
Power in transition?

Power perspectives on transformative social innovation

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30th of November 2020

NAS Workshop

Sustainability Science

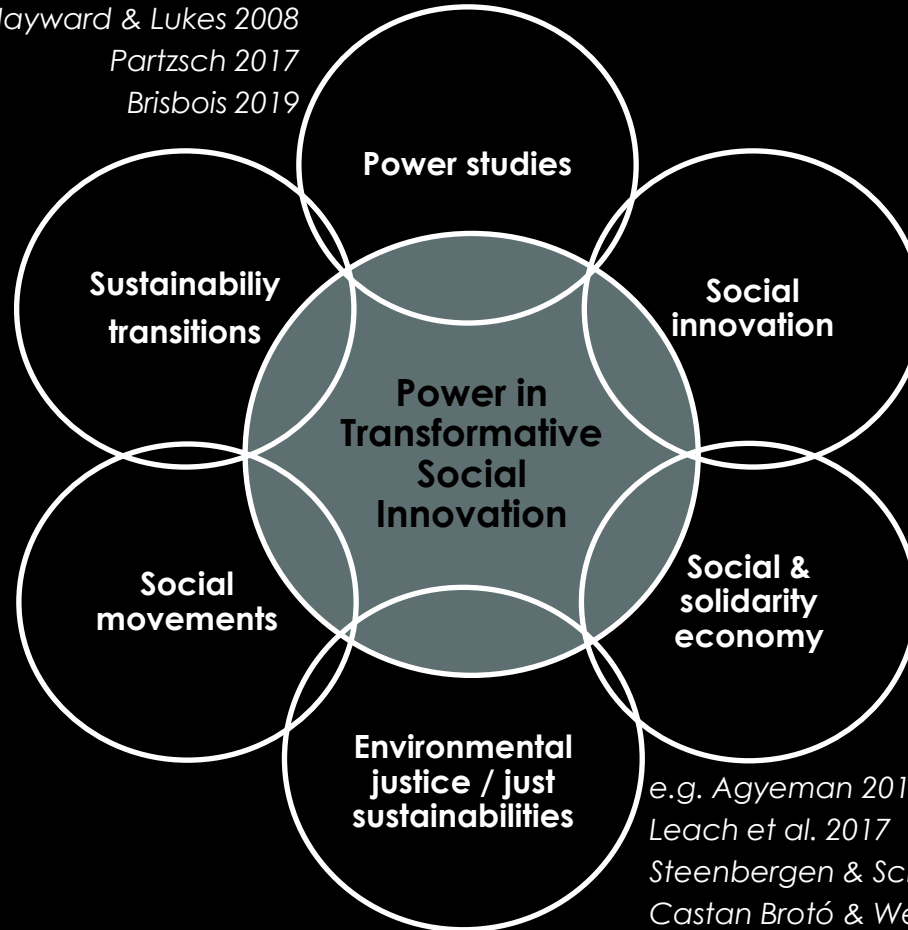
drift for transition

Erasmus

e.g. Haugaard 2002, 2020
Hayward & Lukes 2008
Partzsch 2017
Brisbois 2019

e.g. Rip & Kemp 1998
Schot & Geels 2007
Grin et al. 2010
Markard et al. 2012
Loorbach et al. 2017
Köhler et al. 2019
Frantzeskaki et al. 2018

e.g. Monticelli 2018
Della Porta &
Diani 2015



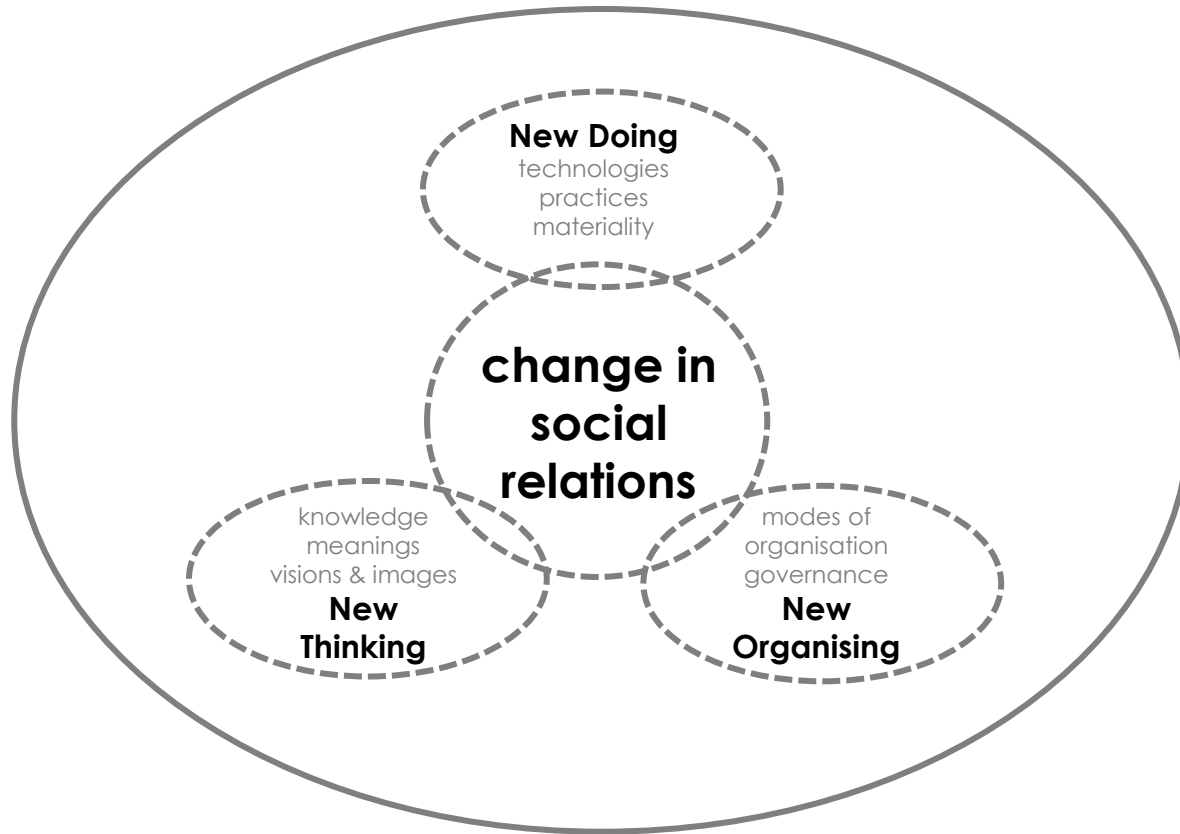
e.g. Westley et al. 2013
Cajaiba-Santana 2014
Moore et al. 2015
Ayob et al. 2016
Moulaert et al. 2013, 2017
Pel et al. 2020
Teasdale et al. 2020
Wittmayer et al. 2020

e.g. Laville 2015
Pestoff & Hulgard 2015
Eynaud et al. 2019
Ridley-Duff & Bull 2020

e.g. Agyeman 2013
Leach et al. 2017
Steenbergen & Schipper 2017
Castan Brotó & Westman 2019
Anguelovski et al. 2020

Social innovation

set of ideas, objects and/or activities that involve...



Chilvers & Longhurst 2016

Haxeltine et al. 2017

Avelino et al. 2019

Pel et al. 2020

Wittmayer et al. 2020



The International Science Shop Network



manifesto of transformative social innovation

Longhurst et al. 2016

Søgaard Jørgensen et al. 2016

Monticelli 2018

Avelino et al. 2019

Wittmayer et al. 2019

Pel et al. 2020

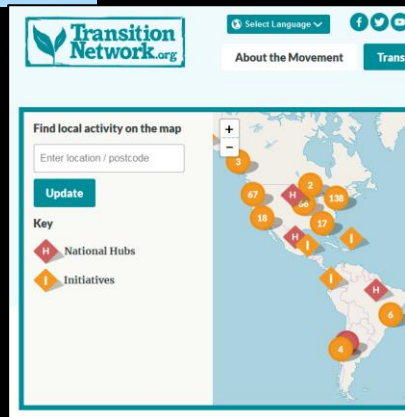


**transformative
social innovation
theory**

www.transitsocialinnovation.eu/discover-our-cases-2
tsimanifesto.org

Translocal Empowerment

locally embedded as well as globally connected



Avelino et al. 2020, Loorbach et al. 2020
Cf. transnational diffusion of innovation: Coenen & Truffer 2012, Feola & Him 2016



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**To tackle societal challenges,
innovation is necessary, but not sufficient.**

**We need systemic, transformative change,
i.e. transitions towards more just & sustainable societies.**



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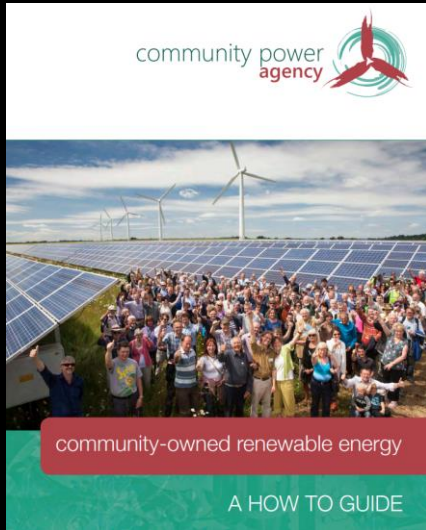


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transformative social innovation



Pel et al. 2020
Avelino et al. 2019
Wittmayer et al. 2019
Haxell et al. 2017

*social innovations are
transformative to the
extent that they*

- **challenge**
- **alter**
- **replace**

*dominant structures &
institutions that underlie societal challenges*



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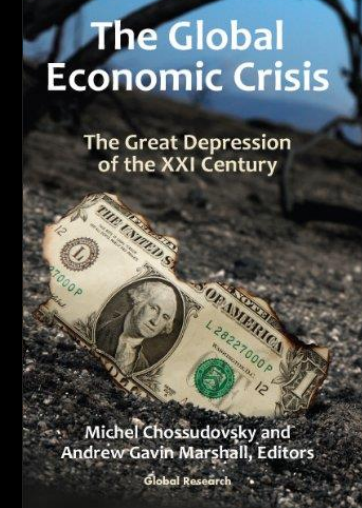




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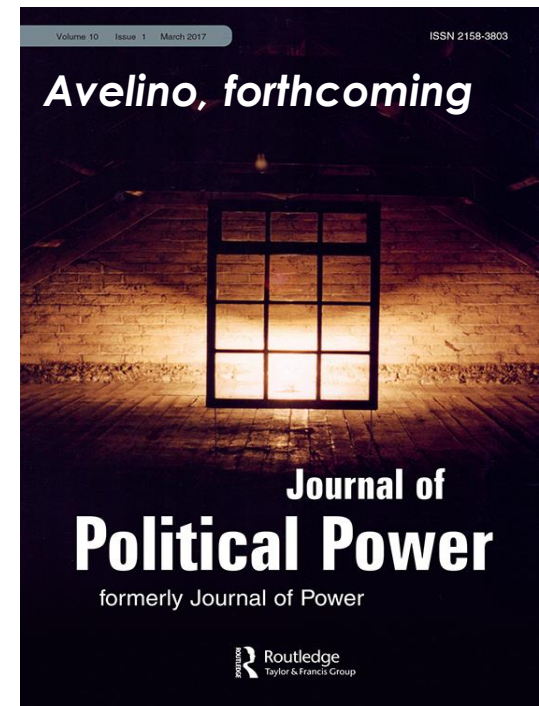
Problematic power relations:
inequality, oppression, exclusion, exploitation, extraction, injustice

How & to what extent are social innovations challenging and/or reproducing power relations?

What are (un)intended power implications of social innovation processes?

Power contestations

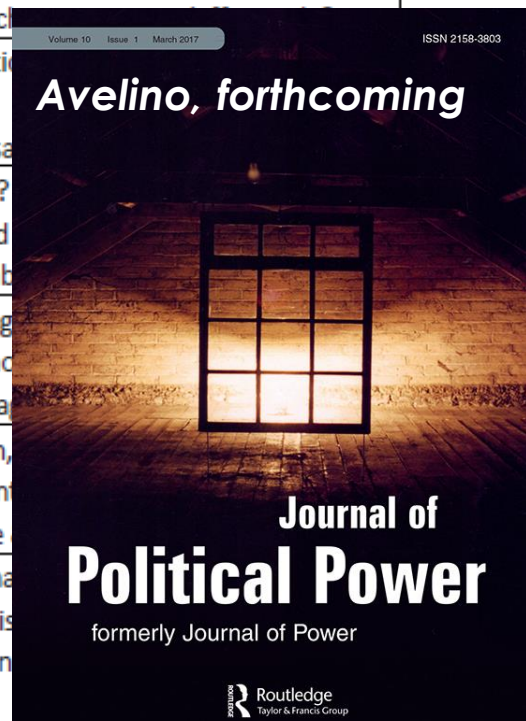
1. Power 'over' vs. power 'to'
2. Centred vs. diffused
3. Consensual vs. conflictual
4. Constraining vs. enabling
5. Quantity vs. quality
6. Power = knowledge vs. power \neq knowledge
7. Empowerment vs. disempowerment



Not choose sides but dialectic approach to highlight different dimensions...

Avelino 2011, 2017, forthcoming

POWER CONTESTATIONS	Empirical questions on how power manifests in change & innovation
Power 'over' vs. power 'to' (e.g. Dahl, Parsons, Foucault, Morris, Davis, Giddens, Arendt, Gordon)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Power over</i>: Who is exercising power over whom & how is this affected by change & innovation? • <i>Power to</i>: How is power exercised for/through/against change & innovation? • <i>Power with</i>: How do actors collaborate for/through/against change & innovation?
Centred vs. diffused (e.g. Dahl, Bachrach & Baratz, Lukes, Mann, Foucault, Gramsci)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How are the three/four faces of power manifested in processes of change & innovation? • How is power (de)centralized & recentralised in change & innovation? Who is included/excluded? • How & by whom is the agenda of change & innovation decided? Which
Consensual vs. conflictual (e.g. Parsons, Arendt, Mann, Haugaard)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How are both consensus and conflict manifested in change & innovation? • Which conflicts are 'hidden' under seemingly consensual processes? • (How) is consensus oppressive and conflict emancipatory (& vice versa)
Constraining vs. enabling (e.g. Foucault, Giddens, Clegg, Davis, Arendt, Hayward & Lukes)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How are both structure & agency manifested in change & innovation? • Who/what is enabled and/or constrained by change & innovation and • How are which structures (a) an object (b) a constraint and (c) an enab
Quantity vs. quality (e.g. Mann, Sewell, Arendt, Stewart)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How are different kinds of power exercised for/through/against change • Who is exercising more/less power for/through/against change & inn • Cooperation/(in)dependence/competition/co-existence/synergy/anta
Dis/empowerment (e.g. Boje & Rosile, Hardy & Leiba-O'Sullivan, Follet)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Who is empowered and/or disempowered in/by change & innovation, • (How) is dis/empowerment manifested as an outcome (empowerment constraining/enabling factor (empowerment as means) of/for change
Knowledge prior to power vs. knowledge = power (e.g. Bourdieu, Flyvbjerg, Lukes, Foucault, Barnes)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Which knowledges/discourses/ideologies underly the processes of cha • How is knowledge on change & innovation co-evolving with which exis • (How) is knowledge mobilised as an instrument for enabling/constrain



Power contestation: consensual vs. conflictual

Violence as “the **most concentrated**, if **bluntest**, **instrument of human power**”.
(Michael Mann 1986)

Violence can destroy power, but “is utterly incapable of creating it”, and
“**power and violence are opposites**; where the one rules absolutely, the
other is absent”. (Hannah Arendt 1970).

“Subjection is not only obtained by the instruments of violence or ideology; it
can also be direct, physical, pitting force against force, bearing on material
elements, and yet without involving violence; it may be **calculated**,
**organized, technically thought out; it may be subtle, make use neither of
weapons nor of terror and yet remain a physical order**”. (Michel Foucault 1977)







Dakota Access Pipeline
Resistance camp
Block County Road 134
October 27, 2016



Protest Dakota
Access Pipeline
November 2, 2016



Power contestation: centred vs. diffused

Three faces of power

1. Dahl (1958)
 - beyond ruling elites
2. Bachrach & Baratz (1962)
 - agenda-setting power
3. Lukes (1974)
 - preference shaping power



(De)/(re)centralization: decentralisation in one place can lead to (re)centralisation elsewhere.

ENERGY DEMOCRACY:

Redistributing Power to the People Through Renewable Transformation

by
Jennie C. Stephens

As the expansion of renewable energy accelerates, the transformative potential of moving away from fossil fuel reliance is becoming increasingly clear. Around the world, individuals, communities, organizations, cities, states, and countries are recognizing that renewable energy offers much more than just reliable clean electricity, pollution reductions, and climate mitigation. In addition to these environmental benefits, the renewable energy revolution also provides potential to transform society by redistributing jobs, wealth, health, and political power more equitably.

Energy democracy is a growing social movement that prioritizes this potential for redistributing power to the people through renewable transformation. Energy democracy acknowledges how fossil-fuel-based energy systems and the associated massive corporate profits of large multinational energy companies have perpetuated inequities, exacerbated disparate vulnerabilities, and promoted widespread injustices among and within communities around the world. By highlighting the negative societal impacts of fossil-fuel-based concentration of power and wealth, the principles of energy democracy connect energy system change with an associ-

ated transformation toward a more socially just and equal society.¹

Energy democracy recognizes that replacing fossil-fuel-based infrastructure with renewables is much more than a technological substitution; the social changes associated with this transition could be transformative. Energy democracy focuses on harnessing this progressive social change potential by embracing a vision of more distributed, locally based energy systems with a regionally appropriate mix of different renewable sources satisfying 100% of society's energy needs.

Whether the renewable energy transition delivers on this potential of re-



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Renewable energy

Power to the people: how Spanish cities took control of energy

The 'sunshine tax' is dead, and Barcelona and Cádiz are mounting a renewables revival

Stephen Burgen in Cádiz and Barcelona

Fri 14 Jun 2019 13:05 BST



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Paradoxes of innovation & transformative change

(Pel et al. 2019)



Ecovillage Findhorn (Scotland) Image by Flor Avelino



Aardehuis Olst, Netherlands, image by Florijn de Graaf



Ecovillage Tamera (Portugal) Image by Flor Avelino

This £4.5m party palace is also one of the UK's most sustainable homes

ES. Homes&Property

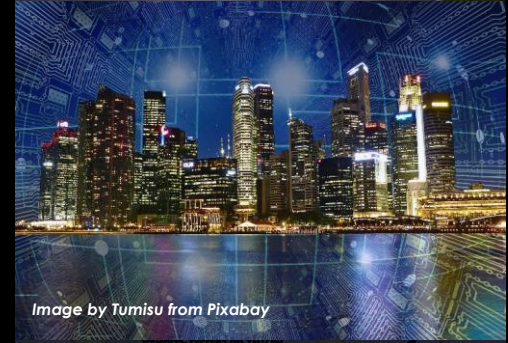


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Embracing & owning the paradoxes



Translating to mainstream context while also nurturing the radical core (*Smith 2006, 2007*)

Prepare for dialectics of innovation 'capture' + develop flexible repertoire of diverse strategies incl. 'Trojan Horse' tactics (*Bonno Pel 2016*)

How can/do social innovations that aim to contribute to just sustainability transitions, **gain power while maintaining their transformative potential?**



Thank you!

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The test of a first-rate intelligence is the ability to hold two opposed ideas in the mind at the same time, and still retain the ability to function. One should, for example, be able to see that things are hopeless and yet be determined to make them otherwise.

(F. Scott Fitzgerald)

GeniusQuotes.net

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drift
for transition



transformative
social innovation
theory



Top 10 background reading

1. Avelino, F., Theories of Power and Social Change (forthcoming). Power Contestations and their Implications for Social Change Research, accepted for publication in the *Journal of Political Power* > in press
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3. Avelino, F., Dumitru, A., Cipolla, C., Kunze, I. & Wittmayer, J. (2020): Translocal empowerment in transformative social innovation networks, *European Planning Studies*, 28:5, 955-977, <https://doi.org/10.1080/09654313.2019.1578339>
4. Avelino, F., J.M. Wittmayer, B. Pel, P. Weaver, A. Dumitru, A. Haxeltine, R. Kemp, M.S. Jørgensen, T. Bauler, S. Ruijsink, T. O'Riordan (2019), Transformative Social Innovation and (Dis)Empowerment, *Technological Forecasting and Social Change*, 145: 195-206: <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.techfore.2017.05.002>
5. Avelino, F., Wittmayer, J., Kemp, R., & Haxeltine, A. (2017). Guest Editorial: Game-changers and transformative social innovation. *Ecology and Society*, 22(4). <https://www.ecologyandsociety.org/vol22/iss4/art41/>
6. Avelino F. & Wittmayer J.M. (2019) "[The transformative potential of plural social enterprise: A multi-actor perspective](#)", chapter 10 in Eynaud P., Laville J.L., Dos Santos L.L., Banerjee S., Hulgard H., Avelino F. (2019), *Theory of social enterprise and pluralism: Social Movements, Solidarity Economy, and Global South*, Oxfordshire: Routledge Publisher, pp. 193-222.
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10. Avelino, F. and Wittmayer, J.M. (2016) Shifting Power Relations in Sustainability Transitions: A Multi-actor Perspective, *Journal of Environmental Policy and Planning*, 18(5), 628-649, <http://dx.doi.org/10.1080/1523908X.2015.111225>