

the objective structure of the *Policy Guidelines* (Green Party 2007). In part, this occurs because the Policy Committee enacts the objective policy-making process ensure that it is making policy decisions appropriately with the membership's direction in mind.

6.3 Conclusion

The Green Party's policy process is participatory and democratic, involving the general membership's input into policy content at both the Issue Group and feedback stages. When members are involved, they expend a lot of time and energy in either developing new positions on policy, amending older ones, or providing their views on suggested changes. The membership values the *principle* of democracy in their policy process, a principle which they do not always exercise in practice as their engagement is generally low. They can do this, however, because the membership trusts that the Policy Committee, responsible for Green Party policy content, will prevent policy being developed which does not reflect their wishes or direction.

The Policy Committee does develop policy which reflects the membership's direction by drawing on congruence to ensure that policy content does not diverge from the Charter Principles or what the membership wants as indicated by their input. The Policy Committee, however, has to balance their critical role concerning policy with ensuring the principle of democracy is enacted in practice. This means, as we saw in the case of the Men's Policy, that they must pay attention to what the membership has developed and not overextend its ability to enforce congruence by ceasing work on whole policies, for example.

Finding the right balance between democracy and congruence under the orthodoxy of Green decision-making is essential work for the Policy Committee as part of enacting the Principle of Appropriate Decision-Making. The appropriate level of policy-making is inherently in tension between democracy and congruence under Appropriate Decision-Making because the idea that policy content should be developed by the membership presupposes that the membership will develop policy that is congruent. To illustrate, when the membership chose to exclude violence from the Men's Policy, the Policy Committee judged that decision to be non-congruent with acknowledging the Charter Principle of Non-Violence. This meant the

Policy Committee had to act against the directive of the Issue Group in order to ensure the Charter Principle was acknowledged and present in the *Draft Policy Document*. To mitigate against this problem, inbuilt into the policy process is the fact that the membership does *not* have to reach consensus in order for the Committee to ratify policy. However, this leaves the Policy Committee having to constantly balance the degree to which democratic decision-making is prioritized over congruence. As a result, balancing the principles of Green decision-making requires the Committee to ethically reflect on which to prioritize. Even though balancing requires a lot of work and ethical reflection, the case study of the Men's Policy shows that it does successfully result in policy development because members value doing so as part of their moral project of enacting the Charter Principle of Appropriate Decision-Making.

In this Chapter, I have explored the Green decision-making tension which exists between democracy and congruence that can exist as the Policy Committee and membership work together to develop policy. In the next Chapter, I will continue with the case study of the Men's Policy to explore the possible tension between the principles of democracy and electoral safety when Policy Committee and Caucus work together.

CHAPTER SEVEN
THE POLICY COMMITTEE AND CAUCUS:
SOVEREIGNTY AND THE PRIORITIES OF GREEN DECISION-MAKING

I think a lot of people who don't have any involvement with Caucus and the way Parliament runs don't understand the *speed* which is required at times. And there have been times when policy-making is *glacial*. And so there is a frustration in Parliament at 'Jesus, won't policy ever do anything about this!?' And at the same time, there's a frustration in Policy about, "Who do Caucus think they are? They're taking this over!' It's a hard one (Vin).

The relationship between Policy Committee and Caucus is important in the Green Party because while the Policy Committee is responsible for developing policy, Caucus is responsible for publically releasing and enacting it. Objectively, their relationship is one of sovereignty whereby Caucus is excluded from exercising decision-making power with regard to policy and policy processes. In practice, their relationship is usually amicable and flexible because they share the same goals which requires them to work together to advance them. In an Election year, however, the different paces of the 'glacial' Policy Committee and 'speedy' Caucus becomes critical and, as Vin acknowledged, the friendliness between the Party wings can diminish and be replaced with frustration. In this Chapter, I will explore the relationship between Policy Committee and Caucus, showing that tensions arise as a result of different priorities with regard to Green decision-making: while the Committee primarily prioritizes democracy, Caucus foregrounds electoral safety. These competing priorities can mean the Policy Committee has difficulty reproducing the orthodoxy of Green decision-making as Caucus requests heterodox actions. As I will show, the ethical reflection required to reproduce the orthodoxy of Green decision-making in the policy-making field entails a lot of work for Committee members.

7.1 Sovereignty and the Policy Committee-Caucus Relationship

The first time I heard ‘sovereignty’ used to refer to the relationship between the Policy Committee and Caucus was at the June Policy Committee Face-to-Face meeting when Steve asserted that, technically, the Committee did not have to do any of the updates the Parliamentary Team requested for the Election. This idea – that Policy Committee has the authority to make decisions and act independently of Caucus and Executive on matters under its mandate – was enlisted often when I conducted my fieldwork and was central to the shared understandings the Committee members had about their role and the structure of the organization. In practice, though, maintaining a boundary of sovereignty can be problematic. The fact that the Policy Committee and Caucus are part of the same organization working toward the same goals meant that they often amicably work together in practice in order to achieve their mutual aims. However, at other times, when the two wings are operating on different understandings of what aspects of Green decision-making should be foregrounded and backgrounded, tensions arise and the usually good working relationship becomes problematic.

The objective structure for the relationship between Caucus, the Policy Committee, and policy is set out mainly in the Green Party’s (2009b) *Party-Caucus Agreement*, and reinforced in other documents. The *Party-Caucus Agreement* (Green Party 2009b:6.1) states that MPs are “bound by the Green Party policies and strategic positions they agreed to uphold at the General Election at which they were last elected, with the exception of any conscientious objections registered on their candidate nomination form.” This agreement, then, precludes Caucus from creating policy themselves and instead binds them to Party policy as made by the membership and Policy Committee. This is further entrenched in the *Green Party Constitution*, where the Policy Committee is the only body identified as being “responsible for the development and ratification of Party policy and processes” (Green Party 2011a:11.1). The processes by which Caucus can have input into policy are clearly set out in the *Policy Guidelines* (Green Party 2007): they can identify issues that need addressing when the policy program is being developed or request an urgent policy process to be enacted for an issue (Green Party 2007:4.1,6). Because of their amicable relationship, however, in practice Caucus and the Parliamentary Team often send requests to the Committee for administrative updates and other matters. What is crucial to their friendly relationship is that Caucus is not *directing* the Policy Committee to act on its

requests; rather, Committee *decides* whether or not to act on Caucus requests in the same way it does for requests from any Party member or group and is thus able to retain its sovereignty while taking into account Caucus' wishes.

Underlying the organization of this objective structure is the Principle of Appropriate Decision-Making. When I talked to Policy Committee members about the sovereign relationship, they told me emphatically that it was a 'good' structure because it meant that the ability to make decisions rested with the appropriate people – the Party members and delegated bodies – rather than a far smaller number of Caucus members. Antony, for example, told me:

The sovereignty is a larger part of the Party design. I think the Party design into [the] three wings of having Policy, Executive, and Caucus is a very good design and it's a separation of powers, and I think that having... that is important to ensuring that there is no cabal at the center of the Party that is necessarily controlling everything. And it helps to keep things democratic to a certain extent.

James built on Antony's assertions and linked them directly to policy creation:

[Policy Committee's] sovereignty from Caucus helps in that the Party itself can actually make policy which contradicts what MPs have said, and which MPs have strong opinions over, and that means that the Green Party's positions actually reflect what the membership thinks, rather than what the MPs want... It means that instead of one person making a decision, that you have the collective membership making decisions over what they think... [MPs] have to accept them.

Historically, managing the boundaries between the Policy Committee and Caucus has not always been easy. I discussed this with John at length:

We used to have huge tension between Caucus and Policy and it got so bad... that MPs were not even allowed to give feedback on policies. Well, that's bullshit. But that's how tense it was. We've almost, *almost* gone back the other way. And I'm quite keen to not let the pendulum swing too far but try and find that middle ground sooner rather than doing this for a while, swinging back and forth [moving his hand in a pendulum motion]. And just *geently* slow that pendulum down [slowing down the movement of his hand], and say 'No, no, no Caucus; you're not running Policy'.

John continued by highlighting the unifying moral project of enacting the Charter Principles, which helps to overcome practical problems in the Policy Committee-Caucus-Policy nexus:

There's a historic precedent for that, you know, before we had policy on certain things, MPs would just say shit... But that's where our Charter Principles come into play... And you can't write policy on everything. This is where we have to trust them, that they're going to think about what they're going to say and that it's going to be broadly in line with the Principles; and, for the most part they have. There's been no really egregious violations of that. And usually Caucus will self-sensor; Caucus will slap down their own if they go too far.

Therefore, in objective structure and in practice, the sovereignty of Policy Committee in the Party's policy-making is based on the Principle of Appropriate Decision-Making which works to ensure decisions are made 'at the appropriate level'. Because the appropriate level of making policy decisions is with the general Party membership and Policy Committee, Caucus is deliberately excluded from being able to exercise decision-making power with regard to policy in the Party's objective structure. The 'appropriateness' of this is widely accepted in the Party, but tensions arise when sovereignty comes under pressure as a result of the two bodies operating on different Green decision-making priorities.

7.1 Green Decision-Making in the Policy Committee-Caucus Relationship

Working with a Green decision-making model can be problematic for the Policy Committee and Caucus. Generally, the Policy Committee will prioritize democratic decision-making and congruence, which can often take a long time. Conversely, Caucus will prioritize electoral safety with a view to both being able to operate effectively in a fast-paced Parliamentary environment as well as not losing their political standing. One explanation for these different priorities is the distinctive conditions of the field each body is primarily at play in. The Committee's Green Party policy-making field and Caucus' public Parliamentary field each require a different balancing of Green decision-making principles and operate at very different speeds. As a result of my fieldwork being centered around the Policy Committee, this section explores these factors largely from a Committee perspective by first describing how they view the ideal work of an MP and then contrasting this with how Committee members view MPs' engagement with the policy-making process today.

When Policy Committee members talked about their working relationship with Caucus, several talked about Jeanette Fitzsimons²³ as the ideal of Member of Parliament (MP) engagement with Party policy-making. In this regard, as well as in the wider Party, Fitzsimons was a master of enacting the Principles of the Charter as part of the Greens' moral project. Fitzsimons particularly exhibited mastery in the policy-making field as she sought to find consensus at appropriate levels and make 'good' decisions, thus prioritizing and seeking to balance democratic decision-making and congruence in the same way as Committee members. Marlene highlighted the way Fitzsimons participated democratically in the process by considering her input to be equal to that of other Party members:

Jeanette Fitzsimons was the most brilliant policy person ever to work with and she was just amazing. She would work at one o'clock in the morning on the policies [*Int: Really?*] Oh yeah! I mean, everything you've heard about her is true [about] her work ethic and her understanding of the need for clear, strong policy. But she never assumed that any of us would just take her word for it; she would provide the reasoning for us, 'I don't agree with this policy because it's not going to work; it's not going to be practical', or 'We looked at this here and what would be a better wording is this', or 'This policy is a better direction'. So she put a lot of effort and thought into what would be good, practical, sound policy and provided that feedback through the process and engaged with the policy.

Marlene's assessment highlights how Fitzsimons foregrounded democratic decision-making because she 'never assumed that the Committee would just take her word for it' and she provided reasoning for her position in the same way as general Party members do, rather than relying on her position as an MP. This showed she was contributing to policy at the appropriate level – as part of the membership rather than as a Caucus member. Marlene continued to discuss this as she generalized out to the wider Caucus' involvement in policy-making:

When I came on board, it was very much under the understanding that Caucus were servants of the Party and it was the membership that directed the policy process and that Caucus' role was to make that policy politically acceptable to the best they could and to be the public face of that policy. And obviously, their views were important but *only* to the extent that every membership view was important, or maybe obviously more weight does get

²³ Jeanette Fitzsimons is a prominent and highly regarded politician-activist. She was a member of the Values Party and, later, a founding member of the Greens as Party Co-Leader for fourteen years, as well as a longstanding MP between 1996 and 2010 (Green Party 2012d:1). Over that time, she had considerable success in both raising awareness and gaining action on Green issues while being spokesperson for the key Green issues of energy, climate change, transport, sustainable economics, science, and agriculture (Green Party 2012a:2).

given always to the MPs' views but they'll still be expected to provide a rationale and a reasoning for the position... Early engagement in the process and providing a rationale and actually thinking about what policy they do want to see; what would be good, politically acceptable policy to be promoting and pressing and putting that into the policy process.

Therefore, the ideal Policy Committee-Caucus working relationship is based primarily on MPs engaging with the policy-making process in an 'appropriate' manner. This means not engaging in the process primarily as an MP but rather as a member of the Party. To show they are doing this, MPs must provide 'reasoning and rationale' for their policy positions in the same way that general members do rather than relying on their Caucus position itself to be the basis on which their policy position should be considered by the Committee. When they do this, MPs enact democratic decision-making which allows them play the game of Green Party policy-making.

In contrast to the work of Fitzsimons, the policy-making practices of the 2008-intake Caucus were judged by some Policy Committee members to be problematic. The main area of tension related to *speed*. It can take up to three years to develop and complete a new, full policy; MPs working in a Parliamentary environment most often need decisions faster than this, which means they sometimes did not engage with the full policy process. Working to make sure that Caucus had the policy guidance they needed while doing democracy in these different field conditions was difficult for both the Policy Committee and Caucus.

Coupled with the critique of Caucus' engagement was an acknowledgement of the Committee's responsibility to ensure they made policy which MPs could use effectively in their Parliamentary work. Val expressed this when she told me:

As long as you've got the Principles and the Goals agreed, the policy is workable. And, actually, it's what MPs prefer because it gives them that level of flexibility to say, 'Well, this is where we're going, does this take us towards or away from that?'... I think Caucus has got to have stuff that is useable but doesn't tell them how to do their job. And that's one of the issues that we have with the details, is there's too much trying to tell them how to do their job.

One MP I talked to told me that the policy-making process was not conducive to MPs 'doing their job' effectively. They pointed out that when the policy processes were developed, the Party did not have a Caucus because it did not have any MPs. Now, on the other hand, there is "another power center, which is the Caucus and the

Parliamentary Staff, to throw into the policy mix” (MP). In their assessment of the process, the MP stated: “I *don’t* think it’s working. I *don’t* think Policy is delivering MPs the right tools for us to do our job to represent the Party.” The MP identified three particular issues: firstly, “The risk is, because we’ve got such an open policy process, those with vested interests or particular points of view which maybe are quite extreme and in a minority of the membership end up dominating it.” Secondly, “the policy process is so *laborious* that we don’t fundamentally review policies, or instigate [a full policy process]; instead, we go for administrative reviews which is a cheap and nasty way but, in fact, is contributing to this *ad hoc* policy nature” (MP). Finally, the MP stated that when policies were made under the full policy process, there was sometimes “*huge detail* about some things, [while being] *absolutely absent* in others.” Because the policy process was seen to be at risk of being overtaken by interest groups, took too much energy and time to reach decisions, and provided inconsistent levels of detail when it did make decisions, the policy process was viewed by some Caucus Members to be at risk of reaching decisions which were not politically safe. As a result of the danger of politically risky decisions in Caucus’ Parliamentary and public environment, they would rather prioritize electoral safety than a very high degree of democratic decision-making.

This description shows that when the usual friendly working relationship between the Policy Committee and Caucus is interrupted, it is because of a differences in the prioritization of aspects of Green decision-making as a result of their respective fields. For the Policy Committee, democracy is a foregrounded concern because, as I argued in Chapter Five, the Committee is always attuned to their *Policy Guidelines* (Green Party 2007) which emphasizes the participatory involvement and directive power of the membership. For Caucus, on the other hand, politically safe decisions are the foregrounded concern as they work to ensure the electoral success of the Party. Democracy and electoral safety can sometimes be difficult to reconcile as a result of the differing speed at which decisions are reached, or because the content of a decision reached democratically may not be politically safe. In the next section, I will trace through the continuing development of the Men’s Policy to highlight how these tensions are worked through in practice.

7.3 The Men's Policy Continued

The Men's Policy sparked discussions among Policy Committee members about sovereignty after some Caucus members expressed concerns about the political risk of the proposal's content and strongly suggested its development be stopped until after the General Election. Caucus became involved in the Men's Policy development just before the *Draft Policy Document* was written. As indicated in Chapter Six, this was the stage when the Policy Committee stopped discussing the policy with the membership and started discussing it with Caucus. As will be discussed in this Chapter, what to do with the Men's Policy became a point of tension on the Committee until it was eventually pushed aside for more pressing Election concerns. This examination will illustrate the tensions between sovereignty, democratic decision-making, and electoral safety in the Policy Committee-Caucus relationship.

At the draft policy stage, some Caucus members evaluated that the content of the Men's Policy proposal could 'open the Party up to ridicule' and concluded that it was politically risky to continue its development. Caucus members stated that they felt it had been 'captured' by a few members and therefore was not reflective of the general membership's views. One MP I spoke to drew parallels between the Men's Policy and the ratified Population Policy discussed in Chapter Five:

There were seen to be risks, politically, with the launch of the policy. This happened in 2008 as well – we've got a Population Policy which is very serious, it's very rational but could be misconstrued as wanting population control, which isn't the point... with a diligent, principled Party like us that does look at the big issues, there are political risks with how our policies can be framed. So the decision by Caucus was to hold off the Men's Policy work. But I think also there was the fear that actually it hadn't had a truly wide engagement and a few people with particular points of view had captured the policy process; so therefore, we recommended it had further work to do.

Contrary to Caucus' recommendation and despite hesitation from some Policy Committee members addressed in Chapter Six, the Committee had chosen to go ahead with the policy's development due to the membership's support for doing so as well as the time and energy already spent developing it. Since the decision to move ahead with the policy had been made, stopping progress on it after a request from Caucus could be seen to be acting on the direction of Caucus rather than the democratic process which had already reached a decision about the content and process. This issue was raised on the June Policy Committee Conference Call, just

as the *Draft Discussion Document* was being formatted into the *Draft Policy Document*.

On the Conference Call, Sharon initiated the discussion by reporting that she had “one issue: [that one MP had] complained that Caucus had not seen the *Men’s Issues Discussion Document* before it went out to the membership.” She asked if we wanted to start sending discussion documents to MPs before the membership. Steve stated that the purpose of sending discussion documents to MPs was not to get their “permission” to send it to the members, but was a “courtesy.” He suggested that we could send them to MPs for five days before the membership so that if they had any “real issues or feedback,” they could tell the Committee (Steve). Sharon clarified Steve’s statement: “We’re not saying ‘Do you agree to us putting this out’, but ‘Do you have any reason why not?’” Steve said yes, we would tell them we would release the document on a certain date unless they could give a “compelling reason not to.”

However, Mark disagreed with this and stated that if MPs participated in Issue Groups, then opposition to a discussion document would “not constitute a lone decision by Caucus rather than the membership.” He expressed his concern that Steve’s proposal would “give them a lot more power” compared to a non-Caucus member (Mark). Steve acknowledged that there were liaising representatives between the Committee and Caucus to “facilitate these discussions” and asked, “Do we need to do more than that?” He told the Policy Committee that, “historically,” there was a “huge backlash” because “people didn’t want MPs on Issue Groups with too much undue influence.” He continued that now the membership was “swinging the other way” (Steve). Steve concluded: “admin updates are okay,” but it’s a “different thing to go and help us write a draft,” which he said he felt some “discomfort” about.

Affirming the sovereignty of the Committee, Steve continued to say that this could be a situation where we “may have to assert our independence.” He gave the example of one policy area where the spokesperson has not “cooperated” because “[the MP] knows what [they] want but [they] can’t get it by going through the proper Party processes,” so they do not initiate the process (Steve). Steve exclaimed, we “can’t let Caucus write policy or then we’re just like any other political party!” Sharon stated that if “that happened,” it would be the “responsibility” of “Policy Committee to push against that.”

Having identified that Caucus' practices were reaching into areas under the mandate of the Policy Committee and attempting to influence the outcome of policy development, the Committee moved on to discussing how to maintain their sovereignty and reassert their independence. Mark suggested this could be done by treating MPs as "well-resourced members" by 'taking advantage' of the knowledge and the research they had access to, "but not treat them differently to other members with the same resources." Steve said he liked "that wording." Sharon clarified whether in practice that would mean MPs would only see the document when it is released for consultation. Mark replied, "Yep, but it doesn't preclude them being on Issue Groups. That should be perfectly acceptable." Steve said he "agree[d], [because] if we're bringing the policy to them, it's like they're dictating terms." He continued that although MPs were busy, the problem often arises "because they couldn't be bothered with the process at the beginning." Steve stated that the Committee could 'table' the discussion documents on the Caucus agenda which would be "very Parliamentary" so 'they should be able to understand it'; in doing so, the Committee would have asked for feedback. He didn't "see any reason why they should get an advanced peek or veto" (Steve). Mark proposed that the Policy Committee should "encourage MPs and [the Parliamentary Team] to get on Issue Groups... then they have the option to participate." That would mean that "consensus is agreed as opposed to a last minute change" (Mark). Sharon replied that was a good idea, but it was a "question of whether they read the emails or not." At this point, as people started dropping off the phone line because we neared the end of the call, the meeting was closed and this conversation ended.

Throughout this discussion, the Policy Committee worked to maintain its sovereignty from Caucus as part of the moral project of making decisions appropriately. By drawing on the idea that Caucus' influence should not extend into the policy-making field, the Committee is asserting its responsibility to be guardian of the policy-making process and policy content, and to ensure that Caucus remains at an appropriate distance from policy decision-making. In doing this, they draw on the principles of Appropriate and Green decision-making and are thus able to conclude that Caucus' actions, with regard to complaining about the Men's Policy development process, are inappropriate, while actions which resist influence from Caucus in decision-making are appropriate, in this case because they actively work to ensure policy is made at the 'appropriate level'. As a result, maintaining the sovereignty of the Committee becomes a moral project whereby the orthodoxy of

Green decision-making is reinforced and the doxa of the Principle of Appropriate Decision-Making reproduced.

In July 2011, the discussion about processes to develop the Men's Policy changed from issues of sovereignty to electoral safety as the General Election drew closer. Caucus argued that the Men's Policy was a politically risky proposal both because of its content and because the time that would be taken up developing it could be used for other policies that would help the Party gain electoral success instead. The discussion began after the Strategic Policy Advisor emailed the *Draft Policy Document* to the Policy Committee. Later, Sharon sent an email saying, "I understand that [two MPs] are going to argue that there is too much that needs to be changed about the draft men's policy, and that we should therefore not aim to ratify it before the Election." The next day, she sent their feedback to the Committee along with her recommendation that "we should not go ahead with consulting on this policy document before the election" (Sharon). The feedback from Caucus via Sharon contained concerns about specific policy points, but, more generally, their feedback was that:

[An MP] is concerned that the policy document generally contains a lot of policy points that have the potential to open the Party up to ridicule. Some members of Caucus support the principle of having a men's policy, while others think this stuff goes much better in other policies. However, there is a general feeling among Caucus that Policy Committee would be better working on things that are directly needed for the Election, rather than devoting time before the Election to policies like these which are not needed for the Election (Sharon).

Jake was the first Committee member to reply to Sharon's email. He wrote: "I would agree with this course of action, as I indicated in my [earlier] feedback. I would be interested in what Caucus actually thinks is required before the election from Policy: presumably this is referring to administrative updates?" (Jake). In answer to Jake's question, a Party Media Advisor wrote: "The updates to current policies, [especially] ones in key areas, are seen as the priority from Caucus. Probably more boring and tedious than new policy, but equally important – especially going into the election." The next day, Peter emailed his support for deferring work on the Men's Policy until after the Election, saying that the Policy Committee should "put our effort into issues that are more important at the moment."

As a result of those emails, work on the Men's Policy was shut down until after the Election. In an email listing which policies were being set aside, Sharon included the Men's Policy, noting that "Caucus have a lot of concerns about the proposals in this document. [A particular MP] apologizes for not engaging with it earlier. They say it is not a priority for the election." The next day, the Caucus representative on the Policy Committee wrote back to say: "I think the view of MPs is that work relating to what we need for the election takes priority over other work. I don't think that means that we can't continue on other policies – if there is time left over. As I interpret it, the MPs are not prescribing idleness for any Policy Networker." Thereafter, there were no more discussions about the Men's Policy during my fieldwork period.

This second set of discussions about the Men's Policy shows what happens when the Policy Committee and Caucus have an amicable working relationship. When this second discussion occurred, the Election was only four months away and both bodies placed a high priority on electoral safety. As a result of Caucus providing reasoning for its position on the policy, the Policy Committee decided to stop working on its development because of the political risk the Committee agreed it posed as a result of some content issues and taking up too much time. Therefore, when the Committee's and Caucus' priorities in Green decision-making are compatible, policy decision-making is done in an appropriate manner.

7.4 Conclusion

The order of prioritization of Green decision-making principles can be an area of tension between the Policy Committee and Caucus in policy-making. Primarily, this tension is caused by an incompatibility between the democratic decision-making of the policy process, which the Policy Committee views as an orthodox moral principle, and Caucus' heterodox prioritization of politically safe policy that does not have risky content and is delivered when they need it. Most often, the two bodies work on the basis of an amicable relationship whereby this incompatibility can be worked out through negotiation. However, in an Election campaign, when time and electoral gain are key, the tension becomes critical. When this happens, the Policy Committee has to work out how to balance democracy and electoral safety while reproducing the orthodoxy of Green decision-making. In this Chapter, we have seen some strategies for how they do this: by internally admonishing Caucus' complaints

about process and not changing it, as well as by deferring work until a more suitable time which still allows them to practice democracy, but at a later date.

This Chapter also shows that the Principle of Appropriate Decision-Making is doxic throughout the Green Party. Even though the Policy Committee and Caucus are often frustrated with each other, neither suggests a change to the appropriate level of decision-making in the policy process – the Committee and the membership. However, because of the lack of directives in the Principle, the Policy Committee and Caucus do challenge each other about how to enact Appropriate Decision-Making in practice when developing policy. These challenges to practice occur over how to balance Green decision-making: to what extent democratic decision-making should be participatory, to what degree political risk should influence the outcomes of decisions, and what the details of the policy process ought to be.

In Chapters Five, Six, and Seven, I have outlined how the Principle of Appropriate Decision-Making and Green decision-making generate the Green Party's policy-making processes and practices. I did this first by exploring the internal work of the Policy Committee before moving on to discussing its two main relationships: with the general Party membership and with Caucus. In the next and final Chapter, I will tie the discussions of these previous chapters together and outline why paying attention to practice-generating moralities – as I have done throughout this thesis – is important for the anthropology of policy.

CHAPTER EIGHT: THE MORALITY OF THE GENERATING PRINCIPLE OF APPROPRIATE DECISION-MAKING

At the beginning of this thesis, I suggested that not only do policies themselves codify moral frameworks, but that *processes* by which policies are made also codify and reproduce moral frameworks. Policy processes do this because they are encapsulations of “the entire history and culture of the society that generated them,” meaning that they “codify social norms and values” (Shore and Wright 1997:7). This thesis has explored this by looking at the ways in which the moral generating Principle of Appropriate Decision-Making is codified in, and codified by, the Green Party of Aotearoa New Zealand’s policy-making practices.

The entire history and culture of the Green Party is encapsulated in its Charter. The Charter outlines the four moral Principles which generate the structures, practices, and agents of the Green Party in a direct and explicit manner. As noted in the introduction, the Charter Principles are Ecological Wisdom, Social Responsibility, Appropriate Decision-Making, and Non-Violence. Additionally, the Charter recognizes Maori as New Zealand’s Tangata Whenua and *Te Tiriti o Waitangi* as the country’s founding document (Green Party 2011d:1). That the Charter outlines the ‘right way to do things’ is unquestioned by Party members, who invest in its moral force when they join the Greens. This was reflected by Val in the Introduction when she simply stated: “You join the Greens, you sign up to the Charter.” When I say that the Greens *invest* in the moral force of the Charter, I mean this in the Bourdieuan sense. Bourdieu (1998:77) explained that investment is “to ‘be there’, to participate, to admit the game is worth playing and that the stakes created in and through the fact of play are worth pursuing; it is to recognize the game and recognize its stakes.” Thus, when a person joins the Greens and signs up to the Charter, they also sign up to the ‘game’ at play in the field. In the field of the Green Party, the ‘game’ is to enact the Charter because the Charter is not only a means, but also an end. Thus, all Greens share an investment in the moral project of enacting the Charter.

The Greens invest in the Charter Principles to such an extent that they become doxic. Doxa occurs when “there is a quasi-perfect correspondence between the

objective order and the subjective principles of organization... [such that] the natural and social world appears self-evident” (Bourdieu 1977a:164). The Greens’ investment in the Charter, and the structures and habitus which generate and are generated by it, produces a seamless ‘fit’ and, as a result, becomes doxic. Thus, that the Charter outlines the ‘way the world ought to be’ becomes a fact beyond questioning for the Greens as they “believe... in the game and its stakes” (Bourdieu and Wacquant 1992:73,98). The effect is that the Charter’s arbitrariness is misrecognized and instead is viewed as self-evident. This means that the morality of the Charter cannot be questioned by Greens. They cannot even imagine questioning it. The Charter simply *is* the moral way to act and be, and everything they do reflects and reproduces this doxa.

Appropriate Decision-Making is one of the doxic moral principles which generates the Greens’ policy-making processes. Appropriate Decision-Making states that “For the implementation of ecological wisdom and social responsibility, decisions will be made directly at the appropriate level by those affected” (Green Party 2011d:1). Thus, Appropriate Decision-Making compels Greens to ‘devolve’ decision-making to the lowest level possible, with the widest participation in the decision as possible. However, while the *Principle* of Appropriate Decision-Making is doxic, the *practices* it generates are *not*. This is because the ‘appropriate level’ is context-dependent, meaning that the level changes depending on the decision being made, the ‘substantiveness’ of the decision, who is affected by it, and other such considerations. Therefore, Greens must constantly reflect on *who* the appropriate decision-maker is for each decision they make. In policy-making, the Policy Committee is invested with the exercise of formal decision-making power as the ‘appropriate level’ at which to make policy; however, pluralistically, they must make their decisions by taking into account the directives of the membership, who will signal to the Policy Committee what decision they would like made. Making policy-related decisions on this pluralistic level is part of the moral project of enacting the Charter because it ensures decisions are made at the appropriate level.

The Greens are directed by the principles of *Green decision-making* which gives greater direction as to the way to enact Appropriate Decision-Making in practice because, as a Principle, Appropriate Decision-Making does not in itself contain a detailed method. As I discussed in the Introduction, Green decision-making has four principles:

- (1) Consensus decision-making;
- (2) Democratic decision-making;
- (3) Congruent decisions;
- (4) Electorally safe or gainful decisions.

As part of making decisions appropriately, the Policy Committee must balance which principles it prioritizes when a decision cannot satisfy all of the needs Green decision-making requires. For example, in Chapter Six, the exclusion of 'violence' in the Men's Policy was seen as democratic but not congruent. Therefore, the Committee had to balance whether to be completely directed by the wishes of the membership, or exercise its critical role and include a section about violence to reflect the Charter Principle of Non-Violence.

Green decision-making is orthodox in the Party. Orthodoxy tends toward doxa, but is not unquestioned like doxa is because it exists in relation to heterodoxy – the critique of the orthodox (Bourdieu 1977b:117). In the Green Party, all four principles of Green decision-making are orthodox because they are the 'right thing to do'. Yet, there are times when some are the 'more correct thing to do' and others are the 'less correct thing to do'. This suggests that there is a continuum between doxa-orthodoxy-heterodoxy because the orthodoxy is context-dependent. Hence, at times, democratic decision-making may tend more toward doxa than at other times. For example, the facticity that policy decisions about the Men's Policy should be made democratically tended more toward doxa at the Issue Group stage than it did a few months before the 2011 General Election. None of the four features of Green decision-making are heterodox; although, at times, heterodox ordering of priorities can be suggested. This was seen in Chapter Seven when Caucus suggested the Policy Committee should stop the development of the Men's Policy. Caucus' suggestion to do this was made too far out from the beginning of the Election campaign, at a time when democracy was still prioritized over electoral safety. This made their proposal to foreground avoiding political risk over the wishes of the membership heterodox. Because of its orthodoxy, Green decision-making shapes the Greens' policy-making because it is widely accepted as the 'good' way to make it.

However, practices generated from the orthodoxy are not always unproblematic, and it is at those times that ethical reflection takes place. Ethical thought requires agents to present the situation to themselves "as an object of thought and to question it as to its meaning, its conditions, and its goals. Thought is freedom in

relation to what one does, the motion by which one detaches oneself from it, establishes it as an object, and reflects on it as a problem” (Foucault 2003:23). The Committee constantly questions what it is doing. In Chapter Three, the Committee paid constant attention to whether they were taking the right course of action when deciding who could give permission for my research to go ahead and how to reach that decision. They explicitly reflected on the enactment of Appropriate Decision-Making, problematizing what it meant in practice for a decision they had not previously had to make and lacked processes for. The constant ethical reflection of the Committee was further established throughout their discussions about the Population Policy Amendment, where members explicitly discussed whether they would be abusing their power by using the urgent policy-making process, what degree of democracy was needed to make the change appropriately, and whether they should follow the particular wording of the *Policy Guidelines* (Green Party 2007, June 20) or its intent. By doing this, the Policy Committee was establishing which problems were being objectified in order to balance Green decision-making principles, and then reflecting on which course of action should be undertaken.

In this thesis, I have explored four ‘ethical moments’ when the Policy Committee was required to reflect on which were the good and right actions to undertake, particularly in relation to balancing the principles of Green decision-making. In Chapter Three, the Policy Committee was required to ethically reflect upon how to ensure it was doing appropriate decision-making when reaching a decision about my research. In doing so, they had to work out both how an appropriate decision ought to be made and, secondly, what that decision ought to be. After first deciding that there were four places where permission had to be attained for my research – individual Committee members, the Policy Committee as a group, the Executive, and Issue Group members – different actions to get the permission had to be undertaken. The methods used were different for each place, reflecting that ‘appropriateness’ is context-dependent. The methods included processes such as meeting with representatives, asking for members to opt out of being included, and using Individual Consent Forms. The resulting decision that my research could go ahead was a ‘good’ one because it was made appropriately.

In Chapter Five, the proposal of an amendment to the Population Policy just one month out from the Election campaigning period required the Committee to balance the principles of electoral safety and democratic decision-making. The ethical problem was centered around whether the Policy Committee should ratify the

proposed changes under the urgent policy process and consult with the membership after the Election, or whether the changes should be released to the membership before the Committee decided what to do. The urgent policy process was advocated for because the Population Policy had been politically risky in previous Elections, whereas others on the Committee argued that because the change was 'substantive', the membership should be democratically involved. The action the Committee decided to take was to ratify the changes under the urgent policy process. This occurred after straw polls showing support for the urgent process were taken and consensus achieved through noting disagreements in the meeting minutes.

In Chapter Six, I explored the way the Policy Committee balanced democratic decision-making and congruence in the development of the Men's Policy. The Men's Policy Issue Group had explicitly agreed to exclude any reference to violence in their proposed policy, and the membership feeding back on their *Draft Discussion Document* tacitly approved this decision by not requesting that it should be included. On the Policy Committee, however, three members disapproved of the Policy as a whole, and one other stated that a section on violence should be included to reflect the Charter Principle of Non-Violence. The Policy Committee had to reflect on whether to prioritize the membership's democratic wish that 'violence' be excluded or its own congruence concerns and include 'violence'. To balance these factors of Green decision-making, the Committee agreed that their concern could not extend to ceasing the Policy as a whole because there was wide membership support for it, but that it could extend to including a carefully-worded section about violence.

Finally, in Chapter Seven, I continued tracing through the development of the Men's Policy to explore how the Policy Committee balanced democracy and electoral safety. Following Caucus' first request to stop work on the Men's Policy, the Committee judged that Caucus' electoral safety concern did not outweigh their priority of guarding the democratic process that members had already invested a large amount of time and energy into. Therefore, they decided to continue with the Policy's development. As the Election drew closer, however, and Caucus provided reasoning for its position, the Committee decided that delaying development until after the Election was the 'right thing to do' because they agreed with Caucus' rationale and because they had other policies which needed urgent work before the Election.

The Policy Committee members were able to reach these decisions which reproduced the doxa of the Principle Appropriate Decision-Making because they had mastered the ability to ‘play the game’. The game results in the reproduction of the doxa of the Principle of Appropriate Decision-Making because it is the unquestionably right thing to do. To do this, agents must balance the four principles of Green decision-making in each decision they make. Mastering this balance requires agents to develop an appropriateness-attuned habitus which enables them to follow the appropriate policy-making process detailed in the *Policy Guidelines* (Green Party 2007), while also ethically reflecting on whether the *Guidelines* provide the appropriate process in the context of the decision they are making. Additionally, therefore, as part of an appropriateness-attuned habitus, Policy Committee members are also predisposed to reflect on the context of the decision they are making, by asking who is affected, how substantive the decision they are making is, what direction the membership has provided, and whether they or someone else is the appropriate person to be making the decision. Finally, the appropriateness-attuned habitus also predisposes Committee members to constantly ethicize their decisions – to reflect on how the principles of Green decision-making ought to be balanced in their decision on a case-by-case basis. It is this habitus which provides members the *ability* to play the game of making policy in a way which is conditioned by the doxa of the Principle of Appropriate Decision-Making and, in doing so, also reproduces it as the generating moral principle of the game.

Because the Policy Committee is at the nexus of the policy-making game, operating at the intersection of the membership and Caucus, they are the players who define the rules of the game. By positioning themselves as guardians and critics at this nexus, they are able to take into account to a greater or lesser degree other agents and bodies whose interests intersect their field. While the *Policy Guidelines* (Green Party 2007) set out the formal relations of the membership-Policy Committee-Caucus in the policy process, they are treated as ‘guidelines’ and, additionally, the *Green Party Constitution* (Green Party 2011a) affords the Committee control over changing the policy processes themselves. What this means is that when interests of bodies in the policy-making nexus are incompatible, the Committee can define whose interests are legitimate by the order of priority of Green decision-making principles they create. In doing so, for example, they may legitimize the interests of the membership by prioritizing democratic decision-making, thus delegitimizing Caucus’ electoral safety concerns, and vice versa as shown in Chapter Seven. Therefore, the Policy Committee is the body with the “power to consecrate” in the

policy-making process (Bourdieu 1989:23). However, this ‘power to consecrate’ is always exercised in the moral project of enacting the Charter Principle of Appropriate Decision-Making and, therefore, works in tandem with their habitus which predisposes the Committee to always act in line with the doxa of the Principle of Appropriate Decision-Making and to balance the priorities of Green decision-making appropriately.

What I have shown in this thesis, then, is that the entirety of the Greens’ policy-making practices, structures, and agents are part of the moral project of enacting the doxic generating moral principle of the field – the Principle of Appropriate Decision-Making. Practices and structures which reflect the doxa are always ‘good’ and ‘the right thing to do’. Practices and structures which reproduce the orthodoxy of Green decision-making are also always ‘good’ and ‘the right thing to do’ because they tend toward reproducing the doxa. Thus, understanding the Greens’ moral framework is essential for understanding how their policy-making processes and practices are generated. This thesis has shown that the Greens’ policy-making processes can be a ‘pain in the ass’, as John was quoted in the Introduction – they take a lot of time, energy, and work to get right. Nonetheless, the Greens are immensely proud of their policy-making because it is an enactment of their Charter Principle of Appropriate Decision-Making and, therefore, doing so becomes a moral project. For the Greens, then, the Charter is both ‘how they ought to live’ and how they *already* live.

This research examining the moralities shaping the Greens’ policy-making offers the anthropology of policy another entry into the study of policy, policy-makers, and their worlds. Working from the level of everyday *practice* is important for anthropology because, even though such actions may not be considered the “stuff of exciting or exotic activity,” they are the one of the central means by which agents make and remake the social world (Feldman 2011:37; Bourdieu 1980:12). Policy-making is primarily an *activity* – it requires agents to *do things* in order to make it and, therefore, understanding what agents *do* is an important part of understanding the ways in which policy is made. Moreover, working from the level of practice allows anthropologists to foreground the meanings that policy-makers share (Colebatch et al. 2010b:18,21). By doing this, anthropologists can build a picture of *why* things are done in the way that they are, as I have done in this thesis. Understanding participants’ practices and shared understandings means that anthropologists’ aim of grasping their point of view can be realized.

Moreover, in this thesis, I have shown that focusing on moralities is good analytic framework for analyzing policy-making because it foregrounds the ways in which policy practices are shaped by the agents' moral frameworks. Moralities, as culturally-contextual non-reflective sets of rules, judgments, and values shape the ways in which policy is made. Not only does this apply to the generation of the Greens' policy-making processes, but it could, perhaps, lead to greater understanding of the ways in which bureaucratization in policy-making is becoming increasingly central because of the doxa of neoliberalism which values rationality and efficiency in processes. Expanding the anthropology of policy's interest from moral economies to a wider picture of the ways in which moralities shape policy processes and are themselves generated through practice can tell anthropologists more about their participants' policy-making activities.

Anthropology is well-placed to undertake this project because of its method of participant-observation. This method enmeshes the anthropologist in the midst of the daily activities of participants so that documenting what is done is possible. Because "one cannot grasp the most profound logic of the social world unless one becomes situated in the specificity of an empirical reality," being in participants' 'empirical reality' is central to understanding how their social worlds are made and remade through practice (Bourdieu 1993:271). 'Being there', for me, was essential for understanding the Green Party's policy-making practices. It was only by becoming invested in the field and its game as a Policy Networker that I became inculcated with an appropriateness-attuned habitus which allowed me to grasp not only how but *why* policy-making happens the way it does. Participant-observation means that anthropologists are 'where the action is' and are able to gain a sense of their participants' practical knowledge and the game that is at play in the field – a central task for practice research.

Policy has become a central generating feature of the Western social world and *making policy* is a central practice in the creation of particular kinds of societies, organizations, and people. As such, anthropologically examining the ways in which policies are made is essential because, as I have shown in this thesis, policies and the processes which create them "encapsulate the entire history and culture of the society that generated them" (Shore and Wright 1997:7).

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APPENDIX A: THE GREEN PARTY POLICY GUIDELINES (GREEN PARTY 2007)

The **Green Party Policy Guidelines** document describes the organisational structure of the Policy wing of the party and the policy process. A summary of the process, including a flowchart, can be found at the bottom of page (PDF, 36kb)

Ratified June 20, 2007
by Green Party of Aotearoa New Zealand Policy Committee

Purpose of Guidelines

This document provides guidelines on:

- The organisational structure of the Green Party Policy Committee (PC); and
- The policy process.

Organisational Structure

1. Policy Committee

Constitutionally the Policy Committee is the Party's policy making body, responsible for the development and ratification of Party policy and the administration of the policy process. The Policy Networkers (PNers) are the voting members of the Committee. The quorum for a Policy Committee meeting is 75% of provinces represented. This equates to 7 out of 9 provinces represented.

The Committee is comprised of the following:

- Policy Co-convenors
- Party Co-leaders
- Two Policy Networkers from each province (Auckland is entitled to 4)
- Te Roopu Pounamu Representative
- Caucus Representative
- Strategic Policy Advisor (SPA)
- National Administrator

2. Role of PC members

Policy Co-convenors

The Policy Co-convenors are elected by the membership at the AGM. They are responsible for developing a Policy Programme (in consultation with the PC, Executive and Caucus), managing the policy process, administering the Policy Committee and organising the annual Summer Policy Conference.

The two Co-convenors have different primary responsibilities. The Policy Programme Co-ordinator (PPC) co-ordinates the Policy Programme and the policy process while the Policy Committee Co-ordinator (PCC) co-ordinates the organisation and management of the PC.

Policy Networkers (PNers)

PNers are elected at provincial AGMs or appointed by Provincial Executives in the event of a vacancy and confirmed at the provincial AGM. They are responsible for encouraging participation of the provincial membership in the policy process and representing the views of these members on the PC.

Te Roopu Pounamu (TRP) Representative

The TRP representative is responsible for liaising between TRP and the PC.

Caucus Representative

The Caucus representative is responsible for liaising between Caucus and the PC and ensuring that there is effective communication between the PC and Caucus.

Strategic Policy Advisor (SPA)

The SPA is responsible for providing support to the Policy Co-convenors in the areas of policy development and co-ordination of the policy process.

National Administrator

The National Administrator is responsible for administrative support to the SPA and Policy Co-convenors.

Policy Process

3. Purpose of the Policy Process

The purpose of the Policy Process is to produce high quality policy that will effectively communicate the vision and policies of the Green Party to the people of Aotearoa/New Zealand and interested people from overseas. The process needs to be clearly understood and trusted by the membership of the Green Party and balance the following objectives:

- Participatory and democratic;
- Efficient; and
- Effective.

4. Stages of the Process

1. Issue Identification

There are three ways in which issues are identified:

- Identified policy priority;
- Urgent parliamentary positions; and
- Issue raised by membership (individual or group) or outside individual/group.

Identified Policy Priority

Policy priorities are identified through the development of the Policy Programme (PP). The programme is developed by the PPC, in consultation with the PC, Caucus and Executive. It sets out a timeline for the development, amendment or review of policy areas and issues. The PP should be consistent with policy priorities identified in the Green Party strategic plan.

Note: These issues identified as policy priorities follows the same process as that described under Member Issues unless they require urgent attention. In this case the urgent decision making process will be activated.

Urgent Parliamentary Policy Positions

On occasion Caucus may require decisions to be made quickly due to parliamentary pressures. An urgent decision making process has been developed for these situations (see page 4 for an explanation of this process).

Member Issues (Individual or Group)

Where a member or group of members raise an issue the following process is followed:

- The member/s should give a written description to one of their Pners who in consultation with the SPA will establish if the issue is already adequately addressed in ratified GP policy or has an Issue Convenor (IC) assigned and is in process.
- The Pner will refer this information back to the member/s.
- If the issue is not covered in ratified policy and is not part of an issue in process then the Pner will take it to the PC for discussion.
- The PC will then decide whether to initiate action on the policy issue or not.
- If the PC decides that no immediate action is required then the PPC will contact the member/s by phone and written communication to advise them of the PC's decision.
- If the member still wishes to pursue the matter, the Pner should firstly see if their Province will sponsor the issue to the Policy Committee
- If the province will not, the Pner (with the aid of the SPA) should assist the member to initiate a nationwide discussion forum, and if there is either provincial or other significant support for the issue, the PC will re-examine whether to act
- Once an issue is identified and recognised as needing further action an IC will be appointed by the PC; this may be the member who raised the issue.

Note: Where an external individual or group contacts a member of the party the member should pass the details on to their Pner or one of the Policy Co-convenors. The process is then the same as for the above.

- If there is no substantive feedback the PC then approves and sends the document to the SPA for formatting into a Draft Policy Document. If the PC doesn't approve the document it will usually be due to fundamental disagreement in the party membership over aspects of the policy and the Contentious Issues process will be activated by the PPC (see page 4 for an explanation of this process).

3. Development and Ratification of Draft Policy Documents]

The following process will be followed for the development and ratification of Draft Policy Documents:

- The SPA develops the draft Policy Document in consultation with the IC, researcher, MP and PPC.
- The draft Policy Document is then checked by the PC to ensure it reflects the finalised discussion, amendment or review document.
- The draft Policy Document is then released for a final round of membership feedback. At this stage, members comments on only the amendments made to the document at previous stages of consultation will be taken into account for ratification. Comments on other issues will be entered into the Issues Identification process.
- If any amendment is required resulting from feedback it goes back to the SPA for this to be done and then is checked again by the PC.
- When there are no amendments required the draft policy is ratified by the PC on the next available conference call.
- Copies of the ratified policy are sent to Caucus and the Policy Co-convenors report to Executive that the policy has been ratified.

2. Development of Discussion, Review and Amendment Documents

A Discussion, Amendment or Review Document will be developed by the IC in the following way:

- The PPC will discuss the 'scope' of the work with the IC. This will include deciding whether the IC will draft a discussion, review or amendment document and a negotiation of an agreed timeframe with the IC for the completion of the draft document.
- The IC will draft a discussion, review or amendment document in consultation with the appropriate MP/s, parliamentary researcher, interested members and external individuals or groups with the support of the PPC. These individuals/groups are the 'issue group'.
- Once the draft document has been completed it is sent to the PPC to send to the PC for comment. The IC has to get the agreement of their 'issue group' to send the document to the PPC. If there is disagreement between the members of the 'issue group' the different viewpoints are outlined in the document to enable the membership to consider the issues when the document is released for consultation.
- If the PC consider further work or editing is required the document is sent back to the IC or to the PPC or SPA for this to be done.
- If the document doesn't require further changes it is considered by Caucus and then the media unit. Due to MP and Caucus involvement earlier in the process it is unlikely there will be major disagreement on the content of the document at this stage. If this situation occurs the different viewpoints are included in the document by the SPA to enable the membership to consider the issues when the document is released for consultation. The media unit will make a recommendation to the Policy Co-convenors on release of the document.
- The PC will make a decision on release at the next PC conference call.

Once the document has been released the following process will be followed:

- PNers will facilitate discussion and feedback from the membership in their province within the time limit allowed for consultation. This time limit will generally be between 6 weeks and 2 months although this may be modified at the discretion of the PC.
- If there is feedback the PPC, SPA & IC are responsible for amending the document, in consultation with the 'issue group' where appropriate.
- The document then goes through the process again and is released for a further period of 6 weeks. At this stage members can only comment on the amendments made to the document as a result of the first round of consultation.

Note: If there is no substantive feedback from the membership from the first round of consultation, the document does not need to be released a second time to the membership for consultation.

5. Contentious Issues Process

Where agreement can not be reached on a document the following process will be followed:

- The member/s that disagree with the initial document prepare an alternative document that sets out the reasons for their disagreement and suggested changes;
- This document, together with the initial document, is then sent out to the PNers who consult with their provincial membership to get a provincial view on the issue;
- The PNers report back to a PC meeting or conference call where a decision is made as to which is the preferred document on the issue on the basis of a vote by each Province (Note: this process was used to get a majority decision on the Superannuation issue).
- An alternative to a Provincial vote would be to attempt to resolve the issue through consensus at a Party conference. This approach will only be used for extremely contentious policy issues that have the capacity to affect Party unity.

6. Urgent Decision Making Process: Interim Policy Process

Sometimes Caucus may require decisions to be made quickly due to Parliamentary pressures. The following Interim Policy Process has been designed to ensure that the PC and the party is included in these decisions as much as practicable.

Those issues requiring a policy position within one week or less:

- It will be the responsibility of the Co-Leaders or Caucus representative to initiate this process. They must get agreement from at least one of the Policy Co-convenors that this is the appropriate process;
- The Co-Leaders and/or the Caucus representative and those members of the PC that can be contacted make a decision on the issue (at least one of the Policy Co-convenors needs to be involved);
- Once the decision has been made it is up to the Policy Co-convenors to inform the rest of the PC of the decision within 48 hours;
- A draft policy document is drawn up by the SPA and the document is released to the policy network for review by the membership for a period of time determined by the PC;
- If there are no objections received from the membership the PC will ratify the interim policy at the next available conference call.
- If there are objections to the interim policy a discussion document will be developed by the SPA and the issue put through the full policy process.

Those issues requiring a policy position within 1 month or less:

- It will be the responsibility of the Co-Leaders or Caucus representative to initiate this process by presenting a position paper to the Policy Co-convenors. They must get agreement from at least one of the Policy Co-convenors that this is the appropriate process;
- The Policy Co-convenors distribute the position paper to the PNers;
- PNers distribute the position paper to their provincial members for a set period of time for consultation then collate feedback and report back to the PC;
- The PC will hold a conference call with the Party Co-Leaders and Caucus representative to make a decision on the issue based on the response from the provincial membership;
- If a conference call is not possible the Co-Leaders and/or the Caucus representative and those members of the PC that can be contacted make a decision on the issue (at least one of the Policy Co-convenors need to be involved);
- Once the decision has been made it is up to the Policy Co-convenors to inform the rest of the PC of the decision within 48 hours;
- A draft policy document is drawn up by the SPA and the document is released to the policy network for review by the membership for a period of time determined by the PC;
- If there are no objections received from the membership the PC will ratify the interim policy at the next available conference call.
- If there are objections to the interim policy a discussion document will be developed by the SPA and the issue put through the full policy process.

7. Review of Policy

Ratified policy will be reviewed regularly to maintain accuracy and relevancy. If a member/s believe that a ratified policy should be reviewed or amended they are entitled to activate the following process:

- Member/s may put forward a proposal to review/amend policy 12 months after the policy has been ratified.
- The PC will then decide whether to initiate action on the policy issue or not.
- If the PC decides that no action is required then the PPC will contact the member/s by phone and written communication to advise them of the PC's decision.

8. Administrative Updates

Ratified policy will also be reviewed regularly in order to check that the policy still "makes sense" because changes in government policies, legislation, or facts may have occurred since the policy's ratification. If a policy does need to be updated with a minor amendment/s, which is/are not substantive because of such changes, this can be done by agreement of the PC through the following process:

- The PC member will identify the words in the policy document which needs to be changed and bring this along with recommended changes to the PC.
- The PC will discuss the issue, decide whether to proceed with an administrative update or not.
- If an administrative update is required, the update will be discussed and agreed to by the PC.

9. Reframed/Repackaged Policies

Ratified policy may be repackaged to form a new policy if this is deemed necessary and appropriate by the Policy Committee. For example, the Drugs, Alcohol and Cannabis policy was formed from the already ratified Health and Cannabis policies. Such repackaged policies would not include substantive changes to existing policy. Any changes which are considered to be substantive need to go through the amendment or review policy process as outlined above. An MP, member of the leadership group, or PC member can activate the repackaging process below:

- A possible repackaged policy will be identified and brought to the PC.
- The PC will decide whether the repackaged policy is appropriate, necessary, and should be pursued or not.
- If a repackaged policy is agreed to, then the policy will be repackaged without substantive changes to existing policy and brought to the PC
- The PC will discuss the repackaged policy and make recommendations in regards to its wording, structure, and ratification.

APPENDIX B: INFORMAL INFORMATION SHEET

PEOPLE AND POLITICS: MAKING POLICY IN THE GREEN PARTY

The Research:

This research aims to explore how people and politics work together to make policy in the Green Party of Aotearoa/New Zealand. The Green Party offers a very interesting site for exploring policy making as its processes are democratic, consensus-based and transparent. Further, the Greens actively encourage participation in policy making throughout the Party membership which means that the backgrounds and politics of members play a significant role in shaping Party policy.

Exploring the interaction of the Green's political values and the people involved will enable a greater understanding of how policy is made in practice. It will enable a better understanding of how the structural processes in place for making policy are shaped by the backgrounds and politics of individual members who participate in discussions and decision-making. Additionally, this research will contribute to a greater understanding of the future direction of the Party and its policy-making.

Research Methods:

For this research, I would like to use the two main methods of anthropological research: participant-observation and qualitative interviews. These two methods provide a high depth of detail from the participant's point of view.

1. *Participant-observation*: This method entails the involvement of the researcher in the activities of the research participants. Participant-observation is an 'on the ground' approach which means that things as they are really done can be seen and understood. It also enables the researcher to gain an insight into the participant's point of view.
2. *Qualitative interviews*: This method involves interviewing key people in the policy-making process about their lives with regard to politics and their views about particular policies. This supplements the participant-observation by providing a forum for participants to share their views and stories.

Contacts:

If you have any questions or comments, please feel free to contact me or my supervisors.

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APPENDIX C: EMAIL TO POLICY NETWORK, APRIL 20, 2011

Thanks for the great feedback and discussion – it's been very interesting and helpful! I just wanted to write a quick response to some of the issues you've raised so far. I've had a quick chat to Jeff Sluka, a lecturer in social anthropology here at Massey who also wrote anthropology's code of ethics, about some of these points too.

For this research, I'm bound by two codes of ethics: Massey University's *Code of Ethical Conduct for Research, Teaching and Evaluation Involving Human Participants*, and the Association of Social Anthropologists of Aotearoa/ New Zealand's *Principles of Professional Responsibility and Ethical Conduct*. These are available here:

<http://www.massey.ac.nz/massey/fms/Human%20Ethics/Documents/MUHEC%20Code%202010.pdf>

and here:

<http://asaanz.rsnz.org/codeofethics.html>

Both of these codes guide the research and are binding when you consent to participate. This makes it unnecessary to draw up an extra legally binding document as Andrew suggested. Additionally, the Massey University Ethics Committee would not let me sign one as they view them as unethical for social science research because there is simply no way to plan or predict for every possibility that could arise during the course of research. There are processes and disciplinary measure in place if it does arise that there has been a breach, but I absolutely don't intended to breach the codes.

With regard to the consent processes, usually what happens with group/ community research in the social sciences is that group consent is required rather than individual consent. So, the group as a whole decides whether or not to participate and then if an individual wishes not to, she or he makes this known during the decision-making and then they won't be included. Practically, here, having Exec consent and the consent of the Policy Committee would be good, and then if people wish to provide individual consent, I can mail the forms for these out too.

Suzi's point about the tension between researcher/ policy networker is something I've been thinking about too and why I made it clear at the provincial meeting that taking up the role would have to be discussed with the Committee first. I'd like to suggest a timeframe for being a researcher (1 May – 30 Nov), but leave it up to you to decide what you think my role as networker should be.

Finally, with regard to confidentiality (and something that will need to be discussed with the Exec), I would like to have access to non-public documents and discussions because this research looks at the *process* by which policy is made rather than particular *policies* (to answer Geoff's question). To understand this process, it's necessary to be able to use these documents to trace the development of particular policies as they are drafted, redrafted etc. I'm not sure that these drafts being used in the research is risky to individuals or the party, and, to further mitigate the risk, I am more than happy to include the usual disclaimer that these are simply draft documents and don't reflect the final views etc.

Sorry, this response is longer than I intended! I'm happy to give anyone a call or join the skype call etc to discuss anything further. But, again, thanks for taking such an interest in my research, and I look forward to meeting you all on the call tonight!

APPENDIX D: FORMAL INFORMATION SHEET



MASSEY UNIVERSITY
COLLEGE OF HUMANITIES
AND SOCIAL SCIENCES
TE KURA PŪKENGĀ TANGATA

People and Politics: Making Policy in the Green Party of Aotearoa/New Zealand

INFORMATION SHEET – POLICY NETWORK

This is an invitation to partake in research that is being conducted by Jessica Bignell for her Master of Arts in Social Anthropology at Massey University.

The study aims to explore how people and politics work together to make policy in the Green Party of Aotearoa/New Zealand at the network, local, and national levels. I invite you to participate in this research because of your role as a member of the policy network.

Your participation involves both being a part of the group participant-observation of the Policy Committee as well as one semi-structured qualitative interview that will last between 1-2 hours.

Data collected from participant-observation and interviews will be used primarily as the basis for my Masters thesis, but they may also be used in additional articles or conference presentations. If data is used for these purposes, participants will be contacted. Data will be kept securely and pseudonyms will be used to protect confidentiality. Upon request, you may be sent copies of drafts, interview transcripts, and the final thesis at any stage.

You are under no obligation to accept this invitation. If you decide to participate, you have the right to:

- decline to answer any particular question;
- withdraw from the study before the interview is completed;
- ask any questions about the study at any time during participation;
- provide information on the understanding that your name will not be used unless you give permission to the researcher;
- be given access to a summary of the project findings when it is concluded.
- ask for the recorder to be turned off at any time during the interview.

Please contact me and/or my supervisors, Dr. Carolyn Morris and Corrina Tucker, if you have any questions about the project.

Jessica Bignell (Researcher)

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APPENDIX E: INDIVIDUAL CONSENT FORM



People and Politics: Making Policy in the Green Party of Aotearoa/New Zealand

PARTICIPANT CONSENT FORM - INDIVIDUAL

I have read the Information Sheet and have had the details of the study explained to me. My questions have been answered to my satisfaction, and I understand that I may ask further questions at any time.

I agree/do not agree to the interview being sound recorded.

I wish/do not wish to have my recordings returned to me.

I agree to participate in this study under the conditions set out in the Information Sheet.

Signature: _____ **Date:** _____

Full Name - printed _____

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APPENDIX F: AGREEMENT WITH POLICY COMMITTEE, JUNE 18, 2011



MASSEY UNIVERSITY
COLLEGE OF HUMANITIES
AND SOCIAL SCIENCES
TE KURA PUKENGA TANGATA

To Whom It May Concern:

Following the 09 May 2011 meeting with Richard Leckinger and Geoffrey Steedman, it was agreed that Jessica Bignell's Master's research (see Appendix A) could commence under the following conditions:

1. Three meetings between Geoffrey Steedman and/or Richard Leckinger, Jessica Bignell, and supervisors Carolyn Morris and Corrina Tucker would occur during the course of the research to discuss matters arising.
2. Drafts will be available to Richard Leckinger, Geoffrey Steedman, and Mojo Mathers upon request.
3. Strategic Green Party private information, such as coalition arrangements, will not be included in the thesis.
4. Draft policy documents of non-strategic importance may be used in the thesis. The Green Party disclaimer regarding such drafts will also be included.
5. Information gathered during the course of the research will remain confidential until publication.
6. Feedback from the membership will remain anonymous, and a disclaimer will be given to members by their Policy Networkers that the research is being undertaken and they are under no obligation to participate. Further, concerns from the membership will be directed to Richard or Geoff regarding this matter.
7. Individual consent forms will be available to Policy Committee members should they wish to sign them.
8. Jessica will be allowed to participate on some Issue Groups (IG). The process for obtaining consent from IG members will be to first gain permission from the IG Convener or appropriate representative, and then contact individual members from the IG to reach a consensus on consent. If interviews are undertaken with individual IG members, individual consent forms will be signed.
9. Jessica will be wearing 'two hats' during the research period – a 'researcher's' hat, and a 'participant's' hat. Where no permission for her to be a researcher is given, she may still wear the 'participant' hat.
10. The anticipated date of completion for the thesis is 28 February, 2012.

Additionally, the research will be undertaken with adherence to the Principles of Professional Responsibility and Ethical Conduct of the Association of Social Anthropologists of Aotearoa/New Zealand (see Appendix B), and Massey University's Code of Ethical Conduct for Research, Teaching, and Evaluations Involving Human Participants (see Appendix C). Also attached are Individual Participant Consent Forms (see Appendix D).

Please feel free to contact Jessica Bignell or her supervisors if you have any further questions.

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