From Scholarly Dialogue to Social Movement: Considerations and Implications for Peace through Commerce (PTC)

Abstract: While Peace through Commerce (PTC) started as a conversation among a small group of scholars, it has grown into an increasingly robust movement, giving rise to conferences, books, journal articles and dialogue between scholars, managers, practitioners, government officials, and civil society actors, all of whom share an interest in the potential of commerce to foster greater peace. Social movement scholarship explores the ability of collective interests to achieve social change and provides a useful lens through which to consider PTC’s maturation. I draw on social movement theory as a resource to consider the rise of PTC and implications for the evolution of a thought movement as a social movement. Increasingly, social movement theory has been used to describe and better understand a diverse range of social and organizational changes (Strang & Il Jung 2005) including the rise of academic ideas into established scholarly fields (Hambrick & Chen, 2008). I characterize PTC as a social movement and offer commentary about what may be gained from this conceptualization. I offer recommendations from a social movement perspective all with the aim of strengthening the continued development of Peace through Commerce.

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INTRODUCTION

Peace through Commerce (PTC) started as a scholarly dialogue at the beginning of the decade and it has developed into an increasingly robust movement that includes scholars from several different fields, practitioners from industry, representatives from government, actors from the social sectors, and participants from multilateral organizations. PTC has the aim of descriptively explaining and theoretically understanding how business activity may foster lasting peace, or what constraints limit the potential for sustainable peace. As the term “Peace through Commerce” suggests, this lively discussion has the normative aim of producing knowledge and contributing to practice that harnesses the mechanisms of commerce to achieve greater peace. Thus PTC has an aim of realizing some measure of social change through knowledge development and practice that furthers the goal of greater peace through commerce.

It is appropriate to consider Peace through Commerce as a social movement for several reasons. The most basic definitions of social movements describe collective interests aiming to achieve social change (Rao, Morrill, & Zald, 2000). This certainly fits the intent of Peace through Commerce. Moreover, the peace movement is considered a social movement unto itself (Marullo & Meyer, 2004) and corporate social responsibility has also been characterized as a social movement (Jonker & DeWitte, 2006; Sahlin-Andersson, 2006) and PTC could rightly be seen as an off-shoot of these more established movements. Finally, the simple growth of PTC to include numerous conferences, books, journal articles special issues, and PTC-themed initiatives in other
professional bodies, including the business school accrediting body, the AASCB. The PTC participant base has greatly diversified to encompass a rich array of disciplines and fields within and outside of academia seems to more accurately resemble a movement rather than isolated activities. Importantly, actors from industry as well as academia now act in coalition to advance the Peace through Commerce agenda. This is important as two groups previously unaware of one another’s existence—in one case scholars and in another social entrepreneurs—discovered that the other group was also engaged in something it was calling PTC. Beyond serendipity, this convergence provides some indication that the PTC idea may have broader social salience in that multiple interests have coalesced around this topic.

Yet, asking whether it is appropriate to consider PTC a social movement is a necessary albeit rudimentary question. It is important to consider whether the minimum conditions are necessary to make an assertion reasonable. I believe my previous rationale establishes that the social movement label is apt. Yet, a much more important, generative, and perhaps skeptical question is “what is gained by conceptualizing PTC as a social movement?” Considering PTC through the lens of social movements has the potential to make two contributions which serve as the essential aims of this essay.

First, a consideration of PTC as a social movement allows the insights of social movement scholarship to inform PTC. All too often we overlook pre-existing scholarly streams that can inform and strengthen our endeavors. As a case in point, previous work in the Journal of Business Ethics has addressed specific social movements such as the fair
trade movement (Hira & Ferrie, 2006), the labor movement (Marens, 2004) and the
business ethics reform movement (Werner, 1992) though social movement theory does
not appear to have been used to characterize these movements. Employing social
movement theory as a lens has the potential to guide PTC by showing what aspects of a
nascent movement should be attended to in order for a movement to strengthen and grow.

Furthermore, whereas social movement scholars such have been importing
scholarly management concepts for almost a half century, social movement scholars note
that “the learning to date however, has been largely uni-directional. Social movement
scholars have been able to productively borrow and adapt organizational ideas to their
own uses; organizational scholars have been far less opportunistic in taking advantage of
movement ideas (McAdam & Scott 2005, p. 5).”

Like the agenda of PTC itself, a social movement perspective allows us to
consider what might enable or constrain the growth and development of PTC and, in a
manner akin to the normative aims of PTC, a social movement perspective increases the
potential for the movement to develop with strength and quality by fostering careful
deliberation about the development of the movement. While a social movement of any
substance would ideally become robust enough that it would become resistant to rational
planning, thinking through major issues of the movement from a social movement
perspective has the potential to improve PTC.
This is the second contribution of this essay: to use social movement scholarship as a resource and framework to organize thoughts and recommendations intended to strengthen PTC. While this is an applied aim, it could well be that thinking carefully through specific challenges and opportunities for PTC, through the lens of social movements, could generate relevant insights for other thought movements and change efforts beyond PTC. While the approach I take in this essay is aimed narrowly at PTC, my hope is that this writing could aid future theory development by provoking deliberate conversation within the PTC movement about aims and methods such that future research efforts may have the benefit of a more visible and detailed record about the visions and actions of a social movement. Additionally, thought movement and academic settings are under theorized terrain for social movements, so at best this writing can shed further light on the development of a thought movement into social movement.

The remainder of this essay is organized as follows: I will first introduce social movement theory as a lens, briefly characterize PTC, and then use three key dimensions of social movement theory—message framing, political opportunity, and resource mobilization—as a framework to analyze PTC. I will offer thoughts and recommendations on how PTC might attend to each of these areas that social movement scholars have deemed critically important to social movements.

**Social Movement Theory**

Social movement theory explores the ability of collective interests to achieve social change. Social movements are commonly framed as preference structures, held
among members of a population, that favor specific social change (Zald and McCarthy, 1987). Rao, Morrill and Zald offer a more parsimonious definition of social movements as “organized collective endeavors to solve social problems (Rao et al. 2000).”

Social movement (SM) scholarship was a project largely begun in the mid 1960s. While SM scholars drew from earlier work on an array of related theoretical topics, such as those of group action, collective behavior, mass society (McAdam, McCarthy, Zald 1996) and on empirical work pertaining to “more evanescent form of collective behavior (Rao, Morrill and Zald, 2000, p.238)” such as crowds, mobs, riots. SM scholars “reframed the view of protest and reform activities from one of irrational behavior—a flailing out against an unjust universe—to one involving instrumental action “(McAdam & Scott, 2005, p.6).” Social movement scholars also shifted the axis of attention from the nature of the social grievance that animated group behavior to an emphasis on the processes and mechanisms of mobilization and attainment of social change.

Part of this increased attention to the processes and mechanisms of social change resulted in a recognition that while social movements require shared belief, or collective sentiment, among individuals they largely become visible in the context of collective action carried out by social movement organizations. Thus social movement scholars offer the crucial distinction between social movements and social movement organizations (SMOs). An SMO is “a complex or formal organization that identifies its goals with the preferences of a social movement…and attempts to implement those goals (Zald & McCarthy, 1987 p.20).” SM scholars also remind us that social movement
organizations need not be created “de novo,” but can take place within, and make use of, current social structures and organizations. Zald and McCarthy note: “social movements are not created outside of the traditions and institutional bases of the larger society in which they are nested. Instead, the cadre and networks of adherents and activists grow out of, build upon, and use the repertoires of action, the institutional forms and physical facilities on the larger society (Zald et al. 1987, p.20).”

Yet, just as social movements can exist within current organizational forms they can also help foment new organizational forms. Rao, Morrill and Zald (2000) describe the role that social movements play in creating new organizational forms, noting that social movements are a source of cultural innovation. The authors cite organizational forms as diverse as micro-breweries, healthcare management organizations (HMO’s), and the Total Quality Management (TQM) movement as examples of social movements that gave rise to new organizational forms. These examples also broaden common conceptions of social change to include all collective action that changes social life, not just social change with a social justice orientation. Given this potentially broad interpretation of social movements, increasingly scholars view social movements as a lens through which to understand many types of organizational change (Strang & Il Jung 2005).

One example of social movements as a source of innovation is particularly relevant to the development of PTC. Recent work by Hambrick and Chen considers the rise of scholarly thought movements into new scholarly fields using the lens of social movement theory (2008). The authors offer a theoretical model to explain why some
thought movements may grow into free-standing academic fields. While their work gives added legitimacy to thinking of an academic thought movement as a social movement, their model is not appropriate for an analysis of PTC because PTC shows no signs of trying to be an autonomous scholarly field. Indeed Hambrick and Chen opine that among scholarly communities, “probably few aspire to become recognized as fields” (Hambrick et al, 2008 p. 34) and only groups who see advancement within current structures as a distinct hindrance, or impossibility, are likely to aspire to field status. Furthermore, the authors note the critical role that having a teaching need for specific subject-matter plays in field development as they explore the rise of strategic management growing out of the business policy courses that were common in management education for a half century prior to the strategic management. These aspirational and contextual differences make Hambrick and Chen’s framework an inappropriate model for analyzing PTC.

Notably, Hambrick and Chen give virtually no attention to one of the dynamics that is routinely considered a key dimension of social movement analysis, that of message framing. Based in part on this, I devote more attention to this topic. Furthermore, while framing has received considerable attention in the last decade, historically it received less attention (Zald, Morrill & Rao, 2005) therefore efforts to characterize and consider social movement framing has greater potential for contribution.

Before using a social movement framework to analyze and offer recommendations for PTC’s development I will briefly characterize the PTC movement at present.
Background on PTC

I make these characterizations based on first-hand involvement with PTC over the past decade and dialogue with the movement’s founders. Timothy Fort and Cindy Schipani are widely credited with instigating the scholarly Peace through Commerce dialogue with academic conferences that began in 2001 though Carolyn Woo, Dean of The Mendoza School of Business at Notre Dame is credited with coining the term Peace through Commerce. Fort notes that what was perhaps considered a quixotic pursuit by many quickly took on far greater sobriety and sense of purpose when the first PTC conference was held just weeks after the events of September 11th 2001. What primarily began as a core group of ethics and legal scholars has broadened to include those from other management disciplines such as marketing, organizational behavior, and strategic management. Increasingly, PTC activity has expanded to include actors from civil society organizations, NGOs, the nonprofit sector, social entrepreneurs, economic development and peace keeping interests within government, members of multilateral organizations, and members of industry. In addition to conferences Peace through Commerce has given rise to books, journal articles, journal special issues, and sessions at the annual conferences of the Academy of Management, The International Association for Business and Society and The Society for Business Ethics. PTC has formed alliances around the concept with the accrediting body of business schools, the AACSB as well as the Aspen Institute Business and Society Program and the UN Global Compact.
Unbeknownst to the academic Peace through Commerce community, a somewhat parallel effort was emerging among industry interests. The private sector effort was largely galvanized by a group co-created by the CEO and co-founder of the Whole Foods markets grocery chain, John Mackey. Whole Foods is the largest purveyor of organic and natural foods in the world and is routinely recognized for its commitments to social responsibility and environmental sustainability. Mackey helped catalyze an organization called “Freedom Lights our World,” or FLOW, that sponsors a series of social initiatives including one on Peace through Commerce. These social efforts are largely carried out by the two staff members and leaders of FLOW-- Michael Strong, the organization’s CEO, and Jeff Klein, the groups Executive Director. Given this shared interest, the leadership of this private sector initiative joined forces with the academic PTC community and held a joint conference in 2008 and continues to collaborate in an on-going on-line forum.

With this background about social movement scholarship generally, and Peace through Commerce specifically, I will now provide some characterization and analysis of PTC using a social movement perspective to organize this writing. I organize this section around a framework of topics that social movement scholars show to be crucial dimensions of social movements (McAdam, McCarthy, & Zald 1996; McAdam & Scott, 2005) namely: message framing, political opportunity, mobilization structures.
Message Framing

A significant strand of social movement scholarship considers the ways in which social movements craft messages to appeal to current or potential adherents. The goals of framing choices are to create a compelling vision that motivates people to participate and move in accordance with the movement or to demobilize those who would hinder your efforts. Framing is the “signifying work” or “meaning construction” (Benford & Snow 2000) that social movement actors engage in. The framing activities of social movement organizations and social movement entrepreneurs are referred to as “collective action frames” which are “sets of beliefs and meaning that inspire and legitimize the activities of social movement organizations (SMOs) (Benford et al., 2000).”

Collective action framing differs, in important ways, from the institutional theory notion of institutional logics or the psychological conception of frames as schema. Institutional logics connote a connection not just to understanding but also to action. This is why Scott, quoting Friedland and Alford, defines institutional logics as “practices and symbolic constructions which constitute (a field’s) organizing principles and which are available for organizations and individuals to elaborate (Scott, 2003. p.224).” While it is hoped that framing inspires collective action, framing itself is represented as meaning-making and does not carry an inherent connection to action. Benford and Snow (2000) note that schema are less of a collective construct and more fundamental in their role as
mechanisms to allow for interpretation of the world. Collective action frames imply a broader sense of “what is or should be going on” and result from a negotiation in a particular interaction. It is assumed, for example, that one’s schema of what constitutes a truck is essentially stable or fixed, but a collective action frame might (convincingly or unconvincingly) construe trucks as symbolic of pollution.

Referring to PTC as a social movement is, by way of example, itself a specific framing choice, distinct from calling PTC a scholarly dialogue, a conversation, a community, or an interest group. The choice of framing PTC as a movement has the potential to convey a comparatively more agentic and powerful image of PTC thereby attracting more adherents, greater strength and support.

A common trap for worthy, socially important causes, is to neglect skillful framing based on a belief that if the goals of an endeavor are inherently noble, the goals themselves will carry the day. This is reminiscent of what social researchers Michael Shellenberger and Ted Nordhaus deemed “literal-sclerosis” (2004) when referring to tendency of some environmental interests to believe that if people simply had the facts they would act as we would want them to, rather than realizing that how a message is crafted is itself extremely important. Each of the considerations highlighted below should help PTC, and other social movements, more actively consider issues inherent in framing resonant messages.
Multiple audiences: Certainly any robust movement is likely to have multiple constituencies or audiences. A key consideration for any social movement’s framing choices then that of understanding multiple audiences and framing messages that are sufficiently resonant to different constituencies, but that also remain faithful enough to a core representation so as not to seem disingenuous. This is closely akin to the logic of customer segmentation we see in the marketing sciences. Thus if the architects of PTC came to learn through careful assessment that the social movement frame was appealing to some audiences, such as students and multilateral actors, for example, but more off-putting than not to other target groups such as governmental actors or scholars, PTC might consider conveying a stable vision to multiple audiences so as not to be disingenuous but somewhat opportunistically invoking a frame of “community” rather than “movement,” if such framing choices made the movement more resonant or palatable to a specific audience.

Yet, framing implies not just a consideration of whether to enact a given frame, such as that of a social movement, but how to do so. PTC faces several framing “choice points” as does every social movement. PTC has gained considerable ground in bringing together multiple professional audiences, not just academics from a narrow range of scholarly fields. Yet increased diversity of the participating audience also creates a need to carefully frame the proceedings in ways that are relevant and resonant to an increasingly varied and specialized audience. This not only implies striking some balance between knowledge development and practical application but the likely need for enduring thematic foci within PTC. The most recent PTC conference employed themes
such as economic development/poverty alleviation, working in zones of conflict, legal considerations in promoting peace, and matters of certification and measurement. Certainly finding enduring themes could enable PTC to make an on-going contribution and tap into expertise and action/dialogue streams already underway.

Framing peace: In the case of PTC, many framing choices relate to how peace is represented. An important divide exists among peace studies scholars between negative and positive conceptions of peace, or peace as the absence of war/conflict versus peace as the presence of certain positive conditions such as supportive relationships, active non-violence, environmental sustainability, etc. (see Galtung) While we often assume that positive messages have greater capacity to inspire, peace as the absence of conflict and war has the potential advantage to be easier to assess and measure.

PTC might be wise to borrow a page from the tactics of The Institute for Economics and Peace, creators of The Peace Index, which assesses societal levels of peace in 140 countries worldwide using a standardized set of metrics. The Peace Index acknowledges that peace is comprised of positive conditions but also notes that its measures all have to do with the absence of conflict and war. Thus it measures peace through a “negative,” absence of conflict frame, using metrics related to societal safety, security and militarization while acknowledging that it should move towards more asset based measures over time. Certainly a case could be made that PTC, unlike a project devoted solely to measurement, is the perfect forum for theorizing about positive peace.
That may well be. The crucial matter is for PTC to see this as a critical choice point or matter worth deciding.

A final critical framing choice, is simply how to refer to peace. Peace, as a concept, often seems much more accessible when modified by various verbs. Thus frames of peace making, peace building, peace keeping, may prove more tractable than the broader overarching frame of sustainable peace. Certainly clarity about a broad vision of peace is essential but these more active “doing” terms might provide a means to concretize PTC agenda. Peace through Commerce also implies a specific directionality and relationship between concepts: that commerce leads to, or yields, peace. While that is certainly a faithful description of much of the movement, it could well be that exploring “Commerce through Peace” would be a useful undertaking to understand what pre-existing peace is necessary to allow for, or foster, commerce. This understanding might be a means to direct social policy and business investment into peace promoting activity, recognizing that it is often a necessary precursor for many types of business activity.

Clarifying levels of analysis: This schism between positive and negative conceptions of peace reminds us that while peace has broad social appeal, clarity about what constitutes peace is no easy matter. Again, this speaks to the value for PTC to clarify its vision of peace. A related framing choice for PTC pertains to the levels of analysis at which peace is most commonly analyzed. Peacemaking activities happen at the societal, organizational, interpersonal, and individual levels (Boulding, 1990; Cox
While a robust social movement might want some requisite variety, it would likely be worthwhile to clarify the level at which PTC most commonly explores peace. To date, those in PTC dialogue have largely considered peace at the societal and organizational levels, rather than more micro-levels of analyses. It seems intuitively logical that, like Russian dolls, more micro-level peace related processes must be imbedded within organizational and societal peace, yet it would likely be useful to the movement to clarify where it hopes to make its primary contribution such that would be adherents can better assess the appeal and fit of the undertaking.

**Open source versus proprietary control of the term Peace through Commerce:**

Recently, the scholarly PTC movement engaged with a group of private sector interests who had also been thinking about PTC and now there is substantial collaboration between the two groups. On the private sector side, Peace through Commerce activity is being promulgated by a public service focused spin-off organization called FLOW funded by John Mackey, the co-founder and CEO of Whole Foods, the organic and natural foods grocery chain. This collaboration offers great synergistic potential given the shared interests off all involved. The resources, talents, and insights to create a movement are exponentially expanded by this collaboration.

This collaboration also creates added complexity when it comes to message framing in that the private sectors organization, FLOW, has trademarked the term Peace through Commerce. Type “Peace through Commerce” into any internet search engine and the first resource you that appears will read “Peace through Commerce®” with the
“®,” all rights reserved symbol, because FLOW has trademarked the term. This creates important framing questions about the value of open source strategies versus those of proprietary control.

The leaders of FLOW have been clear that their intent in protecting the term through trademark is not to narrowly control its meaning but to guard against misuse and to avoid the term becoming anything anyone wants it to mean. Yet, seeing that PTC is now an “owned term” creates a whole series of framing questions and challenges. A potential, or would-be, adherent of PTC would be likely to ask “who owns this term and why” which leads directly to questions about what the agenda of the ownership firm is, what their politics are etc. Not only does this require some sleuth work, if an adherent hangs in there and tries to ascertain the meaning of ownership, their sensemaking process could go something like this: is an organization called Freedom Lights our Way a right-wing patriotic imperialist undertaking? But they fund peace and women’s empowerment….so they must be progressive. Oh, they’re connected to Whole Foods, their quite socially responsible, or isn’t the CEO of that company a libertarian? In short, the possible complexity that an adherent might have to navigate is FLOW “owns” PTC seems far greater than if PTC is simply a bandwagon that FLOW has jumped on or is helping to lead.

These are questions that people routinely ask of non-trademarked terms as well. Astute people will try to ascertain what the politics, agendas, and language choices of individuals and groups they encounter are intended to signal.
While trademark ownership heightens considerations of proprietary versus open access, all movements face framing contests to varying degrees. Clearly, what delineates the peace movement, the environmental movement, the women’s rights movements is not uniformly agreed upon nor do actors in such movements operate in complete consensus or coordination. Thus, one of the challenges of trademark control of Peace through Commerce is simply that it invokes whatever meaning we ascribe to the term/concept of all rights reserved. Not only does this add to the cognitive complexity of what a potential adherent needs to make sense of, it adds to the meaning of PTC whatever is invoked by the concept of “®.” While it is possible that the idea of a trademark is value-neutral or of limited meaning to some, or perhaps conveys a positive sense of careful and deliberate thought to others, I suspect that to many, when attached to a relatively progressive social movement, the trademark has the real potential to make people wary or undermine trust. The deliberate crafting of framing messages is of course somewhat manipulative inherently in that any communication that is crafted with premeditation and strong consideration of audience ought to be designed to provoke certain outcomes, so the risk is not in manipulation so much the possibility that the frame that is invoked by the trademark will cause people to view PTC with less trust in a way that would ultimately undermine interest. Based on conversations with those who made the decision to trademark the term I suspect that they would say that critically-minded people should be cautious in their trust and if the trademark raises the bar so be it. Yet, this presumes that people will go on to make an assessment of PTC rather than simply discount it because it is commercially owned.
While the road not taken is hard to analyze, there could certainly be a more empirical effort to understand how adherents and would-be adherents make sense of and respondent to the trademark of this term.

Emerging norms of communication seem to indicate that fewer and fewer messages can be tightly controlled. Peer to peer and consumer to consumer communication, blogs, etc. all seem to tilt the balance of message control away from those who might be officially responsible for managing the message or the brand. In many cases firms seem willing and eager to cede some control over the meaning of terms and brands in exchange for greater ownership on the part of consumers. Allowing consumers to create advertising content is one such example.

I therefore suspect that the control of terms must largely be won on open source terms. In other words, it would likely be more successful for stewards of a concept to remain vigilant to the concept’s wise use, and aim to control its meaning through both the quantity and quality of their use of a term, rather than to use the channels of ownership. Furthermore, because the goal is to inspire people to engage and promote peace through commerce at many levels, from the scholar to the multinational actor, to the small scale entrepreneur, trademark carries that real risk that this activity or concept belongs to someone and is therefore not something that one can as easily join or identify with.

Framing choices for an insider movement: While social movement literature tells us that social movements are not the sole domain of any specific social group, it may be
helpful to note that PTC is “an insider movement.” On the scholarly side the primary actors are well known and respected in their fields. The major private sector actor supporting this movement is affiliated with a large and respected actor in its industry and in the broader marketplace. This basic characterization all serves to support an informal proposition that insider movements are likely to choose kinder, gentler, more incremental change focused framing messages than that of framing focused on radical transformation and dialectal conflict.

While strong social movements often involve alliances of insider and outsider interests, it is worth considering the dominant status of the overall movement in order to invoke frames that are likely to be received as genuine and resonant to would be adherents. In 1964, the Berkeley Free Speech movement organized a now famous sit-in on the campus of the University of California at Berkeley. Mario Savio, one of the movement’s leaders gave a fiery speech that has been oft-quoted since using the imagery of putting one’s body on the gears of the machine and preventing it from working at all, because this machinery’s operation was odious and denied basic freedoms. The framing choices in Savio’s speech contributed to the resonance of that message and lasting impact of that speech and of that movement. This speech has come to typify the image of the outsider activists rallying at the gates. It stands to reason however that framing choices of those with insider status would need to use a different governing logic to be seen as credible, regardless of the change agenda of the movement in question.
Political Opportunities

Social movement scholar’s consideration of political opportunity acknowledges that movements do no operate in isolation from broader social forces. The wider political landscape affects the ability of a social movement to gain traction or to fail to do so.

PTC movement founder Timothy Fort notes that what was seen by many scholars as a somewhat quixotic effort initially, took on greatly enhanced importance for many when the first PTC conference was held just a two short weeks after the events of Sept. 11th, 2001. Those tragic events reminded many management scholars of the need to better understand the dynamics of peacemaking.

Looked at from a similar light, the current economic crises may be a means to underscore the importance of the PTC agenda rather than a hindrance. If nothing else, such a dramatic economic downturn reminds people far and wide of the importance of economic prosperity and the role of commerce and job creation in society. Even those who have thoughtful critiques of current forms of transnational capitalism acknowledge that the engines of commerce have a critical role to play in social well-being for all. Thus economic crisis may have the somewhat counter-intuitive potential to increase social receptivity to the idea of PTC, or perhaps of the necessity of “C” in making “P” possible.

Other global crises create a dimension of political opportunity for PTC. Despite the devastating tragedies already faced by global warming, with intensified risk pending,
this crisis, there is an opportunity for PTC to gain greater recognition and relevance as issues that have historically been understood purely as environmental concerns are increasingly being understood as security issues as well. Thus, PTC might be able to tie in and bridge to dialogue about matters of sustainability and the environment as they relate to issues of global security and peace.

Just as we have seen how interdependent the world is financially, a new Presidential administration in the United States, that has stated goals of rebuilding relationships and image in the global community, represents an example of a political opportunity that PTC might be able to capitalize upon as an agenda for increased peace and economic prosperity is likely to be a greater part of broader social and political conversations.

It is also possible that, during times of economic downturn that vital social supports fray under the dual pressures of increasing need and decreasing resources. Thus, considering socially beneficial activity that also has a economic dimension might serve as a means to bridge these concerns. Infrastructure projects that also have a strong social dimension might be one such example, or successful social enterprises that combine a social mission with a commerce agenda.
Mobilization Structures

Substantial social movement scholarship has been devoted to the processes, practices, and structures that support movement mobilization. To date, PTC has employed conferences and the publication of academic articles and scholarly books as key means to build the movement and gather and focus resources. A 2007 journal special issue on PTC in the American Business Law Journal and this current special issue serve as examples that PTC is able to make use of the communication and legitimacy granting resources of journal space. PTC has proven quite adept at multi-sectoral alliance building, expanding the resource base of the endeavor by forging partnerships and alliances with allied groups such as the Aspen Institute Initiative for Social Innovation through Business, The FLOW Initiative, The International Institute of Peace through Tourism, the UN Global Compact and the like. The size and scope of conferences is growing, showing that these efforts are gathering both increased resources and adherents.

Other efforts PTC might consider in order to enhance mobilization efforts in support of the movement would include the following: PTC should consider agreeing upon a set of “galvanizing principles” that could attract and focus resources as greater clarity is provided to the direction and aims of the movement. Agreement on vision need not hem the organization in excessively or limit the organization from expanding with flexibility in the face of new opportunities and challenges. Such principles could be amended over time in accordance with political opportunities.
The production of scholarly articles would also be complemented by more efforts to produce practitioner articles in order to broaden the influence of the movement and draw greater support from interested private sector actors. Fort and Schipani make this case in detail (2007). While PTC is fortunate to have attracted considerable interest and involvement from practitioners the fulcrum of interest has been on scholarly knowledge production. More industry focused effort can ensure relevance to practice. There is also a real potential to mobilize resources by deepening ties with actors and dialogue underway in the corporate social responsibility community. One tangible outcome of this effort might be to see an articulation of peace-promotion as part of social reporting efforts. PTC has begun experimenting with efforts focused at specifics industries, such as tourism. This targeted approach might be another means to mobilize resources by specializing dialogues to appeal to specific scholarly and professional communities.

Legitimacy building: Legitimacy building and resource mobilization are certainly mutually reinforcing dynamics. Thus far PTC has fostered partnerships, held repeated conferences and engaged in scholarly writing. All of these practices have of course, helped ensure the continued availability of resources largely through building legitimacy for the movement. Legitimacy building and resource mobilization can rightly be thought of as mutually reinforcing dynamics.

PTC could now focus on matters of depth and breadth. It could both deepen and broaden the alliances it has. It could also deepen its foundations through more empirical scholarship. Continued learning to upgrade the quality of understanding about how to
foster peace and what role commerce can play is the fundamental means to gain legitimacy and mobilize resources. While a movement cannot stand on the quality of its insights alone, without high quality, empirically grounded and theoretically robust understanding, little else matters

Conclusion

In this essay I consider the burgeoning PTC movement in light of key social movement dimensions of legitimacy building, resource mobilization, political opportunity, and message framing to increase the likelihood that those involved in PTC attend to these matters with greater deliberation and attention. These key areas of social movement scholarship provide a useful heuristic or checklist of sorts that any nascent movement ought to attend to.

Throughout this writing I have concentrated almost exclusively on movement dynamics but in closing I want to devote a bit more thought to the “social” in social movement. It is my hope that making the case to consider PTC as a social movement will remind us that social movements are indeed inherently social processes. In addition to PTC as a thought movement, like any movement this is a highly relational process. Thus attention to the relational aspects of movement building would best be seen not as a distraction or secondary part of the agenda but as integral to the success of PTC. An easy illustration of this idea is evident in conference design. Any conference about a broad and compelling topic such as Peace Through Commerce will of course have more
worthwhile information or content knowledge to convey. Yet, adequate time for social interaction and relationship building ceases to be a secondary consideration when one thinks in movement terms.

Attending to the relational elements of movement building need not come at the expense of PTC content. Indeed, one of the aims of PTC could easily be to consistently upgrade our theories and ideas about change and how commerce-based activities can foster peace. This shared organizational learning can improve the quality of analyses and practices and simultaneously serve as a means to strengthen ties among adherents.

In the eighth and most recent Peace through Commerce conference a session was held “in the round” for all participants to address the core principles of the PTC endeavor and to discuss the interests, actions, and methods to advance the PTC agenda. This was a clear example of group learning combining with community building.

Finally, I hope that this essay provokes dialogue within the PTC movement that contributes to the health, strength, and clarity of the PTC effort. Furthermore, ideally this writing can aid others who are trying to enhance their social change efforts, or galvanize thought movements into dialogue, to consider analogous issues in their own change efforts.

For those engaged in social movement scholarship perhaps this work provides case specifics that will prove useful to your efforts. I hope this article inspires others to
explore academic settings and “thought movements” as settings to develop and test theory about social movements.

REFERENCES


