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The Myth of Apathy:
Psychoanalytic Explorations of Environmental Degradation

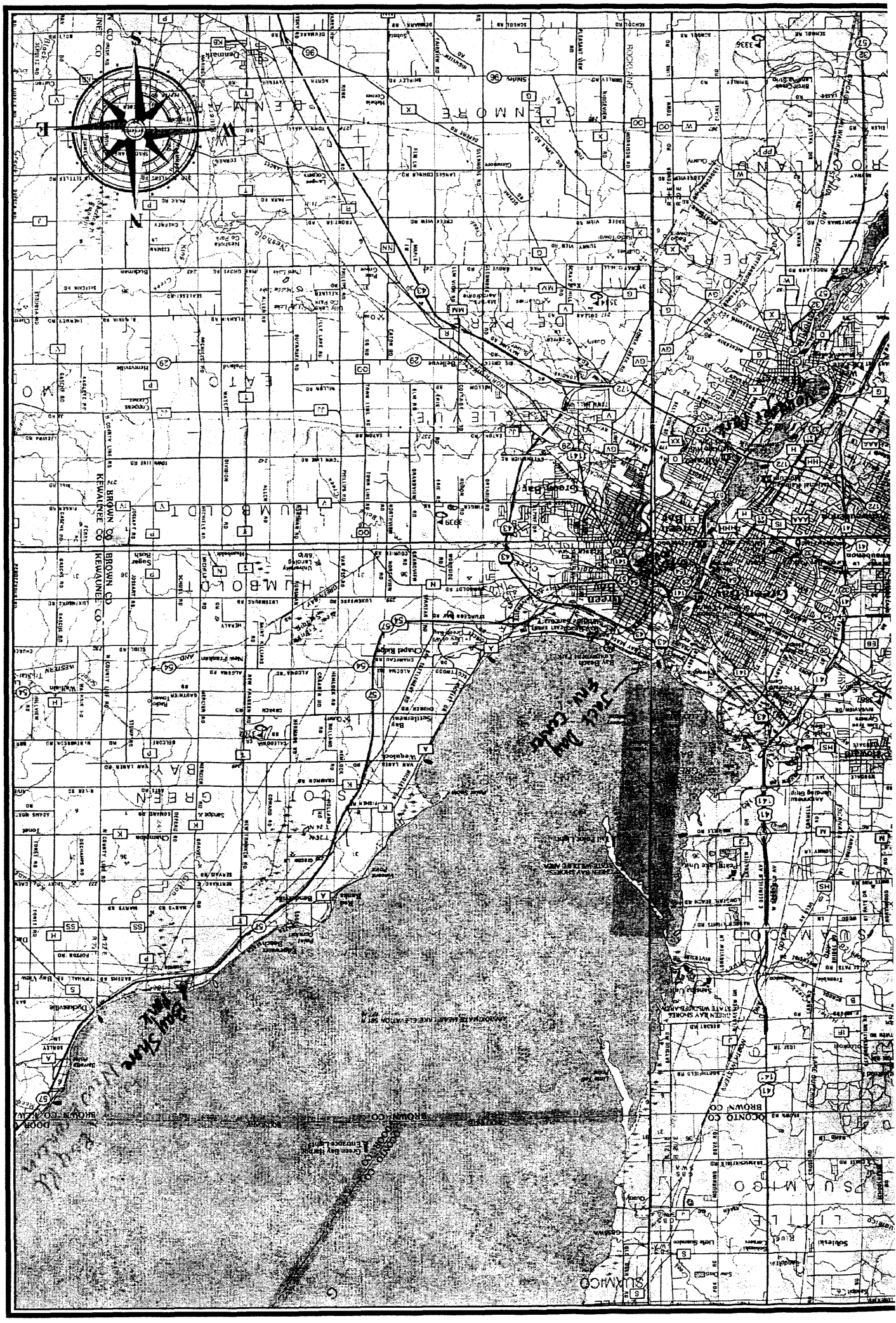
Renee Aron Lertzman

A Doctoral Thesis
Submitted in partial fulfilment of the requirements for the award of
Doctor of Philosophy of Cardiff University, School of Social Sciences
December 2009

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Green Bay
Suamico
Howard
Pulaski
Oconto Co
Brown Co
Kewaunee Co
Door Co
Marinette Co
Oconto
Peshtigo
Menominee
Shawano
Oconto Falls
Gillett
Abrams
Lena
Little Suamico
Bay Shore Park
Bay Beach Amusement Park
Fort Howard
Ashwaubenon
Allouez
Scott
Green Bay
Depere
Wrightstown
Denmark
Pittsfield
Holland
Lawrence
Humboldt
Glenmore
Rockland
Eaton
Morrison
Bellevue
Ledgeview
Hobart
Pensaukee
Oconto River
Peshtigo River
Suamico River
Duck Creek
Fox River
Green Bay
Lake Michigan
Sturgeon Bay Ship Canal
Door Peninsula
Bay Shore Drive
Velp Ave
Mason St
Main St
Broadway
Ashland Ave
Packerland Dr
Lombardi Ave
Riverside Dr
Military Ave
Webster Ave
Dousman St
Huron Rd
Shawano Ave
Oneida St
Monroe Ave
Cedar St
Walnut St
Pine St
Chestnut St
Elm St
Maple St
Hickory St
Ridge Rd
Lineville Rd
Scheuring Rd
Velp Rd
Glendale Ave
Bellevue St
Eaton Rd
Lime Kiln Rd
Dutchman Creek
Apple Creek
Ashwaubenon Creek
Baird Creek
Trout Creek
Suamico River
Oconto River
Peshtigo River
Lake Michigan
Green Bay
Sturgeon Bay Ship Canal
Door Peninsula
Bay Shore Drive
Velp Ave
Mason St
Main St
Broadway
Ashland Ave
Packerland Dr
Lombardi Ave
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Elm St
Maple St
Hickory St
Ridge Rd
Lineville Rd
Scheuring Rd
Velp Rd
Glendale Ave
Bellevue St
Eaton Rd
Lime Kiln Rd
Dutchman Creek
Apple Creek
Ashwaubenon Creek
Baird Creek
Trout Creek

Summary

This thesis presents a psychosocial investigation into environmental subjectivity, through the lens of 'the myth of apathy'. The central argument is for the acknowledgement of unconscious processes, in particular defence mechanisms, and themes of loss, mourning and ambivalence, in how environmental issues are perceived, experienced and responded to. The research draws from qualitative fieldwork conducted in Green Bay, Wisconsin in 2007, involving three in-depth interviews conducted with ten participants selected through the use of an online survey. Surveys were sent out to 1067 residents in Green Bay, 163 responded (response rate 15.3%). The interviews were conducted using 'dialogic, relational interview' approach, and the analysis based on psychoanalytic qualitative research methods. The analysis centres on several core themes as emerging in the data and in the context of industry in Green Bay: loss, mourning and melancholia; ambivalence and splitting; and concern, care and reparation. The data analysis presents two case studies and four analytic thematic chapters. Based on psychoanalytic clinical work on reparation, the thesis presents a case for the incorporation of creativity and concern in the practice of environmental communications and advocacy, and critiques the concept of 'apathy' as based on assumptions regarding a 'lack' of concern or care. Further the thesis critiques the concepts of the 'gap' between values and practices, or between concern and action, and advocates an appreciation for the complex dilemmas, struggles and contradictions that may arise from environmental issues and degradation. The thesis aims to contribute to the field and practice of environmental communications and policy, in addressing unconscious dimensions and the need to incorporate affective elements of environmental degradation in addition to attitudes, values and behaviour.

Dedicated to...

Jonathan Wege, for believing in me and making this project possible.

The memories of my grandfather Albert (Mandy) Mandelbaum and uncle Melvin Lertzman, for sharing with me the joy of intellectual pursuits.

And to my parents for teaching me the meaning of תיקון עולם (*tikkun olam*).

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PART ONE

Thus the shadow of the object fell upon the ego, and the latter could henceforth be judged by a special agency, as though it were an object, the forsaken object. In this way an object-loss was transformed into an ego loss and the conflict between the ego and the loved person into a cleavage between the critical activity of the ego and the ego as altered by identification.

Sigmund Freud, *Mourning and Melancholia*

The struggle between love and hate, with all the conflicts to which it gives rise, sets in, as I have tried to show, in early infancy, and is active all though life.

Melanie Klein, Love, *Guilt and Reparation*

All of these places now live in the imagination, all of them stir us to responses other than the merely visual... our imaginations assent to the stimulus of names, our sense of the place is enhanced, our sense of ourselves as inhabitants not just of a geographical country but of a country of the mind is cemented... it is this marriage that constitutes the sense of place in the richest possible manifestation...

Seamus Heaney, *Preoccupations*

Concern refers to the fact that the individual cares or minds and both feels and accepts responsibility.

Donald Winnicott, *Capacity for Concern*



Fox River, January 2008, N. Dorff

We lived right on the river. I have a tendency to be, emotionally attached to the seasons as far as the river goes. I will, when the springtime, I will be [.] in a better mood, when I see the river ice is off. When it's open. Because it opens from the centre out, and that was, an old girlfriend told me that. She says, you know how much happier you get when the river is open? I know when you have seen the river is open, because you are in such a better mood. And I'm like, oh, that would make sense. ... I never been one to think it's better in some other place than what is here. Because I think it's got a lot of great things around here.

—Howard, Interview 1

Chapter 1

The myth of apathy

> *One of the penalties of an ecological education is that one lives alone in a world of wounds.*
>
> Aldo Leopold, *A Sand County Almanac*

As a student at the University of California at Santa Cruz in early 1987, I sat in a darkened lecture hall and learned about a different environmental issue each week: deforestation, ozone depletion, water contamination, loss of species and habitats, increased CO_2 emissions, and the race in poorer countries to secure resources through burning rainforests and decimating centuries-old agricultural practices. These topics would be accompanied by an array of graphs, charts and visuals. We would quietly file out and return to our everyday lives and routines. On other days I would sit in cultural studies seminars, learning about cultural relativity, historiography, feminist theory and the breakdown of 'master narratives'. It appeared that the world as we knew it was crumbling and yet no one seemed terribly bothered.

My experiences that year initiated an investigation into the nature of environmental awareness and its affective dimensions. I became an environmental communications professional, consulting with organisations on campaigns and using the Internet for new forms of outreach and advocacy. I earned a Master of Arts degree in communication studies with a focus on environmental media. Throughout these two decades of experience in the environmental communications sector and academia, I became aware of a singular puzzle at the centre of our work: how to engage the public and mobilise effective environmental action, to stem the tides of ecological degradation and long-term consequences for all life on the planet. This puzzle was articulated in various guises, however it underlined and informed every cogent environmental campaign; the task was not to enlist those already 'on-board', but to persuade, cajole, scare, or otherwise plea for some sort of *response* on behalf of our environment.

Currently, the field of environmental communications has begun to assess its strategies, through cold and critical analysis (e.g. Shellenberger and Norhaus, 2004), or research-based investigations into the use of fear-based appeals (Weber, 2006; Moser, 2007). Research studies have been launched to ascertain how various publics perceive environmental issues, and what attitudes and values seem to drive particular actions or behaviours (e.g. Schultz and Zelezny, 1999; Dunlap et al., 1992; Lorenzoni and Pidgeon, 2006). High profile polling research reflect startling data concerning

public perceptions of environmental threats such as climate change; according to the Pew Research Center for the People & the Press, there has been a sharp decline over the past year in the percentage of Americans who say there is solid evidence that global temperatures are rising; 35% say global warming is a very serious problem, down from 44% in April 2008 (Pew, 22 October 2009).

It would seem that current forms of environmental communications and campaigns have 'failed' to properly enlist, inform, education and mobilise publics to respond accordingly. The capacities for translating scientific data into compelling narratives has seemingly faltered. The tendency is to view the situation as reflecting a problem in the public's ability to grasp, make sense of, or otherwise *feel* the impact of these issues. Surrounded by the dazzle of consumer lifestyles, the public is often constructed like magpies, consistently distracted by the glitter of a shiny object whilst the world is burning. This is most clearly illustrated through the concept of the 'gap' between values and actions, and the notion of 'barriers to engagement' that keep people from engaging with environmental topics and issues. The basic idea, simply put, is that whilst people report in surveys and polls strong values regarding nature, ecology or environmental quality; they continue to drive, fly, shop and otherwise participate in damaging practices. The discourse of 'barriers' tends to focus on variables that may keep people from more fully engaging with issues, such as poor understanding of the issues, ideological and political orientations (most pronounced in the United States as particularly partisan), and perceiving issues to be abstract, distant and otherwise not immediate or felt. What underlies these particular discourses is a conception of subjectivity surprisingly lacking in creativity, intentionality, or complexity, and the 'public' appear to be the locus of the problems and as such are pathologised.

The notion of apathy and an apathetic subject falls neatly into these particular discourses, as placing the locus of blame on the individuals or 'the public' for the lack of proactive or otherwise reparative practices. Apathy is a concept widely circulating in political arenas, and the notion of environmental apathy is highly prevalent (cf. Cafaro, 2005 on apathy as environmental vice).[1] The term derives from the Greek

[1] A good example of a contemporary environmental perception of apathy as a 'vice' and form of laziness is expressed by Cafaro (2005): "Over the course of the Middle Ages, the two vices of *tristitia* (pessimism, despair) and *accidia* (apathy, "dryness of spirit") merged and morphed into the cardinal sin of sloth. Calling apathy and sloth vices, or sins, emphasizes the active nature of a good human life. Apathy is a key environmental vice, for several reasons. Our default procedures typically harm the environment, whereas doing better takes work, especially initially: bicycling to work rather than driving a car, setting up recycling bins rather than just tossing our garbage. One pop philosopher connects *all* our moral failures to laziness, and if this perhaps goes too far, it is true that doing right requires effort. Often, we need to *think* our way toward better environmental solutions, and apathy shows itself in lazy thinking as well as in halfhearted action or inaction. Sluggish thinking tends to be selfish, short-term, and unimaginative. It reinforces passivity, as when my students' inability to imagine any way forward beyond American car culture, combined with their understanding of its environmental harms, leaves them feeling defeated and hopeless (p. 150).

apatheia, an absence or a lack of feeling, or *pathos*; apathy is best viewed as a lack of care, concern or aliveness.[2] To view a public as apathetic is to suggest people 'do not care' and as such are somehow immune to the highly distressing issues, so viscerally felt by those with a more 'environmental subjectivity' who feel morally, personally and socially responsible for the broader wellbeing of our ecological contexts and fellow species. The idea of apathy therefore constructs a 'two cultures' paradigm, not dissimilar to C.P. Snow's (1959) notion of the arts and sciences as constituting two cultures. In this case, however, the two cultures are those 'who care' and those do not, or are otherwise lacking concern. From an environmental perspective, this appears entirely accurate; however, as this thesis argues, it perpetuates extremely damaging and ultimately counter-productive assumptions regarding environmental communications strategy and outreach.

This thesis is an examination of 'the myth of apathy', conducted through an exploration of affective dimensions of environmental degradation, specifically based in the Great Lakes region of the United States, in the community of Green Bay, Wisconsin. As I will discuss, Green Bay was selected as a research site based on its ongoing ecological troubles, its industrial legacy and history, and its highly committed and beleaguered environmental community. I wanted to explore how local environmental issues, specifically relating to the waters of Green Bay as a tributary to the Great lakes, are experienced by those who may appear as 'apathetic' based on their relative lack of 'engagement' with environmental issues. I wanted to know, did these issues make them feel anxious, concerned, or did they literally not care, and were immune to them? What was the quality of their relations with these issues?

I wanted to explore these issues from a different perspective from the 'gap' and 'barrier' discourse; rather than presuming a lack of something vital or intrinsic, I wanted instead to pursue an investigation into affective and largely unconscious dimensions of these issues. This was based on my own long-standing fascination with psychoanalytic theory, particularly Freud and British object relations, my commitment to qualitative psychosocial research—and the sense that environmental studies and psychoanalysis are not as disparate or dissimilar as one may presume. Psychoanalytic and environmental studies are both keenly concerned with *reparation*. However, how the concept of reparation is taken up and engaged across these divergent spheres of practice and theory are quite different; whereas the psychoanalyst may be concerned with unconscious and often painful processes involved in capacities for reparation, such as guilt, ambivalence or aggression, an environmental

[2] The Oxford English Dictionary provides the first two definitions of apathy as 1. Freedom from, or insensibility to, suffering; hence, freedom from, or insensibility to, passion or feeling; passionless existence, and 2. Indolence of mind, indifference to what is calculated to move the feelings, or to excite interest or action.

advocate may be more concerned with the quickest and more effective way of finding solutions. While this assessment is a bit crude, how reparation is engaged across these disparate spheres is both contrasting, but also complementary. As Ivan Ward noted in his introduction to the *Ecological Madness* conference at the Freud Museum in 1992, activists' tendency for antagonism towards psychoanalytic modes of enquiry and reflection (as a luxury) must be tempered and reconsidered, so that both modes can be seen as integral for a more effective environmental movement (Ward, 1993). Ward notes the psychoanalytic contribution to environmental efforts brings a concern with the relations between what is *conscious* and *unconscious*, rather than the social and the individual—an emphasis with profound implications for the practice of political and community outreach.

❧

The present research thesis is premised on the assertion that in order to comprehend and facilitate a viable politics of environmental advocacy (which require effective communications strategies and approaches), there must be a sustained and focused attention on the psychic (affective) dimensions of contemporary industrial environmental issues. To enable this focus there needs to be a capacity and willingness to investigate not only how 'ecological subjectivities' are constituted within historically contingent social relations, but how unconscious material may be animated and negotiated through such subjectivities. Specifically, this project asks how people make sense of, respond to, and resolve dilemmas posed by environmental issues and threats, both consciously and unconsciously. It asserts that how such dilemmas are 'made sense of' is a necessarily political inquiry, in terms of what expressions of agency are possible.

This chapter presents an orientation and introduction to the thesis, and introduces the field site of Green Bay. First, I situate the project theoretically and explicate its relevance. Second, I present the selection of Green Bay as a field site, and the factors contributing to this choice; relating to this is the ecological context of the region. I will then discuss briefly the project's potential implications for practice, and finally an overview of the thesis organisation and format.

The issues at stake

The Myth of Apathy: Psychosocial Dimensions of Environmental Degradation is premised upon the assertion that environmental issues and threats involve a potential dissolution of traditionally held certainties (Beck 2000, p. 10) and, depending upon the typology and context of the issue, can invoke ruptures in terms of who we are (what it means to be human beings in the context of nature) and what we know (as socially constructed rational and scientific beings). What is at stake is how

environmental agency, engagement and participation in collective forms of response and reparation are constituted and enabled. The working concept of apathy as an environmental vice, and one of the biggest impediments to environmental action is directly challenged by a psychoanalytic conception of subjectivity that presumes unconscious (and often irrational) processes inform actions in both intimate and political spheres. A psychoanalytic conception of apathy presents a different view of subjectivity and hence what is required to address it. It is not defined as a *lack* as much as a defence against possibly distressing or overwhelming unconscious experiences, e.g. loss, anxiety, etc. Harold Searles (1972) wrote,

> The current state of ecological deterioration is such as to evoke in us largely unconscious anxieties of different varieties that are of a piece with those characteristic of various levels of an individual's ego-development history. Thus the general apathy... is based upon largely unconscious ego defences against these anxieties (p. 363).

Following Searles, the thesis aims to help substantiate this claim through exploring topics of concern, reparation and creativity—arguably the attributes absent from 'apathetic subjectivity'. *Apathy* perhaps more than any other concept is a highly active 'discourse' in environmental and political sectors, as a viable explanatory trope for public inaction and lack of response to chronic and evident environmental threats. In setting out to explore unconscious processes of environmental issues and relations with apathy, I found myself instead becoming drawn to how concern, care and creativity (Winnicott's variation on 'reparation'; cf. Winnicott, 1963). In other words, in order to explore apathy it was essential to investigate what assumptions underpin the conception of apathy. In so doing the project problematises the concept of the 'apathetic subject' (as literally without *pathos,* care or concern), and establishes a psychoanalytically informed framework for considering environmental subjectivity and engagement. By shifting the discourse from a *lack* of something to a *presence* of something perhaps not well understood, the project of environmental communications necessarily shifts in orientation and strategy.

The field site: Green Bay, Wisconsin

In 2006, I became a Fellow with the Biodiversity Project, an environmental communications organisation based in Madison, Wisconsin, specialising in work concerning the Great Lakes. The only stipulation of the fellowship was for my research to relate to the Great Lakes region and its ecological future. As a significant environmental site and resource in the United States, the Great Lakes have been receiving increased attention as water becomes higher on the policy and public radar as a future scarce resource. The lakes have long been portrayed in the American public imagination

alternately as fragile, threatened, valuable, degraded, industrial, polluted, pristine and restored, depending on the historical moment, context and site. Like most significant bodies of water, the lakes hold a significant place in relation to industry and American industrial development, and as such have endured industrial processes such as contaminants, pollutant dumping and introduction of invasive species through ballast waters (Hickey et al., 2006). Due to the geographic scope, the lakes are both identifiable as an entity ('The Great Lakes') and plurality comprised of communities, states and nations. For this reason collaboration and coalition building is essential, and is demonstrated by the recent creation of the Great Lakes Coalition that has brought together stakeholders and partners in an unprecedented alliance and network (Wege Foundation 2004).



Figure 1: The Great Lakes Basin. Source: Her Majesty the Queen in Right of Canada, Natural Resources Canada, 2003. Accessed 18 July 2010.

The lakes extend 575 miles from the north shore of Lake Superior to the south shore of Lake Erie, a spread of eight degrees in latitude. From west to east they stretch nearly eight hundred miles. Their drainage basin encompasses 200,000 square miles—in that basin live thirty-four million people, 'each of them affected in ways large and small by the lakes' (Dennis 2003). As there has been considerable media and advocacy activity in the past few decades surrounding the health and wellbeing of this particular vast natural resource, my interest is in exploring the

ways particular communities have been 'affected in ways large and small by the lakes'. There is a particular interest in groups and individuals who may not self-identify as 'environmentalists' or even as concerned citizens, but who nevertheless are touched and impacted by the myriad ecological, industrial and social threats facing the Great Lakes.

Given the enormous scale of the Great Lakes, I decided to conduct the research through conducting research in a particular community of significance for the Great Lakes system: Green Bay, Wisconsin, on the confluence of the Fox River and Green Bay, tributaries of the Great Lakes basin. Green Bay is arguably an ecologically beleaguered place. Having attracted national attention for a proposed Environmental Protection Agency Superfund cleanup due to the PCB-enriched sediments in the Fox River and with its high concentration of paper pulp mills lining the estuaries, Green Bay is an emblem of industrialisation and its ecological consequences.[3] Between 1850 and 1950, Wisconsin's Fox River Valley, where Green Bay is situated, experienced relatively stable patterns of social, political, and economic development; the economy remained tightly bound to agricultural and industrial production, its politicians were conservative and resistant to change, and its racial and ethnic make-up was nearly homogenous (largely German, Italian, Polish and Swedish) (Summers, 2006, p. 9). For decades there was no environmental regulation for these industries, and as a result the rivers and bay, which flow into the Great Lakes basin, have withstood enormous levels of industrial degradation. Green Bay is also a place of contradictions; the University of Wisconsin Green Bay (UWGB), was nicknamed "Eco-U" and is thought to have offered the first course in environmental studies in the United States in 1970 (Wozniak, 2007). It also possesses a history of local environmentalism, as

[3] The Comprehensive Environmental Response, Compensation, and Liability Act (CERCLA), enacted in 1980, is nicknamed Superfund; Superfund sites receive national attention namely concerning their toxic contamination. This law provides the authority through which the Federal government can compel people or companies responsible for creating hazardous waste sites to clean them up. It also created a public trust fund, known as the Superfund, to assist with the cleanup of inactive and abandoned hazardous waste sites or accidentally spilled or illegally dumped hazardous materials. In 2001, the Environmental Protection Agency and the Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources announced the plan to conduct a cleanup effort of the Lower Fox River and Green Bay. In 2007 dredging commenced of a portion of the lower Fox River (Little Lake Butte des Morts). Cleanup of Little Lake Butte des Morts was completed in June. Approximately 370,000 cubic yards of contaminated sediment were removed. To accomplish this, two dredges operated mostly in the southern half of the lake. After PCB-contaminated sediment was dredged from the lake, it was put into large plastic tubes nearby. Once the water was squeezed out, it was cleaned on-site and returned to the river. Contaminated sediment was taken to a nearby landfill for proper disposal. Remaining areas with lower levels of PCBs were covered with gravel and sand caps. This occurred mostly in the northern portion of the lake. This was the first of five regions to be addressed in the Fox River; Cleanup of highly contaminated sediment in the area of the Lower Fox River just below the De Pere Dam was completed in 2008. The area, or "hotspot," near the dam had PCBs as high as 3,000 parts per million. Although this area contained the highest levels of PCBs in the river, it represented only about two percent of all of the contaminated sediment that needs to be cleaned up, but nearly 10 percent of the total PCB "mass" (Environmental Protection Agency, 2009).

outlined by local historian Paul Wozniak (1996), and more recently recounted in Greg Summer's *Consuming Nature: Environmentalism in the Fox River Valley, 1850–1950* (2006). Green Bay remains home to a small but strong environmental community, that includes the University of Wisconsin Sea Grant Institute, the Corfrin Center for Biodiversity, several environmental charity organisations and numerous environmental scientists and historians keen to help restore, protect and conserve Green Bay's ecological resources.[4] The efforts to reach out and mobilise communities in the Lower Fox River Valley to enact environmentally friendly practices, such as reducing phosphorous use, as well as instating regulations regarding the "TMDL" (Total Maximum Daily Load) entering the Lower Fox River are active; these efforts are also constrained by what is perceived as resistance and inertia with regard to environmental protection.

The confluence of variables—a small but dedicated environmental community, national recognition of Green Bay as a notoriously polluted region, its significant role as a heavily industrial tributary of the ecologically beleaguered Great Lakes, and the association of the Midwest with American industrial development and disrepair—presented an ideal site for exploring the topic of environmental anxiety, concern and apathy.[5] Green Bay is known more for its celebrated (American) football team, the Green Bay Packers, than for its environmental track record, despite the significance of its ecosystems for the larger Great Lakes region. Informally, during my prospective field site visit (discussed below), I heard many accounts from local environmental advocates and professionals of frustration and bewilderment at the lack of public engagement with local ecological issues, namely efforts to protect and restore the rivers and bay. These accounts were daunting but compelling. I wanted to explore, first hand, how people were experiencing and perceiving their local environments, and if, in fact, the 'general public' who were not engaged in environmental activities lacked care or concern about their environment.

---

[4] In 2006, the Lower Fox River Basin TMDL Outreach Committee was formed to guide communication and education efforts. The committee is chaired by Victoria Harris, UW-Sea Grant Institute Water Quality Specialist, and includes representatives from UW-Extension, Green Bay Metropolitan Sewerage District, Brown County, UW-Green Bay, Oneida Tribe of Indians, and Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources (WDNR). I was invited to and attended a meeting of the Lower Fox River Stakeholders group during my field site visit in 2007.

[5] Environmental groups and programmes in the Green Bay region include Wisconsin League of Conservation Voters, Baird Creek Preservation Foundation, Northeast Wisconsin Land Trust, Gathering Waters Conservancy, Fox River Watch, The Lower Fox River Watershed Monitoring Program, Fox Wolf Watershed Alliance, Lake Michigan Forum and Rivers Alliance of Wisconsin, in addition to the Department of Natural Resources (DNR) who maintain an active presence in the region. It is worth noting the presence of these groups in light of the interview data, which did not reference these groups with the exception of the DNR and the Wisconsin League of Conservation Voters.

Green Bay: Industrial and Ecological Troubles



Figure 2: Paper mills lining Green Bay; photo credit, State of Green Bay Report 2009, Sea Grant (2009).

The region concerning the Lower Fox River Basin and the Bay, tributaries flowing into the Great Lakes watershed system, faces myriad ecological threats from a variety of fronts. Such threats stem from the region's tremendous significance historically as a port and site of several paper mills and processing plants concentrated in a very small area. Ecologically, this region's watershed is under great pressure resulting from invasive species, toxic pollution, phosphates, polychlorinated biphenyls (PCBs), sewage flows and run-off from the surrounding agricultural industries. While Green Bay has been flagged as a potential superfund site due to its PCBs, there continue multiple stressors on the regions' ecology that present serious impediments to a future healthy watershed system—a system that can support fish and wildlife, and recreational activities as swimming and fishing. These tensions between Green Bay's industrial significance as a port and paper processing centre, with the local cultures' celebration of fishing, boating and swimming, constitute a complicated portrait of coexisting and oftentimes conflicting desires, attachments, identities and practices. PCBs continue to be the toxic substance of greatest concern in Green Bay and the Fox River (UW Sea Grant Institute, 2008). PCBs are chemical compounds that were used in commercial and industrial applications; from 1954–1971, paper mills in the lower Fox Valley manufactured and recycled carbonless copy paper containing PCBs (ibid). As a result, the Fox River-Green Bay system is contaminated with an estimated 110,000 pounds of PCBs, with approximately 80–85% of this amount in the Fox River (ibid). As PCBs are "persistent", they remain in the sediment and the water (and in

the tissues of organisms) for a very long time; hence the serious threat to human and wildlife health and wellbeing.

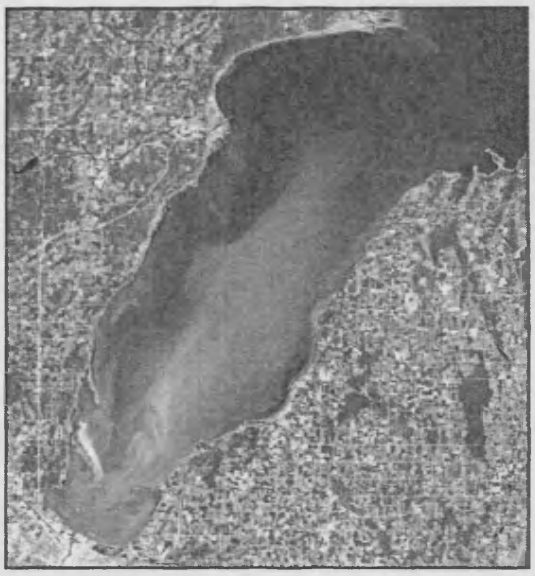


Figure 3: "Satellite photo of lower Green Bay on May 20, 2000 shows the hypereutrophic conditions in the area of concern and a distinct gradient of highly turbid water entering the southern bay from the Fox River to clearer water north of Little Sturgeon Bay." Source: ERSC, UW-Madison; reprinted from UW Sea Grant (2009).

In terms of industry, paper remains central, in addition to dairy farms and large-scale agriculture or Confined Animal Feeding Operations (CAFOs) in Brown County. Run-off from these operations contaminate drinking water wells and are poisonous to aquatic systems; manure from frozen ground spreading is a central source of such contamination (in 2006, due to an early thaw, "more than 100 wells were contaminated with coliform bacteria, E. coli, or nitrates—byproducts of manure or other fertilizer" (Duhigg, 2009). There are currently 24 paper and pulp mills along the Lower Fox River that produce more than five million tons of paper per year and employ around fifty thousand people. The high concentration of paper mills and other industry along the Lower Fox has historically been the source of much pollution of the river (cf. Summers, 2006). Public debate about this contamination began as early as 1923, but little was done to improve the river until the federal Clean Water Act was passed in 1972 (ibid). Much effort has since been put into cleaning the Fox, but problems still exist. According to some measures of pollution (e.g. dissolved oxygen, pollution-tolerant worm counts), the Lower Fox River is much cleaner than it was before 1972. However, according to other measures of pollution (e.g. phosphorus, estrogenic compounds, discarded pharmaceuticals), the river waters are slightly more contaminated than before 1972. As a result, debate over the river's contamination continues between environmentalists, the paper industry, Indian tribes, and elected officials at the federal, state and local levels.

Field visit, Green Bay 2007

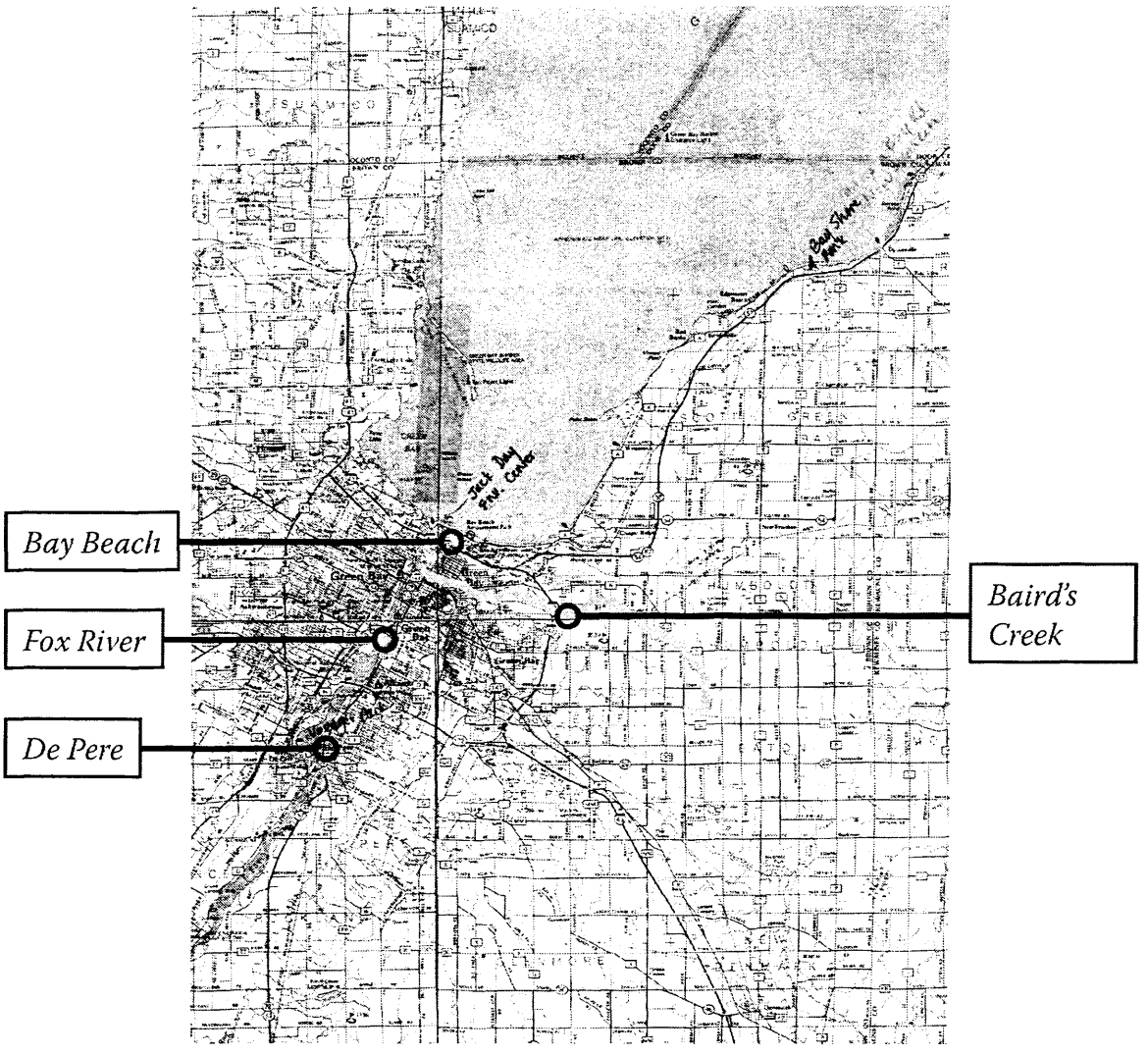


Figure 4: Map of Green Bay, Courtesy Kendra Axness. This map was offered during my first fieldsite visit, and the notations indicate points of relevance (Voyager Park on the Fox River where PCB clean-up has been underway); see also locations of Bay Beach, Fox River, De Pere and Baird's Creek.

With the assistance of the Biodiversity Project, I conducted a fact-finding, preliminary field site visit for five days in June 2006. During my visit, I became aware through my field notes, conversations with my supervisor and colleagues that in fact I felt quite low and affectively 'depressed'. Curious about this response, I began to feel this may be an indication of the sort of 'inertia' or 'apathy' that was presenting during my visit, and experienced as a form of social-cultural countertransference. Rather than resist this response, I decided to enquire more deeply into it, and felt Green Bay would be a suitable and potentially fruitful site for these investigations.[6]

[6] This sense of depression or sadness I felt during my initial field site visit came to a climax of sorts, when Vicky and Bud Harris took me to the Bay Beach Wildlife Sanctuary, part of a recreational area created following the closure of Bay Beach for swimming. We passed an enclosure where a cougar was being kept; as I stared at the cat, as it lay in its hammock, I became overwhelmed with a mixture

Despite its legacy as heavily industrialised region, Green Bay itself is considered one of the largest freshwater estuaries in the world (more than 2,000 square miles): "Despite degraded water quality and invasive species, Green Bay's wetlands, islands and deep waters are still one of the most ecologically productive ecosystems in the Great Lakes" (*The Nature Conservancy*, 2009). Vicky Harris, a water quality and habitat restoration specialist for the UW Sea Grant Institute, concurs: "Because of the bay's warmer, shallower, fertile waters, it is the most productive part of Lake Michigan in terms of fish and other aquatic life" (*The Nature Conservancy*, 2009). The report also states, "Engaging the people who live, work and spend time in the Green Bay area is critical to conservation success". However, the challenges are formidable: the waters are 'impaired' due to high levels of phosphorous, sediment, polychlorinated biphenyls (PCBs) and mercury. After decades of relatively unregulated industrial run-off and the rise of concentrated animal operations (CAOs) along the basin, nutrient loading remains a critical issue threatening the health of the bay and the Fox River.



Figure 5: Coaster, Biodiversity Project, 2009, Great Lakes Forever Campaign

Healing our Waters

Given its geographical, industrial, ecological and historical significance for the Great Lakes region, Green Bay provided a rich context to explore affective dimensions

of emotions and began to cry, despite my self-consciousness with my tour guides. It seemed my own feelings of helplessness, boredom and entrapment were stimulated in this moment, and I found the encounter deeply unsettling and moving.

of ecological degradation, up close and with the fine detail afforded through a psychosocial, qualitative study. However the confluence of two major public outreach initiatives directed to the Great Lakes regions, including Green Bay, signalled a potentially fruitful field site that could be both valuable and timely: The Great Lakes Forever, a public education initiative launched in 2004 by Biodiversity Project, and expanded in 2005 with the support of the John G. Shedd Aquarium and other Chicago and regional partners; and the creation in 2005 of an unprecedented Great Lakes restoration alliance, Healing our Waters, also branded as Healthy Lakes, Healthy Lives, a multi-million dollar initiative funded by Peter Wege and the Wege Foundation, and coordinated by the National Wildlife Federation offices in Washington, D.C. Both projects engaged extensive public opinion research, conducted primarily by the D.C.-based market research firm Belden, Russonello & Stewart, that informed the creation of many media elements, including print magazine adverts (see Figure 6 and Figure 7), radio adverts, and an extremely successful public outreach tool, the use of coasters (beer mats) distributed throughout pubs and taverns in the Great Lakes region in 2008, the winning photos from a contest were printed on more than 120,000 beer coasters, distributed to all eight Great Lakes states and two Canadian provinces (see Figure 5 for an example). At the time of my fellowship commencing, the *Healing our Waters* coalition was formulating advert campaigns for public outreach efforts, in the attempts to drive citizens to donate and sign petitions to pressure governmental regulations for the Great Lakes (see Figure 8–Figure 11 for examples of piloted adverts). After viewing focus group footage conducted by Belden, Russonello & Stewart of groups in Green Bay, Detroit, Chicago and Grand Rapids, to test various adverts in stages of development, and reviewing the focus group transcripts, I decided to incorporate one element from the *Healing our Waters* campaign, the advert "Girl on the Beach". As I discuss in Chapter 4, the intention of incorporating this element was to provide a potentially productive 'prompt' at the end of the three interviews, and see how responses to the advert compared with the impressions I had noted in the focus groups. I was particularly interested in knowing if participants felt more open or able to disclose affective responses to the advert after three, in-depth interviews; and to know if the advert seemed to elicit anxieties or fears. As I shall discuss, the advert did not necessarily provoke the responses I was anticipating, however it did prove as a fruitful prompt on topics of environmental identity and agency.



Figure 6: Healing our Waters, print advert campaign, 2008



Figure 7: Healing our Waters, print advert campaign, summer 2007 ("Girl on Beach")

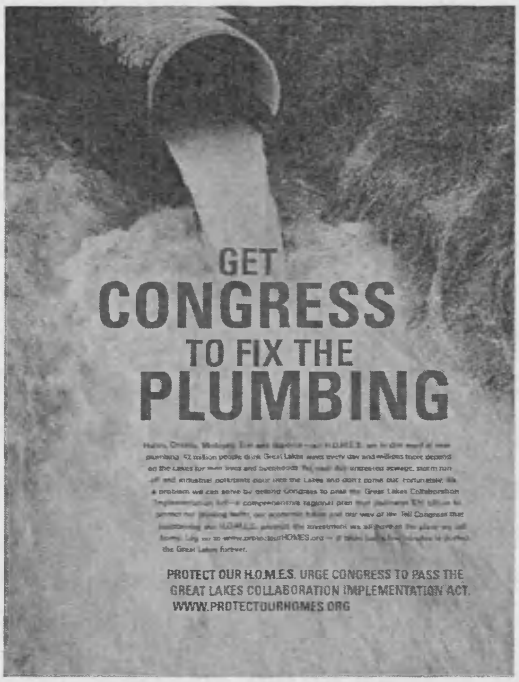


Figure 8: Healing our Waters, print advert campaign, pilots



Figure 9: Healing our Waters, print advert campaign, pilots



Urge Congress to pass the Great Lakes Collaborative Implementation Act.

Figure 10: Healing our Waters, print advert campaign, pilots



Figure 11: Healing our Waters, print advert campaign, pilots

The data collection

The research is a psychosocial interview-based study using three, in-depth, dialogic-relational interviews with ten selected participants residing in Green Bay. As I discuss in Chapter 4, the participants were selected as a result of an online survey I administered through the marketing firm, Matousek and Associates, who provided their services and database pro bono (out of support for the project's focus). (See Appendix B.) As such the data drew particularly on the interview material, and to a lesser degree, the responses from the survey (which provided a useful contrast for assessing responses to a survey compared with in-depth interviews) (see Appendix D). As I was primarily concerned with affect and unconscious processes, I designed the interviews to facilitate and encourage free association, feedback and dialogue, and rapport and trust (what I came to regard as a 'psychoanalytic, dialogic approach'). The thirty-odd hours of interview material provided an excess of riches, and the process of identifying a productive and valuable mode of analysis constitutes a vital component of the study and its evolution (as discussed in Chapter 4 and the preface to the data analysis).

The interviews with the ten participants were conducted over two months whilst I resided in Green Bay, renting a room. The interviews took place in the participants' homes with the exception of one, who wished to meet in her office. I spent much time in the coffee house, informally meeting people, as well as participating in local environmental events (e.g. nature walks, a social called "Green Drinks"), and running and walking along the Fox River Trail (see Figure 12 and Figure 13). Primarily, however, I was consumed with the activities of interviewing, listening to the recordings, taking field notes, and reflecting on the material. I was often exhausted and at times, somewhat depressed; this all fed back into the analytic process for understanding both my participants and my own experiences in Green Bay over those two months and following my return. While I do not specifically reference all of the participants, each participant was vital and informed the study, although I felt particularly drawn or interested in certain participants and their stories (as shall become clear in the analytic chapters). I chose to present a case study based on my interviews with Donald and Sally (pseudonyms), although I felt easily I could have presented several more case studies if I had the space and time. Donald is one participant who was not selected through the survey; we met through an adult education course at the University, when the instructor had invited me, and I had requested to interview him as a pilot; however I decided to include his interviews as part of the data set after I reviewed the material.

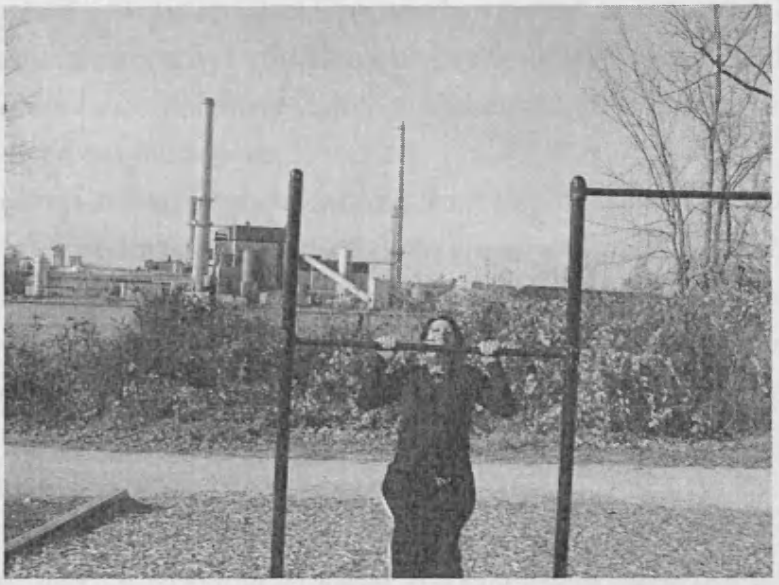


Figure 12: Exercising on the "Health Trail", Fox River Trail, Green Bay, November 2007, J. Galt



Figure 13: Fox River Trail, Green Bay, October 2007, R. Lertzman

Introducing the participants

To introduce the participants, I will present the briefest of sketches to help orient the reader for the voices that appear and constitute much of this study. I interviewed in the following order **Donald, Jeff, Victoria, Sally, Howard, Heather, Dana, Ray, Scott** and **Jessica.**

Donald (focus of case study, Chapter 5), 69, was the sole participant not selected from the survey, but from meeting in an adult education course on the history of

Wisconsin energy and water; our interviews initially were a pilot I decided to include in the data. Donald grew up in Green Bay, and had retired as a successful manager of a vegetable canning company; he and his wife lived in a subdivision overlooking the Fox River, adjacent to the Fox River Trail and had three grown children and grandchildren, who lived out of the area.

Jeff, 67, grew up in Sheboygan Wisconsin (on Lake Michigan) and had moved to Green Bay in 1966; he and his wife raised three grown children and lived in a large, ramshackle Victorian house on the Fox River, directly behind the Fox River Trail. He had spent much of his career working as a project manager for a large-scale nuclear power plant nearby and had been retired for about ten years. His sharing of documents from a university term paper on the nuclear plant for an environmental studies course constitutes one of the 'objects' in the study (see Appendix G). His dog "Rudy" was an active presence in the interviews, often nudging his head into my lap.

Victoria, 47, was a stay-at-home mother and housewife, living in a semi-rural area in De Pere, in a large, well-kept house very close to the Fox River. Her oldest daughter had left home for college and the younger one was in her final year of high school, preparing to leave the following year. Her husband worked for a nuclear power plant on Lake Michigan about an hour away. Victoria was very active in her church community and was beginning to look for casual part-time work.

Sally, 46, (focus of case study, Chapter 6) was a rural postal carrier, recovering from a work-related surgery, and had grown up in Sheboygan before moving to Green Bay with her family at age 15. She lived adjacent to her parents in a duplex (houses that are adjoined) with a large shared back garden, very close to the Bay. She had three cats present through much of the interviews.

Howard, 49, grew up in rural De Pere, on the Fox River, and worked primarily in construction as a manager, along with various odd jobs. He was living in a small bungalow in the town of De Pere close to the university, and our interviews took place during a few snowstorms. Howard shared with me photographs of the region during our meetings and sent several later via email (see Figure 27 on page 249).

Heather, 40, lived alone with her dog and cat in a small house in the East side of Green Bay. Heather worked as an administrator for the state (at a mental hospital) and had grown up in rural Wisconsin.

Dana, 48, worked for the state government and requested we meet in her office. She had always lived in Green Bay and had a husband and two teenage sons.

Ray, a stay-at-home father, had Crohn's Disease, and had to be drinking fluids and snacking continually. He had worked as a distributor for machinery used in paper mills and recycling plants. He and his family lived out in a semi-rural area about ten miles from central Green Bay.

Scott, 31, had lived in Green Bay since he was four years old, and had lived in different areas prior as his father was in the military. He was married and had a small toddler daughter, who he was minding during our three interviews, as he and his partner had shift schedules (she worked days and he worked nights).

Jessica was the youngest participant, 23, and had grown up moving between divorced parents in Green Bay and Milwaukee, Wisconsin. She worked as an emergency call operator (e.g. 999) on shift schedules and lived on her own in an apartment on the East side of town. Whilst she seemed engaged in the first two interviews, she did not show for our final interview.

Relevance and implications of research

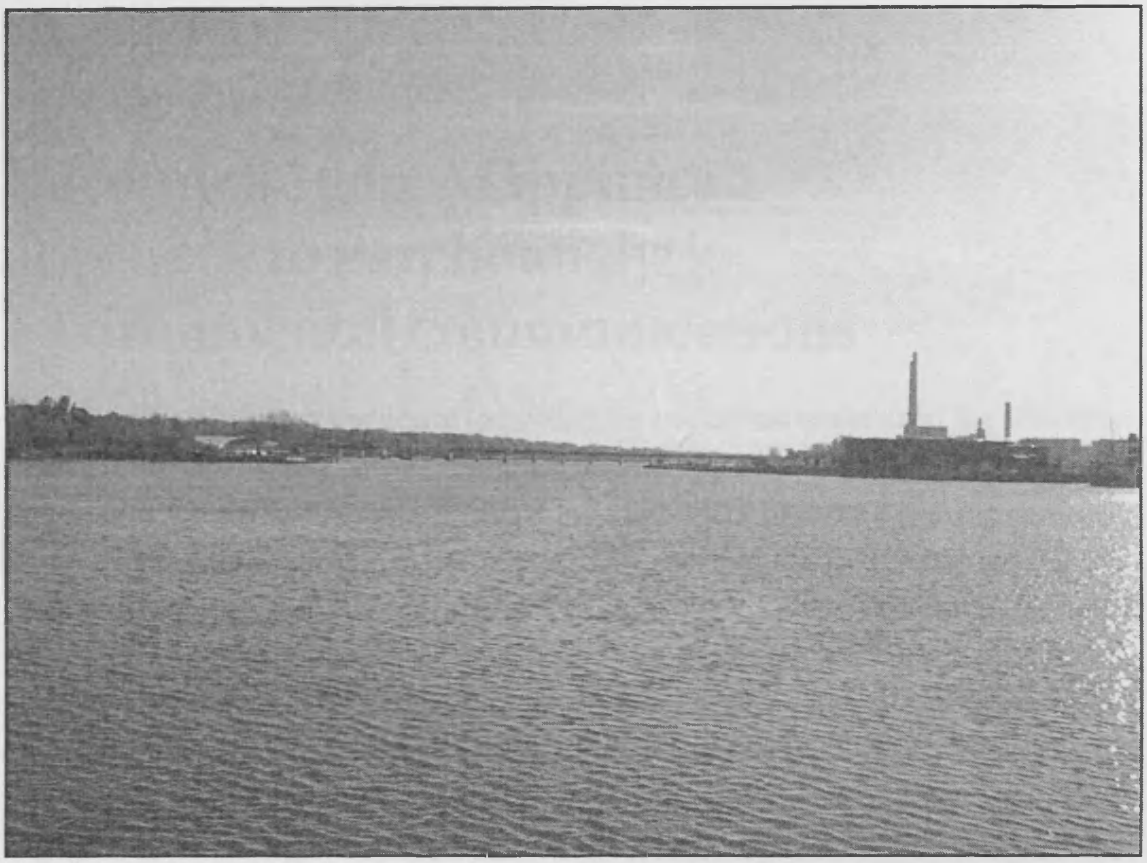
As this project is situated in psychosocial studies and social sciences, I believe critical psychosocial studies "should be about changes in the real world" (Parker 1989, p. 2). This work is ultimately concerned with the relations of theory and practice, and its potential application for more effective and sensitive environmental communications practices. This entails a central emphasis not only upon psychoanalytic phenomena but also upon the social, cultural and political contexts in which such dynamics are played out. As Segal (1999) notes, a psychoanalytic discourse that implicitly or explicitly denies the formative role of the cultural context renders the personal biography as "fragmented and mystifying". Therefore this project is mindful of its position within the larger context of environmental scholarship, including political, social and ideological analyses that are vital for any comprehensive environmental social science. Likewise, if environmental educators, scholars, politicians and communicators seek an understanding of environmental behaviour that is not fragmented and mystifying, there must be a sensitivity and recognition of the more 'subterranean' issues at stake in raising environmental awareness. By understanding how people manage and negotiate potentially distressing information—such as industrial degradation (and destruction) of the natural environment—we may learn of particular strategies and mechanisms which are engaged to enable different modes of being with, and responding to, serious environmental problems. For example, we may discover that people do experience painful dilemmas with regards threats to natural environments, but have devised strategies for negotiating such dilemmas. Or we may find that 'wilful forgetting' can sometimes be the most psychically coherent response to a distressing environmental situation.

The research has implications for the cultivation of a politics of environmental advocacy attuned to issues of despair, paralysis, anxiety and related emotions. Such a politics is one that does not deny or gloss over difficult emotions and experiences, but rather finds *creative* means of allowing a full range to be present. Rather than a politics of guilt or 'feel good' steps to save the planet, with an insistence on 'taking

action', it is possible for an environmental advocacy to avoid simplifications and honour the truly difficult dilemmas contemporary environmental degradations pose for us as individuals, communities, institutions and political bodies. The relevance of this research resides in the capacity to bring greater insight and sensitivity to practices of environmental advocacy and outreach: to inform the work of governmental agencies, non-governmental organisations, communicators, educators and curriculum planners and media producers whose mandate is to create, foster and mobilise environmental concern and practices for sustainability. Its relevance also lies in the capacity to initiate and establish meaningful dialogues among critical psychologists, environmental psychologists and environmental scholars, whose respective areas of expertise can greatly enhance and complement one another.

❧

The thesis is organised as two parts: **Part I** introduces the thesis in terms of its context, inspiration, theoretical underpinnings and methodological approach. Part II presents the data analysis, through two case studies, three analytic chapters and the concluding chapter. Chapter 2 presents a review of related and relevant literature concerning psychoanalytic and psychosocial approaches to the environment; particular attention is giving to Searles (1960; 1972) as a prescient and rare voice from the field on these topics. Chapter 3 provides a survey of the theoretical inspirations and underpinnings of the project, and contextualises its approach in psychoanalytic theory and specifically aspects of object-relations theory. In Chapter 4, I present the methodological design and approach of the study, following on the project's theoretical concerns and commitments. **Part II** of the thesis is prefaced with a brief discussion explicating the data analysis approach and presentation. Chapters 5 and 6 are case studies; Chapter 7 presents the first of three thematic analytic chapters: Loss and mourning; Ambivalence, melancholia and splitting; Reparation, concern and creativity. Chapter 10, brings together the analysis with consideration of the research's implications and practical relevance, reflections on the strengths and limitations of the study, and prospects for future research directions.



Fox River, Green Bay, October 2007, R. Lertzman

I think because of my upbringing, and maybe because of friends or family, I always respected nature. I think I evolved into it, just by education, and reading and exposure to so many different things in my life. I just became more and more aware of it. And perhaps, perhaps um, whomever is responsible for, for telling people, via television, or newspaper or magazine articles, about some of the problems, I tend to pick those kinds of things up, to read, or to watch, because, because I have an interest in it. I am not necessarily an activist. I don't go to meetings of environmental groups that are trying to do something about it. I haven't reached that plateau and probably never will. But what I do try to do is to continue to modify my life as best I can. To provide what I think is the ideal as far as respecting nature. And I have tried very much to make my children aware of their surroundings, and to become as, at least conscious of what's happening as I am. Again trying to set an example to them, of how I would like them to live their lives. I'm not the type of person that would become tremendously active as far as speaking to people, or trying to lead a group of people, or even joining a group for that matter. It's just a very private matter as far as I'm concerned, about what I feel about, about nature and, and the environment that we live in. So, it's pretty close to my own person.

—Donald, Interview 3

Chapter 2

Beyond the gap: Mapping an approach to psychoanalytic environmental communications

This project stems from the desire to investigate and better understand the affective, unconscious dimensions of the experience of environmental issues, and how these dimensions inform and potentially shape the production of certain practices, behaviours and actions. As discussed in Chapter 1, my research is based on the assertion that contemporary environmental problems and threats—both locally (e.g. the condition of the rivers and lakes) and globally (e.g. prospects of climate change-related conditions)—can occasion deeply complicated, often contradictory and conflicting, largely *unconscious* affective and psychic dilemmas. Such dilemmas can dovetail with existing social, cultural, gendered and class contexts concerning political agency and engagement that can render constructive (reparative) responses difficult and arduous. The recognition of largely unconscious processes informing and shaping individual and collective responses to chronic ecological degradation, e.g. defence mechanisms against anxieties, loss, unresolved mourning, or guilt, has its origins in clinical psychoanalytic theoretical frameworks, that prioritize attention to internal conflicts and more inchoate aspects of psychic and social life such as dreams, hopes, memories, phantasies, desires, phobias as well as destructive and reparative object relations.

A psychoanalytically informed approach to subjectivity in the context of social science research, allows for (and presumes) contradictions, ambivalence, internal conflicts and the ongoing work of constructing meaning and coherence out of our past and present experiences (Symington, 1986). As I discuss in Chapter 4, psychoanalytic conceptualisations of subjectivity and experience have influenced almost every aspect of the research design and theoretical element of this study, based on the conviction that such an approach provides hitherto uncharted insights and possibilities for innovative environmental communications and campaign strategy and practice. As I explore in this chapter, research into the complexity of affect, emotion, ambivalence and related psychic phenomena in relation to ecological threats is relatively thin. However, what has been produced is enticingly rich and presents great promise for further elaboration. The aims of this chapter are three-fold: charting the existing literature as it pertains to affective and unconscious dimensions of environmental issues in communication studies, psychosocial and psychoanalytic work; identifying

potential gaps in the existing literature, and highlighting literature within the psychoanalytic field explicitly engaging with environmental topics and the possibilities for future work this presents.

The chapter is organized as follows. First, I situate the present research study at the nexus of environmental communications, psychosocial research and psychoanalytic investigations into the human-(natural) environment relations. Second, I highlight nascent work in environmental communications taking account of affect, emotion and unconscious processes. Third, I identify key studies (primarily in psychology) that have significant bearing on the emerging trends in environmental communications, indicating both epistemic limits of existing research methodologies for adequately capturing psychic conflicts and defence mechanisms, as well as possibilities (e.g. Stoll-Kleemann et al., 2001; Norgaard, 2006; O'Neill and Nicholson-Cole, 2009; Lorenzoni, et al., 2007). Fourth, to fully map the existing relevant literature as it bears on environmental communications research and practice, is a brief discussion and analysis of the articulation of people's lack of engagement with environmental issues through a 'gap' or 'disconnect' discourse, which repeatedly cites studies demonstrating the disparities between professed concern, valuation and attitudes regarding the environment and the subsequent lack of (related, eco-friendly) actions or practices (e.g. Krosnick, et al., 2006; Lorenzoni and Pigeon, 2006). As I argue, the construction of the 'gap' and related 'barriers to action' discourse presents implicit and problematic assumptions concerning subjectivity and agency, which this project seeks to challenge and hopefully overcome. Fifth, I discuss psychoanalytic work that has explicitly engaged with the topic of environmental crises, degradation and response; I devote considerable space to Harold Searles's contributions as one of the few psychoanalysts writing explicitly on environmental issues and whose work undoubtedly influenced those who have followed. I conclude with a discussion of more recent contributions in psychoanalytic and psychosocial contexts (e.g. Mishan, 1996; Randall, 2006; Randall, 2009; Hoggett, 2008; Hoggett, 2009; Nicholsen, 2002; Fisher, 2002; Kidner, 2008 Rust, 2004; Ward, 1993).[7]

[7] I will not presenting a survey of traditional environmental psychology, e.g. conservation psychology research (e.g. Saunders, 2003; Clayton, 2005; Clayton and Myers, 2009) as this work arises out of a distinct tradition in social and behavioral psychology of which this project does not situate itself, nor speculation about how and why psychoanalysis and psychosocial studies (particularly in the U.K. tradition) have been relatively mute on the topic of environmental issues, as this has been done elsewhere and takes me beyond the scope and focus of the project (e.g. see Searles, 1960; Kidner, 2001; Fisher, 2003; Minksy, 1998). While the project shares certain commitments and political affinities with the work associated with 'ecopsychology', and I have occupied a tangential position in the emerging field of ecopsychology in the States (e.g. founder of the first international deep ecology email listserv, through EcoNet in 1995, and participant in several ecopsychology workshops and events), I have chosen to focus primarily in this study on psychoanalytically oriented perspectives, and thus will not be directly engaging with ecopsychology here. This is due to the fact that ecopsychology, as a 'field' has been largely associated with philosophical and ideological commitments (e.g. deep ecology), and is concerned primarily with therapeutic dimensions of environmental activism,

The Myth of Apathy: What is at stake

The myth of environmental apathy goes to the heart of virtually every environmental campaign, strategy and outreach effort: how to mobilise, enlist, encourage and trigger some form of behavioural change or practice. This may be the signing of a petition, the composition of a letter to an elected official, the writing of a cheque, or show support bodily and in collective action. As discussed in the previous chapter, the concept of public apathy is a particular narrative or explanatory discourse that tends to arise when a certain target audience or population does not respond or act in ways that would be desired, expected or anticipated, on behalf of political, social and environmental well-being (e.g. see Hyman and Sheatsley, 1947). As such, public apathy as a concept and a discourse is intractably tied with the practice of communications, and stems from particular assumptions regarding subjectivity, agency and behaviour. As a discourse it is performative in perpetuating specific explanatory 'stories' as to why people are not acting or being constituted as 'agents'. How the topic of apathy, concern, engagement and affect are effectively engaged in the art and study of environmental communications is particularly salient. Not surprisingly, psychological research concerning public perceptions of threats and risks greatly informs the study and research of environmental communications; literature on the efficacy of fear-based appeals can be found over the past few decades; e.g. see Stuteville's paper on psychic defences against fear-based appeals (1970), and more recently Moser's review of fear-based appeals in climate change communications and research (2007). Investigations into public engagement and perception of environmental threats and issues concern both *communicative practices* and *psychological study and assumptions.* The present study lies at the interstices of these areas of enquiry as they are bound to overlap and inform one another. The present study also incorporates a 'third spoke', psychosocial and psychoanalytic thought, as it intersects with and potentially informs new ways of conceptualizing the problem of apathy, lack of public engagement (at least in readily recognized, public forms), and what forms of communications may be most effective in reaching desired goals. In this sense, the project is an attempt to bring the psychic back into the art of rhetorical study, with emphasis on the quality of *pathos* as an element of rhetorical persuasion. As I argue elsewhere (Lertzman, 2007), dominant themes in environmental discourse, such as the 'locus of the irreparable' (Cox, 1982) (e.g. the irreparable nature of much environmental

such as how to incorporate environmental activism into psychotherapeutic contexts, the therapeutic dimensions of nature and wilderness excursions and experiences, indigenous cultural modes of relating with nature, and using psychotherapeutic models such as addiction to understand human degradation and exploitation of ecological resources. All of these areas are important but not central to the focus of this study, which is conceived in part as a complement and counter-offering to the ideological underpinnings of ecopsychology; see Lertzman, 2004 for a consideration of these issues and the need for a more critical ecopsychological approach.

degradation, and the magnitude of loss), the use of melodrama (Schwartz, 2007; 2008), and more recently anxious discourses concerning the 'tipping point' for climate change (Russill, 2008; 2009) are deeply affective (e.g. relating to felt experience, unconscious emotional responses and feeling-states). While this work can be insightful and relevant in terms of how complex issues are framed and mediated, such themes overlap with corresponding work in psychoanalytic studies and psychosocial studies of media and affect (e.g. Blackman and Walkerdine, 2001), and yet remains limited in an engagement with psychology or psychoanalysis. Arguably many topics in environmental communications are affectively oriented, but as with much of environmental studies, remains dissociated from topics of affect, emotion or psychic conflict, and focusing instead on social, cultural and political levels of analysis.

Psychosocial studies, and critical studies in subjectivity (e.g. 'critical psychology', cf. Henriques et al., 1984; Walkerdine, 2002) potentially address these dimensions, through expressing sensitivity to subjectivity as dynamic, social and often unconscious, as well as a growing interest in affect (e.g. Clough, 2007; 2009; Thrift, 2007; Redman, 2009; Protevi, 2009). As with psychoanalytic theory and research, psychosocial studies present a compelling context in which to explore the complex relations between affect, embodied dimensions of experience, sociality, ideological and political contexts, with a benefit being located in a context to conduct empirical, qualitative research. Despite this potential, the topic of environmental issues, ecological threat and relations with nature/biotic systems remains largely unexamined in both psychoanalytic and psychosocial studies. Psychosocial studies lends additional sensitivities to the social, cultural and political contexts in which these enquiries play out, often missed out in psychological studies; however as noted below, the majority of work in this field has remained focused on the inter- and intra-*human* realm, e.g. issues of class, gender, race and ethnicity, sexuality, embodiment, health, and education (e.g. Walkerdine, 1997; Walkerdine, et al., 2002; Frosh, et al., 2002; Stopford, 2004; Hoggett, 1993; Clarke, et al., 2006), whose theoretical contributions have profound *relevance* to the topic of environmental politics and affect, and *yet* has failed to extend to the topic of the non-human environment (although this appears to be changing; e.g. Hoggett, 2009; Mnguni, 2010). As this research study is presented in the context of psychosocial research studies, with regard to the methodological design and data analysis, I remain hopeful this area of scholarship can, and will, have much to offer the additional two spheres highlighted above, communications and psychoanalytic research and thought.[8]

[8] As British psychosocial studies, particularly subsequent to the publication of *Changing the Subject* (Henriques et al., 1998) has greatly informed my own thinking, particularly as a social science researcher interested in subjectivity—but has not engaged explicitly with my topic—I refer to this work elsewhere in Chapter 3 in the discussion of theoretical underpinnings and influences of this project.

The lack in British psychosocial studies explicitly engaging with environmental threats and issues has led me to look further into how a psychosocial perspective, influenced by psychoanalytic thought—notably British object-relations and relational analytic work—can be brought to bear on these themes. More importantly, in the interstices of communications and psychosocial studies at which my project is situated, is the way in which subjectivity is conceptualized, arising from psychoanalytic work. The project sits squarely at the intersection of environmental communication, psychosocial studies and psychoanalytically inspired scholarship in the quest to understand unconscious and affective dimensions of how people experience and respond to environmental problems. The project must attend to the ways in which issues are framed, articulated and presented of these issues are mediated *as well* as experienced directly in certain circumstances (e.g. the ingestion of contaminated water or air, or in one participant's case, becoming ill with Hepatitis), in light of the profound role communications play in the constitution and formation of such responses. As a sub-theme of the present project, attention will be given to work in communication studies that has engaged explicitly the issue of affect and the emotions; I will then briefly survey recent psychological studies that have *informed* work in communications studies and thus constitute part of the literature, before moving on to discuss how psychosocial and psychoanalytic work has explicitly addressed environmental concerns and topics.

To identify how the approach taken in the present study may fill certain gaps in how contemporary environmental subjectivity is conceptualised, I must first address what is at stake in these debates. My cue is the proliferation of literature concerning what has been articulated as a 'gap' or 'disconnect' in public perceptions and attitudes regarding environmental issues, between the domain of values, beliefs, sentiments or attitudes, and practice or action. I argue the discourse of gaps or disconnects, while appearing as commonsensical, in fact reifies problematic assumptions with regard to subjectivity and the complex dilemmas involved with the encounter with chronic ecological problems, locally as well as globally. Further the discourse of the 'gap' paves the way for the concept of 'barriers' to public engagement with environmental practices, which carries its own set of conceptual blinkers and taken-for-granted assumptions regarding how 'the public' is constructed. As I argue in this thesis, much of what presents as 'barriers' may be viewed alternately as symptomatic of unconscious defences.

Voices in environmental communications studies and psychology

Perhaps not surprisingly, much recent work in environmental communications is concerned with climate change-related issues. The past decade has seen a proliferation of literature concerning public engagement, perception of and inaction in the

face of urgent climate change issues, and to some degree environmental issues in general (although those are often left out of the frame); a special issue of *Climatic Change* (2006) devoted its contents to the topic of psychology and climate; the British Psychological Association's *Psychologist* (2009) ran a cover story on psychology, behavioural change and climate (Pigeon and Lorenzoni, 2009), and the American Psychological Association (APA) released *Psychology and Global Climate Change: Addressing a Multi-faceted Phenomenon and Set of Challenges: A Report by the American Psychological Association's Task Force on the Interface Between Psychology and Global Climate Change* (Swim et al., 2009) which subsequently received international media attention (e.g. Levitt, 2009; Revkin, 2009; Tobin, 2009; Porter, 2009; Freedman, 2009). The Cape Farewell project, based in the United Kingdom, began launching their expeditions to the Arctic, sending artists, writers, musicians and cultural and social figures with media presence as a new way of engaging the public and communicating about climate change threats, leading to an exhibit in the Natural History Museum in London and Chicago, USA (2006, 2007), a residency at the Eden Project and the Southbank Centre (2008–2010) and new educational outreach programmes (see Lertzman, 2008; see also Cape Farewell, 2006).

In 2007, Moser and Dilling published a collection of papers addressing communications and climate change, containing two papers explicitly addressing the role of emotions and affect (Moser, 2007; Leiserowitz, 2007). Moser, as she has done elsewhere (Moser and Dilling, 2004) discusses the peril of neglecting emotions in the context of communications practice, noting, "[c]ertain strong emotional responses can end all further thinking—such as massive fear, despair, or a sense of being completely overwhelmed and powerless... Other emotions—such as guilt or other ways of feeling manipulated—can provoke staunch resistance" (Moser, 2007, p. 12). Moser emphasises both the critical importance of attending to emotions in the context of effective environmental (climate change) communications, and the relative failure of fear-appeals as a viable strategy for motivating and instilling desired behavioural outcomes (Moser, 2007, p. 70). She summarises her findings from various empirical studies as follows:

> Threat information is more likely to be persuasive, causing persistent attitude change, and motivating constructive responses only when people:
>
> - Feel personally vulnerable to the risk;
> - Have useful and very specific information about possible precautionary actions;
> - Positively appraise their own ability (self-efficacy) to carry out the action;
> - Feel the suggested action will effectively solve the problem (response efficacy);

- Believe the cost associated with taking precautionary action is low or acceptable;
- View the reward for not taking the action as unappealing; and
- Tend to consciously and carefully process threat information (i.e. engage in central/systematic processing as opposed to peripheral/heuristic information processing. (Moser, 2007, p. 70).

The summary reflects current modes of engaging and approaching these issues; in particular, the observations derived from these studies (e.g. Ruiter, Abraham, and Krok, 2001; Johnson, 2005) focus on the relation of attitudes and behaviour as two poles of a spectrum; the challenge is getting them to 'align' or become consistent. In this sense we can begin to see the underpinning epistemic and ontological assumptions which presume, firstly, that attitudes are centrally important for the ability to take certain actions; and secondly, that there may not exist a multitude of complex and conflicting internal and external factors which may greatly inform how threatening information is perceived, experienced and acted on. As I will discuss below, this orientation that pervades much of contemporary communication studies is in rather stark contrast to the analytic and psychosocial orientation that takes on board—or at least endeavours to—the role of unconscious motivators, forces, and dynamics which shape and inform our everyday practices and decisions (Walkerdine et al., 2006, p. 84). Moser's attention to the role of emotion and affect is noteworthy and signals a shift in attention to the centrality of emotions and *pathos* in understanding the impact of mediated urgent ecological crises.

The second paper in Moser and Dilling's edited collection addressing affect is by Leiserowitz, one of the few scholars actively researching the role of "affective imagery" in relation to environmental communications (focusing on climate change) (Leiserowitz, 2006; Leiserowitz, 2007). The dominant organising paradigm is rooted in the observation of the gap or disconnect; Leiserowitz takes as his starting place the declaration of the "paradox" (see also Jamieson, 2006):

> Thus Americans paradoxically seem highly concerned about global warming, yet view it as less important than nearly all other national or environmental issues. What explains this paradox? Additionally, why do some Americans see climate change as an urgent, immediate danger, while others view it as a gradual, incremental problem, or not a problem at all? (2007, p. 46)

He notes the limitations of polls in providing accurate and adequate insight into ways in which people are experiencing news of chronic ecological issues (climate change): "Polls have limited ability to explain public perceptions of global climate change. Most polls use only relatively simple, holistic measure of concern (e.g., 'how serious of a threat is global warming?'), which provide little insight into the

determinants and components of risk perception" (Leiserowitz, 2007, p. 46). He sidesteps the use of polls in developing a methodology for measuring responses to "affective imagery". Leiserowitz defines affect and imagery as referring to

> the specific quality of 'goodness' or 'badness' experienced as a feeling state (with our without conscious awareness) or the positive or negative quality of a stimulus. Imagery refers to all forms of mental representation or cognitive content. ... Images refer to more than just visually based mental representations (ibid.).

This conception of affect is similar to the one engaged in this study, although my use of 'affect' refers more specifically to a clinical, psychoanalytic concept, as unconscious sensation, feeling-states or energetic qualities. The central problem in Leiserowitz's study of affect is the importation of methodologies used for measuring attitudes and valuation, in the measurement of how people rate certain images—out of context, in an experimental situation—and to then make attempts to "identify, describe and explain those images that carry a strongly positive or negative emotional 'charge' and guide risk decision-making" (Leiserowitz, 2007, p. 50). There is the claim that the results (to the study using affective images),

> Help us explain the paradox in public risk perceptions, in which Americans appear concerned about climate change, but do not consider it a high priority relative to other national or environmental issues. This study found that, in aggregate, Americans perceive climate change as a moderate risk, but think the impacts will most likely affect people and places that are geographically distant. Critically, this study found that most Americans lack vivid, concrete, and personally relevant affective images of climate change (ibid.).

The explanation of the so-called "paradox" is that while people are aware and concerned to some degree about climate change, they perceive it as distant and far away from their own personal sphere; and they do not perceive it has having a direct impact on human health (a finding Leiserowitz notes as "surprising", although given the way in which climate change is rarely framed in relation to human health issues (e.g. disease vectors) outside of scientific journals, this does not appear as a surprise). As I will argue, the construction of a "paradox" between values, attitudes and action is a red herring, and potentially obscures complex psychodynamic processes.

The construction of the 'gap' and 'barriers' to action

One theme dominating psychological research into environmental issues—which informs communication scholarship as noted—is the aforementioned problem of the "disconnect", "perception-action gap" (Lorenzoni and Pidgeon, 2007), or what

Jamieson calls the "American Paradox" (Jamieson, 2006), referring to Americans' perception of themselves as environmental concerned, yet do not express these concerns in practice (Jamieson, 2006, p. 98). Generally speaking this gap refers to the disparities between what people profess in terms of levels of awareness, concern and values, and subsequent actions or practices. It can also be seen as a gap between avowed concerns about environmental problems, and choices made in the voting booth or supermarket. What has referred to as "the gap between high-minded words and low-down behavior" (Jamieson, 2006), and consensus in the scientific communities and public perceptions of environmental risks or threats have become increasingly featured in psychological and risk communication research, in relation to climate change (O'Neill and Nicholson-Cole, 2009, Weber, 2006; Leiserowitz, 2007). It is arguably the fastest growing body of research concerning human dimensions of environmental threats, as scientists seek to find more effective means of eliciting public "engagement" in the form of policy support, consumer behaviour or ecological friendly lifestyles (O'Neill and Nicholson-Cole, 2009). Increasing studies are devoted to communication campaign strategies, and analysis of fear-based appeals in motivating public responsiveness to environmental issues and climate (e.g. Marx et al., 2007; Moser and Dilling, 2004; Weber, 2006; O'Neill and Nicholson-Cole, 2009). In what follows I will briefly explore how this problem of the disconnect or gap is engaged in recent psychological research, with a view to clarifying underlying assumptions and conceptions most salient to the this project. First, I address the predominant orientation to these issues in terms of behavioural change and how issues are perceived. Second, I address how the problem of disjuncture between polling data regarding public concern and valuations of environment, and practices (whether in the voting booth or the supermarket) has been conceptualised as a "gap" or "disconnect". I will then briefly review studies beginning to engage with emotions and affect, and how concepts of defensive mechanisms are engaged in recent research. The section concludes with a summary and considerations before addressing work in psychoanalytic and psychosocial contexts.

We see the tacit equation of a psychological approach to environmental issues with the need for *changing the behaviour of people and society.* The emphasis is on changing behaviour, and not on the potential contextual factors—psychic, social, cultural, political, etc—that may inform behaviour. The range of psychological theories employed towards the facilitation of environmentally friendly behaviour is vast, ranging from planned behaviour (Ajzen, 1991) to research in implicit associations (Karpinsky and Hilton, 2001), social marketing (Kotler and Zaltman, 1971; Maibach, 1993) and place identity theories (Proshansky et al., 1983). What runs through these approaches is the focus on changing behaviour, however possible; it is about engineering certain outcomes, or facilitating some practices over others. This includes

identifying barriers that prevent people from changing their behaviour (Lorenzoni et al., 2007), how environmental groups can communicate what needs to be done in response to certain issues, and what tangible factors can enable different forms of practices (such as providing wheelie bins for recycling, applying congestion taxes or free passes for public transport) (Weber, 2006; Moser and Dilling, 2004).

The orientation to humans as information processors and the 'gap' as a failure to process information adequately is seen in a number of recent studies on perceptions of climate change (Krosnick et al., 2006; Lorenzoni and Pidgeon, 2007). For example, in a high profile study of people's concern about climate risk, but lack of concrete action, the authors attempted to parse out the various influences and variables involved in constituting how serious people perceive climate risk to be. They include trust in scientific sources, direct experiences with the issues, and belief systems. The model used was called "ACE", with roots in the combinational expectancy-value theories popular in psychology throughout the last century (Krosnick, et al., 2006, p. 11). These theories "propose that a person's evaluation of an object is a function of his or her beliefs about the features of the object and his or her evaluations of those features" (ibid.). In summary, the ACE model attempts to make visible the complex interrelations between beliefs about the existence of the issue (in this case global warming), attitudes about the issue, and the certainty with which this belief and this attitude are held. The authors see belief as the "gate-keeper" of the entire process, as the issue would not be perceived as serious unless it is believed to be real in the first place. Important variables and influences on the various interactions include media exposure, sense of immediacy and proximity of the threats, education levels, personal experiences, and evidence of political leadership. What does become clear is that it is not simply enough to present people with the information about the environmental issues at stake:

> Our results suggest that knowledge about an issue per se will not necessarily increase support for a relevant policy. It will only do so if existence beliefs, attitudes, and beliefs about human responsibility are in place to permit the necessary reasoning steps to unfold... Thus we would concur that "[i]t is too simplistic to attribute opposition to science to a lack of knowledge and to suggest that a dose of scientific information will cure people's scepticism (Gaskell et al, 2003, p. 26)" (Krosnick et al, 2006, p. 37).

The focus in psychological and risk communication studies on the "gap" between professed concern and actual practice tends to be articulated in terms of how the issues are perceived. That is, the issues are not perceived as urgent, local or immediate, personally relevant, within the sphere of personal influence, as other people's problems, or as the responsibility of government. The emphasis on the perception of

specific risks (climate change is the focus of recent studies) is premised on the conceptualisation of subjectivity as primarily about information processing; perception attends to the way the information is processed, e.g. if the issue is distant, diffuse or contradictory (Lorenzoni and Pidgeon, 2006), lacking visceral dimensions or is related in terms that are too abstract (e.g. Weber, 2006).

Conceptualising a gap between concern and awareness and subsequent practices as being primarily a failure for information to be translated in particular ways presents a particular set of assumptions regarding human agency, social and cultural influences and subjectivity. It is necessary to interrogate what exactly can be illuminated through this particular epistemic and ontological orientation to the subject (as unitary, rational and self-aware), and what may be missed out. In addition we need to examine how the research issues are produced discursively, in setting up a particular (and arguably naturalized frame) for approaching problems of psychology; for example, the naturalized assumption that if information is presented in a particular way, then the desired behaviours will result. We need to examine a specific concept in environmental policy and discourse: a *disconnect* between feelings and actions, or "perception-action" gap (Lorenzoni and Pidgeon, 2007, p. 1).

Significantly, studies that have found the use of fear-based appeals in communication strategies as not necessarily effective are starting to look more broadly at emotional bases of response, and in their investigations researchers are coming up against certain methodological limits which suggest the presence and role of certain defence mechanisms; they may be referred to as such (e.g. Stoll-Kleemann, et al., 2001) or more commonly as "barriers" (Lorenzoni et al., 2007). These studies as well are informing the direction environmental communication practices are taking, and are therefore noteworthy for this discussion. In the study conducted by O'Neill and Nicholson-Cole (2009), messaging about climate change, specifically using visual data, was analysed in terms of its emotional impact, specifically looking at the use of fear-based appeals to mobilize public response. Joining a new wave of communication scholars interested in affective aspects of environmental communication strategies, they concur that fear, in fact, is not always the best mechanisms for motivating action. As they argue, "climate change images can evoke powerful feelings of issue salience, but these do not necessarily make participants feel able to do anything about it; in fact, it may do the reverse" (p. 373). The recommendations are for the use of fear-based appeals to be used carefully; they have their place, but must be used with caution, "and in combination with other kinds of representations in order to avoid causing denial, apathy, avoidance, and negative associations that may come as a result of coping with any unpleasant feelings evoked" (p. 376). Keri Norgaard, in her ethnographic study of citizens in Norway identifies a complex range of mechanisms employed to create distance or to 'manage' potentially distressing and emotionally

charged dimensions of climate change, even in a region where climate change is starting to be felt and seen (Norgaard, 2006). Similarly, Lorenzoni, Nicholson-Cole and Whitmarsh's study (2007) comprised a mixed-methodology of surveys, semi-structured interviews, focus groups and Q-methodology (most typically, a participant is presented with a set or 'deck' of subjective statements about a topic or issue, and is asked to rank-order them (usually from "agree" to "disagree"), an operation referred to as "Q sorting"), to investigate cognitive, affective and behavioural factors that can keep people from engaging more effectively (otherwise referred to as 'barriers'). They identify both individual and social barriers. Examples of such psycho-emotional *'barriers'* include (Lorenzoni et al., 2007):

- Denying personal contribution to climate change and personal responsibility
- Blaming others (e.g. most commonly, the USA)
- Pointing to governmental inaction
- Claiming ignorance
- Arguing that climate change will happen anyway
- Having faith in technological solutions (we will be saved)
- Being too busy to change one's behaviour (the 'life is too short' argument)
- Finding other issues are of greater importance
- Claiming there are no alternatives to current behaviours

These strategies are articulated as *barriers* to action; the discourse of barriers as constituting the literature on how to overcome the so-called 'gap' between values and actions presents certain limitations for how we conceptualise and approach these psychic and social strategies. Increasingly, psychological and risk studies informing communication studies are starting to incorporate a language of defence mechanisms; as Loewenstein (1967) noted defences are "essential parts of the normal human mind" (p. 797), and warned against portraying them as pathological. Or, as Norgaard wrote in her paper concerning climate change denial:

> To be "in denial" has a negative connotation associated with stupidity or ineptitude. Yet a key point in labelling this phenomenon denial is to highlight the fact that nonresponsive is not a matter of greed or inhumanity. Indeed, if information on climate change is too disturbing to be fully absorbed, or integrated into daily life, this is the very opposite of an inhumane interpretation. (Norgaard, 2006: 366, emphasis added).

While defence mechanisms as conceived by Freud (1915) were seen as defences against incompatible desires, experiences or thoughts, and could relate to social or cultural norms, contemporary social psychologists have applied this understanding to threats to self-esteem and identity (Fenichel, 1945; see Crompton and Kasser, 2009 in relation to climate change). As Susanne Stoll-Kleemann et al. (2001) suggest, defences

can also arise in response to broader socio-cultural 'threats' or anxieties: they need not be limited to individual psychologies, but should also be seen as social or more collective forms of defence. The research team conducted an empirical study of denial as it relates to climate change. This drew on work with focus groups that met several times, affording the scope to observe opinions becoming formed in a social context, as these groups were provided with new visual information about climate change. The authors discuss how denial—as a function of discourse, personal, social and psychological influences—is not shifted by either more information or exhortations to change, as found in most mainstream campaigns for behavioural change:

> Denial over the necessity to adjust behaviour and lifestyle patterns is a function of discourse as it is of more fundamental personal, social and psychological influences that are not readily shifted around by language or by exhortation unless the process of awareness raising is prolonged and set in constructive engagement with a wider array of socially sanctioned moral norms (p. 108).

It seems, according to Stoll-Kleemann and her colleagues that denial or displacement act powerfully to maintain the gap between attitude and behaviour with regard to climate change norms. In order to explore these dynamics the research was designed to analyse patterns of consistency and disjunction between "personal preference for a particular lifestyle, consumption habit, or behavioural choice and the need to respond electively to climate change mitigation strategies" (Stoll-Kleeman et al., 2001, p. 112). The study found that "people may profess anxiety over climate change, but be faced with internal resentment or even denial over what they cannot accept as a justifiable change in behaviour (e.g. to travel by public transport, ride a bike in the rain or invest in high cost domestic insulation)" (ibid.). Hence we see highlighted here the identification of inner conflicts, which can give rise to particular practices and behaviours, even if they are counter-productive both for the individual and the broader issues at stake.

The study identified nine ways in which these possible experiences of dissonance are managed or negotiated, which bear striking similarities to Irene Lorenzoni and colleagues' study although using quite different research methodologies and conceptual paradigms (per Susanne Stoll-Kleemann et al.'s expressed and explicit interest in unconscious processes and how they bear on responses to climate change):

- Metaphor of displaced commitment: I protect the environment in other ways
- To condemn the accuser: You have no right to challenge me
- Denial of responsibility: I am not the main cause of this problem
- Rejection of blame: I have done nothing so wrong as to be destructive

- Ignorance: I simply don't know the consequences of my actions
- Powerlessness: I am only an infinitesimal being in the order of things
- Fabricated constraints: There are too many impediments
- "After the flood": What is the future doing for me?
- Comfort: It is too difficult for me to change my behaviour (Stoll-Kleemann et al., 2001, p. 112)

The authors state, "From an emotional viewpoint such responses help to assuage guilt, to reinforce victim status, to justify resentment or anger, and to emphasize the negative feelings towards disliked behaviour (e.g. the disagreeable qualities of relying on public transport and the loss of social prestige involved)" (ibid.). Based on this theoretical perspective, and especially taking into account the 'barriers' listed above, the authors hypothesize that denial, in the face of political and moral exhortations to adopt pro-environmental behaviour, is reinforced by the following:

- An unwillingness to give up customary habits and favoured lifestyles that are closely associated with a sense of self-identity (the 'comfort' interpretation);
- The construction of attitude and behaviour connections that regard any costs to the self as greater than the benefits to others;
- A lack of acceptance that the climate problem is as serious as made out, and a belief that it can be resolved by recourse to technological and regulatory innovation (the 'managerial-fix' interpretation);
- An underlying lack of faith in the capacity of government to deliver its side of the bargain over climate change mitigation (the 'governance-distrust' interpretation) (Stoll-Kleemann et al., 2001, p. 113).

These four 'interpretations' are closely interlinked. These suggestions have striking similarity to clinically informed views, which explicate the ways in which anxiety around certain threats (e.g. the nuclear bomb, environmental doomsday scenarios) often mobilize unconscious and maladaptive defensive mechanisms, such as denial, projection, splitting and blame (see Searles, 1972). Norgaard's (2006) study of a community in Norway provides an additional perspective of unconscious defence mechanisms, operating individually and socially, despite her lack of engagement with psychoanalytic discourse or literature. Her work is an example of emerging approaches in interpretive sociology, micro-sociology, and "sociology of denial" as applied to contemporary environmental issues (ibid.). Using an ethnographic approach in a middle-class Norwegian community, Norgaard identifies two main domains of denial that circulate through the discourses she records: interpretive and organizational. As an ethnographer and sociologist, Norgaard's work is sensitive to the cultural and organizational forms of defence mechanisms such as denial, and the significance of shared meanings and interpretative repertoires on our ways of experiencing phenomena such as climate change. Within this cultural analysis she also

encounters personal narratives of dissonance, denial, struggle, dilemmas and ambivalence with regard to the seriousness of climate change. Norgaard writes,

> Until recently, denial has been studied almost exclusively as a psychological phenomenon. Yet even the briefest examination of Norwegian political economy illustrates the relevance of linking psychological material on interactions and culture with macro level political economy to make sense of why people do not want to know about global warming (2006, p. 366).

Psychological and social research is beginning to move in a direction that takes account of the role of emotions, fear and affect in how people experience environmental issues and the impact of communications (Moser, 2007; Leiserowitz, 2007; O'Neill and Nicholson-Cole, 2009; Lorenzoni et al., 2007; Stoll-Kleemann et al., 2001).

Psychoanalytic considerations of environmental issues

The language of 'barriers' and the 'gap' may be another way of describing what psychoanalytic practitioners may be more inclined to view as ambivalence, anxiety, unresolved mourning, and unconscious defence mechanisms e.g. denial and projection. Recognising how largely unconscious processes inform and shape individual and collective responses to chronic environmental degradation has its origins in clinical psychoanalytic research and theory, and is predicated on a concept of subjectivity that is not necessarily unitary, rational or self-aware. The ability to trace and investigate the powerful role of unconscious dimensions in everyday life has grown increasingly refined and sophisticated over decades since Freud's writings on the topic, through clinical practice and the evolution of psychoanalysis and psychosocial studies (see Symington, 196; Bateman and Holmes, 1995; Kohon, 196). The psychoanalytic enquiry is one toolkit amongst many, when investigating broader social, political and economic issues such as how we live and engage with our environment. The distinction is the emphasis and acknowledgement on inner worlds, expressed through the often inchoate but provocative media of dream, language, sensation, free association, desire, fears, pleasures and phantasies, as a viable site for study and as bearing powerfully on the world of practice, action and behaviour. Neville Symington (1996) states,

> Psychoanalysis is a method of investigating the unconscious mind, and its particular focus is on the inner world. There are other ways of understanding the individual's manifest or external behaviour. A sociologist would account for it in terms of the social system of which the individual is a part. An economist would understand it in terms of the economic structure in which the person is situated. A theologian would stress the person's values, ideals and so on. The

> psychoanalyst attempts to understand manifest behaviour and communications, too, but in terms of the individual's inner conflicts and phantasies. Yes psychoanalysis does not have possession of the whole truth (p. 16–17).

Taking a psychoanalytic approach to subjectivity (in the context of a psychosocial research study) presumes contradictions, ambivalence, internal conflicts and the ongoing work of constructing meaning and coherence out of our past and present experiences. Such a conceptualisation of subjectivity allows for anxiety as a central human experience, and attends to the ways in which anxiety is managed and negotiated. From a more positivist point of view that equates the real with what we can touch, taste, feel, see or hear, such an orientation may present difficulties: "Most psychological realities do not have the property of extension or tangibility: a dream, a hallucination, a belief, a thought, a relationship, love, hatred or desire. But it is not true these that these realities exist in some non-material sphere only. They are inextricably linked with the physical—this is so even of a thought" (Symington, 196, p. 17). Certainly the role of imagination, thoughts and dreams inform how we shape and practice our lives, from the formation of policy to whether or not we recycle, contribute to a local environmental group or decide to cut down on long-haul flights. Arguably how we respond to increased news of ecological threats are highly complex, often fraught issues that invoke conflicting desires and anxieties, pulling on particular biographical contexts, histories as well as socially situated forces and behavioural constraints. As Paul Maiteny notes, "Environmental policy and social research tends to neglect the inner, experiential dimensions of human life" (2000, p. 339). While there is an abundance of social and psychological research on the problems of public engagement with environmental problems, there is arguably a lack of attention to these inner, experiential dimensions of human life.

Significantly, it is the emphasis on unconscious defences (commonly recognised by the lay public as forms of denial or repression) that has been the focus of clinical psychoanalytic work for decades. Clinical psychoanalytic work offers an arguably more complex and nuanced conception of subjectivity, which may prove to be highly fruitful and productive for those working in the area of subjectivity and responses to chronic ecological threats. Psychoanalytic scholarship has been slow to come to the topic of environmentalism and ecological threats, with the exception of a few notable scholars: Harold Searles, Hanna Segal, Robert J. Lifton, and more recently debates in the psychoanalytic community. I turn to the ways in which psychoanalytic work, notably contributions in object-relations and relational psychoanalysis has engaged explicitly with the topic of environmental degradation and psychic experience and response. As psychoanalytic work tends to focus on the intra-psychic and inter-psychic dimensions of subjective experience, I turn to psychoanalytically inspired social

science research, or psychosocial qualitative research. Psychosocial studies potentially offers hugely productive means for thinking through the interrelations between "psychic", affective or interiority dimensions of the encounter with degraded ecologies, and the social and cultural dimensions of post-industrial, capitalist ideologies, which arguably can produce profound epistemic and ontological dilemmas. It is in psychosocial studies that dimensions of the social and political contexts can be joined up (in some capacity) with the largely unconscious processes that play such powerful roles in how we manage and respond to very serious environmental threats. Where psychology tends to bracket social and political ideological contexts, and sociological studies bracket issues of subjectivity and affect, in psychosocial studies there is the attempt to recognize the complex dialectical relationships of these domains (indeed, the inseparability of them). As with psychoanalytic work, psychosocial studies are slow to respond to ecological challenges, remaining primarily concerned with intra and inter-personal relationships and 'social' issues (e.g. class, gender, ethnicity, labour, education and identity).

There has been a move in recent years—both in therapeutic and academic circles—to bring psychoanalysis into the 'world' (Minsky, 1998; Samuels, 2001; Cargill, 2006; Clarke et al., 2006; Segal, 1997; Hillman and Ventura, 1993; Searles 1960).[9] From Searles's assertion that psychoanalysis ignores the environment at its peril (1960, 1972), to the development of community psychoanalysis (Clarke et al., 2006), the field appears to be starting to take account of what is outside the consultation room.[10] The one area where psychoanalysis—in terms of clinical practice or in more social or research applications—has yet to fully engage has been how humans engage with our nonhuman environment, and in particular how we live with and relate with the natural world (that is, the world beyond the domicile).

Most significant about the muteness around environmental issues in psychoanalytic circles are the potential contributions psychoanalysts can make to help environmental advocates who are struggling with public (and personal) fears and anxieties, behavioural change and the ability to face reality and make reparations. Such day-to-day concerns in advocacy and educational sectors include the ways in which people manage and cope with difficult or painful information (e.g. the ice-caps

[9] It is important not to overlook the work on psychoanalysis and the nuclear threat; e.g. Levine, H, Jacobs, D and L Rubin, eds. (1988), *Psychoanalysis and the Nuclear Threat, Clinical and Theoretical Studies.* Hilldale, NJ: The Analytic Press. Hanna Segal, along with Vamik Volcan, Robert J. Lifton and Daniel Jacobs are part of a small but dedicated group of psychoanalytic thinkers who addressed nuclear threats; however as nuclear issues are distinct from ecological threats in several specific ways, (e.g. intentionality and consequences), I do not include this literature in this chapter.

[10] For example, the large body of work devoted to the treatment and analysis of survivors of political trauma and violence constitutes a significant focus in psychoanalytic studies (Felman and Laub, 1992) and since 9/11 more psychoanalysts have been speaking to themes of terrorism, fear and political anxiety (Wirth, 2004; Coates et al., 2003).

melting, the toxics in the nearby lake, an incident such as a fish-kill or accident), the perception of public apathy (inability or unwillingness to act or engage), the issue of loss and mourning (in the face of ecological degradation), and what it means, quite simply, to live in a world that is presented as being continually under threat, due to a constant stream of media reports concerning matters of water, air, and soil quality. In other words, many of the concerns expressed in environmental policy and advocacy circles, around what is seen as a profound and frightening 'disconnect' between action and values, or knowledge and action, are the focus of much attention and application in psychoanalytic theories and practice.

There have been attempts in recent years to open up a dialogue across these domains; for example the 'Ecological Madness' conference at the Freud Museum in London brought together a group of psychoanalysts and members of the Green Party (Ward, 1993). While the papers were published in the *British Journal of Psychotherapy* it remains to be seen what came of any follow-up, with regard to the ability for these groups to speak to one another in a constructive, common language. There has been little evidence of a psychoanalytic sensibility or 'analytic attitude' present in environmental activism and advocacy sectors. Ward explains how a psychoanalytic approach is not antithetical to a political orientation (the comment itself hints at tensions expressed at some point); indeed, it is the ability to enquire into motivations, desires and (often) unconscious forces that is needed for an effective political movement (Ward, 1993, 179). Ward points out that unique to an analytic perspective is the focus on the relation between what is *conscious* and *unconscious*, rather than between the *individual* and the *social*. In so doing, he overcomes the very binaries that have plagued psychoanalytic thinking for so many years, with this simple distinction; that throughout both and all domains of human experience, we need to attend to how potentially unconscious processes are at work, and the political relevance of bringing such processes into consciousness or awareness.[11]

Several themes emerge in the psychoanalytically oriented work that addresses directly or indirectly dimensions of our contemporary, chronic ecological issue. Generally is a concern for unconscious processes, most notably strategies engaged to manage anxieties and distressing experiences. Depending on the analytic orientation, this includes a concern with movement or vacillations between the paranoid-schizoid position and the depressive position (e.g. Segal, 1973) and speaks directly to the capacity for splitting, both in terms of internal splitting and compartmentalizing, as well as in relation to our dependence on earth systems (Mishan, 1996). This capacity

[11] Certainly, (primarily) British psychosocial research, and publications as *Psychoanalysis, Culture and Society* have been attempting to forge these links between the psychic and the social; notable here is Wards explicit exhortations for the environmental community of activists, educators and analysts to appreciate these relations.

for dissociation is related to issues of vulnerability and anxiety, evoked in dependency contexts, and exemplified by our relationship with nature and ecological systems for survival (Searles, 1960). How this relationship is negotiated can be seen in terms of fantasies of omnipotence, patterns of consumption as "spurious satisfactions' (Mishan, 1996, p. 62) or substitutes (Randall, 2005), and compulsive forms of activism (Zizek, 1996). There has been work addressing 'psychic numbing' as strategies to avoid trauma, specifically large-scale events such as the bombing in Hiroshima or 9/11 (Lifton, 1962; 2001), however this has been applied less to the topic of ecological crises.

The differences between what Ward calls an 'analytic attitude' (an emphasis on relations between conscious and unconscious processes, versus relations between individual and social) and that of cognitive and behavioural orientations to the psyche and environmental topics, present in stark relief the epistemic and ontological issues this project engages in subsequent chapters. Such issues, running through the discussions below, include the role and nature of unconscious processes and dynamics, the conception of subjectivity, anxiety and defence mechanisms, the role of past experiences in the present moment, and the emphasis on collective or social expressions or forms of unconscious desires, fears and anxieties. It is an attitude of enquiry and investigation that marks the work below, and that of the present project; an exploratory attitude that embraces partiality, subjectivity over objectivity, messiness over neatness, and affect over cognition.

Several observers have noted the relative silence from psychoanalytic circles on the nonhuman and natural environment, and speculated on the causes for this omission (Fisher 2002; Kidner 1994; Hillman and Ventura 1992). One of the first individuals to draw attention to this gap (or dissociation, as the case may be) was the American psychiatrist Harold F. Searles. In 1960, Searles published a monograph, *The Nonhuman Environment: In Normal Development and in Schizophrenia.* The book was addressed to an audience of practicing psychoanalysts and practitioners who work with schizophrenics and severely neurotic and psychotic patients. It was presented as an intervention, to invoke analysts to incorporate the role of the nonhuman environment in the experience of troubled patients. Searles also acknowledged the value and benefit of such work for 'normal' psychologies as well, and tries to present the work as applicable in a broader sense. The timing and content of this particular monograph is important for understanding the way in which the role of the nonhuman environment was introduced to a psychoanalytic community, the cultural and social context in which Searles was writing, and the way in which his early theorisations have paved the way for subsequent work in 'ecopsychology', 'ecotherapy' and environmental psychology. (The work appears to not have been picked up in the psychoanalytic community, a point I will discuss; however his work is now appearing

more recently as psychoanalysts are increasingly forced to contend with environmental concerns as a feature of social and cultural life.) In what follows, I present the key ideas presented in this work and relevance for the present project.

Harold Searles: psychoanalysis of human-enviornment relations

The central hypothesis of *The Nonhuman Environment* (1960) is expressed by Searles in the opening chapter:

> The nonhuman environment, far from being of little or no account to human personality development, constitutes one of the most basically important ingredients of human psychological existence. It is my conviction that there is within the human individual a sense, whether at a conscious or unconscious level, of relatedness to his nonhuman environment, that this relatedness is one of the transcendentally important facts of human living, that—as with other very important circumstances in human existence—it is a source of ambivalent feelings to him and that, finally, if he tries to ignore its importance to himself, he does so at peril to his psychological well-being (6).

Essentially, Searles' kinship hypothesis is that humans are, by their very nature, a part of the larger, nonhuman (natural) environment. He cites examples from physics and the natural sciences; for example, 'Even down to the most basic levels to which science has penetrated into the matter of the universe, the level of atomic and subatomic particles, we find this kinship between man and his nonhuman environment' (9). Following the kinship thesis is the complex nature of relatedness humans have with their environment; is a 'dual mode of relating' to the environment, in which the environment and its features are 'carriers of meaning' for us, or are taken more on its own terms (e.g. 'a cat as being a cat, a tree as being a tree' and not simply existing as the projection screen of human desires, fears and so forth). It is this dual aspect of relatedness that offers the most substantial insight presented in the monograph, for through looking at relatedness Searles is able to articulate not only how we engage with the nonhuman environment in often extremely fraught ways, but the roots of what he feels is the anxiety that leads us (and this includes psychology practitioners) to largely omit this hugely fundamental aspect of human psychology from current psychological approaches, treatment and theorizations.

Searles begins his critique of this omission by pointing to the disparagement that humans (presumably his colleagues in psychoanalytic practice) have for looking at how we are rooted and embedded in the environment. He views it as a disparagement through familiarity, and uses a striking example. He writes, 'To me it is reminiscent of the disparagement shown by various Southern-born patients in saying anything, early in therapy, about the Negro nursemaids who, as further therapy reveals, were

the prime sources of the love, during their early years, which literally saved their psychological lives. We must not disdain the familiar, for it may, if we take a second, searching look at it, teach us most of all (11)'. While he does not unpack this racially and politically charged example, it clearly raises important issues regarding the role of repression and the vulnerability involved with our earliest nurturing experiences, when those experiences are closely linked with "nature." What is noteworthy for this discussion is the way we discount the role nature can and often does play in our early childhood, and how in adulthood we often create a distance and almost a mocking attitude towards the affection we have had for nonhuman life. Like the white southern stance towards the Black nursemaid, we receive the benefits while maintaining a safe and disavowed distance.

In recounting the importance of the nonhuman environment in human experience (gardening, sports, animals, visits to nature, dreams, and so forth), Searles attempts to demonstrate the surreal and strange way in which psychoanalytic theory is devoid of any accounts of the nonhuman. (He admits to feeling embarrassed about even having to mention how important the environment is in our lives, it seems so obvious and blatant.) In psychoanalysis limiting its scope to solely interpersonal and intra-psychic dimensions, Searles is portraying a highly diminished and impoverished practice—but more importantly he is pointing to a deficient healing programme that does not incorporate the importance of the environment for all humans, regardless of psychic health.

Searles on subjective Oneness: going back to the source

One of the platforms on which Searles builds his theory of why we ignore and disparage the importance of the environment in our lives is object relations theory. Drawing on Mahler, Starcke and Spitz among others, he expands on the process of individuation as fundamental for grasping the issue at hand:

> ... The postulated subjective oneness with the nonhuman environment (as well as with the human environment), which holds sway in the early postnatal life, has repercussions which flow throughout the subsequent development of the personality, even in the years of adulthood, in 'normal' as well as psychiatrically ill human beings. ... The whole theme of this book, in fact, is that the human being is engaged, throughout his life span, in an unceasing struggle to differentiate himself increasingly fully, not only from his human, but also form this nonhuman environment, while developing, in proportion as he succeeds in these differentiations, an increasingly meaningful relatedness with the latter environment as well as with his fellow human beings (p. 30).

Searles then makes the provocative leap, mentioned only briefly at the start of the monograph and again at the end:

> Here we are beginning to get some hint of the anxiety which, I believe, is aroused in one who attempts to investigate the subject at hand. To my mind, much of the delay in our coming, in the psychoanalytic profession, to a realization of the importance of the nonhuman environment, is attributable to the circumstance that any determined effort to penetrate this area brings up in us the kind of the kind of anxiety which, I surmise, we knew all to much of as infants, when the world around us seemed, oftentimes, comprised largely or even wholly of chaotically uncontrollable nonhuman elements (p. 37).

More significant is his second proposition for the source of anxiety that impedes our exploration of this subject: the anxiety that in large part is tied to defending against the primitive loss of self, and the trauma of differentiating ego from world. That is, Searles believes that at the core, we are so dependent and so related with the nonhuman environment, stemming from this sense of oneness with the world prior to our individuation, that we actively defend and deny our relation to it. As he writes, "Not only do we have unconscious memory traces of infantile experiences in which we were surrounded by a chaotically uncontrollable nonhuman environment that was sensed as being a part of us; in addition, we presumably have unconscious memory traces of our experience with losing a nonhuman environment which had been our sensed, heretofore, as a harmonious extension of our world-embracing self"[12] (1960, p. 39). Thus the exploration of this whole subject, no matter upon how scientific a plane we attempt to pursue it, impinges upon a deeply rooted anxiety of a doubled-edged sort: the anxiety of subjective oneness with a chaotic world, and the anxiety over the loss of a cherished, omnipotent world-self.

Searles on human-nature relatedness

The implicit query underlying this work is how a mature (that is, non-defensive, non-splitting, or depressive position-based) relatedness with the nonhuman environment would be expressed (as in Segal's writings, discussed below). Through extensive examples of 'immature' or 'disturbed' relatedness in his severely neurotic and schizophrenic patients, Searles moves towards an articulation of what it means to have a mature, 'healthy' relatedness with the environment. The basis of a mature relatedness is the ability to recognise (and experience, tolerate) kinship and difference, simultaneously. That is, we must be individuated and differentiated enough to experience authentic relationality:

> By 'relatedness' I mean, on the one hand, a sense of intimate kinship, a psychological concomitant to the structural kinship which... exists between man and the various ingredients of his nonhuman environment—structural kinship in

[12] He cites Stärcke, "It is this separation in the primitive ego, the formation of the external world, which, properly speaking, is the primitive castration" (Searles, 1960, p. 9).

> terms of physiology, anatomy, atomic structure, and so on, as well as kinship with respect to the evolutionary history of mankind and the biological fate of the individual human being (the inescapable destiny of our physical body to become a part of the nonhuman environment after our death) (1960, p. 100).

In detecting 'feeling-variations' or 'feeling components' that include "man's sense of inner conflict concerning his awareness that he is a part of Nature and yet apart from all the rest of nonhuman Nature; and the two great ingredients of this inner conflict—man's yearning to become wholly at one with his nonhuman environment, and his contrasting anxiety lest he become so and thus lose his own unique humanness" (ibid., p. 103), we see the influences from working with psychotic and neurotic individuals. He is able to explore and examine with acute sensitivity these dilemmas, which are nuanced and subtle through close attention to these themes in his work with severely or deeply disturbed individuals.

To summarize this dilemma, there is a fundamental conflict. We are yearning to be at one with nature, and experience anxiety lest we become at 'one' with the environment and lose our identity as a human being. (Again, this theorising is illustrated in his work with psychotic people who literally do fear loss of their identity as humans and may experience themselves as inhuman or inanimate objects.) Searles sees manifestations of this anxiety in 'normal' people as prejudice attitudes that betray our own unconscious lack of sureness that we ourselves are fully and unmistakably human; and in the enjoyment of using figures of speech in which a nonhuman creature or an inanimate object is endowed with human qualities, which reaffirms our status as 'top boss' and resoundingly human. In employing such expressions we reveal our enjoyment of being able to distinguish between oneself and the nonhuman environment (1960, p. 112).

Searles on environmental anxiety

Searles asserts that psychology's engagement with this vital aspect of human experience and existence—the environment—is hampered not only by ignorance, but anxiety concerning our relatedness with the nonhuman environment. He presents a series of arguments for what causes this anxiety, that stem directly from Freudian and neo-Freudian concepts of psychic defences and object relations theory. He applies his Freudian orientation to his thesis regarding our inseparability in Nature, and the ways in which the human struggle to differentiate itself as distinctly human (while having desire to become nonhuman, e.g. the death drive), arouses deep anxieties. In this sense, it is an existential psychoanalysis, placing in the frame the individual struggle to become more fully human, and the complicated relationship we have by necessity with the nonhuman environment. Namely, that as humans we are embedded and are

of nature; the human goes through the evolutionary process beginning at conception, and this memory trace remains with us. To access our deep relation with nature—the nonhuman—is therefore to stimulate and spark anxiety and ambivalence regarding our origins and what it means to be human. Thus we begin to approach a context for the intense defences that can arise when affective relations with nature or non-human environment are felt and threatened.

For Searles, to be human is far less secure and fixed as we may think, and there is the primal, preconscious fear of sliding back into a nonhuman consciousness. This assertion is difficult to prove in a psychological research setting using quantitative methodologies; it is based on Searles extensive clinical work with anxieties and fantasies of psychotic patients (Searles, 1960; Langs and Searles, 1980). The second aspect of this argument is more compelling, as it draws on the research of object-relations theorists, and suggests that the experience of the environment as a postnatal infant was chaotic and overwhelming, and as adults we carry this association with us. Searles is articulating his sense of acute resistance and denial demonstrated by modern humans, of what he feels to be an in-built kinship and relatedness with the nonhuman world. (He indicates this seems too obvious to state; I agree.) He is trying to understand what leads people to overcompensate this relatedness by creating an artificial separation, which enables destructive practices and insulates our consciousness with denial and apathy when it comes to the degradation of the environment. In observing how his psychotic patients relate with the environment—and indeed how profoundly important a role it plays in their development and their subsequent healing—he suggests that this holds important insight for our society as a whole. As these individuals lack the psychic structures that enable more 'normal' behaviour (often induced by a deeply unstable environment as a child), he suggests where the gaps and blurring takes place. He recounts patients who clearly have strong relations with animals (a patient who grew up with horses, or with a beloved pet) and how it was often the nonhuman environment that helps troubled individuals cope with highly fraught upbringings.

Since the publication of the 1960 book, there has been much research produced supporting Searles's intuition regarding the role and primacy of the nonhuman environment. In certain respects, his theories of the causes and roots of the human alienation from nature may seem outdated, as some of his discourse dates him (e.g. humans as "man" and mentioning "primitive peoples"). Given the prescience of his observations, the absence of acknowledgement of Searles's work in contemporary environmental psychology and psychoanalysis is striking, and the fact that psychoanalysis remains, by and large, still rather mute on the topic of the natural environment and human experience. There have been scant references to Searles's work on the non-human, natural environment and environmental crises *within* the

psychoanalytic sector itself; perhaps as he was seen as somewhat of a 'renegade' or his work was not entirely empirically based, but forayed into philosophical considerations. Searles's observation that psychoanalysis presents a diminished portrait of human experience ("skeletal" was the term used) that exists solely of intrapsychic, interpersonal and intrapersonal dynamics still applies today.

Searles on apathy as defensive mechanism

His only other publication addressing environmental issues, "Unconscious Processes in Relation to the Environmental Crisis" (Searles, 1972), uses both Freudian and Kleinian theoretical frameworks to illuminate the complicated dynamics of living in, and contributing to, a polluted and ecologically imperilled world. The central theme of the paper is apathy, and its unconscious roots or dynamics, as a form of defence. As he writes,

> My hypothesis is that man is hampered in his meeting of this environmental crisis by a severe and pervasive apathy which is based largely upon feelings and attitudes of which he is unconscious. That lack of analytic literature about this subject suggests to me that we analysts are in the grip of this common apathy (1972, p. 362).

This paper devotes more energy on the specific processes surrounding what it means to live in a degraded environment than the earlier work on environment (1960); the focus is on unconscious ego defences against anxiety and other painful or difficult experiences and feelings:

> The world's current state of ecological deterioration is such as to evoke in us largely unconscious anxieties of different varieties that are of a piece with those characteristic of various levels of an individual's ego-developmental history. Thus the general apathy that I postulate is based upon largely unconscious ego defenses against these anxieties. I shall speak of those ego defenses having to do with (a) phallic and Oedipal levels of development, (b) the earlier era coinciding with, in Kleinian terms, the depressive position, and (c) the still earlier era coinciding with the paranoid position (1972, p. 363).

Searles's work clearly relates to environmental communications in his analysis of unconscious meanings in environmental discourses, including the moralistic spirit that most environmental communications are conveyed with, and the role of ecologists in stimulating intense Oedipal guilt, and who are calling on us to relinquish our hard-won "genital primacy, symbolized by our proudly cherished by ecologically offensive automobile, and return to a state of childhood, when genital mastery was something longed for but not achieved; our apathy includes an unconscious defiant

rival to do this" (ibid., p. 364). He positions future generations and progeny as unconsciously hated Oedipal rivals which compete with our desire to repair and protect the earth's finite and precious resources. He describes the depressive and paranoid positions as theoretically robust frameworks for understanding the contradictory and irrational ways in which we currently respond to the threat of serious ecological pollution and threat. This includes the symbolization of pollution and its threat to the future:

> Pollution serves not only to foreclose the future upon a progeny we unconsciously hate and envy, but also to obscure a past which we unconsciously resist remembering with poignant clarity. We equate the idealized world of our irretrievable lost childhood with a non-polluted environment. We tend to erroneously assume that nothing can be done about the pollution of the present-day environment because of our deeper-lying despair at knowing that we cannot recapture the world of our childhood and at sensing, moreover, that we are retrospectively idealizing the deprived and otherwise painful aspects of it... In this sense, pollutants unconsciously represent remnants of the past to which we are clinging, transference-distortions which permeate our present environment... (Searles, 1972, p. 366).[13]

Similarly with Segal, discussed below, Searles views the ecologically deteriorating world in which we live as fostering in us, at a largely unconscious level, the mode of experience "seen in an openly crystallized form in paranoid schizophrenia and postulated as characterising the most threatening moments of normal infancy before the establishment of a durable sense of individuality" (ibid., p. 369). This intense fear of being contaminated by everything—the way in which pollutants can be felt or seen as pervasive, invisible and porous—can paralyze us into "terrorized inactivity", as in this deeply regressed mode we are not well differentiated from the environment, and hence have no clearly separate self with which to wage a struggle with an "outer" threat.

This is a sophisticated theorisation and attempt to explain the outwardly irrational lack of political action in the face of evidence and information about an ecologically precarious world. It is a bracing counter to a strictly political analysis of public engagement with contemporary issues (in Western, developed countries in particular), as well as an alternative to cognitive and behavioural schema employed to explain public engagement in terms of rational choice and decision-making. His urgent call for psychoanalysts to draw on their own resources and theoretical tools, as he does in this paper and his monograph, is cogent and yet seemingly fell on deaf ears. It is not entirely clear why this was the case; perhaps the fact it was such a vivid

[13] On a related point regarding bring born into specific environmental conditions and the role of memory, see Peter Kahn's work on 'generational amnesia'; see Kahn, 1999: 110–111.

psychoanalytic interpretation of contemporary ecological problems felt to be threatening or specious, based on a clear lack of empirical evidence. Or such theorizations were simply not in fashion at the time.

Along with Searles, Segal draws attention to the problematic 'silence' in the psychoanalytic field as a symptom of unconscious apathy and paralysis, and uses Kleinian frameworks to analyse public responsiveness to threats such as nuclear weapons, terrorism and environmental destruction. Her primary theory is organised around the concept of manic defences against anxieties, and the way (notably existential) threats mobilize our most 'primitive' modes of being, as Searles points out in his discussion of the paranoid-schizoid position. As a psychoanalyst, Segal draws on her experiences working with patients to produce a theory of socially applied psychoanalytic understandings, as will be discussed below.

Hanna Segal: psychoanalysis of contemporary threats

Central to Freud's conceptualization of mental life is the idea of psychic conflict—conflict between conscious and unconscious desires and realities, between conflicting desires. Equally central is the notion that such conflicts, when unresolved, undergo repression, become unconscious, and find expression and 'compromises' in dreams, symptoms, and so forth. In Hanna Segal's work, attention is drawn to the capacity to experience guilt, loss, and ambivalence in the face of our destructive capacities, and the harm we potentially or actually cause: "Ambivalence is a term sometimes used loosely to denote any ambiguity, but as a psychoanalytic term it has come to mean, more precisely, a conflict between aggression and love" (Segal, 1973, p. 92).[14] Hanna Segal is one of the few analysts to have married psychoanalytic insights with socio-political concerns including the relation of such ambivalence and chronic political and ecological threats. Much of Segal's work in the 1960s and 1970s was located in the clinical context in relation to her innovative work building on Klein, Bion and issues of symbolic formation (e.g. Segal, 1957; Segal, 1978). In the 1980s, she began to write openly about the nuclear threat (and later in the 1990s and 2000s, about terrorism and group anxieties); nuclear bombs and 'deterrence' epitomized the ultimate irreparable event. Much of her work considers the psychic dimensions of the irreparable, and the kinds of anxieties it evokes. The concern underlying these theories is with how we create strategies, often unconscious, for negotiating difficult, painful, and

[14] In light of this topic, is it of no minor significance that the concept of reparation itself is a central topic in the work of Melanie Klein, one of the most significant psychoanalytic thinkers in recent time. Klein's theory of reparation concerns the process by which reparation—the desire to repair, make right, restore—arises out experiences of guilt, loss and ambivalence. Our ability to experience ambivalence toward that which we have harmed (mother, nature, etc) enables the move and desire to repair others and our environment (Klein, 1992; see also Segal 2001). It is a complicated discussion for another time, particularly in light of Cox's analysis.

anxiety-producing thoughts, feelings, and experiences. In light of what has been written regarding the dread and anxiety of the ecological irreparable (Cox, 1985), what Segal describes can certainly be applied to chronic, contemporary ecological issues.

> I contend that anxiety produced [by nuclear weapons] mobilized the worst psychotic fears and defences. It tended to convert the normal fear of death to the unnameable terror of total annihilation without symbolic survival. Against that primitive fear defences of a schizophrenic type are mobilized, including increased projective identification, splitting and deadly self-idealization, paranoia, confusion, etc. (Segal, 2003, p. 259).

What Segal describes is the way in which, when confronted with an "unnameable terror", on some level it is 'unthinkable'—which can lead to a fragmentation of awareness, feeling, and action. We defend against the experience of threat or anxiety in a variety of ways, from denial to projecting the unwanted onto others, or splitting where we create 'good' and 'bad' things. These defences 'against fear' are another way of describing what environmental rhetorician J. Robert Cox refers to as 'inauthentic existence'—turning away, and engaging (escaping) in delusion and fantasy to avoid the unthinkable, or acute anxiety (Cox, 1982). Such defences are engaged in precisely to avoid feeling, and to avoid the confrontation with the reality being presented. This move, as Cox notes, is "inauthentic" in that it is not based on a relationship with reality or authenticity, but falsehood and delusion.

The issue of turning away from the future is fundamental to the experience of the irreparable, and there is much work in psychological and psychoanalytic literature regarding the choice to 'not know,' ranging from the clinical context when people confront their own limitations or neuroses, to studies of the Holocaust and other incidents of genocide and trauma (e.g. see Felman and Laub, 1992). This phenomenon of choosing not to know is closely related to what Freud referred to as 'disavowal.'[15] The 'turning of a blind eye' is something Segal (1987) discusses extensively in relation to how chronic issues—nuclear threat, ecological crises—are responded to. She notes that as more of the discourse appears in popular media, more people engage in 'Ostrich politics' and bury their heads in the sand. She describes this turning away as "close to denial, but is not identical to it; it is a particular form of splitting... in this split we retain intellectual knowledge of the reality, but divest it of its emotional meaning" (Segal, 1997a, p. 145).

[15] In *An Outline of Psycho-Analysis*, Freud described the phenomenon of disavowal as the ability for recognition and anxiety to 'persist side by side throughout their lives without influencing each other. Here is what may rightly be called a splitting of the ego' (1940, p. 203). The concept of disavowal may prove to be highly productive for those studying environmental communications and levels of engagement.

At the core of the potential paralysis in the face of the irreparable event, is the issue of helplessness and apathy. Segal writes,

> We seem to live in a peculiar combination of helplessness and terror and omnipotence—the helplessness and omnipotence increasing each in a vicious cycle. This helplessness, which lies at the root of our apathy, is party inevitable. We are faced with a horrifyingly threatening danger (the nuclear threat). But partly it is self-induced and becomes a self-fulfilling prophecy. Confronted with the terrors of the powers of destructiveness, we divest ourselves from our responsibilities by denial, project and fragmentation (p. 154).

Segal points to the multiple, contradictory, and irrational ways people can respond to acutely threatening situations; in this case, the horrible threat of nuclear bombs, and all that such a threat entails. She theorises how we tend to shield ourselves from difficult or overwhelming dangers, especially if we feel ourselves to be powerless or helpless. To compensate, we assume ourselves to be 'omnipotent', a stance she has written about extensively (see Segal, 1987), and is echoed by other more recent psychoanalytic writers (see Mishan, 1996). Seen in this light, it is possible to rethink conceptions of apathy, not as a clear lack of concern, but rather as a complicated expression of difficult and conflicting affective states. As I argue, if we approach apathy and a 'turn away' from the future through this perspective, we may start to see how in fact messages and vehicles for transmitting environmental issues may in fact do more harm than good.[16]

Contemporary Psychoanalytic Contributions

During the past decade a few psychoanalytic thinkers have continued where Searles left off, in articulating possible unconscious psychic processes involved with ecological crises; this work includes Shierry Weber Nicholson's *The Love of Nature and the End of the World* (2002); Joseph Mishan's paper "Psychoanalysis and Enviornmentalism: First Thoughts" (1996); Ivan Ward's "Introductory Thoughts" on *Ecological Madness: A Freud Museum Conference, December 1992* (1993) and the proceedings (Samuels, 1993; Orbach, 1993; Hinshelwood, 1993 and Richards, 1993); Mary-Jayne Rust's presentation "Climate on the Couch" and related publications (Rust, 2007; Rust, 2006), Rosemary Randall's two papers, "A New Climate for Psychotherapy?" (2005), "Loss and Climate Change" (2009) and Sally Weintrobe's work on green and climate change (2009). More philosophically theoretical writings include Zizek on the ecological crisis (in *Looking Awry*, 1992), van Wyck's work on nuclear waste burial site signage (2004; see Lertzman, 2006), and Guatarri's *The*

[16] Such an argument towards a theory of environmental anxiety and its relation to communications is the subject of the PhD project of which this talk is based on; it is part of a much larger discussion.

Three Ecologies (2000).[17] As unique and varied as the authors may be, is the central role of unconscious processes, specifically guilt, anxiety, loss and related defence mechanisms, arguing for the important role psychoanalysis has to play towards helping people respond more effectively to serious ecological threats, and understanding our current predicament. Similar to Searles, Mishan makes compelling links to the possible association of anxieties with early childhood experiences, which may lead to dissociations from our unavoidable dependence and vulnerability. Also with Searles, Mishan is sensitive to the psychic costs at stake in the "recognition" of our dependence on nature, providing an astute analysis concerning this problem of "recognition" of our inherent ties to nature and our flights through consumption and other avoidance mechanisms. In this sense he also echoes Randall's work on the role of consumption as a guilty escape route from the horrific prospects of uncontrollable climate change (2005). Mishan was aware of the preoccupations of the analytic community, specifically the lack of attention to the world outside of the consulting room or family matrix of relations and as such, his paper is both a call to action (to the psychoanalytic community) and recognition of the possible futility of this call.[18]

Randall (2005) also provides a lucid analysis of our predicament, focusing squarely on unconscious defences against the problems we face, and the complex relations between ecological anxiety, compulsive consumption and shopping, and the rise of therapeutic culture to help individuals manage their "personal" distress more effectively. All facets create a constellation of avoidance and denial of what is taking place, and Randall provides a much-needed analysis of the role psychotherapy has to play in the problems we currently face. For Randall, it is the process of loss and mourning which have particular salience for the ways in which people—often unconsciously—negotiate the awareness and prospects of climate change and mitigation practices, and she argues persuasively for more nuanced language and models for mourning, looking to Worden's work on mourning (2009). It is her belief, based on her work as a psychotherapist and in her work designing "Carbon Conversations" as part of Cambridge Carbon Footprint, that in the recognition of loss and support for mourning, the behavioural changes so desperately needed and desired by environmental advocates may be enabled. In this sense, we see again the recognition of the

[17] Emerging work by Cameron and Forrester are also making links between Freud, psychoanalysis and the founder of ecology, Tansley; see Cameron, Laura and John Forrester, (2000), "Tansley's Psychoanalytic Network: An Episode out of the Early History of Psychoanalysis in England," *Psychoanalysis and History* 2 (2), 189–256.

[18] Mishan was actually quite prescient in his writings; although the psychoanalytic community for the most part ignored his pleas—leading him to retreat into activism and to abandon future attempts to engage with the psychoanalytic community on environmental issues—over ten years later there is good evidence to suggest psychoanalytic practitioners are ready to engage with this thorny topic.

psychic power of acknowledging and naming emotional truths.[19] As Randall (2009) writes,

> Building on the work of Bowlby and Parkes, Worden suggests that the work of grief is a series of tasks that can be embraced or refused, tackled or abandoned. He sees the work as always in progress, never complete. Life will never be the same again, but meaning may be restored and it may become possible to flourish once more. The work may falter or stall, the bereaved person may return to an earlier stage, sink into depression, abandon their attempt at recovery, take heart again, move forward and so on. In each of the stages Worden suggests that either the task, or what he calls its negative, may be embraced (p. 121).

Shierry Nicholsen, a psychotherapist and former critical theory professor in the States published a book of reflections on environmental crises (2002) in which she weaves together analytic theory (Winnicott on concern, Bion on binocular perception) with aesthetics, art theory and ecopsychological literature (see Lertzman, 2004). Her writings are personal, interdisciplinary and quite poetic, but certainly infused with a psychoanalytic sensibility, e.g. attention to unconscious processes; indeed she acknowledges Searles at the beginning as one of the few voices in this area and a major influence (2002, p. 1). Nicholsen does discuss apathy; citing Harry Stack Sullivan, who wrote, "Apathy seems to me, to be a miracle of protection by which personality in utter fiasco rests until it can do something else" (1970, p. 174–175), she describes apathy as a way of adopting and defending oneself in a situation,

> That is utterly overwhelming and where there is no end in sight. We all need this kind of protection in our current environmental situation, certainly, in which there is so much destruction of so many kinds, in so many places, affecting so many people and so many other creatures, and with no end in sight. No wonder environmental activists complain about the widespread apathy that meets their efforts to arouse concern (2002, p. 147).

For Nicholsen and colleagues in the psychoanalytic field, the task appears to be the ability to tolerate being disturbed or uncertain; as Segal notes, the schizoid flight into manic defences is a flight from anxiety, an inability to tolerate ambiguity, ambivalence, uncertainty (Segal, 1997). The analytic attitude, then, as Ward expressed it and also reflected in Nicholson's writings, is one of curiosity and investigation; she writes,

[19] As Moser points out, Roosevelt's famous statement, "Let me assert my firm belief that the only thing we have to fear is fear itself—nameless, unreasoning, unjustified terror which paralyzes needed efforts to convert retreat into advance" was so effective, because in "acknowledging people's fears, he went on to say, 'only a foolish optimist can deny the dark realities of the moment' and then called for a renewed vision and concrete action plan" (Moser, 2007, p. 70). Randall's emphasis on naming the fear and anxiety, as well as our sense of loss, resonates with Moser's observations.

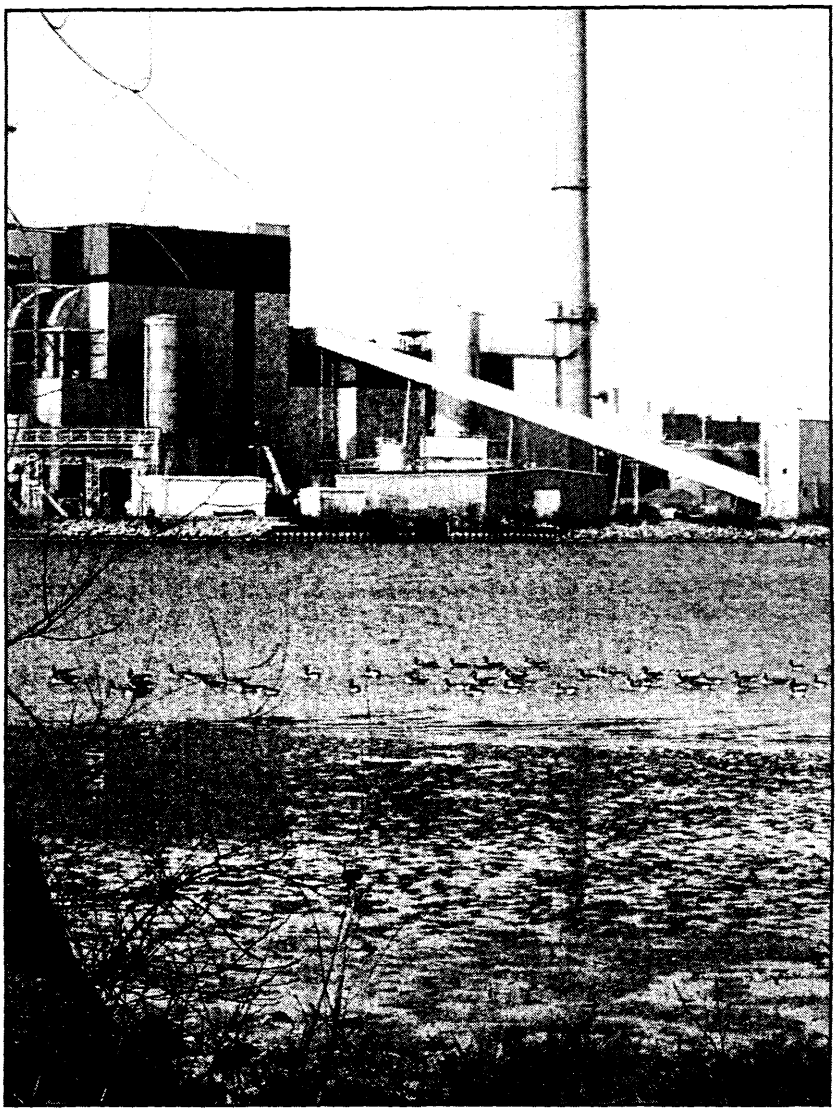
"It is clear that the capacity to be curious is very useful. Since the environmental situation is a part of current reality, albeit a disturbing part, and since it is something we do not yet understand or know how to deal with, it is useful to be able to turn our attention to it, to notice how disturbing it is, and yet to be interested in it and inquire into it" (p. 156). For Nicholsen the capacity to be disturbed is linked with the capacity to be curious; both require certain levels of containment and safety, to help tolerate such experiences. This aspect of the work—the implications for practice, specifically for communications and outreach—thus remains undeveloped; exactly how can we bring in the therapeutic and clinically derived insights, regarding the capacity to be present, enquire and investigate aspects of our experiences and reality, so as to become more 'alive' (as opposed to numb, or 'apathetic') to what is actually taking place, and to the sources of our own concern. As discussed in Chapters 8 and 9, this is where the present project, as grounded in empirical research and theorized psychoanalytically and psychosocially, and ever relating to the art of effective environmental communication practice, attempts to proceed a bit further into these territories and present implications for practice. In doing so, the project aims to introduce into the debates an acute sensitivity and acknowledgement of subjectivity as fluid, plural, and unfixed, and the methodological implications for researching environmental behaviour, attitudes, values and politics.

The field of 'environmental psychology' and ecopsychology has been largely dominated by two central psychological paradigms (broadly speaking): social psychology and humanistic, therapeutic psychology. As a result, much of the research produced investigating how people respond to environmental problems, and the issue of perceiving chronic ecological issues and risks are interpreted and translated in terms of cognitive processes (how humans perceive risks and threats, e.g. invisible threats such as climate change causality), based on observable behavioural practices or self-reporting of particular values, sentiments, beliefs or opinions. Alternately, the issues are rendered as deeply emotional and falling on humanistic, romantic ideological underpinnings concerning the human rift from a dynamic and life-giving Earth, with a focus on how to mend and heal this rift or 'disconnection'. Underpinning these two broad paradigms are epistemic and ontological assumptions that do not, and perhaps cannot, account for the often extremely complicated psychic and social processes of managing anxieties, fears, threats and desires; nor the importance of psychic resistance to distress, and the ways perceptions of reality is often distorted to conform to certain affective requirements, e.g. safety, security, stability or continuity. These epistemic and ontological underpinnings—either rigidly positivist that does not allow for the invisible, inchoate, or messy aspects of psychic and social phenomena, or a romanticised adherence to a prior union (merged, symbiotic) with nature that is the cause of all our ills—leave out room for accounting for how humans respond often

irrationally and affectively to anxiety, loss, mourning and perceived (albeit perhaps vague) threats.

As I have discussed, there are indications of psychological research that is beginning to acknowledge such processes such as defence mechanisms as social phenomena; notably the study produced by Susanne Stoll-Kleemann et al., (2001), and Kari Norgaard's (2006) work on climate change denial based in on community in Norway. Further, voices emerging out of the clinical, psychoanalytic therapeutic field are bringing new perspectives, building and extending the arguments presciently articulated by Harold Searles (1960; 1972), such as Rosemary Randall (2006; 2009), Joseph Mishan (1996), Ivan Ward and his colleagues (1993), Shierry Nicholsen (2002; 2009) and Andy Fisher (2002). Such work problematises concepts such as 'barriers to action' by inverting the concept of 'barrier' to dilemmas, opportunities, and psychic 'work'; Randall's work, for example, argues how unprocessed mourning in response to losses, often unconscious and inchoate, can profoundly complicate coherent and effective political actions required for climate change mitigation.

As I have suggested in this chapter, the potential for psychoanalytically oriented, psychosocial studies have much to offer contemporary dilemmas concerning public responsiveness to critical and potentially urgent ecological threats. An analytic perspective informed by psychosocial research, where theory and qualitative methodologies can meet, may help us understand issues of denial what may facilitate reparations. Importantly, such perspectives can inform a more effective communications strategy and practice that does not position or construct the public as either 'apathetic' or as drones for engineering certain behaviour. In the following chapter, I present an overview of the theoretical underpinnings of the research project, illustrating how the literature and its respective gaps and offerings have informed the research, its questions, preoccupations and methodology.



Fox River and Fort Howard, November 2007

It's calming you know, water is, ah, for me you know and cause yeah, I love one of the things I love watching about when we go to the river and stuff, I love watching the birds that gather around the water. And there's been um, a couple of bald eagles that in the last couple of years have been, in the area down here in Green Bay that have been by the Fox River. And watching that and, it, it's just that's just neat, I just get a sense of joy and you know, seeing you know, birds, big birds of prey like that you know. And the sand cranes, and the pelicans that have been coming back too, to the area, the water quality must be getting better. Otherwise animals wouldn't be coming back. But you know, there's a ways to go... You know cos, probably before when I was younger, then I was like, "hey look, neat, water, you know, you drink water, you know". You know the bay is water, you drink water, you cook with water and all that, and then realizing that water could be dirty.

—Scott, Interview 2

Chapter 3

Theorising environmental psychosocial research

In this chapter, I present an overview of theoretical influences that have informed and shaped the present research. The focus on how specific ideas in psychoanalysis, psychosocial studies and cultural studies can be productive for new ways of thinking through and conceptualising the experience of contemporary ecological issues. Central concepts of anxiety and defences against psychic pain will be introduced and discussed in relation to ecological threats. The overall aim is to move towards a theoretical and analytical perspective on environmental dilemmas, which stresses the centrality of affect, defences and unconscious processes, constructions of nature and ideology in the constitution of environmental subjectivities and responses to chronic ecological threats. In bringing this rich body of theoretical work to bear on both the methodology and approach to data analysis in this project, the thesis attempts to combine theoretical awareness with empirical sensitivity in a critical way, and provide a mapping of how analytic thought may inform current thinking on the topic of environmental engagement and response.

Over the past two decades, since I have been seriously engaging with the topic of how psychic responses to environmental degradation may animate particular political and ideological formations, or more crudely put, 'couch and culture' tensions (Layton, 2006) or 'political psyche' (Samuels, 1993), I have experienced a consistent response while reading many psychoanalytic texts, regardless of how deeply clinical they may be. This response, which remains as vital and alive today as it did twenty years ago, is the uncanny sense that much of what has been written and developed in psychoanalytic thought, starting with Freud and particularly found in object relations and relational analytic work, has profound and potentially powerful relevance for the struggles we are engaging with in terms of how to live sustainably on an increasingly populated planet.

❧

I am going to present the following psychoanalytic ideas as they relate to the topic of environmental issues, as contributing to debates on public engagement, apathy and environmental advocacy in general. The focus on psychoanalytic theory stems from my personal and intellectual investigations in environmental subjectivity spanning almost twenty years; having surveyed work in anthropology, sociology, cultural

studies, psychology, communication studies and social and critical theory, I remain convinced psychoanalytic work has much to offer this topic and yet remains marginal in the field of environmental scholarship.

As I began my explorations with Freud so many years ago, the chapter begins with Freud. The project's theoretical underpinnings is informed by the anxiety-defence model, according to which an individual has conscious and unconscious anxieties and conflicts, which are dealt with by developing psychological defence mechanisms (Freud, 1915; Freud, 1940; Hinshelwood and Skogstad, 2000). This model as articulated by Freud in his writings on unconscious defence and anxiety establishes this basic orientation of psychic defences and splitting in its most essential form, and as basis for future elaborations by object-relations and relational analytic theorists. Freud's writing on transience provided further clues as to the psychic nature of ecological degradation, which I discuss briefly (1916). I will then introduce the concepts presented by Melanie Klein and Hanna Segal; Klein, who introduced the core theories concerning splitting and the paranoid-schizoid and depressive positions, and which are inherently connected with the topic of reparation, and Segal, who enabled explicit links to be made between psychotic psychic defences with contemporary contexts involving public avoidance of distressing (social and) ecological issues. The articulation of psychic defences and ecological threats are made even more explicit in the work of Harold Searles (1960, 1972), whose theories of apathy as defence have clearly informed and inspired the present project. I will then address related psychoanalytic topics concerning mourning, loss and reparation, as articulated by Klein and Segal, as particularly salient for a theory of environmental subjectivity (and the issue of mobilizing reparative energies).

The second half of the chapter concerns more recent psychoanalytic work that takes the topic of enquiry out of the clinician's consulting room even further: in Bollas' work on objects, and Tavistock scholars on issues of anxiety and defences in organizations and groups. With Bollas we see a significant preoccupation with the way our material world—objects, nature, places, experiences—deserves as much enquiry and investigation as our interpersonal and intrapsychic 'object' relations. This way of 'reading' our affective investments in objects has proven productive in allowing for a more complex reading of how meanings are produced relationally and with the non-human, as discussed in the case studies (Chapters 5 and 6) and in the analysis, Chapters 7 and 8. Menzies Lyth and the Tavistock Institute's work exploring defensive technique in organisations (Menzies Lyth, 1959; Hinshelwood and Skogstad, 2000) enables a way to theorise how a community as Green Bay functions collectively in response to chronic and severe industrial degradation, as discussed briefly in Chapter 9. Such an analysis of organisational dynamics introduces a consideration of

affect, anxiety and unconscious processes into the social context.[20] Finally, I present considerations as to how these theoretical orientations give rise to the chosen methodologies employed in the project.

The analytic attitude

The facts of ego splitting, writes Freud in "An Outline of Psychoanalysis" are "neither so new nor so strange as they may at first appear" (1940, p. 204). And yet, as he also writes, in a fragment dated the same year and entitled "Splitting of the Ego in the Process of Defence":

> I find myself for a moment in the interesting position of not knowing whether what I have to say should be regarded as something long familiar and self-evident or as something entirely new and puzzling (1940, p. 275).

At issue in these extracts is the concept of splitting and how it relates to contemporary environmental degradation (which I discuss below). Freud's statement also reflects my feelings concerning how Freud's theorisations of defences, anxiety and psychic internal conflicts and dilemmas speak so specifically to contemporary problems concerning environmental awareness. While it seems self-evident to remark on the potentially anxiety-producing effects of ecological trespasses, whether climate change, deforestation, water contamination or any number of gravely serious matters, this dimension of environmental problems has remained largely out of view for both psychologists and environmental scholars for decades. As Layton notes, "so often psychoanalytic theory ignores the psychic effects of the power hierarchies in which we live" (2008, p. 13); such can be said of the power hierarchies as extending to nature, biotic systems and how we participate with non-human environments. Yet these omissions of the centrality of anxiety—and psychic defences, splitting, disavowal—for understanding how environmental issues are experienced and subsequently responded to, come at a cost. As discussed in the previous chapter, psychological studies continue to point to 'barriers' in public responsiveness to environmental problems, social marketing efforts continue to address how to engineer 'environmentally friendly behaviour', yet rarely is the issue of how humans cope and manage anxieties, and how these strategies may inform or impede constructive response, actually considered. The discourses of 'barriers to action', as I argue, can effectively obscure and mask underlying dilemmas, conflicts and processes far more complex than whether or not there are adequate structures for action in place such as

[20] Theories of loss, mourning and melancholy underscore this project's tenor and findings, and I have found Winnicott's writings on care, concern and creativity to provide a useful complement to Klein's more 'negative' focus on aggression and destruction; I discuss Winnicott's work on concern, care and creativity in Chapter 8 and 9 as it evolved with my deep engagement with the material.

recycling or energy-saving light bulbs. There is little concern for unconscious processes or irrational modes of responding to such serious problems in discourses on public responses to ecological threats (e.g. 'climate denial' and 'apathy'), changing consumptive behaviours, and how young people may be coping with such potentially frightening or overwhelming information.[21] Freud's theories on anxiety, when read in light of urgent and pressing ecological problems, provide a starting point.

Freud found both self-evident and potentially "new and strange" how the psyche manages contradictory and anxiety-producing reactions. The question of ego splitting occupied Freud throughout his work, appearing particularly in his later work as he relates phenomenon in so-called pathological conditions to more ordinary, everyday 'neurotics'. Freud returns to the notion of a "psychical split" that occurs in face of a reality that has become "intolerably painful" for the ego (1940a). But this time Freud will begin by explicitly challenging the line that separates the normal from the pathological: "We have seen that it is not scientifically feasible to draw a line of demarcation between what is psychically normal and abnormal" (p. 195). In fact he does more than challenge this line: he will claim to have "established the right" to understand "the normal life of the mind from a study of its disorders" (ibid.). He describes a child who is both possessed by a powerful drive which it is in the habit of satisfying, and what happens when it has a terrifying experience which "lets it know that to carry on satisfying the drive would lead to a real and almost intolerable danger" (Freud, 1940, p. 275). The individual now has to decide whether to acknowledge the real danger, and thus refrain from giving in to this powerful drive, or to deny reality, convince herself there is nothing to fear, and therefore maintain satisfying this drive. Freud continues to describe two contradictory reactions, both of which are valid and have their own logic. The first is to reject reality and refuse any prohibition. The second response, "in the very same breath", acknowledges the danger, turns anxiety about it into a symptom, and attempts to ward this anxiety off. While this activity serves the psyche's need for satisfying both its desires and to contend with reality, it comes at a high psychic price, for as Freud reminds us, "nothing in life is free except death" (p. 104). This success of managing anxiety comes at the expense of a "rift in the ego that will never heal, indeed it will widen as time goes on" (p. 104).

It is this *rift* that we are most concerned with in the context of this project, and how distressing feedback regarding human industrial impact on ecological systems registers psychically, cognitively and affectively. It is the space between knowing and not-knowing, the capacities we have for compartmentalisation and disavowal

[21] While environmental communications and education in general do not attend to affective and psychic dimensions, there has been sensitive work in environmental education, in particular David Sobel's (1996) *Beyond Ecophobia: Reclaiming the heart in nature education.* Barrington, MA: Orion Books.

of distressing information such as the consequences of carbon or any number of common, naturalised, and often dangerous and toxic industrial practices. This rift constitutes what Freud has referred to as the "denying of reality", in accordance with his theory of the reality principle. It is the ability to fragment awareness and cognition into coexisting, and often quite smooth functioning, in order to maintain a psychic and material status quo. The splitting is related to what Freud termed as "disavowal", a "defence hysteria" in which an occurrence of incompatibility takes place in ideational life:

> ... That is to say, until their ego was faced with an experience, an idea or a feeling which aroused such a distressing affect that the subject decided to forget about it because he had no confidence in his power to resolve the contradiction between that incompatible idea and his ego by means of thought-activity (Freud, p. 1940, p. 203).

Deciding to "forget" about a distressing experience, idea or feeling is what Freud refers to as "intentional forgetting", which has direct relevance for the data analysis to follow. In his articulation of intentional forgetting, Freud notes the way in which we can effectively "convert" affect from one area to another:

> That affect is obliged to remain in the psychical sphere. The idea, now weakened, is still left in consciousness, separated from all association. But its affect, which has become free, attaches itself to other ideas which are not in themselves incompatible, and thanks to this 'false connection', those ideas turn into obsessional ideas (ibid.).

The seeds of Klein's later formations of psychotic defence mechanisms and projective identification are present in the concept of affective displacement, disavowal, and psychic splitting. Freud's concept of disavowal and intentional forgetting as psychic defences against anxiety is central to a conception of subjectivity that is dynamic, shifting, unconscious and irrational (Walkerdine et al., 2003; Hollway and Jefferson, 2000). The concept of dynamic psychic processes that can involve a certain fragmentation of affect and thought stems from Freud's central thesis of psychic equilibrium, in which the ego is guided by the tensions produced by stimuli (pleasure and unpleasure), strives after pleasure, and seeks to avoid "unpleasure". As he writes in *An Outline of Psycho-Analysis*, an increase in unpleasure that is *expected and foreseen* is met by a signal of anxiety (p. 145). The occasion of such an increase, whether it threatens from within (from impulses, unwanted desires or thoughts, urges) or from without (external sources of distress) is known as *danger* (ibid., 146). Freud makes a clear distinction between *danger* and *threat*: danger is expected and foreseen, whereas threat indicates distressing signals that are not foreseen and appears suddenly, without warning.

Freud's model of *ego*, *id* and *superego* have been elaborated and refined through object-relations theory in moving from a drive-centred theory to an object-relating and more relational model (Greenberg and Mitchell, 1983). Freud's theorisations of the superego as potentially paralysing the ego from taking action in response to danger or threat is relevant, however, for the topic of environmental awareness and anxieties. Freud describes what is now commonly recognised as 'resistance' in the analytic context, in how the superego can become a great impediment to the ego's ability to gain mastery over "lost provinces of his mental life" (1940, p. 178). The superego, as the internalised, moral parental agent, can inhibit healing and process; the more hard-pressed the ego feels, "the more convulsively it clings (as though in fright) to these anticathexes, in order to protect what remains of itself from further irruption" (ibid.).

It is productive to consider Freud's formulation—later to be elaborated by Klein, Segal and object-relations and relational analysts—of *resistance* and the defences against (internalised and external) moralising agents in relation to how distressing environmental news may be experienced by the ego. Simon Blackburn (2001) references the affective aspects of moral intrusions in environmental contexts, echoing Freud's earlier formulations:

> Ethics is disturbing. We are often vaguely uncomfortable when we think of such things as exploitation of the world's resources, or the way our comforts are provided by the most miserable labour conditions of the third world. Sometimes, defensively, we get angry when such things are brought up. But to be entrenched in a culture, rather than merely belonging to the occasional rogue, exploitative attitudes will themselves need a story (p. 7).

In a critical sense, this project takes up the question from a psychosocial, psychoanalytic perspective: what does it mean to tell stories that help maintain exploitative attitudes? What *are* the stories we tell to each other and ourselves? How might defensive mechanisms enable or produce certain strategies for such stories? Using Freudian formations of unconscious drives, phantasies and desires, what might we learn about the psychic processes involved when facing the "ethics" of ecological sustainability, particularly if this touches on issues of "unpleasure" or distress, reduction of pleasure and the reminder of limits and boundaries? Further, as Searles (1972) has sensitively pointed out, to what extent do we defend against the perceived threats to our hard-won Oedipal accomplishments, such as the automobile, the plane, the luxuries provided through wealth and exploitation?

What begins with Freud is the analytic attitude within which this project is situated. As discussed in the previous chapter, Ward noted to an audience of both psychoanalysts and environmental activists at the *Ecological Madness* conference

at the Freud Museum in 1992, "It is not the relation between the individual and the social which is crucial in relation to this issue... The relevant distinction is rather between what is conscious and unconscious" (Ward, 1993, p. 179). What has been remarked on by psychologists and social theorists as a "disconnect" between values and actions, or between attitudes and behaviour can be reframed and articulated in terms of complex psychic negotiations with the presence of potentially (or actual) anxiety producing experiences, ideas or events. Freud's writings on anxiety, psychic splitting and defence mechanisms have been elaborated into a more comprehensive theory of anxiety and subjectivity characterised by ambivalence, conflict, and contradiction as articulated by British object relations theorists (e.g. Klein, 1959; Bollas, 1989; Segal, 1997; Segal, 1973; Winnicott, 1971), and the relational psychoanalytic orientation (e.g. Greenberg and Mitchell, 1983; Mitchell, 1988; Benjamin, 1990; Aron, 1996), which have potentially profound implications for how we grapple with contemporary public 'apathy' and issues of environmental engagement, concern and the drive for reparation.

The revolt against mourning: Transience and environmental melancholia

The topic of loss and mourning is central to a consideration of the affective and psychic dimensions of contemporary ecological issues. Almost one hundred years ago, Freud (1916) wrote a brief essay called *On Transience,* which deals with these themes, in the context of the horrors of World War I:

> Some time ago I took a walk through a blossoming summer landscape in the company of a silent friend and a young and already well-known poet. The poet admired the beauty of the nature around us, but it did not delight him. He was disturbed by the idea that all this beauty was bound to fade, that it would vanish through the winter, like all human beauty and everything beautiful and noble... All the things he would otherwise have loved and admired seemed to him to be devalued by the fate of transience for which they were destined (p. 179).

He continues, "We know that such absorption in the susceptibility to decay of all that is beautiful can produce two different impulses in the mind. One of these leads to the painful world-weariness of the young poet, the other to revolt against the asserted fact." That is, we can either withdraw affectively from the world, or we can deny the prospect of loss (reality). He concludes, "That which is distressing may none the less be true... But I disputed the pessimistic poet's view..." (ibid.).

In *On Transience* Freud articulates one of the fundamental aspects of the experience of industrial change and ecological threat: anticipatory mourning and the risk of withdrawing all affect (what can appear as 'apathy'). The vignette speaks to the

dilemmas of experiencing and encountering environmental issues, the way our experience of our material world and invested objects can be mediated by the sense of impending loss or change. Freud's walk is not unlike a walk through a surveyed forest, or viewing a mountaintop slated for mining, or perhaps watching a nature documentary of rare creatures whose very existence is in peril. This is an affective dimension of ecological issues that cannot be denied. There is the turning toward or away from the risk of loss, from the sense of *unpleasure* Freud writes about. Or as the "silent friend", to not engage directly with what we see before us. Or, as Freud suggests in his somewhat optimistic final note, struggle to find a way to both bear witness to what is happening and remain engaged and alive to both the beauty and the despair of loss and change (what Klein terms the depressive position, discussed below).

Freud's essay suggests how environments and affectively invested objects are experienced through the lens of loss and impending threat. While Freud did not often address nature as a central topic, the essay marks a rare instance of a thoughtful, meditative reflection on three different modes of experiencing the plants and flowers. He presents a parable of three modes of being: one in suspended engagement, the poet who cannot be fully present, who is arrested by an anticipatory mourning which is neither active nor inactive and a silent witness. The mourning experienced by the poet is not 'worked through': objects in the garden were transient, fated to extinction: mocked by its own frailty, beauty was eclipsed by its negation, and had no value and no meaning. The other mode (the narrator, presumably Freud) reflects a capacity to appreciate what is, to be present to it; the fleeting quality of existence increases, not diminishes, life's value. Freud describes the mode of being his friend the poet manifests as a "revolt in their minds against mourning". The knowledge of loss so disturbed him that he could no longer appreciate beauty except as something already lost (von Unwerth, 2005, p. 3).[22] Freud writes, "It must have been the psychical revolt against grief that devalued the pleasure of beautiful things... and gave... a foretaste of grief over its destruction, and as the psyche shrinks instinctively from everything painful, they felt their enjoyment of beauty to be spoiled by the idea of its transience" (1916).

In the essay, a meditation on mourning, articulates what is to later be developed in Klein's theory of mourning and reparation, as well as her theory of the depressive position (the ability to contain and tolerate conflict and awareness of loss, without regressing to primitive defensive mechanisms). Freud writes that a year after the walk through the garden, the war had "robbed the world of its beauties. It destroyed not only the beauty of the landscapes through which it passed, and the artworks

[22] See Matthew von Unwerth's Freud's Requim: Mourning, Memory and the Invisible History of a Summer Walk (2005), for an expanded discussion of the circumstances surrounding this essay and the context in which it was written. As von Unwerth notes, at the time of writing On Transience, which was a tribute to Geothe, World War I raged outside his door, "in the final days of the glory of the Austro-Hungarian Empire and the city of Vienna" (3).

that it encountered on its way, it also shattered our pride at the accomplishments of our civilization, our respect for so many thinkers and artists, our hopes of finally overcoming the differences among peoples and races... In this way it robbed us of so much that we had loved, and showed us the fragility of much that we had considered stable" (p. 199). Freud presciently notes the way such an affected society tends to cling "all the more intensely" to that which remains in the aftermath of such loss, including a renewed passion for nationalism, kin and pride on what is held in common. In what appears to be an articulation of reparative capacities, Freud notes that mourning does, indeed, come to an end, and our libido is "free" to become attached to new objects. What has been lost can be mourned but does not damage the capacity to love again:

> As long as we are still young and active, it is also able to replace the lost objects with objects that are, where possible, equally precious, or with still more precious new ones. It is hoped that things will be no different where the losses of this war are concerned. Once mourning is overcome, it will be apparent that the high esteem in which we hold our cultural goods has not suffered from our experience of their fragility. We will once again build up everything that the war has destroyed, perhaps on firmer foundations and more lastingly than before (p. 200).

In the poet's stance towards the garden and his affective withdrawal (unable to take pleasure or even be present to the surroundings), we recognize what appears and is often labelled as 'apathy' or complacency. While it is impossible to know what may be taking place for those who withdraw from the world, for a variety of reasons, we must also remain open to the possibility of a form of psychic revolt as described by Freud. Such unconscious negotiations with pain, love and ambivalence are further elaborated and developed by Melanie Klein.

Reading beneath the surface: engaging with environmental objects

The notion of a 'revolt against mourning' arguably complicates the idea of apathy as a literal absence of affect or pathos. Both Searles (1972) and Mishan (1996) relate environmental anxiety to the evocation of infantile experiences of a chaotic, uncontrollable world; thus apathy is not only a response regarding lack of personal agency or sense of powerlessness, but rather as a *defense against the unconscious anxieties the circumstances may evoke.*[23] The perception of a deteriorating world is, according

[23] There are parallels in the theorisation of nature as uncontrollable and hence evoking infantile experiences of intolerable invulnerability in certain discourses concerning "Earth as Mother", found frequently in ecopsychology, ecofeminism and Jungian conceptualisations; there is a spectrum from a romantic association of nature as mother, to a more critically informed analysis of colonisation of nature and power relations; e.g. see Rust, 1994 for Jungian perspectives; and in particular ecofeminist literature, which engages in critical analyses concerning gender, power relations and the control

to Searles, so frightening a prospect, that taps into acute fears of survival as an evolving organism, as to be too much to contain or to bear. As discussed Chapter 2, Segal (1997) also presents a similar analysis of the ways in which powerful and (often) unconscious anxieties can be mobilized in the face of threat (e.g. nuclear, terrorism), leading to a range of defensive mechanisms recognisable as denial, projection, and splitting objects into 'good' and 'bad'.

The phenomenon of loss, particularly of specific objects (e.g. a clean lake, a woodland, a bit of riverbank behind the house to enjoy, the ideal of clean air and water) is also a subtext of environmental issues, and a topic engaged in psychoanalytic work pertaining primarily to the loss of human (object) relations. To view ecological, non-human objects, or at least to allow for the ways in which we imbue our object work with associations which may involve human others, sensations, memories or desire, calls on a different way of approaching environmental 'objects' (and thus, to try to understand the potential meanings of their losses). An example of this is Searles' analysis of ecological problems; he approaches pollution as something meaning more than its mere empirical content. That is, as an analyst, he looks to objects and phenomenon as *more* than their literal meanings; as Freud taught in dream analysis, and Bollas developed in his 'transformational object' relations theory (in addition to Winnicott's theory of the 'transitional object', 1971, pp. 86–94) things and events have psychic resonance, and how we relate and respond to them potentially presents another language, one of desires, longings and unconscious wishes. It is not to say objects are 'only' a construct of our imagination, but to acknowledge place of subjectivity in the human-non-human object world.[24] Such an approach has certainly informed my own capacities for engaging with the material presented in the Green Bay interviews and my own visceral, imagined and intellectual experiences of the factories, rivers and lakes of the Great Bay region. I felt employing an object relational approach for 'reading' both the narratives and the places enabled a more psychically honest analysis than focusing primarily on values, attitudes and opinions, which constitutes the focus for a majority of the studies conducted in the region concerning public perceptions of the Great Lakes (e.g. Belden Russonello & Stewart, 2006). This orientation (to environmental 'objects') is reflected in Searles's psychoanalysis of pollution:

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and mastery of nature; e.g. Val Plumwood's *Feminism and the Mastery of Nature* (1993) for the definitively critical articulation of ecofeminist political philosophy.

[24] The topic of social and cultural constructions of nature is a lively and important debate, and there is not space to develop these ideas further, however they inform my own thinking as a result of years steeped in environmental cultural studies, communication studies and cultural geography; see William Cronon's "The Idea of Wilderness" for the 'seminal' paper in these debates, as well as Kate Soper's *What is Nature*, the collection *FutureNatural* (ed. Braun and Castree).

> Pollution serves not only to foreclose the future upon a progeny we unconsciously hate and envy, but also to obscure a past which we unconsciously resist remembering with poignant clarity... We equate the idealized world of our irretrievable lost childhood with a non-polluted environment. We tend to erroneously assume that nothing can be done about the pollution of the present-day environment because of our deeper-lying despair at knowing that we cannot recapture the world of our childhood and at sensing, moreover, that we are retrospectively idealizing the deprived and otherwise painful aspects of it... In this sense, pollutants unconsciously represent remnants of the past to which we are clinging, transference-distortions which permeate our present environment... (366)

Connecting idealisations of childhood and the image of a more 'innocent' and less 'sullied' or contaminated time surfaces in much of the data collected in this project (discussed in Chapters 5 and 6). Powerful narratives regarding childhood and loss, nostalgia and a longing for simpler, cleaner, freer times run throughout most, if not all, of the interviews conducted in Green Bay. Engaging with the narratives in terms of 'layers' or multiple aspects of meanings (as discussed in the following chapter), as opposed to face value or on a literal basis, takes inspiration from Freudian interpretations of dreams as unconscious material "knocking at the gates" of what we allow into our conscious mind (Freud, 1921) and object relational analysis that help illuminate the subtle ways in which our interactions with the present world and circumstances are infused (transference-distorted) with potentially unresolved or powerfully affective relations and experiences from our past. For example, rather than focusing on what the water means for local residents in the Great Lakes basin in terms of utilities or recreation (e.g. fishing, boating, swimming), as is often the case in the majority of surveys and polls assessing how people relate with their local environments and valuations of the lakes and rivers, taking a view towards how these 'objects' figure in the context of their lives, what sort of associations they conjure, and how this may inform modes of relating with these objects can open up new terrains of investigation. A phobia of large bodies of water, for example, as revealed by one of my participants, Victoria, is eventually traced to a singular event as a child, during which she was able to feel her mother's fear and anxiety about her falling in the water and drowning; this insight opened up a relatively new space in terms of understanding the 'flatness' of affect when describing her recent visits to up to Lake Michigan in Door County, or her complete dissociation with living near the Great Lakes, beyond an interpretation of her 'valuation' of the water for recreation. It introduces *dimensionality* to the engagement with the material, as opposed to a reductive interpretation, e.g. viewing the phobia of water as informing the stance towards environmental protection activities, given her potentially unconscious associations of the water with danger, threat and risk. Likewise when another participant, Howard, tells me how he feels

emotionally attuned to the river, and the way his emotional life shifts as the ice breaks and the "river opens", I can engage with this in a number of ways, including an enquiry into what this means for Howard, not only practically that he can now go down to the water, but as an expression of change, expansion and freedom; informed in part by his narratives about the pleasures of hunting for washed up treasures, and perhaps implicitly the pleasures of escaping the family space to wander on his own, with his own thoughts.

This mode of engaging with the material is informed by both Freud's basic insights into the language of unconscious material through dreams, stories, memories and associations, and Bollas's elaborations of how our material world can evoke and call forth self-states, much as a work of art may evoke a series of sensations that we may not fully understand, but are drawn to them nonetheless. As Freud notes, it is also in neurosis that our unconscious comes knocking at the gates; thus the repetitions, stuckness or manic defences that are engaged are equally vital sites of enquiry.

Guilt, loss and ambivalence

Environmental issues can pull on us in complex, unconscious and deeply troubling ways; as subjects in a Western developed nation, participating in the fruits of industrial development can arouse great levels of confusion and conflict as environmental awareness grows, or the consequences are made more visible (e.g. through dead fish on the shores, beach closures, contaminated waters, or invasive species that thrive and crowd out native biotic populations). Central to Freud's conceptualization of mental life is the idea of psychic conflict—conflict between conscious and unconscious desires and realities, between conflicting desires. Equally central is the notion that such conflicts, when unresolved, undergo repression, become unconscious, and find expression and 'compromises' in dreams, symptoms, and so forth. In British object-relations theory attention is drawn to the capacity to experience guilt, loss, and ambivalence in the face of our destructive capacities, and the harm we potentially or actually cause. In relation to the topic of environmental degradation, and relations with nature in an industrial context, ambivalence has served as a productive concept. As Segal notes, "Ambivalence is a term sometimes used loosely to denote any ambiguity, but as a psychoanalytic term it has come to mean, more precisely, a conflict between aggression and love" (Segal, 1973, p. 92).[1] The ways we respond to irreparable events is of far greater psychic complexity than has been previously acknowledged, certainly in the fields of environmental psychology and communications, which continues to resist a consideration of affective and unconscious dimensions: namely those who are potentially driving irresponsible practices such as denial of problems, increased forms of consumption and waste, and an overall attitude of business as usual. What has yet to be explored are the affective, emotional and potentially

unconscious factors that can help facilitate and foster reparative actions: what Klein would refer to as mobilisation of reparative energies (1937).

For Segal (1987; 2001; 2003), nuclear bombs and 'deterrence' epitomized the ultimate irreparable event. Much of her later work, as with Searles, considers the psychic dimensions of the irreparable, and the kinds of anxieties such threats can evoke. The concern underlying these theories is with how we create strategies, often unconscious, for negotiating difficult, painful, and anxiety-producing thoughts, feelings, and experiences. In light of what has been written regarding the dread and anxiety of the ecological irreparable, damage beyond repair (c.f. Cox, 1982), what Segal describes can certainly be applied to chronic, contemporary ecological issues.

> I contend that anxiety produced [by nuclear weapons] mobilized the worst psychotic fears and defences. It tended to convert the normal fear of death to the unnameable terror of total annihilation without symbolic survival. Against that primitive fear defences of a schizophrenic type are mobilized, including increased projective identification, splitting and deadly self-idealization, paranoia, confusion, etc. (Segal, 2003, p. 259).

Segal describes how, when confronted with an "unnameable terror", on some level it is 'unthinkable' (e.g. climate change, mass migrations, or chronic water shortages), which can lead to a fragmentation of awareness, feeling, and action. Segal maintains that we defend against the experience of threat or anxiety in a variety of ways, from denial to projecting the unwanted onto others, or splitting where we create 'good' and 'bad' things. These defences 'against fear' are another way of describing what Freud refers to as "denying reality" and the "revolt against mourning"—turning away, and engaging (escaping) in delusion and fantasy to avoid the unthinkable, or acute anxiety. The "turning of a blind eye" is something Segal (1997) discusses extensively in relation to how chronic issues—nuclear threat, ecological crises—are responded to. She notes that as more of the discourse appears in popular media, more people engage in "Ostrich politics" and bury their heads in the sand. She describes this turning away as "close to denial, but is not identical to it; it is a particular form of splitting... in this split we retain intellectual knowledge of the reality, but divest it of its emotional meaning" (Segal, 1997, p. 145). Here we see echoes of Freud's analysis of the poet in the garden, who divests affective energies from that which surrounds him; it is not a denial of the impeding decay and loss of the life that surrounds the poet in the garden, it is the ability to carry knowledge also as a shell, something emptied out of its affective resonance. It is a form of deadening or numbing to certain aspects of reality, internal states or experiences; similar to Robert Jay Lifton's concept of psychic

numbing (Lifton, 1979) based on fieldwork with survivors of the nuclear bomb in Hiroshima.[25]

At the core of the potential paralysis in the face of the ecological crisis (or irreparable event), is the issue of helplessness and apathy. Segal (1997) writes,

> We seem to live in a peculiar combination of helplessness and terror and omnipotence—the helplessness and omnipotence increasing each in a vicious cycle. This helplessness, which lies at the root of our apathy, is party inevitable. We are faced with a horrifyingly threatening danger (the nuclear threat). But partly it is self-induced and becomes a self-fulfilling prophecy. Confronted with the terrors of the powers of destructiveness, we divest ourselves from our responsibilities by denial, project and fragmentation (p. 154).

Here Segal points to the multiple, contradictory, and irrational ways people can respond to acutely threatening situations; in this case, the horrible threat of nuclear bombs, and all that such a threat entails. She remarks on the ways in which we tend to shield ourselves from difficult or overwhelming dangers, *particularly* if we feel ourselves to be powerless or helpless. To compensate, we assume ourselves to be 'omnipotent', a stance she has written about extensively (see Segal, 1987), and is echoed by other more recent analytic writers (see Mishan, 1996; Rust, 1994; Randall, 2005; 2009).

It is of no minor significance that the concept of *reparation* itself is a central topic in the work of Melanie Klein. Klein's theory of reparation concerns the process by which reparation—the desire to repair, make right, restore—arises out experiences of guilt, loss and ambivalence. Our ability to experience (tolerate) *ambivalence* toward that which we have harmed (mother, nature, lakes, sibling, etc.) enables the desire to repair others and our environment (Klein, 1937; Segal 2001). It is the inability to tolerate ambivalence (socially and psychically) that can lead to splitting and manic defences (Segal, 1997). Object relations theory as pioneered by Klein, has been applied and discussed primarily in the context of clinical treatment (Anderson, 1992) with occasional forays into social and political topics (e.g. Ben-Asher and Goren, 2006). Object relations theory provides persuasive and compelling theoretical schema for approaching human-environment relations, specifically concerning ecological environments and human treatment of nature. As contemporary human

[25] However in the case of psychic numbing—which speaks to the way in which survivors of certain mass traumas such as the bomb or war become 'numb' and cease to feel emotions in any normal sense, thereby enabling a mode of functioning—and the topic of ecological devastation occasioned by human practices, there is the aspect of the 'unthinkable' that is distinct from disavowal; in disavowal we see a splitting due to incompatible or conflicting thoughts, desires, or insights, whereas in psychic numbing there is the dimension of the 'unthinkable' or that which cannot be adequately symbolically represented; this point of ecological crisis as exceeding symbolic representation is addressed by Zizek (1992) and is discussed in the final chapter.

relations with nature are also about industrial development, conversion of raw materials to energy and varying degrees of exploitation of resources, one can say object relations theory contributes to our understandings of industrialisation. Few psychoanalysts have extended object relations theory to this topic; those who have present compelling interpretive repertoires that require further consideration (see Segal, 1997; Mishan, 1996; Searles, 1972; Minsky, 2003). I wish to examine what specifically object relations theory brings to bear on this topic, with special attention to the themes of persecutory guilt, the coexistence of hate and love toward particular objects, and the relation between mourning lost objects and the energies of reparation.

Approaching the experience of guilt as articulated by Klein and subsequent object relations theorists, we start with the 'paranoid-schizoid position'. In the earliest stages of development, "the infant deals with the chaotic impact of external and internal stimuli by splitting the object and the self into an ideal and a bad one, and in this way trying to create some order in their world" (Segal, 1994, p. 95). A crucial role in this splitting is played by 'projective identification', the process in which the infant gets rid of whatever is a painful or bad experience, by trying to project it outside into the object, thereby making it into a 'bad object'. Similarly, parts of the self that are felt as good and constructive may be projected into a 'good object', making it more ideal but stripping the ego of its potential (Segal, ibid.). In normal development, where there is adequate containment and attunement, and without psychic trauma, the infant withdraws these projections, and is able to *tolerate* more effectively the knowledge of real objects, and their good and bad qualities, as well as the child's own ambivalence, which also leads to guilt and dread of loss (ibid., p. 96). It is a story of moving from a more distorted perception of the world to one that is more in touch with reality, along with the painful reality of one's own desires and conflicts. This is referred to as the 'depressive position', as is arguably an articulation of the capacity to engage in a more authentic and responsive mode with reality, in terms of self, relationships and with the external world. Segal, Searles and Mishan point out the more common mode of relating with the world and our environment is characterised by what can be seen as defences used in the paranoid-schizoid position: splitting of objects into good/bad, projection, denial, blame, and disavowal, to name a few. It is a mode of being on individual and collective levels, marked by defensive strategies against anxiety (cf. Hinshelwood and Chiesa, 2001), and arguably foreclose or inhibit more constructive forms of reparative affect and actions.

What is of most interest for us are the defences mobilised against the experiences of conflict, notably guilt and loss. In relation to industrial reflexivity—the capacity to confront the damage humans have wreaked to the planet's complex ecological systems, resulting in an array of ruptures to hugely complex systems (e.g. decline of honey bees, damage to coral reefs and countless species extinctions, introduction of

destructive invasive species)—guilt has a vital and significant role. The conflict in the depressive position, as articulated by Klein, gives rise to the earliest experiences of guilt: the recognition of our conflicting feelings of love and hate for objects (in this case, the mother), and of our own destructive capacities. Klein echoes Freud's central perception of the human as possessing of great creative and destructive energies (Eros and Thanatos), but is elaborating on the ways in which the infantile experience of such energies can lead to painful psychic splitting and defences. In the depressive position, the threat that had been experienced to one's ego (that is, the survival of the ego) moves outward, toward loved objects, and the subject regrets their suffering with an intense remorse that is felt as guilt and responsibility (Hinshelwood, 1989, p. 314). Guilt, therefore, "has numerous tones to it, strung out along the spectrum form horrendous and persecuting punishment to pained remorse, mourning and reparation" (ibid.). According to Klein, initially in the move from paranoid-schizoid to depressive position, the guilt is experienced as persecutory and punitive, "taking its colour from the preceding paranoid state of persecution" (ibid.). With the accumulation of good experiences with the "whole object" (that is, one that can be both good and bad, or not idealized) and its resilience, guilt becomes modified by the impulse to put right the good object, and to contribute to its survival. At this point guilt becomes suffused with reparative wishes and contributes to the strength of constructive and creative effort derived from guilt (ibid.).

Considering possible dynamics of guilt and reparation in light of environment and the natural world, an analysis of the processes of how guilt arises and is experienced has the potential to facilitate reparative energies and activities. For example, in writing about the role of guilt in discussions of the psychological constellations developing after Hiroshima through the Cold War, Segal asks,

> What can psychoanalysis possibly offer in such a situation? I think it has something unique to contribute and that this arises from our understanding of the mental processes we observe in the clinical situation in which we work with our patients. It is here that the study of ambivalence, and the need to accept and face what has happened despite the enormous guilt involved is of prime importance. I think the only remedy we can possibly offer is to argue that it is not always necessary to swallow lies, and that circumstances do arise when we can look at the facts. These facts include the psychological motivations which underlie ambivalence, and an understanding of them can help in the struggle for glimmers of insight and sanity (1997, p. 167).

Such understandings of ambivalence and our need to accept and face "what has happened" despite enormous guilt is of equally prime important in considering how best to facilitate reparative responses to ecological degradation. This requires the ability to first acknowledge the role of mental processes such as ambivalence, guilt,

loss and mourning; unconscious processes not readily observable in standard psychological measures and marketing discourses. In *Mourning and Melancholia* (1917) Freud provides the description of the central role of ambivalence, which greatly informed Klein and Segal's ability to theorise the relations between guilt, mourning and reparation. Where we see the articulation of ambivalence towards the internal object in Freud's paper—a painful coexistence of hatred and love between the lost object and the ego—Klein develops in the view that the conflict between loving and destructive impulses is experienced from the beginning of life in relation to objects (in particular the maternal breast). The ability to experience ambivalence towards our object relations is considered a fundamental achievement, "a major step in development" (Segal, 1997, p. 159). It is essential to the integration of split objects and feelings. It also brings new feelings such as loss and guilt. As Mishan (1996) points out, it is the avoidance of these feelings of loss and guilt, and the subsequent mourning, which acts as the greatest barrier to reparative capacities. On the other hand when ambivalence can be recognised, aggression is felt as damaging an object that is also needed and desires (e.g. the mother, or our natural resources), and brings in its wake not more hatred, but a mobilisation of loving impulses and the desire to repair and restore. This is referred to as "reparation" and is seen to exist in dialectical relationship with aggression and hate; that in order to be moved to repair, we must be able to tolerate and acknowledge our destructive capacities. As Segal points out, "the recognition of ambivalence, guilt and fear of loss is extremely painful, and powerful defences can set in, manic defences, paraonid defences, all necessitating some degree of regression to more primitive forms of functioning (Segal, 1997, p. 159).

To effectively mourn, Freud postulated the necessity to experience the attachment to the lost object, so that it may run its course and become open once again to new forms of attachments. Central to this point and Segal's, as mentioned above is the capacity to *experience* and tolerate ambivalence and loss, without regressing into primitive defences (e.g. denial of attachment or loss). The inability to tolerate ambivalence "brings about a regression to the primitive mental mechanisms of the paranoid-schizoid position of denial, splitting, projection and fragmentation" (ibid.). Segal explicitly makes this point in considering the ability to move from destructive to constructive modes of being:

> It is essential to differentiate the fact of the existence of ambivalence, which is there from the beginning, from the achievement of knowing one's ambivalence, accepting it and working through it. Such working through is accomplished primarily through the recognition of guilt and loss brought about by ambivalence which leads to the capacity to mobilize restoration and reparation. This does not mean that aggression is absent; but it becomes proportional to the cause, as does the guilt attached to it (Segal, 1996, p. 159).

In light of current potentially moralising and anxiety producing discourses around environmental responsibility, energy consumption and the potentially catastrophic consequences of human wastefulness and industrial practices (notably concerning carbon and climate), we need to investigate what psychic processes, in addition to economic, material, political and social, are involved with restoration and remediation. The capacity to theorise ambivalence as a requisite in enabling reparative impulses and desires, both on the individual and social levels, produces an opening, a space for enquiry, that has not been possible previously, due to ideological discourses produced out of a fundamental splitting between action and process, or behavior and consequences. Industrial processes are out of sight and mind until a rupture takes place; it necessitates the oil spill, the nuclear reactor meltdown, the algae bloom or disease epidemic to make visible what has been with us all along, disavowed and split off. The power of acknowledging ambivalence and its relation to reparation goes to the heart of our complex relations with nature: relations that defy idealization and romance, and approach a quality closer to psychic reality. That is, a relation constituted of competing and conflicting desires and impulses, destructive and loving motivations, and what is revealed to us by acts of transgression against ecological systems. Relations that are, in fact, deeply ambivalent, but no less capable of reparation.

Expanding the field of objects: Environmental object relations

Bollas, the 'transformational object' and the natural environment

As I have asserted, psychoanalytic theory has a unique contribution to the understanding of contemporary social and political problems, in this case specific to human-environment relations and current crises in the various formations of public response. In particular, because of psychoanalyst's familiarity with the experience of conflicts between constructive and destructive attitudes, it is able to shed light on some of the destructive forces taking place socially (Segal, 1997, p. 157). While a central problem as articulated in environmental sectors concerns a lack of public responsiveness, or what appears to be apathy or inertia (e.g. the 'gap' and 'barrier' discourses as discussed in Chapter 2), psychoanalytic thought has engaged with problems of anxiety, defences, and the phenomenon of resistance for decades. To be precise, psychoanalysts and psychotherapists have had to develop strategies for working with impaired and neurotic processes that present barriers for engaging with reality more effectively and competently. Such resistance has close parallels with the manifestations of 'resistance' observed in relation to climate change and other ecological degradations, e.g. the increase in consumption and enjoyment of toxic goods

(Randall, 2006), denial of the problem, aggressive belief in technological fixes and rescue schemes, scapegoating and blame, and forms of disavowal and rationalisations. An analytic attitude, as presented, is one primarily concerned with the relation between conscious and unconscious processes, so that we may better understand what may be informing practices, and the centrality of desire, pleasure and anxiety that runs throughout human experience.

The analytic attitude also involves the willingness and capacity to approach human experience, behaviour and attitudes as more than it appears superficially; the unconscious communicates and expresses through a variety of means and modalities. For Freud, the dream was the "royal road to the unconscious", along with free association, obsession and compulsion, bodily symptoms and slips of tongue; all phenomena that manage to 'escape' rational control or thought, or forms of 'excess' that cannot be contained adequately through social intercourse and language. This dimension of the analytic attitude is concerned with what is communicated non-rationally or linguistically, via dream, object, experience, memory, sensation, and association.

In expanding the field of object relations to materiality, Bollas (1987; 1992) theorises the "transformational object" (what appears as a play on Winnicott's "transitional object") and the ways in which we gravitate and are drawn to certain objects as expressions of unconscious desires, fears, longings and memories, as well as how objects 'act' upon us. My attempts for understanding the complex object relations conveyed through the interviews, and affective investments in places, objects, things, events have been influenced by Bollas' writings on the significance of transformational objects. For Bollas, the ego is the constitutive factor in the unthought known—rather than internal phantasy (Klein) or psyche (Winnicott) determining the structure of the ego, phantasy reflects the *ego*.[26] It is the task of psychoanalysis to bring the "unthought known" into thought, through the experience and the interpretation of the transference and countertransference (Bollas, 1987, p. 9). Bollas thus brings his attention to the *ways* in which the patient represents his internal world to the analyst. This representation is not merely through narrative (speech), but also through using the analyst as a transference object:

> The patient processes us, organizes us and establishes his ideolect of usage over time. These procedures are the work of the unconscious ego, and only by confronting (occasionally facilitating) and analysing the patient's ego procedures can we bring into consciousness, and make psychically available, what has been buried as a deep structure (1987, p. 9).

[26] As Bollas writes, "At the very core of the concept of the unthought known... is Winnicott's theory of the true self and Freud's idea of the primary repressed unconscious... phantasy is the first representative of the unthought known in mental life. It is a way of thinking that which is there. In other terms, it is an expression of an idiom of the infant's being and is the first mental act in the gradual and complex development of 'internal' world" (Bollas, 1992, p. 279).

Bollas extends the conceptualisation of the patient "processing" the analyst to a theory of object relations that extends to and encompasses both human relations and what makes up our lived experiences: objects, memories, events, places. "Over a lifetime we objectify, known and 'relate to' many different states in our being. Emotional and psychological realities bring with them self-states which become part of our history" (ibid.). For Bollas such self states become invested and are informed by specific experiences, objects and events, and in this sense his approach to the material and external world is phenomenological and non-dualist. In contrast to the tendency in psychoanalysis to render all phenomena in terms of intra, intro or interpersonal relations, Bollas brings the same sensitivity to unconscious processes to the ways we engage with and interact with our world. The significance of the "unthought unknown" is how it *becomes thought*: "In some respects in the same manner that it partly developed: establishment through object relations. It is only through the subject's use and experience of the other that mental representations of that experience can carry and therefore represent the idiom of a person's unthought known" (Bollas, 1987, p. 280).[27] The theory of the 'transformational object' is based on the premise that in adulthood, we seek out objects—relationships, things—that offer the potential to alter our internal mood as our mother once could. It is the endless quest for a reconnection, the ability to re-experience "an uncanny fusion with the object, an event that re-evokes an ego state that prevailed during early psychic life" (Bollas, 1987, p. 16). He continues,

> However, such occasions, meaningful as they might be, are less noteworthy as transformational accomplishments than they are for their uncanny quality, the sense of being reminded of something never cognitively apprehended but existentially known, the memory of the ontogenetic process rather than thought or phantasies that occur once the self is established (ibid.).

To seek the transformational object in adult life is to recollect an early object experience, to remember not cognitively but existentially—through intense affective experience—a relationship identified with cumulative transformational experiences of the self. The object itself is being identified with specific states of being, with affective relations. Bollas is thus conveying the often unconscious and mysterious (or not so mysterious) attractions and longings expressed for certain places, things, events, as transformational objects. For Bollas the aesthetic experience exemplifies this uncanny quality of feeling fused, in communion with something uncanny, and yet almost magical, as if the music or art has 'chosen' us. This experience of feeling chosen, or visited upon carries powerful resonances from early life, in which we phantasized we could

[27] As Bollas points out, brings us to transference and countertransference, the more operationally relational aspects of psychoanalytic practice (1987).

'magic' our mother into being for our needs. "Transformational-object-seeking is an endless memorial search for something in the future that resides in the past," Bollas writes. "I believe that if we investigate many types of object relating we will discover that the subject is seeking the transformational object and aspiring to be matched in symbiotic harmony within an aesthetic frame that promises to metamorphose the self" (Bollas, 1987, p. 40).

Bollas likens this investment of our world with affective relations and yearnings to dream life, and brings a level of interpretation similar to Freud's dream interpretation technique: "As we constantly endow objects with psychic meaning, we therefore walk amidst our own significance, and, sometimes long after we have invested a thing, we encounter it again, releasing its meaning, although, as I shall maintain, such signifieds do not often reach consciousness" (Bollas 1992, p. 12). Similar to dreams, how we endow things with our psychic states is not unconscious, but can become clearer though the clues these relations offer. Bollas refers to how certain objects can perform as "psychic keys," opening doors to unconsciously intense, and rich experiences, and can serve as articulations or elaborations of aspects of the self, similar to how the imagery or language of a dream or a movement may do. Such objects and experiences are thus "keys to the releasing of our idiom", momentarily expressing discrete urges, ideas, memories and feelings (Bollas, 1992, p. 17). We act on these objects as much as they act upon us; a perspective of the non-human (particularly the natural) object world, thoroughly informed by the mutuality and reciprocity so embraced by the relational schools of thought (e.g. Layton, 2008; Benjamin, 2004). It is also a view of the human-object relational field expressed so vividly in Searles's theoretical analysis of psychotic patients and their ability to blur or merge with inanimate objects (1960).

For the purposes of this study, Bollas' theory of the transformation object, specifically the ways in which unconscious desires may be expressed in our attractions and engagement with specific objects, enables a reading of the layered and complex relationships people have with their environments and places, that goes beyond superficial levels of measuring or gauging attitudes or valuation. It enables a psychoanalytically informed study of how people respond and interpret their own environments and threatened or damaged ecosystems, particularly in a region as industrially shaped and informed as Green Bay, and where water constitutes part of the lived experience of the place. We begin to see how water may have a particular resonance or meaning for an individual, relating to childhood experiences, a family member or a specific outing that may have aroused anxieties or fears. We begin to develop a far richer and more nuanced engagement with the object relations as conveyed in the interviews, that goes beyond simplistic measurement, and even beyond conscious storytelling. For example, when Donald shows me his battered copy of a children's book from 1941 called *Paddle-to-the-Sea*, we can enquire what this object

may mean for Donald; why he has held on to it since 1941, given it to his grandson and even asked for its return, and had the pages photographed and scanned. I observe how he handles the book, thumbs through the pages, and enquire which images or parts of the story seem significant for him. What the book may represent or signify to me, as researcher and interviewer, may begin to take on different levels of meaning or affective investment. Who gave this book to Donald, what resonates for him in the story, the pictures? The book as a transformational object, as articulated by Bollas, suggests what is being sought in the contact with the object: affective associations, and what is being expressed or elaborated through this object? How does it help me better understand how Donald relates to the river behind his home, the paper mill on the horizon, the same place that caused great injury to his father, resulting in a loss of employment and subsequent precarity. Though the lens offered by Bollas, and the psychoanalysts cited, how the materials are 'made sense of' can be seen in a more holistic *gestalt*, rather than a fragmentation of beliefs, values and 'attitudes' so favoured in contemporary psychological research. What is missed are the ways memories, experiences and associations are infused with affect, and how this may inform the ways local ecological degradation is responded to.

Social defences against anxiety: the social unconscious and industrialisation

I do not explicitly undertake a social analysis of unconscious processes in the culture and site of Green Bay where I conducted my fieldwork (due to constraints on time and scope). However, my perceptions of the place and my experience during fieldwork were informed (implicitly and to some degree consciously) by theories of social defences against anxiety, formulated primarily by Menzies Lyth (1958; 1990), and subsequently expanded and developed by colleagues in the Tavistock Institute (cf. Trist and Murray, 1990; Hinshelwood and Skogstad, 2000). I was sensitive to how specific discourses and 'myths' circulated both in the context of interviews and throughout informal conversations, environmental meetings, and my everyday experiences during the two months in Green Bay, *as performing specific functions and constituting a certain stance or configuration in terms of how local chronic pollution was related with and negotiated.*[28] The work by Menzies Lyth and colleagues at the Tavistock Institute (e.g. Trist and Murray, 1990; Jaques, 1955) has relevance for how environmentally related attitudes and beliefs are studied and analysed in behavioural and cognitive-based psychological studies, as representations of "truths" or facets of psychic reality,

[28] The emphasis on the socially constituted and specific modes of relating with nature in Green Bay is made in Greg Summer's study of the Fox River Valley, in *Consuming Nature* (2006), although from a cultural geographical orientation and without recognition of psychoanalytic perspectives; the point being similar arguments are made in cultural geography with regards to social myths surrounding how nature is engaged, exploited and protected, although using a very different theoretical paradigm and framework; this overlap is a topic deserving of future consideration and discussion.

in its positing the way in which unconscious processes circulate throughout individual and cultural "psyche"—if one can call it that—and advocating for an approach that can appreciate how social and cultural contexts contribute to how aspects of reality are engaged, confronted, denial, and so on.[29] For Trist and Menzies Lyth, "Attitudes and sets of beliefs are cultivated partly as rationalisations for the defensive techniques and the schismatic projections" (Hinshelwood and Skogtad, 2000, p. 9). That is, the expression of particular attitudes and beliefs must be viewed in the context of cultural, social dynamics, ideological and material conditions. They cannot be taken at face value. The concept of culture in this case bridges the psyche and the social, and "refers to the structural and instrumental aspects of social life as well as reaching down to 'emotional phenomena at the deeper levels of the personality'" (Trist, 1990, p. 540). As a psychosocial project, it is presumed that while individuals possess their own unique and specific objectives, conscious and unconscious, for taking part in cultural formations, they are also participating as social and cultural beings.

A psychoanalytically informed view of data directs attention to processes that are unconscious, the unspoken shared attitudes, the unacknowledged anxieties and conflicts, as well as the quality of the atmosphere and its unconscious aspects (Hinshelwood and Skogstad, 2005, p. 9). The social defence system as articulated by Trist—that is, a set of social practices that are defensive in nature—is thus a psychosocial process, cultural attitudes that "reach down to the depths of the individual personalities" (ibid.). This is illustrated beautifully in Menzies Lyth's study of nurses in a stressed NHS hospital ward, as her interviews with individuals reveal a complex configuration of practices that have a specific logic and function, only visible to the researcher after a period of time and consideration of both practice and affective dimensions of the workplace.[30] Unconscious defences generate implicit sets of attitudes, which form a palpable aspect of culture, and it is these aspects of culture that can be noticed and observed. Despite being unconscious, such aspects are quite dominant, and remain influential, because they are not recognized and accounted for consciously. This is demonstrated vividly in the study of participants in Green Bay, and though my encounters with the place. As with the theory of transference and countertransference, the studies of social anxieties (as place-based, contextual studies) assert the need to notice one's own responses, subjective experiences and sensations experienced in particular places. By focusing on the atmosphere, the

[29] In a similar spirit, Lynne Layton also illustrates the way culture enters the consulting room in her analysis of gender, power and identities; see Layton, 1998. The difference being the research carried out by Menzies Lyth, Hinshelwood et al is 'in the field' and outside of the consulting room. Both however demonstrate the ways in which the psyche and social domains are porous and mutually constitutive in myriad and complex ways.

[30] Cf. Menzies Lyth's (1959) "The functioning of social systems as a defence against anxiety" as well as *Containing Anxiety in Institutions* (1988) and *The Dynamics of the Social* (1989).

beliefs and the attitudes that make up the culture (in Trist et al.'s case, of the organisation), Trist's view of a bridge between the organisation as a whole and the internal 'culture' of the individual is preserved.

The three ecologies: environment, social relations and human subjectivity

As psychosocial research tends to lack extra-human dimensions (e.g. place-based dimensions or ecological considerations) it is important to incorporate sensitivity to ecological and socio-cultural contexts. Rather than focus exclusively on the content of in-depth interviews, I have *endeavoured* to take account of the place as having its particular circulations of stories, mythologies, legacies and identities. Thus when participants tell me what a wonderful place Green Bay is to raise a family, or the fact that industry has provided such resources for the community, I consider the meaning and function of such tropes in terms of community identity, historical mythologies, and specific meanings in individual biographical lives. The constellations produced are therefore place-based, affective, social and cultural. This theoretical consideration has affinities with the Tavistock social scientists who examined cultural 'myths' as both social and psychological, as well as psychoanalytically informed cultural theories, e.g. Guattari's political philosophy of the 'three ecologies'—the (ecological, biotic) environment, the social, and subjectivity—that is concerned "with visible relations of force... but also take into account molecular domains of sensibility, intelligence and desire" (ibid., p. 28). This is an approach that refuses to compartmentalise and parse out these relations, which are in fact mutually shaping one another dynamically, although within clear asymmetrical power relations (e.g. the species of frogs under threat from human activity are arguably with less power than, say, those capable of either ruining their habitat or poisoning the waters in which they live; asymmetrical relations do not exclude the fact they are interacting in co-productive ways).

In essence what Guattari argues for is the need for environmental reparation and inventive efforts, in the face of current threats, to both concentrate on both the need to de-centre social struggles and ways of coming to one's own psyche in the context of ecological degradation and accelerated techno-scientific and industrial growth, driving ecological degradation (ibid., p. 52).[31] That is, environmental ecological crises require a radical rethinking of social relations as well as domains of desire, phantasy, anxiety: "the whole of subjectivity" (ibid., p. 52). Guattari's three ecologies is concerned with an "ethico-political articulation" between these three ecological registers of the environment, social relations and human subjectivity. Neither of these domains can be successfully parsed and treated separately; and when they are, we

[31] This emphasis on invention resonates with Winnicott's focus on the role of creativity, as discussed in Chapter 9.

are merely reinstating and propagating similar mindsets that can give rise to chronic fragmentation of causes and effects, resulting in the forms of severe disruptions to ecological systems we face at present.[32] Guattari's argument, expressed in the paper *The three ecologies (Les trios écologies)* (1989) and published as a monograph (2000), are in sympathy with psychoanalytic researchers who have yet to turn their attention to ecological crises (e.g. the collection in Clarke, Hahn and Hoggett, 2008), but who fully recognise the complex interpolations of culture, subjectivity, politics and emotion or affect—as well as the writers discussed in the previous chapter who seemed to have recognised this but from the vantage point of clinicians and therefore with an emphasis on the psychic as opposed to the social and political (e.g. Searles, 1960; Searles, 1972). Guattari seeks to acknowledge the paradox we find ourselves in on these various levels:

> Wherever we turn, there is the same nagging paradox: on the one hand, the continuous development of new techno-scientific means to potentially resolve the dominant ecological issues and reinstate socially useful activities on the surface of the planet, and, on the other hand, the inability of organized social forces and constituted subjective formations to take hold of these resources in order to make them work (2000, p. 31).

He does not filter these observations through the discourse of the 'disconnect' or the 'gap', because to do so would be to ignore the mutuality and systemic nature of these processes (e.g. Bateson, 1972; Trist and Murray, 1990). Thus, *paradox* is a term for this apparent gridlock between awareness, recognition, and action. Guatarri is a systemic, relational thinker who seems incapable of perceiving social ills and forces (unemployment, poverty, depression and malaise) as separate from biotic and ecological declines (loss of habitat, clean water and air, etc.) and late capitalist subjectivities which give rise to specific consumptive practices based in a deep dissociation between ourselves and our biotic contexts. Industrialisation itself is form of dissociation, a system perpetuating difference, separation and phantasies of omnipotence (e.g. Searles, 1960; Kovel, 2007).

Bringing it all together

An analytic attitude that informs this project, as outlined above, privileges an emphasis on the relations between conscious and unconscious processes, making space for the presence and influence of psychic negotiations with conflict, distress,

[32] As Latour writes of the ozone hole, "[It's] too social and narrated to be truly natural; the strategy of industrial firms and heads of state is too full of chemical reactions to be reduced to power and interest; the discourse of the ecosphere is too real and too social to boil down to meaning effects. Is it our fault if the networks are simultaneously real, like nature, narrated, like discourse, and collective, like society?" (1993, p. 6).

contradiction and ambivalence. Further, the analytic attitude I employ in this project recognises the integral phenomenon of loss, mourning and grief in human experience, and seeks to insert such sensitivities into how we understand the (often) painful confrontations with ecological issues. It is an attitude, or perhaps more accurately, an underpinning epistemology and ontology, that assumes the constitution of human subjectivity as conflicted, anxious and ambivalent, but also creative, reparative and capable of great concern. Seen in this light, it is possible to rethink conceptions of apathy, not as a clear lack of concern, but rather as complicated expressions of difficult and conflicting affective states. As this project argues, if we can approach apathy through this perspective, we may start to see how in fact messages and vehicles for transmitting environmental issues may in fact do more harm than good. For if we appreciate and are sensitized to the myriad ways we may respond to distress, anxiety and potentially frightening information, such as the extreme fragility of the Great Lakes, or the prospect of eating fish contaminated with PCBs—depending on our respective social and biographical contexts—we may think twice before alarming the public into swift action. Further, messages of moralising and admonishment of poor response or action may also reify self-states or self-concepts of an 'apathetic subject' which do not necessarily help mobilise reparative energies. Taking our cue from those on the clinical frontlines, apathy may well be a form of defence against the sensation of pain or distress relating to helplessness or vulnerability.

The concept of apathy further becomes complicated when considering how we relate with the 'objects' in our world, both human and non-human objects, and take a more fully encompassing object-relations approach to these issues. In light of Bollas' elaborations on objects as 'psychic keys', the world becomes more interactive and fluid in terms of effects—objects touch us and we touch them. Specifically for this project, participants' relationships with specific environmental objects—the Fox River, a beach, old photographs—provide potential windows into a world of complex affective dimensions that defy crude explanations of apathy or absence of concern. We can appreciate how certain objects are invested with meanings, memories, associations, and self-states (e.g. Bollas' psychic keys), *as well as* considerations of the social, historical and cultural meanings invested in certain objects, as articulated in cultural geography and critical environmental studies (e.g. Cronon, 1995; Summers, 2006; Soper, 1995; Bate, 2000; Glacken, 1992) and environmental cultural studies (Berland and Slack, 1994; Slack, 2006; Potter, 2008). I try to come to terms with how complex relations to the environmental objects are constituted, drawing on work from British object relations theorists (including relational) in the interview material. I engage the usage of 'objects' in a similar sense as Hoggett:

> I use the term 'object' in what I believe is its main psychoanalytic sense, as 'the idea' one has of something—which may be animate or inanimate, internal or external—to which one is emotionally connected. Thus 'the object' is essentially 'the idea' one forms about one's father, garden, car or television, one's body or a part of one's body, a particular group (such as Jews); indeed, any such things which have acquired specific conscious or unconscious personal meaning (1992, p. 38).

Hoggett clarifies the affective dimensions ("emotional cathexis") of 'the idea' may vary from positive, negative, or an absence or 'flatness' of affect. Significantly, where there may be a flatness or what is referred to as apathy, may "mask a relationship which is dangerously charged" (ibid.). Here we begin to appreciate what the 'psychoanalytic object' may bring to bear in how we understand the ways in which environmental subjectivities are constituted, and in particular relations which may appear as paradoxical, contradictory or plain 'flat' or dead. In other words, the objects constituting our world are made up of conscious and unconscious material, and how we engage and relate with them will be bound up with myriad phantasies, associations, dreams and desires. It is this dimension of objects I wish to bring to the fore in this study—the interplay of the psychical and the physical. Not a negation of the empirical facts of objects, a point particularly relevant when speaking of environmental or ecological issues or entities which have their own intentionality and empirical facticity—but to surface the capacity for largely unconscious, yet no less powerful, forces informing how we relate with these objects.[33] Thus how I engage with 'objects' in the analysis that follows is both the psychoanalytic object, imbued with meanings, conscious and otherwise, and the ecological, as objects with their own integrity, historical contexts and features (Leopold, 1949).[34] As I analyse the objects as they arise in the interview material, my perceptions are informed by the theoretical considerations outlined above, and in so doing I aim to bring a more psychoanalytic element to environmental scholarship.

It is important to signal a strong relational orientation I bring to the research, stemming from the theoretical work in relational psychoanalysis, phenomenological

[33] In the term 'surface' I am aware of invoking the ubiquitous spatial metaphor, of the notion of bringing 'to the surface' from the 'depths', certain psychic treasures and found objects from the murk, thanks to the skill and insight of the psychoanalytic scholar. In this sense dream, wish, phantasy, memory, and free association can take a valorised (and precious) place in relation to mundane aspects of everyday practice and conscious life. I have tried to resist this spatial constituting of the psychosocial as if to suggest the project or interviews are attempts to mine or 'dive down' into some depths; rather I strive to see these elements of conscious and unconscious qualities and aspects as coexisting and part of a constellation which may have depth, or dimension, or not.

[34] 'Integrity' refers here to the well-known phrase by conservationist Aldo Leopold, which has become a touchstone for the American environmental movement ethos: "A thing is right when it tends to preserve the integrity, stability and beauty of the biotic community. It is wrong when it tends otherwise" (1949, p. 240).

approaches and developments in psychosocial research (Stopford, 2006; Clarke, Hahn and Hoggett, 2008). A relational and dialogic orientation is one that presumes all participating 'objects' are also 'subjects' that inform and shape the interaction; Cartwright (2004) frames the research interview as a 'hermeneutic circle' in which interpretation and participation feed and inform one another, so the interviewers' involvement is viewed as constituting the data. A relational and dialogic orientation reflects a post-structural influence on the psychoanalytic and therapeutic encounter as co-constituted and co-produced, (rather than presuming a neutral or all-knowing analyst) and has extended into psychosocial research approaches (Hollway, 2008). As I discuss in the following chapter, a dialogic approach specifically embraces active participation in the interview, and encourages the role of the interviewer as an 'active' investigator who can ask questions, clarifications and even present preliminary interpretations as the interviews progress (Cartwright, 2004). All of this constitutes the interview data, in making the interviewer's role explicit and viewing responses to interventions, interpretations or queries as highly productive. As Benjamin has written, "where objects were, subjects must be" (1990, p. 34, cited by Layton, 2008). This extends to how I approach the research design and task, (discussed in the following chapter) and formulate interpretations and insights into how objects touch and are touched by us. Echoing Benjamin, in discussing the way in which welfare practice situates participants as objects to be 'acted upon', Hoggett notes that in dialogue, "we are subjects seeking [both] understanding and to be understood rather than objects seeking to act upon or to be acted upon" (2007, p. 76). While the research context presents its own set of asymmetrical relations, I certainly felt the process was co-produced and at times, a mutual groping towards some sort of understanding or articulation of sensations or affects difficult to articulate, or in many cases, the basic act of speaking aloud to another, which had its own transformational aspects.

The field of enquiry concerning social defences, as illustrated by Menzies Lyth and colleagues (e.g. Menzies Lyth, 1988; Menzies Lyth, 1989; Hinshelwood and Skogstad, 2000; Trist and Murray, 1990; Trist and Murray, 1993), and developed largely through the Tavistock Institute, widen the field considerably when exploring issues of psychosocial relevance. Specifically, this work widens the field through going *out into the field*, thereby (perhaps inadvertently) making it a theoretical and methodological approach suitable for environmental scholarship. I have included reference to studies of social defence, even if in brief, because I feel this is an important dimension of the topic of public apathy and broader issues of environmental engagement; it helps us think more critically about the ways in which we construct particular practices, socially, institutionally, politically and personally, in the service of defence against certain anxieties, losses and apprehensions. Perhaps this is nowhere more relevant at this particular time than in relation to how we treat and respond to our natural world,

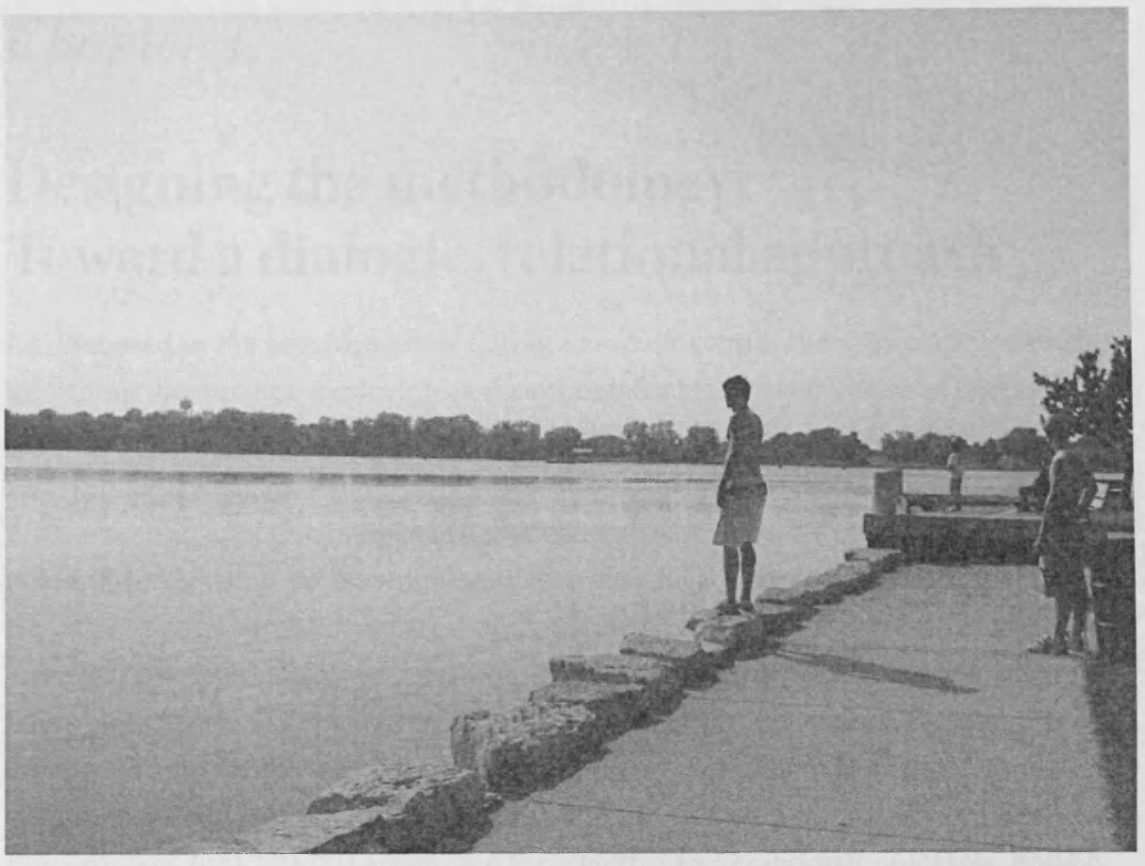
and the ecological limits in which humans must live but seem to refuse to acknowledge. The topic of social defences in relation to environmental degradation, industrial practices, and contamination has been addressed in part through the work of Michael Edelstein, whose research into 'toxic communities'—communities going through forms of contamination and toxicity—helps to highlight the ways individuals, families, and communities work together to manage and cope with the trauma, pain, and range of dilemmas occasioned by such events, although not using a psychoanalytically informed lens (see Edelstein, Tysiachniouk, Smirnova, 2007; Edelstein, 1988). Glimmers of this perspective are in Norgaard's (2006) ethnographic study (discussed in the previous chapter), in her identification of defensive mechanisms regarding climate change. There remains great potential for extending research into social defences into the terrain of environmental sectors, particularly institutions engaging with policy, protection, conservation and restoration, in terms of how anxieties are managed and the ways the institutional culture is constituted to 'contain' or 'defend' against the stresses that may arise (Hinshelwood and Skogstad, 2000, p. 14).[35]

The 'three ecological registers' expressed by Guattari (1989; 2000) capture a spirit that I hope informs this project. This is the recognition of the interrelations of the social, ecological and psychic spheres; a thoroughly systemic and relational theoretical orientation that is demanded of us by chronic ecological degradation. Guattari is able to recognise the existential dimensions of contemporary ecological issues, and to respectfully acknowledge the psychic impact of the social and economic precarity that accompanies ecological systemic stresses. Without placing overemphasis on the psychic dimensions, he inserts a concern for subjectivity in a political and economic analysis that is rare and required. In this sense, the 'three ecologies' reflect a capacity for 'holding' or 'containing' the three seemingly disparate but mutually dependent facets of environmental destruction. As opposed to psychoanalytic theorists who tend to place the psychic at the centre, with all else occupying 'the wings' so to speak, and social theorists who appear almost allergic to a consideration of subjectivity, psychic and affective dimensions of environmental issues, the mood reflected by the three ecologies is at once political, playful, passionate, exuberant and despairing. It resists the nihilism of cultural studies, insisting on cultural productivity as *the* defining lens, as well as the positivism of environmental sciences which tend to ignore (or

[35] One indication of this beginning to change is signalled by a forthcoming paper by Peliwe Pelisa Mnguni (2010), "Anxiety and Defense in Sustainability". In Mnguni's paper, social defense theory is used to explore the nature of anxiety and defence in sustainability initiatives. Taking seriously the suggestion that people use social institutions for both creative and defensive purposes, she examines how the organisational processes of a consortium case study seemed to be mobilised to cope with anxiety.

defend, depending on how you look at it) the ways we construct, frame, shape, and inform nature and our relations with it.

In the following chapter, I present how these theoretical inspirations have informed the research questions, design and conduct of the research project. I will discuss the process through which I developed a methodology appropriate for my research commitments, questions and theoretical allegiances, as well as my desire to produce a project that could potentially inform the practice of environmental communications. In undertaking a psychosocial environmental research study, informed by psychoanalytic thought and a background in environmental cultural studies—with attending sensitivities to culture, history, social forces and subjectivity—I endeavoured to carve out a way of doing research that could honour all three ecological registers of the social, the ecological and the psychic. These questions concern the myth of apathy: what the concept of apathy tells us about how environmental agency is constructed and conceptualised, and the implications for a viable environmental communications practice.



Voyager Park, Fox River, July 2007, R. Lertzman

I have strong feelings, I don't think it, it goes anywhere, I mean I just, I live with it. It's ah, it's tolerable feelings, because it's more tolerable than the other way. I don't know, I think a lot of people might do that, that would be, "yeah I don't like it but I'm not going to do anything about it because, cos I just don't feel like it". Or something like that, they might get angry about but, but yeah, I don't see it manifesting itself into anything strong. Other than just, I'll do my, what I can in my, and what I can do is what I can do, you know what I mean. And what I can't do I can't. Um, doesn't stop me from having opinions. I mean it's, it's ah, the way to get things done is to be obsessive about it, I believe in that, so the people in the organizations trying to, to get the things done for the environment have to be that way, and I don't want to become that. That's why I don't think the feelings go anywhere. And I don't think not having that feeling satisfied, um, has any detriment to me. Now if I'm wrong then okay, there's something underlying that I'm not recognizing and [laughing] I should focus on that and give it a try.

—Howard, Interview 3

Chapter 4

Designing the methodology: Toward a dialogic, relational approach

As discussed in the previous chapter, there are four central theoretical commitments informing this project: exploring environmental subjectivity in terms of unconscious processes and psychic defences; attending to object relations in environmental research as psychic and material objects; acknowledging social defences as practices, discourses and affective images as constituting particular environmental subjectivities; and recognising intimate interrelations and flows between ecological, social and the subjective or psychic 'registers' or domains. At the heart of these concerns are the following research questions regarding environmental subjectivity: How might specific object relations inform responses to chronic environmental degradation? What are the reasons people may not take "action" in the face of environmental issues, even those they may care deeply about? What might an environmental communications strategy look like if it accounted for affective and emotional processes, notably concerning anxiety and loss? Or perhaps more accurately, what is an environmental communication strategy that does not *presume* an apathetic subject position (e.g. a *lack* of concern, care or creative response) when no apparent action or leadership is evident?

In this chapter I present how I translated these concerns and questions into the methodology for conducting the research. Theoretical assumptions and commitment inform each aspect of the study: the questions, methodology, data collection, and analysis. Thus I discuss *'what took place'*, detailing how the data collection was conducted, as well as *'how it came to take place'*, to make the development of the method as transparent as possible. The chapter is organised as follows; first, I discuss the strengths and limitations of two related psychosocial qualitative methodologies—Biographical Narrative Interpretive Method (BNIM) and Free-Associative Narrative Interviewing (FANI) in relation to the epistemic and theoretical concerns of the project. In moving towards more explicitly psychoanalytically informed research methodologies, I discuss Stopford's (2006) relational analytic methodology and the Psychoanalytic Research Interview (PRI) (Cartwright, 2004; Cartwright, 2002) as strongly informing the formulation of what I came to refer to as the *Dialogic, Relational Interview*. Finally, I present how I designed and conducted the data collection and analysis as follows: the approach to interviewing; participants, selection, ethics, online survey; field site and environmental contexts. This chapter concludes

Part I of the thesis; following this chapter is a discussion of how I approached the data analysis as a preface to **Part II**.

Contexts

Every aspect of the research methodology flowed out of the research questions, the epistemic and ontological assumptions (as outlined in the previous two chapters) and my desire to formulate an environmental psychosocial study. In brief, the research methodology constituted of in-depth, open-ended interviews with ten participants in Green Bay; each participant was interviewed *three* times, each session lasting approximately one hour, and digitally recorded. Participants were selected based on responses to an online survey disseminated through a local market research firm in Green Bay. The interviews were unstructured and intentionally free associative, becoming progressively focused during the second and third interviews as I presented questions, clarifications, feedback and occasional interpretations (a method I refer to as a *Dialogic, Relational Interview*, an elaboration of Cartwright's (2004) Psychoanalytic Research Interview, discussed below). The number of interviews (three) and how they were conducted were designed deliberately according to principles of a psychoanalytic, psychosocial and environmental investigation. The interviews followed the ethical code of conduct as dictated by the University and the department; participants signed consent forms (see Appendix A). Confidentiality was assured, and names have been changed. During the final interview, I presented an advert from the recent *Healing our Waters* campaign ('Girl on the Beach', 2007) before closing. Final interviews were concluded with a debriefing session during which participants could ask any questions about the study, the process or whatever came to mind. Each participant was given the option to receive copies of the transcripts and/or the thesis; interviews took place in participants' homes with the exception of one who wished to meet in her office. The data analysis was conducted using principles from qualitative social science research, psychoanalytic work and psychosocial studies, in addition to environmental contextual factors. Field notes were incorporated and countertransference was viewed as part of the research methodology.

Context has been increasingly recognised as salient for psychosocial and psychoanalytically oriented work in clinical and research settings, as relevant for making accurate interpretations (Cartwright, 2004; Schafer, 1980; Spence, 1982). In relation to this study, "context refers broadly to the host of factors, internal and external, that come to bear on the way an individual communications and how the communication is understood" (Cartwright, 2004, p. 220). I begin then with a brief discussion of my interest in anxiety and how this shifted through the course of developing the methodology and my research interviews. As an environmentally focused study context has additional importance; I have striven to maintain sensitivity to ecological contexts,

often missed out in psychosocial research. This is illustrated foremost in decision to conduct a place-based, regional study situated in Green Bay, the selection of Green Bay as the field site due to its specific attributes, conditions and industrial history, and the decision to spend a weeklong initial 'scouting' visit and two months *in situ*, immersed in the place. I endeavoured to learn as much as I could about the region's ecological, social, political and cultural contexts, and met with local environmental professionals, activists, historians and people I would randomly meet in the coffee-house or through my host. Walking the streets, running on the Fox River Trail (see Figure 14) with the paper mills behind me, experiencing the celebrated American holidays of Halloween, Thanksgiving, the lead-up to Christmas, and each drive to and from participant's homes—sometimes through heavy snow and sleet—informed my impressions of the material.



Figure 14: Running the "Health Trail", Fox River Trail, Green Bay, November 2007, J. Galt

My initial enquiry into psychosocial dimensions of environmental issues stemmed from experiences with anxiety and distress. I have often reflected about my own ways of negotiating my concerns and lack of 'action' in recognisable forms of activism and protest, and what informed the choices I made.[36] These personal experiences and reflections inform my desire for researching affective, unconscious processes in relation to environmental issues, as forms of social and cultural trauma (Lifton, 1979). I was most interested in exploring the more painful and perhaps less clear or

[36] As Paul Hoggett has noted, there is 'good agency' and 'bad agency: "... radical social policy has only been able to conceive of human agency in terms of its positive and optimistic dimensions... other forms of agency that are destructive towards others and ultimately towards self cannot find a comfortable place in radical social policy" (2008, p. 69). My particular expressions of agency in relation to environmental issues has certainly spanned the spectrum, as I have wrestled with how to come to terms with both the magnitude and related issues of scope and personal efficacy.

conscious expressions of the dilemmas of negotiating chronic ecological issues, some of which touch our lives in profoundly direct ways (as reflected in one participant's story of contaminated drinking water, or another who contracted Hepatitis probably from swimming in the Fox River). I was aware the issues I was most concerned with would not be readily available through more 'frontal' forms of research, and I was in sympathy with the concept of the 'defended subject', a concept coined by Hollway and Jefferson (2000) to help bring psychoanalytic concepts of unconscious defence mechanisms into research context (e.g. the 'subject' is 'defended' and therefore the story told is not necessarily straight-forward or 'reliable'). I also knew that issues of anxiety, loss, or other potential psychic complications which may constitute environmental subjectivities and forms of agency were potentially elusive and, if 'defended', then potentially out of view. As an environmental scholar, I was also cautious about making certain claims regarding environmental subjectivity or agency, whilst being mindful of the enormously relevant and complex material, social, economic, cultural and political contexts involved with contemporary environmental degradation.

The task was to design a research methodology that could effectively encompass and manage these various constraints and concerns; the capacity to potentially explore unconscious processes and dynamics, attend to (environmental) object relations and contexts, provide space and depth required to meet the needs of a psychosocial investigation. I needed the methodology to allow for the exploration of such processes, within logistical constraints of budget, time and labour. There were further constraints via my Research Fellowship with Biodiversity Project: the topic needed to relate to the Great Lakes. The mandate of a particular environmental region (as opposed to issue area, e.g. climate change or a topic such as environmental media, e.g. the *Planet Earth* series), even one as vast as the Great Lakes, spanning six states and two countries, necessarily informed how I approached the interrelated 'registers' of ecology, sociality and subjectivity, rendering the study not only psychosocial, but *place-based,* a hitherto uncharted territory for the conduct of psychoanalytic psychosocial qualitative research.

Negotiating these tensions between exploring unconscious processes and the mandates of conducting reliable, empirical qualitative research is what constitutes the methodological design. In the following section I discuss my critical engagement with contemporary psychosocial research methodologies. I will then discuss the specifics of my research methodologies: the selection and criteria for the field site, the design and use of an online survey, the selection of participants ('sample'), the ethical consent form (and its function in the context of the interviews), and preparation for and conducting the interviews. As an environmentally contextual project I will also speak to the way in which the place and the site-specific context was incorporated into the

research design as a vital dimension of an environmentally sensitive psychosocial research project.

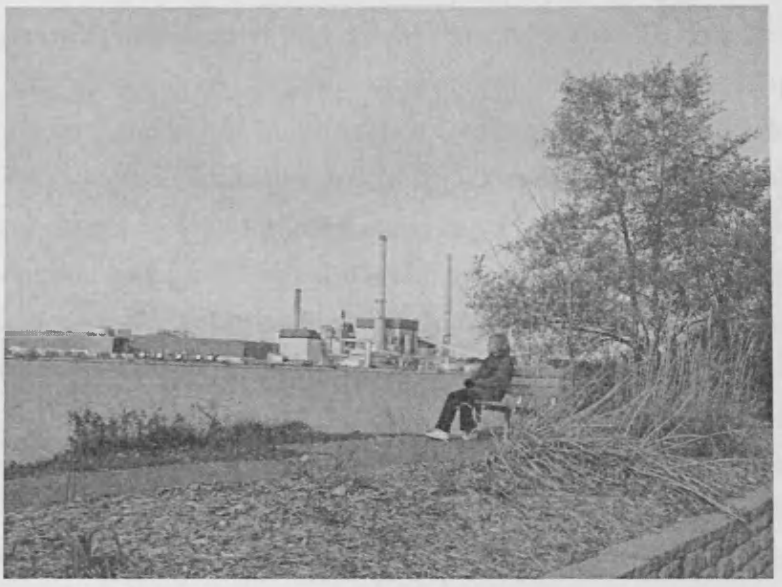


Figure 15: J. Galt on Fox River Trail, October 2007, R. Lertzman

Finding my way: Psychosocial approaches to research

As discussed in Chapter 3, the epistemic and ontological assumptions underpinning this research are based on conceptions of subjectivity as dynamic, irrational, inconsistent, anxious and both social and psychic; additionally the significance of object relations for contextualising subjectivity and practices. These assumptions extend to the role of the researcher as partial, involved and subjective, and engages psychoanalytic concerns with unconscious *relational processes* that can take place between participants and researchers, such as countertransference, to help make sense of the researcher's own involvement with the material and as co-producer of data generated through interviews (cf. Stopford, 2004). Psychic and social processes are seen as existing in complex dialectical relations that disrupt the notion of an interior, private 'interior' and the outer, social and public sphere. As Walkerdine et al. write, "To get beyond conscious, rational explanations to a greater understanding of the influences and behaviour of our subjects, both the psychic and the social processes of how they have come about need to be investigated" (2001, p. 87). In contrast to the tendency in social sciences to presume a rational subject who is in control of their actions and behaviours, or at least conscious of them, and thus whose values, attitudes and opinions can be measured and presented as 'fact', I was interested in "a subject whose actions, behaviours and biographies are not solely determined by conscious will, agency or intent (or indeed the lack of these things)" (Walkerdine et al., 2001, p. 84)

It follows that the methods employed for exploring perceptions and relations with ecological degradation and issues pertaining to industry would not rely on self-reporting such as polls, surveys and focus groups (e.g. see Baumieister et al., 1996 for discussion of self-reports and defence mechanisms). To counter prevailing approaches to the study of environmental communications and engagement as focusing on attitudes and behaviour, I needed to design into the methodology elements afforded through a qualitative psychosocial study: depth (e.g. smaller sample and higher levels of contact), immersive experience (*in situ* and familiar with local ecological discourses and histories), and an emphasis on providing 'space' and 'context' for as much narrative scope as possible. In other words, what was needed was a carefully considered contextualisation within which to approach and explore the complexities and nuances of how local and global ecological issues were made sense of, experienced and narrated. An orientation towards psychoanalytic conceptions of subjectivity—the centrality of unconscious processes and in particular the primary of defence mechanisms in how unpleasant and painful material is negotiated both to oneself and socially (via discourse)—requires an interviewing methodology to account for what Hollway and Jefferson refer to as "the defended subject" (2000), in addition to issues of relationality, co-production of meanings in the interview context, and the significance of researcher subjectivity, i.e. countertransference.

Thus one of the central methodological issues concerns "the transparent self problem" (Hollway and Jefferson, 2000); that we cannot assume people are 'telling it like it is' nor that we know what makes us tick and can thus self-report in the context of an interview, poll or survey. Further, integration of defence mechanisms into research is predicated on the theory that anxiety precipitates defences against the threats it poses to the self and these operate at a largely unconscious level (Hollway and Jefferson, 2000). The consideration of how to conduct research into subjectivities informed by psychoanalytic (e.g. unconscious, irrational and informed by prior object-relations and traumas) and post-structuralist thought (e.g. the self as multiple, contextual, social and historically contingent) has been underway in recent years, and I turned to several studies as resources: Walkerdine, Lucey and Melody's (2001) study which used innovative methodological practices to "work with emotions" and explore anxiety and unconscious dilemmas, Hollway and Jefferson's "free association, narrative and interview method", and Stopford's study drawing on relational psychoanalysis (Stopford, 2007).

As I designed the research interview approach, I critically reviewed Hollway and Jefferson's Free-Associative, Narrative Interview (FANI) (2000) and Wengraf and Chamberlayne's instruction of the Biographical, Narrative, Interpretive Method (BNIM). Both of these approaches, in addition to the others cited, presented potentially useful platforms for considering my approach. While seeking a prescriptive

formula to 'harness' as I went into my fieldwork, I came to realise (not without my own considerable anxieties) the nature of the psychoanalytic research interview is precisely about bringing a creativity and sensitivity which will be unique to specific contexts and concerns.[37] The following approaches were vital to my formulation and provided templates to experiment and revise for my own design. I will now discuss these influences in brief, identify what was most salient for this project, and a more explicit discussion of what methodologies I used and why. I will then discuss the choice of field site, how I selected the participants, and how I conducted the interviews. I will conclude the chapter with a brief discussion of how my time in Green Bay informed the process of data collection, and reflections on the strengths and limitations of the approaches used for future consideration.

In 2006 I participated in an intensive six-day training in Biographical Narrative Interpretive Method, co-taught by Tom Wengraf and Prue Chamberlayne. My interest in BNIM was sparked initially by the method's expressed commitment (as articulated by Wengraf, 2001) to examining themes of embodied subjectivity, situated biographical analysis and an attention and sensitivity to narrative content. BNIM is a qualitative approach based on conducting in-depth interviews, with usually two interviews per participant. It is both a method for conducting interviews and for the data analysis, and is expressly interested in 'lived subjectivity'. The method offers a highly systematic approach to both interviewing methodology and data analysis that is attractive in light of what can be rather 'amorphous' and less clarified approaches to psychosocial and psychoanalytic qualitative interview methodologies. BNIM is a highly structured and prescriptive process which its practitioners maintain is a 'formula that works' and also perhaps provides desirable containment for the risky and potentially intimidating process of qualitative, open ended interviews. The central technique BNIM uses for interviewing is the careful crafting of an opening question, that is focused enough to direct responses to a specific research topic, but broad enough to allow for free associations and stories. BNIM as a narrative-based approach is centrally focused on the richness of stories and 'particular incident narratives' as conveying meanings which may not be elicited using more straightforward, linearly conducted interviews using direct questions. It was primarily the approach to interviewing I focused on.

There were two techniques I was able to utilize from BNIM and helped constitute my interview method. The first was a carefully selected and considered opening question and its importance in the setting up and conducting of a genuinely free associative interview. The opening question is what BNIM practitioners refer to as

[37] As Duncan Cartwright told me, "In fact, in keeping with the creative nature of the Psychoanalytic Research Interview (PRI) I would resist being too systematic!" (Personal communication, 4 June, 2008).

the "Single Question aimed at Inducing Narrative(s)" (SQUIN) (Wengraf, 2001) and is central to the BNIM commitment to elicit rich narrative content. Given BNIM's primary interest in the 'lived experience' and biographical material, a typical SQUIN would be, "Can you please tell me your life story..." followed by a carefully worded preamble about how the interview will be conducted (e.g. the interviewer will not interrupt, speak as long as they wish). The role of the SQUIN in the BNIM interview sequence is crucial, and I found this to be the case in my interviews as well; the spirit of the SQUIN is an *invitation* to speak, encourages free association and backgrounds the interviewer, and yet provides containment and structure. In a crucial way BNIM's use of the opening question and the technique of allowing the participant to speak at length and without interruption was more free associative than Hollway and Jefferson's FANI method (discussed below). I perceived the use of a carefully chosen opening question in the first interview as a prompt for free association, not only in relation to the question but with all elements of the encounter, e.g. the online survey, ethical consent form and any other associations or projections potentially stimulated by my presence, words, appearance and so on.

Based on my experience with BNIM, I developed an opening question for my interviews and practiced this with the workshop: "Tell me about where you grew up. Please start wherever you wish and whatever comes to mind". This question was designed to be both encompassing and broad and to deliberately unconsciously reference the topic of the study (which the participants knew about via the survey and consent form; see Appendix A). While BNIM uses a script for the opening statement or 'preamble' in which the participant is instructed on how the interview will be conducted, that they will not be interrupted, I did not always adhere to this *exact* wording, but the question was always more or less the same, and it *followed* from a preamble very similar to the one used in BNIM (particularly regarding the fact they will not be interrupted and are encouraged to speak at length about whatever comes to mind; I discuss this below). Therefore using this broad question provided a context in the interview to perceive what sorts of (unconscious) associations are formed to start with the topic of water, nature, environment, or Green Bay. Due to the sequence of three interviews (another divergence from BNIM, which advises two interviews and *only* three if absolutely necessary to follow up on loose narrative ends or the need to check on biographical data), the use of a SQUIN in my work became integral to how I encountered the material all three in relation to one another (discussed in Part II). My intention in using the SQUIN was in crafting a psychoanalytically oriented research interview to facilitate free association; this is a somewhat different emphasis from BNIM, which focuses strongly on the 'particular narrative incident' or richly detailed story as the 'gold' in the data.

In addition to the use of the SQUIN, I obtained from BNIM the practice of following the *gestalt* of the narratives and topics of interest in each interview session, and the importance of noting down topics, ideas, thoughts that arise in the interview which seem particularly charged or significant.) In the subsequent interview session, the interviewer can then pick up these topics, but only in the *same sequence in which they appear in the participant's narrative.* The metaphor used, which I found myself returning to often, was that of tracing footsteps in the snow. The theory, where BNIM speaks most clearly to unconscious processes, is to acknowledge a flow of associations as reflected in the sequence of stories, topics or themes that have an integrity and significance ('deep structure'). To disrupt this sequence is to 'trample' on the way in which the psyche orders and makes meaningful certain stories or topics of relevance.

While I was attracted to a highly technical formula for the conducting and analysis of interviews, the approach was overly prescriptive in light of my interest in a dialogic and relational approach; it did not incorporate enough of the researchers' own creativity and improvisation. I did not share the explicit desire in BNIM to access or identify a 'deep structure' found in the interview material, particularly though the articulation of "Particular Narrative Incident" (PIN), and the use of a panel for conducting analysis of the material.[38] While I was interested in exploring *incoherence* as a productive site for enquiry, BNIM seemed to be more concerned with coherence in the narrative material. The emphasis on the panel raised issues for me, (similarly with Cartwright's advocating a triangulation process for analysis), as it felt an attempt to approximate reliability or objectivity for analysis, but in fact carried with it unconscious assumptions and biases regardless; the lack of attention to these unconscious dynamics seemed problematic. The use of teams or groups is important; how group work is approached must be handled sensitively in light of transference and countertransference (e.g. Walkerdine, et al., 2001).

A central methodological axiom as stated by Hollway and Jefferson is the desire to "get behind" the subjects' defensive apparatus or mechanisms: "The research strategy has to be such as to get behind subjects' defences. In practice we found that what we called the free association narrative interviewing method, where we attempted to elicit relevant narratives of real world events, produced the kinds of accounts that assisted this strategy significantly" (2000, p. 171). Hollway and Jefferson's research methods, as my own, are informed by the premise of "the centrality of defences against anxiety as a helpful method of researching biographies" and "commitment to

[38] Part of the data analysis process used in BNIM are the 'panels' which involve a group of readers, similar to Cartwright's "Independent evaluators" (2004), who collectively 'chunk up' the text and conduct interpretations of very minute sections, as a way of finding meanings in the narratives. Panels are seen as integral to the BNIM analytic process, by way of creating verifiable interpretations and reliable data analysis.

the notion of a defended, psychoanalytic subject with which to interrogate our data" (2000, p. 179). The researchers designed their methodologies with this in mind; in particular the creation of the Free-Associative Narrative Interview (FANI). The central technique of FANI is the production of a semi-structured interview (they used six questions) and attention to context, biographical material and the way in which the participants (or "subjects" as they refer to them) provide often complex, indirect and meandering narratives. Similar to my own study, the authors were frustrated with the way in which the topic of crime, and specifically fears of crime, were engaged with the use of methodologies that only served to point up inconsistencies in what people report and overlooks the subtle issues of social, cultural and emotional contexts (Hollway and Jefferson, 200, pp. 7–14). Thus their desire was to present a more 'embodied' account of how people experience crime in the context of their daily lives, familial and social networks and unique biographical backgrounds, with attention to gender, age, and class. It was unclear, however, exactly how their methodologies took account of the issues of defences, particularly that of the researcher; it was also unclear how free association was employed, if the interviewers used a set of six predetermined questions.

Although there were similarities between our respective research intentions, the notion of 'the defended subject' and the technicalities of how the interviews were conducted (e.g. using a set of predetermined questions), were not sufficiently based in a dialogic, relational epistemology (and one informed centrally by psychoanalysis, as discussed below). My issue with the first point is if we have the "defended subject", surely we have the defended *inter-subject*. That is, positioning the interviewee as "defended subject" suggests a stance towards the research interview that does not appear intersubjective and relational. Hollway and Jefferson (2000) often write of their going into the interviews 'armed' with various theoretical assumptions or frameworks; although they are speaking to their 'baggage' so to speak, the language suggests a discourse of battle. The attention to defences in the research interview is key; it does not end with the "subject" but rather is part and parcel of the interview interaction as dialogic and mutually constitutive.

Hollway and Jefferson's study does offer an innovative way of designing interviews in order to elicit rich material and informed how I considered my own approach to interviews, particularly with reference to biographical and psychic nuances in relation to 'hot' topics such as fear of crime (which tend to be conceptualised comparatively crudely in media and policy debates). Their engagement of free association was quite limited compared to the use of a very open-ended question, as employed by Cartwright for example (2004). They clearly were able to illustrate how simplistic approaches to 'fears of crime' are inadequate when seen in view of the dilemmas and contradictions negotiated on an ongoing basis. The incorporation of established

questions for eliciting narratives on the research topic, the method's absence of attention to transference, countertransference and the unaddressed power relations (particularly as Hollway and Jefferson tend to focus primarily on working class 'subjects') firmly established the methodology as fundamentally rooted in a social scientific epistemology, less so a psychoanalytic one.

The most valuable aspect of their work for this study is formulating 'doing qualitative research differently' as introducing defensive mechanisms such as splitting, denial and projection into the context of qualitative research practice. I found the psychoanalytic processes they cite to be under-theorized and the concept of a "defended subject" somewhat contrary to the spirit in which I hoped to engage with my participants, because it presumed only the 'subject' is defended (whilst the researcher is certainly as defended) and therefore promotes a power relation I am not comfortable with, and the terminology itself suggests something quite fixed and static, when in fact defences as psychic processes tend to be fluid and dynamic. Rather than approach my participants as 'defended subjects' I felt we were both 'defended' and negotiating difficult dilemmas, and as such I felt more on par and less an 'all knowing' or neutrally positioned researcher.

Although I was not entirely convinced of the use of several questions in the conduct of a free associative interview, I decided to alleviate my niggling anxieties regarding *not* using their method (as one of the most visible psychosocial research methodologies in the UK), in trying out the approach with one of my early participants in Green Bay, Victoria. I took the six questions and modified them to suit my research topic of environmental issues and anxiety. From the beginning of the interview, I felt stilted and uncomfortable with a list of questions to follow or adhere to, and I found it stifled my own sense of spontaneous, presence and being attuned to what was happening in the moment with the participant, in the interview encounter. While I had a fruitful first interview, I realised using the questions was primarily about my anxieties regarding whether my participants would speak if given the space, and my own abilities as an astute interviewer. I decided to abandon the questions and resumed the style, which I came to regard as a free associative, dialogic approach to interviewing. As I discuss, the basis of this approach is on the use of deliberately unstructured, open interviews that become progressively more focused across the three interviews. Such fluidity allows for much greater scope and richness, but more importantly is in accordance with the central epistemic and theoretical concerns stated above regarding unconscious, intrapsychic processes, narrative-based investigations and object relations.

Developing the dialogic, relational interview

Many of the limitations in Hollway and Jefferson's study (2000) are sensitively addressed in Stopford's study of transculturation in African Australian relationships (2004), and Cartwright's study of violent men in prison (2002). Both employ explicitly psychoanalytic concepts in shaping a methodology for interviewing and analysis.[39] In taking a *relational psychoanalytic* approach, Stopford provides an alternative paradigm to the power relation of the 'defended subject' and the attending practices of keeping interpretations separate from the interview context and remaining 'silent' and neutral (e.g. BNIM). In Stopford's application of relational psychoanalysis to her research methodology, the *intrapsychic* and *intersubjective* are seen in creative tension; one is not privileged over the other necessarily. Therefore, attention is given to the "complex threads of the relational matrix" and specificities of individual histories and locations (2007, p. 224). Stopford's relational approach is particularly attuned to the issue of "co-construction of meaning in the analytic space" (2004). It also demonstrates to the way in which psychoanalysis itself has been implicated in the production of problematic power relations, its legacy as an authoritative practice, and the cabal-like secrecy of psychoanalytic knowledge (e.g. psychoanalysts as all-knowing, viewers of unconscious material), and rightly notes that psychoanalytic thought—and particularly its engagement with unconscious processes—subverts the modernist valorisation of the rational, unitary subject.

Cartwright's Psychoanalytic Research Interview (PRI) is "part of an ongoing project aimed at developing research methods that focus on the specific needs of psychoanalytic enquiry" centred on conducting in-depth, psychoanalytic interviews that incorporate free association, counter-transference and transference, and the recognition of unconscious dynamics in the research interview context (Cartwright, 2004). As with BNIM and FANI, the PRI is a narrative-based qualitative methodology. Cartwright presents an approach integrative of psychoanalytic theoretical principles, namely object relations, transference and countertransference, an appreciation for meaning in narrative, and psychodynamic 'core' themes. As a practitioner he is mindful of differences between the clinical, therapeutic encounter and the research interview (e.g. the emphasis on treatment, issues of context and intention) as a practicing analytic psychotherapist, and does not presume a smooth transition; that said, he fully endorses the value and relevance for a psychoanalytic approach to research interviewing.

[39] Perhaps not surprising, Stopford and Cartwright are clinically trained psychoanalytic psychotherapists in addition to researchers; I believe this training and experience shows up through the 'feel' of the work and its particular sensitivities and is indicative of the value of clinical training in conducting psychosocial, or psychoanalytically informed qualitative social science research.

His method is based around the conducting of three in-depth, open-ended (unstructured) interviews that utilise the practice of free association in a way I found more productive than FANI and BNIM, in that the interviews were conducted as more spontaneous and dynamic (e.g. genuinely open and exploratory in the absence of set questions and the commitment to following up with clarifications and feedback in the second and third interviews). The researcher is encouraged to be attuned to her sensations, reflections and responses, and to maintain a sense of 'presence' and dialog with the participant. As I discuss in Part II, Cartwright suggests an innovative technique for data analysis in attending to themes, dynamics and object relations as they surface in the material: careful attention to feeling states and corresponding thoughts or perceptions both before and during interviews; the search for core narratives, and the exploration of identifications and object relations in the data (within each interview and across the set of three interviews). He also advises the use of triangulation as a sort of measure against the threat of 'wild analysis'—similar to the 'panel' used by BNIM to create a sense of validity or checking one's potentially unconscious projections and interpretations onto the data—in the analysis process.[40] I felt his rationale was more coherent than BNIM's panels in accounting for countertransference impressions, as a PhD researcher I chose not to pursue the use of interpretive 'panels' or teams, although I did share excerpts of the data in one instance at a workshop.[41] I will reflect on the strengths and limitations of sharing data in a group and working solo in the final chapter.

Pilot interviews

In 2006 I conducted pilot interviews with four participants in Cardiff; three males (ages 46, 26 and 49) and one female (age 36). With each participant I conducted three interviews each, lasting approximately one hour and recorded digitally. The interviews were conducted using a similar approach to the one I was considering for the Green Bay interviews; starting with an open-ended question (inspired by BNIM), "Tell me about where you grew up, start wherever you wish, I won't interrupt you", asking clarifying questions primarily in the second and third interviews, moving into slightly more 'confrontational' observations as I noted particular contradictions or possible dilemmas the participant seemed unaware of (e.g. "You have told me *x* and

[40] The use of research groups, panels, or triangulations is a central issue and point of much debate and deliberation in the evolution of psychoanalytically informed psychosocial qualitative research; I will discuss this in more depth in the final chapter, in which I review 'lessons learned' and the potential value (and possibly requirement) of research groups or teams for effective psychoanalytic, psychosocial work that takes on board issues of unconscious processes, both in the research data and on the part of the researcher.

[41] 'Data-analysis in psychoanalytically-informed research', Psychosocial Studies Network Seminar, Birkbeck, University of London, 26 June 2009.

also *y*, can you say more about this") and being attuned to both my own feelings and sensations as well as the 'feeling tone' of the interview interaction. I also took extensive field notes of impressions and questions following each interview, and discussed the work with my supervisor.

The pilots taught me first how providing prompts is a productive way of conducting an interview, and my fears of silences and gaps in the absence of structured questions were alleviated. Second, I began to have a taste of the richness of biographical narratives, and the complex levels of possible meanings as produced in the interviews conveyed in singular incidents and stories. In this sense, the BNIM emphasis on the "Particular Incident Narrative" (PIN) approach was validated. However, I also realised the richness of the data was not *only* to be found in the PIN, but in *how* the stories and themes were organised and presented. (The relations between PINs, one might say.) I was as interested in the particular memories or stories presented (regarding home, nature, environment, family holidays, significant events such as moving or the loss of loved ones), as much as in the *way* they were presented, the ordering and affective tenor. Finally I was suitably impressed with the nuanced and subtle ways in which personal meanings were conveyed through biographical narrative material, in relation to particular issues and practices.

Through the interviews I had a direct confirmation that "analytically informed interview technique and analysis can yield valuable psychoanalytic insights about a particular research topic in the space of few interviews" (Cartwright, 2004, p. 210). For example, one of my participants, "Ron"(age 26) had grown up in the valleys in Blackwood and recounted evocative memories of playing in the fields, hills and one lane in particular. As he described the move from the valleys to Cardiff when he was a teenager, it was evident this was a traumatic event through his references to a profound sense of loss, not only of community but of the place itself, as Blackpool succumbed to development of the hills he had loved so much. However, it was an account of how Ron felt about the large Tesco in Cardiff that I began to realise the irrational and affect-driven nature of practices in relation to environmental concerns. Ron himself was sympathetic to environmental concerns, though not engaged in any activism or explicitly 'green' practices (hence my decision to interview him), but in his sentiments and values. He was most passionate about the development of green spaces. He also had expressed critical views regarding consumption and wastefulness of resources. He told me how, after the move to Cardiff, he would find solace and respite in wandering the aisles of the 'big' Tesco. To this day, he enthuses about Tesco and relishes visits on Saturdays, his "favourite day of the week".

When I followed up with this in our third and final interview, I gently presented my observations regarding his love of the 'big Tesco' and his environmental sentiments. I expressed curiosity about this apparent contradiction. He then relayed

how, after the move, he suffered from social anxiety disorder, and found the large, impersonal environs of the shop comforting for their anonymity yet abundance. In other words, in going through a transition from a small, close-knit valleys village, to the 'big city', and from one topography to another, he was able to find some comfort in being in a space that was neutral and yet promising; filled with an abundance of items. I could begin to appreciate how Ron's environmental concerns were able to coexist with these expressed powerful affective relations with Tesco; as an 'object' I could note the psychic affective investments (e.g. comfort, anonymity, abundance, modernity) and its function in his biographical narrative. It did not indicate to me that in fact Ron was uncaring about environmental concerns, but he had found a way to negotiate these concerns quite seamlessly, in a way that did not appear to cause conscious conflict or anxiety.

Data collection

The pilot interviews thus led me towards developing the methodology used. In light of the remit to focus on the Great Lakes, my research questions and my particular interest in unconscious processes, how ecological issues were experienced and negotiated, and what may inform the appearance of 'apathy' (e.g. a flatness or absence of caring or concern), I chose to conduct three in-depth interviews with ten participants, using interviews of approximately one hour each. The interviews would be conducted in their homes, ideally, and digitally recorded. In addition to the interviewing process, I would reside in Green Bay for two months, and 'immerse' myself as much as possible in the local community; I arranged to stay with the mother of a local and popular coffeehouse, who had a room for rent, and followed up on the contacts I had made during my field site visit. I present below the specific components of the field work, data collection and how I went about designing and conducting the data collection.[42]

The interviews would take place over the course of the two months. I will now discuss the tools used for locating and recruiting the participants; issues of selection and criteria and scheduling. I will then discuss the approach I adapted to the interview process, highlighting the use of open-ended, free-associative interviews that emphasised issues of *containment*; and the use of the *Healing our Waters* 'Girl on the Beach' advert in the interview context. This leads into a discussion of ethical considerations salient to this style of interviewing and data collection. I will then present how I chose to engage in data analysis, in drawing strongly on the work of Duncan Cartwright (2002) and similarly psychoanalytically informed researchers (e.g. Walkerdine et al., 2003; Hoggett et al., 2006).

[42] The selection of Green Bay as a field site for the research is discussed in Chapter 1.

Participants: Survey, selection and logistics

With the assistance of the Biodiversity Project, I contacted a market research firm in Green Bay they had engaged previously, and queried if they may be available in assisting with obtaining a 'sample' of potential participants. The firm had since relocated and transferred their accounts to a different firm, Matousek and Associates; the person who received my email query was Heather Herdmann. Heather expressed great interest in the project, and had completed a qualitative, phenomenological research study for her PhD; she also expressed personal environmental and political commitments. She offered me the use of their services *pro bono*, their facilities if I wished to conduct interviews on-site at their offices, and access to their database of individuals in Green Bay who had signed up to participate in focus groups and related market research projects.

I designed a basic online (web-based) survey to use for the initial screening of prospective participants (see Appendix B), to be emailed to people in their database within 20 miles of Green Bay. The database included Internet and phone participants, so it was sent to *Internet participants only*, a total of 1067 receiving the survey. We received 163 responses, or a response rate of 15.3%. Heather recommended we offer a 'drawing' of three prizes, valuing at $20 each, to provide incentive for completing the survey (a standard practice with market research firms) and potentially increase the response rate. The survey was designed with 'screening questions' to screen suitable participants, and fulfilled multiple functions: in introducing a survey instrument, I was able to generate a valuable second set of data to correspond with the interview material as I saw fit. Further, the data set generated by the survey tool provided a useful screening for selecting suitable participants for the interviews (the 'target population'), the 'quota' or sample size from the target population. The survey was designed with three basic types of questions: multiple-choice, numeric open end and text open end ('verbatims'), and included an opening letter that included consent to be contacted for interviews in completing the survey (see Appendix A). Included in the multiple-choice questions, I used rating scales and agreement scales (see Appendix C). The survey was designed with the primary intention of gauging levels of environmental concern, engagement, literacy (knowledge of issues), and verbal acuity (provided through the use of text open end, or verbatim, questions).

From the 163 survey respondents, I reviewed the responses in light of both of how they rated their own level of concern regarding environmental issues, and in particular, the rating scale used to measure how *frequently* they thought about environmental issues, also referred to as the 'frequency scale' (see Appendix E). The intention was to view how individuals were constructing themselves in relation to environmental engagement and issues, and centrally the issue of 'apathy' as rendered through the questions regarding the 'frequency' of thinking about environmental

issues. The intention with the survey and my selection process was to identify those in a 'middle range', neither strongly engaged nor completely out of touch, but with a moderate level of awareness and no explicit recognisable activist or 'green lifestyle' practices: individuals whose 'frequency rating' falls between 'Rarely' and 'Depends on Events'. I eliminated from the screening process those who answered either 'Never', and focused on those in the 'middle range' answering either 'Occasionally' or 'Depends on Events' (see 'Frequency' graphic of participants, Appendix E). I then endeavoured to select a balance of male and female ratio, and a diversity of age groups within the ten participants. Given this was not designed as a 'sample' in the sense of accurately representing the demographics of the target population, I was less concerned about finding a statistically accurate mixture of ages. I also felt to introduce extremely divergent age ranges could potentially introduce demographic considerations (e.g. generational differences, social and cultural background) that would extend beyond the scope of the analysis. To maintain the focus and emphasis on the issue of investigating 'apathy' and environmental subjectivity through the use of in-depth, psychoanalytic, open-ended interviews, I chose to keep the group of participants more or less similar in demographic background (e.g. white, working to lower middle class) and natives of the Great Lakes region. *I specifically wanted to interview a group of individuals who environmental activists or professionals may be inclined to view as 'apathetic' based on the absence of their engagement with local environmental issues.*

The logistics of requesting interviews and negotiating availability introduced the next process of selection, as often initial contacts were either unable to participate due to various factors or declined. I selected nine participants from the survey responses who were available and willing to participate in three interviews, and one additional participant (Donald) I recruited through my participant-observation in an adult education course at University of Wisconsin at Green Bay; Donald had been interviewed initially as a 'pilot' during my first two weeks in Green Bay, and I decided to include the data in the study. I had initially approached him as a pilot participant after hearing a few remarks in class regarding his experiences growing up in Green Bay and working for a local cannery on the river, and my interest in his perspectives as a 69 year-old.

The interviews were arranged by phone and email communications, during which time I would identify myself, remind them of the survey they had participated in, and request their interest and availability to participate. (I discovered initial query emails for invitations to participate were not very effective, so I stopped using email and instead rang people on the phone numbers provided in the survey response data.) If the person was interested and available, I emailed a copy of the ethical consent form for them to complete prior to our first meeting (see Appendix A). There were

occasions when someone who had expressed interest in participating had to withdraw for various logistical reasons or due to family illness. The interviews all took place in the participants' homes, with the exception of one woman who requested we meet in her office; I was to realise later during the interviews this request made sense in light of the issues regarding work and home boundaries, as well as protecting a sense of privacy, as she felt she could be *more* open and disclosing with me in her office, than if we were in her home with her husband and children about.[43]

In selecting of participants was the desire to find a 'median' range of individuals who may fall into a category of the population perceived by active environmentalists or public opinion researchers as apathetic or not caring; the group I interviewed is not a 'sample' in the sense of being representative of a larger group. The study is informed largely by highly qualitative research approaches; priorities were depth as opposed to 'breadth', and microanalysis as opposed to generalisations regarding a particular demographic. I wanted to talk with people who may be easily overlooked as being either too preoccupied with personal concerns for environmental matters, or who may literally not care as much about nature or the environment as those who were actively occupying positions of 'agency' in recognisably 'good' ways (e.g. part of a local nature group, involved with environmental protection campaigns, and the like.) I was drawn to those in working class or 'labour' categories, as likely subjects to be constructed as lacking concern or as being 'apathetic' based low levels of environmental engagement, and tended to rule out professionals or higher educated individuals (who tend to be more liberal and progressive; this is supported in the analysis of 'frequency' responses, in Appendix E). As such the criteria included eliminating any participants who were actively involved in any environmental groups, activities, educational efforts or activism. I wanted to go into the 'eye of the storm' and meet with those who either expressed a moderate to low level of conscious thought regarding environmental issues, or in the case of two participants, express 'frequent' thought of environmental issues, but not engaged in any recognisable activities, e.g. restoration or local environmental groups. (See Appendix D.)

The research interviews

Clearly, the research interview is a vastly different setting and context than the analytic session; therefore the question arises how suitable the tools and strategies

[43] This observation regarding privacy at home and at work also related to the way in which environmental 'objects' and topics for some participants were highly personal and kept "close to their person" as one participant, Donald, expressed it; this participant, Dana, would tell me of taking private trips out to the beach in Door County on Lake Michigan, without her husband knowing. Her scheduling of the (environmentally themed) interviews away from home reinforced the sense of this being a domain held private, which raises an interesting set of issues to be discussed in the final Chapter.

employed in the analytic context—free association, abstinence, dream analysis, and so on—would be for conducting research interviews. With full awareness of the important differences between these contexts, noted by several psychosocial researchers (Forget, 2008; Cartwright, 2002; Kvale, 2003; Hollway and Jefferson, 2000), it was my view that the research interview could be not only informed by greatly enhanced by the use of specifically analytic tools for conducting the interviews, but that such an approach was in some ways more ethically motivated, in allowing participants the space to express what are undoubtedly complex and often fraught experiences. As Hendin, Gaylin and Carr (1966) note,

> The information elicited by the usual interviewing procedures, even when conducted by trained observers, is of limited value and can be misleading. The answers to questions usually reflect what the subject wants to feel, thinks he feels, or thinks he is expected to feel. As psychoanalysis has demonstrated, individuals are not consciously aware of most of the significant attitudes and dynamic patterns shaping their thinking and behavior (p. 1).

When considering the increasing relevance of studies concerning public engagement with chronic ecological issues, including climate change, for policy decisions and public marketing campaigns, using an approach informed by psychoanalytic practice—based on free associations, unconscious reactions, dreams, fantasies, attention to object relations, desires, and defences—arguably widens the spectrum of knowledge production, even given its limits and cautionary aspects (as discussed later in this chapter).

There are two key points of overlap between the therapeutic and research contexts to signal, before discussing the research interviews and the specific issues and considerations involved. First, much is made of the fact that in treatment contexts, the 'patient' or client has sought out the encounter, as opposed to being recruited by the psychotherapist or analyst (as in the research context) (e.g. see Cartwright, 2002, p. 215–216). The context for psychoanalytic treatment is marked by the mutual objectives of facilitating a process of healing, development and support, regardless of the analytic persuasion (e.g. relational, Lacanian, etc.) The production of case studies for publication, is a dimension of therapeutic work that is often not mentioned, suggesting a potential valorisation of the therapeutic encounter as entirely focused on the well-being of the patient; in fact, much psychoanalytic theory is based largely on the presentation of detailed case studies, in which the therapist is often constructed as wise, effective and innovative (e.g. see Frosh, 1997; Miller and Rose, 1994). Thus the boundaries between how the material generated through the encounters is perhaps more blurred than we tend to assume. Secondly, while there is a frequent emphasis on the fact that in treatment patients are choosing to see the therapist, there is

oft-overlooked aspect of unconscious motivations on the part of the participants for choosing to engage in the interviews. I was aware of this factor in the production of the survey, consideration of who would elect to complete the survey (investing the time and energy), and the level of thoughtfulness reflected in some of the responses; the willingness to participate in three, one-hour interviews was a level of commitment that reflected perhaps the presence of certain motivations or desires evoked by invitation to participate (of which the survey was the first step).

The interviews were conducted very specifically according to the psychoanalytic and qualitative principles discussed above. In conducting three interviews, I was creating a context through which much terrain could be covered in a very open, unstructured way. This would facilitate both free associations, which felt important for me in terms of tracking unconscious material and affect, as well as rapport, trust and a sense of safety or containment (discussed below). As I describe below, each interview was conducted with these principles in mind: a sense of spaciousness and enquiry, mutual engagement in particular topics (a sense of mutual exploration and dialogue), containment in terms of safety and rapport, and active, attentive listening. Each interview however narrowed in scope progressively; whilst the first interview was conceived as casting the 'big net' with the opening SQUIN, the second interview would follow-up the 'footsteps in the snow' with both feeding back ('what I heard') and requests for elaboration or clarification, and the final interview inevitably became most focused on the topic—the environment and water, generally—as I presented both gentle interpretations or confrontations, and the incorporation of the advert at the end bringing together many of the disparate themes we may have touched on throughout the three interviews. Therefore each interview was viewed as having a specific function in relation to the whole set, and the use of the advert at the end was deliberately employed as a 'focusing device' and prompt, the most specific acknowledgement of the topic thus far in the three interviews. In this sense I was able to 'push' the topic forward whilst using an advert to carry this function. This is important relationally and dialogically, in that the participants were then responding *to the advert* and not to me if I had asked a rather frontal or direct question regarding their feelings about ecological threats facing the Great Lakes.

I was sensitive to possible motivations bringing each individual to the encounter, and what they may indicate either explicitly or implicitly as to their desires, hopes, or motivations. I was particularly moved by one participant, Howard, who told me participating in the study was a way to have "impact", more so than voting or any political activity; so for him participating in the study was having a role to play in the production of knowledge that may have some actual imprint in the world. In another instance, I was aware during the first interview with Victoria, of a sense of loneliness and need to 'work through' some very difficult and painful emotions regarding loss

and disappointment (focused primarily on the topic of divorce and family values) and I suspected this might have led her unconsciously to volunteer. Every participant expressed great gratitude for the opportunity to participate (including the young woman who didn't show up for our final interview), primarily for the opportunity to think about topics and ideas they had not before or for a long time; I often had the sense that they 'needed' to talk through some of these issues and associations with their personal biographies and relationship with the region. Further based on the responses to the online survey, almost half (49%) of the responses to the survey were people who reported thinking about environmental issues "frequently" (see Appendix E), suggesting those completing the survey already had some form of conscious or unconscious desire to engage with the issues. While I attempted to interview a range from the survey responses, the point is that I presume what draws people to the study is highly individual and must been viewed in light of unconscious motivations.

Trust, rapport and containment

As noted, the context of the research interview is significant, and raises several issues with regard to the issue of emotional safety, trust and disclosure. As in the analytic setting, the fixed frame and the formation of a constant long-term relationship minimize the extent to which extraneous factors impinge on the relationship, it is a relatively stable context and makes it easier to isolate the context around which associations are organised (Cartwright, 2002, p. 220). Thus the onus is on the researcher to provide as much stability and containment as possible in the conduct of psychoanalytically informed, in-depth interviews. I was acutely sensitive to this, as both a research and ethical concern. The initiation of the relationship in my view was in participating electively in the online survey. Therefore I was conscious of both the language used in the opening 'blurb' (see Appendix B) and the way the questions were framed in the survey itself, as inviting and non-confrontational. The consent form, used in accordance with the Cardiff School of Social Sciences Research Ethics Committee, initiated the trust and rapport building (see Appendix A). In making the research topic known enough to inform the participant of the general area of research, but without providing too much detail as to skew their responses, I aimed to cultivate respect and trust.

There were three central practices for creating a relative sense of containment, in the sense of providing a space to 'hold' the participant and whatever material or emotions were to arise. The first was my initial preamble, in which I let the participant know of the 'style' of the interview, the comment that they were encouraged to speak on whatever comes to mind, and to let me know if at any point they wished to stop or ask a question. In orienting the participants to the unusual style of the interview (most were anticipating a set series of questions, i.e. a structured interview), I

began to help set them at ease through talking through how the interviews would be conducted and how this process may be different from what they have encountered previously. I also asked if they had any questions or concerns before we got started. I found it very important to let the participant know I was interested in her or his own thoughts about the topic (of environment, water, etc.). I would also make it very clear I was interested in also hearing about anything the participant might want to tell me about their life or background, even if it may appear as 'off topic'—I often used the analogy of there being no 'trail' to depart from, but rather the whole 'field' was valuable. I did this to ensure the participant felt relatively at ease to speak freely; and most important, I would encourage the participant to start wherever they felt like. If this was with specific literal memories of their childhood home, excursions into nature, or direct references to the river or the lakes, it was all encouraged as valuable and relevant.

The second technique for cultivating safety and rapport was the practice of active listening and feeding back (discussed above). In the activity of 'feeding back' what I had heard, I was letting the participants know they were being listened to. This in itself I found had profound implications, and participants seemed quite encouraged once they realised I was paying attention to material they may have felt would be either irrelevant, or mundane. Specifically, prior to each interview subsequent to the first, I would listen to the digital recording right before the next interview, and recount certain topics or details that had struck me as particularly interesting or relevant. This practice, which I had consciously initiated help *me* with recall and with following up on the most pertinent points, ended up performing a dual function of fostering trust and rapport. I could almost visibly see participants relax as they comprehended their words had been recalled and considered. As part of this practice I would always ask participants if anything had arisen since our last meeting that they wished to speak about, or raised concerns, or if they had any questions about any aspects of the process. Third, if any material was evoked that seemed to pose potentially painful emotions, I would ensure they were comfortable with the interview and with continuing; I would then follow up in the next interview meeting with enquiring how they were doing (in light of what had transpired).

For example, in my first interview with Victoria (where I was 'trying out' the FANI approach, using six questions modelled after Hollway and Jefferson's study, 2000), she spoke about topics of great pain, particularly her anxieties about divorce in her family and community. She spoke of the breakdown of her relationship with her father, who had started a new relationship soon after her mother died (which she related to being "like a divorce"). She ended up bursting into tears, and I 'held the space' and let her cry; when we met for the second interview, the first thing I asked was if she was okay with what had happened (she seemed, frankly, quite relieved to have gotten it off her

chest and surprisingly unself-conscious). In addition to responding with empathy when possible, I approached the activity of providing 'containment' (Bion, 1962) as existing on a spectrum depending on the dynamic with the participant, from active engagement to listening, e.g. listening so the participant felt understood as a form of 'containment', to being attuned to the affective mood in the room and how best I could respond in the moment-to-moment interaction. The use of interpretations in the context of the interview was used cautiously, often supported the mood of 'containment', e.g. the participants either confirming ("That's very perceptive of you") or correcting but in the spirit of intersubjective meaning ("Yes and no, let me tell you what I am feeling or thinking".) How I approached the practice of containment was centrally about cultivating a mood of receptivity, so that I could 'take in' and create a mental space for the participant's experiences, including any anxieties they may have regarding the research interview.

As I have discussed, one of the assumptions underlying the project and the approach to methodology concerns subjectivity—the construction of meaning, what constitutes psychoanalytic knowledge, and how this may informed the way we approach the issue of environmental concern, engagement and 'apathy'. This relates to how the interviewer and participant, or interviewee, co-construct a narrative around a particular focus in the interview. In this sense, the interview is not about uncovering an essential truth, or mining for 'stories' as reflected in the BNIM approach, but about facilitating the construction of a story or narrative (Cartwright, 2002, p. 217). This point concerns how narrative is engaged and approached; Cartwright cites Spence (1982) who holds that historical truth is impossible to access after the fact, as it is subject to numerous interpretations and revisions (ibid.). This view is in alignment with a psychoanalytic *and* psychosocial theoretical purview, informed by post-structural thought, that challenges the quest for essential 'structures of meaning' and presumes a filtering or lens through which we engage with the world, from our particular subject positions. This recognition, does not preclude the conduct of meaningful empirical research and insights, but requires considerations of *how* the self reconstructs a particular happening, more than a concern regarding factuality; and the role of the researcher's own subjectivity, influence on the data, and interpretation. Further, how the researcher best facilitates the process in the interview encounter becomes an important part of the interview technique (ibid.). In the following I highlight four characteristics of the interview approach in light of these epistemic assumptions: taking a dialogic approach (in recognition of the co-construction of meaning and narratives); facilitating trust, rapport and containment (in relation to the capacity for participants to free associate and feel 'held'); the recognition of 'objects' both internal and external as arising in the interviews (engaging object relations as central expressions of unconscious processes and psychosocial

dynamics) and the importance of attending to my own inchoate transference and countertransference impressions.

Balancing dialogic and free associative dynamics in the interviews

There appears to be a tension with regard to preserving elements of free association, as engaged in psychoanalytic practice (in which the patient or client is enabled, through the 'abstinence' of the analyst and the sense of containment, to free associate), and a dialogic, relational approach in the research interview method. While I wish the participants to free associate openly, so I may be more able to trace and track core narratives, that help provide certain threads of meanings (discussed below), I also want them to be able to address the topic at hand. The balance I strove for was between active, dialogic interviewing, and providing the participants space to free associate either in response to my questions, reflections or prompts, or to perhaps another variable, such as the experience completing the survey and any associations that may have been stirred, the language in the consent form (discussed below), my presence as an academic or researcher, or any number of projections that may have been elicited. Free association where the analyst (researcher) sits back, remains primarily silent and allows the patient (participant) to say whatever comes to mind is clearly not possible nor desired in the research interview: the encounter is already framed and contextualised by the research focus, topic and whatever the participant may know of the study. Cartwright notes,

> Making it very clear to the interviewees what the specific subject of the interview is serves not only to inform them about why they were selected; it also provides the central context around which they are urged to associate (consciously and unconsciously). From this point I am interested in how the interviewee chooses to start and where this eventually leads. In other words, we are interested in the emergent structure or 'shape' of the narrative here. I see my role at this point as simply being a facilitator of the process, making mental notes of evoked feeling states and any difficulties in accessing some degree of empathy toward the interviewee (2004, p. 224).

The emphasis in using free association-style and dialogic interviewing is on the *way* in which meanings are produced and constructed, with particular attention to affective themes, repetitions of certain topics or themes, and the way in which the participant moves between topics or ideas as conveying unconscious processes or motivations. As discussed below, the attention to object relations, both internal and external, shifts the emphasis and focus of the discourse, to be less precious perhaps regarding the nature of what is said, in what form.[44] Attention is given to broad, core

[44] The approach I used diverges from a critical discourse analysis approach; see Wetherall, 2003;

themes, object relations, evidence of conflict, ambivalence, or contradiction, affect and counter-transference in the encounter. Therefore the emphasis was not on capturing concrete moments (particular incident narratives) as crystallisations of psychic and social life, but on the way the self constructs meaning or organises associations to create narratives (e.g. Schafer, 1989). This view contrasts with the more positivist tendency in qualitative research that presume an existence of a 'fixed deep structure' that the interviewer sets out to excavate from the material. For these reasons, (as stated in the discussion on BNIM), I used an opening prompt or 'SQIN', which was:

> Tell me about where you grew up. You can start anywhere, and say whatever comes to mind.

The question was broad and expansive enough to allow participants to 'roam'—e.g. answering the question literally, going straight to environmental issues, etc—and worked dialectically with the *consent form* (see Appendix A, and discussed below). The ethical consent form both fulfilled the mandates of the ethical consent process and also constituted part of the interview process as an important object and discourse from which free association could take place, as Cartwright notes (above). I did not want to ask explicitly and straight-forwardly about environmental problems: a decision based on the theoretical assumption regarding unconscious defences (asking frontal questions would not necessarily elicit fruitful responses) and the underpinning *ethos* of the project, that assumes how people engage with environmental issues must be seen in the widest context of both intrapsychic and interpsychic dynamics, social and psyche, internal and external object relations, and affective investments which may have no apparent 'rhyme or reason'.

While I endeavoured to give the participant as much space as possible for free associating (at times more successfully than at others), I would openly engage in questions, clarifications and occasionally steer the discussion further into a particular theme or topic. What I did do was to note very carefully and with great detail, what themes and topics arose in the interview and in what order; following the interview, I would listen to the digital recording and partially transcribe and note the pattern, if any, of themes that emerged through the interview. Prior to the second interview, I would listen again to the interview to 'refresh' my recollection, and enter

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Gough, 2009; Frosh et al., 2003 on the relations (and tensions) between a CDA approach and a psychoanalytic data analysis methodology (and Midgley, 2006 on psychoanalytic and qualitative paradigms in research). In contrast to CDA, I did not feel it necessary to conduct microanalysis on the speech utterance, but to attend to core themes, narratives and psychodynamics, in particular object relational. I found it essential to note when pauses, abrupt change of topics, repairs, jokes and humour occurred, as indicators of unconscious dynamics (e.g. Wetherell, 2003; Billig, 1997) but the focus in this study was centred on thematic analysis. I felt it possible to integrate attention to this level of discursive phenomenon with analysis of thematic, narrative material. I do feel a microanalysis of the discourses in the interviews would yield a fruitful investigation.

with great recall of many detailed accounts from our previous session. This practice fulfilled two functions; first, it allowed me to pay close attention to "repetitive narrative structures" as mirroring more consistent and prominent factors contributing to the intrapsychic life of the individual (Cartwright, 2002, p. 218). In not disturbing the 'footprints in the snow' of the ordering of the narrative content and themes, so I could preserve a semblance of the free associations and their possible meanings. As Cartwright notes,

> Psychoanalysis is particularly interested in implicit forms of association. Here the idea that thoughts are associated with one another through unconscious forms of psychic determinism holds great importance for understanding the interview dialogue. The way the interviewee begins to tell me about him- or herself and then changes to another subject at a specific point, how the interviewer's tone of voice alters in association with particular subjects, and how things are described in different ways—all of these suggest possible ways in which elements of the dialogue are unconsciously associated. This in term yields an underlying structure that can be used to understand the intrapyshic processes most apparent in the interview material related to the topic being discussed (219).

Therefore, I used prompts (observations) and questions for facilitating free association in the interviews. In returning to the subsequent interviews, I would raise points only in the order in which they arose (e.g. tracing the *gestalt* of the participants' associations). I also took a more actively dialogic approach than practiced in BNIM and FANI, as discussed above. I practised this in the following ways: first, at the start of the second and third interviews, I would 'feed back' to the participant what I had 'heard' in the previous session, based on my reviews of the material and my own note taking. I would be as detailed as possible, to both freshen the participant's recollection of what had transpired, as well as to communicate implicitly the level of my attention and listening (this relates to the point below regarding trust, rapport and containment). I would then share what aspects of points struck me as particularly interesting, moving, provocative or unclear, and ask the participant to expand on these points (in the order in which they had arose in the previous session). Second, I would share with the participant my own impressions in the context of the interview, such as "That sounds painful to me", to elicit further expansion, but also to 'check' my impressions with the participant's version of events or reality. Third, I would occasional make 'interventions' in the psychoanalytic sense of confronting the participant as gently as possible, with possible contradictions or incoherence that arose in the interviews; I practiced this with great care and with some trepidation, and only in the final interview session. As indicated by relational researchers and analysts Stopford (2003) and Jeffenez (2007), the practice of

conducting this sort of intervention is central to both leveraging the opportunity for exploring previously unconscious processes, and out of respect for the participants; to not assume the researcher 'knows best' and can be trusted to have an accurate understanding or account of what is being communicated. This aspect of a dialogic approach is arguably quite central to a *relational* approach of conducting qualitative research interviews. While I adhere to the notion of the defended subject (Hollway and Jefferson, 2000, (as well as the 'defended researcher'), and assume how people respond to such interventions or feeding back may not be taken at face value, I maintained whatever response *did* arise (even if 'defended') was valuable and informative. Again, this is due to the epistemic assumption regarding the construction of meanings in narrative, and less of a concern for uncovering a form of 'essential' truth, as if there is a fixed 'truth' to be accessed through the research process.

I felt able to do this largely because I was not seeking to capture some sort of essential version of the participant's reality, and had a fundamentally relational view of the research encounter. That is, that all research is an expression of both the investigators desires, intentions and unconscious processes, and that what evolves in the research encounter is co-produced and mutually constitutive. That is, my subjectivity, intentions, desires and phantasies were *already present* in both the initial phone calls to set up the interviews, the survey, the consent form, and the way I conducted myself in the interviews. There was no point in maintaining an illusion, in my view, that I was somehow absent from the interaction.

I now provide two examples from the data of this dialogic approach: an interaction with Sally on the topic of 'save the whales' (see Chapter 5), and with Donald on the topic of his father's accident and dismissal from the paper mill (see Chapter 6). The vignettes illustrate in various forms the 'active' role I took in my interviewer capacity. First, in my interviews with Sally, the topic of her earlier involvement with the whales arose in the second interview. Sensing possible complex affective relations with this topic and her foray into environmental activism, I enquired explicitly as to what emotions may arise for her in considering this, in the third and final interview. Provocatively, I raise the topic of 'loss'; this reflects the practice of sharing my own reflections (and counter-transference) with the participant, as well as making quite transparent my own possible projections.

S: [Laughing] After you left, I was rather, um, I thought about it a lot after you left the last time.
R: About what?
S: All the different things I talked about. I hadn't thought about 'save the whales' in years and I still, like I said I still have three of those cards that you can, and you know, it's just really nice cards with envelopes you can mail out, I think I may even still have the T-shirt, and all the different

environmental issues that came up, that I remembered, it was [.] interesting to remember them all. And just, be that animated about it because, when you can't do anything about it, a lot of times, after a while, it's just, yeah, okay. Well there's nothing I can do. And, like for example, with the water 30 years later they are saying get going, there's nothing I can do in that 30 years. You know. So, sometimes you can just watch and see how things happen and what, what happens. So it was kind of, um [...] fun to touch back on that, how [.] intense I was at one point with the save the whales thing. And all the environmental stuff. And over the years you just kind of realise there's nothing you can do and you just go on, so it was, kind of um,

R: What does it mean to you that you were once passionate about those issues?

S: [..] um. [..] Hmm! [...] Somebody once said when you're young you need to have a heart, and when you're older, you need to be able to you know, have heart, be passionate over those things when you're young because when you're older your priorities change a bit, and as you're, in your 50s to 60s you start thinking more about retirement, and how you're going to live out your final years, things like that, and if you can help out you do. But on the whole, your priorities change. So. Um. It was [..] actually, I was glad. I mean everybody knew about the save the whales thing, I mean, my family thought it was hilarious that I would just, [laughing] get into that. But, it um, I don't know. It brought back good memories. I don't know if that's answering your question or not.

R: Yeah. Well, I guess I'm wondering, how, what it means to look back and to see that you were once really engaged with those things. And, um, I mean I hear you saying that you kind of have to move on, at a certain point. And realize-

S: -yes.

R: What you can and can't do. But that's kind of like, um, that's, that's analysing it, um, from your perspective now. Whereas, um, I guess when I ask what does it mean for you, when you look at yourself as a younger person-

S: Hmm hmm

R: Really passionate and, really um, yeah I guess, I guess I'm wondering what feelings come up around that. Um, if you feel maybe, like it, do you feel you lost something, or-

S: Yes and no. Because, [..] when you're young and you're not exactly sure which direction your life is going to go, how you're going to go, what your calling is in life, I guess calling, I don't know if calling is the right word, but what your abilities [.] are, and where you can make the difference. Um. You look, you know when you're young you're just kind of looking at everything trying to figure out where do I fit into this whole, where's my path, where's my [.] thing and that was it for a little bit, but as I got more into the music that consumed more of my time. So priorities changed, because of, with music there's practice, and there's rehearsals, you know there's performance, things like that. So priorities [.] Knowing that I have the ability to do different musical things, I can play guitar, I can play viola, I can sing, and [.] having those abilities, not using those and focusing on total environment

things, is not a good use of the talents and the abilities that I have. And there are other people who, [.] don't have those talents or not willing, it's not their passion. Music is my passion. So I think over the years, it just, it was a matter of, the music taking over more and more of my time.

R: Hmm hmm. [..] And did you find you thought about environmental things less? As you became more focused on other things?

S: Not so much less, but you pay attention, you read it like I would have read the article and I would have looked at it and saying, I hope they start it soon. I hope they really don't let them out of it. I hope you know, that they will follow through and really make them do it this time. And that's about as far as this time, and otherwise it would go. Because there's nothing I can do.

In this exchange, my questioning and reflections prompts Sally to free associate, in her attempt to 'meet me' and communicate her experiences and reflections. She both corrects me—"Yes and no"—and uses the questioning as a springboard into a series of associations I never could have anticipated. What matters here is not so much if I am 'correct' or 'incorrect' in my perceptions, e.g. "Um, if you feel maybe, like it, do you feel you lost something", whether Sally feels she lost something, but the way in which she responds to the prompt. The vignette is also an example of a subtle form of 'intervention' and confrontation, in that Sally begins the topic laughing, with a sort of jovial quality, which I then sought to 'confront' by asking her about loss. I was resisting her tendency to present material in a light and joking manner, suspecting this was in fact a form of defence against potentially distressing emotions (I address this sensitive aspect of intervention in the ethics discussion below). What is also observed is the repetition of a 'core theme' (an element of the analysis, discussed below), concerning her sense of agency; "there's nothing I can do" appears throughout the three interviews, in varying contexts, but largely in relation to ecological problems. The ability to observe these repetitions would not be possible through conducting a structured, or even semi-structured interview, as the researcher may entirely miss areas of potential importance for the participant. In a dialogic, free-associative style interview, there is enough structure to facilitate a meaningful exchange, but also enough spaciousness to enable tangents, memories, flashbacks, joking, and so on.

In the example with Donald, during the first interview I present him with my response to a story about his father's accident and dismissal from his job at midlife (discussed in the case study, Chapter 5). I observed a contrast with the content of the story and the affective tenor with which he relayed it. I sought to both 'test' my perceptions and 'prompt' him potentially to disclose more of his experiences of theses events as part of the larger picture regarding his relations with Green Bay, industry, and environmental degradation, via the accident his father had with the paper mill.

The excerpt picks up while Donald is recounting his own career trajectory and a close brush with working for the paper mill.

D: So thank god, they had that policy at the paper company, I probably would have ended up like my father, working in a job, in a paper mill [..]
R: What would that mean for you?
D: That would mean just mean that I would, I would have a... middle income job, probably wouldn't have been feeling as fulfilled as I do today after spending an entire life in more of a management position, and um, who knows, if I would have been [..] I may have been so frustrated, just working in menial labour jobs, I would have... Lord knows what would have happened [laughs] I have no ideal. So having the opportunity number one to get the education that I did, to get me into more a white collar job, and then secondarily having the opportunity to learn a business, in a small company, thoroughly learn a business, gave me just a great opportunity to move into other areas of food processing business, where I fit, and enjoy my career and... uh did OK financially. And so... was able to provide my family and myself with a comfortable living, and I provided all of my children with an opportunity for education. So. [.]
R: I am kind of interested in what happened [.] to your dad [.] Because it sounds, uh, quite traumatic actually. And, I'm just curious, how that affected [..] maybe, some of the choices you made, as well as how you experienced that industry, and it seemed to affect him, and I am surprised to hear that he went back to work in paper [..]
D: Well, uh, you're very perceptive, that was a very, very traumatic time. The man put in, he started with the paper company right out of high school, and that was [.] his entire education, high school diploma. And he [.] Fort Howard Paper Company was one of the very good companies to work for in Green Bay, it was a non-union operation, and was up until the day they stopped being Fort Howard. But they, they did that, or kept themselves non-union by paying good wages, and keeping their people reasonably happy, so they didn't have anybody upset, and trying to push a union into the operation. By the same token, they had no protection, the workers had no protection from some of the decisions, some of the things that management did. So when dad was hurt, I can, I can remember, again I was just a young man at that time, I was in high school, and after he had gotten out of the hospital, he was confined to his bed for a number of months, and a couple of times executives from the mill would come and talk to him, and say don't worry about a thing, we will take care of everything, and I think financially they paid for his medical bills, for workman's compensation for his injuries and I don't know what kind of deal they gave him for his salary, I never paid any attention to that ,but nevertheless he went back to work for them [.] and [..] I don't think any of us know what happened, including my dad [..] they just fired him. They just told him, he no longer had a job. And it was so soon after he came back, that it was just, just a weird, way for professionals to treat somebody, that was injured while he was doing

his job. And you know, when I look back on that, I don't think that could happen today, they couldn't get away with pushing somebody out the door just because he had been injured. [Umm hmmm] So you know, it, it just... practically destroyed the man. Because that was the only thing that he did in his life, and then he had to go and try to find work [.] and it was almost like he was black-balled, as I tried to explain, if you were fired from Fort Howard, you must really be a problem guy, and no other paper company would hire him. He had applied to all of the paper companies up and down the valley and simply couldn't find anything. So [.] he had to take [..] after [.] he went to vocational school to try to get some other training for himself, but needed a job, so he went down to Kanosha, and my mother and his family, his family, this is right when I was married, and moved out of the house, but he had three daughters at home, they all stayed back in Green Bay, and he was down in Kenosha, and commuting once and a while to see his family [.] you know, it was a tough, three years I think he worked down there, and then he, he moved back into upper Northeast Wisconsin, and that's when he found this job at a paper mill in Nina Wisconsin. And he moved his family down to Nina then. So it was a tough time, it was a real tough time for [.] he and his marriage, and his family, and everything, just because of the separation, and uh, his inability to find a job that was meaningful and fulfilling for him. And uh, it was a very difficult, very difficult time.

In this vignette, we can see how the question posed to Donald is also a form of free association on my part; I share my impression of the story as "quite traumatic" but then continue to free associate, perhaps reflecting my collusion with Donald to skirt around the traumatic nature of the story. He responds primarily to my comment regarding the traumatic aspect of the events, and his detailing of *how* traumatic and "very difficult" it actually was for his father and the family. He does not address the comment regarding career decisions, although he does return to this a bit later in acknowledging the events may have had a "subconscious" effect on his decisions.

The balance between free association and dialogic interviewing is held in place through the understanding and location of the context, internal or interactional, around which associations are organised (Cartwright, 2002, p. 219). In approaching how free associations constitute certain forms of narrative and 'core themes', it is not enough to pay attention to the ordering of certain topics or memories; rather, naturally the ordering and language used in my questions and reflections help shape what is shared. In this sense, the interviews are viewed as mutually produced, and context-specific. As Benjamin (2004) has noted in her work on the intersubjective space produced through the interaction between two individuals, addressing the conceptual division between the 'doer' and the 'done to', I occupied my role in the interviews quite actively. I was both the 'doer' and the 'done to'. In order to accomplish this successfully, I had to attend fully to issues of trust, rapport and containment, so that both

participant and myself felt adequately safe to come together and share rather intimate discussions over the course of three hours.

The 'Girl on the Beach' Healing our Waters advert

Given the context of the research support, through Biodiversity Project and in connection with the Wege Foundation, sponsors of the *Healing our Waters* (HOW) initiative, I wanted to incorporate an element of HOW into the research. I introduced the advert, 'Girl on the Beach', a magazine print ad that had run in Wisconsin magazines a few months prior in the summer, as a prompt for free association, at the end of the final interview (see Figure 10 on page 18). The decision to bring in the advert at the end of the three sessions was the sense that enough trust and rapport may have developed to foster a frank and candid discussion; I hoped more affective disclosure may be possible as a result. The image also served a dual purpose of providing a highly effective prompt for the topic of environmental action, identity and concern, without my needing to enquire directly or 'frontally' about it. In many cases, the advert was a spur to expand on themes or topics that had arisen in the course of the three interviews, pertinent to environmental issues. The advert was an effective tool for introducing the topic of the Great Lakes. I was careful to present the image with a disclosure to indicate that I was not involved in the production or use of the advert, so they could speak as openly as they wanted. Only in one case, did one participant (Sally) take interest in the advert and request to record the details.[45] Finally as I had viewed focus group video footage of groups discussing this advert, as part of Biodiversity Project's work for HOW in 2006, incorporating the advert at the end of three in-depth interviews provided a useful contrast to the quality of discourse prompted in the context of a highly structured, facilitated focus group and a more free-form style dialogic interview.

Scones, brownies and cats: objects in the room

The incorporation of material and psychic objects into the data translates into a methodological practice of maintaining curiosity for how certain objects carry and hold meanings, are repositories, but also agents that can act upon our subjectivity as well (an attitude of mutuality and recognition of the agency of objects—and particularly how they arise, and how we use them—in our world) (Bollas, 1992). While not a central focus in the data and interview process, I took note of how certain objects were engaged in the interviews, by the participants and myself. As I discuss in Chapter 9, certain object relations provide indications of *reparation* that may fall

[45] She told me via in September 2009, in response to a communication regarding the delivery of the transcripts she had requested that she had donated to the *Healing our Waters* project on their website.

outside the radar for 'agency'. Such objects included animals, food, drinks and various artefacts presented (maps, photographs, artwork, books, etc). For a few participants, pets were a continual presence in the home and the interview space. I would often interact with the animals to pet, talk to, or otherwise alleviate my own anxieties, particularly at the beginning of conducting the interviews. Sally, for example, had two cats, and often we would break into a discussion of them; I noticed at certain opportune moments, Sally would suddenly break off topic and start addressing the cats. (I regarded this as a moment of 'changing the subject', and noteworthy in terms of what it suggested about the topic and possible issues raised.) The cats also served as a common language between us, as a fellow 'cat lover' and they helped put me at ease. During my first interview with Jeff, his dog "Rudy" kept poking his head in my lap, which caused much amusement. With Kerry, I had a strong sense of how her animals—a cat and a dog—were functioning in relation to the core narratives presenting in the interviews, particularly around loss of a sense of home and hearth, a childhood place on the farm where animals were a part of life. So the animals in this sense seemed transformational objects connecting her to particular affective relations and investments, and coloured how I engaged with the material.

Various artefacts surfaced in the interviews, contributing to research encounter. Jeff, for example, pulled out maps of the region and his hometown of Sheboygan in our first interview; later, he brought down from the attic copies of a university report and exams from an environmental studies course in 1972; he subsequently gave me copies (see Appendix G). This object clearly had significance for Jeff, (as I discuss in Chapter 9, regarding expressions of creativity and concern). Howard brought out family photograph albums, and black and white photographs he had taken of the Fox River decades ago. (Howard has since emailed me several black and white aerial photographs taken of his childhood home on the Fox River; over a year since the interviews took place.) The ways in which objects were employed to communicate or convey specific meanings, affects or associations was profoundly important for a holistic, more 'environmental' approach to the data; going 'beyond the text' and discourse to appreciate the materiality of the topic, and how affect circulates through things (as relations), as well as language, bodily sensation and metaphor.

An additional dimension regarding objects and their significance and relationally was through the use of food or refreshments. I noticed when participants offered me tea, coffee or something to eat, or when they did not.[46] I also found myself wanting to bring an offering of some kind, perhaps out of my desire to say 'thank you' for their

[46] In one example, a participant, Victoria offered me cookies she had baked for a church charity event in our third interview; my sense was perhaps she was feeling the need to 'mother' me as we discussed my distance from family over the holidays and her own sense of bereavement over her two daughters leaving home.

time and energy, but also undoubtedly out of an impulse to share something of myself with them, to introduce a sense of reciprocity within the constraints of the interview encounter. During my first interviews with Jeff, I brought scones from the local bakery, which his wife served with great pleasure with a special kind of tea (which they seemed to take great pleasure in doing). The scones and tea became a 'ritual' even though we met only three times; after the three interviews were completed, they invited me to their home for 'afternoon tea' before I left Green Bay, where I brought the scones and they served the tea. The desire to share food became even more pronounced when I brought a bag of pastries from a Greek bakery to Howard, one of the participants I felt most moved and affected by through our interactions. I brought Howard *arugula*, a middle-eastern pastry that is also popular in Jewish culture. I also brought him a brownie, a specialty of the bakery, along with a scone or two. In this sheer abundance of pastries for Howard, I could witness quite clearly something *I* was trying to communicate or share through the use of food. My encounters with him and the material generated had seemed to evoke a maternal instinct to 'care' for him, through the use of food (nourishment). I also desired to share something of 'me' through pastries from a bakery he would never normally visit, and pastries from my culture. We also had them together, so there was the additional sense of 'breaking bread,' in a ritualistic way. In feeling touched by Howard's narratives, energy and presence, I was moved to share something of myself, and to 'gift' him. The integration of objects also extended to the method of analysis, in attending to material objects in the context of the interviews—the interiors of homes, how they were decorated, if they had views of the water, their proximity to the water, that contributed to the data analysis as constituting environments, both imagined and actual.

Ethical dimensions

Relationships

Relationships within the interview process are an important consideration within ethical research practice (Lincoln and Guba, 1985). I position myself in Chapter 1 within an ethic of relatedness where attentiveness and reciprocity are important dynamics in any relationships. This was particularly evident as the study was 'shortitudinal' in design, collecting data over two months spent *in situ* in Green Bay. I found participants were often interested in my story, the nature of the study and remembered events between interviews. Often, as discussed above, people would share physical materials with me relating to the water, Great Lakes or region, such as family photograph albums, artwork, maps, university reports, childhood books, and in one case, the contents of her freezer (to show me her organic, locally sourced meat). Setting up the interviews also elicited data; one participant was so eager to do

the interviews, she rang me when I had neglected to follow up after a few days, and chatted at length about her interest in the study and suggested her parents may want to participant too. Closure for interviews were important moments and at times quite difficult to negotiate as a connection and relationship had been formed. Some people encouraged me to look them up in my future visits (Jeff and his wife, Jane), and others seemed content with wishing me and the research, well. There is a reciprocity to in-depth interviewing; the relational dialogic approach only strengthened this (Holloway and Freshwater, 2007; Wenger, 2003).

The interviews followed the standard ethical guideline for interviewing human subjects: confidentiality was ensured, and all data was kept in a secure and password-protected location in my hard drive and file cabinets. Further due to the nature of the in-depth interviewing, acute attention was given to facilitating a safe space for participants (as discussed above), through clarifying the research scope, making my interest in their contributions clear, frequently checking in (to see how they were feeling or had any questions), and their choice not to answer any questions they didn't wish to (as outlined in the consent form; see Appendix A). Adequate time was always given for debriefing both at the beginning or ending of each session (opening each session with asking how they were doing, if anything came up since our last meeting, or anything else that comes to mind, and closing each session with a similar query) and concluding the three interviews with a full debriefing if they desired. Transcripts were provided on request as well as the offer of the final product of the thesis. Participants were also instructed of their freedom to terminate the interviews at any point or if they did not wish to continue the full three sessions.

Confidentiality

Geiger (1986), Wengraf (2001) and Hollway and Jefferson (2000) note that anonymity in biographical research cannot be guaranteed by changing names or places. This perhaps applies particularly in detailed case studies, as illustrated in Chapters 5 and 6. Although the great majority of people would not recognise the participants in this study a close family member or friend possibly would. I have taken the precaution of using pseudonyms. Beyond this I have undertaken to ensure that the interpretations are grounded in strong analytical practices and are seen as my interpretations, a reality, rather than the reality of the participants. I have also striven to situate confidentiality within a wider ethical fame: in the interpretative practices, detailed below, I have attempted to layout the analytical process. The intention is to present the analysis as an interpretative process, the basis of which I can form suggestions and possibilities, rather than positioning the data as definitive or 'hard fact'. This seems

important in terms of making the work ethically honest, in that it is as much about me as researcher as it is about the participants and the place.[47]

Reflections on strengths and limitations of the methodology

As discussed, the activity of researching unconscious processes presents a formidable challenge for the qualitative, social science researcher. In contrast to attending to what can be easily observed and tracked, this process relies more on several complex, and at times tenuous, variables regarding how to design, conduct and analyse the research data. There are many 'choice points' along the way, regarding specific interviewing methodologies and theoretical frameworks, scope and focus of the data collection, ethical considerations and the thorny issue of interpretation and incorporating the subjectivity of the researcher.

In light of these challenges, the research design enabled the exploration of how to investigate unconscious processes, and engaging in a psychoanalytically informed epistemology. This epistemology embraces a complex view of subjectivity that presumes irrationality, conflict, ambivalence and contradiction; it is also a view that accepts anxiety as central to human experience, and is concerned with how anxieties are managed in relation to political practices and actions. The data generated through such a study therefore has the potential to bridge the political and the social domains, and can potentially introduce clinical concepts that may prove highly constructive to a more complicated and grounded view of environmental subjectivity. In conducting in-depth interviews over three meetings, what transpires is an interaction fostered by trust and rapport, which can bring dignity and restore integrity to the messy and complex ways we constitute our lives. Further, in attending to object relations, both internal, and external, we can begin to appreciate the need to consider how our practices and use of objects are both performative, affective, and meaningful, and can be 'read' akin to dream analysis.

There are aspects of the method that warrant caution and present limitations. There are certain questions regarding to the conduct of psychoanalytically informed research that must be addressed, e.g. the issue of training; whether it is possible to conduct this research without some form of clinical training, supervision or background. I managed to resolve the issue somewhat through the engagement of occasional clinical supervision, in addition to academic supervision; I consistently had the nagging feeling that the work would have benefited from a clinical background and perhaps training in infant observation, particularly with regards to

[47] A psychoanalytically informed project carries specific ethical considerations, including the accountability of the researcher and her or his own projections; as Walkerdine et al. (2001) state, "Put simply, in order to examine other people's unconscious processes you must be willing and able to engage with your own" (p. 85).

researching affect, and the inchoate dimensions of experience, which may exceed the limitations of representation through language (discourse). I felt capable of conducting this research by virtue of my years spent in various forms of psychotherapy and psychoanalytic therapy, immersion in psychoanalytic literature and years as a journalist conducting dozens of in-depth interviews for magazine publishing.

The second limitation or issue with regard to this form of methodology concerns the issue of team or group work in the process of analysing and interpreting the data. There are mixed views on this issue; Cartwright (2002), for example, advocates the use of a 'triangulation' to verify and check findings, to protect against 'wild analysis'. Hollway and Jefferson (2000) worked together as a team, and many psychosocial studies seem to employ a team model for effective analysis (e.g. Walkerdine, Lucey and Melody, 2001; Hoggett, et al., 2006). The intentions for using teams or group work for psychoanalytic psychosocial research are important. Working with others is not an attempt to mimic or emulate some form of 'objectivity' valorised in the sciences; it can be a recognition that when engaging with such intimate material, that is inevitably going to evoke certain projections, associations, or feelings due to our particular subject positions, it is beneficial to have others to share ideas and observations with. This model has long been in practice in clinical training, and infant observation training uses the small group seminar as a foundation for clinical development. A similar approach needs to be adapted in the production of psychosocial knowledge, and the role of teams and group work cannot be underestimated.

A third limitation to this method is the labour-intensiveness. As noted, conducting in-depth interviews, across three sessions, was extremely intensive in terms of time, as well as mental and emotional resources. In addition to conducting the interviews, is the task of writing up and then analysing the material, which all takes huge amounts of time. In contrast to software programmes that help with coding or organising the data analysis (e.g. Atlas.ti), this is all done by hard graft and 'by hand' as it were. I cannot imagine doing the data collection and analysis any differently. What would be required for longer-term application of this approach would be the sufficient resources to allow for teams to work, collaboratively and to distribute the labour, which would also then afford a greater number of participant interviews.

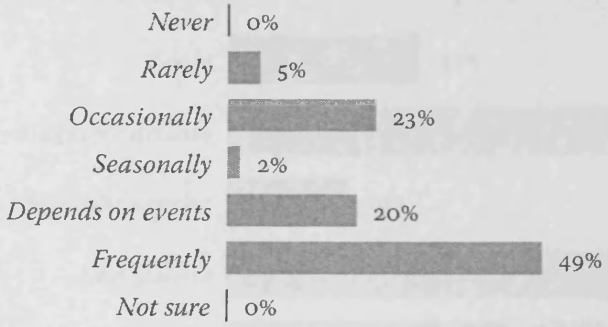
In investigating the topic of apathy—what is often perceived as the biggest impediment to environmental advocacy and restoration—I found, in fact, through conceptualising this particular methodology, I was able to perceive it as predicated on complex assumptions regarding what constitutes agency, guilt, shame, and lack of recognition of innate human creativity and sources of concern.[48] Throughout

[48] This point regarding apathy as perceived as the greatest barrier and obstacle for environmental advocacy will be picked up in the final chapter; as I was to realise later, that in fact from an 'engaged' environmental subjectivity, i.e. for those who are active in their environmental commitments and

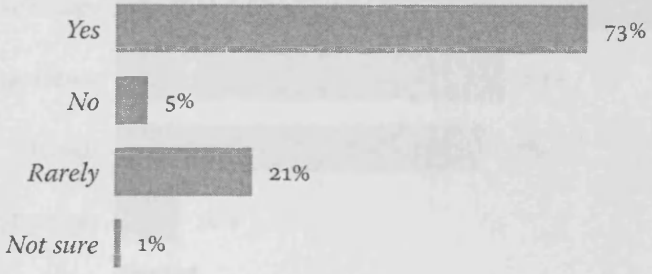
the research my own epistemic orientation shifted from viewing intrapsychic and interpsychic (and often unconscious) dilemmas, contradictions, tensions and ambivalence as *barriers* (the common parlance, reflected in the literature on engagement, as discussed in Chapter 2), to apprehending expressions or forms of environmental subjectivity that *may* or *may not* facilitate, impede or foreclose particular practices. I endeavoured to observe these dilemmas with a compassionate curiosity, and to take a holistic approach to psychosocial processes as conductive to creativity, concern and care—*including* aggression, guilt, destruction and reparation (Winnicott, 1986). In so doing, my own assumptions (and frustrations) regarding 'public apathy' became clearer, primarily through active attending to *countertransference* impressions during the research (discussed below), tracking my various fears, anxieties, and at times dread in conducting a study in the 'heartland' of industrial United States. Embodying a psychoanalytic epistemology in relation to the research project was to ultimately transform my conceptions of conducting qualitative psychosocial research, in terms of how knowledge is generated, experienced and the task of interpretation and analysis (as discussed below). The following five chapters present the data analysis, comprising **Part II** of the thesis, prefaced with a discussion of the data analysis methodology.

passions, the labelling of inaction as 'apathy' presents indications of projection and splitting, so that apathy itself becomes the Other and those who appear to constitute an apathetic subject position are therefore demonised and Othered quite un-reflexively. The 'apathetic subject' is the repository for disavowed and self-hated aspects of an inactive, uncaring or aggressive self.

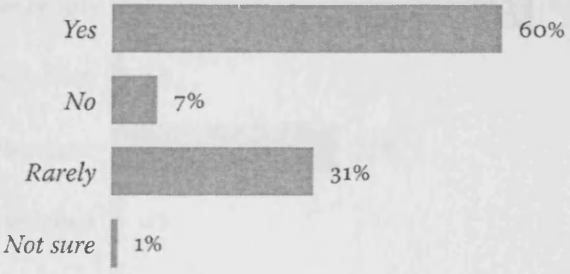
I think about environmental problems (including local issues, or those in other parts of the world):



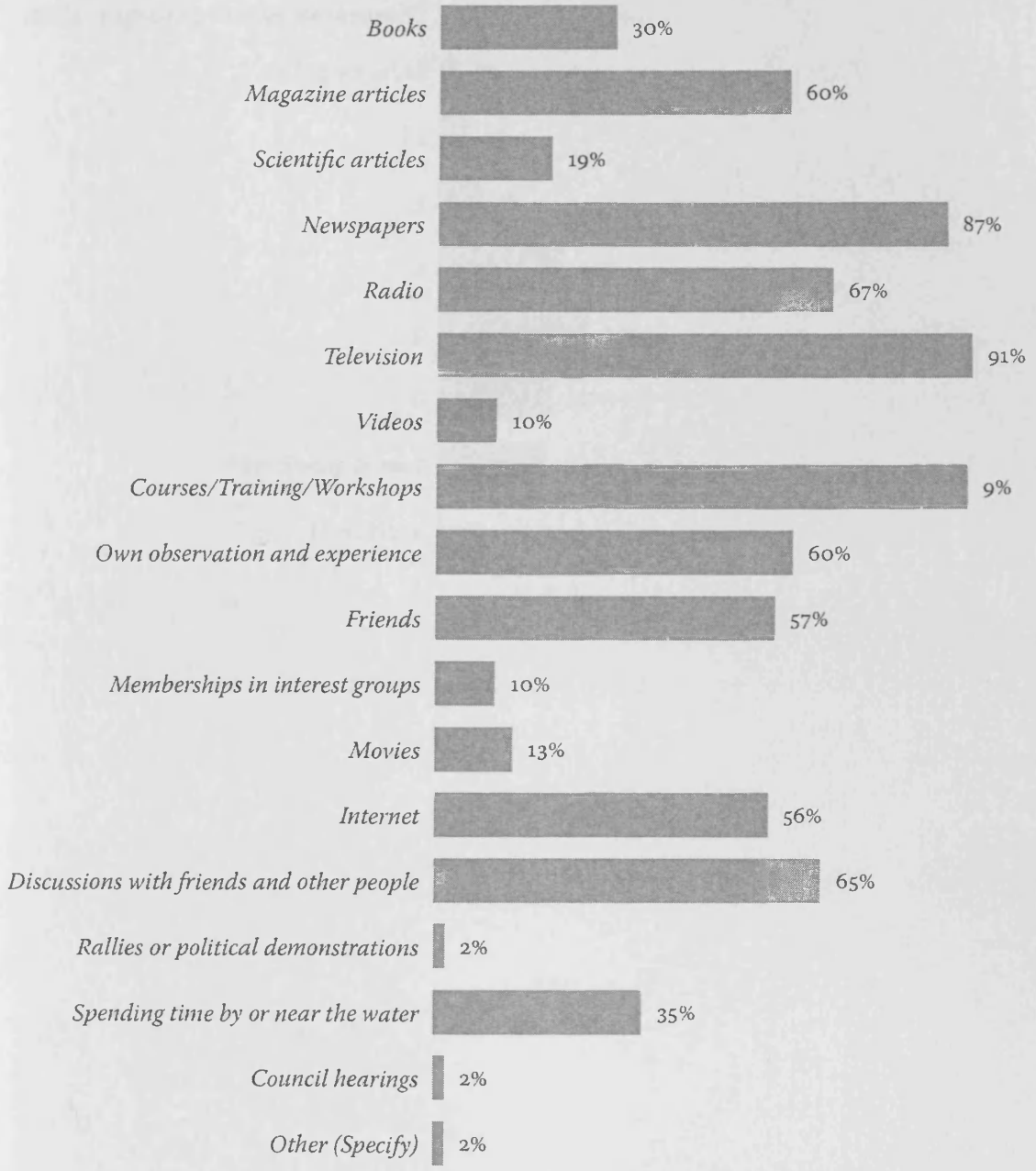
Are these environmental issues you shared above ever discussed within your family?



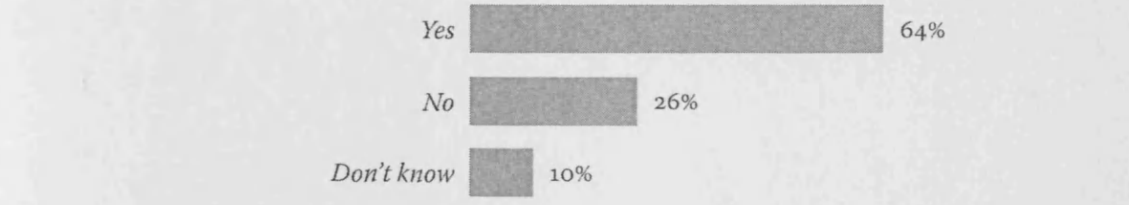
Thinking about those same environmental issues you shared above, are these issues ever discussed among your friends or colleagues (e.g. work, church, etc.)?



Thinking about those same environmental issues you shared above, are these issues ever discussed among your friends or colleagues (e.g. work, church, etc.)?



Have your feelings or behavior towards the environment changed over time?



Using a 1 to 7 scale with 1 being 'No Impact at All' and 7 being 'Very Strong Impact', how much impact do the following sources of information have on your feelings or behaviors towards the environment.

—Books, magazines, articles, newspapers



PART TWO

Psychic dimensions of environmental subjectivity: Analysis of the data

The data collection process has focused on primarily on a variation of the psychoanalytic research interview; a *Dialogic, Relational Interview* approach. The style used both for the research interviews and the whole of the data collection and analysis is largely informed by a psychoanalytic epistemology as centrally concerned with intrapychic processes and unconscious meanings associated with situations, objects, phenomena or practices relating to the environment. It is my hope that in attending to possible underlying unconscious dynamics concerning the experience of environmental degradation, the complexities and dilemmas attending living with chronic ecological problems may receive greater respect, acknowledgement and ultimately support through more effective communications and outreach practices. As the researcher I have endeavoured to become as sensitised as possible to affective dimensions, currents and flows running through the data.

In introducing Part II of the thesis, the data analysis chapters, I discuss how I approached the data analysis process. I will first preview the central aspects of the analysis: the search for core narratives or 'plotlines'; exploration of object relations; attention to feeling states and use of countertransference, and the ecological contexts of the region (place-based awareness and experience). I will discuss briefly how I analysed the data using object relations and thematic tables and affective 'flow charts'. I then discuss issues of reliability involved with the psychoanalytically inspired research interview data analysis. I conclude with an overview of the following five analytic chapters: two case studies and three thematic analytic chapters.

Core narratives and plotlines

The central intention underlying the data analysis process is to expand the field of meaning surrounding various environmental topics. That is, to create the context and space to notice how environmental objects are both psychic and material objects, and as such, to bring nuance to the ways people are relating with their local environments. This approach deliberately casts as wide a net as possible in collecting stories, vignettes and accounts (as I told my participants) in recognising how our relations with the world are often imbued with affective investments, memories, desires and anxieties—and are anything but straightforward. The structure of the interviews as fluid (dynamic) and open-ended and free associative capitalised on this 'open net' and, as I told my participants, I was very interested in anything they happened to feel like sharing, and nothing was 'off topic'. That said, the interviews had a focus and a direction informed by my own intentionality and interests: during the three interviews I would seek clarification on information gathered in previous interviews, confront the participant with contradictions, conflicts, or idiosyncratic forms of speech (e.g. nervous laughter), and put forward preliminary interpretations of my understandings of the emerging conflicts, anxieties and so forth (Cartwright, 2004, p.

225). How participants responded to these gentle 'interventions' provided additional insight, regardless of the nature or style of their response. As stated, the interviews were viewed as co-produced and relational.

In light of the research objectives, the search for core narratives in the interview material has revolved around how certain topics (such as the river, water, health and so on) arise and are engaged throughout the three interviews. The search for core narratives, as Cartwright (2004) and Jimenez (2007) have noted, involves searching for storylines in the interview that isolate a particular scene or plot that can be related to the topic of the environment in some capacity. In addition to storylines or 'plots' I was also interested in noticing key protagonists, or characters (objects in psychoanalytic parlance) appearing as significant. I was both very interested in specific stories told, and what meanings may be present in the telling, as well as the affective themes that constituted 'core narratives' as I listened during the interviews and later to the recordings. An affective theme may be the strong sense of loss that comes with adulthood and a poignant disappointment in childhood ideals or expectations; this theme may be related through numerous stories and accounts, as well as the affective tenor (sighing, crying, voice tone and so on). While most qualitative data analysis attempts to remove the 'noise' in the interview to identify key topics, and often uses software programmes for coding these particular narrative themes or 'topics', a psychoanalytic approach favours the 'noise' and attends to how repetitions, a cough, the way a pet may draw attention, a digression or incoherence are potential "signifiers of unconscious meaning and risk being lost" (Cartwright, 2004, p. 228).

I therefore engaged in the whole of the interview material, both as individual interviews and across the three interviews as a 'series' or set of three, immersing myself in the content and resisting the pull (having internalised the qualitative research task of parsing and fragmenting text) to break up the text prematurely. Therefore the first step was an immersive process of listening to the recordings, reading the transcripts, and reviewing my field notes and countertransference impressions (discussed below). The *whole of the interview* in this case also refers to the experience of being in the home, the feeling of the space and atmosphere, the provision of tea or cookies or refreshments, the time of day or evening, the location of the home in relation to the river or the bay and the drive to and from the home and the various landscapes I traversed. The environment was viewed as integral to the material and inseparable from the interview content.

Environmental object relations

After the immersive process I would begin to draw out possible affective themes, specific core narratives and environmental and other forms of object relations, and sketch these possible relations and flows in a variety of ways. I began with pen

portraits, (Hollway and Jefferson, 2000), to evoke a sense of the participant and their biographical contexts. I would then notate across the three interviews, specific environmental objects and themes as they arose (referred to as 'environmental themes'), and how they may have shifted across the three interviews, in free form prose style. To help gain greater clarity I would translate this prose into a table, to chart out the specific objects and themes. For example, we can see in Appendix F a table I created in analysing the interviews with Donald. In the case of participants with specific objects that arose in the interview materially or figuratively, I would create separate documents for writing up analysis of these specific objects, such as the book *Paddle-to-the-Sea* (Holling, 1941) that Donald had presented. I obtained a copy of the book for myself through a used bookshop and spent time with the book as well, reading the story and developing a feeling for the storyline of the book and its possible meanings for the participant. In doing so I incorporated my own impressions, associations and interpretations in light of the contexts (Green Bay, father's injury and so on).

An additional process taken with the analysis was the creation of 'affective flows' and experimenting with charts to visualise these flows and relations. As an example I include a chart created for participant Victoria (see Figure 16). Creating these charts in the process of writing up the analysis helped me encompass both topical and affective themes and dimensions which may have been missed through a straight-forward narrative analysis only focusing on particular incident narratives (PINs), plotlines or topics, or using keyword location techniques with software programmes. My overall intention in creating the charts, tables, notes and 'case studies' for each participant was to maintain the integrity of the material, in its wholeness and investigate the quality and tenor of environmental object relations.

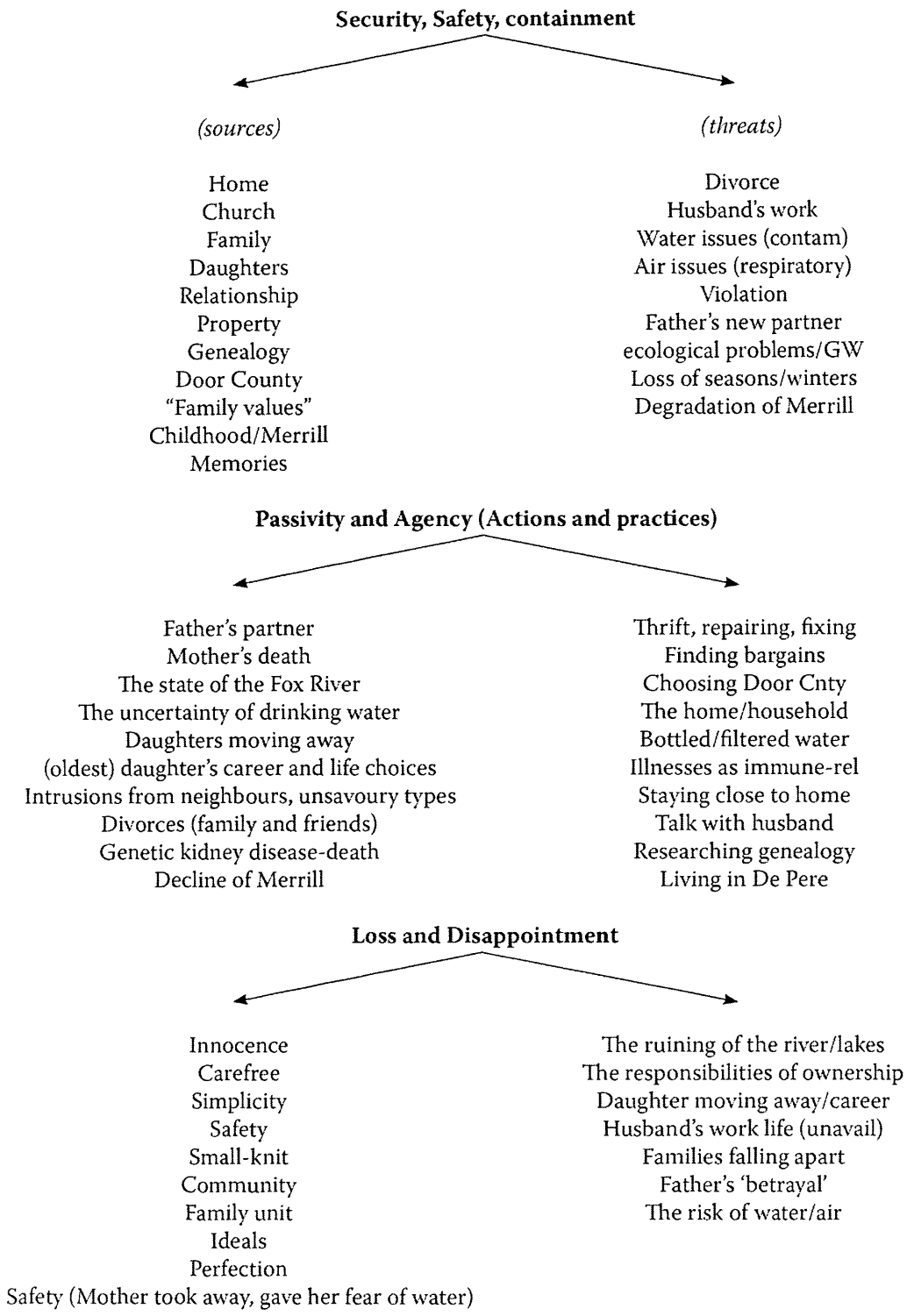


Figure 16: Victoria, data analysis chart (affective and object flows)

Countertransference and feeling states

As Cartwright has pointed out, in most analysis of interview material the emphasis is placed on the finished transcribed text (Cartwright, 2004, p. 226). As I have hoped to make clear in the previous chapters, the analysis of the interview takes place both during and before it happens, with the exploration of the researcher's motivations, intentions and assumptions. As I have discussed, I have interrogated my own assumptions and motivations in the early stages of the project, particularly in terms of my expressed interest in anxiety and my own feelings whilst sitting in lecture halls and learning about quite terrifying environmental crises. The point of interrogating the researcher's position in relation to the study is to make as transparent and explicit as possible what the researcher brings to the analysis. As Cartwright (2004) notes, "The aim is to ensure that any particularly impressive preliminary response to the research topic can be checked and monitored for its potential influence over the interview process" (p. 226). Examining such presuppositions only helps make the 'hermeneutic circle' involved with data collection and analysis more contextualised. Attending to feeling states and inchoate countertransference during the course of the data collection process is integral to a psychoanalytically oriented research study, as discussed in the previous chapter. It is the absence of presence of this emphasis that tends to differentiate social science qualitative research from more psychoanalytically informed methodologies; this is because countertransference is viewed in the clinical context as a vital and intrinsic tool of the methodology (Orbach, 2009; Cartwright, 2004; Stopford, 2006; Walkerdine et al., 2001).

Inchoate feeling-states and countertransference, however, are not included in the writing up and analysis of the data as 'evidence'—rather, as "a corroborative source of information that confirms or disconfirms analytic impressions" (Cartwright, 2004, p. 226). I engaged with my countertransference impressions as clues or indications of what may be taking place in the interviews. If I felt particularly anxious at particular moments for example, I would note at what points in the interview these feelings came up and explore what such impressions may be indicating. However I would not 'lead' with these impressions; they constituted part of the context and background I have been referring to as part of the 'field' of the study. In certain instances, the countertransference material emerged as significant for guiding my attention in a particular way; for example, while visiting one participant's home I often felt quite breathless and 'full'—I realised later that both her space was quite filled up with things but also psychically there seemed to be little space to reflect. This helped me see that perhaps a defensive strategy for managing certain painful losses may be to keep busy and 'full', hence my feeling quite breathless or full during the visits.

Countertransference impressions were also noted throughout the time in Green Bay; keeping a field notebook, I would record and track mood, energy levels and

feelings states. As an environmental project, I spent as much time as possible outdoors and 'in' the site, often running or exercising on the Fox River Trail (see Figure 17), and impressions experienced were recorded and reflected on. I often felt quite mixed when running on the Fox River Trail, for example; while it afforded a pleasant trail outdoors for exercise, it also faced the same industry connected with the degradation of the region. As I sat facing the river, I was noticing my own mix of impressions and confusion. (See Figure 18.) Rather than deduce from these impressions any conclusions regarding the way in which certain environmental objects are 'split' or negotiated, it helped inform my understanding when participants would vacillate in their own impressions of the river, the water or Green Bay itself. Having spent time in the site and on the trail, I had my own references and impressions to draw on. In this sense, the study as a psychosocial project has explicitly endeavoured to bring *in* to the project the environment and ecological contexts. Thus countertransference is also related to the sensations, feelings, and associations with the *place* as well as in the interviews.



Figure 17: Running the "Health Trail" (2), Fox River Trail, Green Bay, November 2007, J. Galt

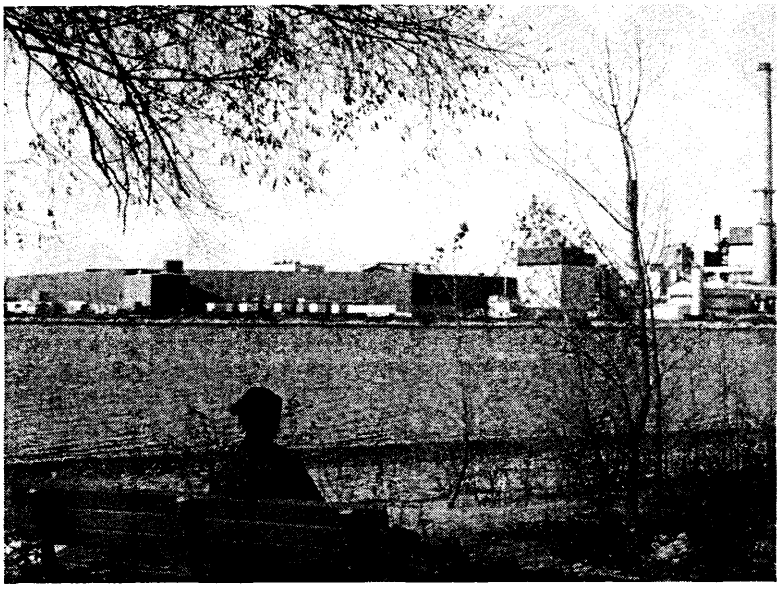


Figure 18: Fox River Trail, October 2007, J. Galt

As I have discussed, one of the central theoretical themes for the project includes Guatarri's concept of the 'three ecologies'—psychic, social and ecological registers informing and influencing one another. Translating this into the methodology, it has been vital to incorporate analysis of 'environmental object relations'. Whilst Cartwright (2004) discusses the importance of object relations in psychoanalytic data analysis, 'object' tends to refer to significant relations, primarily humans, as is the case in much object relations theory (e.g. the mother or father as primary objects, cf. Klein, 1935). Psychoanalysts Winnicott and Bollas, as discussed in Chapter 3, are quite singular in their attention to the transitional (Winnicott, 1953) and transformational objects (Bollas, 1992) as significant non-human object relations. In reading the material for core narrative themes and affective themes, I also incorporated analysis of specific environmental objects. In creating levels or 'layers' of material—narrative, affect, environment, object, biography, region—I have attempted to introduce precisely the dimensions that are so easily missed or overlooked using less in-depth or intensive methodological tools, such as surveys, polls or focus groups. In having three interviews per participant I was afforded a surplus of rich material: the challenge was in managing the analysis in terms of scope and scale. I certainly felt I could have produced an entire thesis project from one participant's interview material.

It is based on these concerns of scope, scale, depth and integrity of the material that I chose to present two case studies and three thematic analytic chapters. The case studies are presented to reflect the complexity of the data and what an environmental analysis may look like when viewed through a more psychoanalytically informed lens. Organising the case studies was itself a challenge, as I did not want to be reductive of

any of the material and as stated, wanted to preserve the 'wholeness' and integrity of the data in terms of how psychic, social, ecological influences and factors flow into one another and constitute particular subjectivities. I selected the two participants for the case studies based on the richness of the data and as examples of particular aspects of the material: in the first case study about Donald, the confluence of the book, his father's tragic experience with the local paper mill, Donald's own environmental commitments and affective investments seemed a strong case in presenting how the influences mentioned flow together.

In the second case study, Sally's story conveyed the enormously complicated struggles and dilemmas relating to environmental awareness and concern. Both case studies were particularly moving and poignant for me, as accounts of individuals with high levels of environmental concern and yet low levels of 'agency' due primarily to affective factors. Their stories help to illustrate the disjuncture often observed between concern and action in the public tend to be more complicated than issues of whether or not people understand the problems or have access to resources. They tend to involve issues of biography and life story (e.g. the trope of surviving and 'getting on with things'), perhaps unresolved loss and mourning, or a deep sense of powerlessness that is related to class and gender. The emphasis is less on providing a definitive statement as to why individuals do not act, but rather to surface and illustrate as richly as possible the variety of factors and influences at play in these highly complicated situations.

The three analytic thematic chapters stem from the process by which I began to realise the affective, psychic themes emerging from the data were not what I had expected; that in fact rather than anxiety I was overwhelmed with a sense of sadness, loss, longing and potentially mourning. The analysis led me to query more deeply into the nature of loss and to consider its application to environmental, material objects, and to expand the field for considering how losses of environments can be as important as human relations. Further, I observed the blurred distinctions between the material and human relational objects, in that certain objects (the riverbank, the sand dunes, a boat) also involved associations with significant relationships. (For example in Donald's story of his aunt taking him on a walk in Baird's Creek as a very young boy, discussed in the next chapter, we see Baird's Creek and his aunt, the book about the Great Lakes and his father's injury flowing imperceptibly into one another.) For this reason, the presentation of analytic themes as they appeared through the data was organised along affective flows or 'flights': loss, longing and mourning; ambivalence and splitting of objects, and how concern, creativity and reparation is relevant both for understanding the data and implications for practice in communications and advocacy. In presenting the case studies and three thematic analytic chapters, the data is presented holistically and systemically, so as to not fragment or

disrupt the constellations, but able to present a coherent story or analysis. The two case studies present detailed analysis of two participants' data, highlighting key object relations and core themes. The three thematic analytic chapters to follow present three *interrelated* theoretical dimensions surfacing from the data: loss, mourning and melancholia; ambivalence and splitting of objects; and concern, reparation and creativity. As psychic processes, the themes presented are dynamic and constitute *constellations*; as such the chapters are interlinking analyses, constituting possible unconscious processes underlying the myth of apathy.

The Participants: Present and Absent

As discussed, I selected ten participants from the survey responses for the interviews. While I conducted interviews with all ten participants, not all of their contributions appear in the present study. There are varied reasons for these omissions. In one case, the final participant, Jessica, did not show up for our final interview appointment at her home. She did not respond to my follow-up emails or phone calls. While I found the first two interviews with her fruitful and productive, the lack of the final third interview translated into a partial set of data for my analysis. For the other three who are not invoked in the data analysis, the reasons have more to do with the timing of the fieldwork and the style of analysis undertaken, as continual throughout the entire data collection phase. That is to say, I had considerable data analysis underway by the time I was nearing the completion of my interview process. What I found was the richness of the interviews and the participant interactions was consistently high, and while I wanted to include thorough analysis of all ten—including the woman who did not show for the final interview—I found myself 'putting aside' some of the data for further analysis and writing up.

Therefore the factors leading to inclusion of certain participants in the study has more to do with logistics and time, than of preference or selection. The final four participants are largely absent from the present study: Dana, Ray, Scott and Jessica. Although introduced early (see page 20), I include here ten brief 'pen portraits' by way of situating and introducing the participants in terms of impressions and themes.

Donald. Donald is the focus of the case study in Chapter 5 (see Chapter 5 for a pen portrait).

Jeff. Jeff was the first participant I interviewed from the survey responses. Jeff was a jovial and relaxed man, who had grown up in Sheboygan Wisconsin, a community on Lake Michigan approximately 50 miles from Green Bay. Jeff lived with his wife in a large, ramshackle Victorian home directly on the Fox River and the Fox River Trail. He had a large, friendly dog, an active presence during the interviews, often poking his nose into our laps for attention or treats. Jeff was from working-class

roots, as were all of my participants, and relayed the narrative of his father losing work, not unlike the story Donald had provided. I was particularly interested in the way in which Jeff's environmental concerns and commitments unfolded gradually throughout the interviews, to the point where it was revealed he had taken one of the first environmental studies courses offered in the United States at the University of Wisconsin in Green Bay, and brought out his typed reports to show me—even loaning me the documents. The reports concerned his work on a local nuclear energy plant project, thereby vividly complicating the themes around environmental protection and industrial development. I became friendly with Jeff and his wife, so that they invited me to their home for tea before I left Green Bay, and continued the 'ritual' I had started of having scones, muffins and tea during our visits. We have also kept in contact through email.

Victoria. Victoria was the second participant I had selected and who was available from the survey responses. She was a stay-at-home mother, with one daughter who had left home for college and the other due to leave the following year. The house was located in De Pere in farmland country, and with close proximity to CAFOs (Concentrated Animal Feeding Operations), a white Colonial style home with shutters and a long driveway. Victoria had decorated the home entirely and it was tidy and comfortable, with soap operas on the TV when I arrived. Victoria was very active with the local church community and was preoccupied with the rate of divorce among her family members and friends. She also seemed preoccupied with the health and wellbeing of her own marriage, her daughters, and the sense of divorce encroaching on her life. This preoccupation was focused primarily on her father's pursuing a new relationship, in what she perceived as too soon after her mother's death. Victoria provided highly rich and vivid accounts of childhood, as well as her childhood hometown, and the interviews were coloured with a sense of longing, nostalgia and idealised memories of her earlier life. These idealisations appeared to be bound up in how the water and nature were experienced and perceived, both as threats and risky, and as havens for returning to a simpler and more romantic time. During our first interview, Victoria burst into tears when speaking of her father and their relationship (as "broken"), and she seemed to enter into the interview process quite openly. I was particularly struck with how she initially presented an idealised view of the Fox River (citing the boat ride, the Foxy Lady), and by the third interview, laughed at her earlier comments (when reminded) and noted the fact she found the Fox River quite sad due to its neglect and rubbish. This was also seen in the casting of Green Bay as both idealised (for raising a family) and acknowledging the fact the entire family developed respiratory infections after moving to Green Bay, particularly her infant daughter, and the sense of uncertainty regarding the drinking water quality.

Sally. Sally is the focus of the case study in Chapter 6 (see Chapter 6 for a pen portrait).

Howard. Howard lived in a small bungalow in De Pere, a small town adjacent to Green Bay (see Figure 4 on page 14), in a home he had purchased from his grandmother. When I met with Howard it was in the beginning of winter, and I had to navigate snow (and one evening, a snow storm) to travel to his home. Howard had been engaged very physically taxing work for decades, primarily as a contractor and doing odd jobs. We sat in his living room and he would bring me water, and on occasion go to various boxes to retrieve relevant photos of the river, and family holidays. Howard had expressed from the beginning his sense of political inefficacy and his participation in the research as a form of having input or an impact, on matters that he cared about. Howard had extremely high levels of awareness and ecological literacy concerning the local watershed and industrial development, and perceived environmental advocacy and activists as wanting only money, and occupying a particularly manic or zealous subject position, which he distanced himself from. As a person of principle and able to tolerate uncertainty, Howard regarded much environmental discourse, particularly in the local area, as polarized and black and white, and he had particular disdain for ideas that had not been considered thoroughly. The central themes of the interviews revolved around the issue of agency, in his own personal circumstances (his desire to live in the country but his seeming paralysis to make the move), and the ways in which he was able to express agency and leadership in certain contexts, even from an early age (staging a play in school, being a leader in work), and not in others. Howard responded to my emails following up, and graciously sent me scanned in images of his home and the surrounding region that his father had taken. The photography objects figured prominently in the interviews and as potentially 'transformative objects' in terms of maintaining positive affective investments in the region and the Fox River in particular. Howard was the only participant I interviewed who grew up swimming and boating in the Fox River; he also mentioned his contracting hepatitis in high school, an experience that seemed to lay the groundwork for a career working outside in all of the seasons and elements (perhaps in response to having been confined for several months as an adolescent boy).

Heather. Heather was a single woman living alone with her dog and cat, both of who were active presences in the interviews (in the room, trying to play, chasing the microphone cords, etc.). We met at her home, after she returned from work. Of all of the participants, Heather had the most rural upbringing, growing up on a farm and continuing to spend time at the farm after her parents had moved away to the 'town' about twenty miles away. Much of the interviews concerned the rich and highly detailed accounts of life on the farm, images that brought together family relations, warmth and nourishment, nature and play, and closeness with animals. As recurring

themes in the three interviews, the early experiences on the farm and in nature seemed to surface in her various moves, and her desire to relocate to the country, where she would retire and live at a campground. It seemed Heather could be happy living outdoors or camping, however her present lifestyle seemed far from this, as someone who worked full-time indoors as an administrator for a government office. Therefore the feeling tone of the interviews for me was one of melancholy, nostalgia and longing, however her affect was consistently even and at times, upbeat. There was a sense of humour never far from the surface in our interviews, and she was easy to laugh, at times at the stories she recalled. I found myself profoundly moved by her narratives and wanting to take an active role in helping her find a job working outdoors, say for the national park service. The interviews with Heather helped clarify for me the topics of the 'depressive position' (see Chapter 9), in her ability to both contain her desire and love for nature and living close to the water, and her current circumstances of working and taking care of her niece. The interviews also raised questions for the project, concerning what it means to mourn for losses that are not fully recognised, socially or otherwise (i.e. that which may be 'foreclosed'; see Chapter 8, the section on Disappointment).

Dana. Dana is the one participant who requested we meet outside of her home, in this case at her office. She preferred this space in part because it afforded certain privacy apparently not available at home (a closed door, for example), and my sense was that the topic itself—the water, environment, Great Lakes—was also something more 'private' and intimate for her. Ironically the office environment meant frequent interruptions by phone or office mates, and I felt impeded a more intimate style of relationality found in the other participant interviews. Dana was a high level administrator in the state government, and managed a very busy office setting. She seemed to enjoy her work and was in general a high-energy person. She spoke rapidly and her sentences at times ran together. She had grown up in Green Bay, in a very large family of seven siblings, and a large amount of our first interview concerned what it was like for her to live in a crowded house, and the peace she found during the times when she was home alone. The other central topic concerned the local park and swimming pool area, which was the main site she sought out to escape the crowd of the family, but also in terms of recreation and outdoor experiences. It was when Dana mentioned her 'secret' trips to the beach on the Great Lakes (Lake Michigan) and how only her mother-in-law knew about these 'elicit' day trips, during which she would drive out to a favourite café and then sit and read and lounge in the sun on the beach, that I took great notice. I recognised a significant 'object relation' in this account and a deep curiosity in the meaning of the water and this place held for Dana. For Dana, home was the equivalent of family (in this case, her family of origin and her immedi-

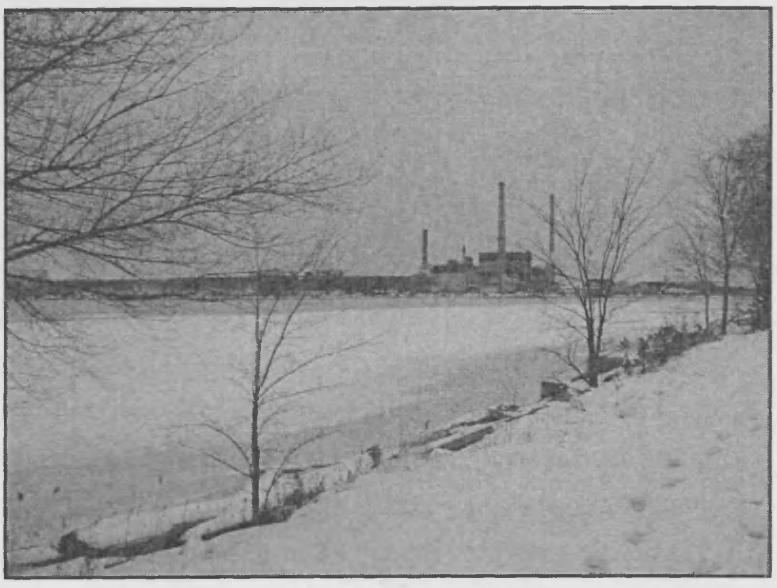
ate family of a husband and two teenage boys), a busy household in which she tried to maintain some order, and domesticity.

Scott. Scott was one of the younger participants (31), and met with me in his home whilst his partner was working and he was looking after their toddler daughter. Scott had an easy-going, relaxed manner, making frequent jokes and laughing quite a lot. He had lived in Green Bay since age four, and still had recollections (sensations, images) of his home prior in a hot and dry region in the Southwestern desert. One of the more compelling aspects of the interviews with Scott concerned his narrative of reaching out to Greenpeace as a child, and being sent a form for donations. This experience of radical lack of 'attunement' had left a residue of resentment and cynicism towards all environmental organisations. In contrast to the older participants, Scott expressed less of the affect of loss and mourning; he recounts the story of when he realised that in fact, the water near their home in the Fox River or the Bay was in fact, not clean, more as matter of fact than with a sense of longing or nostalgia. Scott possessed a moderately developed environmental awareness and literacy (i.e. being able to describe the issues facing the Fox River), and a style of communication that was jovial and joking. This mode of discourse suggested to me a distancing strategy from the material being discussed. This 'shifting' quality, noted in other participants and discussed in subsequent data analysis chapters, indicated the capacity to both 'be with' and 'stand apart' from the chronic local ecological problems. As a younger participant, with a small family, I was particularly interested in how he was able to negotiate the tensions and pressures of raising a small family on a limited income, and having the space and time to reflect on environmental concerns. Therefore the story concerning his earlier contact with Greenpeace was particularly significant as well as his ability to describe the water as both sparking and beautiful and degraded and dirty (see Chapter 8).

Jessica. Jessica was the youngest of the participants (23) and did not show up for our final interview. We met in her small apartment, which she rented on her own in a lower income area in Green Bay. She worked as an emergency phone operator (i.e. '999') and had had a tumultuous youth of drugs and reckless behaviour. The first two interviews covered her associations with growing up in Milwaukee (on the Great Lakes) and the move to Green Bay in her teenage years. The story or 'particular incident narrative' (PIN) appearing most significant in the interviews was of her watching a documentary about the Amish community. Amish people live 'off the grid,' in period costume and do not use any sort of machinery. They use horses and wagons for their transport. Jessica's fascination, and what bordered on an obsession, with the Amish provided a fruitful doorway for exploring her views and feelings associated with nature, with industry and cities, and her deep longing for a simpler and easier time. Through the Amish as 'good objects' Jessica was able to connect with something

entirely outside of her particular lifestyle and with the idea of a more natural way of life as being appealing. In pointing this out to her, she found this observation particularly useful and noted she had been reflecting on our interview (in the second interview). I was surprised and disappointed that she did not continue with the third meeting.

Ray. Ray was a stay-at-home father of a teenage daughter, married to a wife working full-time, and former professional in the paper manufacturing trade and not working due to a chronic health issue, Crohn's Disease. As a result he was drinking iced water continually and nibbling on salted snacks, both important for his hydration. He recognised the irony and poignancy of his own condition concerning water (pointing to an infusion IV bag, hanging from a rack holding the pots and pans in the kitchen) and the topics of the interviews, with an easy, relaxed joking style of relating. When I first arrived he was busy cleaning the floors, indicating from the start a man for whom domestic duties was a part of life and with no self-consciousness. We met in his home, a ranch-style property approximately 20 miles outside of Green Bay in a semi-rural region. Ray was a participant with high levels of environmental and industrial literacy, combined with low levels of 'action' or engagement in community or local activism concerning the environment or water quality. He spoke clearly, directly and we enjoyed a warm and friendly rapport. Ray was also particularly interested in the research, and followed up with me via email, wishing the research and me well. Ray seemed to particularly enjoy telling me of his early adventures on the water, i.e. engaging in high-risk activities such as snow mobiles on frozen lake ice, and suggested to me the complex interplay of the water and local environments as sites for rites of passage (boundary and limit testing) evidenced through many of the male participant interviews (i.e. Jeff's story of rafting down a swollen Fox River), and the capacities and desires for reparation and protection of these sites. Ray was clearly deeply concerned and angry about the local industry's treatment and degradation of the water resources, and seemed to participate in the interviews with high enthusiasm as an expression of such affective investments. As my final participant, I spent more time 'debriefing' with him than the other participants, discussing the nature of the project and my concerns after our third and final interview had been completed.



Fox River and Fort Howard, December 2007, R.Lertzman

Cos, you know, it's a classic, what goes around, comes around. It might not next month or next year, but .the contamination, wherever it is, everybody is going to have to contend with it, eventually, on the planet. You know, for a lot of my career I sold machinery that cleaned up waste paper pulp, and they start with a big tub, got a big mixer on the bottom, and they throw all the waste paper in there, beats it all up, makes it this big, gooey, looks like a brown milkshake, if it's not white paper, usually, you know, I'm talking about box paper, and everything goes in that, so, you know, there's plastic from these boxes, and there's staples from these boxes, and there's Styrofoam from these boxes, and, all the stuff gets, of course, all beaten up, and gets taken out by various methods, in the process depending upon what they are, if they float they get skimmed off. But I read recently where in the Pacific Ocean, I guess it is, see now, in the middle of one of these tubs, you know, you have this vortex, right, and it's all swirling, and one of the removal methods is they make a rake, they throw a rope in that's got a bunch of barbed wire on it, they just throw it in, and this, it's a rope maybe about twelve feet long, about this big around, and it wraps around inside this tub just by the motion of this stuff swirling around, it wraps on this rag, and then every, every few minutes you pull this rope out by about six inches and this continues to build from this plastic, and you can continue to do this then, as long as, as long as you continue to put waste paper in you can continue to pull this rope out of this plastic, and it'll be this big around, hard packed, it's like a rope. In the middle of the Pacific Ocean, there apparently is this huge, if you want to call it a vortex of junk, contamination, plastic, only it's, it's like the, what I just described, only on a much larger scale, apparently this thing is just miles in diameter, imagine this big island of plastic junk, just floating in the Pacific Ocean.

—Ray, Interview 2

Chapter Five

Case study: Donald

In the following five chapters, I present the data analysis in two case studies, and three thematic analytic chapters. As discussed in the Chapter 4, all aspects of the project are informed four central theoretical themes (to greater and lesser degrees): psychoanalytic theorising of subjectivity and the implications for apathy and agency; object relational theory and the environment; unconscious defences as both social and individual; and how ecological, social and psychic spheres are inseparable and co-constitutive. The data analysis is presented to reflect these concerns, primarily in the attempt to reflect a non-linear, 'constellation' of participants' environmental subjectivities. The format has been inspired by the genre of clinical cases and 'vignettes' in psychoanalytic clinical literature as a mode of conveying a partial account of often-inchoate processes in the psychoanalytic or therapeutic encounter.[49] The richness of the data and my impressions in Green Bay exceed representation as a research account; I negotiated this by presenting material I found potentially productive for extending understandings of environmental subjectivities, in relation to conventional discourses on gaps, behaviour and attitudes. I present core themes emerging from the data, and how certain 'objects' in both case studies fulfil and extend the participants' subjectivity (e.g. a book, photograph, poster, food.). The analysis is not exhaustive, but presents a glimpse into the complexity of these issues and often moving negotiations with difficult and painful relations with a degraded environment.

Donald: negotiating affective investments and environmental concern

Donald's story reflects several themes arising from the data; notably the capacity for simultaneously holding quite different associations and affective investments with a particular place and region, in regards to the environment, nature, family history and biography, and ambivalent relations. This region for Donald is associated both with deep affection and personal development, as well as brutality (as illustrated in his father's experience with the paper mill, discussed below). He expresses sadness and pain at the way the environment has been degraded, and yet celebrates the benefits

[49] I say 'partial' in the recognition that linguistic, discourse-based representation is only one part of the story, a fact I was often confronted with in my ongoing attempts to make the data coherent and translatable in a meaningful way. While I am not conducting psychoanalysis and there are important, fundamental differences between the research and clinical contexts, I found Ogden's writings on the limits of linguistic representation of unconscious dynamics in analysis valuable, and his invocation of dreams and poetics; see Ogden, 2005.

of industry that has made Green Bay such a 'nice place to live'. Donald is an example of an individual with fiercely held environmental concerns and commitments, and yet the ways in which he expresses these concerns may not appear as very 'active' or 'engaged', therefore signalling the complexity of what is meant and evaluated as 'agency' and 'action'. Further, his case suggests limitations in environmental practices that fail to enlist or involve him on terms he would be comfortable with. In an important sense, as I discuss below, Donald's relationship with Green Bay suggests a 'depressive position' as articulated by Klein (1935); as such it raises questions regarding both the emotional maturity involved in achieving such a position (e.g. the ability to accept objects as whole and fallible, including oneself) and affordances for agency and 'action' in the wider, more political and civic sense of the term. As Klein (ibid.) theorised depressive anxiety as only being overcome due to two processes of object relating—inhibition of aggressiveness and reparation of the object (e.g. mother)—what is conceptualised as 'reparation' and 'agency' requires greater analysis, as I address in Chapters 8 and 9.

I am interested in how Donald makes use of both internal and external available 'objects' in maintaining a supportive and nurturing connection with the region he knows has suffered great degradation; a place that brutally treated his father, leading to tumult and crisis in the family as a result; he is able to live in a property with a clear view of the very paper mill his father and family suffered from. He loved nature and the outdoors, and lost the places closest to him over the years through development and ecological degradation. Yet he demonstrates the capacity to both hold and contain these losses, whilst remaining connected with the 'good' objects, both internal and external.[50] I am interested in how losses are *managed* and what this may tell us about how Donald constructs his environmental subjectivity and agency in the face of serious ecological problems in the Great Lakes region, a place so closely aligned with his own sense of self and personal history. The question underlying the case study and data analysis relating to the 'myth of apathy' is this: how does a person with high levels of affective investment in the local nature and water quality, who has great concern for the water and its future (in addition to other serious global environmental issues), negotiate their choices regarding forms of action, such as joining or supporting environmental advocacy groups, being part of environmental restoration projects or becoming politically active? In other words, far from having a lack of concern or anxiety about the environmental threats and the future of the Great Lakes, we

[50] As discussed in Chapter 3, the use of 'internal' and 'external' objects is a direct reference to object relations theory, notably Klein (1986) formation of 'objects' as both psychical and material, and is elaborated in my view by Bollas (1992) and Winnicott (1953) in extending this theorisation to the ways in which objects constitute internal states, and thus how our relations with objects (people, memories, things, places) are both ideational and actual.

encounter someone who has great concern, a surplus even, and yet considers these matters private, to "hold close to my person" as he says in the final interview.

Case studies as gestalts

Writing up the case studies has been challenging, as my objective has been to maintain the integrity of the 'whole' and to glimpse how disparate elements are related; a desire to observe and note 'constellations' as opposed to linear, causal vectors. It is difficult to present constellations in a coherent, narrative form of presenting data analysis. As discussed in the previous chapter, in conducting the interviews as free associative and open-ended, it was my intention to capture whatever appeared in the 'frame'—the imposed structure, context and boundary of the research interview—as elements constituting a *gestalt* or pattern for investigation. This is not looking for a 'deep structure' underlying the material or in the participants' psyche, as something fixed or established for excavation, but nuanced and complex relations between disparate elements, themes or events; affective processes, often not entirely conscious or straight-forward either for the participant, or for the researcher. For this reason I encouraged participants to 'go where they felt like going' and assured them continually there was no such thing as going 'off topic'. Ambivalence, ambiguity, anxiety, loss and so on, are processes that may not be as easily represented as opinions or attitudes. As such the case studies are illustrative vignettes, prisms neither conclusive nor reductive, but can hopefully refract new combinations.

In this case study I present themes and topics for understanding how Donald situates himself in relation to chronic ecological problems he is well aware of. First I explore the ways in which nature and outdoors are also about relationships and in particular, family. We see Donald as someone with a powerful identification as a Green Bay native, with ancestors literally within walking distance (with the exception of the aunt from Chicago). Integrated into the narrative content of outdoors and nature is a subtext of loss; he refers to the fact that the places he enjoyed as a child are no longer available or accessible due to degradation or development. I follow this affective 'flight' to the property in Two Rivers, a 'good' object and idealised bit of nature protected from industry, a place to "nurture" the family and himself. I then briefly address two significant sites, in contrast to the 'good' object of Two Rivers: Bay Beach (once the good object, now 'bad') and the Fox River (which, in these narratives, seems to have always been 'bad' and abject). In relation to these objects I address his father's accident and dismissal from the paper mill and the possible impact this had on his own trajectory, and what it may tell us regarding the choices he has made regarding his own expression of concern and anger towards industry. Finally, I highlight the children's book, *Paddle-to-the-Sea*, which arguably constitutes a crucial element in the interviews and case study, and how this book, as both a literal and

symbolic object, may function in negotiating and managing a complicated relationship with Green Bay and its industrial legacies.

From Baird's Creek to Two Rivers: Negotiating environmental concerns

At age 69, Donald can remember what it was like to swim in Bay Beach, (closed for swimming since the 1940s), the soft sand under his feet as he waded out to the floating wooden raft. He also spent much of his boyhood running around Baird's Creek, "a sort of wilderness for Green Bay" with his friends, playing around the rocks, hills, woods, "doing whatever young boys in the forest do". It was in Baird's Creek they spent occasional overnights, built campfires, took their bikes and had autonomy from the world of adults and family. It was a rocky, hilly terrain, a place to test limits, explore and play, close enough to town, but like another world. At the start of the first interview, Donald recounts a vivid memory of walking in Baird's Creek with an aunt, at about age ten: "I'm not sure why this comes to mind... But I have a very vivid memory of us walking through the fields...". It was on this walk they tried to cross the creek across a log and both fell in; he laughs as he remembers this. It seems a story of being 'baptised' by the water, an initiation into the creek and place that would be so formative in his early years, arguably setting in motion an enduring love of nature and wilderness in his adult life. Donald expresses a deeply instilled sense of "respect for the waterways" and grew up spending much of his time outdoors exploring and being with friends. As with many families in Green Bay during this time, the outdoors and water life were central to recreation—boating, renting a cabin on a lake, fishing and taking a canoe down rivers (even the Fox River, an experience he suddenly 'remembers' as an afterthought in the final interview). Family recreation in nature often revolved around the father's work schedule, as it was often shift work and time off was limited; quick and easy access was key.

Family and nature

In response to the opening question, "Tell me about growing up in Green Bay, whatever you feel like saying about it, what comes to mind?" he provides a chronological account: "I grew up, I grew up on the east side of Green Bay, I was born August 29th, 1938, and my parents lived on what was Crooks Street, which was really only about three miles from where we are at today." He continues, "As a child, uh, I pretty much stayed in my own neighbourhood, my grandmother lived about three blocks away from us, we would frequently walk to visit her. My father was employed in the paper making industry, worked for a company called Fort Howard... we were part of a reasonably close-knit family in that there were aunts and uncles on my mother's side that

would frequently be with us or visit with us..." He is immediately situated in the place in a network of relatives and affective relations, and the paper mill.

As the oldest child without siblings until age six (when his sister was born), Donald has strong memories of spending one-on-one time with various relatives, often out in nature or on the farm run by his mother's relatives. The two incidents that come up right away in the interview are the walk his aunt when he was about five and the time he spent on the farm. Family relations and experiences in nature are evidently closely related for Donald.

D: I was exposed to nature... an awful lot, either with my mother or with another relative... my mother had relatives who lived in Green Springs, Wisconsin and farmed out there, so every summer, as a child they would allow me to spend a week or two with the farm relatives, and I would get involved and just [..] living and experiencing farm life. So that was always kind of a thrilling thing to do...
R: Was that with your siblings or just you?
D: Pretty much just me, because my sister came along... I believe I was about six when she was born, so I had an awful lot of opportunities to do things by myself with other grown relatives. So I was exposed then to living on a farm, and experiencing all of the neat things that go on.. on farms, I still remember as a child riding on the hay wagon, and farmers I was with still used big horses to pull wagons... and then a bit later on, they were much more mechanized, tractor power, that sort of thing....

He free associates from the farm to a let cottage on a lake in Northern Wisconsin, fishing and walking in the woods, "So I guess as I talk about these things I recognise that I had an awful lot of opportunities to get out... to get into nature... around the lakes and waterways of Wisconsin..." Donald also had an uncle who hired out small boats for fishing for perch on the Bay: "In those days, there were *good* perch and pretty nice water. Getting a bit shady but pretty nice water...". Donald is referring to the water in the Bay, which has long become too polluted to use for swimming or fishing. He recounts "another *fond* memory" of swimming at Bay Beach as a boy:

I'm jumping back, to go back to my very young years, probably this was seven or eight year old boy, my father would bring me out to Bay Beach, and Bay Beach was still being used as a... a swimming area. And I can remember the very nice sandy bottom that was on the bay at that point, and walking out, at least two city blocks, ummm, and never being in deep water. And then later as I learned to swim, I could walk until I was up to my armpits, and swim a ways out into the bay, to a wooden raft that was anchored out there, and many kids would use it to dive into the bay water. That, I don't have a specific memory of when that was all closed, but nevertheless they did close the area because of

> severe pollution and we lost one of the greatest spots for recreation... and they just shut the whole thing down, and nobody swam there anymore...

I try to elicit some sense of what this loss has meant for Donald by asking if he remembers when it closed. He says he doesn't—as if it just sort of closed and they continued to use the area for family recreation, as the city built rides and a wildlife sanctuary following the closure of the beach for swimming. It is worth noting that I started to feel a bit bored and drowsy at this point in the interview; there was a flatness to the account, a lack of emotional content. I experienced this flat, drowsy sensation when visiting the site of Bay Beach during my initial field site visit in 2007; while I wanted to feel more engaged and interested in the site and with my fellow guides, I felt a mixture of both boredom and malaise.[51] It resembles the sensation I would have often during the course of my interviews, and with Donald, when certain topics of loss were broached; there would be an almost flattening of affect and a move towards a different topic. In this case, after mentioning the closure of Bay Beach and my queries about his memories of the closure, he moves on to other (free) associations with childhood, youth and nature: 'good objects'. He mentions how a group of friends in high school would spend time in Baird's Creek, doing some overnight camping, and later after high school would take short excursions to Canadian waters, north of Lake Superior, for fishing, but that "he'd come back home and enjoy more of this local area..." At this point he introduces Two Rivers, the property he bought with his wife about thirty years ago:

> The connection I had with, or have with, with the outdoors, and with waterways... continued on into adulthood, after I was married and started my own family, about thirty years ago now, we bought a cottage that's twenty-three miles away from Green Bay... in what is known as the Marabell Caves area, that is located, that cottage is located on the west twin river, one of the two rivers that flows into Lake Michigan, in a small town called Two Rivers....

Two Rivers shares many topographical similarities with Baird's Creek. He describes the property in Two Rivers as having "lots of open land, that we use to hike, and walk and we have most of the time, enough water in the river to be able to do a little canoeing up and down the river, do a little bit of fishing out there, and we have enjoyed the area for all of these years, nurturing our kids out there, they have enjoyed it, to the point where when they come back home—all of them live outside of the city of Green Bay—when they come back home, that is one of the places they wish to

[51] As I discuss in Chapter 1, this mixture of boredom and malaise was brought to a head for me when, during a visit to the wildlife sanctuary in Bay Beach, I came upon the wild cat held in captivity and found myself in tears; perhaps an expression of both the sense of boredom I imagined the cat experiencing and the sense of loss and feeble attempt to create 'amusements' at a beach no longer available for swimming.

go... we now have third generations, children, enjoying that property..." Like Baird's Creek, it is a place for young people and children to run around, explore, climb rocks, play around in the water, and experience simultaneously "wilderness" and homeliness. Unlike Baird's Creek, however, the land at Two Rivers is protected and safe from development. Donald and his family can act as stewards for the land in a way the city of Green Bay did not for Baird's Creek, which has since been largely developed for housing and schools.

Baird's Creek: loss of 'good' object

Baird's Creek appears early in the interviews and is infused with positive relational associations. This begins, as mentioned above, with the aunt in Baird's Creek at age five.

> I had, I still have a childhood memory and I'm not sure why this comes to mind, but one of my aunts, that lived out of town, came to Green Bay [.] at that time I was probably ten years old, and she decided we should take a walk in the Baird's Creek area of Green Bay, which is the far east side, and I have a very vivid memory of us walking through fields, and we came to Baird's Creek, and I was, the water was running rather rapidly at that particular time, it must have been the spring, and we decided to cross it. And there was a downed tree across the creek, and we started gingerly walking across that log, and fell in. [laughs] and of course, it wasn't very deep, so we just waded out, but we were soaked to the skin, and then we came home. I don't know why that strikes [...] why I have a memory of that, but it was quite [....]

I ask what associations he has with that walk; he responds, "Just enjoying the outdoors, hiking, looking at trees, the hills, it was hilly, and very pretty area at that time. So I have good memories of that". This particular incident manages to crystallize and encapsulate certain affective associations and qualities Donald has with this place, with nature, and with this aunt (who is also gives him *Paddle-to-the-Sea*, discussed below). The reference to how the environment has changed is in, "It was very pretty, *at that time*." Donald spent much time in Baird's Creek throughout his youth, most often with other friends "horsing around", all the way through high school. Baird's Creek was centrally associated for Donald with that initial walk with his aunt where they fell into the water, and going with a group of male friends as young boys, "and do whatever young boys in the forest do... Nothing organized at all, whatever caught our fancy, horsing around with". (I admit to being startled to hear a nature preserve in Green Bay described as a "forest", which suggests wilderness and dense nature, despite its proximity to development and industry.) While Donald and his friends would take bikes out or just go rambling around the area on their own, he gives a

singular account of an occasion when "parental protection" was available at a time it was needed:

> I believe it was three of us... decided to do an overnight in Baird's Creek, and we brought along a tent and we were not by any stretch of the imagination experienced campers, so we just pitched a tent... as it developed during the night, ah, a big thunderstorm came through, and the result of the hard rain was that we had pitched our tent on a side of a hill, so the rain came running [laughing] through our tent, and we were frantically trying to stop it from washing us away.... One of my friends' mothers, a parent of one of my friends, must have got panicky because of the story, came out to the woods, having no idea where we were, and was riding up the road, and the road is a winding, twisting thing, yelling for her son. She in fact finally found us, we heard her beeping her horn, and she packed us up in the car and took us home.

Laughing, he concludes the story, "Parental protection at its greatest!" There is no shame in being rescued by the mother; the story conveys a strong sense of *containment*. With the exclamation, "Parental protection at its greatest!" Donald acknowledges a profound aspect of effective parenting: the ability to allow the child to foray out into 'the wilderness', test limits, experience autonomy, but to be present and protective if necessary. It is a remarkable story conveying healthy boundary testing and conveys positive affective associations of great warmth, affection and humour with Baird's Creek (as good object). Similar to other participants, such as Howard who lived on the Fox River or Heather and her family farm, the nature provided space away from the family and yet not too far away. However, Baird's Creek is a place of the past: "It's built up, there are a lot of homes" and while there is still a Baird's Creek park (where I went on a winter nature walk with a small group from UWGB), it is a tiny fragment remaining from the original park. He says, in the second interview, "I haven't been down there, um, in the areas where we used to do most of our playing, for quite a few years. But I do know there are homes, scattered throughout the whole area, little subdivisions. There's still, there is still some evidence of the hills and certainly the creek. Baird's Creek is still there, so there's still some *evidence* of that... So there isn't too much left any more... I think there's a pretty good-sized grade school, which supports the communities that have sprung up... [Sighs] Trying to think of anything else that went on at Baird's Creek... I'm at kind of a dead-end with the Baird's Creek...". His expression "dead-end" seems to be a double entendre, as he seems to have reached a dead-end affectively with regard to the place and its subsequent development, from the large area he once knew to a tiny fragment, "evidence" of what once was. His affective investments, as we shall see, have shifted to a new locale. In the interview, as in his own trajectory, he moves rather swiftly from his love

and immersion in Baird's Creek to the land up in Two Rivers he buys with his wife, as they begin to raise a family.

Two Rivers: the 'good' nature-object

After his accounts of Baird's Creek, Donald tells me early in the first interview about the property in Two Rivers he bought with his wife as newly-weds. As he recounts their first visit to the property and their decision to buy the land and the small cabin on it, the level of detail and visceral recall strikes me as significant, as it seems that Donald, in light of Baird's Creek no longer being available to himself or his family due to development, managed to shift affective investments to a new natural setting, which contains many of the natural features as the Baird's Creek of his youth: hills, rocks, a river, woods and lots of space to explore and roam. The narrative of their finding and establishing a relationship with the land conveys deep affection, humour (e.g. when they first went to the property it was overgrown, and they were attacked by mosquitoes, so they "walked away", but on their return the owners had cleaned it up and "somehow or other taken care of a lot of the mosquito population... so we pretty much fell in love with the place") and the close proximity to Green Bay:

> I think the driving force was... the tranquillity of the place, the uniqueness of the area, we were used to... walking through the woods and climbing the rocks and crevices that the river runs through... And the other important thing to me is that I was in the food processing business, vegetable processing business, and in those days the company that I was with required us to work all summer and autumn long, and there was no such thing as a summer vacation. I could not get off work at all. And so, with the location of that [...] cottage, only 22, 23 miles from our home, it was very attractive for us to be able to go down there, after work and spend a nice evening, around the campfire, or doing a little fooling around in the river, or [..] on a weekend spending the night in the cabin.

The property and cabin (since renovated since buying the land three decades ago) play a large role in Donald's family and his own enjoyment of recreation in nature. As he points out, they can use the land and cabin year-round, enjoying winter sports, and using the water in the summers for swimming, kayaking or just playing around. He mentions that it is a place his children return to, and now their children as well; the land at Two Rivers represents the future for Donald and his ability to pass on to future generations an appreciation and enjoyment of nature, as he had enjoyed in Baird's Creek and other areas in Green Bay before they were either too polluted to use or developed. The property in Two Rivers seems precious, vital and sacred to Donald. This suggests the role of steward, as a *creative, reparative* capacity as potentially significant for considering environmental agency; if it is not available through

civic contexts (e.g. protecting Bay Beach or Baird's Creek, or one's parent from misfortune as we shall see below), it can find expression in more 'private' practices, such as land ownership and passing on certain ethics to ones children and grandchildren. Donald takes great pride and pleasure in recounting the work done on the property—clearing brambles and weeds, renovating the cabin and installing a wood stove to enjoy year-round. This is echoed in Jeff's stories as well of fixing up and making properties habitable and to enjoy; as I suggest such practices are reparative and creative, if channelled in private realms. In contrast, there are participants who seem to lack reparative impulses towards their own conditions, as discussed in Chapter 7 and 8, suggesting a melancholic mode of relating with loss and degradation.

Losing a good object: "They just shut the whole thing down..."

How Donald articulates his enjoyment of Bay Beach and its closure suggests an ability to shift affectively to other objects or replacements; however the memories remain infused with positive associations. There are not many people still alive in Green Bay who can remember when Bay Beach was used for swimming, as it has been permanently closed for swimming since the early 1940s. Donald mentions Bay Beach in the first interview as, "A *fond* memory", with his father, learning to swim, walking out on the "very nice sandy bottom", to a raft floating in the Bay people would use for diving, lounging and hanging out. At the time, Bay Beach was a hub for Green Bay residents as a very popular swimming beach. It has since held the stigma of pollution, and has been replaced with a small amusement park, as if to conveniently substitute the pleasures of swimming with rides and an animal zoo. His memory of losing Bay Beach as a place to swim is vague and hazy, "They just shut the whole thing down". In the second interview, Donald mentions after Bay Beach closed they would swim in "very tiny, little pools and you'd pretend you were swimming by hanging on to the bottom and walking across the pool". He describes the large, newly built municipal pool, sighing when he says, "that's where the swimming now revolved". As I found throughout the interviews, when recounting an episode of loss, there is a surprising lack of affect. It is recounted matter of fact, and it is consistently in these moments I find myself becoming bored or distracted. I was not able to elicit much affect connected with this place, although it is recounted with vivid detail. There are strong visceral accounts of the sandy bottom, so one can almost imagine touching one's feet on the sand. When talking about the closure of the beach and replacement of recreation (with tiny swimming pools) I notice I start to feel bored and sleepy; there is a flatness of affect in his account, which leads me to feel a bit dull. My sense is that the loss of Bay Beach is numbed or dulled, a lack of affect I notice in other interviews when invoking places that have been lost. Similar to Baird's Creek, the fact it has been largely developed and is no longer a place to explore and roam is recounted with a

lack of affect, although it's evident Baird's Creek and Bay Beach were significant in his early life and he can recognize the fact such losses are inherently connected with the presence of industry and its impacts on the surrounding ecosystems, recreation and access to nature, and health. The tenor is a resignation, a sense of 'that's how it goes', lacking in affects of anger, resentment or even loss.

Related the closure of Bay Beach, is the advent of city-build public swimming pools. As Donald says wryly, "the city fathers were probably under pressure to provide swimming for the citizens." I was interested in how Donald coped with shifting from swimming in an open, natural bay, with a nice sand bottom, to small cement swimming pools. I imagined this was quite a disappointment, to lose such a central hub for the city and access to free-style swimming. When asked how he felt when Bay Beach closed, he responds, "Very honestly Renee the only answer I can come up with is that obviously it was a very pleasant memory for me. So I must have, I must have missed that, because there wasn't anywhere else we could go for swimming... especially being in that 6–8 year-old range... because there just wasn't anything we could do.... So I probably missed in the fact that I enjoyed going there [to Bay Beach] but again I don't have a conscious memory of being, just, upset because I couldn't..." The closure of Bay Beach was simply part of life in the industrial city, where pollution and its effects are suffered quietly and the emphasis is on moving on. It is only later in life that Donald seems to become increasingly distressed with the impact industry and the "forefathers" had on the local waterways and subsequent impact on the Great Lakes.

The Fox River, a 'bad object': "It just never called to me"

The Fox River, as this project suggests, is in many ways an emblem in Green Bay for industrial pollution, neglect and degradation. It is the repository for unwanted and discarded material, both actual and symbolic, and for many people the river is ignored, hardly noticed. The way in which the Fox River appears in the interviews illustrates complicated feelings and associations (with family relations, nature, industry), (discussed in the following chapters). Almost as an afterthought, Donald mentions the "tooth incident". The *tooth incident* represents a host of feelings, associations and affiliations with the Fox River—and there is no question this is about the Fox River, as he referred to it energetically (excitedly, even) as one of his primary associations with the river. In the story, as Donald recounts, he is playing with some friends down on the banks of the Fox River. They are playing with a BB gun (an air gun using pellets, or 'BBs'), and Donald decides to call a halt to the game, by jumping out in the middle of the group, and instantaneously getting his front tooth knocked out by a BB. As he tells the story, he says how the dentist at the time could only manage an ill-fitting cap, which then became a horrible brown colour as time went on,

causing an ongoing embarrassment and stigma throughout his young adult years, until he was finally able to get it properly sorted as an adult. The story appears as a metonymic account of the stigma and degradation associated with the river, as something "brown" that becomes visible and causes embarrassment. In effect, he suffers long-term consequences as a result of a moment of foolish and irresponsible behaviour. It is evident in the way Donald tells the story that it has significant resonance for him and is associated with the Fox River. It is a place of abjection, where bad things happen, and accidents take place. I also suggest the tooth story may serve as a means for addressing the tragic events surrounding his father's accident, which is also closely affiliated (via the paper mill) with the Fox River.

In the second interview, I ask Donald if he sees the Fox River as a "river". I ask this because I am noticing the ways in which he talks about other bodies of water, such as Baird's Creek, or Lake Michigan, or the rivers in the Upper Peninsula he and his friend would kayak on. He says it isn't seen as a river in the sense that it was a recreational opportunity. But he knew it was polluted: "We were much aware of that because my father would tell me he used to swim in the Fox River..." For Donald, "Nothing called us to the Fox River... there were other bodies of water, the Bay, of course Baird's Creek, that called to us..." However, for its abject qualities, he could still imagine using it: "Even at its most polluted days you could use it, because you didn't have to go in it; *I guess you could say we didn't see it as a river, and I would say, the Fox River is an important part of the whole Green Bay scene...*" Ambivalent relations are apparent (abject but 'important'). As long as no contact was made with the waters, it was 'usable'. However, the Fox River held no attraction; it was abject, not a site to be used or enjoyed: "I mean you could see, not that we went down there, but you could see solid matter floating on the water. And so there was not an attraction, nothing that called us to the Fox River". And yet, Donald did indeed at one point engage with the river. In the final interview, Donald remembers an account of paddling in a canoe with friend down the Fox River about twenty years ago, when I was asking if he had any comments or feedback on how the interviews were going so far. After commenting on the interviews ("I enjoy your approach to interviewing, and that is, to allow me to story tell, or meander, whatever I, my brain takes me... by the same token it's not so stilted as to um, not begin to steer me into specific directions or ask questions for clarification. Which is very good. Because just to have a one-sided dialogue, very difficult for most of us..."), he suddenly mentions a canoe trip he had taken with a friend down the Fox River:

> One thing I did remember, and one thing I never mentioned to you, only because I had totally forgotten about it, but it popped into my brain recently, and that was, a good friend and I, um probably fifteen years ago, took our

> canoe, the same canoe that we canoed the Lakes in northern Wisconsin, not the lakes but the rivers, we put, we brought that canoe down to Wrightstown Wisconsin and paddled up the Fox River to the city of Green Bay, in a day.

I asked if he had noticed the river was polluted when they were riding down it. He responds, "Sure, there were, there was, um, you know, almost like oil slicks on the water and junk on the river bank... and stuff floating in the water, solid matter, what it was, I couldn't tell you... but it was solid matter (laughs)". I then asked, "How did that, how did that make you feel?" to which he responds:

> Well, again I think if you're, I think, [..] if you grow up, knowing and understanding what has happened to your environment, it doesn't have the impact the same as if I had travelled five hundred miles and been on that body of water for the first time ever. I think then I probably would have had more of a reaction. This, it's just something that, that I accepted as a fact, I wasn't pleased with it, obviously. I'm still not. But um, I can't tell you that I had any revulsion because of what I experienced on that trip. It, as I said it was more of a recreational adventure. And we weren't looking or seeking, any kind of trouble, or for any kind of 'proof' of what we were, that what we were in was in fact polluted, because we already knew that.

I asked Donald then why they did it, to which he replied, "Probably for the same reason people climb Mount Everest, it was there. Just kind of on a lark. Nothing planned. ... And we never did it again." In the brief comments regarding the experience on the Fox River, Donald illustrates what occurs when being around something that has 'long been' degraded. It ceases to shock.[52] (This theme is raised in the other participant interviews, e.g. from Sheboygan, Sally and Jeff's sense of shock at moving to Green Bay and the condition of the waters.) He seems to need to clarify why it was that he didn't find the condition of the Fox River distressing; or if he did, he is not willing to articulate it as such. This 'smoothing' over of pollution, as a fact one learns to live with and acclimatise to, is reflected also in the interviews with Sally and Victoria (discussed below).[53] My sense is the participants may be projecting on to me some sort of expectation of a certain reaction (e.g. revulsion, distress). But at the same time they also acknowledge at various points in the interviews feelings of

[52] Peter Kahn's research addresses "generational amnesia" that occurs when people are born into already-degraded ecological conditions, and memories of how it once was are gradually erased (see Kahn, 2001).

[53] There is a simultaneous recognition of the degradation and acceptance of its reality; this response, I argue, is strongly tied with specific subject positions concerning power, agency and working class subjectivity. The issue of class is not emphasised in this study, although it is recognised as a vital context for understanding specific environmental forms of agency and subjectivity, also overlooked in the 'gap' and 'disconnect' discourses; barriers to action are rarely articulated in terms of subjectivity, gender, class or any number of other contexts informing environmental responsiveness and reparations.

disappointment (Sally, Victoria), sadness (Donald) and related feelings of frustration. There appears an inability to align the affective responses in a coherent way; the 'negative' affective responses, such as sadness or distress, and the more 'positive' affect such as appreciation, value and pride, sit side by side and pose no evident conflict. As evidenced in the account of *Paddle-to-the-Sea,* it may be certain objects or events serve as suturing devices to help bring smoothness, continuity and coherence to what could potentially be disruptive and fragmenting experiences or emotions.

We clearly have 'good' rivers and 'bad' rivers, and in this sense Donald does not perceive the Fox River as much of a river: a river is a recreational site, a place of enjoyment, alive, and an ecosystem. The Fox River is something else, a zone occupied and used by industry, devoid of its natural or ecological attributes. It is also a place of loss, conveyed in the story of losing his front tooth on the banks of the river. It is a 'bad object', signifying abjection and transgression and desecration. It is where accidents happen. And yet, as Donald comments, it is a vital part of Green Bay's history.

The brutality of industry: the accident at the paper mill

Donald begins his account with a factual description of his family and father's employment with the paper mill, Fort Howard; however it becomes complicated when he states the bare facts of his father's accident and subsequent job loss. Told in an affectively flat tone, Donald tells me of how his father worked at Fort Howard right out of high school, worked his way up to a highly skilled position, and then suffered a tragic accident where a large roll of paper fell on him, breaking both his legs. As this was in the time before unions, the company told him "they would take care of things" and paid his medical bills and costs while he recuperated for months at home. Then, after his return to work, they demoted him to a less skilled post, and then abruptly told him "not to come back". This event set in motion a spiralling of his father's job prospects, "as it was like having a black mark against you", and unsuccessful attempts to find employment. It was when I pointed out to Donald the traumatic nature of the event that he conceded:

> Yes, well it was a very, very traumatic time... I don't think any of us know what happened, including my dad, they just fired him. It was just a weird way for professionals to treat somebody. You know, it just practically destroyed the man. Because that was the only thing he did in his life. And then he had to go out and try to find work [...] it was almost like he was blackballed. ... So it was a real tough time, a real tough time for he and his marriage, and his family, everything, because of the separation and his inability to find a job that was meaningful and fulfilling for him. And uh it was a very difficult, very difficult time.

The event coincided with Donald's psychological and practical development as a young man. I surmised that on some level he decided to take a different path so that he would not be in such a vulnerable position as his father was.[54] After working at Fort Howard for a summer and enjoying the work and the pay, he tried to apply for a job and was told to apply the following year. In retrospect he regards this as a blessing, as he chose instead to take a course in accounting, eventually leading to a job with a vegetable processing plant as an accountant. He worked his way up the ranks until he was head of the company by the time he left the company for another business venture. I raised the topic of his father's accident and asked clarifying questions in the subsequent two interviews, to help understand more how his father's tragic situation may have informed his own views and feelings about the paper industry, Green Bay (as an industry-dominated community), nature, and if he had any resentment towards the company or industry.

When we view Donald's own professional trajectory in relation to the events surrounding his father's accident and job loss, we can appreciate the significance of his ability, after a brief flirtation with blue collar work and a short stint at the paper mill and an automotive factory in Kenosha (where he overlapped with his father, suggesting an attempt toward solidarity and support), to working at a vegetable processing cannery when "in fact, I was not a very good vegetable eater, I did not like my vegetables". Donald first learned to grade vegetables by chewing them, tasting the flavour, the sweetness, determining the texture and then spitting out the product. "One of the very great things that happened to me," he recalls, "was because of the smallness of the company, I was able to get involved in anything at all at the company that I wanted to, anything that intrigued me. I could follow a person around and find out how they did things... so as a result of my curiosity and smallness of the company, I was able to learn more and more about the business... I went from being a bookkeeper to being an office manager and then finally general manager... and in the last few years, I became president of the corporation".

The narrative of how Donald went from someone who "didn't like his vegetables" to running a vegetable canning company taps into the American dream narrative blending serendipity, curiosity and perseverance. In contrast to his father, Donald followed his curiosity and fashioned a career for himself in a very small company, unlike the monolithic corporation of the paper mill, which he witnessed as brutalizing his father and symbolically castrating him, robbing him of his potency and efficacy as a masculine provider. With the loss of the job the family had to watch his father become 'feminised' in his quest to find new work after being sacked from the

[54] Although at one point Donald says his father was in his late 20s when the accident happened, which would have been a biological impossibility. Perhaps Donald was unconsciously referring to himself, as he was probably in his early 20s at the time of the accident.

dominant industry in the area, for no clear reason than the fact he had an accident and was a potential liability. In Donald's account of the accident and his own trajectory there is a quality of not wanting to know, or consider too deeply the mechanisms by which his father lost his job: "I don't think any of us know what happened..." Whereas for myself, listening to the account, it seemed less shrouded in mystery and more of a straightforward account of mistreatment and unfair dismissal to a man who had put in decades of his life into working for the company. Donald repeating the sense of not ever fully knowing the story behind the dismissal suggests both a lack of closure and clarity on the traumatic events, and the way the family managed the events as something not to question or discuss openly too much. His father hardly spoke of the event and it rarely came up in subsequent years. This capacity to endure such a level of brutality, indeed victimization, without directly interrogating it, conveys a subtle sense of surrender and passivity in the face of what seems like all-powerful and controlling forces. It is this sense of resignation, but also a refusal to engage directly with these forces that seems to characterize the mode of relating with industry across the participants interviews.

I asked Donald in the second interview to reflect on how the events concerning his father may have impacted his own decisions. He responds:

D: Yeah. And I hear where you're coming from. First of all, one of the things I'm hearing is did your, did the treatment that your dad received from this company, influence you Donald in your career decisions, or your educational decisions. And, ah, if it did, it was very subconsciously, and I don't discount that at all. You know, I had some, some deep feelings about how my father was treated. And, I hoped that it would never happen to me. And you know, somewhere, somewhere, during that whole time frame, I was, I was struggling with trying to figure out who I was going to be, or what I was going to be. (Yeah) and I started out as I confessed to you, that I was, I was very happy with the kind of opportunity I had at Fort Howard Paper Company, and wanted to stay there. Seriously considered that that could be my life's work. So you know, right around that time, all of this is going on with him, and ... I had not been, I had not been a good student. In high school.. and I had tried going to a liberal arts college, and done poorly. And stopped going there. And then when I tried to get into the work force, trying to find labour job that would be appealing to me, and ... finally recognizing, you know, somewhere there the light hit, that I had to, I had to get more education, in order to do better-

R: But your parents didn't encourage you to do that?

D: No, there was no strong influence from them, to do that. That was pretty self-motivation. [.] So. So I got through all that. And recognized that I needed to get myself an education. And probably first time in a long time, really applied myself in school, and did very well, in the two-year course that I eventually took. So I guess I was laying the groundwork for trying

> to find something where I had a little better control of my destiny than my father did. [.]

Rather than showing solidarity by taking a blue-collar job either at the paper company or the automotive factory where he and his father overlapped briefly, he is able to effectively 'reclaim' the space by carving out a niche for himself, through education and subsequently rising through the ranks in a small and successful vegetable plant.[55] In contrast to paper and its toxic processes, Donald selected a relatively benign industry. (Although he tells me in the final interview how he discovered through an excavation project that even his own company, when he was managing it, was diverting food waste into the river many years prior, which was then an illegal activity; he had been unaware at the time.) How Donald manages to construct his own identity and role as family provider (father) in relation to his own father, and still returning to the very site in which such events took place, indicates a resilience, and perhaps what Klein refers to as the 'depressive position' in which he resists splitting (making Green Bay or even the paper mill as 'bad' or evil') and manages to hold both the 'good' and 'bad' simultaneously. However, I see hints of idealisation (attempts to recover something good and positive) in his use and relationship with the book *Paddle-to-the-Sea* (Holling, 1941).

[55] I note my own use of the word 'carving' here invokes the protagonist Paddle in Donald's beloved childhood book, *Paddle-to-the-Sea,* who carves out a space for himself symbolically, in staying to work with his father but sending himself, via the carved figure of the man in the canoe, out on expeditions and adventures, to see the world (in this case, the world *is* the Great Lakes). I suspect my usage of the word reflects my own counter-transference in piecing together the various elements of the story, and the reparative quality of Donald's own professional and personal trajectory.

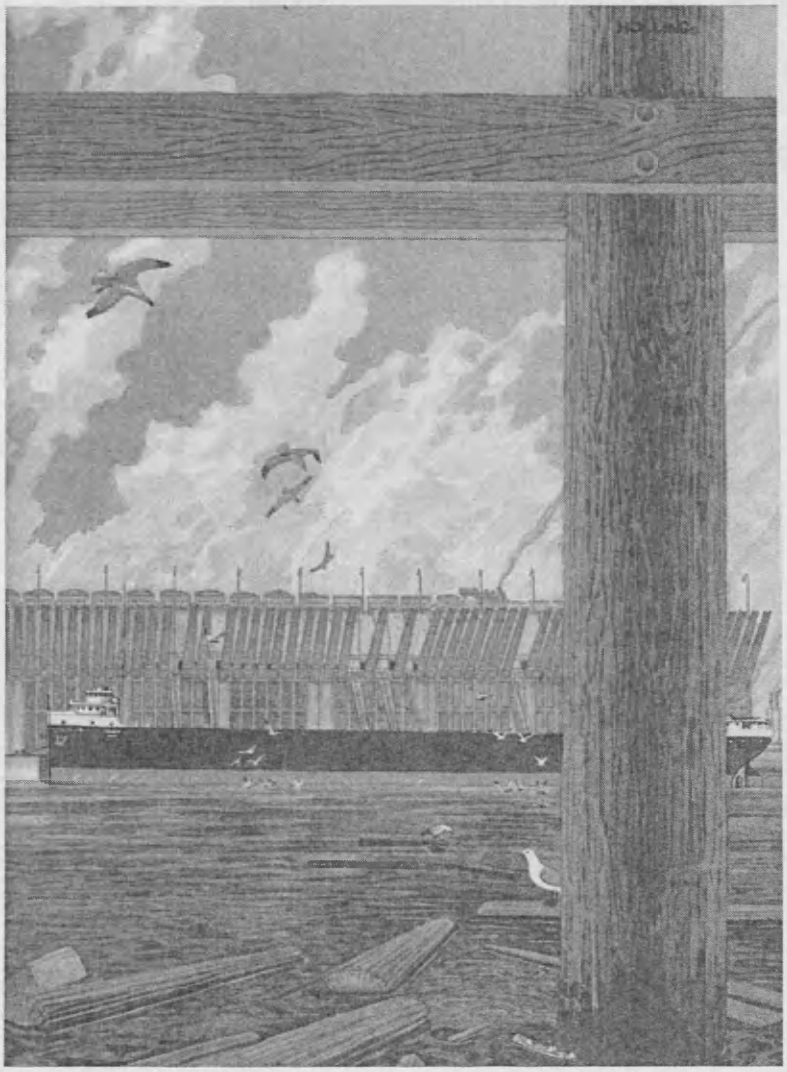


Figure 19: Reddish tint, Paddle-to-the-Sea, Holling (1941, chapter 11)

Paddle-to-the-Sea: Leaving home, and returning anew

In the second interview, Donald discusses how as he grew older he became aware of Green Bay as a port, its significance for commerce in the Great Lakes region, and how "these bodies of water served a great purpose for the development of the Green Bay area". Donald seems to negotiate the destructive capacities of industry—both the violence delivered to his father and their family, as well as the ecological violence delivered to the Fox River and surrounding waterways—with the benefits and services such industries provide for the region. In the context of discussing his appreciation of the region, he invokes *Paddle-to-the-Sea* (Holling, 1941), "A book I was given that I cherished as a young person...". The person who gave him this book was his aunt, the same aunt he went walking with in Baird's Creek as a boy, and so it seems these two "good" objects or sites are associated in his mind with this cherished relative, the aunt

who took him out into nature and gave him a book celebrating the unique characteristics of the Great Lakes system. Paddle-to-the-Sea is to emerge as a key object in the interviews, both as a literal object and means of negotiating, and perhaps rescuing, his positive associations with the place. Although it was given to him when he was eight years old, he has kept it, taking it out regularly to look through, and even after giving it to his grandson, asked for its return.



Figure 20: Paddle-to-the-Sea, Holling (1941, chapter 9)

He describes *Paddle-to-the-Sea* as, "A very neat little story about an Indian boy who was given by his father a carved out canoe", that he understood from the story what impact the Great Lakes has on commerce, business, and how "fortunate we are to have water resources that we do in the Great Lakes basin". This initial discussion of *Paddle-to-the-Sea* leads into a discussion of the value of the Great Lakes and Donald's worries about the way they have been treated and their future. In the following (and final) interview, I ask Donald to bring out the book and walk me through it, and tell me more about the story and what it means for him, and why it feels so significant. (It's worth noting that Donald had given this copy to his grandson, in Delaware, and then asked for it back; he also had the pages scanned.) As he says, "the book is respected but well used"—which remind me of phrases he also uses in relation to the Great Lakes and suggests a level of wish fulfilment in how the waters and Great Lakes are treated, as it becomes evident he is quite sorrowful at the way the Great Lakes and waters are both "well used but not well respected".

Paddle-to-the-Sea is a fable that involves multiple narratives or tropes; it is on one level a coming of age story, in which the young boy becomes a man, expressed in the adventures of the figure "Paddle" and its eventual return years later having 'seen the world' and perhaps lost the innocence of childhood. It is also a narrative about the rise of commerce and industry in the Great Lakes region, both celebratory and cautionary, as we see Paddle's adventures and reliance on the kindness of strangers (again another powerful trope in American culture and its settlement), and the drawing depicting an industrious region with heavy human impact (suggested in one image

by the presence of some bottles on the shore, see Figure 22). The plotline involves a young Indian boy at the headwaters of the Great Lakes in Canada, who is called on to help his father with work. He carves a small wooden figure in a canoe (and is not given it by his father, as Donald incorrectly recounts; again suggesting a wish fulfilment of being given something from his father perhaps, as part of the transition from boyhood to adult), and places it in the headwaters for its own adventures. The figure is, in essence, a symbol for the boy's own curiosity, desire to travel and metaphoric development from boyhood innocence to adult 'worldliness'. Whereas the boy must remain with his father (both literally and in Donald's case, emotionally), he sends the figure Paddle out into the waterways. His route takes him through all of the five Great Lakes, and serves as a primer into what industries were emerging at this time in the early 1940s—notably fishing and timber/logging.

I request in the final interview to see the book, which is brought out by his wife Judy along with a plate of freshly baked chocolate chip cookies (apt for looking at a children's book). I ask Donald to reflect on feelings associated with the book:

> Well... the feelings are initially, are, and again I believe I got this from an aunt, a sister of my mom, and in looking back, I certainly respect the fact that she must have given this to me, because she had an appreciation for what the Great Lakes meant, hmm, to the world, and certainly gave me an opportunity to learn something about something that I was going to be living in. Or that I was indeed living in. So as I matured, I could read stories about various locations throughout the Great Lakes. And not only is it just a fun story to read, because it's sort of an adventure story, but it's also just a neat story about how the Great Lakes impact all of us. So I learned a great deal. And this book as you can see, is well used. Respected but well used. And so I have an opportunity as I said my mother read this to me, as a child. And as I furthered my education and was able to read it myself, I did so. From time to time I would pick this book up. And perhaps not read it from start to st—from cover to cover, but page through it must like I'm doing now. And just sort of looking at some of the diagrams and pictures and reading some of the story that went on.

I am given less information about what *feelings* Donald has, but how this book as an object and as a story helped him to connect with both an aunt who seemed to recognize something in him—a curiosity or interest perhaps in the region—and with the commerce and industry in the Great Lakes and which he himself participated directly in. When I ask, again, what feelings it arouses in him, he responds:

> Well, I was just intrigued by all of the nature, especially in and around Lake Superior and Michigan... Lake Superior and Lake Michigan. And then turning to commerce, and some of the lower Great Lakes, where there's much more population, so it was not only a story of things in nature, and what was going

on with them, from forest fires to beaver dams, to logging, but um, also one of shipping and commerce and it was just a story that enabled me to, learn an awful lot about what went on in the communities that I live in. [...] I do remember being very disappointed because "Paddle-to-the-Sea" never made it to Green Bay, Wisconsin. He floated right by the Bay.... He did not, he didn't make it to Great Bay.

When I picked up a copy of the book myself a few weeks later, I was even more struck by Donald's comments about the book as an educational tool; while there are small hand-drawn maps of the Lakes (see Figure 20), primarily the story is of a character, Paddle, (who is both symbolic of the boy, stuck at home with father, and an autonomous character) who has a harrowing adventure and the reader is never quite sure if he is going to make it. He does, through the classic combination of chance, luck and the kindness of strangers who help him along the way. Indeed, it is Donald's following comments that are particularly poignant:

I thought the story was unique enough, that it was quite easy to follow and quite easy to get kind of involved in. Because there were instances where you weren't sure the poor little guy was going to survive at all. And then the wrap-up of the story, is that the little boy, that um, put this Paddle-to-the-Sea on the snow banks to begin his journey, became a young man, and saw his little Paddle-to-the-Sea when he was then a young man, and just kind of walked away from it. Just said, oh, he made it to the sea....

Donald then recounts in detail why Paddle did not make it to Green Bay:

I know why he didn't make it to Green Bay, because he was on, a commercial boat, an ore carrier, and came through the Sioux St. Murray locks, and went down in a straight line to Gary, Indiana. So he was carrying iron pellets on a boat. Out of a Lake Superior ship, and he was picked up, right at the edge, end of Lake Superior, and brought all the way down to Gary on a boat. Being refurbished, a man repainted him, and got him all gussied up, and put him back in the water, and then he meandered up the Eastern Shore of Lake Michigan, and on to Huron, that's why he never had a chance to come down to the Bay. Yeah. Okay.

R: Would have been a bit complicated to get that in.

Yeah it would have been tough. He'd get stuck in the Bay and be there forever (we both laugh) could be very tough, end of story. Yeah.

It seems important to Donald, after all these years (sixty years after he was given this book, which he has kept in its original condition), to clarify why Paddle never makes it to Green Bay, a place that has played such a central role in his own trajectory and life, and which he perceives as part of the Great Lakes system as celebrated in this classic children's story. My sense is that certain qualities have been introjected

into the character, and the story provides a vital context for Donald to experience and relate to his own position in the system and perhaps, an unconscious sense of being "stuck in the Bay" and being there forever. The interviews began with his unquestionable rootedness in the place, his ties with family and ancestors; in fact following the second interview Donald brought out a family history book a relative had compiled full of photographs and news articles about various family members who played roles in the formation of Green Bay in the 1800s. And yet we can see in his account of Paddle, a hint of longing, a sense that one can "get stuck forever in Green Bay".

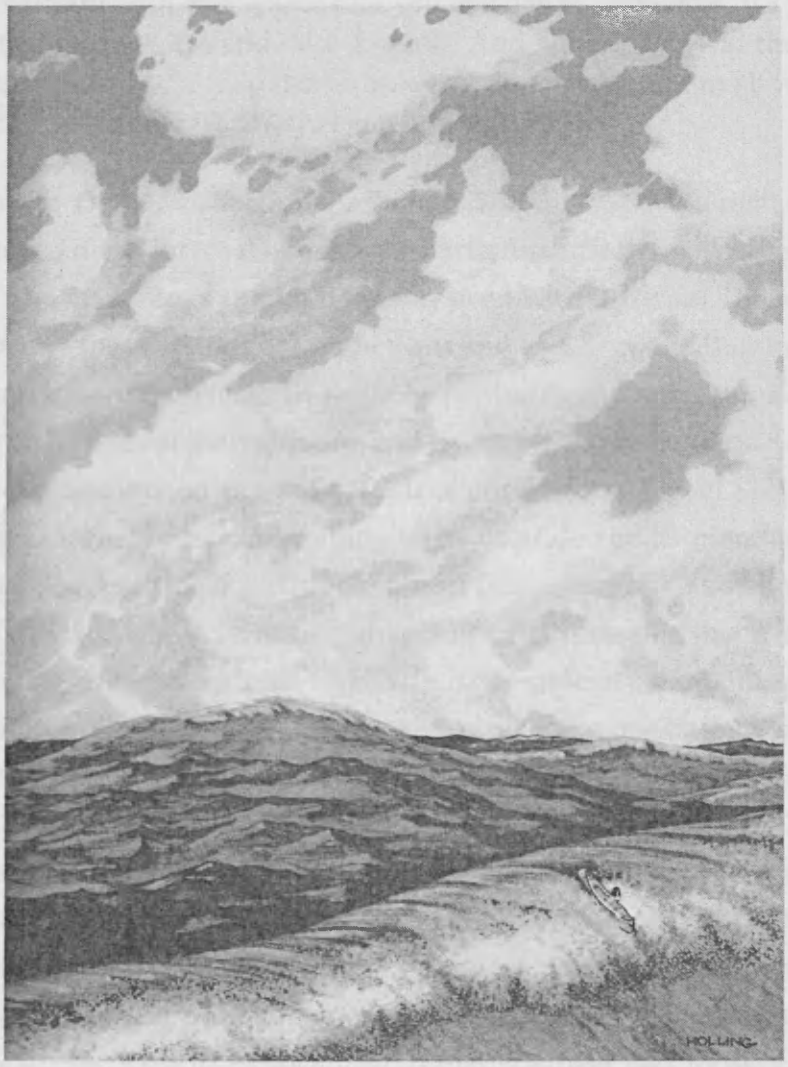


Figure 21: Paddle's adventures, Paddle-to-the-Sea, Holling (1941, chapter 11)

It seems from the interviews that Donald's relationship with Green Bay is complicated and integral to his sense of identity. When I asked him why he returned to Green Bay, after what had happened to his father, and any possible associations he may have with the place and the industry which had so brutally treated his father, essentially emasculating him, he responded:

> I can tell you that when I moved down to Kenosha Wisconsin as a young man, and as a married young man, um, the environment in that city was so totally different than what I was accustomed to in Green Bay... that I couldn't wait to get back home. Home being Green Bay. And I just felt, like Kenosha with its unfortunate geographic location, had absolutely no identity of its own. It was just a city where people lived, and went to work for an automotive company, and just didn't have anything going for themselves. ... So we just decided we needed to come back to Green Bay, and (sighs) again, not again, but the rationale in that, is that Green Bay is... just a good community, to raise a family, it encompasses all of the values that I have in life, it is not without its problems certainly, but everyplace that you live has its problems. It's just a really neat place to, to live and raise a family. And I guess that was the attraction that called me back.... So there's an attraction, an attraction about this particular place. For me it's always been home.

I am moved by Donald's affection for Paddle (and the book as a materially cherished object, and an internal object with particular affective investments and associations), and his feelings about Green Bay even with its flaws. The way he relates to this book brings these various contradictions and conflicts together in a coherent and wishful narrative, concerning the positive attributes of the region, along with the inevitable challenges of individuating and going forth into the world as an adult. The book appears to function as a powerful transformational object (Bollas, 1992) that calls forth in Donald deep and abiding sense of pride and connection, as well as loyalty to his father. As a transformational object (discussed in Chapter 3), the book functions as a 'psychic key' in terms of conveying and expressing inchoate impressions and affective relations with the region, in its complexity, containing darker aspects (brutality, pollution, transgression) and pleasure (exploration, expansion, profit, play). The book in its rather celebratory and transformational narrative—as the boy essentially becomes a man, the reader travels through the Great Lakes, and Paddle has various close scrapes and receives the kindness of strangers, another strong trope in middle western America—appears as a 'good object' for Donald to mediate his complex relations with the place through. For all of the brutality he has experienced via his father's unemployment, the degradation of nature and loss of the places he grew up playing and exploring, he remains a loyal 'son' to the Green Bay 'fathers'. It seems the book as both a narrative and an object facilitates this positive association and relationship, extending to the way Donald projects himself into the character 'Paddle' and muses on his disappointment Paddle didn't make it to Green Bay, but may have been stuck forever if he had. Understanding the complex relationship Donald has with Green Bay, and its issues of degraded nature and waters, as well as the broader context of the Great Lakes which he clearly identifies with, allows us to appreciate why it may not be so straightforward as to why and how he chooses

to respond to the issues he is aware of facing the waters he respects and values. As powerful as his feelings are about the "terrible" impact industry has had on the waters (and the fact this impact he suggests was avoidable and unnecessary), he would never consider becoming involved in any group activity. The main mode of expression for such concerns appears to be through personal contact (talking with people) and his family (passing on awareness, respect and responsibility to his children). The idea of taking his sentiments to the civic level strikes him as highly distasteful, as if pleading to a parent to clean up one's own mess. If we consider this stance, of refusing to pass on responsibility to the parent, to shoulder the responsibility one oneself, and to quietly plug along, it may be possible to detect threads and patterns of such modes of being in other aspects of Donald's biography. I now look more directly at what is Donald's stance towards environmental problems and how he articulates his own relation with them.

Engaging with environmental concerns: Privacy and passion

As mentioned, I met Donald at an adult education course on the history of water and energy in Wisconsin, a course about both how industry has impacted the natural resources in the region, and also the significant role of water in the shaping of this history. He discusses his participation in the course in our final interview, which opens up with a discussion of what took place in the last class (which I had missed) and comes up again when he is discussing in more depth his feelings about environmental issues and his level of involvement. Donald alludes to his concern about the problems facing the Great Lakes—in this case the use of water and the pressure from other states to export water—and energy issues: "There's a whole (sighing) lot of stuff, maybe not so much for my generation anymore, we are probably going to get through it with having adequate supplies, but then the other part of the equation is those supplies are going to be more costly... so it's going to cost us more for energy, but your generation and the following generations are going to be running out of that, so mankind is going to have to come up with some other [..] Methods of keeping us warm, and keeping, getting us transported. Whew! Those are some horrendous problems, big time problems, yeah, absolutely." A bit later in the interview, I decide to reflect back to Donald some of what I have been hearing, and to press a bit more for clarification on how he actually *experiences* the degradation he sees and has been involved with (tangentially). What follows is a lengthy excerpt of this exchange, regarding how Donald experiences issues and his modes for responding or engaging with them.

R: We've been saying pollution but there are obviously other issues than just pollution. But um, so it kind of makes me wonder how it all sits together for you, because. [.] You clearly have a, you have a powerful appreciation of

nature and the natural world and at the same time, having lived in a pretty industrialized area, (hmmhmm), you know I guess the question that comes to mind for me, is how you feel about the human impact. Because, on the one hand, you mention that it's, the industry is what has made this place. And on the other hand, you've expressed pretty profound disappointment, and I think sadness around the degradation of the water.

D: So, um. And I understand what you're asking me. Um. (sighs) and I don't know [.] I don't know that you're going to find too many people, and if you do, I'd love to be able to hear them and talk to them, but we always have this balance of mankind versus nature. And how we as, men, as 'man' impact our surroundings. I guess in my mind, we were put here for a purpose and that is to enjoy and use the land. Now, does that using it, need to spoil it? In my mind, I don't think so. But I also accept that fact that just because we build buildings and modify the things around us, for our own comfort, it causes some destruction of the natural things. And, I can accept that, but what I can't accept is, even when I went to the class that you and I met at, is to try to know and understand why my forefathers, ah, had such a terrific, terrible impact on the waterways and the land that we're trying to use today. And again, what our responsibilities are, to our children, and grandchildren, as we pass that on. Because, is, you know, I have become more and more aware through reading books, and newspaper articles and watching TV programmes about pollution and the fact that [sound of geese in background] mankind is starting to wake up a little bit and take some ownership of what has happened and trying to reverse the process. But is it too little, too late? And what can we do for the future? So I don't know if that's getting on my soapbox answer (yeah) That's kind of...

R: But how does it affect you, in your life? In your day to day? Do you think about these things very often? If you were to say, how often you might think about issues pertaining to the environment and Green Bay or the Great Lakes, would you say rarely, or occasionally, or is it more seasonal maybe?

D: I think I, I think I, I think about, and this is total environment not just waterways, but I think about the environment, what has happened to it, often. I think its, I think its one thing that is heavy on my mind. I get upset, with even incidental things like people tossing paper out of a moving car window, or opening their door and dumping their cigarette ash out into the street or the parking lot, or .. I just, I [..] I, think often of all of the things that go on because humans are [.] in the environment that we are in, and don't respect it. (hmm) And so many of them, to me, seem to care less. Um, I don't think a majority of the people that live in this community, or any community for that matter, give a darn about what they are doing. They care about themselves and how comfortable they are. And don't care about what they may be doing to the environment or around them. So I think about it quite frequently.

R: Has that changed for you over time? Your level of thinking about it?

D: Yes. Definitely.

R: How, can you say how, when did this start to be something you really..

D: Well I think because of my upbringing, and maybe because of the contacts I had with either friends or family, I always respected nature. So I don't think, I don't think that you know, suddenly a lightening bolt hit me when I was 18 years old, and I said Holy Smoke I've got to turn my life around, I've got to do something different. I think I evolved into it, just by education, and reading and exposure to so many different things, in my life. I just became more and more aware of it. And perhaps, perhaps um, whomever is responsible for, for telling people, via television, or newspaper or magazine articles, about some of the problems, I tend to pick those kinds of things up, to read, or to watch, because, because I have an interest in it.

R: Doesn't that news upset you, or make you feel anxious?

D: Sure. Absolutely. Absolutely.

R: So what do you do with those feelings? Are you [.] well I'll let you-

D: Okay. I am not necessarily an activist. I don't go to meetings, of environmental groups that are trying to do something about it. I haven't reached that plateau and probably never will. But what I do try to do, is to continue to modify my life as best I can. To provide what I think is the ideal as far as respecting nature. And I have tried very much to make my children aware of their surroundings, and to become as, at least conscious of what's happening as I am. Again trying to set an example to them, of how I would like them to live their lives.

R: So is that how you [.] manage the feelings would you say?

D: I think so, yeah. I think so. I don't, again, I'm not the type of person that, would become you know tremendously active as far as speaking to people, or trying to lead a group of people, or even joining a group for that matter. It's just a very private matter as far as I'm concerned, about what I feel about, about nature and, and the environment that we live in. So, it's pretty close to my own person. Yeah.

There are several points raised in the above passage concerning Donald's relations with environmental issues and how he negotiates them. First we can see that environmental issues, not only those concerning the "waterways", weigh heavy on his mind. It is what led him to the course (where we met) and he seems to have considerable anger at the ways in which industry has not treated the resources and nature with respect, and have degraded it. It is not that the use of nature or resources is wrong, but how it is done. This is a question that haunts Donald; how could they have made such "terrific, terrible" impacts on the waterways. Donald has experienced some of this first hand, directly: the closure of Bay Beach, seeing the pollution and "solid matter" in the Fox River, no longer having access to Baird's Creek due to extensive development; the inability to fish for perch as he once did on his uncle's rental boats; and his father's employment with an industry that he knows was largely responsible for the "terrible" pollution and spoiling of the water resources. He feels distressed that the majority of people in the community don't seem to care about the environment which seems to weigh heavily on his mind: "Um, I don't think a majority of the

people that live in this community, or any community for that matter, give a darn about what they are doing. They care about themselves and how comfortable they are. And don't care about what they may be doing to the environment or around them. So I think about it quite frequently".

Donald has a high level of awareness and distress about various chronic ecological problems in Green Bay and beyond, and feels that others seem to care less than he does. This seems based on his observations of how people carry on, business as usual, dumping their litter (interestingly, also an issue for Howard). My sense is the littering issue is poignant for Donald and Howard because it is visible, tangible and appears as evidence for a genuine lack of regard, respect or awareness of ones' surroundings and environment.

Reflections

From the first moments of our interview Donald mentions Baird's Creek (as experienced with his aunt) as a place once available as a wilderness area in Green Bay, since developed for housing and as part of the University of Wisconsin campus. He then mentions Bay Beach, where he learned to swim, and the fact it closed when he was quite small (he doesn't remember exactly when) for swimming and was replaced as an amusement park area. For swimming they had to use small concrete pools built by the city, as access to swimming in the Bay and Fox River became less feasible due to pollution. Throughout the interviews he demonstrates a relatively high level of knowledge and awareness of chronic issues facing the Great Lakes and local waterways and the tie in with industry; this seems to have evolved in his later years and particularly after retirement, when Donald has had the time and opportunity for self-education. In trying to understand how Donald relates and responds to local ecological issues in the Green Bay area, and environmental issues more broadly, I paid close attention to the ways in which Donald recounted his associations, memories and identifications with specific places and experiences. Specifically, I was drawn to how certain places and experiences seemed to convey or reflect certain organizing themes or "plot lines" to help lend a coherence to the material, in my attempt to make sense of how someone who has very powerful and deep affective investments in a certain place and region comes to express such investments in very particular, and in this case, private, contexts. In the face of certain losses, such as when a beloved place is developed, or a body of water is polluted beyond use, how are such losses managed and articulated? I wanted to see if there were indeed connections or patterns in the constellation of material that emerged in our three interviews, and if or how they may also be reflected across the interviews with the other participants.

What I have come to see are potential relationships between what appear to be psychic 'keys' in the narrative content. The term 'psychic key' is informed by Bollas's

(1992) theorising how certain objects and events serve to crystallise or encapsulate complex affective relations, associations, and meanings. Further, the concept of 'tropes' (White, 1985) speaks to capacities for making sense of complicated and often messy narrative threads, in attending to how certain stories or plots, characters, protagonists constitute an overarching coherence or meaning (I will return to 'tropes' and psychic keys in Chapters 8 and 9). In my reading, psychic keys for Donald include Baird's Creek and associations it holds as a child and adolescent; the losing of his front tooth on the bank of the Fox River; the significance and function of the Two Rivers property Donald and his wife bought soon after they were married; the trauma of his father's accident at the paper mill, and subsequent downward mobility (loss of masculine identity); Donald's work with the vegetable processing plant and his choice to work with vegetables/food (and not paper); the book *Paddle-to-the-Sea* as a transformational object (Bollas, 1992) and how it enables a positive connection with regional identity and pride; and finally how Donald constructs himself in relation to environmental activism, advocacy and action in general. When viewed as a whole—a sort of psychic prism—we can begin to trace certain filaments of connection and affiliations between what may appear as disparate topics and events.

Turning to the crucial underlying question underpinning this research study, how might we understand how Donald makes sense of, experiences and responds to chronic ecological issues? To fully appreciate this query we would need to attend to the 'context-embeddedness' (Stolorow, 207, p. 47) of his emotional life in general and in particular the experience of ecological degradation and restoration. In other words, if indeed there are groups focused on restoration and conservation of the waterways Donald clearly cares about (which there are, as discussed in Chapter 1), it is important to understand why he may not feel drawn or motivated to engage with them, in terms of emotional or psychic dimensions. That is, to address the central question of this study—how do people experience chronic ecological degradation, and what happens when there is a surplus of care, but a lack of action—we need to approach the concept of apathy differently than it would be treated another context. In resisting the pull to label someone inactive with local environmental actions or practices as 'apathetic' we must then try to understand what is happening for Donald and how his manages his affective investments in the region.

His first statement is, *"If enough of us care, and talk about it in our community, then somehow or another that reaches people that can do something about it".* He elaborates:

> It is not my philosophy of politics to be involved, talking to congressmen, telling them to take care of the problems that I've caused... just can't and won't do it. Or I'm not inclined to do it... So I agree with this kind of shock advertising,

it's okay to tell people uncomfortable truths about what is going on, but I don't necessarily agree with the action that it's for.

The "action that it's for" to is to log on to a website and "tell your congressmen" to take protective and stricter measures for protecting and restoring the waters and ecosystems of the Great Lakes. While he shares the views for protecting the lakes, Donald's focus of agency is the capacity to "talk about it in our community". This is very different in its sense of agency from trying to pressure congress to pass a bill or legislation, or joining a group who does. The issue of what 'action' means, and political agency is clearly complicated and does not reflect sentiment or even concern. His channels for affective investments and concerns regarding the ecology of Green Bay and the Great Lakes is to talk informally with friends and family, to instil a respect and appreciation for nature in his children and grandchildren (progeny and future generations), to self-educate through the participation in adult education, public television programmes and documentaries, reading articles in magazines and newspapers; and enjoyment of nature, both around the Great Lakes region and at the Two Rivers property. These activities contain creativity, reparation and concern, all qualities considered integral for effective agency (e.g. Winnicott, 1963; Segal, 1997). However the contexts in which they are expressed are what matters in light of 'apathy' and lack of public 'engagement'.

In considering the choices with regard to how, and with whom Donald is willing to share his own deeply held sentiments and concerns about ecological threat, the trauma surrounding his father's accident at Fort Howard and its impact on the family unit seems significant. Donald's description is of a taciturn man (his father) who did not openly discuss much, let alone his feelings or convictions, even when he was injured and then fired from the only company he had worked for. Given the magnitude of betrayal, shock, anger and loss one would assume attends such an event, it is remarkable to consider the lack of discussion or acknowledgement. It is this lack of finding a 'relational home' for the emotional trauma that constitutes a theme running through the data; psychoanalysis has long recognised the relation of silence and repression.[56] I ask Donald about whether his father ever spoke openly or addressed either the ecological impact of the paper mill, or any issues relating to pollution. I include this extended extract because it illustrates how Donald moves from discussing his father's lack of communication about the industry, to how he experiences the

[56] The concept of finding a 'relational home' for trauma directly relates to social forms of mourning and the social nature of melancholia (Leader, 2008). Issues of social trauma, memory and melancholia have been addressed in other contexts (e.g. Felman and Laub, 1992; more recently applied to dystopia (Moore, 2006) and social theory (Sànchez-Pardo, 2003), but to date has not been adequately applied to *ecological mourning and melancholia.* This topic will be addressed in a future research study of the Transition Town Movement and the role of the social in

mill when walking down the Fox River Trail, and then his own reflections on industry in Green Bay.

D: About pollution, or anything that was going on at the paper mill. He just, he just simply, didn't talk about it. And I guess I have to wonder, was he even aware. Was he even aware. Or then, if he was aware, did he decide that by saying nothing, it was OK because he was only protecting his welfare or his job? Um. And knowing the personality of my dad, he was first of all, ah, not a, not a great communicator. He was a quiet man. And um, um, he just, I'm not sure that he would have gotten involved in any questions about what the heck are we doing here? I think he just went in and did his 8 hours of work every day and collected his paycheck at the end of the week or month whatever it was, and that was it. So (sighs) I cannot, I cannot recall one instance when we ever had any discussion about what paper mills were doing in Green Bay. (hmmhmm) Good or bad for that matter. So it was pretty much, just an occupation, just a job that he had. And um, I think I indicated to you that he had a rather responsible position, so he was kind of up the ladder as far as the work force went, I think he was I don't know, foreman, and I'm not sure what the structure was at the time, but he was up, a responsible, apparently well thought of person ... at least before his injury. So um, [sighs] you know, and again, I'm, I'm, we think about the old Fort Howard I guess it's called Georgia Pacific now, the old Fort Howard, and ... one of the things that I, I still think about, when um when I walk down the trail and see Fort Howard over there is that, I'm kind of aware that they, they um, filled in parts of the river in order to make more land for their operation. And I'm also aware that on the south end of their property, um, they used to have lagoons in which they discharged their effluent and let it settle and then just opened the sloughs gates and let it flow out into the river. And then they stopped that, again I'm not sure what is voluntary or what is dictated to them, but nevertheless, I you know, of all of the paper mills that I, um, had any contact with, Fort Howard certainly was first and foremost, the rest of them were just buildings that I drove by, throughout my life, they were always there. I can certainly remember Northern paper over there, having huge, huge piles of logs, that they used for paper making, (hmmhmm) and I'm also aware, only because of recent knowledge gained, that the treatment of those, of that wood, was one of the big polluters of our system. But um, again, ah, I think as I matured and became involved in business, and I certainly recognized what the paper industry has meant to this city. (hmmhmm). By the same token I recognize I also realize that Green Bay is diverse enough to have enough industries that were not kind of a 'one horse town,' so many towns that if, ah, the particular industry that they're married to, or, made their community, goes away, (hmmhmm) it's pretty tough. And I think Green Bay has had, um, enough diversity in manufacturing and service businesses that, ah, even in tough times, they seem to make it work. Yeah. But, um-

R: Do you consciously associate looking at the former Fort... um... Fort... Green?

D: Howard (we both laugh)

R: Is there a conscious association with the mistreatment of your dad.

D: Oh yeah yeah very much so.

R: I mean is there a sense of, do you feel certain emotions come up when you look at it...

D: You know again there is a great separation of years by this time (yeah) but I can vividly remember having a great dislike for the institution after that happened, and as years went on, I just knew that he had been wronged, he had been terribly wronged by that company. And ah, I don't, again, I always wish I could learn more of the story. (hmmhmm) um. My father, again, was not at all open with all of that, so I was never able to really sit down and say, Dad, tell me what happened. How do you feel that's happened, or what happened, to all that? And if I ever, I think I probably made a couple of attempts on occasion, because by the time all of this happened I was a young adult, but ah, you know, he never really, he never really, said, I know that they did this to me, because... and so it's, it carried, it carried a lot of feelings because I knew he was, he was a very loyal guy. I mean he started as a graduate, graduated from high school and went to work there, and stayed with them, and worked hard his entire, well, until he lost his job and he was, he was ... twenty-some, twenty-seven or twenty eight years when he lost that job. That was a tough time, tough time in his, at his age to lose a job certainly. And um, you know, just difficult. So yeah, I had some feelings about that, sure.

R: But did it colour your perception or experience of being here in Green Bay?

D: No. (it didn't...) No. I think I realized that, you know, they were, they were a company... and there are individuals in companies that [..] that basically set the policy and, and, make the decisions, and people pretty much have to work to the ends that's shown them. (hmhmm) And so, I honestly didn't even know, um, and if my dad did, he didn't tell me, who, who the people were, or the person was, that actually... made him, made him leave. So there wasn't, there wasn't this guy on a poster that I, threw darts at to feel relief [laughs] and feel really upset about. I just knew the corporate environment at Fort Howard Paper Company allowed them to make a decision about firing an employee that had gotten severely injured (hmmhmm) a couple of years after he went back to work. And,

R: Perhaps, I mean it sounded to me there were clues in the narrative you provided, as to what was going on (yeah) because you prefaced it by saying they were non-unionized (right) and they were able to maintain that status because they kept their employees well paid and reasonably happy. And so it sounded like a clue that basically to remove any potential threat, of possibly unionizing activity from an employee who had just been injured (that's right) just to kind of, removal (hmmhm) I mean that's based on just what you have told me.

D: And I don't have anything more specific other that I do recall when he did eventually go back to work, physically he was not able to do the work that he was, that he had done before. So they, they put him on increasingly more meaningless jobs. (hmmhmm) if that makes sense. You know, to the point where it almost seemed as if they were trying to give him a signal, that you're no longer useful to this, to this group. And Jeez maybe if we keep giving him these lousy jobs he'll quit. Well apparently he didn't, so they eventually just threw him out. but, ah, yeah, again, um, (sigh) I have no strong allegiance to union work forces, at all. Probably leaning a bit the other way. But—I also recognize that Fort Howard Paper Company was the lone employer in the paper business, paper manufacturing business, in this valley, that was non-union. And so, did that give them more freedom to treat people as they did my father? Than a union shop. I don't know. I don't know. [..] I sus- I feel that was possibly true. But, [sighs] we don't know. So. [clicks tongue] [..] Ah... [pause] yeah, that was... that was a tough time. Tough time. For him. And us and his family. [long pause] [..] Often you have to think about what is, Fort Howard had allowed me to stay on, how would I have, how would I have reacted had I been an employee there, and my father had been shown the door. That would have been really tough, yeah.

The impression I have from this excerpt and from references Donald makes to his father and to the industry in Green Bay is one of 'silent suffering' or the capacity to endure difficulties, even trauma, and to move forward without much agitation or even acknowledgement. This is a theme running through the interviews (across participants) and may provide a clue as to how these participants manage and negotiate their own affective investments in specific chronic issues. This position was probably the only one open to many people who felt they could not have survived otherwise; it is a story of stoicism and quiet dignity, central tropes in American frontier cultural formations. In light of how traumatic events were managed in the family and surrounding culture, we may begin to appreciate why it may appear to Donald as distasteful, even contrary to his own values and identity formation, to take action and become more vocal, outspoken and involved in local environmental politics. Pain, struggle and hardship are generally experiences one keeps private, and manages in ones 'own person'.

The other important dimension of this vignette is the theme of innocence and the subsequent 'fall' through the violation of his father's dignity, the closure of the Bay Beach for swimming and the recognition that industry brings with it damage and abject pollution ("solid matter"). This loss of innocence is vividly expressed in the tooth accident on the Fox River. Both Donald and his father experience accidents linked with the Fox River; for Donald it was the loss of his front tooth, symbolically linking to childhood, recklessness ("I don't know why we were doing that") and the subsequent public shame of having to wear an ill-fitting, rudimentary false

tooth which discoloured, until he was old enough (and with resources) to have a proper replacement. The Fox River is constructed as something that both provides and 'takes'—in the case of his father, it provided livelihood and supported the family for years before being 'taken' away; no protection, no safety. The Fox River as site of the Fort Howard paper mill and many other industries, including the vegetable processing plant Donald worked for, has both given to the community and provided a thriving place to live, and has 'taken' away the *riverness* of the river. For Donald the Fox River does not register as a 'river' but a site for industry. This is in contrast to Howard, (who I discuss in Chapters 7 and 8) who swam in the river and played around in it for the majority of his youth, until he moved to 'town'. These two primary associations with the Fox River—his father's accident and the tooth accident—are negotiated in powerful ways in the incorporation of the book, *Paddle-to-the-Sea.* Although the book does not *explicitly* involve Green Bay, or the Fox River, it portrays the same body of waterways and ecosystems in a positive and affirming context. For Donald it *is* about his home, and he acknowledges that if Paddle had gone to Green Bay, "he would have been stuck there", suggesting an unconscious sense of perhaps being stuck in Green Bay, but knowing it is home nonetheless. There are hints of industrial consequences (e.g. the bottles down by the shore, the reddish tint of the water, see Figure 19), but such ruptures or hints are smoothed over effectively by the narrative of "Paddle"—the symbol of the boy leaving home—finding his way through the adult world of work and industry and travail, and being rescued, repaired and returning to his home.

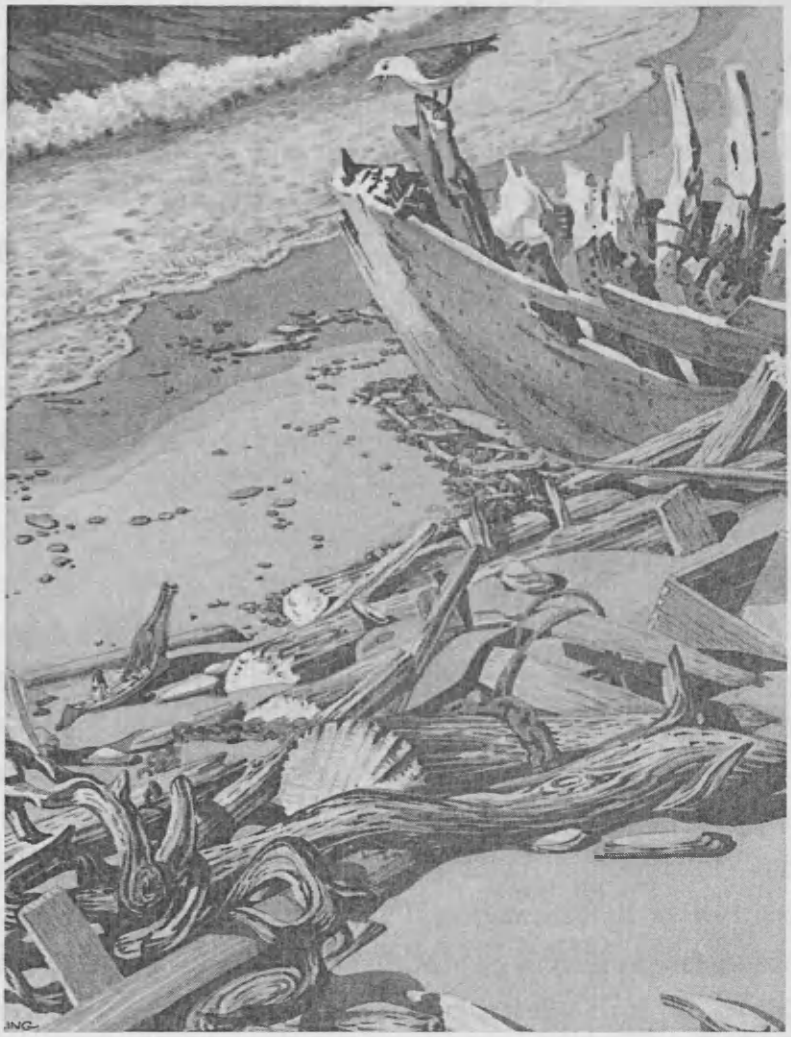


Figure 22: Paddle finds human impacts, Paddle-to-the-Sea, Holling (1941, chapter 18)

Donald has managed to hold and contain a series of conflicting, contradictory and at times extremely painful experiences and perceptions. Living on the Fox River Trail, facing the same plant at which his father suffered, and which has dumped tonnes of PCBs into the waters, he is able to retain his bonds and connection with this place. Through the use of 'good objects' such as Two Rivers, Baird's Creek and *Paddle-to-the-Sea*, as well as positive relationships (with his wife, family, children, and his mother's relatives), he is able to tolerate the 'good' and 'bad' of Green Bay, without moving into denial, splitting or projection. In some ways Donald represents the depressive position (Klein, [1935] 1986) in his toleration of loss. However, in his lack of 'action' in terms of channelling his affect around ecological threats and degradation locally or pertaining to the Great Lakes suggests the possibility that while Donald may be occupying a 'depressive position', in the lack of finding a relational home for the emotional trauma of his father's accident, and his own sadness and con-

cerns about the environment, there is a lack of capacity for moving his own private concerns and feelings into the public sphere or domain.

If Donald did not have access to the Two Rivers or the book then it does raise questions regarding how depressed he may have become. (I joked with him that if he had ended up as a machinist in Fort Howard, doing the same repetitive work, he may have gone mad, as a way of acknowledging his close call with factory work, but how ill suited he appeared for it, to which he laughed heartily.) As noted in my field notes following our meetings, I felt there *was* a certain degree of sadness or depression in his discussions about the water and nature; this incredible sense of powerlessness and dismay at how "our forefathers" damaged the waters so profoundly. His feeling is that we can use and enjoy the resources without destroying and damaging them. For Donald, this is a private matter, he would never even join a group, and he doesn't see the point of appealing to government to clean up a mess "that we created". Therefore he takes some responsibility, although he may not have been directly involved in the damage, which shows a remarkable ability to resist splitting and projection (or otherwise assuming a defensive stance, either making the perpetrators of the degradation into 'bad guys' or exempting himself altogether from the situation). That said he is fully aware it was the paper industries that damaged the waterways so severely, expressing pain and consternation about this. I believe this case study shows up powerfully the creative ways in which painful and difficult, contradictory and conflicting feelings and emotions can be managed and negotiated, often on unconscious levels, and with the use of certain objects or relationships. In this important sense, the study is not only about the psychic or the social, but about the material or ecological as well, a point I return to in Chapter 9.

This case study, and the one that follows, highlight the complex, and often contradictory nature of relations with nature and degradation, particularly in the context of an industrial 'heartland'. The case study portrays someone with passionate feeling about environmental quality and protection, and yet who would never consider participating in so-called environmental activities such as activism or joining an organisation. In this case, as reflected across most participants' narratives, often the only position open for agency is one of survival and 'getting on' with things. As we see in the following chapter, the cultural and social histories woven through the founding and settlement of Green Bay, as a region of primarily working class and industrialist German, Italian, Polish and Scandinavian immigrants (more recently immigrant communities from Southeast Asia), have produced certain dominant tropes with regard to facing and adapting to adversity, relating to surviving and not speaking out. For Donald the idea of taking his concerns to congress or a political arena is distasteful; such issues are for the private sphere, and to act otherwise is to infer passing the buck on to someone else, and *avoiding personal responsibility.* There is a dignity to this

mode of being, however it also presents serious issues in terms of mobilising publics to take broader actions on behalf of how the environment is treated and protected.

We have seen in the case study how certain object relations—particularly environmental objects—can carry meanings and associations based on life experiences and relationships. The Great Lakes and its tributaries including the Fox River and Green Bay are both 'good' and 'bad' objects for Donald. Baird's Creek and Two Rivers for example function affectively as 'good objects'. I argue the children's book given to Donald by his aunt is an object evoking specific self-states that have specific affective functions. The narratives presented illustrate the contradictions, ambivalence and losses attending environmental degradation. It is not surprising ambivalence, contradiction, dilemmas and ambiguity marks relationships with environmental issues and objects; psychoanalytical theory takes this as a given condition of human subjectivity and experience. Rather, at stake is *how* these contradictions, ambivalences and dilemmas are creatively managed and negotiated. The following case study continues this investigation into affective relations and environmental degradation, through Sally's narratives and recounted experiences.

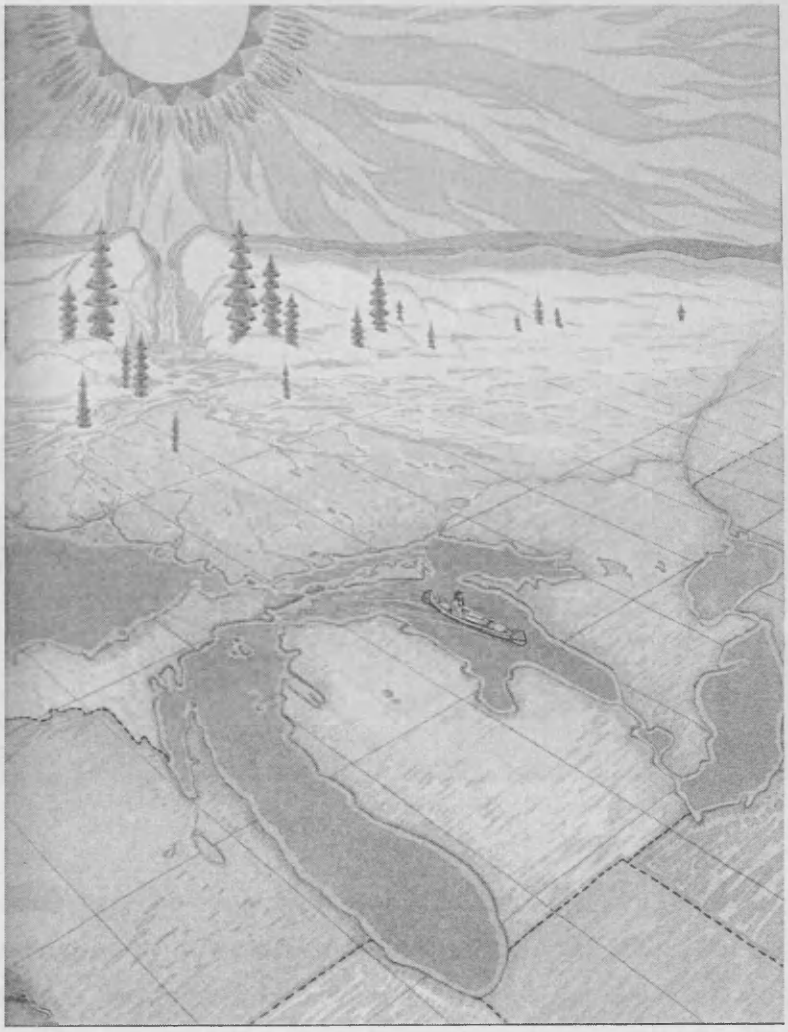


Figure 23: Paddle-to-the-Sea, Holling (1941, chapter 2)



Photo: painting of home in De Pere, provided by Howard

After reading my first interview with Howard, I had dream about staying with a family in Southern California. In the hills behind the house, there were industrial buildings, sort of built into the sides of the hills. I went out with the wife, and asked her about it. She was talking about how the land was toxic because of the buildings and her concerns for her kids, but also her enjoyment of the hills, her love of them. She talked about how much they loved living in the 'west.' They had lots of children and a grandchild, and had a photo of them and the grandchild on the mantle, and she was saying how their lives were focused on them to help them through tough times and difficulties. I saw her life/situation as interesting and to convey this to her, but it also felt foreign and mundane.

Field Notes, March 2007

Chapter Six

Case study: Sally

This case study of Sally explores unconscious and contiguous object relations at play with regard to the Bay, Lake Michigan, and creative negotiations with living in an environment experienced and perceived as both polluted and "awesome"; a place with risks and rewards. As in the previous chapter, the case study problematises relations of environmental agency, subjectivity and the myth of 'apathy' in absence of certain practices. I selected this case study for several reasons; the interviews suggest complex psychic dynamics concerning biographical 'lived experience' in relation with what appear to be ambivalent relationships with her experiences of local chronic ecological issues, her sense of agency and efficacy, affective investments in particular issues and places, and the ways in which she has creatively managed and responded to specific ecological issues (e.g. water contamination, the polluted Bay, her concern for aquatic creatures). As with Donald, there is coexistence of quite passionate concerns and feelings regarding environmental issues, and certain choices regarding 'where the concern goes' or how its channelled as 'action'. As with the previous case study, I trace possible relationships between aspects of her biographical story, family dynamics and histories, and her strategies for reparations. This case study situates certain 'objects' as both internal, external and partial; s the water, the city, the dunes as invested with affective relations and tied to specific affective moments in time.

I first present a summary of Sally's biography, and review signficant events and transitions in her life, and how she has responded to them, beginning considerations of affect and object relations in how associations are made between the dunes of Lake Michigan, childhood and innocence, and the polluted (abject) waters of Green Bay. (There is more detail in this case study than the previous, as Sally was very verbal, spoke quickly and provided considerably more detail.) I focus on the move Sally's family made to Green Bay when she was a teenager, and the significant events surrounding this move. I then focus more closely on the specific topic of drinking water contamination and the issue of health, as representing a loss of purity and safety, her mother's cancer and her own exposure to contaminated drinking water. I identify the ways in which Sally has responded to these events and situations, both as creative negotiations and defensive strategies, notably through her brief involvement with the Save the Whales movement, attention to what she eats and drinks, the tendency to fill up space with a lot of activity, and her appreciation of the back garden. A core theme emerges about *adaptation* and *adjustment*. These themes relate to both biographical (parents' experiences and their interpretative reperatoires), and socio-cultural

influences (social defences to manage adversity and anxieties), so that boundaries between the psychic and social are blurred. The two case studies (and across the participants, largely) present subject positions that express both a recognition of limits and finitude, the ability to see the good and the bad, e.g. a depressive position; and resignation and sense of inefficacy, leading to a dissociation from concern, e.g. splitting off or decathecting from affective investments in certain issues (e.g. the simultaneous acknowledgement and disavowal of concern, creating a sort of movement or dynamic between different positions, as witnessed in these interviews).



Figure 24: Terre Andre State Park, Sheboygan, Wisconsin, copyright © Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources

Sally was selected as a participant based on the survey (see Appendix D). She selected "depends on events" as the frequency she thinks about environmental issues, which I rate as a mid-range level of engagement, satisfying my desire to interview people who are not particularly engaged but seem to have a moderate level of awareness about certain issues. It also signifies a local orientation (e.g. seasonal events). When asked what issues are of more concern in the survey, her response was, "Pollution in water, dioxins, growth hormones to all animals being raised for food consumption" (raised in the interviews as discussed below) (see Appendix D). Sally was eager to participate from the beginning, ringing me after I had not called her back to schedule our first interview, to tell me how keen she was to participate. During each of our phone calls to set up the interviews she would mention various items that had come up for her, for example something she had remembered regarding her mother's illness and a phone survey about local spraying and water contamination. She also had suggested in our first call that her parents may be able to

participate (a proposal I declined, but suggests her recognition of the familial (relational) nature of these themes).

Beginnings in Sheboygan: Biographical background and overview

As I crested the hill leading to Sally's subdivision, I was struck by the sudden panoramic view of the Bay which I had not seen until then. When I shared this with Sally later in the interview, she whispered dramatically, "Isn't is awesome?". When asked if she spent time by the Bay, she responded, "I don't do it as much as I used to, or as much as I would like to. Lot of times I will just go by... on my way home, I'll just stop there for a while and just stare at the water, but you just, you see businesses, you see factories all over. You have to really angle yourself so you don't and then you just see land on the other side. Which is different than, the lake. Um. But it's still water and I still love it".



Figure 25: Dunes at Terre Andre State Park, Sheboygan, Wisconsin, copyright © Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources

The "lake" is Lake Michigan. Sally grew up swimming and playing in its dunes as a young child in Sheboygan, about sixty-five miles from Green Bay. She mentions the lake moments into our first interview, in relation to the Bay (which is seen as inferior and polluted), as a place she deeply misses. It was only after the family left Sheboygan and moved to Green Bay when she was fifteen that she claims to have started to miss Lake Michigan and its open, expansive horizon: "Actually, after we, after I was an adult and I was out on my own, I actually went out and bought myself a picture of waves. [...] (see Figure 26). Because I didn't get enough, you know you don't get quite enough of the lake and driving to the lake is different from the Bay. [..] Looking at the

Bay is not the same as looking at the Lake! The Bay is calmer, the lake you don't see anything, you just see water as far as the eye can see. The Bay you can see across to Oconto over there to the other side, um, and it's not as rough. It's not as [.] what is the word I'm looking for? *Wild* isn't the right word, but it's more nature, the Lake, where the Bay is more subdued". Almost immediately into the interview Sally expresses ambivalence about the water in Green Bay; she both loves it and is disgusted by it; she takes pride living near the Bay, and yet hardly goes down to the shores, and when she does, she "angles" herself so she is not facing industry and land on the other side.

Sally is divorced, 47, living alone in a duplex shared with her parents (the houses are connected by a doorway and they share the garden). She works as a rural postal carrier. At the time of the interviews she was recovering from cervical spinal fusion surgery, a result of a workplace injury lifting heavy boxes and was wearing a brace; she was two months into a six-month leave of absence from work. She had quite an expressive, at times dramatic style of communicating, and her discourse was often punctuated with laughter. She spoke rapidly, which I found challenging and initially intimidating, but we settled into a comfortable rhythm together. When I ask Sally how long she has lived in Green Bay, she responds, "Okay, we moved to Green Bay—my parents moved to Green Bay in 1977, and uh they bought a business and motel, and um, so I spent my half of my junior year and all of my senior year in high school here". We see right away the shift from "we moved" to "my parents moved" as indicating that while the family moved, it was her parents who made this move, which would prove to be a defining event in her life. Sally's parents uprooted the family when she was fifteen, in the middle of her penultimate year in high school (junior year), a move Sally was opposed to (she jokes, "I was going to move in with my Aunt Margie [laughing] but she moved to Milwaukee [laughs] so I didn't have a choice, I had to come up here. I didn't want to come. It was the unknown!").

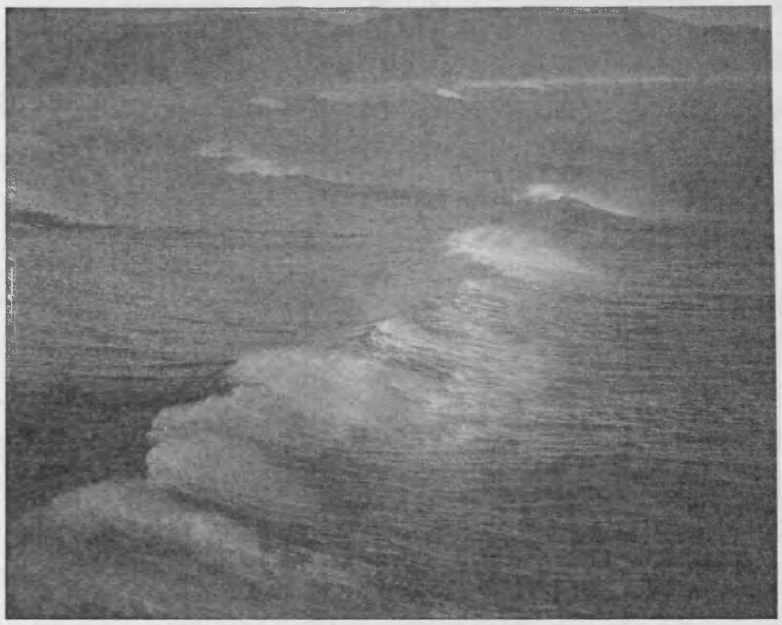


Figure 26: Poster of Waves, photo taken by Sally (participant), 2009

Sally spent her early years growing up in a trailer park a few miles from the beach of Lake Michigan. As if anticipating my judgements about trailer life, she says, "Back then, trailer parks were *very* nice, it was, you know, it was a very nice area. There was a movie theatre, um, you know one of those outside movie theatres, real close also so sometimes we'd walk down, you know, walk down, down the road a little bit, and could see a little bit of the movie, but we didn't do that too much". During the period in the trailer park, the family outings seemed to revolve around trips to the dunes of Lake Michigan and visits to Terre Andre State Park (located on the Lake Michigan shore). The outings mainly involved her mother, brother and the dog Cleo; her father worked long shifts at his mechanical factory job and her mother did not work while the children were very young, and picked up occasional work (e.g. as a short order cook in a café) when they were a bit older. I have a strong sense of 'parental supervision being quite important when she was young, as they would swim out 'as far as they'd be allowed' and the kids would rarely venture out on their own without their mother until they were old enough to ride bikes, after the move to the ranch house.

When she was about seven years old, the family moved from the trailer park to a ranch-style home across town, where they lived until moving to Green Bay in 1977. It was during this time on the east side of town that Sally seemed to have more autonomy; of this time, she says, "I mean, you know from little kids who are totally dependent on their parents to kids who are older have their own friends, and you know, do things like that. So. And having bicycled and being able to, 'I'm going over to my friends' and you know bike off [laughs]". Her life changed abruptly when her

parents decided to buy a motel and run their own business when she was fifteen. When asking Sally about this decision, following up in the second interview, she says, "We all talked about it, but we were the kids, and really, they made the decision that was best for them, and [.] the family". The family moved into the motel, which they ran as a family business. As Sally describes it, there was little privacy, the phone and door bell were ringing at all times, and she and her brother had to help with cleaning rooms, answering phones most weekend mornings. When I asked Sally if the motel was in any way a step up from the ranch house in Sheboygan, she says dryly, "Uuhh, only in the fact that it took that many steps to go up there, no. [Laughs]" and then describes in great detail the Sheboygan ranch home with its basement and bar.

Within the first moments into the interview, Sally expresses her relation with Green Bay in terms of what she was missing: "I know that after we moved to Green Bay, I missed [.] the [.] Lake [.] a lot. The Bay is not the same. First of all, it was so *polluted here* that we couldn't go swimming in it". The move to Green Bay becomes strongly associated, at least in the context of our interviews and her awareness of environmental issues, in terms of how polluted and degraded the water was, and the inability to go *in* to the water (e.g. immersive, entering into it). However, despite the "shock" and abjection of the polluted water and overall disorientation of the relocation, Sally remained in Green Bay and eventually moved into her own apartment soon after high school. She seems very close with her parents. She recounts a story that conveys something about her struggles with establishing autonomy from her parents. While living in the apartment, an intruder broke into the apartment: "He was there when I got home and that was a little exciting..." Although it sounds like a terrifying experience, she tells the story with levity and laughter, as she ends up giving the burglar a lift when she leaves the house, and comments on her handling of the situation, "But I think some of that is our personality and how we react or not panic. You know, it's like I didn't really panic that much..." However, following this incident, despite the fact she didn't "panic" she moved back in with her parents and stayed for the next couple of years. In herearly 20s, she travelled abroad on an exchange programme working in a German post office for a few months, where one of her uncles was working, and on her return began to work for the United States Postal Service as a rural postal carrier (where her father was also working part-time as a rural postal carrier). She then bought a condominium, and eventually sold it a few years later and moved into the duplex she shares with her parents; connected by a doorway, the two homes share a large garden, full of trees and plants. She has lived there since, and refers once to the fact she was married for five years and divorced in 2007.

At the time of mentioning her two months in Germany, in our second interview, Sally tells me her parents were both born and raised in Germany. Both parents grew up in Berlin and lived there during World War II. Of her father, she says, "He came

over in '54 or '55 and my mom came over in '59". In the third interview I follow up on this topic, and Sally describes severe deprivation her parents lived through during the war. (As I discuss below, her parents' experiences in Germany may help us understand how she has learned to negotiate difficult circumstances and experiences, significantly the unhappy circumstances of her involuntary move to Green Bay as a teenager).

Sally's rather frenetic activity had come to a stand still as she recovered from her surgery, and she found it a time for reflection, hence her desire and time to participate in the study. Her lifestyle has been 'filled up' with a physically demanding full-time job, (e.g. her vehicle has two steering wheels and two sets of pedals for manoeuvring post and country roads), music and adult education. As she told me, breathlessly, "Um I have rehearsal two nights a week, I take another, because I sing with the X, I play with X Symphony, so have those rehearsals two nights a week, Monday is usually a ten or eleven hour day, because there's a lot of mail on Mondays, because we're not delivering on Sunday! So Mondays I don't want to do anything but I also take a workshop class every other Monday right now. Monday, Wednesday, Thursday, so you know three nights a week I'm already gone. So the other kind of, the other two times, and on the weekends, I you catch up. Which I need to catch up during the week so I can have my weekends free so I need to change that [laughs] goal for next year, new year's resolution!" I am already feeling exhausted and a bit of out breath just listening to her.

My overall sense is of Sally literally 'filling up' space as a defence against experiencing intolerable distress or dissonance. While it sounds as though she was very active prior to the move to Green Bay, I suspect her current lifestyle has become constituted as a way of living in conditions that are 'less-than' ideal. I am most struck by the way she consistently gets close to a topic clearly of great affective investment, and then retreats or backs away into a mantra or litany that repeats itself through the interviews: "There is nothing I can do". It is this dynamic I am most interested in, in terms of what it may tell us about her subjectivity in relation to environmental issues, the topic of 'concern' and 'engagement' and how we can adequately assess someone's level of engagement if what we are looking, e.g. specific practices, are seen as heavily negotiated strategies which have their own psychic logic and contexts.

In the analysis that follows, I begin with Sally's recollections of the sand dunes in Sheboygan (as 'good' objects), and the affective associations. As with several other participants, when describing her childhood she falls into a sort of reverie. I then turn to the move to Green Bay, a 'turning point' in the narrative, a crucial 'plot' turn, and informative for subsequent relations with ecological issues and her perceptions. As I discuss, the move ushers in a new era, in which childhood ideals are lost, things become topsy-turvy and a new order must be constituted. In paying close attention

to the 'incantations' of adjustment and adaption to conditions, no matter how toxic or chronic, I explore her narratives about water and its risky quality. Water (as object) seems to be a source of love, affection, nostalgia, disgust, risk and danger; it connects her with something vital, and potentially lost, and yet is impure and sullied. I then address the core themes of adaptation and adjustment, in the context of both the acute shock (and trauma) of the move and the parental authority it represented, and her parents' survival in a deprived war and post-war Berlin. There appears to be the sense of extreme vulnerability; no protection, no ability to be safe (e.g. "There is no more quarantine"). In this light I suggest her attempts at environmental reparation, e.g. through the 'Save the Whales' campaign are heavily qualified with a sense of impotence. I finally discuss Sally's participation in the interviews and survey as an expression of concern, reparation and engagement, and conclude with final reflections.

Affect, environmental objects and memory

The sand dunes: The world as a safe place

I begin by asking Sally to tell me "what comes to mind in terms of where you grew up".

She tells me they lived in a trailer park, and then says, "Back then, the sand dunes were *all sand.* Now there's a lot of growth. I don't know if you were over there at all, but it used to be pure sand, just sand. And now there's other stuff growing up out of it". The narrative is a story of loss, of the pure sand dunes. I ask if she would go out to the beach with her brother, or on her own; she responds,

> Oh my parents would take us, and we had a dog also, Cleo, so we'd all go down, we'd all be playing in the sand, in the sand dunes. And go swimming in the Lake, and you know that the Lake is pretty cold in June and July and May, if you want to freeze that's your choice! And then by August it warms up. And um, so we were used to that. Yes so we'd be out there, we'd play out there, we'd run to the dunes and the dog would go running with us. It was a lot of fun. And, just jump in the lake, cool off, spent a lot of time- and I love looking at the Lake. I just love, what it... Looking at the Bay is not the same as looking at the lake!

I am given a vivid account of family trips to the shores of Lake Michigan; the cold waters, the sense of freedom and playing in the sand with the family dog. She also invokes the Bay as inferior to Lake Michigan; she loves looking at the lake, whereas she does not enjoy looking out at Green Bay. My feeling is she is somewhat embarrassed by the Bay; it is not as 'wild' or 'natural' as her hometown waters of Lake Michigan. I ask how the Bay is different, she responds:

Bay is calmer, the lake you don't see anything, you just see water as far as the eye can see. The Bay you can see across to Oconto over there to the other side, um, and it's not as rough. It's not as [.] what is the word I'm looking for? Wild isn't the right word, but it's more nature, the Lake, where the Bay is more subdued.

The lake is more wild, less "subdued", not as rough; the Bay is associated with settlement, towns, industry, whereas the Lake seems untouched by all of that, is just wide open, wild and has rough waves to gaze out on. I then ask Sally if she has any particular memories or stories (I am probing for a "PIN"):

R: What is your, what are some of your earliest memories of going out to the Lake?
S: [..] Well in summer of course, being on the beach, going swimming and playing and that. And sometimes, just [.] um, [.] enjoying it. Being young and knowing, not knowing that there's anything wrong, you know the world was a safe place.
R: So you felt safe-
S: Oh yeah!
R: And at ease
S: yes safe and at ease. [.] Yeah. Calm, peaceful.
R: Are there any, it's a bit hard to do this but can you imagine any particular moments or incidents that you can describe that really stand out to you.
S: Well, with the sand and you're young kids, you, we did a lot of um, sand castle stuff. And making a lot of different sand castles and the waves would come and wash them away and start over and try to built a really nice big one, all that kind of stuff. Building sand castles, and [.] just having lunch and relaxing out there, playing in the water and going swimming and going as far as we'd be allowed [laughs] and coming back in.

She articulates what it meant to enjoy the water, the sand, the warmth and the cold water and, "Being young and knowing, *not knowing that there's anything wrong, you know the world was a safe place*". This is a world *prior* to adult concerns, where the future was as open as the horizon of Lake Michigan. It is this identification with the dunes and the outings to Lake Michigan as feeling "safe" and "not knowing that there's anything wrong" that exists in contrasts to the life in Green Bay, which is clearly not safe and where there are things that *are* "wrong". Also of note is the reference to swimming also being a monitored activity, as they would go out "as far as we'd be allowed" and coming back in. This reflects both the sense of freedom and innocence, as well as containment and a sense of limits (which we observed in Donald's account as well; nature was wild and open, but within certain limits. The exception to this was the accident at the Fox River for Donald, and with Sally, the polluted waters signify a sharp lack of protection and containment, as discussed below). I have a

strong sense of her mother's presence during these outings, as her father was often absent due to his shift schedule.

In the second interview, Sally corroborates her memories of the lake with her brother, and she brings him in to collude (on the part of Sally) in the experience of the dunes, and shock at the pollution of the water in Green Bay. (It is also worth looking at what it means for Sally's brother to corroborate her own memory retrievals.) For Sally, the move to Green Bay signalled the end of swimming in nature (e.g. not in swimming pools); for her brother, as a "guy" the polluted water didn't pose as much of a threat.

> Um I talked with my brother and um I asked him what he remembered from that time, and he agreed, he remembered we spent a lot of time playing in the dunes in Lake Michigan-in Sheboygan. And um running into, and we had a dog Cleo too, and running into the water and doing some swimming and you know playing in the dunes you get all dirty and you need to go jump in the water and rinse off. So he remembered a lot of that. And then his shock, and too, that when we moved to Green Bay [..] that um, you couldn't go swimming! And then, several years later, you know he did go swimming in there, a bunch of guys went out there, I mean they're guys, and they went swimming and he said now I know you don't go swimming in the bay, you don't want to. [laughs] Cause it's polluted and it's just not, [.] worth swimming in.

When describing the dunes and the waters in Lake Michigan, Sally recounts memories of a more idyllic time in childhood, running into the waters, playing with the dog, as capturing a certain quality or moment when they were young. In the narratives about the pure sands and the clean, clear, and wild waters of Lake Michigan, she is also indirectly referencing the polluted and degraded waters of Green Bay. She does not mention one without the other; each is articulated in relation to the other, to something prior, unspoilt, pure. I am interested in the way she articulates her life in Sheboygan and the dunes, because it helps me make sense of her account of the "shock" of the pollution of the waters in Green Bay, and how this can be seen in context of the shock of the move itself. In the second interview, I wanted to know if Sally's experience of the dunes as overgrown with grasses had led her to learn more about the ecology.

R: And you mentioned that the dunes were very high-
K: They were very sandy. Very sandy. And now there is more vegetation.
R: And why is that?
S: Don't know.
R: The change in-
S: Ww- I have no clue.
R: Okay.

S: I just know that way back then there was not that much vegetation, it was sand all over for as far as the eye can see. Just once and a while you'd see a little bit of vegetation.
R: But now there is more grass.

There is a prickly, defensive quality in her responses, as if I am suggesting she ought to know more about the issue, or perhaps she is projecting onto me an idea of what she should know. In this case, it is difficult to ascertain if the grasses that seem to have become more prevalent in the dunes are native species, and perhaps Sally doesn't recall their being there (e.g. her selective memory is of 'pure sand') or if they are invasive grass species, which do plague many areas of the Great Lakes wetlands and beaches.[57]

However, the dunes, for Sally, are no longer pure and sandy. The water is no longer clean and she cannot swim at the beach as she once did. She speaks of Sheboygan, and her childhood, prior to the move to Green Bay in affectionate, idealised terms. In order to understand more about how Sally relates and experiences the water and environment in Green Bay, as the interviews progressed, I wanted to explore her life prior to the move to Green Bay. I was curious if her nostalgia and feelings about Lake Michigan were connected with the subsequent dislocation and trauma of the move to Green Bay, which occurs when she is about fifteen. By the time they left Sheboygan, how central was Lake Michigan to her life; that is, when she says that she missed the lake intensely after the move, is it possible the lake comes to represent something vital, pure and innocent she has lost. In the second interview I ask how much she spent time at the lake, after the move across town to the ranch house.

S: Not as often, as when we lived closer by. Cause there were other things, and you know we were getting older too, I mean, you know from little kids who are totally dependent on their parents to kids who are older have their own friends, and you know, do things like that. So. And having bicycles and being able to, "I'm going over to my friends" and you know bike off. [laughs]
R: Right. So would you say the lake, um, you know, what, [.] would you say that actually the move, there was a shift where you spending less time there, or did that happen not necessarily by the move, but more your age, getting older.

[57] According to the Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources, "Embracing the shore of Lake Michigan, Kohler Park Dunes contains active and stabilized lake dunes, interdunal wetlands, and a small dry-mesic white pine forest. More than one mile of Lake Michigan beach is included in the natural area. Several interdunal wetlands (called pannés) are thickly vegetated with lakeshore rush and sedges. Some of the common plants that stabilize the dunes are sand reed, marram grass, Canada wild rye, northern wheat grass, common and trailing junipers, sand cherry, and willow species. Three state-threatened plants are found in the dunes: clustered broom-rape (Orobanche fasciculata), dune goldenrod (Solidago simplex var. gillmanii) and dune thistle (Cirsium pitcheri)" (http://www.dnr.state.wi.us/org/land/er/sna/sna71.htm, accessed 10 November 2009.)

S: You know I can't quite remember exactly. I can't really. That would be a question my parents would be able to answer better. Because you know, you're just a kid, 10 and younger, and 10 and 16, you just really don't, or 15 you don't think about that kind of-
R: Yeah you just kind of are doing your thing
S: Yeah! As a kid the world revolves around you! [Laughs]
R: As an older person getting into your teens, would you all go out to the Lake?
S: [..] My dad worked a lot of hours. So, my mom, my brother and I probably would, yeah. And then dad probably would, you know, if my dad would be available on the weekends.

Again, there is a prickly quality to the responses. In response her tone, I then add, "Yeah you are just kind of are doing your thing" as if to say, "it's okay, I am not judging you". The lake seems to have receded in Sally's memories and life by the time the family moved to the ranch house, as she gets older and has more autonomy. At the same time, the world "revolves around you" as a kid, which also suggests how, prior to the move to Green Bay, she still enjoyed a sense of innocence and freedom associated with childhood. The way she mixes up the ages, going from ten to sixteen, to fifteen suggests the time between ten and sixteen as when this progression took place; it is also the time period when she lived in the larger ranch house prior to the move. What is clear is that by the time Sally moved to Green Bay, she was spending less time in the water, by the lake (which was largely associated with family outings) and was mostly consumed with teenage preoccupations of socializing along with church and school activities (orchestra). It was when they were moved, while she was in high school, to Green Bay to run a motel, was when she began to long powerfully for the water, the lake and the ability to look out on to an open horizon; this is the narrative she provides in the context of the interviews. As she says, she didn't begin to appreciate the lake until they moved.

From the beginning, Sally's narratives concerning the dunes and her early experiences in and by the lake are clearly powerful and strongly associated with childhood innocence and family. As it becomes clear throughout the interviews, Sally expresses very strong concern and awareness of environmental issues in Green Bay, specifically relating to the value of quality drinking water, clean water for swimming, and the value of the Great Lakes as a resource. However she does not participate or 'look' like an environmentally engaged individual; music is her passion and focus. However there remains a vital energy present with regard to issues concerning water. I now explore the move to Green Bay as a pivotal event in her life story, one that may offer clues as to how and why Sally responds and engages with issues in the way she does. Specifically, the move to Green Bay may signal an end to innocence; from 'idyll' to abject, from omnipotence of childhood to imperfections of adulthood, from safety to

risk. The move to Green Bay dovetailed with Sally's emergent adolescence, and the perception of Green Bay as shockingly polluted and abject may be affectively associated with the shock of leaving life in Sheboygan. Her experience of the water and environment in Green Bay may operate as an "objective correlative" (Eliot, 1922) of unconscious processes and intra-psychic dynamics.

Moving to Green Bay: The shock of the water

In the first interview, as discussed in Chapter 4, the main focus is on eliciting free associations with the place one grew up, and the region in general. As we move into discussing life in Green Bay, I ask Sally about her associations with the move.

R: Anything else about, what you [.] associated with moving to Green Bay?
S: The shock of the water, the Bay, being so filthy that you could not swim in it. Um. For some reason, they allowed you to swim in Ashwaubenon, there was some in Ashwaubenon... you could swim there. I don't know why that was cleaner than the tip down here, but it was just down the road from Fort Howard! [laughing] I mean looking back now, um, they used to have way back when they used to have swimming right at Bay Beach. They used to have swimming, right off, by the University here, that little park, um, Comm-university, they used to have swimming there also. Um, and, the shock of the water being that dirty, it was huge. And, you know they said okay two years, and you say okay I can live with that, two years later it still wasn't clean, and here we are, 2007, twenty years later and it's still not clean. I don't think they ever will have it clean. [.] So.
R: Do you think, as far as your parents moving here. Did they ever mention the water, or um, the change in the quality or anything like that?
S: They were also appalled that you couldn't swim, that the water was so dirty.
R: Uh huh. Was that something that you all didn't know before you came here?
S: Correct.
R: so perhaps you had an idea that, it would be kind of more of a, resource that you could use?
S: Right. Yeah. Um. We didn't, we just assumed, because, [.] we'd, I guess, we did spend a lot of time at the lake, going swimming down there, and I guess even growing older we'd go down there, if we wanted to go swimming, the hot dog days of summer, we'd go down there. And then living here, you'd want to go swim close by and you couldn't. So it was a shock. And, it-- part of me would think, why did the community allow it to get so bad? (Hmm.) But, [.] not having lived here in those early years. And there are so many mills here, there are so many mills in the area.

It seems important for Sally to convey to me her strong views and feelings about the water in Green Bay; the way she communicates this is unequivocal and passionate (in contrast to other participants, such as Victoria who registers this as matter-of-fact, or Jeff who notes his shock also, when moving from Sheboygan to Green Bay

but notes it in an almost jovial way). Early in the interviews there is a strong association between the move and the "shock of the water" as being so polluted. According to Sally her parents were "appalled" about the inability to swim in the bay. We also see the beginnings of assigning responsibility in, "Why did the community allow it to get so bad", an expression of disappointment that runs throughout almost all of the participants' interviews. Here is it the community who failed; later in the interviews it's down to the governmental failure to regulate, and how small one feels in relation to such remote powers. There seems to be a lack of comprehension as to how it was allowed to degrade and degenerate so badly. I found her emphasis on the water quality striking, when considering the context of the move, and what appears to me as having been a traumatic event on a number of levels. While the focus of the interviews cannot be ignored (indeed are held unconsciously or consciously for the participant), it made me wonder if the water was being used as an object of displacement for the affective responses to the move, which may be otherwise unacceptable to express or even to tolerate (e.g. anger and disgust towards the parents for enforcing the move, and putting an abrupt end to childhood innocence and omnipotence). In other words, the severity with which she speaks of the water and her shock seems out of place considering what sounds like a shocking and traumatic move. Sally was moved in the middle of her junior year, with one year remaining in high school, from a highly developed community and established way of life. She mentions several times the fact she had just earned a high rank in the school orchestra, which had taken years. While much of the content is related in an upbeat and cheerful tone, the facts of the events strike me as painful, sad and about loss. Her account of trying to find the Abbey in Green Bay, soon after the move, and instead ending up at the local prison (correctional institute) conveys this disorientation vividly:

> It was funny... We were looking for St Norbert Abbey. We knew it was on Webster and Monroe in that area, you could get it from either side, [laughing] we kept ending up at the correctional institute! [laughing] It was hilarious! It's like, is this it? Is this it? This is a huge brick building! It's the correctional institute let's get out of here! So it's kind of funny finding your way around and ending up there. Another place we ended up at was East High. From East High we learned, I don't know why we ended up there, but somehow we always, we'd miss the turn, and we'd always go there, and from there we found our way for a while in Green Bay and all of a sudden you learn the way. Those are just some funny things that I remember about first moving here. Um. [laughing] Yeah, thinking you're going to St Norbert Chapel and Abbey and you end up at the correctional institute! [laughs]

I am reminded of what Winnicott has observed about the nature of manic defences, as a flight from inner reality to outer reality, and the "denial of the

sensations of depression—namely the heaviness, the sadness—by specifically opposite sensations, lightness, humourousness, etc." (Winnicott, 1935, p. 132). As Sally recounts the circumstances of the move, particularly in the first interview, there remains a brittle lightness, which belies the difficulties she must have experienced. In addition to describing the 'shock' of the water she also acknowledges the culture shock of having grown up around a thriving Mexican population, and the relative homogeneity of Green Bay. It is clear she misses Hispanic culture as well, as she mentions piñata parties as a child. As I process the magnitude of this move in Sally's life, I begin to wonder why her parents chose to move at that time, and to run a motel business (not even waiting for her to finish her junior year in high school; here my own counter-transference is evidence in the experience of anger towards the parents, given her relative lack of affect). In the second interview, I begin to piece together a *gestalt* of the move to Green Bay, and revisit the account, by feeding back what I have heard and my own queries.

S: They wanted to be their- my dad wanted to be his own boss, he wanted to be in charge instead of being always, you know, an employee for somebody else, he thought it would be great to, to be his own boss and have his own business.
R: Was it something that you all talked about as a family, or was it something they suddenly announced?
S: We all talked about it, but we were the kids, and really, they made the decision that was best for them, and [.] the family.

We see a similar repair as in the opening of the interview, mentioned at the beginning of this Chapter, in which she says, "Okay, we moved to Green Bay- my parents moved to Green Bay in 1977". Here she begins with "they wanted" and repairs to, "my dad wanted", suggesting at least unconsciously, that in fact her father was the key decision maker in the family. She tells me, laughing, that she wanted to move in with her aunt, but her aunt then decided to move out of the state so that was no longer an option. This is all relayed in a light, breezy tone, causing me to initially overlook the fact that she had resisted the move and her one option for staying in Sheboygan was removed. In fact it took me at least until the second interview to fully grasp the content of what she was telling me; that not only did they move to a new town, but they were all living in close quarters in a motel which was run as a twenty-four hour, seven-day a week business. In the first interview, I am asking her for more information about the lifestyle; I include a lengthy excerpt below as it is important for obtaining a sense of what this life was like for her as a teenager. However there is a notable lack of affect concerning what sound to be difficult circumstances. (This pro-

vides a clue as to the 'adaptation and adjustment' theme with regard to environmental issues, discussed below.)

R: And where did you live?
S: The motel had an apartment upstairs, a three-bedroom, it was really like a house, a ranch house, because you had the kitchen, the living room, a dining area, laundry room, and three bedrooms, with two baths.
R: Was that, um, a step from where you had been living in Sheboygan.
S: Uhhh... only in the fact that it took that many steps to go up there, no. [laughs]No. They had a ranch home, um, very nice ranch home with a basement, the basement was [..] they had some area of the basement that was finished off, and we made it into a living room, they had linoleum down, they hadn't hung the ceiling, back then the rage was panelling all over. And um, so they had a nice living area, uh, family area downstairs, um, and a pool table and ping-pong table, we had all that stuff. And back then, having bars in your basement was huge, so they had that, even though they didn't drink that much, you know but when everyone got together they'd all, that was a point of um, hanging out. So part of the basement was done, um, we had the whole first floor or had a ranch home, that was nice, very nice yard with garden and all of that, and um, close to school, close to work, close to everything so it was very nice [..] nicer than the motel [laughs a bit wryly] so yeah.

There is a brittle, clipped quality to the way Sally is describing this scenario to me, particularly when I ask if she helped out with the work, as if to suggest such a question was ludicrous. It was taken for granted the whole family ran the business. We see Sally surprisingly invoke the topic of the water and access to the lake, even though we are now speaking about Green Bay—not Sheboygan—so there is some incoherence, and the theme of water and the Lake is still active unconsciously. It is articulated as not accessible due to family pressures and the constraints of running the business. We may view the comment, "We didn't do as much going to the water and to the Lake and things like that" as being about activities associated with *childhood* and life in Sheboygan. Rather, there is no time for playing, "it's just part of your job"—the world of adulthood has suddenly intruded, and one must "do your job". I then ask about what it was like for the family and her parents to adjust to the new lifestyle.

S: [..] So there was a lot more limitations with owning a motel and living there.
R: How did your parents adapt to that, such a radical change in lifestyle and, work life? Given that it used to be your dad putting in a lot of hours at the factory and now, it was totally different kind of situation.
S: (Sighs) Repeat the question... (Sounds weary, tired)
R: How did they find the change in work life and lifestyle?
S: It was hard. It was very hard. That's Melvina! [Another cat walks in] I'm glad you came out sweet pea! This is Renee. [I pet the cat, very timid. We both

laugh.] She's the curious one, the inquisitive one, always pays attention and knows what's happening.

R: And this one is—

S: The social butterfly! [Laughing]

R: So it was hard—

S: Very hard.

R: —transition

She is struggling to respond to my questions as I try to gain a sense of the level of tension or conflict during this time, and once admitted how hard it was, jumps on the change of topic, as her cat walks (conveniently) into the room. I also welcome the diversion, as the topic is becoming more difficult, and I 'jump' to the cat and begin to stroke her, both calming me and conveying a sense of having a relaxed chat. After this initial interruption, we return to the topic and she opens up more about how hard the transition was—and the importance of being *adaptable*. Understanding how she has responded to the trauma of the move and the difficult circumstances enables me to better understand the theme of *adaptation* that emerges as central in how Sally relates to chronic ecological issues she experiences and is aware of. Here she elaborates on how difficult the transition was, and how much she missed her life in Sheboygan; there is now a sense of loss that had not been present previously.

S: Very hard transition. Because we had a very nice life. Um, involved in church, involved in, you know, hey were very involved in their church at that time, they um, we had a full life we had a very nice life. And coming to a motel, a small motel, it's not like a motel where you go and put your hours and then you go home. Um. A small motel, that is your life. That is your, you know, you eat, sleep and breathe that. And um, it was [..] (sighs) I don't recommend small businesses, that type of business to somebody unless they are younger and they want to have the 24/7 that they can put into it. It's a lot of hard work. It's a lot of hard work. You find out really how well you work as a family. Um. You know, um, the first two spouses, how they work, because normally one spouse is off to work-

R: Exactly—

S: And work separate times, so you found out how well you work as a couple you find out how well you work as a family. Interesting dynamics. Because, um, you get frustrated, you get upset, um, you're with those people 24/7. You don't, you can't just say at the end of my workday, I'm going home. You already are home! [Laughs heartily.] So. That was, that was interesting the dynamics did change a lot. Um. You do adapt because we are, everybody is adaptable. And um, it was just very hard. But the business did well, it um, you know, you work hard put a lot into it, and um, you get a lot out of it too.

In addition to the importance of adaptation is the way the family came together. When I asked her about the mood and if there were tensions in the house, she responds with language that takes me by surprise:

> As our family um, we'll all argue, um, you know, complain whatever, but when coming together as a family and working together, and standing united we do that well. So, I mean, if anybody were to attack any one of us we are united force. So. I don't know if that answers your question. We um, always have been a close family. Um, with the excep- even though my brother has travelled a lot, we still are relatively close family. Um. [..] in that kind of thing you learn how to work together, you learn how to get along, you learn how to interact with the other with the other people in your family because otherwise, they'd be constant strife.

There are now *three* key themes emerging with regard to how Sally has creatively negotiated with extremely difficult circumstances: *adaptation*, a sense of one's own limited agency, and "coming together and standing united, a united force", the primacy of family unity. The militaristic language employed here denotes a mood of battle and strife; and the allusion to attack was a bit unclear. Who is doing the attacking, and why? Where I was querying internal conflicts and strife, Sally shifts the discourse to one of standing united against external threats. How she articulates the importance of family, in the context of what sounds to be very difficult and trying circumstances—which I would have expected her to feel anger and resentment about—becomes a sort of incantation, to appear throughout the interviews, regarding adaptation and the importance of being a close family. Given Sally's own trajectory and the fact she never, in many respects, 'left home', there is something important here regarding how she chose to respond to these circumstances, and how she has subsequently responded to other difficulties, namely the risky drinking water quality, her mother's illness and her awareness of and responses to local and global environmental issues.

Affective relations with water: love, disgust, threat

What I have heard from Sally up to this point has been an ambivalent account of her object relations with water. As she says of the (polluted) water in Green Bay, "It's still water, and I still love it". However it is clear there is 'good' water (the waters of her childhood Lake Michigan) and 'bad' water (the polluted waters of Green Bay, and the contaminated drinking water). (This splitting of good and bad waters has resonance with Donald for whom the Fox River was 'bad' and Two Rivers is 'good', one is spoiled by industry and abuse, the other protected, pure and pristine, both functioning as internal and external objects.) When Sally tells me she would sit and look out at the

Bay and angle her body as to avoid looking at the land or buildings across, it is a poignant and telling metaphor for this ambivalent stance, not able to sever the connection and yet managing it through specific and strategic points of contact. (As we shall see, the ability to calibrate contact with both the 'good' and the 'bad' becomes more evident as she discusses her book, *Our Stolen Future*, discussed below.) During the second interview, I fed back to Sally what I 'heard' her telling me regarding the difficulty of the move, as a means of both validating with her my own impressions, and as a way of building up a rapport and transitioning into a discussion of how she experienced the ecological problems in Green Bay.[58] I was aware that it would be difficult to consciously acknowledge something as subtle and potentially unconscious as how one experiences ecological issues, but I was fielding around and asking Sally to help me understand how she responded. It is here she expands more fully on the theme of readjustment, and elaborates on the importance of adjusting one's expectations; that is, learning to live with disappointments.

S: I guess, I- in one way you readjust [..] how you do things and what you do. For example, going just right down to the water and going for a swim, there was a bb- there was a beach at Com-university park and at bay beach. Originally that was a swimming beach. All these, so instead of going to Bay beach, emphasis on beach, going into the water, it became a park and it meant being by the water, not in the water. It meant, going to you know the amusement park at bay beach. Um you could sit and look at the water, but you'd never want to go into it. And it was always in the background, rather than, [.] you know, rather than going into it and playing. Or swimming, not just playing but swimming, or cooling off. Um, going to Cum-University Park, you sit there and look at the water. You don't go, you know, on a nice hot summer day you just don't go running into it.

R: Right, right.

S: So it was, getting used to that, and realizing, and then it took a long time, years before we found out about that area where you can go swim, which is ironically just down the road from Fort Howard [laughing a lot] and that's an approved swimming area.

R: Did you swim in there?

S: Yeah, yeah. When we found out about it, and we were able to drive down there. And with friends I think we would drive down there, we'd go down there with friends, with a youth group, and actually go swimming into the water in addition to the picnic or anything else that was going on. Usually they'd have volleyball and all that other fun stuff. Does that answer your question? You kind of readjust your expectation.

R: Right. I guess I wonder how that coloured your experience of living here. I think it's hard to separate out all the other things that were going on-

[58] This style of feeding back to facilitate greater levels of disclosure, trust and dialog is discussed in Chapter 4.

S: I don't know if it's ss- I don't know [..] I like your word 'coloured' your, feelings, it's just it was just, there were so many changes that you just adapted to the new changes, and okay that's just part of life, and since there were so many of them, it's just, oh, okay.

The irony that Sally is laughing about, of course, is that the area deemed as safe for swimming was just downstream from one of the major paper mills. So even though she went swimming, it was with a group (church youth group) and in dubious waters. The central 'mantra' to emerge from these accounts concern adaptation and adjustment to change. I want to suggest that this same 'mantra' surfaces in relation as well to issues of risky water quality, and may have its roots in certain generational familial dynamics which predate the move to Green Bay, as we see below.

The issue of water quality and food purity (e.g. the use of bovine growth hormones in meat and dairy cows) rated high on her radar in terms of key issues in the survey. As I was to learn, Sally had direct experiences with water contamination as relayed through two specific 'incidents'. The first, concerning her narrative about the water smelling like gasoline and how she had to adjust her living conditions to accommodate this mysterious situation, the fact her cat subsequently died of kidney failure having been given the water; second, her mother's breast cancer and the fact they learned, retrospectively, that her mother should have been avoiding the drinking water during her chemotherapy treatments. The topic of water quality is also strongly associated with bottled drinking water and her vigilance about drinking tap water, even ice cubes, when out at restaurants. Not surprisingly the topic of water—drinking water, water for swimming, the water in the Great Lakes, the water as home to whales and creatures, water as industrial site in Green Bay, and as a sign of civic inaction and inefficacy—is difficult to 'contain' as discrete and separate topics. Literally and metaphorically the water 'flows' from one topic to another. Therefore what I wish to focus on in the following section, are the *affective* undercurrents in the discourses concerning water. Specifically, there is a subtle yet palpable *movement* between different affective registers: acceptance, resignation, disgust, anger and sadness. There is also the undercurrent of *disappointment.*

Disappointment

In the second interview I bring up the topic of industry in the region:

R: What, um, and this is kind of, free association so just kind of whatever comes to mind. What are your feelings about that industry, all those industries being here and the paper mills, and [..]
S: [...] if you don't think about it, and it's just part of life, it's just oh, that's just part of life, that's how it goes, that's the way the area is. But when you look

at the big picture, if you look at, like when you look at the Weather Channel and they actually show Canada, and they show kind of the whole nation and you realize, this is the main thing of water, there are other coun-t other states that don't have this much water. And I look at that and I'm surprised at how we allow our water to be polluted.

Sally is able to articulate the complex and uncanny capacity for both being simultaneously aware and unaware of our surroundings; akin to disavowal, the ability to 'know and not know'. Her surprise is registered when she apprehends the significance of the bodies of water that comprise the Great Lakes. She describes the way certain conditions, even those that are distressing or discomforting (e.g. the industry and its degradation of the waters she claims to value strongly) are naturalised: "Just part of life, that's how it goes, that's the way the area is". But when we look at the 'big picture', such as a Geographical Information Survey (GIS) impact of the region on the *Weather Channel*, it becomes quite a different picture; she is able to grasp the magnitude of the situation, the value of the waters and its vulnerability. The affective register returns to what arises in the first moments of our first interview, of shock and disappointment. I follow with, "What are your feelings about that?"

S: Oh I dislike it. You know, the, regulations should be stricter. This is the water we are going to be drinking, this is the water that grandkids are going to be drinking. It needs to, they need to clean it up. Water is a limited source. It, it's gotta be, water is one of the things that we need to live by.
R: Hmm hmm. So if you were to [.] um, describe, emotions associated or affiliated that come up when you think about the industry here in Green Bay. What would those be?
S: [..] Emotions. What emotion would I attach to [.]
R: If you just allow yourself-
S: First thing is disappointment. Ah, disappointment that they're allowing the pollution to continue, disappointment that- I already said disappointment. Well, like I first said when we were all shocked and appalled at how bad the water quality was. [....] I can't think of anything else, I'm trying too hard. [laughs.]

Disappointment echoes across several other participants, making it a strong thematic undercurrent. What are emotional registers of disappointment; is disappointment an emotion? It is as far as she is able to go in this moment; disappointment is a softening, a blunter edge than anger, or outrage, for example. It has a sadder quality, muted, and is entirely liveable. We can live with disappointment; one adjusts, as Sally often says. Immediately following this exchange, Sally introduces the topic of water contamination, in telling me that when you have good water you "take it for granted" and how in the nineties, there was a period "when the water was *really*

bad. It smelled awful, it tasted awful, I was buying bottled water for a long time." Her parents bought a water filtration unit for the house, as the water smelled like gasoline. I ask her how that was for her:

> Um. [....] I'll go to the emotions. Angry. Um. Disgusted, shocked. Um. Because water's what we need to live. You need water to shower, you need water to drink you need water to cook. And um, I wasn't, I had to go buy you know, to do aann—and you need water to clean. Um. You know we got a, our clothes, our dishes, all of that you need clean water in order to wash all that stuff, because you're going to be eating off it or wearing it. And that type of, you wash water, bad water, you wash clothes in bad water it will smell like the bad water. So. Which, but there's nothing you can do about it, for washing your clothes, you still have to wash your clothes and that's the way it goes. But I purchased bottled water, for cooking and drinking, um, for a number of years.

Listening to this account, I began to experience a sense of indignation and anger myself. I imagined her having to deal with noxious water in her washing and cleaning, and asked instinctively if the water department or city had said anything publicly about the situation.

> I have to admit- oh publicly? No. But I have to admit every so often, um, the Green Bay water department will send out a little brochure. I don't read it. It's like oh what is this? It's not a bill [tosses away, laughs] and I never read it. Um. In 2000 my mom was diagnosed with breast cancer. And after she went through the chemo and the surgeries, four surgeries in a year, bilateral mastectomy, all of this—um, we, she actually read, the brochure. And in that brochure, the Green Bay water department, in 2001, had stated, if you are going through chemotherapy do not drink the water. If your immune system is bad, do not drink the water. Yeah. I never knew that, prior to that. Because I never sat and read the whole brochure. You know. I don't think anybody does [laughs] but now I know that, it, and it was interesting to find out afterwards, if you are, if you have autoimmune disease, if you are very sick, if you are going through chemotherapy, don't drink the water, the local water. And then we had all those scares, um, all the exposes whatever on TV where they were talking about, um, people who are doing bottled water, where are they getting their water from. Is it run-off from the farm-mm, you know farm up above and all the [.] sewage and stuff is running into the water? I mean there were a lot of scandals going on around that for a while, when was that five or ten years ago, something like that. And um, so bottled water isn't even saguaranteed to be safe either. They don't have to say yeah we are at the bottom of the hill and there's a farm at the top of the hill, you know. So how do you know how your water is safe? So. Um. During that time, when did we [..] and then when the Bovine Growth Hormone, when people, when the animals started getting injected with that, we didn't want to drink the milk or eat the

meat from there anymore. So we started looking more to the organic meat and more natural meat. So we made that switch around that time. It's a growth hormone, we don't need to have additional hormones in our body. So that's when we started going to Hoaglands Ranch in Algoma and they also sell it at the farmer's market.

There is a negotiation between awareness, shock and disgust, and available modes of response or actions. It moves very quickly to being about protecting the body from the potential contaminants, through the use of filtration, bottled water and organic local meat, although even the bottled water cannot be certain for its safety. The picture is one of increased risk and a move inward, rather than outward, in terms of action. We are presented with a stunning account of her mother's breast cancer, and the fact they had unwittingly not read a small pamphlet sent out by the city water department. Sally is laughing, which makes it difficult for me to accurately gauge the magnitude of the story and its affective impacts. However the content of the story concerns her mother's vulnerability and the lack of effective protection and communication to prevent her from drinking the water. The theme of negligence runs through the interviews and the stories I have collected from Green Bay, notably on account of industry and civic responsibility (a sort of parental protection). We see a hint of guilt arise, in her admission ("I admit") of not seeing the notice and throwing it away but also an acknowledgement of its inadequacy as a form of communication.

Adjusting to conditions: Every body of water has parasites

The of the central themes in the interviews as a whole and in this series of three is the incantation of adjusting to conditions, for it does begin to sound like a mantra or an incantation: when addressing difficult chronic issues, such as the toxicity of the drinking water, or the inertia in cleaning up the Bay, the phrase about adjusting and adapting comes up. We can see this below in the example concerning the incidence of her mother's illness and a possible link to environmental toxicity, where she makes a surprising detour. Sally had mentioned during a phone call to set up the second interview, that she had recalled after our first interview a connection between her mother's illness and the water quality. I asked her to expand on this.

R: You, you, on the phone it sounded like there was a potential connection between the illness and the water. [Referring to earlier phone call.]
S: That's right. There was one point when [.] somebody called my mom and they had mentioned that they were doing a survey and if they could ask her some questions. And, they asked her if, during the nnn mid-90s if they had noticed any little flying planes, if they had noticed if the water had tasted bad or smelled bad during that time. They asked her several different questions. And um, I don't remember all of them, I just remember, mom's

surprise when, that they had even asked that. And they wondered if there was a correlation between those items and the cancer rise, because the breast cancer [.] just skyrocketed during that time, it just rose so fast. And a lot of women died from it. And um, but, we didn't actually notice any of those things. I mean, in this area, there's a strip where planes fly over to-to-to the airport all the time. Planes from, where would that be, I don't know, Detroit, Minneapolis, whatever no Minneapolis would be the other way, I don't know. Um. You know it's a, it's a, it's an actual flight, during 911 when all the planes, and everything was grounded for a couple of weeks, it was so quiet it's like 'what's wrong' and then all of a sudden the planes started going away, and it was like okay that's right. Because the planes are going overhead all the time you don't pay attention if they are low-flying planes. You see the helicopters going by once in a while but, so that was very interesting that they had called and asked us those questions and if we had noticed anything during that time.

R: How would you say that affected you.

S: People were aware. People were aware, but you can't really prove that all these things could have caused the cancer.

Sally responds to my question how this affected her by displacement, from "you" to the impersonal, "People were not aware". It moves from the personal to the impersonal, to "people" as opposed to herself or her mother, and then undermines the entire narrative in the statement, "you can't really prove" the causal links. It is not an answer to my question; rather it is a response to an *imagined* question. It is a statement of helplessness; people were aware, e.g. I was not alone in my concerns and anxieties, (a validation of her experience and perceptions) and yet it can't be proved, so it moves into the background. People were aware and unaware simultaneously; there is the capacity to make connections and yet inability to tolerate this awareness (and perhaps feelings of anger, betrayal, guilt, potentially destructive impulses), so it is pushed, sloughed off. I ask Sally, "I guess what I am wondering is if, that made you feel anxious".[59] At this point I become extremely interested in the affective register of what Sally is telling me, and my own counter-transference experience anxiety at what she is telling me. What I was saying, in effect, was that it was making *me* feel anxious. And yet her tone seems without a trace of perturbation or anxiety.

[Thinks for few moments.] No. You have to adapt to whatever you have. If the water is bad you have to adapt to it, that's just the way it is.

[59] As Hollway and Jefferson (2000) have pointed out, anxiety is not something you can ask people about directly (although in their own study they do ask participants about what makes them anxious). It is clear my question here comes spontaneously as my own anxieties about the material become stronger, and whilst I am aware people may not be able to self-report on their anxieties, given certain forms of anxiety are often unconscious, I wanted to both relay my own perceptions to Sally through the question, and see if 'anxiety' was effective as a prompt for deeper reflections.

Here we see the resurgence once again, quite strongly of the repetition of adaptation, which is beginning to feel like a mantra throughout the interviews. Then, Sally supports the mantra of adaptation with an example of a recent holiday with her parents:

> When we went to, for example, when we went to Israel and Egypt and they said when you get to the Nile they said do not put your hand in to the water. Every body of water has their own parasites, and your body is, used to the parasites in the water wherever you're at. In the Nile, the, the parasites, you know they are different parasites, they will enter into your skin and you know it can cause havoc and you can die from it and you can get quite sick from it. So you don't want to go someplace else and just automatically put your hand in the water, because you don't know how contaminated the water is, and your body is not acclimated to those parasites and the things that are there. So I thought that was interesting. Every- every body of water has parasites. [We both laugh a bit].

When I laugh here, I am partially laughing out of shock, as I listen stunned to this account about parasites and the Nile. Parasites are natural occurrences; and when our physiologies are not adapted or suited to accommodate these foreign bodies, we can become ill. However in the case of Green Bay, the water is not naturally toxic but that the water has been contaminated, spoiled, by human activities. What seems completely disconnected and distant (the Middle East) has been connected affectively with her experiences of the local water, and how she has managed to relate with it. Sally has effectively gone from speaking of the contaminated water in Green Bay, and her mother's potential exposures to toxins and potential links with her cancer, to a story about the water in the Middle East, and you *have to adapt to whatever you have.* Sally's response to my question about her anxiety is a vivid illustration of the ways in which we 'defend' and psychically manoeuvre around distressing and potentially irreparable circumstances. In telling me about the phone call which raised questions regarding possible toxic contamination and (her perception of) the rise of breast cancer in the region, Sally seamlessly moves into discussing a body of water thousands of miles away, and normalises the threat in making this link: "Every body of water has parasites". Thus the water issues in Green Bay are status quo and to question or challenge this would be to go against the grain of nature.

After the narrative about the Nile, Sally stops and says, "Trying to think if there's anything... no, came to a standstill". There is nowhere for her to go from there. I pick up the thread about water and ask about her current filtration practices. Again there is the 'mantra' about her concern and threshold of worry regarding the water, "You know, so I'm not that concerned about it anymore. You have to acclimate, you have to [sighs] get, *accept whatever there is,* otherwise you'll make yourself nuts worrying

about it". The ability to acclimate and adjust is a strategy for self-preservation, otherwise one can literally become crazy worrying. This capacity for regulation of knowledge and awareness, combined with the internal mantra regarding acclimation and adaptation, begins to emerge as a rather effective psychic strategy (as well as social, as this is undoubtedly a social process, not limited to individual or intrapsychic processes). We also see Sally exhibit in certain contexts a hyper vigilance, suggesting a method of choice regarding where the affective investment is channelled. For example, we discuss the quality of drinking water, and she notes that when she is out at a restaurant, she will not drink the tap water because of the ice cubes: "It depends on the taste of the ice cubes, if the ice cubes are old, or if the ice cubes are... you take one sip by one sip I know whether I'll drink it or not, and if it's bad I won't. There are some restaurants here in Green Bay where I won't drink their tap water". We also see that Sally will only eat organic meat and hormone-free milk products.

Sally tells me in the first interview, when discussing her cats, that one of her cats had died of kidney failure during the period when the water was dodgy. In the second interview, when discussing her cat's dying of kidney failure in the context of the water quality, she seems to have internalized a sense of blame and guilt. I ask her if she felt the death was connected to the water, and she responds, "Yeah I think so, but can I prove it? No. But I don't know why I didn't you know, sometimes, you're careful and sometimes you're not. And unfortunately I was not thinking clearly... yeah I think that may have contributed to her kidney failure". There seems to be an inability to assign anger and aggression towards the source of the problems which were in actuality the fact the tap water was risky and led to the death of one of her cats. The tendency to internalize the guilt I see as a repetition throughout the interview, as she is able to describe alarming instances of transgression and trauma (e.g. the move to Green Bay, in the middle of her junior year, right after she had achieved a high level in orchestra, uprooting her from her community and home) without expressing anger or resentment towards those responsible. It is a remarkable illustration of internalized guilt and resignation.

Negotiating environmental awareness

In the third interview, the level of the discourse seems to shift and Sally is speaking more openly about her environmental concerns, and her level of environmental literacy. There are two instances in which it becomes clear how much Sally has thought about these issues, moments that surprise me. The first concerns her invoking a fantasy author Jean Auel, whose novels are based on traditional indigenous cultures in prehistory; the second is her mentioning of the book *Our Stolen Future* (Colborn, et al, 1997). What is important in both cases is the coexistence of high levels of affect with the incantation regarding powerlessness. This is particularly important if we are

interested in exploring if someone who does nothing to express their ecological sentiments are suffering from 'apathy' or not. In the following excerpt, Sally expresses the irrationality and mystery regarding human destructiveness towards nature and other humans, and she employs Auel's literary worlds to help provide some sort of explanatory schema for this.

> We as humans can do a lot of damage, to the earth, to other animals, to other people. Um. [..] Common sense seems to have died. Um. In the old times, there were the people, you lived off the land, you ate, you killed the animal to eat for that meal or to prepare for the winter. Um. Uum. Jean Auel's books are a good example of that. Then there's people who want to trade and you need to have the furs to be able to, cover yourself and some people are not able to, do the hunting, and so there was trading and things like that. So these people would kill extra and so that they would have enough to trade for the supplies that they needed. But then there came those who wanted the ivory for the elephants and just slaughtered the elephants just for the ivory, that's senseless. There was not that big of a need for ivory, didn't need to be that huge, should've remained, when an animal died they were able to get that. Man becomes greedy. In so many different areas. Will that ever ss- stop? No. it just has gotten worse over the years. And um, what can be done about it? [.]

Sally expresses the mantra when discussing the chronic quality of contemporary ecological issues: What can be done? I notice there is a sort of circularity to her narratives (and occasionally incoherence), so that in listening to her I begin to feel almost literally entrapped, or stuck; I suspect this is a counter-transferential impression of the sense of 'stuckness' or the lack of agency she must feel in relation to issues beyond the scope of her particular world. She gets "off-track" as she follows these circular expressions of powerlessness; both the acknowledgement of issues and her own sense of impotence.

> Nothing. Very little. Very little. Um. Like for example, when an animals' going to go, they've counted them and they've showed an animal is going extinct, and you can't hunt that animal anymore, that's as it should be. Find another animal to hunt for meat, or whatever. You know what we have so many [.] (sighs) so many farms and all that who raise the farm fish, raise the chickens, raise the cattle, raise the pork and they keep them in a little stall, just so that they can flood the market with all of this meat. Is that fair to the animals, inhumane treatment for the animal? No. Is there anything that can be done about it? No. Because it's our food supply. [Laughs] Um. I think I got off-track with what you asked me. [...] I guess, [..] it's a complicated thing. You look at things with one hand and you realize you can't do anything, you hear other information about things going in cycles, and all you can do is hope and believe that the cycles is really, is what they found, the research they did is accurate and it really does go in cycles and therefore it gives a person hope.

The above passage is a portrait of human greed that is apparently beyond redress: finding ourselves in painful circumstances, but nothing can be done. It is implacable. The last line expresses the desire to believe in "cycles"—both a reference to natural climatic cycles versus human-induced global warming, and "cycles" as process of change—as something she wants to believe in, even while acknowledging her need to "hope and believe". There is an underlying quality to the excerpt that reveals a very dark and quite brutal view of life and humanity. If life is basically brutal and dark, then it seems the only options are to withdraw affectively into the domains that have influence (e.g. her music), and "hope and believe" in the existence of cyclical change—change that happens out there, that one is passive to, and not an producer of.

Adaptation as survival: The parents' story

In reflecting back to Sally my observations in the final interview, I connect the above with the theme of 'adaptation' and ask Sally if there is any connection with her parents' history, and perhaps if they helped to instil the need to be adaptable, and accept limitations on what one can do. She then takes a deep breath and begins to relay an extraordinarily detailed account of her parents' life in Berlin; of particular note is the great sense of survival in dangerous and deprived circumstances. I include the excerpt in full due to the level of detail she provides.

> Let me go back to my parents' beginnings. My dad was born in '33. In the Frankfurt area of Germany. And um, my mom was born in 1940 after the war had already begin and she lived in Berlin. During that time with the war, think about it, you're moving along you hear the sirens you have to go into the bomb shelter. You immediately go into safety. You stop everything, immediately survival is the utmost importance. How the war impacted things; the food, the rations, um, what they had or didn't have growing up, and how they survived that, was, um. Interesting because it's really comes down to survival. How you do what you do. Um. Um. After the war dad's, uh step-father had suggested that, okay, we need certain things to um, rebuild some of this stuff, go dig in the rubble and get those things out of there so we can secure our stuff. Um. You know whether it was, um, some kind of shelter you, way back when they didn't have refrigerators or any of that, so they had cellars in the basement where they would keep, that was cooler, where they would keep whatever perishable items they could for food. And, anything else. There's also storage area. So they had to go and repair that. My mom on the other hand, in Berlin, when the bombings and everything came, [inaudible] there wasn't a lot of money. There were times when they didn't have enough food to survive. And they were thankful when a neighbour left them half dried up, half a loaf dried up bread, they were just thankful that they had something to eat. Um. You took, had a small piece of meat, and, ww- what are you going to do, how do you divide that up for a family, a woman and four children? Um. You make a

big pot of soup. Take the meat, separate it strand by strand so everybody has a fair share of it. And try to get whatever vegetables and potatoes I think were a good substance of food that you could add to it, so you'd make soup so everybody could have some of the meat. Because if you only had one bite full of meat that wouldn't be enough to satisfy everybody's hunger. So you adapt. The iron breaks, what happens, you can't afford a new iron. Because you can barely afford to put food on the table. My grandma had to learn how to fix the iron. She took it apart and fixed it. Were things a lot simpler then? Yeah. Were they more durable back then? Yeah. We have a disposable society now. They don't make irons that last for 20 or 30 years [laughs] or anything else. So during that time, you had one dress, one pair of underwear. You washed your underwear every night so it was dry in the morning and you could re-wear it. We, we get a hole in our underwear and we throw it away, you know a hole in the sock it's gone and you buy new ones. So adaptability and survival, for my family, my parents, came down to the very basics. Um. And they brought that, you know, that formed and shaped them how they lived their life. Um. Our family's a big thing, you gotta clean off your plate, you can't leave food on your plate when you're done. You take smaller portions but whatever you put on your plate you have to finish because there are starving people in the world [laughs] and at one point, that was them.

There is a great deal of *energy* in Sally relaying this story; she has heard this many times growing up. The account introduces a context for the theme of adaptation, and the seeming frivolity of something such as saving the whales. For her parents, adaptability was the basis of survival, and has reverberations in Sally's life as well; having moved to Green Bay and finding it abject and disorienting, she had no choice but to 'adapt'—her parents had survived wartime Germany and she was going to complain about moving to a new city, with a nice school, parks, a home to live? She has remained, in many ways, the dutiful daughter whose more 'wild' explorations have been reigned in; after all, there is nothing one can do, anyway.

Saving the whales

Immediately following the discussion of her foray into the natural foods scene, she mentions her brief yet intense involvement with the Save the Whales campaign. She introduces the topic lightly and with some self mockery:

S: I was into 'Save the Whales' for a while but then I thought [laughing] you know there's not a whole heck of a lot I can do and just giving my money isn't going to make a difference in the long run... It was in the 20s, when I was in my 20s and 30s, I was into, I still have some save the whales cards you can mail off to people, I'd buy those, I had 'Save the Whales' t-shirt-
R: Was the whale issue the main one that was concerning you?
S: Yeah, for some reason! I don't know why! [Laughing a lot.]

In the laughter and comment about her money, Sally is distancing from the issues and the emotions they may relate to; in a sense we can see in terms of how she perceives her capacities for real effect (for reparation).

> Those things are important, but in the whole scheme of life, donating money to the cause, is it really going to the cause or is it going to the overhead? [laughs] you know is it going um, somebody's wages or is it really going to help? You know. The rainforest or the whales. And [laughs] how will my money help the whales? [Laughs a lot] I mean when you look at it from a different perspective.

I press on, wanting to acknowledge what I perceive as a form of concern; in other words I am resisting the collusion with the part of her self that is denigrating this activity.

> R: It makes me wonder what happens to the concern though. The concern is still there. And you realize that, well I'm not sure that this is the best way of taking action by giving my money-
> S: Correct. Because now, I'm looking at [.] I have to admit, I'm looking at how much [.] I didn't go full-time in my job until 11 years ago. I didn't put anything in my retirement until then. Is giving money to, to save the whales, or putting my money in an IRA more important, or 401K. And I have to say, retirement is a higher focus of, you know, to me, then saving the whales right now. You know. I have a lot, I have a lot of catching up to do on that [laughs]. When I see how much it costs to live, and I'm thinking, how long am I going to be living and how much do I need, and I like to travel, you know. So. Mmmy- financial resources are more going not to save the whales anymore but [..]

This is a common litany with regard to why people do not support environmental advocacy; the perceived dichotomy between self interest (retirement, 401K) and altruistic concern. Concern (Winnicott's concept of reparation) develops when the infant feels herself to be able to *contribute* (Winnicott, 1963, p. 77). The perception of "nothing I can do" exists in dialectic with the energies mobilised for practice; however it does not necessarily correspond with the level of concern or care that may be present.

> R: I'm wondering, there is the financial aspect of it, but there's the initial concern of wanting to help something. You know what I mean?
> S: yeah that's always there.
> R: Where does it go, is it in your mind or do you just kind of, other things take over? Or,
> S: [...] You never want to see animal go extinct. [Measured voice.] You never want to see [...] um, save the whales, you have to save the whales, part of it

is saving the water and making sure the water is healthy so the whales and all the creatures in the water will be well. I'm concerned about the fish and the virus that is going through the Great Lakes right now. And you can't eat the fish out of there anymore. I'm concerned about it, I'm aware of it, there's nothing I specifically can do for it. [.] The states around the Great Lakes, somebody has to pass legislation, [..] well the virus they can't do anything to stop, but like the pollution things like that, that, something has to be done on there, but all these things going through, to get approved or disapproved through congress, you never know what will be approved or what won't be. It's dependent on what they attach it to. Um like, the bill that they wanted to do for military, for our troops. Um, they were attaching so many other little things on to that, that's the reason the money didn't get approved because of all these other things they were trying to sneak along in, you know, it's like, were they trying to save the whales at the same time, I'm just using that as an example, as, at the same time as they were trying, needing to fund the troops? That shouldn't be in the same bill. So it all comes down to congress and how they're going to pass legislation to protect these things. And there's not really a lot I can do. You can do political action committees and things like that, I do political action committee for where I work, and um, that, they will pro- try to push through things that will benefit my job. Um. But, is that answering your question?

R: Sort of.

S: The concern is there, but it's also dependent on who and how they try to pass the bill and how they try to get the legislation passed.

R: It sounds like there is a recognition of limits of what you can do.

The narrative becomes incoherent in the free associations with the whales, the Great Lakes, the fish virus, the military and troops and how it comes down to congress and legislation. It feels muddled and the sense is that these issues *are* muddled internally. We get the sense of her experience as a 'little person', someone who has very little impact on the world and its forces, so best to withdraw one's vital energies and focus on what one *can* effect. The phrase, "There's not a lot I can do" is what stands out amongst the muddle. There is a great sense of disappointment and anger that degradation has been allowed to go "so far", as seen in this narrative about the fish virus in the Great Lakes. What this emerges to be about is the issue of containment; the lack of protection, of immunity, of quarantine. "They" should have stopped it.

When I heard about the virus and that it was in Lake Erie, it's like I hope it doesn't come into Lake Michigan. And when they say, when they said that they found it and that it had already been here, that it's already here, I was disappointed and angry that it was allowed to be, allowed to go that far. That somebody wasn't able to do something about it. Is there anything I can do about it? No. um. Giving money is the only solution a lot of people will say.

> It's like I don't have the training, I don't have the authority in any way shape or form, to try to have stopped that. That should have been stopped before it even entered into the Great Lakes or as soon as they found it, it should have been isolated...

As I mentioned above, the topic of water 'flows' in the interviews: we started with a discussion about her involvement with the Save the Whales campaign, which moved into a discussion of the virus in the Great Lakes. The associations can be traced: water, creatures, protection, invasion, risk, vulnerability and acute lack of control. There is a sense of betrayal and disappointment in those who should have been 'minding the store'. In this incantation I hear echoes of potential disappointments that go back to the move; did Sally's parents let her down in moving her at a crucial time in her development, as an adolescent establishing her sense of bearings in the world?

Sally free-associates to a recent story of man who had contracted tuberculosis but had ignored the doctor's advice to not leave the country, thereby putting thousands of people at risk. In this excerpt is the repeated theme of permeability, of lack of containment and protection, running throughout the interviews:

> Yes that's the word. Quarantine. There is no more quarantine. People are not, people high up are not willing to quarantine and take a tough stand and say, okay, um you know, this area is quarantined, period. I mean it has to be really bad before they do that. Like that guy with the T.B. who left the country, they didn't quarantine him. They should have. Until they knew exactly what they did. But they don't do that any more. Is there any way that they could, um, with the deer, the wasting disease, that should have been quarantined and eliminated immediately. You know, tested it and taken care of—but nobody followed through on it. There wasn't enough funding, there wasn't enough money, whatever. You know. So. What was your question, am I off track....
>
> Well you can see I have strong opinions on it, and I do pay attention, I do w-watch for all of this stuff. And I'm frustrated that they don't do the quarantine, they don't do the [.] um, take stronger measures. Unfortunately, I don't have, I'm thinking of the Mad Cow Disease and all of that, can you imagine if you are a farmer and one cow gets infected. It's possible the other cows are carrying it. A carrier but not necessarily infected. But they could infect others [laughs] I'm watching my cat stare at you, that's why I'm chuckling. Technically that should have been all quarantined and killed but then you'd wipe out that man's living. So they don't do that anymore. So how do you justify all of that? How do you regulate, how do you take care of the problem without putting some people's business, or their livelihood, how do you [.] So then you just have to step back and say there's nothing I can do, [breathes out, sighing] let it go. Does that answer your question?

It is an iteration of the previous dynamic of a harsh and senseless world, in which people will do what they wish, and the impotence in the face of such conditions. It is

an extremely painful position to occupy and yet Sally appears to be negotiating this through her brittle and quite resilient capacity to almost 'slough' off the painful affects of sadness or heartache.

Possibilities for creativity and participation: The 'little realms'

After a brief foray in the natural foods scene in Green Bay, revolving centrally around the co-op, Sally found she did not identify with the "lifestyle" it seemed to promote.

> There are those who are environmentalists and how they live and what they choose and how they do things, there are those um who are totally into the natural foods and everything organic and all of that. And you live within that realm.... Getting to know the organic group and people, was very interesting, they also have a slightly different lifestyle. [..] They are in their own little realm.

Thus the route to identify with a particular group does not work for Sally, as with Donald and Howard, who perceive environmentalists to be fanatic and totalizing in their adherence to a particular view and way of life. It is a closure to something, these "little realms", not openings into new possibilities for reparation and creativity. So where does Sally find expression for reparation, and how does she express her creativity? I see this taking place in a number of ways.

First, and perhaps most obvious is her enthusiasm towards participating in the interviews and her subsequent phone calls to set up the meetings and to ensure I did not forget or overlook her. Each time she rang me (three times) she iterated her desire to participate, and also took the opportunity to include reflections since our prior interviews, e.g. after the first interview she tells me by phone she remembered something about her mother's illness and the survey about low-flying planes. She also tells me with some enthusiasm, as Howard does, in our second interview how she spoke with her brother to share memories and as a means of corroborating her own recollections. (Howard similarly speaks with his sister and shares reflections and memories, as discussed below). Sally was excited about participating in the interviews; by the end of the three meetings, she tells me how much she benefited from the experience and how she is now considering donating to the Healing our Waters project (which was not my intention, as I had explained).

Second, when we view how Sally chooses to engage in the issues and her contact with the water and local ecology, and specifically her love of Lake Michigan, we see how certain objects are employed affectively: the poster above her bed, of the waves, connects her with the wildness and open horizon of the Lake Michigan of her childhood; the Save the Whales T-Shirts and cards she has kept all these years, and the frozen organic meat she shows me in her freezer and her retrieval of the card for

the ranch. Primarily what I view as her creative response is in the form of how she has filled up her life and her time with busyness and activity; as she describes in the narrative about the Save the Whales in the final interview, she has chosen to turn to music as a way of channelling her creativity, energies and desires. It affectively (and effectively) fills up, takes the space of, other competing concerns which by her own admission, "would drive you nuts" if you were to focus too much on. What we can see then is a carefully calibrated capacity for 'contact' and engagement. It would be incorrect to see Sally as not engaged or connected with these issues, but rather on closer analysis, a finer grain emerges. The texture of this engagement is complex, full of ambivalence and contradiction, and reveals the way she has been able to stay with and yet hold at a distance the issues which she finds troubling: the quality of the water, the issue of health and safety, responsibility and accountability, and the trustworthiness of those deemed 'responsible', e.g. the city and regulatory bodies.

Fantasies of immunity: The golden ring

There are two vignettes conveying a powerful longing for protection, immunity and omnipotence (power). The first concerns a long narrative, in the second interview, following the discussion of the contaminated water and her cat's death. She tells me of her brief foray into the natural foods lifestyle, and how she once spent much money and time at the local co-op (which has since been closed). She then makes one of her surprising free associations, to a talk she had been to the night before at a church group; she says she thought they were going to be talking about baking with coconut flour but instead the speaker was addressing the topic of the immune system. She begins to describe the speaker and the topic with great excitement, almost breathlessly. The story concerns how the speaker and his wife are opposed to the use of vaccinations, and how they will expose their child to someone who has the chicken pox or mumps, "let them go through the whole process and build up immunity, because if we get the virus and our body fights it off, one at a time, we have permanent immunity from that disease. Life-long immunity. That's the right word. Immunity". It strikes me that this conveys her wishes and desires for "life-long immunity" and protection. It seems her reparative efforts towards her own health and quality of water and meat are ways of expressing this desire, in however limited capacity possible.

The second vignette takes place during the third interview, and Sally is telling me about a nature programme she has seen about weather patterns and the cyclical nature of freezes. On account of the programme she says,

> Therefore I don't worry as much. Because based on that, the freezing will come back. If it doesn't we are going to be in trouble.

Immediately after this statement, there is a rather extraordinary association to a science fiction story and a magic ring:

S: There was a science fiction fantasy type book that I read many years ago. And um, this one man was, had a lot of problems with his health and his body and he finds this gold ring. And this gold ring takes him to another world. And the world had just, um, it was getting hotter and hotter. Like with the global warming, and everything, this guy was way ahead of everything that's been going on. With this gold ring he was able to wield power and make things better and right. But the world on its own just kept getting hotter and hotter, the water supply by book three or four, had dried up and all this stuff, but he was able to rectify some of that. And, I lost my train of thought. [...] somehow with the global warming and all of that it reminded me of that book, and [..] that could happen to us, if what they say about global warming is true.
R: What was it about the story that was compelling for you? That he had like-
S: He had the ability to change the negative effects and rectify some of the things that had gone wrong. And then he'd be there for a while, he'd fix the planet and then he'd be back, in his modern time, and the ring also made him healthier [..] while he was there. And then when he came back it had no effect on him, because he was in our time [laughs a bit] whatever. And that author, just two weeks ago I read someplace he's come up with another book. So. [..] it was, but it [..] it showed me that [..] it kind of, seeing that science fiction thing, fantasy thing, showed me, it uh, when you read a book you picture things along in your mind. Um. If the global warming really does happen, something like that could happen to our earth. Where the water would all dry up or it's so polluted it's not usable. And where do we get fresh supply of water. So. It was interesting. [Laughs]

Both of the stories—the ability to have life long immunity through the exposure to dangerous viruses, and the magic gold ring that endowed the character with health and the capacity to "make things better and right"—convey powerful reparative fantasies and wishes. In her account of the character with various health problems (recall Sally is recovering from a cervical spinal fusion surgery during our interviews) and his magical healing, as well as the planet's healing we see deep desires to be able to heal, restore and be well. She is unable to make a coherent connection between the story and global warming, except to say the story allows her to "picture things in your mind" and the image of what the earth could look like if it got hotter (and there was no saviour with a magic ring in sight). She is both comforted by the idea of cyclical weather patterns and is acknowledging the real threats the planet faces if these patterns are not stabilized.

In many ways these accounts take us to the heart of what is affectively taking place with regard to Sally's own sensitivities, awareness of issues and recognition of

her own lack of agency and efficacy. As we see in the narratives about her involvement with the 'save the whales' campaigns, she wishes to make reparation, but is only able to do so with a remote region (the world's oceans) and with far away, almost mythical creatures (the whales). It concerns water but is (safely) far from the troubled waters of the Great Lakes and Green Bay. And yet, as she tells me, laughing, what could her money possibly do to protect the whales? The idea of *her having impact on this issue* strikes her as ludicrous so she laughs. Her family thought it was "hilarious" that she was so passionately involved with the issue, and yet decades later she still has the T-shirts and cards, transformational objects which connect her with this time, the concern and the belief she had that she could become involved in something larger than herself to make reparations.

Managing affect, negotiating awareness

At the end of our third interview, as with all participants, I presented Sally with the image of the *Girl on the Beach* advert. I asked her to take her time and look at the image, and share with me whatever comes to mind, her feelings and thoughts. She began with presenting a sort of caveat regarding her tendency to 'modulate' her information intake, as much of it is distressing and negative. She then reflects, in a stream of consciousness manner, why she responded to the survey, and the fact that often she is so exhausted from her work and activities she collapses into bed most nights. I find this part of the interview quite moving, as she is feeling her way through what may have motivated her to participate, and reflects on her own desires and needs that may have come through (in this being a time of reflection and re-evaluation, due to being off work to recover from the injury).

s: Um. [...] Again. We're polluting our water. Ahh- and it, I, I really like the ad, I like the way they laid it out, I like the way they presented it, it is so true it covers all the things, and they even give you access to where you can go and um, and you know, I'm going to check out that website and I hope it's still there and valid. Um. [..] Ha, before we had this interview, how would I have, how would, how I would have reacted. I'd have probably just read it, and agreed with it and thought, yeah. Actually by having our interviews it's made me, kind of, re-brought to the surface a bit more. I have to admit I don't know why I chose to do that survey. Um. They send a lot of surveys out, sometimes I don't have time, I don't always check my email every day. And there are some days I work, come home, shower and change and out the door and I left at 6:30 and I get home at ten o'clock and I'm exhausted and I go back to sleep. So I don't get, some days I don't get to do a lot. But. I was surprised that I actually did that environmental survey and as I was filling it out I thought, wow I haven't thought about these things in a really long time, what do I think about this? (Yeah.) So I had to put a lot into it. I

like the ad. I like the way they presented it. Prior today, prior today would I have done anything about it? Probably not. I would have looked at it and said yeah I agree with that. And would have continued on with my day-to-day [.] busy life.

R: Right. Right. But you're not busy at the moment. I wonder if that has something to do with it as well.

S: That could be. [We both laugh.] And, I look at this time as an opportunity to re-evaluate, re- you know, re-assess, because you get into a routine and you just keep doing the same old, same old so this is an opportunity to, how am I going to do things differently after I can get back into everything. And I haven't quite figured that all out yet. But. So this came at a really appropriate time.

R: Hmm. Well you did, I called you and then, you called me back, and you were concerned that I might have dropped the ball or something or you had scared me off because you had mentioned your parents may be doing it-

S: Yeah [laughing]

R: I did wonder, I thought it was important that you were enthusiastic about it. It made me wonder what it was about this, that was drawing you, in some way. Especially considering the fact that in the survey you did not rate high in terms of your environmental concern-

S: No. [We both laugh, she laughs a lot here.]

R: Something obviously must have, um,

S: I don't even know. It's just one of those, [.] really bizarre things that just, I can't explain it. I guess because it was there a long time ago. And other things just kind of, [..] I don't know. Was that website dot org?

It seems Sally is describing how her daily practices and lifestyle serve as effective 'defences' against experiencing certain affects and anxieties; she is so exhausted she literally doesn't have time or energy to contemplate these issues. And yet she has taken the time and energy to participate in the survey and the interviews, and it is clear there is often considerable reflection on our discussions between the meetings. She seems genuinely interested, curious and energetic, despite her being quite 'defended' with regard to the painful content of some of the material shared. There is evidence the experience of participating in the interviews—and indeed, beginning with the survey—was productive for Sally and enabled her to process and think through material that had been latent for quite some time. She states this at the end of the third interview.

I have really enjoyed doing this. It has made me think about things I haven't thought about in a long time, personal and environmental and you know. The whole thing. And, um, I've really enjoyed [..] In a way you've challenged me. [Hmm hmm.] Just by asking neutral questions and making me think about what are my responses, what do I think now, what did I think then? How do I, you know, and like you were just asking, how does it all fit in now, from this

to now. And um, will it overwhelm and overtake my life? The environmental issues and causes? No. Music is my passion and that's where my heart, emotions and energy goes into. But. There are other things that you can add into your life. And I'd like to add a litt- that a little bit more into it again. So I've really enjoyed this. And I hope I've helped you. I know you've kind of made me think, and um, whenever I walk away after you leave, I still think and dwell over everything that we've discussed and everything, the questions you've asked me, and sometimes I think, was that the answer I wanted to give? Yeah. [Laughs] So. Thank you.

Reflections

Sally's first articulation about moving to Green Bay is the "shock of the water" at how polluted it was. I was interested in what about her life story can help me understand the nature of her relationship with ecological issues, namely those concerning water. Looking at the narratives concerning childhood and life in Sheboygan, it is evident that the time playing in the "pure sand" of the dunes with her family (without the father) is very much associated with a time of innocence, safety and feeling the world is safe. It's about containment. Her lamentation about the loss of the sand, due to overgrowth of reeds and grasses, suggests to me a loss of the sands and the purity of the dunes and the wild, clean waters of the Lake Michigan. I perceive that in fact life in Sheboygan at the time of the move was at a high point for Sally, at least this is how she *represents* this; socially, musically, and in terms of establishing autonomy. The Lake had receded in her life after their move across town. As she says, "the world revolves around you" as a teenager; we see how the busyness of life becomes potentially an effective strategy for negotiating the transition between childhood and adult life.

The interview opens with the "shock" of the water, and "shock" appears primarily in relation to her affective response to pollution. However, the affect feels bound up with the "shock" of the move, the disorientation, and the sense of abjection that may be bound up in life living in a motel, all crowded together, the loss of clean water and air, and metaphorically, the loss of childhood and sense of safety and protection. This we can see that it is impossible to separate out internal and external object relations, as they are imbued with psychic meanings and associations, and precisely as Winnicott (1975) and Bollas (1997) have suggested there is an 'excess' that cannot be expressed and for which we draw on and use our material work, e.g. the environment functions as an 'objective correlative', a concept coined by T.S. Eliot which I shall discuss more fully later in the thesis.

There are currents of care and concern and expressions of reparation—even if they may not be channelled or directed in forms that are easily recognisable (in terms

of environmental advocacy). Reparation (and concern) is expressed in her desire to do the interviews and her eagerness and enthusiasm; her vigilance about drinking water and organic meats, which ties directly to mother's illness and links with environment and contamination; and the need to protect the boundaries of one's body as the only site of actual control. Sally goes out to look at the water but angles her body so she cannot see the industrial buildings. This is a metaphor for how she has gone about coping with the move and the loss of something vital in her life.

The move also signals a potential loss of agency, the experience of oneself as an agent that can influence change, in that it suggests that in fact she is not omnipotent, her parents have control and power, and perhaps this occasions a form of resignation or a way of negotiating the events that leads to the central theme, or 'mantra' of the interview, which concerns *adaptation, adjustment* and *survival.* These are underlying themes that can be seen in dynamic relation with the biographical narratives shared concerning her parents' survival in wartime Berlin. If we want to explore the theme of adaptation and adjustment more closely we can see how her parent's survival and their highly detailed accounts of surviving in poverty and deprivation in Berlin 1940s, and their subsequent exodus to the New World, we may begin to appreciate how getting involved in "Save the Whales" seems frivolous. At the same time we can see this involvement with Save the Whales as a way of connecting with water, and large vulnerable creatures, in a way that may have captured Sally's imagination and affective relationships, but was safe in that it was very far from Green Bay's polluted waters and quite mythical almost fairy tale like.

Viewed through these underlying, unconscious dynamics, we can perhaps view Sally's discourses about water, global warming and other issues in the interviews in a new and enriched light. She says we all need water to live and expresses disgust at the way the drinking water and lakes have been degraded. She recounts a time when their water smelled like petrol and her cat died of kidney failure (and her mother ended up with cancer). Then she presents a very curious story about the water in the Nile and how "all bodies of water have parasites", a resurfacing of the theme of adjusting to life's circumstances. She gets close to anger on several occasions, but then retreats into a story and discursive style (laughter, quick speech) that smoothes the edges. This also appears in her account of watching a documentary about weather on the *Nature Channel* and how climates have been changing for millions of years—a comforting thought in the face of growing evidence of man-made climate change.

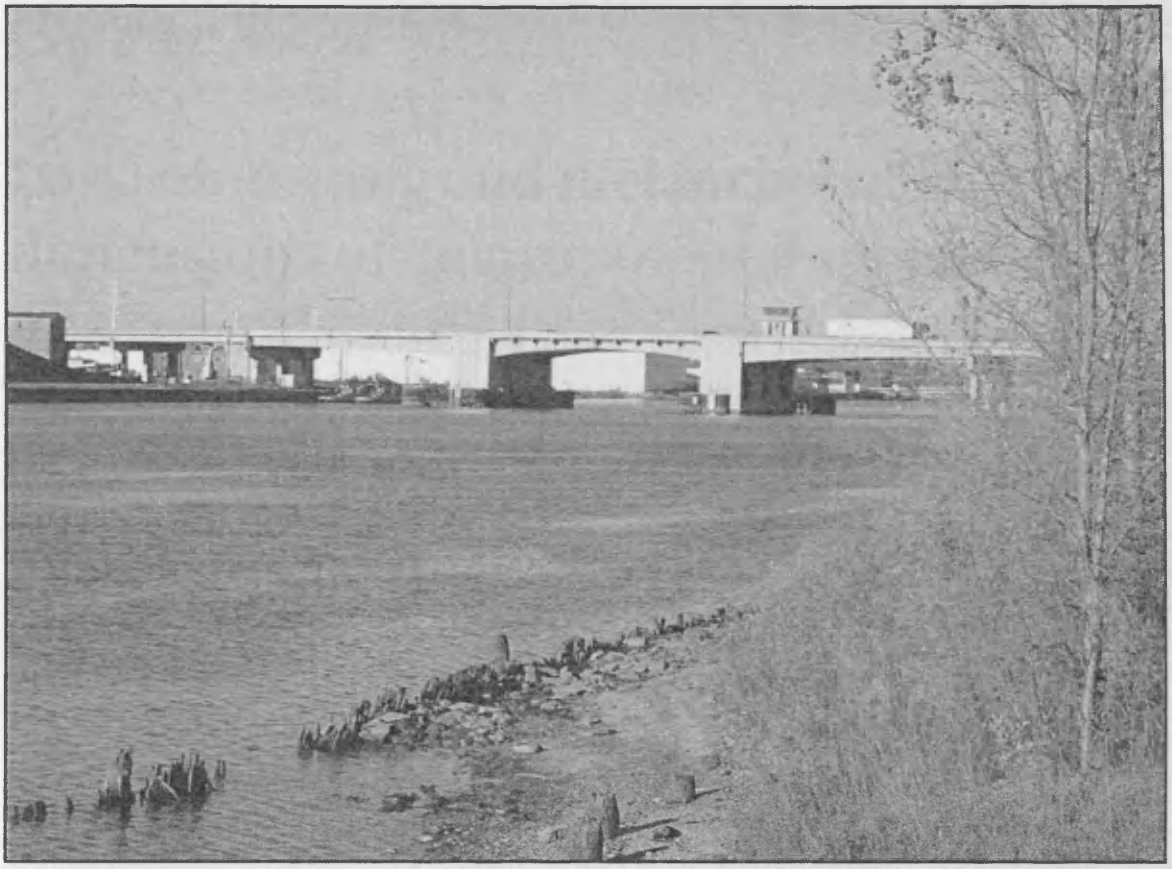
In summary, the material illustrates the complexity of these issues, and problematises simplistic notions of what environmental concern or care is or how it manifests. My interpretation is that the event of the move to Green Bay was so traumatic and registered a loss on such a scale that it led Sally to withdraw into a smaller world, and to accept a level of resignation and 'adaptation' as a way of life. She is not able to

openly critique or express anger towards her parents or even the City of Green Bay, just laughs it off, and *creates* a full and active life, in arenas she has impact (music). Further, biographical contexts, such as her parents' experiences as immigrants from Germany, may inform a particular worldview that is conductive to certain forms of agency, and what positions of action are possible. In both the case studies, and across the data material, I detect underlying formative, unconscious and yet social themes concerning the importance of survival, adaptation and 'getting on with things', a mode of existence commensurate with a particular formation of immigrant experience and subjectivity that is both historically situated and psychically animated and expressed. Understanding what positions for response—indeed, the expression of protest, of anger, of indignation—must be viewed in light of the social, cultural and political contexts for the participants and their relations, as well as the individual processes of negotiation and affective investments.

Sally's case study surfaces the following themes, which will be explored in the following three chapters more broadly. First, The loss of childhood spaces, and specifically spaces in nature, constitutes a key theme in these interviews and across the participants, manifesting in different ways, and participants negotiating their relationships with these lost places in varied ways. In light of understanding environmental responses to degradation, it is important to contextualise these relations and appreciate their psychic and material dimensions. How loss is processed and negotiated then leads to issues of mourning, melancholia and how pain and loss are managed; in this sense, if loss does not find a 'home' to process, e.g. social forms of acknowledgement or support, it may go underground or become expressed in more defensive ways, such as filling up space to avoid any sense of loss or impotence. Second and related, themes of survival, and 'getting on with life' in response to difficulities informs and complicates notions of 'agency' and 'action' in terms of asserting where there is no 'action' there may be apathy. In this case study, there is evident concern, anxiety and affective investment in degraded ecologies. At issue is not a lack of concern or care, but rather how responses to losses and risk are socially and psychically managed. In this sense, the background of the parents' survival in wartime Germany may provide some clues for understanding political acts of protest or resistance. Third, certain environmental objects appear to function as what Eliot called "objective correlatives", in the sense that qualities of innocence, childhood or abjective may be introjected into the environment; one can never return to the innocence and purity of childhood (cannot protect restore or repair the Lakes). This may have bearing on how environmetnal action or response to degradation or threat is conceptualised and responded to, on a symbolic, psychic level.

In the following three chapters, I explore these dimensions of environmental subjectivity as arising from the data: how loss, mourning and melancholia feature as

core themes; the process of ambivalence and splitting in response to environmental objects, and third how these processes enable or impede capacities for guilt, reparation, creativity and concern.



Bay Beach, July 2007, R. Lertzman

We never had a lot when I was young and but, we'd always find something to do. And my aunt and my grandma both had chests up in the attic and boxes, old clothes from the early 1900s and old baby clothes and things like that, we'd go and get dressed up and go up into the field and play or whatever and we'd kind of go off and make our own fun... so at times my grandma had to do her chores and stuff and to keep us kids occupied, um, you know, she'd get out a thimble and hide it and we'd have to go find this thimble you know, or we'd go hide and she'd come find us, but that gave her you know 10–15 minutes to finish doing her dishes or whatever it might have been you know, she played 'Go Fish' with us or she had a big chalk board, to me back then it was big cos I was little. I'm sure it's not really that big, um, she'd get that out and you know, have us write words you know and teach us and stuff.

—Heather, Interview 1

Chapter Seven

Loss, mourning and melancholia: Hidden dimensions of environmental subjectivity

This project began as a response to own anxieties about our ecological future. It arose out of my sense of powerlessness as I sat in lecture halls, walked the streets, contemplating my own complicity and inadequate responses. In many ways, the project was born out of my own environmental subjectivity: anxious, sad, concerned. However, it was not only anxiety that I was experiencing but something else; an inchoate, mute sadness in the face of perceived and rampant industrial development. Inchoate perhaps because such losses may exceed language, and mute in the lack of social and culturally sanctioned forms of sharing emotional responses about ecological issues. As Leader points out, mourning is a social process, and in the absence of this sharing we remain in some ways stuck, the mourning in stasis (Leader, 2008, p.155).[60] Anxieties, loss, mourning, melancholia; might these affective dimensions potentially inform the ways in which people respond and make sense of serious and chronic ecological issues? How can an appreciation of these complex psychic processes, both individual and social, inform how we understand environmental public participation, and issues of agency?

In light of the psychoanalytic emphasis on anxiety as central to human experience, and the myriad strategies humans employ to manage and 'defend' against anxiety, anxiety was central in my investigations into environmental subjectivity. This emphasis was also supported by my own experiences of anxiety and my struggles in coping at times with the balance between a growing awareness of ecological degradation, and mental and emotional distress. The notion of placing anxiety in the centre of an investigation into affective dimensions of environmental issues made much sense, as addressing an unconscious and yet profoundly influential aspect of how people respond to such issues. I thus oriented my project and my research questions along the lines of how anxieties evoked through the awareness or experience of ecological

[60] In drawing on Lacan's theory of anxiety as "the sensation of the desire of the Other", Leader discusses how the loss of a "buffer", namely close social and familial relations, as linked with ontological anxiety. "When this imaginary buffer is withdrawn, through death, separation or illness, suddenly the person is without any defensive barrier... And this can trigger an unbearable sense of anguish and dread. The anxiety here is less about the loss of the person in question than about the consequences of this loss in terms of another relationship..." (2008, p. 155). However as this project argues, it is not only the loss of a loved one (human being), but loved beings, places, sites which help constitute our sense of identity and being in the world. In this, sense, theories of mourning and melancholia have much to offer analyses of environmental subjectivity, but need to be taken further in the world of non-human losses and objects.

threats, likely unconscious, may inform the ways in which people respond and make sense of issues.

From anxieties to apathy: Expanding the field of affective dimensions

I went into the interviews anticipating expressions of anxiety; instead, narratives of loss became evident. These stories unfolded almost immediately following my opening question, "Tell me about where you grew up, whatever comes to mind". I was not expecting the narratives of loss that people began to share with me, and I was surprised and curious. The participants had given little or no indication in their survey responses of the often moving and poignant associations and stories concerning the Great Lakes, local water activities, family, childhood and associations of innocence and freedom. (In other words, the survey eclipsed much of the affective content of the issues as explored through the interviews.) I must have also internalised the frustrations on the part of the local ecologists who had been taking me on tours of the region. I had heard many stories about their ongoing (often thwarted) efforts to 'get' citizens, farmers, and the larger community onboard somehow to help protect and conserve the already damaged natural ecosystems in the region. The environmental community in Green Bay was relatively tiny, including the team of environmental scientists housed at the University; its marginal position only supported sense that people were not concerned about their local ecosystems' health. The construction of 'apathy' was so performative as a viable political category, that it was never considered as being possibly the surface appearance of something deeper and more painful.[61] Second, I was curious to the nature of the losses as articulated; what was actually being mourned for, and what had been lost?

The theme of loss emerging from the interviews led me to revise my initial focus on anxiety; the complex, nuanced associations with specific 'objects', e.g. a lake, beach, boat or creek, enlarged and complicated my initial perceptions of how environmental issues are experienced affectively. I moved from a focus on anxiety as potentially the central (if unconscious) affective response, to appreciating the complex constellation of processes, both psychic and social, with regard to anxiety, loss and sadness, mourning and melancholia, ambivalence and contradiction, reparation and concern. The picture became more kaleidoscopic, as these dimensions were moving almost imperceptibly into one another. (This 'shifting nature' raised an important analytic and methodological point, discussed below, and has presented unique challenges to the analysis, in presenting a 'linear' account of the data.) Importantly, what

[61] This point regarding the seeming ease with which the category of 'apathy' is embraced and accepted as a viable interpretation of the lack of public will or engagement with these issues raises issues regarding how apathy functions and performs politically, socially and psychically; I return to this topic in Chapter 9 when I discuss the possible construction of apathy as a means of projecting internal and disowned aspects of the self, e.g. selfish, destructive or aggressive aspects.

this chapter and the following chapter explore in more detail is what we can learn from the narratives of loss, and how this may inform a deeper understanding of issues of agency, response and 'engagement'. In order to connect the analysis of environmental loss with broader, psychoanalytically informed theorisations, the following questions inform the analysis in the following three chapters:

- What is the nature of this loss? How does it appear and in what form?
- What has been lost, and what is being mourned?
- What is the 'quality' of the loss; is it one of mourning, of ambivalence, of guilt?
- How might loss relate to capacities for reparation and expression of concern?

Based on the data, I argue we have much to learn about public engagement with local ecological issues, through exploring the nature of loss and how this loss is negotiated psychically and socially. I maintain such negotiations are related with capacities to *take action* and experience a sense of agency in the face of what may seem to be overwhelming forces, over issues that actually matter a great deal to people. It is also an honest account of the sense of insignificance in the face of genuinely huge, systemic issues.[62]

The experience of anxieties with regard to environmental issues and threats remain a concern of the project. It is not to say anxiety is not a central feature of how environmental issues may be experienced; rather, I had to confront that what was being presented in my research interviews appeared less about anxiety and more about loss. Relations between anxieties, loss, mourning and related themes of melancholia and ambivalence were subtler, nuanced and interwoven than I had anticipated. Further, I was aware of my own affective states during my time in Green Bay, which were marked strongly by a sense of heaviness and depression, and it took me considerable time to work out what was actually taking place; was I feeling others' disowned depression and melancholia, as form of countertransference, or how much of it was my own, relating to what the issues brought up in me, and corresponding to my own biography and associations? I felt it was most likely a combination of what I was picking up affectively and unconsciously through the interviews, my own experiences as an outsider in an industrial, Midwestern American city, and personal factors.

Applying psychoanalytic concepts of mourning and melancholia to social forces is not novel, particularly with; these concepts have been engaged for decades in critical theory (e.g. Fromm, 1941), in the context of social memory and trauma (e.g.

[62] For example, after Ray described the large rubbish heap in the middle of the Pacific Ocean (see page 146), I asked how it made him feel. He responded, "Small and insignificant". I could not argue with this; higher levels of environmental literacy can arouse justifiable senses of powerlessness.

Santner, 1993; Caruth, 1996), and Holocaust psychoanalytic studies (e.g. Felman and Laub, 1992). More recently, there has been a 'discovery' in social theory of Kleinian psychoanalysis and object-relations, in particular the emphasis on 'modernist melancholia' (e.g. Sanchez-Pardo, 2003; Nussbaum, 2001) and engaging melancholia as a viable political philosophy (e.g. Kristeva, 1992). More recently, literary theorist Alice Kunziar's (2006) work on melancholia and mourning as features of human-canine relations is a valuable addition to thinking through human-nature relations (discussed in Chapter 10). However, there has yet to be a coherent focus on the role loss, mourning and potentially melancholic affect may psychically, socially and politically to an ecological world in crisis, a decline of species and ecosystems due to human industrial practices.[63]

What follows therefore is an exploration of some aspects and dimensions of loss as they appeared in the context of the interviews. I first focus on aspects of loss as appearing in the context of nature and childhood, and how memories and associations of nature and childhood often appear interwoven and inseparable. This is the more 'narrative' part of the analysis, to try to understand *what* has been lost, as articulated by the participants, and possible limits for expressing (discursively) what has been lost. The following section focuses on affective dimensions and environmental 'objects' that appear to have been lost and how these narratives surface, focusing on the Fox River (as a vivid illustration of the objects arising in the data). This section presents the more process-oriented dimension of the analysis. This enables us to interrogate the 'quality' of the relationship to the losses; is there a sense of mourning, of retreat, of ambivalence? When disappointment arises, what is the nature of the disappointment, and where is it directed? How might we understand the narratives of loss in the context of the biographical interviews? Finally, I conclude the chapter with consideration of ambivalence in relation to capacities for reparation, which will be the focus for the subsequent chapter.

As discussed in Chapter 3, I take a psychoanalytic view inspired by Freud's writings on mourning and melancholia (1917), Klein's work on mourning and reparation (1937; 1940), and Bollas's (1992) writings on the phenomenology of the object work in relation to our internal object world, along with related post-object relations theorists, specifically Winnicott's (1935; 1990) writings on creativity, concern, and reparation. I also engage with the narrative content in the interviews in terms of conscious and *unconscious* levels; in this sense I employ a sensibility found in Bollas

[63] Ulrich Bech in writing on "industrial reflexivity" argues the consequences of our industrial processes are often displaced and disavowed through complex systems and networks precluding "reflexivity", so that actual effects surface in the form of breakdown, ruptures, illnesses and events (Beck, 1992; Beck 2009); but this process is not theorised (psychologically or psychoanalytically) in terms of its affective and unconscious dimensions, such as how anxiety, loss and fear may contribute to how industrial impacts are disavowed and disassociated.

(1992) of reading objects as expressions of unconscious self-states, as well as Freud's concept of the "screen memory" (1914).[64]

Bollas's work on object relations, and specifically relations with non-human objects has been productive; his theorising of objects as occupying an 'intermediate' zone between the imaginative (our projective fantasies and associations with self-states) and actual (the intrinsic materiality of the object) is useful for thinking through responses to ecological degradation as filtered through these various affective, psychic and social lens. It is an approach that takes into account the ways we embed ourselves in our worlds, and the difficulty in disentangling our various commitments, memories, desires and so on from our material world. I am interested "in understanding the representation of one's being through object relations as well as narrative content" (Bollas, 1987, p. 3).

The following three chapters explore the narrative content of the interviews, and what is expressed and represented symbolically through specific objects, and in some cases, their losses. The objects may be a swing used as a child, a boat, a children's book, a riverbank or a stretch of dunes, as discussed in previous chapters and in the following. The sensitivity to objects as they arise is based on the assumption that in fact there are profound or otherwise relevant dimensions of our lives and experience which we simply cannot narrativize in words; as Bollas (1992) has discussed, how we relate with objects is often neither rational or conscious. On this point Bollas (1987, p. 48) writes,

> While it may not be accurate to maintain that each of us chooses a friend or a mate or a peer environment as an expression of our relation to the self as object, it can certainly be said that our external world evokes unconscious elements of the self as object relation, and that our experience of reality is therefore influenced by those unconscious associations elicited by environmental conditions.

As tempting as it has been to create a neat list of 'objects' as they arise, as practised in my initial data analysis of the interviews, such as "the Fox River" or "sandbox" (see Appendix F), I resisted fragmentation of topics in favour of addressing processes, dynamics and psychical and objective qualities of the object relations presented.[65]

[64] In "Remembering, Repeating and Working-Through" (1914), Freud compared screen memories and dreams, observing that their common trait of visual representability enabled them to contain mnemic traces, albeit in the form of "dream-thoughts." He added that the analysis of dreams and screen memories facilitated access to the reality of the direct experience of the past just as effectively as the analysis of simple memories: screen memories, he wrote, retained "all of what is essential... They represent the forgotten years of childhood as adequately as the manifest content of a dream represents the dream-thoughts" (p. 148).

[65] I did however find it useful during my data analysis process to, at certain points, present how certain topics appeared in interviews and how they changed across the three interviews; for example, see Appendix F in which I present a sample of such a 'environmental object table', as part of the

While codification was helping in my processing the material in terms of patterns or key objects, once I began to isolate an object from its context, whether narrative or the context of the three interviews, I began to lose the thread. This leads to my final introductory comment.

It is tempting to provide a linear, neat and tidy explanation, following from the research questions, as to 'why *x* equals *y*' or in this case, a progressive argument illuminating why it is that people are not acting on ecological issues they may care very much about. Due to the aforementioned 'kaleidoscopic' quality of the data, it was not possible to present a clear-cut exposition of why *x* equals *y;* a declaration of why people who care deeply about their environments do not take (publicly recognised) forms of action (otherwise known as the 'values-action' gap (e.g. Lorenzoni et al., 2007). As much as I would like to present a tidy narrative summary of the data, in a sequenced progression, the material, research design and epistemology does not allow this. The strategy for approaching and presenting the analysis, and the subsequent presentation, as informed by a psychoanalytic view is one of exploring themes and concerns arising from the data material as a series of *constellations*. The themes are presented as part of a *constellation* of features that may help us gain a deeper and richer understanding of environmental subjectivities.

I want to make a final comment about the presentation of narrative 'themes', and the process of pulling out and identifying certain key features and qualities in this data analysis process. In certain respects the themes of childhood, innocence, possibility arise in the material, but do not necessarily get us closer to an 'object relations' approach. In a sense, a thematic organization is at cross-purposes with the object relations view. I discovered this tension whilst struggling in the best way of presenting the data analysis write-up. I found it helpful to locate specific themes as a way of getting closer to the significance of certain object relations in the context of the interviews. In other words, I suspect, via the material, that some loss that has taken place, and in speaking of the local environment and childhood experiences the loss becomes quite vivid. It is also clear that the nature of this loss is not entirely straightforward, precisely because of the dynamic, psychic and material nature of external and internal objects; e.g. the water (as object) is both *internal* and *external*. The loss involves both the object (e.g. no swimming access, the water, sand, etc.) and the introjected qualities associated with the water and swimming (e.g. goodness, purity, safety). I cannot reduce one or the other.

A thematic focus is productive for exploration of certain object relations, however focusing on the *themes* makes it difficult to address the psychic processes involved that I'd like to address, which relate to the ambivalence around these objects and

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discussion of data analysis methodology in the preface to Part II of the thesis.

specifically industry and the paper mill. In a sense, I feel the format of presenting narrative 'themes' is potentially at cross-purposes with presenting psychical, analytic processes and dynamics. This is an aspect of psychoanalytic data analysis that requires attention, and further discussion takes us beyond the scope of the present project. What is hoped for in this particular mode of analysis is both the demonstration and performance of the complexities underlying environmental relations; not to reduce what these relations *are* as a matter of fact. If I can help to complicate and trouble how we approach apathy as a viable environmental subjectivity, then I would feel some measure of success has been attained.

Melancholic narratives

Much psychoanalytic literature concerning loss, mourning and melancholia concerns bereavement: the loss of the mother or father in the infantile world, the loss of loved ones and family relations in childhood and adulthood. Freud's (1917) *Mourning and Melancholia focuses* centrally on the issue of the loss of human others. The losses I am most concerned with here, and what surfaced in the interview material, are those of significant 'objects' in the participants' lives, notably environmental 'objects' such as water or a specific lake or river. The topic is on ecological degradation, and therefore I wanted to understand my participants' relations and engagement with their environments, and how they negotiated awareness or experience of ecological problems, such as water contamination, loss of fish and other wildlife, or the removal of a place via development. However, it became evident there was nothing straightforward about these 'objects' nor could they necessarily be separated from related associations with specific relationships, memories, and aspects of the self.

To explore the loss of a wetland or a lake was also to explore the loss of potential associations and strong memories and how this constitutes an enduring sense of self and identity. At times, the loss of individuals and relationships did arise; for example, in my first interview with Victoria, discussed below, her grief and sense of loss surrounding her father and the sense of family disintegration broke through, and she expressed her grief through tears. More often, as people recounted their associations with specific places, and their experiences over the years in the local waterways of Green Bay or nearby environs, there was an acute sense of longing and sadness, although it was not always clear *what* this loss was linked to. It was this quality of loss without clear origin or cause that led me to consider Freud's concept of melancholia, a concept refined subsequently in the work of Klein and other psychoanalysts, but whose original articulation remains lucid and clear. For Freud, the key difference between the work of mourning and melancholia was the (often) unclear nature of the original loss: it was not clear what exactly had been lost, although the object may be clear. When Sally is speaking of her time playing in the dunes, for example, I am left

wondering, is it the dunes she is missing, or the sense of connection and safety with her family, or the open horizon of Lake Michigan, or all of this and more?

I am relating to melancholia neither as a mental disease nor even as an abnormal condition or disorder.[66] In peaking of melancholia I want to "emphasise the subjective distress and sorrow, the mood of sadness, that arise both from separation" from our natural attachments, and from ambivalent identification with them (Kuzniar, 2006, p. 8).

It was this sense of subjective distress and sorrow, and of sadness that I was most struck by during my interviews. While I was interviewing participants who, based on their survey responses, did not appear to be involved with environmental issues, I was unprepared for the poignancy of narratives concerning childhoods spent largely outdoors, swimming in the waters and running around dunes, fields and woods. I am aware that an opening prompt, "Tell me about where you grew up" invites narratives of childhood and memories, and is arguably courting nostalgic recollections. However, my choice of this question was precisely to track where the free associations went.

I begin with loss as it appeared in the context of childhood, and what sort of associations and possible meanings are being invoked. I will then shift to the more tangible and concrete dimensions of loss, of specific places, water, and experience. In this sense I examine the way in which objects are 'real' and constructed, essential and imaginary, and how we may understand certain objects as Bollas suggests, as psychic keys expressing more unconscious content than narrative and language are able. In looking at the memories and significant internal and external object relations that surface in the material, the concept of the "screen memory" is useful (Freud, 1914). A screen memory (like forgetting and amnesia) is a compromise between repressed elements and defence against them. Inasmuch as screen memories cover up that which is unacceptable to the ego, they may be considered essentially defensive in nature; the way in which illusion may inform remembering, which renders memories and recounted events as suspected of having a 'screen' function. The notion tends to subvert the idea of historical reality, and in this case, how interview material is engaged, (e.g. defended subjects, or the 'particular incident narrative' in BNIM), for it prompts the question whether such a reality is the outcome of creative interpretation or of genuine access to mnemonic traces.

A paradoxical feature of recollections of this kind is they are less childhood memories than memories *about childhood*, characterised typically by their singular clarity

[66] Darian Leader revisits Freud's original conceptualisations of melancholia as a specific clinical condition, one that we need to return to in our contemporary understandings of what is referred to broadly (and potentially unproductively) as 'depression'. Leader aims to retrieve the colloquial usage of 'melancholy' to bring more nuanced understandings of the nature of melancholia as a clinical condition, concerning loss and its relation to depressive disorders (Leader, 2008).

and the apparent insignificance of their content. Important facts are not retained; instead, their psychic significance is displaced onto closely associated but less important details, e.g. the blue sky or the sand under bare feet. Displacement is indeed the main mechanism here, as it is in the case of mnemic symbols or in the forgetting of a proper name, although to some degree condensation may also be present. Bollas expands on mnemic symbols in the dream-like way we occupy our world; not that life is dream-like itself but that we express unconscious material through our investments in particular object relations, and aspects of the self projected into objects are re-experienced in our contact.[67] It is a phenomenological orientation to the self in the world, and one that informs the analysis of the interviews. The objective is *not* to reduce environmental objects to 'mere' constructions or phantasy, but to appreciate how these relations are often inseparable with imbricated psychic and social meanings, and the implications for environmental communications practices that seek to mobilise, enlist or otherwise encourage engagement or participation.

Childhood: innocence, sanctuary, possibility, freedom

As noted above the opening prompt for the first interview was: "Tell me about where you grew up, anything that comes to mind". After initial logistical clarifications, e.g. if the participant grew up in another town but moved to Green Bay later in life, they could begin telling me about varying detail features of their childhood home or region. In some cases, the narrative would start out very general and I would gently press for more specifics; in other cases, as in the first interview with Dana, her response to my prompt was literal, and she went into an extended description of the house she grew up in with her six siblings (which indicated to me psychic and emotional significance of the house, and her room, as objects in her early life). However, there are two key variables to note: all had reviewed the ethical consent form, (see Appendix A), and were aware of the interest in the environment, specifically the water and Great Lakes, and all had completed the survey (see Appendix C) and consented to be interviewed. Thus the opening question allowed a level of free association beyond the question itself with the context and nature of the interviews and my expressed interest in water and the Great Lakes.

[67] Bollas (1992) writes about *mnemic objects* as the way a child "may associate a conserved self state with certain actual objects that were part of his early experiences" (p. 19). Bollas describes an example of how he "nominated" a swing to conserve some aspects of a self-state associated with his parents' marital conflicts (an object formally producing joy now "empty and unoccupied"). He writes, "These 'subjective objects' to use and yet extend Winnicott's term, are a vital part of our investment in the world. Through this particular type of projective identification we psychically signify objects, but as they retain their own intrinsic value they can be said to occupy an intermediate area between the conventional use or understanding and our private one" (p. 20).

Innocence

One of the core themes running throughout several of the participants' interviews was a palpable sense of having lost something intangible from childhood. These associations as they presented in the interviews were bound up with images and memories of play, and enjoyment of water, nature or imaginative play. In recounting associations and memories of nature and childhood, the overwhelming affective qualities were of recalling a self-state of innocence or perception of the world as a safer place. The water and nature, in an idealised sense, is experienced as the site of innocence prior to the 'fall' of adult knowledge and awareness. Related to the feelings of innocence are of feeling safe and contained.[68] This is not surprising as the narratives were about childhood experiences but I was struck by how the water and playing outdoors featured so significantly. For example, when I ask Sally about her experiences with Lake Michigan, she recounts with reverie and enjoyment, the thrill of running around on the dunes ("pure sand, back then they were all sand"), feeling "safe and at ease" and "being young and knowing, not knowing that there's anything wrong".

While Sally recounts the joy of free play, "Building sand castles, and [.] just having lunch and relaxing out there, playing in the water", she also acknowledges the presence of parental boundaries, in "going swimming and going as far as we'd be allowed [laughs] and coming back in". Innocence and freedom are possibly only through the felt presence of boundaries and containment. Donald's story (in Chapter 5) about camping in Baird's Creek during a rainstorm and being rescued by a parent exemplifies this, as does Jeff's story of taking a raft down the Fox River during a snow melt, and after a harrowing adventure, washing up in town soaking wet, as his parents drove by going home from church. Victoria, who grew up in a small town in Wisconsin, conveys a powerful sense of childhood idyll and specifically a sense of safety and protection, in her simple statement of her mother telling her to return home "when the streetlamps come on", invoking a simpler and more innocent era in the American Midwest. She describes a scene in our third and final interview, capturing this sense of utter freedom, innocence and safety, whilst swinging:

> [Her eyes closed, thinking] I am thinking of our backyard, there used to be an apple tree, in our backyard and a sandbox. There was originally one swing in the apple tree. And my dad, um, extended a board from the tree, to the garage, so that he could add two more tr—two more swings. Because I had

[68] As Klein points out, "The object which is being mourned is the mother's breast and all that the breast and the milk have come to stand for... namely, love, goodness and security. All these are felt by the baby to be lost, and as a result of his own uncontrollable greedy and destructive phantasies..." (Klein, 1986, p. 148). I was struck by the similarity in how the participants recalled their experiences with and in nature as children, and the subsequent loss of such good objects. This is seen most vividly in Heather's narratives of the farm, a land of milk and honey, however it is seen across the interviews in varying forms.

one brother and one sister and we each would have one swing. And I remember spending so much time swinging, on the swings. [..] And you would swing as high as you could, and um, I guess I would describe it as free. Carefree [...] a time when you were just alone with yourself. [...] And, secure and safe. Not a care in the world.

I continue while Victoria is in her reverie to ask her to imagine where she is, and how old she is at the time. She says she is about six or seven or eight. I then follow with how she sees herself; Victoria rarely mentions her siblings in the interviews; the psychic space she seems to inhabit is one of herself and father, with an anxious mother in the background.

R: In your mind, are you with- are you on your own, or are your brother and sister there with you?
V: I am by myself. And in my mind, the sky is real blue, and the clouds are, um, real white and puffy. And it was so innocent, and so, um, uninhibited. I mean I remember swinging, and singing! At the top of my lungs! [Laughs quite a bit] Oh dear! [...] Seemed like a simpler time.
R: Do you have any other associations with being outside when you were younger?
V: Well we played in the sandbox... with an old tractor tire, and we sat on the edge because it was black and when the sun beat down on it, it was really warm. Um. S-s-so. Being outside, [...] was comforting when the sun was beating on you, [.] and, and I played with more kids in the sandbox, um, my brothers and sisters and we each had friends, on one side of the street or in back of us, we'd play in the sandbox. [.] Um. And physical things like riding our tricycles, we had a long driveway, we'd make believe they were streets and we were going different places [..] hooking together the tricycle with the wagon and hauling our dolls around. [Laughs] Oh dear! What was the question about feelings again?
R: Hmm! How it felt to be outside, and doing these various things you are telling me about.
V: Some- you know I look back and see it as so innocent and so simple. So carefree.

The swing as object is infused with the sensations of freedom and being alone in the world; no siblings to compete with, just the sun, sky and movement through space. In a sense, the swing is a condensation of memory, a "screen memory" (Freud, 1914, p. 148). There is an enormous sense of wistfulness in her recollections; although she is laughing, throughout the interview is a strong feeling of looking back on something prior that has since been lost. Back then, playing house was with wagons, dolls and leaves; now as an adult she is faced with chores, upkeep, work, and unfulfilled expectations. Victoria describes the bright blue sky and big white, puffy clouds, and singing at the top of her lungs and there is a visceral sense of freedom and possibility,

as she recalls her seven or eight-year-old self on the swing (notably no sense of siblings around). When asked about her playing outside, her associations are largely of domesticated play: dolls, wagons, playing house. She recalls the sandbox as warm, pleasurable, the heat of the rubber tire on summer days, poking around for ants. This is in sharp contrast to the sense of the water and the local river as being dangerous, risky and unsafe, discussed in the following section. So what emerges is the positioning of childhood and certain experiences in nature with an innocence and sense of safety, which is to become lost at some point later. The sense of loss articulated around the water and its degradation is therefore affectively connected with the loss of something inchoate and prior to adult knowledge: a time of blissful innocence. In speaking about her hometown she is also speaking of loss, as the city has fallen into economic decline, the buildings once restored and maintained have been left to become derelict, and it is no longer seen as a desirable place to live.

Sanctuary

To appreciate the sense of inchoate loss, we need to understand what has been lost in the first place. Nature and experiences outdoors conveyed both a sense of innocence and purity, as well as containment and sanctuary for many participants. The sense of containment and sanctuary provided for by nature and the local waterways was expressed most vividly in Heather's narratives about her experiences on her extended family's farm in Menominee. Heather, a single forty-year old woman who works as a state administrator at a mental health institution, grew up a rural area in Menominee, but her parents moved the family to 'town' about twenty miles away when she was about ten. Heather continued to spend as much time as possible with her larger extended family on the farmlands where she had been growing up, once even cycling the twenty miles to visit. The land with its woodlands, farmland, animals, and the network of close familial relations—outside of her own nuclear family, which is portrayed at chaotic, noisy and abrasive—is constructed as a site of nourishment, connection and sanctuary. When asking Heather about specific memories of her time on the farm, she describes a visceral scene of being fed, taking naps in a swing, and having her needs anticipated and met.

> I guess the most times that I was [...] or a lot of times just our family gatherings at the farm, the picnics you know and everybody there, all the cousins and their kids...my Aunt T. had a closed porch, kinda L-shaped on the front of the house, and it was all screened in, we had a table out there so, you know, kids nearly always got fed out there you know, she always made lemonade and stuff, and she had a swing too and that was one of my favourite things and when we were little she used to put a blanket a pillow and put me in and one of my cousins on there we'd nap on there and fall asleep, so...playing games,

you know, she always brought out games for us you know. [..] and turn the sprinklers on and run around and a big yard she had big lilac bushes and we used to play inside those until the bees would get us [laughter].

Britton (1992) discusses *sanctuary* as "a sense of being in a safe place, which itself expresses an idea of being inside something good" (p. 103). This is related to Winnicott's concept of the "sense of being held" (1960), and Bick describes this ontological containment as a sense of envelopment like a skin around oneself, which protects and enfolds (Britton, 1992, p. 103; Bick, 1968). The sense of sanctuary, containment and envelopment all refer to a visceral and material sense of being *inside* of something, protected. This quality comes through in the narratives of being in and around the water, for Heather being on the farm was an experience of being 'enveloped' by loving relatives and cousins, and having the woods, hills and waters to roam and explore. I ask Heather about the emotions she associates with her time out on the farm.

I contrast the affective qualities of her experiences on the farm, as well as her discussion of the summer she spent living outdoors working in Door County, during which time she felt completely at home and relaxed in nature, with the following narrative relating to her more contemporary experiences with water and the environment in Green Bay.

H: Um, when I first moved to Green Bay there in 1991, um, I would say it probably must have been about '92, um, when I was with my ex-fiancé, um, he had a boat or his dad actually had a boat and we would go out on the bay, sometimes fishing and sometimes get in the water, but that was probably the most, and that was only 3–4 times maybe, out of almost four years, so you know, unlike in Menominee when I at least when I was younger, um, and living at home and stuff we were probably there in summer two to five times a week, you know and we'd spend half a day you know.
R: What was it like, the water and the beach there?
H: Um, it used to be really good, it's, it's not good any more, just in the last few years have been really bad, but you know, before I had you know gone to college and that it was, was clear, it was nice, I don't know, I said sometimes the water would be so shallow it would be so far out so it would never get really deep or you know, but, um it was always just you know really nice swimming, I don't remember ever there being signs up saying you know, 'the beach is closed' you know.

Heather relates the dramatic drop in her access and contact with the water from two to five times a week to three to four times *over four years.* The water quality years ago, she recalls, was always good for swimming. She then recounts more recent experiences with the water, this time with her dog.

H: You know my dog likes to swim and probably about two summers ago I'm like 'let's go up the bay a little bit out of town' and there's some small little like, um, I don't even know if they're actually, well one's Airport [..] Beach I think it's called, and I don't know if it's owned by the county or what it's kind of like a wayside off, a few picnic tables and that's about it, um...there was like...um, I don't know what to call it, but the weedy grass stuff was so tall and so close to the top I was like 'oh my gosh it's so overgrown', it was as tall as us but you could see there was a track where people were going through it to get to the water and so we started heading and then it was just like, really, the smell was just horrendous, and it was like 'oh my gosh, what is that' and [...] it was just green muck, really.

R: Algae?

H: Algae, and oh it was horrible, and of course they're still ashore so we were filthy and so we were like oh man, then no clean water to hose em off, and we had towels I believe but, um, yeah, so that was really disappointing, and so we drove further north along M35 and um, to where someone we know lives, um has a house there and then the other side of the highway she owns the land along the bay, we thought well maybe, you know, it's better there, and no it was the same

H: And so, you know, we just went home and then we were talking to my dad and he was like 'oh yeah you can't go in there it's so polluted and so algae and stuff is going on', so for me that was really disappointing because only probably, you know, two years before that it seemed just fine, we were going to there all the time and so.

There are degrees of loss in Heather's narratives; the move away from family in Menominee, to Green Bay and a change in lifestyle with far less contact with nature. There was a move from Oshkosh, which had become a viable new home, close to Lake Michigan and with a couple of 'grandparent' surrogates living next door, providing snacks and handy assistance. She then had to relocate to Green Bay, reluctantly, for work. Here we see another level of adjustment; she is not able to take her dog swimming. (Note it becomes the *dog* that likes to swim, not herself, although she admits earlier in the interview she has spent almost entire childhood summers in the water.) I ask about the experience taking her dog out unsuccessfully for a swim:

R: So was that the first time, that you had that direct contact with the bay... changing?

H: Yeah, yes, you know, and I had heard, like you know on the news and stuff, them talking about it, like Green Bay bad, but I didn't think it was that way up there, you know I just figured they're talking about the river and the bay here being really bad, I didn't realise, and because I never went down here to the bay, I really didn't know what it really looked like or anything, um, so that was kinda shocking to see that, how it could happen that bad, so-

R: That was like a couple of years ago?

H: Yeah, that was like two years ago and it's still not real good, um, there's one area in town near the paper mill, um which they call 'fat lady beach' it's actually called something else but everybody calls it because it's kind of hidden [laughing] and that's what my mother called it [cos the women that were bigger didn't want to be seen down in the marina area] so, but uh, there was a little spot where I would take her and the other dogs so that your not by anybody else and just some rocks and we went this summer just couple of times and it was better, it wasn't as bad but it's still, you know, I didn't want to go in other than walking into it, but [the dog] swam in it, but we gave her a douse right away when we got home, so, um...but...that said it wasn't as bad as the year or two before, but, just hit a good time of the year and what, I...

R: So you said when you moved to Green Bay you didn't really go down to the water very much? You lived here through...

H: Not a real lot.

It is in the interviews with participants who grew up outside of Green Bay who appear to find the water unwelcoming; it does not seem to call to them, due to its industrialised context and history of ecological problems. As Heather notes she had heard about water problems, as does Victoria, as something in the background, and fore-grounded by the other 'features' of Green Bay life, notably shopping and town-related benefits. Jeff, who moved to Green Bay from Sheboygan, as Sally also did, spent summers in the water, and boating had been a huge recreational activity for him. Having moved to Green Bay, Jeff declared he and his wife found the water "shockingly polluted". This sentiment is reflected by those to came to Green Bay from elsewhere, in this case from communities in the Great Lakes region: Victoria, Jeff, Sally, Heather and Ray. In these cases individuals, with the exception of Victoria, grew up close to the water and have strong associations with playing, family, recreation, fishing and boating. There is a sharp drop in water-related activities and the water is either tolerated, or enjoyed in a superficial way, e.g. Sally angling herself when sitting by the Bay away from the view of industry, or Heather walking along the Fox River Trail as a peaceful and relaxing reference to her times walking in the country, trying not to notice the rubbish collecting under the bridge, or the fact that access to the river is highly restricted and limited to derelict-looking areas. After moving to Green Bay from Sheboygan, Jeff kept his boat, still parked in the driveway, and lives directly on the Fox River, although rarely takes it out on the water. There *has* been a form of loss taking place in the relocation, and the sanctuary or just respite the water had brought previously is no longer available. Rather than find new places to enjoy the water, such as Door County, the activity itself is curtailed. This is the case even with those who relocated within the Green Bay region, such as Howard who moved

from rural De Pere to town; a short distance but a huge expanse, psychically and topographically.

Water symbolically evokes strong sensations of containment, being held; it is sensory, experiential and immersive. For many participants, this sense of immersion in the place, via the water, has been lost, in varying degrees. Donald (discussed in Chapter 5) describes the sensation of wading out in the water at Bay Beach to the raft, where he first learned to swim, and describes the sensation of the sand under his feet, and the water supporting him. This is lost when the beach is closed, and the only swimming available is in small "concrete" pools where one has to "pretend" to swim by scooting along the shallow bottom and holding onto the sides. Sally recounts swimming in the freezing waters of Lake Michigan, and although her visits to the Lake declined as she got older, she pines and yearns for the wild waters of the land, with its open and endless horizon, once the family is uprooted and moved to Green Bay. The water then becomes frozen for Sally as a powerful association with something that has been lost, and although she rarely visits, she places a poster of waves above her bed, to remind her of the rough waters and what it felt like to be held in those waters (see Figure 26 on page 189).

For Victoria, sanctuary and containment is centred on the domestic space; play is domestic imaginary play, such as dress up and 'library' up in the attic, creating an imaginary house with her neighbour out of leaves, carrying dolls around in wagons. Affectively the home is an object of safety and protection, and the outside and water is perceived as risky and dangerous. This perception of water and weather as risky appears to be mediated through her experience of her mother's fear of the water (the sense of danger and risk) and fear of storms, which can cause serious damage in that part of the country. They are forces beyond human control. In considering how strongly home is a sanctuary for Victoria, any perceived threat to home is what is acutely felt; issues pertaining to the local environment such as the Fox River (which flows behind their home) do not seem to register other than in a dim sense. She mentions taking a boat down the Fox River with a church group and how fun it was, but by the third interview, she laughs at this, "Did I say that?" and comments that the area was "ratty". In contrast to the other participants, Victoria's sense of refuge and sanctuary was bound up in the domestic domain, and it seems her hometown was containing, as she speaks of it as a "very safe place for children" and the way everyone knew everyone else. In the interviews we see therefore a demarcation in how she experiences certain environments; specifically nature is seen as risky and town and home are experienced as safer. The river as it appears in her life becomes more prominent as she begins dating, suggesting an association of sexuality, adulthood, risk and danger.

In my interviews with Victoria, several significant environmental issues are discussed; when I press her to describe any emotions she has in relation to the environmental issues, e.g. air quality, leading to frequent sinus infections in the family members, the smells from the large scale farms nearby, or the "ratty" and polluted river, she cites "disappointment". She relays the story of how when they moved to Green Bay, her infant daughter immediately began to have sinus infections, and laughing, recounts how people would say ironically, "Welcome to Green Bay!" This was as close as Victoria became to asserting a clear connection between the health concerns and the local environment (see discussion of ambivalent relations with loss below). She also conveys the loss of a sense of containment and security in her acknowledgement of how, when she goes out into the garden, all she see is 'work to be done', that is weeding, endless chores. Gone are the carefree days of swinging and singing up at the blue skies and white clouds. More importantly, however, is the way in which Victoria felt her home to be a refuge and sanctuary as a child—even though she recounts their poverty and huddling around a small coal stove to keep warm in winter—and how nature itself became a threat, which sent her hiding with any hint of an approaching storm or hurricane ("I was always afraid of thunderstorms and tornados, so at the first sound of thunder, I started to worry"). Despite the fact that she and her husband finally went to Door County (the resort area on the shores of Lake Michigan) for their anniversary, her descriptions of the nature and water are removed; she focuses on the culture, shops and restaurants. This omission becomes clarified when she mentions in our final interview that in fact, she has both positive and negative associations with Door County, in that it both reminds her of her youth (parts of the park resembling her childhood terrain) and her discomfort with large bodies of water; she describes developing a phobia of water after being with her mother during a picnic alongside a riverbank and her mother's palpable fear of the children falling in and drowning:

> There was one park where we had a picnic with my family, and my dad's baseball team, and I can't remember the name of it, but it was a very dangerous place. The land was level and then it was a drop-off to the river. And I remember, being a small child and my mom, I could feel, a sense, the fear my mom had for her children. The urgency that which she spoke to us, about not getting near the edge, I don't know if that, at that point as a kid, um, made me have some fears of large bodies of water.

The revelation about the fear of large bodies of water placed Victoria's narratives about water into context. It also reflected how people respond to ecological issues may involve unconscious associations that defy discourses focusing exclusively on 'values' and behaviour. Victoria's internalised fear of water relates with what Bollas

(1987) calls the "unknown thought" as an embodied experience of her mother's anxiety around water becoming her own; the image of the picnic by the water also suggests its potential function as a "screen memory" in its quality of a condensed memory, a snapshot conveying her mother's parental fears around wild nature and the risks associated with water. As with Donald's tooth accident, these images are condensations of affect and memory that convey more than the simple representation of the story; they convey complex meanings as well, which likely operate on a dream-like level of consciousness (e.g. not entirely conscious). As an adult Victoria could only engage with nature and the water in terms familiar for her—through the domesticated space of her marital relationship and family—although there are signs she can also connect as well with nature as a positive object from her childhood. As she recounts, in our final meeting, the experience of being in nature and by the water in Door County was comforting to her, because it made her feel young again; however it remained mediated by loss. When she is driving with her husband through a winding road in Door County, she is reminded of the council grounds in her hometown where she spent much time. I asked her what feelings are associated with that.

> Oh, (sighs) I suppose, more, more youthful. You feel laughing a bit] bit younger, remembering things you did, um places you were when you were younger... [...] that everything in childhood hasn't gone away. And I even said to my husband, I wish I would have brought my camera this would be such a neat picture!

Here we see that Victoria takes pleasure in telling me a *positive* association she has with the local nature and a region she has also just told me can arouse anxiety and fear (large bodies of water). This association is one of her youth, reminding her that in fact some things endure; there is a sense of continuity. Her remark about wishing she had her camera indicates her desire to preserve this moment, the experience of youth, into something she can hold on to. In many respects, her home has become her 'sanctuary' and there is a constant sense of permeable boundaries, of potential siege, or invasion.

In our third interview, speaking about the home and issue of boundaries (neighbours transgressing), Victoria free associates to being in a shop and finding an old, dirty coat; she realises the owner must have taken it off to put on a new one and walked out with it. This contact with the dirty coat and the awareness of someone in her midst, who would do such an act, fills her with distress and a feeling of contamination. Her attempts to maintain the sanctuary and security felt as a child are constantly being tested, and her emotional pain regarding her own family's divorce rate and the divorce rates around her, (including her local pastor), reflects the sense of shifting sands under her feet. She is trying to hold on to something, but in the end,

people grow older, leave home and occasionally, fragment the family ("Something that wants to stay together"). Nature is positioned in this context as a threat, already ruined in a sense, so that affectively the focus is on the household and the garden. For several participants, nature itself is a form of sanctuary that has been lost. For Victoria, the home has become the sanctuary and nature is positioned as a threat or risk, to be negotiated.

Possibility (open horizons, blue skies)

In addition to being associated with innocence and containment (sanctuary), it seemed the local nature and the water as experienced in childhood also evoked an open, and untarnished world. Even Howard, who lived on the (highly polluted) Fox River and spent years swimming, boating and playing on it, experienced the river as dynamic and full of possibilities, a peaceful space to be on one's own to explore, a state subsequently tarnished by "all the big houses on the river".

> Um in the springtime I'd walk along the river just to explore it, just to see what type of things got washed up from the ice and everything like that. It was always a relaxing place. That was before they got all the big houses on the river, like they have now.

For Howard, the loss of the river happened through development encroaching along the riverbanks, as the riverfront property went from being inexpensive real estate, to desirable and high cost, and his subsequent move out of the family home in his early 20s to a small bungalow formerly owned by his grandmother, "in town". The loss is one related to access, rather than pollution, as the Fox River was already degraded, and Howard contracting Hepatitis during high school was a testament to its condition (although he is ambivalent in making this causal assertion, and skirts around it as one might protect a problematic but beloved relative; he seems to know the river made him ill and yet he is very attached to it). Although Howard moved only several miles into town, and the Fox River continues to flow close to his house, being in town has entirely changed his mode of relating with the river. He experiences the river as lost in his shift from a "river rat", growing up in and around the river in rural De Pere, to an adult living on his own, having stayed at his parents' home by the river as long as possible. He tells me how he may take a few minutes of his lunch break and park near the water, looking out, and tells me in our second interview how after our discussion he decided to go spent a couple of minutes by the river during a recent lunch break. This practice of accessing the river through 'glimpses' and snatches is poignant in light of how important the river has been in his youthful years.

Both Howard and Sally (discussed in Chapter 6) have lost sites of exploration and vista (respectively), as sites for expansion but also for individuating from their

families, in their respective moves; from Sally's open horizon of Lake Michigan, a wild body of water with an endless horizon, to Howard's Fox River before the big mansions and his relocation to a bungalow in town. Howard retains an ambivalent relationship with his desire to return to the country and his beloved rural Fox River, as he cannot settle nor feel at home in town. His relations with the water and river are in what seems to be a continuous state of melancholic longing. He is unable to return to the river, and yet is unable to make a new home in town. Howard, Heather and Sally seem to have a melancholic relation to their earlier attachments with the water and nature, and while engaging with Green Bay's waterways as adults, have clearly found it lacking, as discussed below. Their camping and swimming activities have become sharply curtailed, and when Howard tells me of how much he loves swimming and his use of a local indoor pool on special occasions, I feel sad. My sense is that swimming indoors cannot replace the unique pleasures of outdoor swimming and exploring the riverbanks.

Donald's accounts of being out in nature, boating and enjoying the water also indicated a sense of expansiveness and of open horizons: adventure. While Donald appears reconciled with his relationship with Green Bay, including the events concerning his father's accident at the paper mill (discussed in Chapter 5), there is an undeniable melancholic tenor as he recounts the water and nature of his youth, and the gradual erosion of these places. Indeed, where he sought sanctuary as a child in Baird's Creek and Bay Beach are no longer accessible; this is quietly noted, not railed against or even complained about. It is, as for many participants, simply a matter of fact, sad but irreparable. The Fox River had always been and remained an abject object, a place where loss is a matter of course (discussed below). It is notable how Donald manages to retain a sense of possibility in the face of these developments; as discussed in the following chapter, his ability to shift his affective investments from Baird's Creek and Green Bay, to the property in Two Rivers signals a form of reparation. However, as a mature adult nearing seventy, he laments the way the "city's forefathers" allowed the degradation and destruction of the water to take place, and is clearly pained in this awareness. In contrast to Paddle's adventures through the circuit of the Great Lakes and estuaries, a narrative that embodies a visceral sense of possibility, Donald's growing consciousness of the threats facing the Great Lakes instils a genuine sense of personal limitation and vulnerability.

Object relations: Intermediaries between public and private meanings[69]

What is it we have lost, when our rivers, beaches and wetlands are degraded, developed or altered? What aspects of ourselves are in the places in which we reside? In order to explore interrelated, intrapsychic dimensions underlying responses to local environmental issues, particularly those concerning local ecologies, we need to relate themes of loss, mourning and melancholia with the concerned objects of water, nature, and industry. As we have discussed, running through the interviews are strong themes of loss, specifically evoking a childhood associated with innocence, possibility and safety; these qualities are strongly connected with specific places, sensations and memories. Following Bollas (1992), if certain objects are like "psychic keys", through which we articulate ourselves, and if objects and experiences are "keys to the releasing of our idiom" (p. 17), occupying "the intermediate space" (Winnicott, 1971) between self and world, formations between the subject's state of mind and the thing's character, I would like to now focus on the various meanings and significances specific *environmental* objects may have in the context of loss.

The focus on environmental (non-human) objects is a relatively novel approach in psychosocial studies, in that the emphasis has tended to be to be primarily on inter-personal and intrapsychic dimensions and processes, without attending to the 'realness' of our object worlds and the spaces we move through. There is a lack of spatial and contextual considerations in most psychosocial studies; interviews may take place in council flats or living rooms, but the focus is almost entirely on the interpersonal and intrapsychic. For an environmentally concerned study, attending to how environmental objects arise, and are configured in the brief space of three interviews extends the capacities for thinking through nature and environment as either 'merely' ecological entities, biological and empirical, or 'merely' a projection of our imaginations, desires, fears and internal states. I maintain there is this "intermediate" or "third area" of great importance for an environmentally sensitive study (Winnicott, 1971, p. 110).[70] As I am drawing on three in-depth, free associative interviews per participant, and not the outcome of psychoanalytic sessions or longitudinal interviews over months or years, my observations regarding internal and external object relations are limited. Even within these constraints, I have found it possible to

[69] Bollas, 1992, p. 20.

[70] Curiously Winnicott's work has yet to be taken up in environmental psychology as an early formulation of intersubjectivity and relations with our non-human, object world: "It is useful", he writes, "then, to think of a third area of human living, one neither inside the individual nor outside in the world of shared reality" (1971, p. 110). For Winnicott this third area is the space, of course, between infant and mother, and its foundation is the baby's trust in the mother experienced over a long-enough period, established at critical junctures in the development of separation and autonomy. As discussed in Chapter 9, he links the healthy and reliance of this space to the capacities for concern and creativity; a more positive spin on reparation than Klein's emphasis on guilt.

identify a series of qualities, or dimensions, to these object relations, which are highly suggestive of the capacities to 'split' objects (and ourselves) in terms of 'good' and 'bad' qualities (e.g. pleasure, desire, escape; danger, threat, abjection); a psychic process, I maintain in the final chapter, integral to industrialisation and our experiences of industry as profoundly ambivalent and anything but straight forward.

Psychoanalytic theories of loss, mourning, melancholia, and especially ambivalence, contradiction and internal conflict are productive for coming to terms with the capacities to hold conflicting and simultaneously opposing, or contrasting, feelings and views about certain objects, and have the potential to help theorise industrial impacts on more nuanced levels than noting attitudes, behaviours and values. As Klein notes, there is a quality to the longing for the lost 'good object' that is akin to "pining" (Klein, 1986, p. 151), and as discussed I felt this quality appear in the interviews, sometimes fleetingly, at other times in a more pronounced way. To understand what has been lost, and what is being 'pined' for, and what defences may thus be mobilised around the experiences of loss and pining, or longing, we need to take a closer look at the ways in which the environmental objects invoked are articulated; what is speaking through them, how we are to follow their traces.

In the following section I discuss how certain bodies of water and places in nature are constructed as 'good' or 'bad' objects and the affective investments involved in the objects: the focus tends to be on the Fox River, as the most central body of water in Green Bay, the site of much attention in the media and in the course of the interviews, thus I focus on this I the following section. Far from binaries, these objects, as the Fox River, are 'shot through' with complicated affective dimensions and at times, contradictory. At the centre of the contradictions, I argue in the following chapter, is the paper mill and industry itself, an object that casts a profound and complex shadow. I conclude the chapter with a discussion of the implications of 'the work of mourning' and ambivalence, a discussion continued in greater depth concerning reparation and bases for trust and belief in real objects in Chapter 9.



Figure 27: De Pere inlet, date unknown, provided by Howard (participant), 2009

A "river rat": River as 'good' object

Perhaps more than any of the participants, Howard expresses great affection for the Fox River. Having grown up on its banks in rural De Pere, about ten miles outside of Green Bay, Howard spent much of his childhood in and around the river (see Figure 27). Unlike participants interviewed whose associations with the river include abject pollution, abuse and neglect, Howard appears to have identified positively with the Fox River, and associates it with play, exploration, curiosity, freedom and expansion, and indeed as a part of himself (telling me moments into our first interview that he was a "river rat", and confirming this perception in the second interview after speaking with his sister, who agreed, "Yep, I was a river rat"). This sense of identity is reflected in the above passage as Howard notes his emotional states are in rhythm with the river. The river is a 'good' object for Howard, in that it evokes a sense of himself, and particularly his younger self as adventurous and autonomous from the family fold (as with Sally and Jeff, the memories seem to portray an image of a solitary figure in nature or the water, in contrast with Donald whose memories included friends and family relations). To say the river is 'good' however is does not equate with it being idealised, although there may be aspects of this. I did not find Howard's relation with the river as idealised primarily because of the fact he was so keen to participant in the interviews based on his own concerns regarding water health and quality ("my way of making a difference"), however unconscious or distanced such concerns are from his conscious, everyday practices. (As I discuss in Chapter 10, Howard's environmental concern is actually very high, despite his presentation and responses in the survey indicating otherwise.) In addition, he mentions in the interviews his contracting of

Hepatitis C; a potentially devastating virus that he strongly suspects was linked with his high exposure to the Fox River water.

However even in noting this, he does not seem particularly angry or disgusted at the fact his health was so severely compromised through contact with the river; although he had to miss much of a year in high school, and suggests the illness led him to pursue physical labour, working outside as opposed to indoors at an office job (perhaps tied with the trauma of being bed and home-bound at the peak of his adolescent years), there is not a trace of bitterness or resentment towards industry or the river. The tenor with which he speaks of the river is instead affectionate and tender, and borderline protective. This is illustrated in the vignette he shares about the first time he became aware of the poor water quality in Green Bay; he is recounting a trip on Lake Michigan, (often constructed as the 'good water' in many interviews due to its blue waters, open horizons and associations with fishing and boating, despite its own ecological issues as part of the Great Lakes system).

> The first time we went out on Lake Michigan, that we take the boat out, because you look at the back of the boat and it's coming out blue, [.] blue water, as opposed to brownish water. Cos I had never seen that, we always boated on the river, and I cannot tell you exactly when it happened, but I, but I did, that's when I realised how clean water should be. ... I distinctly remember the first time doing it, I can't tell you when or how old I was, but I do remember it being, "wow, I can't you know... I've never seen, that's what clean water is [laughs]. It's not the pollution that's making it that, it's the run-off of soil and different type of water [..] It would have been the point of recognizing clean from, clear water to cloudy water.

In contrast to those who found the water abject, (e.g. Jeff, Donald and Sally, who would not want to touch it for fear of contamination), Howard didn't have a problem jumping into the water and swimming and water-skiing. He notes his mother wanted him to "Rinse off in chlorinated pool... and I agreed". But, he continues,

> I didn't worry too much about it. I mean, I keep, I had hepatitis when I was 17, and mom blamed herself for some food... I kept thinking I had better chance of getting it from... I know that a lot of septic systems dumped into river, even ours did, I didn't realize that until I was older, but I kind of knew that when I was 15, 16, 17...

When I asked Howard about swimming in the Fox River in our first interview, with a note of unintentional incredulity ("You didn't actually swim in it, did you?"), he responds, "I didn't even have a problem [going into water] in my later years, I mean in the, in the last ten years, I was out there [...] but yeah, I swam in the river... Anything else? I kind of went blank there. Do you mind if I get a soda?" My sense was that he

became slightly defensive at the suggestion there was anything unusual about swimming in the Fox River, and quite literally came to a blank.[71] The river and experiences with the water are so strongly a part of Howard's identity that it almost seems literally a part of him; he speaks about his claustrophobia living "in town" in the small bungalow, and how he keeps the shades drawn most of the time: "From the minute I moved in", he says in our first interview, "I didn't like being in the city. I just, closed in to me. I have the drapes open and the blinds open for you, not for me, because I'd probably have them closed". He literally suffers by being confined to the indoors, and speaks of his enjoyment of the outdoors all year round almost boastfully, including the winters, when he has no trouble sticking his bare hands in the ice or snow (to his co-workers' shock).

While his mood fluctuates in sync with the seasons and the river's ice opening, he refuses to 'criticise' aspects of the river or the environment on account of its being cold, polluted, or a sewage dumping site. These are the 'good' aspects of Howard introjected into the river, so that in protecting and enjoying the river, defending it against critique, he is protecting and salvaging core aspects of himself, which contact with as become potentially lost in the move towards adulthood, life in town several miles from his childhood home, and the interim development alongside the riverbank that virtually altered the river for Howard almost completely from a serene and natural area—despite its ecological woes—to a row of high value properties, owned by the wealthy. Howard notes that in moving 'away' from the river (recall he still lives close to the Fox River, however in the town), he has realised how important it has been:

> Being away from it makes me realize it more than had I'd stayed on the river my whole life.. it might not be as noticeable to me, might be noticed to other people that thought that, but its when you interact with other people, that's why the term a 'river rat'... I just talked to my sister today, actually I was going through this stuff and the interviews and I said, 'well you know about me being on the river' and she said, 'yep the river rat'... and I'm like, 'yeah she probably had her time of doing that too' and ah...

The sentiment of only truly missing the river—the 'good object'—after moving from it, e.g. experiencing the loss of its proximity and thus self-experience in relation with it, echoes Sally's narratives regarding how deeply she missed, and 'pined' for

[71] In light of his momentary 'disassociation', it is also true that I intruded, in suggesting involuntarily (my surprise when he tells me about swimming in the river) that the act of swimming in the river was possibly 'wrong,' and perhaps casting doubt for him. This is possible, and as a co-produced interaction it is evident my responses inform the dialogue. At the same time, it would not be possible for Howard to *not* realise swimming in the river was generally perceived as risky behaviour; this is indicated in the fact his mother made him rinse off in the chlorinated pool after being in the river; however she also seems to disavow the river's contamination in blaming herself (e.g. spoiled food) for his Hepatitis, rather than the more likely cause being the river water.

Lake Michigan only after the family had moved to Green Bay. For Howard, the river was 'his' private space, but also "something the whole family was that way, we're kind of connected to it. Could be why we don't leave the area, I mean because if we left the area I think it would have to be near a body of water". Howard is able to differentiate the Fox River from another body of water that was also polluted, Bay Beach. He notes in the second interview, "I mean we heard stories about Bay Beach being closed down...". His relationship with the Fox remains intact in terms of his perception of it as a river, not necessarily the site of a nationally recognized cleanup: "I'm for the cleanup they are trying to do, I feel the river has gotten cleaner since I was younger... so I think they're doing stuff to do it". He relates a story about talking with "a professor in a bar about the water, and learning the cause for the PCBs was recycling, which makes it 'less sinister'" (my words); unlike a waste dump nearby "where they knew what they were doing", the intention is what matters, a feeling also expressed by Donald when he notes how some businesses intentionally channelled wastes into the Fox River and expresses dismay and shock at such practices.

Negotiations: Good water and bad water

Scott relates in our second interview, after an initial glowing and jovial discussion of the region and the water (he refers to enjoying the water "glitter" on the surface of the Fox River in certain lights), begins to disclose more about his feelings of sadness and disappointment when becoming aware of the degradation.

R: Um, can you recall, the kind of um, the kind of feelings that might have, you know to learn that, that there are these problems with the river and with the bay?

S: I, I would be, it was more like [.] disappointment. You know cause, I, probably before then I was like, "hey look, neat water, you know, you drink water, you know," its stuff that ... you know the bay isn't water, you drink water, you cook with water and all that and realizing that water could be dirty. You know. So that, that was probably, um, a point of when I went "oh, okay," you know realizing that you know, everything is connected. So why is the stuff that I use water with okay and the stuff that, that, that [..] outside the water is not okay to do with. Deal with you know and now I remember [.] um, [.] when I was in school we took a field trip to the water treatment plant. You know that, that site, the sewer treatment plant that's in Green Bay yeah I, I think I was in seventh grade, eighth grade, sixth grade, yeah, I remember, that might have been one of the things too would you know, going to the sewage treatment plant. Boy did that place stink. [Laughing.]

R: What kind of impression did that have on you?

S: I don't know, just that you could turn bad water into good water. You know that, that things could be better. But you know, realizing that you know, when you go to the bathroom it has to go somewhere [laughing] yeah, okay,

that makes sense. That, that and you know, my dad said and you know, when we went to the sewage treatment plant and when um, [.] it was being built, you know, my dad was in construction at that time and he helped build the sewage treatment plant. So [.] I always remember that too. Being that the one, the one section of the building is that seven stories [.] straight down and it's, and it's in the ground. You know just, that was always kind of neat. Mmm, yeah, I can still remember being inside the building. I betcha it hasn't changed much either. It's probably the exact same yellow paint [laughing].

Scott's description of realising there is 'good' and 'bad' water, and the fact you can not only turn good water into 'bad' but the other way round, signals negotiations with an object as neither all-bad or all-good, but mixed and even mutable. His recollection of the sewage treatment building, even the colour of the paint on the walls, suggests this 'object' as having some sort of importance, an imprint in memory that is now recalled. For Scott the sewage treatment centre is "neat" and not abject, similar to his finding great beauty, adventure and relaxation in the Fox River, a site that many others found to be quite abject. I ask him to expand more on the disappointment.

S: I would, I would guess maybe it's disappointment that somebody could let that happen. That you know, [.] water, you know that just because of what humans did that the water became bad, now, now I realize a little bit later that you know, [..] it was more, it, it's not so much negligence but [.] but being naive that "oh, I'll just dump it in the water and then it's, it's gone". You know, not knowing that some of the stuff that they used was potentially harmful. And then after the fact then they found out it was harmful and some companies tried to fix it right away and some companies must not of tried, they're just, "Okay, we'll just not say anything." Yeah, the environmental protection agency must have been started for some reason you know. That's exactly it, environmental protection.
R: Yeah, so it's a sense of [clearing throat] let, let down?
S: Mmm hmm, yeah. [...] Yeah, I've just, yeah sense of let down with disappointment and just ah, you know, that's sad.
R: Mmm, were there...
S: Not so much anger. [Laughs.]

I find Scott's absence of anger, just a sort of subdued sadness, and sense of let down by others, quite moving and curious. As I return to this topic in the following chapters, the role of anger and protest are potentially quite implicated in the capacities for creative engagement and response to our circumstances; a withdrawal into sadness and disappointment seems to suggest an internalised passivity that I find interesting. We continue, as I enquire into his feelings of disappointment and sadness:

R: Were there any other things that you can imagine that also contributed to that feeling?

S: Mmm, well it must have been with being, [.] having so much fun with water and other places and you know [.] and then you know, the water up north is okay to swim in and stuff and then [.] you know, come down here and it's, [.] not that okay. Maybe that's why we never really did much around here that we always went somewhere else to... You know, to [.] to the lakes or to the river or various other places

R: So you weren't necessarily aware of other kinds of environmental (mm) issues-

S: Yeah, I didn't realize later in life that eating fish, you know if you eat too much fish then you know it's tainted with mercury because of air pollution But yeah, actually it didn't really make that, make that connection 'til H. got pregnant, I was like "I can only have fish once a week, why?" "Mercury," [.] "Oh." [Laugh] but I, I, I must have known that ahead of time, that you know just, [.] just that it would happen but didn't know that it was that predominate here too. You know cause, you know they had fish fries, is one of the big things around Northeast Wisconsin, every Friday fish fry (Yeah.) So, and you can only do that once a month.

R: Right, and um how does that make you feel, [.] the idea that the fish is actually not entirely safe?

S: Yeah, it, it, it's [.] not something that [.], that I can change immediately.

What we find in the excerpt is an articulation of a shift in awareness; from an object that has been largely 'good' ("having so much fun with water") to recognition of its taint, or having been spoiled in some way, by others' negligence. However in place of a sense of indignation or anger, we see a quiet sense of disappointment, followed by the admission that "it's not something that I can change immediately". This particular movement, between acknowledgement of a loss and sense of betrayal, and quiet admission of personal powerlessness, runs across the interviews. When I ask Howard how the idea of contaminated fish makes him feel, he responds instead with a comment that it's not something he can change, therefore there is no point 'feeling' anything about it. The space for emotional processing of the losses or sense of anger is not available; it has been short-circuited, in the single expression, "it's not something that I can change immediately". What I want to suggest is how this particular mode of being may inform how Howard relates with the water's ecological issues as an 'engaged' activist or citizen; it does not refer to whether he sees the water as good or bad, but rather how he sees *himself* and his *agency* in relation to the particular object. In this case, Scott feels concern for the water but it is not expressed as creative engagement; Winnicott's suggests this is related to the lack of *contributing-to* that is so central for the animation of one's reparative and creative energies towards the world. It is possible, through an object-relations analysis, to see that the river holds for Scott certain 'self-states', as Bollas (1992) describes his childhood swing

holding certain associations of a particular time—and in this sense, perhaps certain environmental objects are 'frozen' in terms of evoking a sense of active reparation or engagement with them.

River as abject object

In contrast to Howard and Scott, for Donald the Fox River seems to have occupied a site of abjection and loss; the two singular associations he has with the Fox River is the accident when he was playing with some friends and hit in the tooth with a BB gun, losing a front tooth, and his father's traumatic experience of suffering an injury at the paper mill and subsequently losing his job, after having worked his way up to a foreman position, over twenty years of working for the company. When Donald told me the tooth story (as I came to think of it) in the first interview, I was struck by the story, in both how it arose—at the end of the first interview, as an errant association surfacing—and the language he uses in telling it.

> One other little incident in my life that has to do with our proximity to the Fox River, I had a good buddy that lived [laughs] three-fourths of a mile down here. We were probably 11 years old, and I would frequently hang around with him. And he and I and a group of guys decided we were going to go down to the Fox River, and uh, along this west shore, almost right below our location here, there were a couple of old wooden ship hulls, half in the water, half out of the water. And... a couple of us owned BB guns, so we were down there horsing around, shooting at God knows what, and for some weird, strange reason, we decided we would start shooting at each other. It was just a crazy game, probably four or five of us, one guy had his gun on one side, the other had his gun on the other, and a couple of the guys were in one of those ship hulls, and a few of us were behind a big anchor lying on the side of the river bank, and, for I can't remember the total incident, but I jumped out from behind an anchor and yelled at the guys in the other, in the ship hull, to stop firing, I don't know why. And just as I jumped out, one of the guys shot his BB gun, and the BB came and hit me in the tooth. And knocked out my front tooth. Knocked out my front tooth. And it was not a baby tooth, and it was the permanent. So I went home and had to try to hide it for about two hours and my mother and dad finally saw It and I was, [laughs] I paid for that for the rest of my life, cause I had to wear a false tooth, still have one as a matter of fact... but the trauma of wearing that crazy piece of hardware in my mouth all those years, because dentistry is not what it is today, and they put a plastic roof in my mouth, and hung a little tooth in the front of it, and that was all well and good, but for some reason the chemical reaction in my body turned that little tooth dark brown so anytime I smiled, I had to look like a hole in the front of my mouth. And I had to wear that until my mouth matured, until I was 18 years old, at which time they could put a bridge in. But that was a trauma, all tied in with the Fox River...

In the story there is a strong association with the river and the "trauma" that Donald experiences; although he is laughing a bit and recalling it as a light anecdote, there are indications of more to the story. The event takes place down by the banks of the Fox River, amongst old relics of an earlier, perhaps indicative of a more dignified time in the River's history, and for some "strange, weird reason" they started this game. The setting is already marginal, transgressive and a bit naughty. I am most struck, as discussed in Chapter 5, of the phrases of paying for the accident for the rest of his life; like his father, a trauma took place associated with the river (the paper mill being directly on the Fox River), that was both recklessness and bad luck. While he may have trouble speaking about his father's accident or the paper mill, the story is a 'screen memory' in that it seems to bring together certain abject aspects of the river and associated brutality.

For Heather, having moved to Green Bay from Menominee (and more recently Oshkosh, which she describes as feeling like home, located on Lake Michigan), the Fox River seems to be a pale reflection of the waterways and nature of her earlier life. While, like Howard, she maintains that 'any body of water' has a similar soothing and relaxing effect, I am saddened and intrigued to hear her recount her experiences with the Fox River, and how it is integrated with the 'life world' on the whole in Green Bay. Here she picked up the topic voluntarily when we meet for our second interview. She first recalls the affective associations with the beach and water, with friends and family, as "the days going on forever", and contrasts this with her life in Green Bay.

H: I know you were asking like um, what did uh you know like being in the water and so what it meant to me up there and stuff and how I felt but um, of course I don't know if it was just because you know I was young, but I, you know I compare it to now I feel like that time was, um, going to the beach with my friends or being with my family um, the days went on forever you know? And like now cos I'm you know so busy working and doing other stuff and but um, so kind of [.] um, how do I want to say, not freedom but just being able to relax, not worrying (hmm mm) having to worry about anything you know. I guess that's one of the reasons a lot of times um [.] you know like here in Green Bay they have the Fox River Trails, I don't know if you're familiar with them or not? And like in the summer I mostly take her [dog] a lot between spring and fall and on the trails because it's nice it's kind of somewhat woodsy, you know you go by houses and some businesses at times but they don't have the traffic or the vehicles and stuff. And you've got the water and you can hear the fish jumping and stuff so it's more relaxing to me than just walking through town. ['Sit' talking to dog.]

R: What do you think of the scenery along that walkway?

H Um, it's nice I think it could probably somewhat be a little nicer in areas but um, you know, it's, I like kind of going where more of the residential part is because they do such nice landscaping of their land and stuff so that's

really pretty, um, I you know it would be nice if there was a little more, um, access to go down like by the river maybe a little cleaner because there are a few spots where I will take her where it gets kind of mucky, and icky and [.] the one area where it's really accessible is down under 172. But kids, people leave their garbage you know down there they party or whatever, so there's broken glass a lot and stuff, um but there's certain times of the summer where you don't go too close to the river cos of the smell. [Laughs.]

R: What makes, what causes the smell?

H: Um [.] I don't know, I would just sense a lot of it is the algae and from the paper mill nearby and um but you know usually in Spring it doesn't look that bad but then you get to, by the end of June it looks kind of nasty, so, um. [She talks to the dog: gotta get your paws in too!] Um. So that is probably the one thing about Green Bay that I do enjoy... is having those trails to, yeah walk or bike on or stuff so that's nice. I wish they were on this side of town so I didn't have to drive over there to get to it but you know, but yeah.

Heather's narrative about her walks down along the Fox River Trail is poignant. She says it is the one thing she likes about Green Bay; however she has to negotiate bad smells, algae, broken glass and garbage. There is a remarkable ability to 'split' off the good and bad aspects of the river, thereby salvaging or protecting the 'good' qualities she associates and presumably experiences in herself in relation with the water and the river. She is unable to reject it completely, and in this sense is reminiscent of the 'depressive position' in her capacity to 'hold' both the good and bad qualities without splitting the object into being idealised or hated. However, despite the maturity demonstrated by Heather, I cannot help but sense something is being tamped down, a violation or anger in relation to the transgressions she witnesses on her walk (e.g. trash, broken glass, industrial trespasses leading to algae blooms). There is, as discussed in the following chapter, a mood of resignation or despondency even when speaking about gross levels of ecological degradation and her direct experience of the water.

Negotiating losses

In terms of loss, and what the loss of the specific objects may mean for Heather, it is not the Fox River that has been lost, but rather it is the sanctuary she had found on the family farm, and childhood associations with swimming and water, which has not been recaptured. The sense is of someone wandering through life, not fully engaging, as if in a state of arrested mourning, or perhaps more accurately, melancholia. The loss is present but not clearly delineated, rather it seems a process of disappointments and losses that are affective and relational as well as tangible (e.g. the family farmland, the barn, the woods); the quality evokes melancholia as a loss that has unclear origins (Freud, 1917). Both Heather and Howard brought out photo albums to show me of

times in youth in and around water and nature. The images were of family holidays and 'good times'. The Fox River is a 'good enough' object for Heather, as she suggests, but is it sufficient? How does it function as a 'transformational object'? What is being protected, defended, in the lack of affective engagement with the river; what would it mean for her to connect with the river as a body of water, and site that has been degraded but which may have potential for renewal. In this sense, it would appear that to tolerate the river, walking alongside it but not fully engaging with it, is to protect something vital and 'good' that continues to be pined for. It is a preservation of a prior 'good object'; the physical sites of goodness have been lost but continue in the psychic, imaginal spaces. In the pining is a refusal, or inability, to engage with objects of the present. Rather Heather continues to seek her 'home', a place of love, security and nourishment, and she knows it is not in Green Bay. The Fox River does not 'call' to her as it does not seem to call to most participants (with the notable exception of Howard), and it seems to mirror the unfriendliness Heather finds in Green Bay.[72]

For Victoria, her house has become the site and physical representation of 'sanctuary', an affective space of safety, containment, and goodness. The home is the 'good breast'. However, as becomes evident, the good breast is also capable of producing ill effects; the drinking water is heavily filtrated, the odours from large-scale farms come wafting in, the neighbours let their dog soil on the sidewalk by the post box. The garden needs weeding. The home, with its relational content of daughters and husband, is not impermeable to the forces of change. The daughters eventually leave home, the husband spends over sixty hours a week working at the nuclear plant on Lake Michigan, and the spectre of divorce looms as both siblings enter into divorces. The Fox River hardly registered in this world, other than something to cross on the bridge, and the occasional news on the television about the PCB cleanup. As Victoria notes, because they don't use the river recreationally, its issues don't really impact the family. If anything, water, particularly rivers, register as sites of danger and threat, with suggestion of risk. As she notes when discussing her contact with water as an adolescent, the *feelings* in rural settings are "more secluded, rustic... romantic". For Victoria, becoming an older person—maturing into adulthood—is about becoming aware there are dangers in the world; "There were people who drowned in the lake, um, and so you knew there were, there were dangers [..] Associated with it". The Fox River in her adult life has scarcely registered, although she mentions a boat ride on *The Foxy Lady* she experienced with a church group. In the first interview, she presents the

[72] Arguably the Fox River can also be interpreted more psychoanalytically as a symbol of internal states; the water as an "objective correlative" of a self that has been perhaps neglected, abandoned or beyond repair or 'recovery'. The river can be viewed as a symbol of life, as something that inevitably becomes ruined or degraded and is therefore beyond reprieve (or repair). I have resisted this level of interpretation as taking the analysis to a potentially more specious level, however I do feel such interpretations are worth exploring.

ride as pleasant and fun; in our final interview, I am asking her about her impressions of the Fox River and she mentions a boat ride her neighbours took her on, that she seemed to enjoy although found the scenery not very 'naturesque' due to the lavish homes lining the river. I revisit the vignette about her impressions on the *Foxy Lady*.

R: I was kind of intrigued because you said that it was very, you really enjoyed the scenery when you were on the Foxy Lady. Going down the Fox River.
V: I did?! (Incredulous.) I guess maybe I was thinking about the river itself, because you're right! When I compare what we did with the neighbours on this part of the river, compared with what the Foxy Lady did, you're right! As far as the scenery off of the river, it's not very, um, very attractive. And it makes me wonder, why [laughs] why are people riding this boat?! [Laughing] And maybe, well just maybe just like to ride, whether you like the scenery or you don't and of course they serve drinks and food, so, maybe it's not about the scenery at all!
R: Why do you think that, I mean tell me more when you look at the scenery down the river? What does it, what kind of feelings does it-?
V: I guess it makes me, um, sad in a way, that something so public as the river, and the shore would be used up, in a not a very attractive way.
R: What does 'not very attractive way' mean?
V: Um well. Like you said about some of the industries, and um, I noticed that a lot of coal piles, down there; I guess you'd rather see residential or recreational use along the river.
R: The fact that there is industry there, and that it is the way it is, um, how does that affect you?
V: [..] Well it certainly doesn't make me want to go on the Foxy Lady. [Laughs a bit] I'm not a big drinker and their food isn't that good, and [laughs] I don't care to do that. Um. I guess it doesn't affect me in a real strong way, just like other things, thinking about, um, life for my children, it makes you concerned that all these, natural, um, natural um, [voice trails off] [...] conditions or natural [.] I can't think of the word. We'll just say phenomena, that ss- will be used up. But, I guess on the other, hand, you could look at some of it that wasn't, wasn't residential, and there wasn't necessarily um, industrial building and it, but it wasn't groomed or anything, looked ratty too. [..] So it's, it's not something I think about a—a lot.

I ask Victoria why this may be, and if it may be related to a perception that there is not much that can be done about the situation.

V: [...] I guess I just accept the way it is, and maybe there can be things done about it, [..] industry that, industries don't always survive, um, businesses could go out of business they could sell the property and develop it in a more attractive way. [.] It's not something that I see on a regular basis so it doesn't [.] it doesn't effect me all that much. [...] And, [.] also I'm really interested in genealogy? And (sigh) so olden times interest me, too. And, I

guess realistically these industries that [.] you know are on the river, they're probably the founding industries they were what made this city, get established. (Yeah.) And grow. [..]

R: So how does that affect the way you see it?

V: Kind of as a nec- a necessary evil?

R: uh huh

V: That this negative things come, come along with progress and prosperity for the community.

The Fox River, it seems, is an object that has been 'used up', is beyond repair, unless industries or businesses literally disappear. (This is a surprising image that conjures up a more futuristic, possibly dystopian fantasy than I was expecting.) The possibility for change as presented does not allow much in the form of reparation or agency. It reflects a highly passive subjectivity, of one literally watching from the sidelines. As Victoria admits, she is more anxious and concerned about life for her children, and the idea of "nature" being "used up". There is a tacit acceptance of the risks of "using up" and debasing nature. The view of the river and its condition as being part of a "necessary evil" for the benefit of the human community in the region, e.g. "progress and prosperity" lies at the nub of the difficulty in coming to terms with the experiences of both sadness, an affect Victoria acknowledges, and appreciation of the benefits. She is able to dissociate from the environment, and displace engagement with it on to others as she states in the third interview: "I think it's, my [.] Um, feeling of being somewhat removed, from, like you asked do I consider myself, do I realize that I'm living on the Great Lakes, do you consider yourself living on the Great Lakes. You know, and it, it doesn't occur to me. So I feel somewhat *removed* from this, this situation. Um, it doesn't impact me on a day-to-day basis. But I'm sure there are others, you know, who make their living, um, in these areas, who live in these areas. That would be more moved to do that than I would". Victoria remains exempt from affective involvement with the Great Lakes as such.

In the mix of conflicting affective dimensions of sadness, disappointment (discussed below) and appreciation is likely to be unconscious levels of guilt. In the recognition of degradation, there is a basic recognition of transgression, of participants practices that have somehow violated a sense of ecological integrity, whether it is the visibility of trash and debris, or the lack of fish and other aquatic life basic to a healthy, ecologically viable river, or the presence of PCBs in the river bottom. By and large the dance around this basic recognition; on one hand expressing their sadness and disappointment, and on the other their acceptance of the "necessary evils" of industry which has allowed Green Bay to thrive and become such a "good community" and place to raise children. Donald is aware of the darker aspects of this beneficent entity of industry (the paper mill) that treated his father with brutality,

essentially emasculating him at the prime of his middle-aged years, so that he had to seek work as a precarious labourer for years. Donald is also aware, as someone who worked and thrived in a local industry, the vegetable processing plant, the responsibilities and ease with which business can take liberties with its surrounding ecologies (illustrated by his discover of the errant pipeline that once sent waste directly into the river). He does express a sense of loss and sadness at the current state of the waters in Green Bay and the Great Lakes and he is aware, nearing seventy, of the costs of disrupting one ecosystem (the Fox River and the Bay) for the entire system. While Donald is affectively connected positively with the Great Lakes, his ambivalence towards the Fox River is evident. It has robbed him and his father of vital organs, in a sense; it is the site of the tooth story, but also the site, by association, of his father's injuries and symbolic 'castration' by the mill. Yet, Donald lives alongside the Fox River Trail and the mill can be seen from his back window.

Reflections: Why ecological mourning matters

Freud asks, "So what is the work that mourning performs?" (1917, p. 204). This question is important to address if we are to explore the narratives of loss and sadness with regard to a more pure, clean nature; the loss of both water (by industry) and childhood (by onset of adulthood). Mourning matters if we are to conduct a meaningful analysis of how sadness and loss may relate to capacities for reparation, concern and creative engagements with the lost 'objects'. Following Freud, Klein (1940), Winnicott (1963) and others have formulated theories of mourning as intrinsic to capacities for reparation and concern. In thinking through the process and dynamics concerning environmental object-losses, and how this may inform reparative responses to ecological issues, we begin with Freud's original insights into the work of mourning, and why it matters.

The work that mourning performs, according to Freud's (1917) early formulations, is the process of severing libidinal bonds with the lost object (e.g. beloved object). This task is not completed immediately; it is "carried out piecemeal at great expenditure of time and investment of energy, and the lost object persists in the psyche" (p. 205). Freud tells us that each memory and expectation associated with the lost object is "adjusted and hyper-invested, leading to its detachment from the libido" (p. 205). The extraordinary pain of this process had puzzled Freud; he was unable to account for its intense painfulness when in fact, substitutes for the lost objects often beckoned. As he noted, "It is curious that this pain-unpleasure strikes us as natural. In fact, the ego is left free and uninhibited once again after the mourning-work is completed" (ibid.). However, we know full well the work of mourning is often anything but complete, and when concerning losses that are less specific than a loved human being or pet, such as woodland, a swimming beach, or the long summer

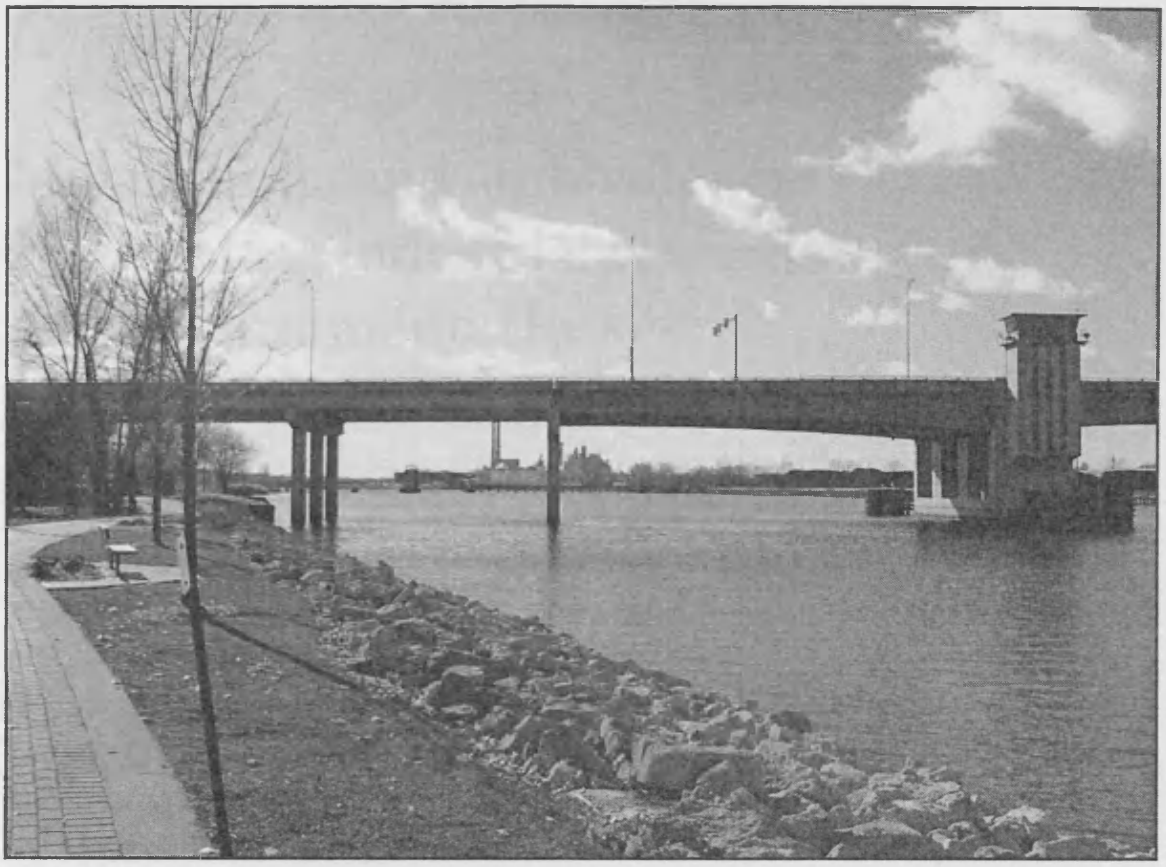
days of youth spent playing in the river, we may need new theories and language. It seems Freud comes close to articulating the inchoate losses of nature—losses rarely socially acknowledged, hence destined to become private and lacking validation and expression—in his work on melancholia and his writings on transience, discussed in Chapter 3. These concepts are extended in the work of Klein and Winnicott, on reparation and concern respectively, as identifying the *dynamic* processes of loss and mourning, and the 'stuckness' or stasis that can result at certain points along the way. Such insights provide useful ways of understanding what can commonly be referred to as 'apathy' or a lack of libidinal, affective engagement with chronic ecological problems, both near and far.

Freud explains that "inhibition and apathy" in the wake of loss can be caused by the absorption of the ego in the mourning-work (1917, p. 205). That is, something has become arrested, and unresolved. He locates this in the inability to trace the source of the loss; that is, when what has been lost is "more nominal in nature" such as expectations, dreams and experiences. When it is difficult to see what has been lost, "we may rather assume that the patient cannot consciously grasp what he has lost" (ibid.). Crucially, Freud traces melancholia to the outcome of knowing *who* has been lost, but not *what* about that object (person in his case) has been lost. Freud relates melancholia to the loss of an object withdrawn from consciousness; unlike mourning where it is clear what has been lost, melancholia refers to a more inchoate, vague sense of loss. And as he notes, melancholic absorption is puzzling to the analyst because we are unable to *see* what so completely absorbs the patient. This explication between mourning and melancholia has potential relevance for our discussion, for what has been lost as expressed in the interviews seems to be something inchoate, a bundle of projections, memories, and actual objects. Is it the water that has been lost, or is it the experience of innocence and freedom associated with playing the waves? When a lost object, such as a family farm or beloved tree is mourned and grieved, it is often the case we know not *what* is lost, other than the most objective, empirical fact. The farm is gone, the house has been sold or razed to the ground, the water is now polluted and unsafe for the body.

As we can see in this analysis, how we respond to particular environmental issues can be shot through with powerful and inchoate affective investments, memories, desires and losses. How environmental apathy (and subjectivity more generally) has been conceptualised in environmental advocacy, however, rests primarily on a conception of apathy as equalling a lack of environmental action or engagement. Rather, what we may begin to appreciate is how the external 'presentation' of apathy, appearing as an *absence* of action, may in fact be related to deeply felt losses. These losses may be inchoate, unconscious to some extent or at least not well understood, and experienced as 'stalled out' or frozen in certain aspects, depending on how they are

managed. As environmental losses are not engaged actively in many social or cultural contexts as topics for 'working through' various emotions, it is possible such losses may go 'underground' but still inform our choices from political engagement to what products we buy. In order to understand on a deeper level dimensions of environmental engagement, to move beyond a discourse of 'barriers' and 'gaps' that presume an absence of something vital or required (e.g. passion, concern, anger), we need to understand how losses have been sustained, worked with psychically and socially, experienced, survived, and mourned, in order to see how they can be more constructively integrated or used creativity.

In addressing the affective and psychic dimensions of loss and apathy, I am not suggesting these are processes only restricted to the subjectivity and interiority of individuals; I view these processes as both psychic and social. I do wish to point up the role biographical influences have in helping us understand some aspects of how loss influence our choices, including how we respond to chronic ecological issues. Based on the data, I want to situate loss as central for understanding absence of agency and the forms of engagement environmental advocates desire so deeply from their communities. In making this crucial shift, we can begin to appreciate that were there is presumed to be a lack of affect, in fact there may be a surplus or 'excess' of affect to explore. In the following chapter, I continue this discussion with exploring responses to loss and mourning as forms of ambivalence, splitting and managing contradictions. Addressing loss and responses to loss can then enable a fuller appreciation for what constitutes and enables reparation, concern and creativity—capacities a sustainable, ecologically healthy future depends on.



Fox River, October 2007, R. Lertzman

Sometimes when we drive over the bridge. I think about the water, especially, even more so if we walk across the bridge. When the kids were younger sometimes we'd take the car in to be worked on at the mechanics and it wasn't too far from the bridge, and the library used to be on the west side of town, and we would walk across the bridge. And we would stand and look down at the water. And, think, thinking about the things that have been on the news, about you know, not eating the fish, so those are the times that I would think about and be concerned about the- the water quality. The things that make me feel comforted, somewhat, is when I hear about um, the industries, and what they are doing to, to try to correct things, or to create um, less damage. To stop further damage. And, that when you do hear about some, some of the clean-up efforts, it's reassuring to me that there are people out there who really do care about that type of thing, and there are people who are doing something and I suppose the situation didn't um, create itself overnight and I'm sure they can't clean it up overnight. And I don't know if it's possible to ever get it back to the way it was, or um, should be... it's unfortunate. But, the earth is here for [.] um, mankind to use. And the earth will never be the way when God created it. You know, we've, we've got highways, and [.] um, skyscrapers, and, and so nothing can st- stay the same. So. I'm okay with it. We just have to do the best that we can... and it won't, you know, be the way it once was.

—Victoria

Chapter 8

Melancholia and ambivalence: Negotiating industrial rewards and environmental losses

In the previous chapter, I presented an analysis of loss as a prevalent affective dimension throughout the interviews, in the context of specific themes (childhood, innocence, sanctuary and possibility). I also explored the Fox River through an analytic lens, to illustrate how a specific environmental object can be bound up with complex affective investments, so that what has been lost or mourned accrues more psychic dimensions than the facticity of the object, what Bollas (1992) refers to as the "intermediate" space between the psychic and the material. Integrating a narrative analysis of certain core themes, e.g. a pervasive sense of loss, with consideration of how certain objects are bound up in specific affective associations and memories serves two functions: 1) to provide a richer investigation into the complexity of how people experience (and respond to) local ecological degradation caused by industrial practices, and 2) to suggest complex psychic processes informing how ecological issues are negotiated and repaired. In highlighting affective dimensions of loss and longing, questions regarding what may impede 'engagement' with issues become more complicated; rather than being concerned with particular values or attitudes regarding nature, resources, or industry, the emphasis shifts to a consideration of unconscious processes, both psychic and social, and the dilemmas occasioned by contemporary, chronic ecological problems. The experience of ambivalence, as I argue in this chapter, constitutes an additional dilemma.

As well as noting narratives of loss and investing certain objects with longing, nostalgia, abjection or other affective qualities, I observed ambivalence and a 'splitting' of objects in the data, notably associated with industry (e.g. the Fox River, the paper mill, Green Bay, the Great Lakes). It seemed to me the ambivalence I was noticing—vacillations between articulating objects positively or negatively, the anxieties underlying these movements, the reluctance or inability to acknowledge source causes of distress, illness or health problems—presented clues with regard to understanding the nature of environmental subjectivities and responses to chronic issues, particularly those which clearly aroused concern and yet were not 'repaired'. I began to view ambivalence of a piece, or part of the constellation of affective dimensions including sadness, loss, guilt and melancholia. Further, it seemed ambivalence could

constitute a central affective domain in how relations with industry are constituted; that experiences of industry itself are fraught, mixed, conflicted, and include pleasures, desires, pain, and destruction. As environmental issues *are* largely consequences of industrial processes, how they are related to then may evoke dilemmas leading to splitting; and this would be entirely logical.[73] In light of Klein's theories of coexistence of aggression, hate and love in the infant, and the achievements of the depressive position as integrative of these aspects (arguably a mode of more authentic engagement with objects and reality), I want to argue that ambivalence towards industry and the environment characterises these significant object relations, and contributes to a *melancholic* mode of response to ecological degradation. 'Melancholic' as referring to Freud's theory of *melancholia*; the losses incurred through industrial processes tend to be inchoate, their origins unclear, and due to guilt and other unconscious processes, the loss can be internalised. A state of longing and unresolved mourning may then ensue, which is what appeared to me throughout the interviews as participants spoke of various nostalgic longings, without any clear sense of agency or active response. To call it 'depression' would be possibly missing the point; participants did not appear depressed necessarily, but there was something deeply sad in their articulations of ecological issues, and a muted quality as well. Protest and anger may not be possible to direct towards the source of this loss (industry, or symbolically perhaps, the parents) for fear of possible repercussions, such as job loss, social ostracizing, or appearing as 'ungrateful' for the fruits of these industries.[74] Ambivalence, splitting and melancholia thus comprise a constellation of defensive strategies that inform agency, response, and 'engagement'. Further, appreciating dynamics of ambivalence and splitting enable a greater understanding of how concern and care for damaged ecological objects can be fostered and facilitated, impeded or stunted.

In order to consider what may help to foster reparation, creativity and concern in response to ecological degradation, we first need to account for the ways in which

[73] As Segal (1973) has written in her introduction to Melanie Klein's work, splitting can be benign as well as pathological; the ordering of the internal world relies on splitting. Splitting is also used to pay attention, to suspend one's emotional distress in order to come to a decision, to make moral choices, or form an intellectual judgement. "The widespread tendency to split the world into good and bad, right and wrong, black and white, or heaven and hell persists through life and profoundly affects our attitudes not only to individuals but also to social institutions and political, religious and other organisations" (Bateman and Holmes, 1995, p. 82). The point here is to bring acknowledgement of unconscious processes of splitting into how environmental issues, as industrial consequences and processes, are responded to and experienced, both cognitively *and* affectively.

[74] Certainly the way in which environmental advocates have been positioned in this region and similar industrial centres suggests that arguing on behalf of ecosystems is constructed as 'anti-job', anti-human welfare and un-American (even participants with strong environmental concerns articulated environmental advocates in the region as 'obsessive', 'black and white' and as only wanting monies (e.g. collecting donations). These constructions are deeply ideological; although I do not explore ideology in this project due to my focus on affective dimensions, it is a integral dimension for understanding the psychosocial aspects of how environmental issues are negotiated.

these same objects needing 'repair' are also associated with objects that are 'repairing'—while industry may degrade and damage valued ecosystems and recreational opportunities, or quality of life (e.g. clean air and water), it is also life-giving (e.g. livelihood) and benevolent (provider of community resources and prosperity). As Freud (1917) argues, the "conflict of ambivalence" is a precondition for melancholia; and melancholia as response to loss presents profound implications for capacities for action and engagement, let alone effective and constructive responses to environmental degradation. As I argue below and in the next chapter, until we take account of the ambivalence and melancholia that may run throughout these complex relations, conceptualisations of environmental engagement and advocacy in terms of values, behaviour and attitudes are partial and only go so far; if ambivalence contributes to a melancholic response in which mourning is impeded, the ongoing efforts for mobilising reparations will be thwarted, as long as communications stimulate defensive strategies. We need to understand—as communicators and educators, primarily—how to facilitate reparation, but in order to, we must understand the processes of ambivalence and how contradictions are psychically managed (and defended).

I begin the chapter with a discussion of *melancholia, ambivalence* and splitting (as a schizoid defence) of objects, notably in the context of the place (Green Bay), industry and environmental conditions. To illustrate these processes, I discuss the tendency across the interviews in asserting Green Bay's value as a 'good' place to live (celebrated, abundant and life-giving Green Bay) and its legacy as being the recipient of multiple industrial effects, resulting in serious air and water quality issues and degradation of aquatic systems locally and linking up with the Great Lakes ecosystems ('bad' or abject, spoiled, mistreated Green Bay). Green Bay, primarily the Fox River and the surrounding waterways, tends to be split into a good object and a bad object alternately, and appears to contain both loving and aggressive tendencies, particularly as reflected in the way its been used by industries. The ambivalent relations suggest powerful affective needs for security, afforded by jobs, home and community, override concurrent and potentially distressing awareness of ecological degradation, resulting in a complex capacity to both recognise issues but choose to focus on the 'goodness' of the place. It is a form of splitting, or creating partial objects that takes place. Further, as Klein argues, the need for security in its various forms harkens to the infantile quest for containment and is one of the driving forces for a return to a site of love and nourishment (Klein, 1964, p. 108). I regard this phenomenon as symptomatic of an ambivalence experienced in relation to local ecology and primarily how industry is perceived and experienced (as both good and bad objects).[75] Following the

[75] In the final chapter, I suggest psychic and social guilt associated with ecological degradation, as consequences of human practices both local and systemic, plays a large role in the capacities for both

discussion of Green Bay as 'good and bad object', I focus on degrees of ambivalence and conflict in relation to causality of environmental health issues and the presence of toxins and risk in the immediate environment; a simultaneous recognition of, and denial, of industry's complicity in ill effects. Below, I suggest this ambivalence constitutes a much broader ideological dimension of how industry is simultaneously celebrated, protected, blamed, hated and loved.

Melancholia and ambivalence

In *Mourning and Melancholia* (1917), Freud discusses the processes surrounding what he terms 'melancholia' as opposed to 'mourning'. These distinctions have relevance for our discussion. As is the case in most psychoanalytic thought, the lost object-choice with libidinal attachment as described by Freud is invariably a human being; however I want to argue that the processes described may allow a glimpse of insight into how the loss of affectively invested, non-human objects are managed and negotiated. As noted in the previous chapter, the participants related losses of certain qualities or associations, losses of specific places and sites, loss of aspects of the self, or loss of expectations and hopes. I want to employ Freud's thought regarding mourning and melancholia and his suggestion of *ambivalence* as central in how loss is psychically managed, in the service of understanding how participants are negotiating these specific losses; furthermore, Klein's work on the depressive position and reparation places ambivalence as central for both the achievement of constructive, creative acts, or as a factor in the development of the melancholic disposition (Klein, 1935; Klein, 1940). What is at stake are how losses are managed and processed unconsciously, and what the expressions of ambivalence towards certain objects may tell us about reparative capacities and expressions in the participants.

Matters of love and hate

Ambivalence matters for how melancholia is understood, as Freud articulated, in the coexistence of love and hate (or aggression) towards the lost object; this can lead to unconscious guilt that leads to the lost object as being introjected, and internalised in the subject. It is as if the self has become fused with the lost object. In the case of industrial ecological issues, object relations appear similarly complicated; while natural damage may be experienced as a loss, the causes (industry) are also identified with benefit or surplus. We partake of the fruits of industry whilst we may experience sadness or longing for the losses it incurs. As discussed, I found strong affective themes throughout the participants' interviews regarding specific environments, such as affection, longing, even love or tenderness. This presence of loving affect was

recognition and active engagement, e.g. reparation.

surprising to me given the lack of external, recognisable expressions of reparation towards the lost objects, e.g. participating in environmental restoration activities, being involved with conservation practices, or even the simple act of ensuring one is knowledgeable and aware of the range of issues confronting the local aquatic and air quality systems. In addition to narratives of affection for the local area, however, I also found contradictory sentiments and observations, leading me to consider and observe a certain *ambivalence* regarding Green Bay and its local area, including the industry which has both provided for its communities (jobs, schools, etc) and degraded the local waterways. Ambivalence is conceptualised as simultaneously held, competing or opposing affective investments, thoughts or feelings, such as the classic example of 'love and hate' experienced towards one's parents or the breast (Freud, 1926; Klein, 1935). In many ways ambivalence characterises the mood or tenor with which participants tended to relate with Green Bay, the local industry and the local environments. On the one hand, they may openly express disgust and shock towards the level of local water and air pollution; on the other, they may quickly shift modes and either backtrack, contradict themselves, or provide excuses or rationales for the very issues they had just been expressing unhappiness over. It was difficult to obtain a 'straight' and simple narrative with regard to the local environment; in this sense there seemed to be considerable movement across the interviews around the topics of environmental issues and quality, shifting from a subject position of blame to victim to disengaged citizen.[76] These subject positions are reflected in statements such as "I don't know how they could let this happen", "Green Bay is a good place to live", and "I guess I see it [industry] as a necessary evil". Such positions are also reflected in the ambivalent feelings towards environmental health concerns that are initially acknowledged, then disavowed, acknowledged again, and so forth (discussed below).

Freud conceptualises ambivalence as a condition for the development of melancholia, in suggesting it is the complex and unresolved object relations (of coexisting love and aggression, or love and hate) that can impede or interfere with the mourning process (1917). Such complications can lead to the introjection of the lost object, resulting in a sort of 'stasis' in which the lost object is never adequately mourned, but carried around internally, as if 'dead inside'—suggesting an element of numbing, disassociation and being 'cut off' in melancholia. We also see this conceptualisation in his short essay *On Transience* written a year prior to *Mourning and Melancholia*, discussed in Chapter 3, in which the observer in the garden is unable to partake of the beauty as it is experienced as 'already dead'; thus affective investments are not

[76] By 'movement' I suggest the dynamics of how certain feelings or assertions would literally shift and 'move' either within one interview or across the three, providing a discernable pattern of approach and withdrawal from certain topics. I suspect this quality of 'movement' or dancing around certain issues, and what I experienced as a melancholic mood, may have contributed to the difficulty I found in writing up the analysis, and the 'resistance' I was feeling.

allowed to flourish, and reparative impulses are stunted (1916). We can see here in Freud's thinking and progression the fact that melancholia does not solely relate to loss of human relationships, as is commonly interpreted, but may include other forms of deep, and often profound, inchoate object and identity loss.[77] Freud discusses how in melancholia, the occasions which give rise to the "illness" often extends beyond the clear case of a death, and can "include all those situations of being slighted, neglected or disappointed, which can import opposed feelings of love and hate into the relationship or reinforce an already existing ambivalence" (1917, p. 211). He continues, "This conflict due to ambivalence, which sometimes arises more from real experiences, sometimes more from constitutional factors, must not be overlooked among the preconditions for melancholia" (ibid.). There are a few key points in this passage to direct our attention to; firstly, that melancholia can be triggered by *situations* as opposed to direct and specific losses, e.g. the death of a loved one. These 'situations' include slights, neglect and disappointments, which can "import opposed feelings of love and hate" or strengthen an existing ambivalent relation. This distinction suddenly widens the view in terms of what can be considered loss, and what may trigger or reinforce the experience of ambivalence. Common to slights, neglect and disappointments is the loss of an expectation; a condition of deprivation, of not having ones needs adequately met. Significantly Freud articulates such situations as forms of loss, as linked with mourning but arrested, stuck in the "conflict of ambivalence" (1917). In this sense, the ambivalence can seemingly fracture or divert psychic energies in terms of adequately processing a loss; recognizing its existence, its source, and coming to terms with it in the eventual "work of mourning". In melancholia, ambivalence towards the loss can divert the sense of anger, hate or resentment towards the external object inward, so that the love and hate presumably felt towards the lost object, or situations, is internalized. The external lost object is 'rescued' from the wrath or anger, and it is thus turned inward with its aura of longing, "pining" (Klein, 1940, p. 151). The result is a narcissistic, inwardly directed impoverishment, unresolved and static. In the extreme sense, it is as if the individual has internalized the dead or lost object; in the context of this discussion, we can view the sense of flattened affect, a lack of engagement with the issues as possible expressions of this unresolved loss. Most significantly, grievances experienced as a result of the loss, or the disappointment (e.g. contaminated water, the pollution of a beach, the muck of algae) are not directed outwardly, but rather remain private, interior and contribute to a subjectivity which may be incapable of action or repair.

[77] I proceed here with caution, in recognizing the potential dilemmas of importing clinically-based, psychoanalytic concepts to psychosocial phenomena, such as how environmental losses and degradations are processed. However, Freud's work on melancholia does present several compelling insights into what may be traced as a *form* of melancholia, specifically concerning the ways in which libidinal attachments are withdrawn, and the lost 'objects' or occasions of loss are internalised.

The second point made in the excerpt above relevant for understanding aspects of environmental losses is ambivalence as a *precondition* for melancholia. This suggests something quite central and fundamental about the way in which ambivalence can thwart, impede or otherwise complicate how loss and related 'situations' are processed and negotiated. Why would ambivalence be a "precondition for melancholia"? It is suggested that the experience of both hate and love for the object can arouse intolerable guilt, which is then directed inwardly and makes it impossible to withdraw the "libidinal" affective investments that can foster mourning. In order to mourn, as Freud points out, the subject needs to be able to recognise the loss, make it 'real' through reality testing of the absence, in order for the psyche to reorganise accordingly. If there is an unclear origin of the loss as suggested in the previous chapter, it may not be possible to undertake the 'work of mourning' which is the basis for action, repair and creativity. The ambivalence may so acute as to constitute guilt for the hatred or resentment towards the object (e.g. nature, industry, Green Bay, family, parents, government), producing psychic conflict. I explore in the following discussions how ambivalence in relation to specific grievances or issues surfaced in the interviews, and reflect on how this may constitute a form of *melancholic* subjectivity that can impede or impair what would be seen as viable and active engagement with the issues. There is not necessarily a lack of concern, anxiety or awareness about these specific issues; rather there is a 'dance' taking place, suggesting some form of conflict or ambivalence occurring. I explore these topics through the themes of how Green Bay is perceived as both 'good' and 'bad', site of good objects and bad objects, and ambivalence around industry and in particular its connection with illness and health risks.

I began engaging with the concept of 'splitting' in relation to how these environmental objects are related with, in realising through the analysis that in fact how people are relating with the river, Green Bay, industry, the paper mills, seemed to be constituted of quite distinct states that are dissociated mentally from each other, or 'split'. Trying to illustrate ambivalence is actually difficult as it is an internal state, however splitting can be identifiable in narrative discourses more easily in terms of noting how the same object is referred to alternately in very different terms. That said, I felt there was 'ambivalence' with regard to industry as a whole, and in how the same objects that are loved are also potentially hated, e.g. Victoria, Jeff and Sally acknowledge illness or health issues but find excuses for causality, as if they are protecting a loved object from abuse or hatred. Instead, it appears the object of hate is internalised, as Freud articulates in melancholia, leading to a withdrawal of anger, protest, and 'agency' that may otherwise be anticipated. In the following sections I present examples illustrating the ambivalence and splitting I found during the interviews. As I discuss in the following chapter, the ambivalence running through

relations with nature and industry (as good and bad objects, as benevolent and punishing, as contaminated and spoiled, pristine and pure) may provide important clues as to the arresting of reparative impulses, or what Winnicott refers to as the basis for concern.

Green Bay: Good object and bad object

There seems little question, at this juncture in the thesis, that how people relate and perceive their local environment, and the ills caused by industry is extremely complex. In contrast to a stance perhaps more aligned with a 'paranoid-schizoid' position in which the world may appear as quite black and white, in the interview data I found degrees of nuance and complexity with regard to how both the place and its industry (and degradation) are experienced. Initially this suggested either splitting or disavowal; there was the capacity to switch modes between viewing Green Bay as a polluted and even abject site (e.g. Jeff and Sally's "shock" at the water pollution when moving from Sheboygan), and viewing it as a 'good object' full of nourishment and provider (not unlike a benevolent father, or a loving mother). The object in this case has multiple dimensions. However on further examination, it is not entirely clear if what is taking place is 'splitting' or a capacity to hold opposing and contradictory feelings and views about the same object, or perhaps more accurately, a capacity to fragment the object into its 'good' and 'bad' qualities which remain separate and concurrent (Klein, 1946). This capacity to see both the 'good' and 'bad' may resemble the 'depressive position' (Klein, 1935) in a mature ability to recognise *both* good and bad aspects; the question remains, however, how this may serve as a basis for active response, specifically to the 'bad' that is being observed and recognised. Regardless of whether the capacity for viewing Green Bay and its environments as 'good□bad' is an instance of splitting, denial or a depressive position capacity, I characterise the relationship with the area, and particularly with industry, as *ambivalent.* Underlying the ambivalence, and most salient to the concerns of this project, is a sense of resignation or complacency that seems to paralyse or neutralise the capacities for repair of the 'bad' qualities, other than the reparative expressions in more intimate, private sphere contexts, as discussed below. Or, it may suggest in the participants a denial of the impulses to make "extensive and detailed reparation because he has had to deny the cause for the reparation, namely the injury to the object and his consequent sorrow and guilt" (Klein, 1940, p. 155).

Green Bay as an external and internal object appears to contain and encompass these respective qualities of good and bad, mutually coexisting. Across the interviews, I found a striking juxtaposition between expressions of affective and attachment with "Green Bay" as a place, a site, a community, with acknowledgement of its pollution, irresponsible industrial practices and environmental quality issues (notably air and

water quality). Jeff, a former nuclear plant manager and boating enthusiast tells me he regards his move to Green Bay from Sheboygan as "one of the best moves of my life", extolling its virtues as a place to raise a family. As he says in the first interview, "Ah, Green Bay is a nice town. I really like it". He mentions its virtues as a place for raising a family, the schools and sense of community. At the same time, he is aware of its chronic pollution problems, concentrated primarily in the Fox River, and chronic air pollution issues (he mentions working in town and not being able to breathe during his lunch break walks due to the stench from emissions). His narrative concerning the move to Green Bay reflects Sally's, who as discussed in Chapter 6 also moved from Sheboygan to Green Bay following childhood:

> The river, when we first moved here, twenty-two years ago, was quite polluted... ah in fact you couldn't see, you know, you couldn't see the bottom. At least now you can see the bottom. They are cleaning it up which is nice... well, (sighs), I think it's EPA. There are all these paper mills up the river, dumping crap, they got them to stop... most of what they are putting in, the sources have pretty much stopped. There are PCBs that are still a problem, especially if you want to eat the fish.

Jeff then mentions the clean-up efforts:

> They are talking about pumping sediments out of the bottom of the river to clean it up. Which would be really nice. If it was really clear it would be really, really nice, it would be a lot more usable for recreation, I mean people are still fishing out there, I'm not sure I'd eat any of the fish. They do. I like looking at it... like, like I say when the water was higher I'd take that little sailboat I have out here, and sail up and down the river... it, ah, I don't know, I think it's, it's nice.

At the end of our first interview, Jeff continues to talk about his appreciation for the Fox River Trail, which runs directly behind his house, as being a "neat" mix of industry and nature: "If you get south, just, well by the reformatory, you're out in the middle of the woods, in the woods someplace, you know. Which is kind of neat, I think. The contrast of industry and population and non-population". The comments about the Fox River Trail are resonant of sentiments across the interview regarding this pathway, although few people actually used it much; however it seemed to be regarded as a civic feature of some kind.[78] At the end of the second interview, as I was leaving the house again, Jeff said it was interesting that I had asked him why

[78] The Fox River Trail, as I discuss in the *Afterword*, as an object itself reflects and performs complex relations towards the water and industry; as a stretch of walkway running alongside the Fox River, it both faces and celebrates industry, and at the same time is a natural feature (e.g. as the name 'trail' would indicate, as opposed to walkway or path).

they chose to stay in Green Bay despite its polluted condition—a question I had never actually addressed to him. This 'imagined' question suggested to me that our conversation about the pollution in Green Bay had stimulated an internal process of questioning or reflecting on why they would stay in a place that he has acknowledged was polluted and whose waterways they could not use (in contrast to Sheboygan, where Jeff was very active with racing boats). In the third interview, I mentioned the fact he had presumed a question posed to him that I had not actually asked, and asked him what he made of that.

> I must have asked myself... why would I ask myself that question. I guess talking about, you know the environment, and I thought about some days you couldn't breathe, and some days the water was so bad it looked like you could walk on it ... And I guess I asked myself why did I stay in an environment like that. And I guess the other things that were going on here, overcame that. [.] I mean the university here, ah, well I went out there for several years. I had gone to school before, but I never finished, so I started going part-time here. Ah. I guess the assets outnumbered the bad parts. Because otherwise why would a person stay. I mean why do coal miners keep going down that hole (laughing), just do I guess. So I don't know.

As someone who refrains from any environmental activism, it is important to recognise Jeff's simultaneous awareness of local ecological issues, including visceral experiences of polluted water and air, and his appreciate for the 'good' qualities that he seems to feel outweigh the 'bad'. In his way he is able to appreciate the river despite its abject pollution and (as Donald also recounts), takes some pleasure in reporting his observations of the water becoming clearer on his walks on the Fox River Trail. In imagining my question regarding his decision to stay in Green Bay despite its pollution, he presents the contradiction and complexity of this dilemma beautifully in his example of the coal miner, going down into the hole. His laughter signifies the lack of words to articulate what appears as an incoherent situation: the act of willingly going down into "that hole", which he is likening to his arrival to Green Bay.

Yet, throughout the interviews it is clear Green Bay has afforded Jeff remarkable opportunities in terms of personal development and career challenge, as he thoroughly enjoys learning new skills and was able to be a part of a large-scale nuclear power plant construction project as a project manager. Even in the case of the nuclear plant, Jeff brings his concerns and sentiments together in an unlikely combination in writing an in-depth report on the plant (which he lovingly displayed and provided a copy for me, dug out of the attic) for his environmental studies course at the University of Wisconsin in Green Bay (UWGB), one of the first universities in the United States to offer environmental studies (see Appendix G, Jeff's papers as 'objects'). His pride from his involvement in the power plant is palpable and he

regards the experience as a highlight of his professional career. In his work on the plant, Jeff was forced in some ways to background his environmental concerns, as he alludes to in the final interview; when discussing environmental engagement, he notes that he would not "be quiet" in the context of his workplace, but that he learned over time that it was important to know when to speak out and when not to. For example, in discussing how certain environmental issues effect him emotionally, he responds, "Well I'd just, it's like, ah, today's world I mean if you think about the war or other things that aren't going right, you think about our political situation, I mean it's depressing, what do you do you do what you can, influence what you can and other than that you have to go on with your life. It's like a lot of things. Ah. We had an issue that came up, ah years ago, EMF or electromagnetic fields on high voltage lines, I don't know if you are familiar with that at all", and continues with a long story about an uncle who had been involved with research on electronic long wave risks. The point of the story being the importance of being aware of risks, even if they may not be certain; he then relates this to his experiences working on the nuclear plant project:

> When we were arguing that point, ah, I made myself heard, that at least let's acknowledge that there is something there, and we're looking at it. And do look at it. Which they did and I don't—and again I doubt if it's just cause they were listening to me, but I was one of those, who was saying. And that was not in my realm of work field at all, but I did... maybe that's why they stuck me in Antigo for the last three years! (Laughs.)[79]

In certain respects Jeff reflects a particular subject position in which environmental concern—in the Winnicottian sense of having a sense of moral responsibility—is present but expressed in quite specific channels, as is the case throughout the participants in the study. I want to argue that in fact the processes of splitting or capacities for regarding the positive and negative attributes of particular objects, such as the water and environment in Green Bay as both life-giving and risky, appear to work in concert with the channelling and expression of environmental concern in particular ways. It may be necessary to 'split' objects in order to then live with and manage environmental concern in ways that are expressed in very particular formations (e.g. boating as culturally and socially sanctioned, but being outspoken politically as not). The splitting then is not only in relation to how objects are related with, but reflect

[79] As Jeff wrote to me later by email, "The city I was transferred to the last 3 years of my career is Antigo. It is located in north central Wisconsin, kinda in the middle of nowhere. It is a city of about 8,000 people with potato farms around it and the Wisconsin 'north woods' north of it" (23 November 2009). It was considered by Jeff to be a sort of cultural 'backwater' in contrast to Green Bay. Thus he jokes his being transferred to Antigo in response to his being quite outspoken, particularly concerning the public's right to know about risks associated with the nuclear plant.

internal forms of splitting and disassociation as well—from self-states of deep concern, love, care and creativity that may not have adequate outlets, or as Winnicott may say, opportunities for "contributing-to".

The Snoopy fishing pole: Scott and staying connected with the 'good'

Scott's narratives about his perceptions and relations with the local environment, as both loved and recognised as slightly damaged (perhaps as a loved but slightly pitied relative) illustrate the ways in which water can be viewed as good and bad, but also the sense of possibility that 'bad water' can be turned into 'good water'. Scott was a thirty-one year old when I interviewed him, and the father of a small girl he was looking after during my visits. He and his partner lived in a small modest home, both of them doing shift schedules, so they could take turns looking after the baby, but having limited time together. He worked a shift schedule for a packaging plant, so he was able to meet with me in the afternoons before he would leave for work. His father had been in the United States Air Force and the family moved around the United States frequently until Scott was thirteen, when they settled in the Green Bay region. Through the G.I. Bill, his father received a degree in communications; however as Scott points out employment opportunities were limited at that time, so he ended up training as an electrician and currently works in the maintenance department at a local hospital. His mother aged fifty-one years, who had not worked while he grew up, was due the following week to receive a college degree. In the first interview, about halfway through, we begin discussing his feelings about Green Bay and the water. As with Howard, Scott tells me with some pride about someone he knows who moves away to a supposedly more desirable place, only to return. It seems important to emphasise Green Bay here as 'good', a common tendency in many first interviews:

S: Well, living in Green Bay, you know I've, I've heard some from many people that have lived here, moved away and came back that this is such a great area, you know that, not so much that, I, I know somebody who lived in Florida, came here, went back to Florida and then came back, you know just because they, they like the area so much.
R: And what is it-
S: Um I think it's, I, I, I think you know, overall you know, like um, the quality of jobs that are available, I mean the pretty good economy. Um, the friendliness of the people. That, that goes a long way. Um, [...] you know, yeah, I'd like to say climate but you know [..] There's much better places than Green Bay if you want to talk climate. (We both laugh.) But [..], yeah, it, it's...

Scott is refers to human qualities, friendliness and the economy, as the positive attributes, downplaying the non-human environment (e.g. the climate).[80] I ask him to expand on how the local water influences his experiences of the place.

R: Do you think the water adds to this area?
S: Well definitely, um [..], if it wasn't for the water, um, wouldn't have any of the paper industry that is growing up and built the economy. You know because you need water for the paper making process. Um, and, and you know, historically you know, people are always drawn to where water is. Um, so, ah [...], it, it, it's a good thing to be near water, you know because, you know when, when ah, Green Bay was first starting out everybody got their water from the river, you know a hundred and thirty, a hundred and fifty years ago [..] And then, when they started going more to the ground water and, which is better, and, and now, now, you know there's a big push not too long ago for, and everybody is getting their water either from the bay and getting it treated or...yeah, um, there's a coalition of gover-, governments around the area that are piping water from Manitowoc, so,) so, so it's getting treated, Manitowoc and getting piped here so... [...] I, I, I, I think that, you know, [paused] you know water is important to life, I mean we're, what seventy-percent water? So, yeah [...] What was your question? (Laughing.)

Here Scott relates a somewhat incoherent string of associations with water, ending with a moment of dissociation ("What was your question?"), which also occurred when Howard spoke of swimming in the river, and when Sally was speaking about the contaminated water. Scott's free associations suggest the connection with industry, water and its "importance to life", bringing it back to the human body. If it was not for the water, there would be no paper mill and industry that supports the economy; however if not for industry there would be no need to treat the water from the Bay and pipe in drinking water from elsewhere. Scott is aware of the interconnected nature of the Great Lakes and the relation of Green Bay with the Great Lakes, and at the same time is able to both celebrate the local economy and acknowledge the water as both 'good' and 'bad' object, preferring to focus on it being 'good'. In the passage below he describes water as calming, and how he is able to enjoy the "glitter of light" on the Fox River, and the fog rising in the early mornings, without distinguishing between industrial and more 'natural' areas. He does not wish to split the object in this way; rather he is able to hold simultaneously conflicting or different affective relations with the water; calming and pleasure, but also "dirty". He then mentions the "Snoopy pole" as a 'good object' from his own childhood, which he wishes to pass

[80] Note the contrast to Heather's experience of Green Bay as unfriendly, and therefore unhomely; see Chapter 7.

on to his daughter; the 'good' in this case subsumes any 'bad' qualities that may be present.

> S: I, I think you know, being that it's calming, you know, being that it's pretty, you know, no matter what time of the year there's always something neat to look at...
> R: Everywhere, or certain parts of it?
> S: Yeah, pretty much anywhere. You know, well, downtown, it's so industrialized you know but its still, there's still, you know it, when the light hits it just right you know, you can get all the glitter of light coming off [..] I, you know, if, if, things were cleaned up and you know wouldn't think of it as a dirty river you know. [...] Um, we would, yeah, I don't know if we would do anymore recreation on it than we do [..] You know, just because you know, you know boats can be really expensive. But you know, taking walks along the ah, Fox River Trail or over at Boerger Park [Sp?] you know, yeah, well we do that now, but you know, maybe do a little fishing you know, that would be a little more fun. You know, I, I'd love to teach my daughter how to fish eventually. You know. Everybody's got to start out with a Snoopy pole some time. (Laughing.)

As Bollas writes, "The object world is, in many respects, a lexicon for self experience, to the extent that the selection of objects is often a type of self utterance" (1992, p. 30). The Snoopy fishing pole is a particularly poignant invocation, bringing together childhood associations with the centrality of fishing in his family (despite the fact that, although he seems either unaware or disavowing, the fish caught in any waters near Green Bay are potentially contaminated). Objects can hold both positive and negative qualities, can 'contain' (and thus evoke) aspects of the self and experiences we wish to protect, savour or disown. Green Bay on the whole strong *positive object* for Scott, providing essential needs such as "friendliness" (love and affection) and work (security). Affectively and discursively, there is little space for the 'bad' qualities, similar with Sally and her need to put aside the experience of Green Bay as flawed in any way, despite her ongoing acknowledgement of its serious ecological issues.[81] It is not a denial, but a capacity for *splitting* off good and bad qualities so the good object is not contaminated; it is as if there are multiple lenses held simultaneously that do not seem to interfere with one another.

To perhaps put into context Scott's ambivalence surfacing around industry and the water, we need to attend to the positive affective qualities conveyed in the interviews. For Scott, having been moved around frequently as a child, *home, security* and a sense of *belonging* is a central theme, and he spends much time discussing the minutiae of his domestic situation in Green Bay; how he and his partner had been

[81] As discussed in Chapter 6, I argue Sally's position is informed by perceived sense of powerlessness and the inherited familial emphasis on adaptation and adjustment.

displaced from an apartment building so it could be renovated into an assisted living development, and although speaking lightly of it, they were essentially forced to leave along with some residents who had been living in the building for decades (including a ninety-one year-old, he notes with irony). The ability to purchase a small, modest home was a huge achievement, and he enjoys telling me about all of their work involved with the house, particularly extensive renovations done by Scott and his friends. In this sense, they were able to make the house 'their own' and had strong affective investments in the home itself, similar to the way Victoria invested reparative energies into the home, as a site for modification and reflection (and expression) of herself. As with Howard, who lived with his parents as long as feasibly possible, Scott stayed living with his parents until he was in his early twenties; he was forced to move when his partner told him, "I can't marry you unless you move out on your own". While Scott jokes and laughs often, I sense in the narratives a distress around the frequent moves in childhood, but an inhibition to express (or consciously feel) this distress. For example, he recounts the time when they were living in Utah, and his affection for the landscape: "You know and I, I always remember looking at that, and especially you know, in, in the early evening when it would turn orange and purple in colours you know, my mom said she would just catch me just staring up at the mountains. [..] And then the move back, you know it's, I'm, the way I look at it now is that, you know I was like, 'okay, we're going somewhere else', [higher pitch voice] you know, left a few friends behind and, but didn't really bother me [..] You know because I was going somewhere else [uses a higher pitch]".

The ambivalence noted in how environmental issues are negotiated seem related with the priority and focus on issues of security. The first verbal association Scott makes with Green Bay in the first interview is with the local economy. This is significant, for as Klein points out in her discussion of livelihood and security, "The satisfaction of our self-preservation needs and the gratification of our desire for love are forever linked up with each other, because they are first derived from one and the same source". She continues, "Security attained by satisfaction of our essential requirements is therefore linked up with emotional security, and both are all the more needed because they counteract the early fears of losing the beloved mother" (Klein 1964, p. 108). The point being, that Scott's prioritization of the local economy and the ability to work and afford a home reigns affectively significant and may serve to elide or override other, less desirable qualities or traits. In actuality Scott demonstrates in the interviews a surprisingly level of environmental literacy, as with many of the participants, thereby dispelling a potential misconception that he either is not aware or 'doesn't care'; but how this is negotiated in relation with additional, admittedly complex variables, is what needs our attention. (As discussed below in 3.1, he made a foray into an environmental activity at age twelve, through contacting Greenpeace,

which was frustrated and foreclosed any further attempts for 'contributing-to' environmental groups.)

In Scott's interviews, the affect of loss or mourning is not explicitly expressed or conveyed initially until the second and third interviews; however the experiences of loss, via frequent relocations as a child until age thirteen, likely inform his mode of relating with his current residence. Through a 'jolly' affective exterior, there is an avoidance of negative or mournful affect. He seems genuinely happy and at peace with his life and circumstances. There are hints of recognition of a reality which could be improved: the water would be seen as "less dirty" if cleaned up, which may afford him and his family more opportunities for recreation and enjoyment of it. With regard to the river and the water, there appears to be ambivalence in how it's viewed as both 'good' and 'bad', glittering and dirty. In our final interview, I revisit the topic of his feelings of sadness regarding the compromised water quality in the region, and we see the refrain echoed across the interviews:

> You know and [..] you know shrimp isn't from around here so but still it mean, everything is [..] you know, ev, everything is affected by pollution somewhere. You know, and around here is ah little different than [.] you know in the middle of the ocean because I think it's a little more concentrated around here. Because of the [.] overly industrialized area we have. But you know it, it's what the economy was built on. You know, it mean Green Bay is the number one toilet paper producer in the world. So it mean it's [..] that accounts for a lot of things. You know and [..] generally sometimes when you have [.] progress you have you know ya, there, there's a cost to that [..] be it you know, monetary or government or [..] Or ah, [.] environment.

At one point in the interview Scott acknowledges sadness about the water quality issues; as do all of the participants at one point or another in the interviews. The sadness about the environmental issues, that Victoria expresses as acute 'disappointment', mainly in herself for "choosing to come here", and Sally expresses as disappointment in others for allowing it to get "so bad", is continually tempered with the need to highlight and 'defend' the good qualities brought by the same industry responsible for degradation and the losses as registered in the interviews. Industry may be seen as a "necessary evil", but what is the affective function of this sentiment; what does it perform affectively, psychically and ultimately, politically? This stance may be viewed as an expression of the 'depressive position', the capacity to integrate both the 'good' and 'bad' qualities in the particular object (e.g. mother, industry, Green Bay), depress the anxieties experienced by the potential loss or absence of the object, and employ the sense of guilt towards our potential harm to the object towards a grounded and mature basis of concern and reparation, even creativity. And yet, if this is the case, would we not be able to observe more evidence of reparation and creativity, in the

form of active attempts to make right, repair and contribute to the environment that has been so degraded? For this reason, we must appreciate the form of splitting that appears to be taking place, a process that seems to neutralize any prospect for further involvement or sense of concern for the environment. In order to act on concern and view the environment as an object requiring intervention, restoration, protection, repair, or contributions in some way, there would need to be the recognition of some harm or damage that has taken place.

This is where the participants consistently stop short; they come close to signalling their distress over the environment—indeed their participation in the interviews signalled some sort of affective investment—but withdraw when it approaches what may seem as a critique, or anger towards industry itself. In this sense we need to look again at Freud's insights into melancholia and the role of ambivalence, and the inability to express hate or anger towards the loved object, that can arrest mourning, when mourning may be the most constructive response to loss. Industry has seemed to taken the role of the 'father' who is both beneficent and brutalising; it may arouse too much guilt to confront the transgressions of the providing father figure, who has made Green Bay "what it is". As Scott notes, "it's what the economy was built on". As the economy is security, and as Klein notes, security takes us back to our hunger for the sense of complete love and protection from the mother, we may begin to appreciate what is actually at stake in making environmental redress in this region. However, Klein points out the interaction between the aggressive impulses and the libidinal ones: "The course of libidinal development is thus at every step stimulated and reinforced by the drive for reparation, and ultimately by the sense of guilt" (Klein, 1945, p. 410). Reparation is a result of the confluence of the opposing instinctual drives, rather than merely a displacement of an impulse on to some socially acceptable representative (Hinshelwood, 1989, p. 414). For Klein, reparation is the cornerstone of the maturational processes that forge a way out of the depressive position. In these cases we see profound ambivalence and inability to 'make reparation' towards the environment; however we need to examine the issue more closely in terms of both Freudian melancholia—an arrestment of mourning and paralysis—and Winnicott's concept of contributing-to, as signalling environmental contexts as providing a home for reparative potentials. As Winnicott expands the basis for reparation to include concern and creativity, 'contributing-to', for both Klein and Winnicott there is the need to have integrated or tolerated aggressive and destructive capacities. It is when such impulses (or 'instincts') are not tolerated (by the mother) that guilt may become so overwhelming as to impair capacities for concern. In the case of the local industry, which has both provided jobs, the civic economic base and international cache as a paper processing empire, it is the destructive capacities that are not necessarily fully addressed. The consequences are felt, observed, even in some cases, experienced as

illness; however there remains deep ambivalence in the ability to come to terms with, and thus potentially grieve and mourn, the impacts of the local industry. Perhaps not surprisingly, this capacity is displaced and projected on to environmental advocates and scientists, who thus 'hold' these experiences and are able to mourn, grieve and ultimately make certain reparations to the ecological systems. As we see below, environmental engagement is cordoned off as a zone for others, and constructed as constituting those who see the world in black and white; indeed, what Klein would refer to as the paranoid-schizoid position, mobilizing manic defences.

Disappointment and the melancholia of illness

Related to ambivalence and difficulty in expressing genuine distress towards those who have despoiled or degraded the local ecologies, is the way in which environmental health issues are discussed in the interviews. In the context of health, we also see, in the example of Victoria below, the articulation of 'disappointment', a common response to environmental issues. Disappointment is a variation on the melancholic theme, and suggests a lack of options for agency or action. In disappointment, the locus of accountability is both external and internal; it is directed outwardly but also inwardly, as if one must assume some measure of responsibility and guilt for risks. For several participants, various health issues are either actively present or are discussed. In some cases the participants allude to health issues as linked with the environment. The way in which the illnesses were articulated, however, reflected a dance around issues of causality. Most often there would be mention of a particular illness or health issue, a light suggestion of its being caused by local pollution or environment, and then a retraction and possibly a movement forward again. In this sense it appeared as a 'dance' around the issue and an inability to make the connection consciously and emotionally. It seemed there was a considerable level of ambivalence regarding the sources and causes of the issues; this registered, affectively for myself in listening to the accounts, as a need to protect a beloved object, from attack or blame. There was a process of internalisation to protect the external object, in this case the region, industry, the city, from attack. This could be viewed in the cases of Howard and his contracting Hepatitis, Victoria and the respiratory infections experienced by family members, and Sally's discussion of the water contamination.

I first noticed the capacity for both acknowledging and disavowing industrial causes for health problems during the interviews with Victoria. When asking Victoria to free associate about Green Bay in our first interview, she first mentions the health effects:

> I know that when we first [.] came here, [.] we felt healthier before we came here. [.] I, my kids never had sinus infections, um, my older daughter never

had an ear infection, in fact we moved to Green Bay when my younger daughter was just two- two weeks old. And I don't know how old she was, if she was five months old or what, she wouldn't sleep laying down, the only time she would sleep would be if I would hold her. And, you know being a new, um, new mom, but just having the baby, I was tired too. Felt really frustrated and I took her to the doctor and the doctor said, M'aam, your daughter has an ear infection. And I just kind of looked at him and said my kids don't get ear infections! But she had probably three of them, as an infant... and then it seemed my husband would get sinus infections and we had never experienced that before. And lots of people would say, 'Welcome to Green Bay', they really felt the paper industries had, had a big effect on that.

During the third (and final) interview, however, Victoria has retreated from acknowledging the environmental effects on their health. In the following excerpt, I have asked Victoria to reflect on what she had meant in the previous interview when she said she felt "disappointment" about the various water quality issues in the region.

What is the disappointment [...] Somewhat in ourselves, that you know, we made this choice, to come here. And then we find out that you know, it is like this. You would hope for better, you would hope that, you know that the air would be pure and the water would be pristine and, and, that you were not somehow endangering your, yours or your children's health or safety.

Um. [...] Disappointed that somehow, along the lines, sss- somebody allowed this [.] condition to come about, and it wasn't always that way, um, so disappointed, um, unfortunate, were my feelings, and then when, when unfortunate things happen, you just do your best, to [..] combat that. [..] and I, you know the water thing was easily remedied, with um, water systems, or buying, buying water. And the air issues [.] don't cause, uh, daily irritation, it's not like, it's not like these problems that we've had have been chronic, its just things that we have not experienced before, and now are and I suppose I can say that there is no guarantee that that is what did cause it. I mean for my husband and I we can just say we are getting older and our immune systems aren't as good and your health isn't as good as when you were younger. Disappointed when you are making a change in your life, and you're buying a new home [...] there is such excitement about it, and it's kind of a, [.] let down, when you find out you've got water in the basement, it's like oh I just got this new house that I think is perfect- and it's not. And I guess that's the same way in our world, you want it to be perfect but it's not.

Victoria's narrative of disappointments, both in themselves and others, signals the psychic processes of melancholic "pining", acute disappointment and the capacity to internalise this disappointment; Victoria cannot remain disappointed or angry for long towards others (e.g. those responsible for the unclear water and air) and directs it towards herself, the sense of guilt quite discernable. It is a narrative of a mother coming to terms with having moved her family to an environment that may pose

health risks. It is also a narrative of lost ideals and the quest for perfection (as discussed in the previous chapter, the loss here is ideal, rather than tangible). You want the world to be perfect, but it's not, she says. As the depressive position marks the capacities for recognizing the world (mother) is not perfect, and indeed is flawed, or absent, it also signals a mourning for the loss of an idealized object. As Klein (1940) has written on "pining" that can arise for the loved object:

> When I first introduced the conception of the depressive position I put forward the suggestion that the introjection of the whole loved object gives rise to concern and sorrow lest that object should be destroyed (by the 'bad' objects and the id), and that these distressed feelings and fears, in addition to the paranoid set of fears and defences, constitute the depressive position. ...
>
> I now propose to use for these feelings of sorrow and concern for the loved objects, the fears of losing them and the longing to regain them, a simple word derived from everyday language—namely the 'pining' for the loved object. In short—persecution (by 'bad' objects) and the characteristic defences against it, on the one hand, and pining for the loved ('good') object, on the other, constitute the depressive position... When the depressive position arises, the ego is forced (in addition to earlier defences) to develop methods of defence which are essentially directed against the 'pining' for the loved object (formerly termed 'manic defences') (p, 151).

In Victoria's case it seems to be for an ideal of perfection; perfect husband, home, life. Particularly striking in Victoria's narrative is the way in which she retracts from her previous statements about the illnesses linked, likely, to the paper industries. It becomes now less focused on the externalities but the interiorities, specifically their immune systems. Victoria displaces her disappointment in the environment and a sense of betrayal (for allowing the environment to become degraded, potentially "used up"), into herself and her husband, e.g. their being older and more vulnerable to illnesses, and questions the link with environmental factors: "I suppose I can say that there is no guarantee that that is what did cause it". Why is Victoria now, in our final meeting, vacillating on her previous assertion of the area as contributing to their respiratory illnesses? I believe Victoria is expressing profound ambivalence towards Green Bay, and their home, as both a loved and hated object. In a sense she has been betrayed and yet she must maintain her affective investments. As Klein notes, when we feel we have been betrayed in terms of loss of livelihood or security, the sense of sorrow can be ever more profound as reflecting the conditions of our earliest experiences, of our needs not having been adequately met (Klein, 1959). The affective tenor of Victoria's narratives, combined with shifting around causality of environmental ills and her actual feelings about these issues suggests a degree of psychic conflict. As a result she pulls away, and focuses on the 'good' as she can, trying to keep out the 'bad'

as reminders of how she has failed to fulfil expectations of the good and perfect life. The decision to focus on the 'good' unless proven otherwise, (e.g. "ignorance is bliss"), is illustrated below in her comments about the drinking water quality. Victoria lives in a region known to have experienced chronic water contamination due to the proximity and practices of local Concentrated Animal Operations (CAO). The following excerpt is from the second interview:

> There have been other communities in surrounding areas that have had severe issues, with farmers. Um. And it's been on the news (tone of voice changes, becomes higher), and you can see them, you know, filling a glass with this filthy looking water, and [.] um, [.] I, there, it's obvious that there's something wrong. I guess if, if our neighbours said they took their water to some lab or some sort, and they knew that there was harmful chemicals in our water, then, I would question ours too. I would say well, we live next door to each other, and if you know that, then maybe we should have our water tested too. I mean maybe ignorance is bliss, but as long as water looks good and tastes good, I think we are alright.

Victoria establishes her parameters clearly in terms of what would be required for alarm, regardless of rationality or logic. (If other communities in surrounding areas have severe issues, then it stands to reason her locality may have similar issues.) We may argue this is a form of defence against the knowledge that would require some form of action or tangible response. As noted the ability to split objects into good and bad qualities and to overlook the 'bad' is central for understanding the appearance of apathy, or a lack of active engagement. In contrast to attributing a lack of engagement with a lack of concern or ignorance, what we may observe in the illustrations provided is the capacity for a simultaneous recognition but refusal to engage any further.

It appears there is a splitting taking place between an idealized object (industry perhaps) and a hated object (illness, infection). As Klein notes, "Idealization is bound up with the splitting of the object, for the good aspects of the breast are exaggerated as a safeguard against the fear of the persecuting breast. While idealization is thus the corollary of persecutory fear, it also springs from the power of the instinctual desires which aim at unlimited gratification, and therefore create the picture of an inexhaustible and always bountiful breast—an ideal breast" (Klein, 1946, p. 182). I want to argue that the splitting taking place in the self and environment, reflected in Green Bay, water and industry, as about preserving certain good and bad aspects, and the ability to gain trust in 'real objects'. Not being reflected in the narratives are levels of care or concern—recognisable as environmental activism or advocacy—as much as the ways objects are split off into ways we can cope with. If we pay attention to the *affective economy* of what is taking place, we may appreciate that in fact certain objects call out, or act upon the participants in complex and different ways. Bollas (1992) notes

how we use objects, but they can also use us; in other words, the degraded or risky environments call forth qualities that cannot be tolerated or processed. In fact what appears to be the case is a strong sense of resignation, of complacency when faced with the evidence and circumstances of loss. The intention is to place this resignation, withdrawal of affect into some semblance of context, psychic, social and environmental, so we can gain a more nuanced understanding of why people withdraw and what practices and techniques may be effective for inspiring or attracting active response and participation, or in Winnicott's words, the impulse and desire for *contribution* to one's environment, with its limits, damage and imperfections.

I argue, based on the data and theoretical analysis, ambivalence is a central factor for conceptualising environmental subjectivity, in light of how we live with, from and in relation with industry. As LaPlanche and Pontalis (1973) note, ambivalence has come to mean broadly in psychoanalytic terms most forms of 'compromise-formation' psychic conflict; however, as they advise, it is important to have "recourse to it only in the analysis of specific conflicts in which the positive and negative components of the negative attitude are simultaneously in evidence and inseparable, and where they constitute a non-dialectical opposition which the subject, saying 'yes' and 'no' at the same time, is incapable of transcending" (p. 28). Viewing ambivalence in this way is not dissimilar to how Klein views instinct as ambivalent from the start: 'love' for the object is inseparable from its destruction, so that ambivalence becomes a quality of the object itself (Klein, 1940). As such an ambivalent object, perfectly benevolent and fundamentally hostile at one and the same time, would be intolerable, and the subject struggles against this predicament by splitting it into a 'good' and 'bad' object. I believe contemporary environmental subjectivity—the experience of, perception and response to chronic, ecological threats and degradation—arouses or evokes a form of "non-dialectical opposition" that produces splitting, and that makes reparations potentially arduous.[82] In other words, experiencing ecological issues, particularly in an industrial region as Green Bay that owes its development and prosperity to highly polluting and resource-intensive industries, can be fraught with contradictions and dilemmas. In this sense environmental discourses perform and produce commensurate subject positions of disassociation and ambivalence; for example, in not acknowledging the paper and ink used for producing campaign materials, the carbon emissions from the computers used for generating online advocacy, and so on. There is a presumed 'out there' from which we speak of environmental issues, and nature itself is cleaved into 'good' and 'bad' nature; the Fox River is an ecosystem, a dumping site, abject, glittering, a gem or place of trauma. It contains

[82] I prefer to avoid the discourse of 'barriers' to reparation as discussed in Chapter 3, and instead view reparation, concern and creativity as processes to 'work through' rather than 'get over or past' (as the semantics of a 'barrier' tends to suggest).

shopping trolleys, PCBs, algae, fish, and mayflies.[83] These constructions of the river depend on particular subject positions, experiences, cultural and social contexts and affective investments; the river *is* both an ecosystem and a waste site. It is both industrial and natural. It makes sense that there are marked narratives of ambivalence in the interviews, with regard to Green Bay, and various negative effects from industry; but where this matters is what the implications are for understanding what is actually required—affectively, practically—for reparative impulses and energies to be tapped or experienced. In the experience of degradation, it is possible the ambivalence leads, as Freud suggests, to a melancholia; this has profound consequences for political engagement.

Foreclosure and the impossibility of mourning

The capacities for mourning environmental object-losses, that are losses of both places and times, are potentially complicated due to both the social and cultural constitution of environmental loss (as incurred through taken-for-granted industrial processes, largely normalized) and the difficulty in symbolically representing such losses. This is to say that environmental loss may be "foreclosed" through what Butler (1997) refers to as "a preemptive loss, a mourning for unlived possibilities" (p. 139). The concept of foreclosure as engaged by Butler (1997, 2003) highlights the psychic implications of losses for which there may quite literally be a lack of symbolic means of representation required for the 'working through' of mourning. In other words, if environmental object-loss, occasioned through degradation or destruction of natural resources of places,

> ...has no public recognition or discourse through which such a loss can be named and mourned, then melancholia takes on cultural dimensions of contemporary consequence (Butler, 1997, p. 139).

For Butler (discussing foreclosure in relation to homosexual objects and aims), foreclosure is a form of "preemptive loss, a mourning for unlived possibilities" (ibid). That is, the very ability to symbolize and thus mourn are "foreclosed", resulting in a particular form of cultural melancholia in which the lost object is internalised. This orientation presents a potentially fruitful way of thinking through the phenomena of environmental grief, loss, mourning and melancholia. Specifically, considerations of foreclosure help us consider environmental loss and degradation as a form of

[83] Mayflies are insects endemic to Green Bay, and belong to the Order Ephemeroptera. They have been placed into an ancient group of insects termed the Palaeoptera, which also contains dragonflies and damselflies. Common names for mayflies include "dayfly", "shadfly", "Green Bay Flies", "lake fly", "fishfly," "midgee", "June bug", and "Canadian Soldier." The mayfly belongs to group *1 taxa*, or pollution—sensitive animals. This means if mayflies are in or around the water, the water should be of a good quality (Staneff-Cline and Neff, *'Born to Swarm'*).

ungrieved and ungrievable loss, a predicament Butler signals (in relation to homosexuality) as involving great difficulty for actual mourning.

Such issues are profoundly complicated by the ways in which the practices of industrialisation are bound up in the rewards, pleasures and 'good objects' of the social and cultural domain. In this sense, Butler's formulation takes us far, but not far enough; she is able to identify an impossibility for grieving and mourning losses for which there are no sanctioned discursive spaces, a loss that remains unnamed and unrecognised. However, this project argues that such losses are registered affectively, even if they are not spoken or named, and there exist sites for symbolising these losses, even if nascent. This is precisely why exploring object relations and specifically how particular objects (in the material sense) may function as transformational object-relations (cf. Bollas), and help us deal with the problem of a foreclosed and disavowed relationality with nature or the ecological object. This very relationality has been 'foreclosed' to a certain degree with industrial processing, a set of practices in which splitting is embedded and contained: nature can be the 'raw stuff' for making goods, whereas there can also be the 'good nature' that is there to enjoy and appreciate.

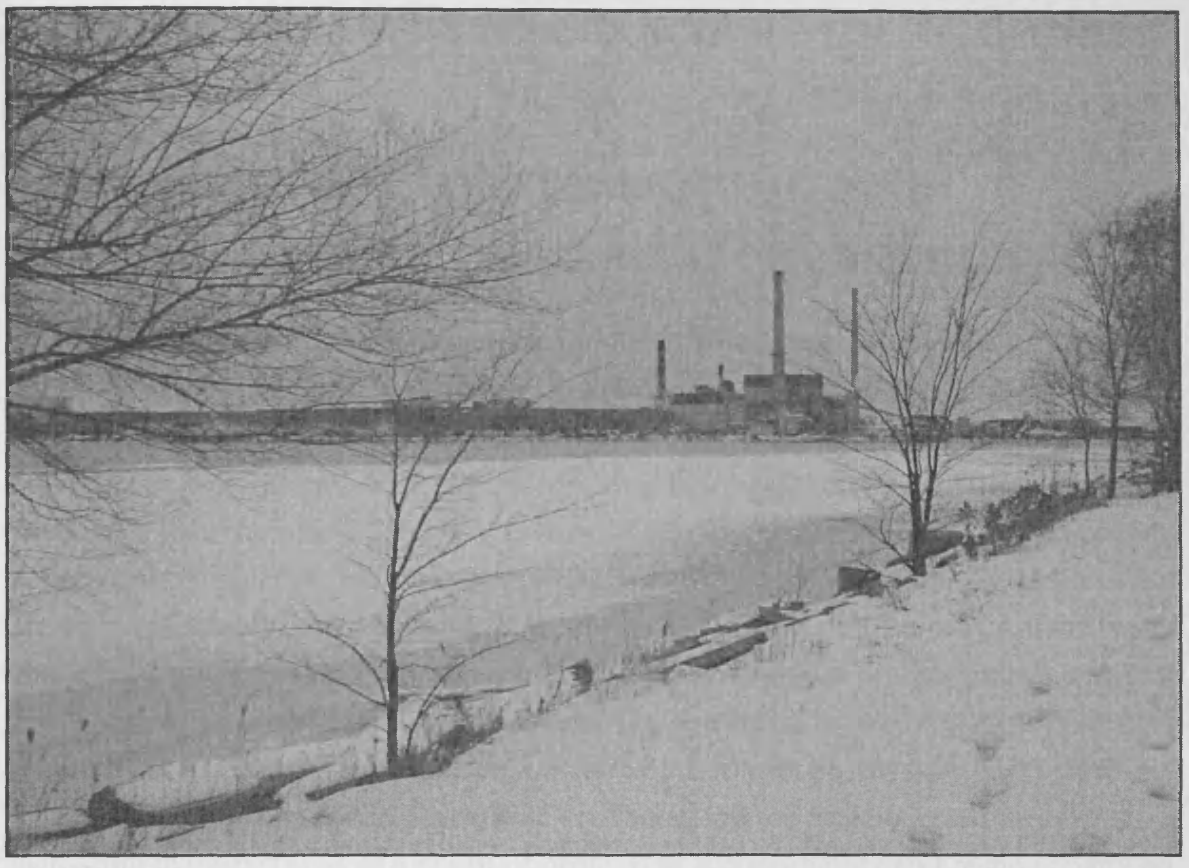
What is evident, as Butler does aptly acknowledge, is the loss of linearity to the process of loss, melancholia and mourning. That is,

> The presumptions that the future follows the past, the mourning might follow melancholia, that mourning might be completed are all poignantly called into question...as we realize a series of paradoxes: the past is irrecoverable and the past is not past; the past is the resource for the future and the future is the redemption of the past; loss much be marked and it cannot be resented; loss fractures presentation itself and loss precipitates its own modes of expression (Butler, 2003, p. 467).

Indeed we are discussing different forms of loss (i.e. social, cultural, environmental, political, ideational) and these formations bring Freud's insights concerning the work of mourning and the phenomena of melancholia into a new light. For this reason, the themes arising from the data speak to me of a form of 'ecological melancholia' that is unique and unlike any other form of melancholia. It is referred precisely as melancholia, as I discussed early in this chapter, as loss that has not been mourned, and has become internalised and identified with. The loss is no longer external but felt and sensed as a part of one's own self. The question arising from this perspective of foreclosure and melancholia is whether there remains a possibility of healing; whether the only agency available is one of "melancholic agency" (Butler, 2003, p. 468), that does not know its own past but dwells in a sort of perpetual present that is unmoored from its own sense of loss. I prefer to focus on what processes are

constitutive of a reparation required for ecological agency, an agency not constitutive of melancholia but of creative engagement with loss and with repair; capacities for concern and care to emerge, perhaps in unexpected and unconventional modes of expression.

In the following chapter, I discuss capacities for reparation and concern in light of the interview material and the topics of ecological degradation and environmental practices. This is a progression from how ambivalence and melancholia are theorised in relation to what enables concern and reparation, and helps reframe the discourses around environmental engagement, participation and agency. I frame this discussion in light of the concept of 'agency', and suggest evidence in the data for expressions of 'agency' and reparation, albeit in unexpected or otherwise unrecognised ways—small intimate practices, private acts that may not show up on the radar of environmental engagement, but which may provide clues for how to approach this topic more broadly. In discussing concern (and as it relates to reparation), I employ Winnicott's conceptualisations of concern as covering "in a positive way a phenomenon that is covered in a negative way by the word 'guilt'" and referring to the "fact that the individual *cares*, or *minds*, and both feels and accepts responsibility" (Winnicott, 1963, p. 100). As Winnicott notes, "the capacity for concern is at the back of all constructive play and work" (ibid.), and as such is a salient topic for considering environmental engagement, agency and the concept of 'apathy' (as referring to a psychic 'numbness', disassociation or lack of specific practices). And, as Winnicott and Klein both note, processes of reparation and concern are intractably linked with destructive and aggressive aspects; creativity cannot be engaged, at least psychoanalytically, without taking account of the oft disowned aspects of the self, and those reflected in our social contexts: the capacities for destruction, exploitation and aggression, towards the very objects that are also loved (Winnicott, 1963, p. 101). Hence, reparation, creativity, concern, the capacities for 'contributing-to' (discussed below) involve how ambivalence—the 'fusion' of erotic or loving and aggressive relations to an object—and subsequent (unconscious) guilt is tolerated, managed and processed (Winnicott, 1960).



Fox River Trail, December 2007, R. Lertzman

I keep saying yeah if there was a way that I could help out in a smaller matter rather than getting totally involved with it, I think if I go to that website and I have to sign my name or, or email I'm gonna to get petitioned for, for money of some sort. I believe that so when I go there if they request an email address or something for contacting um, I probably won't sign it. Because it's like, okay, you asked for a little bit, I'm going to give you some, now I have to give everything, and you know, why can't I choose how far along I do. They always say the worst person to be around for moral superiority is someone's who quit smoking. Because they'll tell you all the bad things. And so, I don't want to become that, I think I would, I don't know if I would, I might end up becoming like that if I got that involved in environmental issues. Environmental issues, I think it's always there, in the background. On a personal basis. [.] Ah, I'm trying to think of ah, salting the, the sidewalk, I don't think putting a lot of salt is [.] that good for the environment so I don't put that much salt out, I don't get that many people coming here, I will salt my sidewalk, but it's no good to do it now because it's just going to melt and refreeze.

—Howard, Interview 3

Chapter 9

Opportunities for reparation: Reframing environmental engagement

The concept of public apathy is often invoked when there is a perceived absence of care towards environmental quality or protection, as illustrated by either a *lack* of certain practices: e.g. buying eco-friendly products, reducing carbon footprint, participation in political efforts or campaigns, or a more general sense of living 'business as usual' (e.g. high carbon lifestyles, continuation of ecologically damaging practices). An apathetic subjectivity is characterised as one that is numb, tuned out, or simply does not care about issues beyond one's immediate sphere of influence. Apathy is also viewed as a psychic defence, a way of managing intolerable primitive anxieties; the result of a peculiar combination of helplessness and terror and omnipotence (Segal, 1987, p. 154). The helplessness which may lie at the root of apathy is in part actual—in some cases, the ecological threats we are facing are too large to confront on our own—and manufactured as a result of projecting accountability and responsibility on to others (e.g. governments). In other words, we may experience ourselves as helpless ("there is nothing I can do") but in some respects how we cope with this only contributes to the problem, as we shift agency from ourselves on to others. Disappointment, as we have seen in the interviews, is a close relation to helplessness, as it contains elements of not only loss but also resignation.[84]

I want to argue that the concept of apathy is ultimately a superficial assessment, simplistically equating external acts with internal states, and as such is damaging as a way of constructing subjectivity. The concept does not further our understandings of how chronic environmental issues are experienced, mediated and negotiated both psychically and socially. In critiquing the apathetic subject, it is my intention to reframe these issues of agency, creativity, concern and reparation; rather than presume an absence or of certain 'barriers', I take a *lateral* approach to explore agency, creativity, concern and reparation in the context of the data. A lateral approach interrogates underlying psychic and social processes as potentially informing what may shape or give rise to particular expressions of reparations and creativity; in relation to

[84] Disappointment, rather than anger or protest, as we have seen can become a dominant affective response to ecological trespasses (toxic air and water, the removal of swimming beaches, the inability to fish in local waters, the invasion of exotic, colonising species), constituting a passive and melancholic subject, rather than an active, empowered or creative one. Disappointment as a response is as much about a sense of loss, as I suggest in the previous Chapter, as a passive stance towards reparations; it can deceptively obscure concerns that may be dormant, as I wish to suggest.

the data, it attends to how participants may express reparation and concern, laterally in the sense of exploring material that is not straight-forward, or 'frontal'.[85] This view places creativity at the centre of the reparative impulse, and with Winnicott (1963), gives a more positive emphasis to reparation as form of creativity, *as well* as a product of negotiating guilt and destructive, aggressive impulses towards loved objects (Klein, 1940). In addressing opportunities for reparation and the implications for environmental engagement, I present a discussion of ambivalence, following on from the previous chapter and bringing into explicit relation with reparative capacities. I then present instances of reparation as arising through the interview material, signalling expressions of concern that may not otherwise be registered on the radar of environmental activism, yet arguably contain seeds or elements of powerful concern.

Ambivalence and reparation

As I discuss in Chapter 8, there appears to be ambivalence in how issues are regarded; the water can be 'good' and 'bad', damaged and irreparable, glittering and valued. There is 'good' water (e.g. Lake Michigan) and 'bad' water (e.g. the Fox River). It provides relaxation and respite, but perhaps only if one is positioned in a certain way, or the light falls in a particular angle. It may provide recreation (swimming, boating) and illness (Hepatitis). Green Bay as well is a contested site of contradictions: home of dominant industry providing jobs (economy) and despoliation (degraded waters, PCBs, air pollution). In spite of the current efforts on behalf of environmental advocates and scientists in the region, such as Sea Grant and the Lower Fox River Alliance, it is hardly surprising the public response is less than enthusiastic considering how complex these object relations appear to be. It seems something is arresting or impeding the reparative energies, or what Winnicott (1963) would express as "concern and creativity"; the quality of engagement with the issues has felt for me, in conducting the interviews and analysing the data, almost viscous, like a substance or 'fog' that seems to surround these issues concerning water and air quality. I found myself often feeling confused, inchoate and vague about the ecological issues in the region during my field visit. I found myself colluding with both the sense of resignation for reparations to Green Bay, and with the recognition of the waters as ecosystems worthy of repair. The capacity for splitting objects into 'good' and 'bad' qualities as part of the process of ambivalence has been signalled as symptomatic of the paranoid-schizoid

[85] As I discussed in Chapter 3, a lateral approach is conceptualised as an alternative epistemic and ontological orientation to traditional psychological studies that presume a self-knowing subject; I use the term 'lateral' to signify explorations in how unconscious (and conscious) meanings are produced, in what are often un-straightforward, circular or relational matrices, as dreams, narratives, memories, and other forms of unconscious material tend to surface as. See Schafer (1958) on unconscious processes and psychological testing, and Schafer (1992) on psychoanalytic investigations into narrative content.

position (Klein, 1940), otherwise perceived as defensive mechanisms against the experiences of intolerable guilt, aggression or destructive impulses (Segal, 1972). Salient (for this discussion) is the relationship between splitting and paralysis, or in this case what appears to be a sad or depressive mood enveloping these issues, what suggests a melancholic stance in "revolt against mourning" (Freud, 1917). These processes present implications for how reparation and concern is approached.[86]

In the building of this argument—that reparations are both impeded by ambivalence and melancholia, but are also present in certain more intimate practice and thus are not absent but perhaps lacking a 'home' for broader expression—I want to suggest that the industrial presence in Green Bay constitutes an object that cannot seem to withstand anger or redress without arousing intolerable levels of guilt. The refrain, "Green Bay is a good place to live" may have truth but is only a partial truth; the loss or disappointment, so poignantly expressed by Victoria, Sally, Donald, Howard, Scott and Heather, doesn't have an affective 'home' to take root. In this sense, the loss is *melancholic* (Freud, 1917), with unclear origins, and cathected internally (into a mood of sadness or depression, or vague disappointment). However, I want to posit that there are unique qualities to this form of 'environmental melancholia', which must be placed in a social, economic and political contexts, for these are what help provide such 'affective homes' for our losses, grief and mourning. For example, we find less expressions of self-flagellation as described in Freud's (1917) essay *Mourning and Melancholia*, (e.g. self hate as the internalised hated lost object) and a more generalized guilt that may lead to a collective form of paralysis and ideological defensive structures (e.g. equating environmental practices with being non-capitalist or "Un-American", or viewing environmentalists as only wanting money, as discussed below). I frame the discussion of reparation by first focusing on certain activities engaged by a few participants. This is a deliberate emphasis, as part of this project is to assert that while there may *appear* to be an absence of activity or response, (e.g. "engagement"), in fact reparative activities are taking place, however they fall short of moving beyond a certain sphere of influence. Understanding these reparative activities in the context of biographical, affective and social influences may help to further destabilise limited or prescribed conceptions of reparation. I will then examine how several participants articulate their own levels of engagement and involvement, and in some cases recount negative experiences or associations with

[86] While Klein's theories of reparation have been central in the formulation of the thesis, in terms of what may impede or impair reparative practices to the environment, I want to suggest Winnicott's theories of care, contribution and creativity may offer a more positive, and realistic insight into the issue of environmental degradation and creative acts of restoration; whereas Klein focuses on *damage done* and the need to make reparation, Winnicott views the ruthless interaction with the mother as being necessary to the capacity for concern and creativity. This may be a more hopeful, as well as more realistic, analysis of environmental engagement, as I shall discuss in the final chapter.

'environmental' groups or activities. These narratives raise the issue of *contribution,* a concept articulated by Winnicott in the context of the capacities for concern, e.g. taking responsibility for oneself and one's environment, which I shall discuss and thus conclude the chapter.

The achievement of ambivalence: The depressive position

In order to address reparative capacities adequately, we need to revisit the concept of the depressive position, ambivalence and its role in understanding the emergence of concern, or what Winnicott below refers to as *ruth.*[87] Hanna Segal, in writing about "socio-political expressions of ambivalence" in relation to war, highlights the central role of ambivalence in the capacities for both loving and mature engagement with the world, and the capacity for splitting of ego and objects that can lead to manic defences (Segal, 1997). Segal usefully distinguishes between the achievement of ambivalence, which in the context of the depressive position is essential to the integration of split object and feelings, and "the recognition of reality, which is both gratifying and frustrating. It also brings with it a new range of feelings, such as the fear of loss and guilt" (p. 159). In optimal circumstances, it is suggested that when ambivalence is recognized, the aggression that is felt as damaging an object that is both loved and needed can bring in its wake the mobilization of loving impulses and the wish to repair and to restore (ibid.). This is the basis of constructive sublimation, in Klein's view. However, what Segal points out, and what I have attempted to suggest, is what can impede or impair this process; that the guilt and fear of loss is extremely painful, and powerful defences can set in, if there is not an adequate sense of containment or security through which to 'work through' the ambivalence. I believe, although the context is set in infantile development, we can apply similar concepts to the mature person's capacities for coming to terms with ambivalence, loss and aggression. (This is what I take Winnicott as suggesting, in the recognition of destructive and aggressive energies in relation with repair, concern and creativity, which may provide a wholly more grounded and psychically astute approach to social and individual forms of environmental creative response.) As Winnicott asks,

> What is the so-called depressive position about, or better, what is it? The helpful approach perhaps to this problem starts with the word ruthless. Ruthlessness, of course, has to come into our lives constantly if we are to be alive and clear. At first the infant from our point of view is ruthless. There is no concern yet as to the result of instinctual loving. This love is originally a form of impulse, gesture, contact relationship, and it affords the infant

[87] *Ruth* is defined in the Oxford English Dictionary as "The quality of being compassionate; pitifulness; the feeling of sorrow for another; compassion, pity" (http://dictionary.oed.com, accessed 17 September 2009), and I take Winnicott's usage in this light.

the satisfaction of self-expression, and release from instinctual tension. Furthermore, it places the object outside the self, that begins to be separation (1958, p. 265)suggesting that there must be a recognition and engagement with our ruthlessness, in order for concern and 'ruth' to emerge. This is what is missing.

> At some time or other in the history of the development of every normal human being, there comes the change over from pre-ruth to ruth... the only thing is, when does this happen, how does it happen, and under what conditions does this happen? The concept of the depressive position is an attempt to answer these three questions, and, according to this concept, the change from ruthlessness to ruth occurs gradually under certain conditions of mothering during the period of around five to twelve months. And its establishment is not necessarily final until a much later date, and it may be found in analysis that it has never occurred at all.... The depressive position then is a complex matter, an inherent element in a non-controversial phenomenon. That of the emergence of every human individual from pre-ruth to ruth (ibid.).

Segal helps distinguish the fact of, and potential "flight from ambivalence" as leading to primitive mental mechanisms of the paranoid-schizoid position (e.g. denial, splitting, projection and fragmentation), from the "achievement of knowing one's ambivalence, accepting it and working through it" (Segal, 1997, p. 159). For Segal this is accomplished primarily through the recognition of guilt and of loss, brought about by ambivalence that "leads to the capacity to mobilize restoration and reparation". Aggression is not absent, as Winnicott also suggests, but becomes proportional to the cause, as does the guilt attached to it. Further, Segal signals the importance of environment for the resolution of the "ambivalence conflict"; how parental objects cope with infant destructiveness of naturally of fundamental importance. However, more salient for our discussion, is how society or social contexts provide 'good' experiences for the toleration of ambivalence and guilt. More often, groups function in such a way as to manage collective anxieties and tamp out threatening or potentially disruptive affects, such as grief, guilt or aggression. As Segal suggests, the nuclear bomb arouses "the most primitive psychotic anxieties about annihilation, and mobilizes the most primitive defences" (1997, p. 163). I argue certain forms of ecological threat can arouse similar responses—as presenting an imaginary of apocalypse and end of life as we know it—with the primary difference being the fact of our own complicity and participation in practices which simultaneously bring us benefits, pleasure and security, as well as loss, despoliation and the recognition of limits (e.g. the loss of childhood based 'endless possibilities' and omnipotent phantasies). Connecting this back to the practice of communications for mobilizing and involving people in environmental engagement, it raises the question of how well our communication practices may help foster this process of 'working through' ambivalence, perhaps through the basic fact of acknowledgement and support, rather than using fear, guilt and cajoling to engage

a socially constructed apathetic audience. (I shall discuss this further in the concluding chapter.)

Splitting as basis for agency: Some considerations

While it would appear the emergence of the depressive position is a psychic achievement, the "emergence of every human individual from pre-ruth to ruth" (Winnicott, 1958, p. 265), there is also the question of whether certain forms of splitting are conducive, indeed a prerequisite, for agency and action. Specifically, it has been suggested that the depressive position may be a mode of being that can neutralise or impede forms of resistance so essential for political action. This point, raised by Hoggett (1992, pp. 47–51) in relation to political agency, presents a different angle on the depressive position as "achievement"; as opposed to viewing a progression from paranoid schizoid to depressive, the positions are seen as dynamic, shifting and in oscillation. In addition to seeing the positions as dynamic, there is additionally the suggestion that a form of splitting—i.e. what would be considered the paranoid-schizoid position—is required for action.

Based on the data analysis presented in this project, it would appear the participants who may express the most developed sense of 'depressive position'—that is, a capacity to recognise and integrate both the 'good' and the 'bad' aspects of environmental objects and the place of Green Bay (as both provider of life and nourishment, and as source of toxicity and degradation; a place that both gives life and takes it away)—may be the least able to mobilise a political subjectivity in response to the ecological trespasses they are so acutely aware of. There appears a potential complacency, similar to what Britton (1998, p. 82) writes about in his chapter on the complacent patient in analysis (and in everyday life), where treatment can remain at a sort of stasis. This sense of complacency, he notes, is nourished by a belief that all things seem to have a purpose and a reason, so that life's circumstances are presented to test us, or as opportunities, etc. This "Panglossian" attitude, Britton notes, can fuel a complacency challenging to the work of analysis. He notes treatment tends to move forward at the moment the patient is able to express outrage—not only anger, but genuine outrage—occasioned by a rupture in their sense of peace with how things are. That is, if one accepts the good and the bad as coexisting, there may be a lack of capacity to engage with the truth of what is really happening (in this case, the devastating effects on the water quality caused by myriad human practices, from unregulated ballast waters bringing in invasive species, to the leaching of agricultural sites into precious water tables). Further, Meltzer (2008) in discussing autism, discusses the limited ways in which Klein conceptualised splitting (as always incurring damage to the object, and therefore being an occasion of guilt and remorse), and suggests,

> It is also perhaps true that splitting processes are necessary for the kind of decisions that make action in the outside world possible. Every decision involves the setting in motion of a single plan from amongst its alternatives; it is experimental, involves risk, a certain ruthlessness toward oneself or others. (p. 241).

I agree with Meltzer (2008), Hoggett (1997, p. 47), Britton (1998) in the recognition of both the necessary dynamism of the positions; that is, the so-called paranoid schizoid (Ps) and depressive (D) move back and forth, and this movement is essential and required for effective agency and the capacities to recognise and respond to external exigencies. I can also accept the idea that splitting processes are necessary for the kind of action and response required to take direct and authentic, effective reparative and protection action on behalf of the natural environment. Signaling the depressive position as an achievement, as I have done and following from Klein, is admittedly a crude mode of engaging with what are highly complicated and nuanced psychic and social processes, often largely unconscious in both individuals and groups. And yet, the reason I do signal the depressive position in contrast to the splitting reflected in the paranoid-schizoid position is because it is suggestive of a capacity for a mature and integrated psychic structure, to contain and integrate both 'good' and 'bad'; the ability to resist the temptation when faced with the unknown and uncertain, to retreat into a mode of splitting, both internally and externally. This is particularly salient in relation to environmental issues and degradation, a context in which gross splitting up of 'good' nature and 'bad' nature or environments is prevalent and presents serious challenges towards more effective environmental engagement and agency. The perception of an oscillation between these modes of being, and the suggestion a form of splitting may actually be constructive and a prerequisite for action does not preclude the recognition of the need for a more integrative psychic engagement with chronic environmental issues. Rather than assert the argument that splitting is required for action, as Meltzer does above, which may or may not be accurate, I prefer to frame this problem in terms of mature, resilient integrated subjectivity in relation to chronic ecological degradation (and destruction); rather than a form of 'splitting' I prefer Winnicott's formulation, as I discuss below, on the capacities for care and concern that do not require a conceptualization of splitting. In my usage, splitting refers to a departure from what is real and actual, and a retreat into the psychic processes Segal describes as a turn from authenticity. In other words, it depends on how we are defining and engaging the concept of splitting, and for the purposes of this study, I maintain what is constructive is to consider more constructive, integrative, mature and authentic modes of engagement with environmental issues that may involve but is not predicated on 'splitting' in the sense of

cutting up the world into discrete and concrete objects. For this theorisation I turn to Winnicott, and the concept of repair.

Contributing-to: Finding a home for reparative energies and concern

The root of *reparation* is to *repair*.[88] One of the more damaging consequences of 'the myth of apathy' is to overlook attempts for reparation, or to assume only certain practices constitute the reparative act. I do not want to suggest that all practices are equal in their reparative capacities, as this is certainly not the case. It is important to acknowledge, however, the ways in which people *are* managing and negotiating responses to losses and environmental degradation, through perhaps unexpected, irrational or intimate practices. Throughout the interviews, I was struck by both my own attempts at reparation, e.g. bringing Howard a bag full of pastries from the local Greek bakery, and those of my participants, starting with their voluntary involvement in the project with the online survey and subsequently the three interviews.

During the data analysis process, as I was creating maps based on significant object relations, thematic narratives, counter-transference notes and the presence of particular personal 'objects' (e.g. books, maps, photographs, food, teas, etc.) I became aware of certain practices indicating forms of reparative activities taking place. These activities demonstrated, on performative or symbolic levels, attempts to 'stay connected' or associated with the positive attributes of certain lost objects that had been referenced. Such practices only added to the complexity of the research site, as it became evident that people resist being reduced simplistically to either 'caring' or 'not caring' about their environment or their sense of personal involvement or attachment to particular environments or ecological situations. I want to suggest that certain practices that may appear as mundane or 'personal' have significance and are indicative of the potential for further engagement beyond the private sphere. In making this emphasis, I am less concerned with how unconscious guilt may be mobilising reparative energies, and more with concern, and how concern can be further cultivated and supported, through having a 'home' for contributions.

Reparations in the intimate sphere: Books, food and water

It would be inaccurate to suggest that the participants are not engaging in reparations towards damaged environmental objects, due to their lack of engagement in certain recognized practices such as joining an environmental group, or signing a petition. In the case of Sally, for example, I was quite moved by certain uses of objects and practices that felt reparative in nature. For example, Sally (almost proudly) tells me in

[88] The Oxford English Dictionary provides the root of reparation as follows: [a. OF. reparacion (14th c.; mod.F. reparation), ad. L. repar{amac}ti{omac}n-em, n. of action f. repar{amac}re to REPAIR.], http://dictionary.oed.com, accessed 20 September 2009.

our first interview, that when she moved into her own apartment in Green Bay, she bought a print of a photograph of waves to put above her bed, to remind her of the waves of Lake Michigan. Perhaps more viscerally, Sally expresses potentially reparative practices in her relationship with food; specifically, how she and her parents will only consume organic locally produced meats and dairy. She seemed quite pleased about her involvement with organic farming, and even showed me her freezer full of organic meat and procured the ranch's business card for me. On my third visit I came in to her kitchen to find something simmering in the slow cooker, which she proudly informed me was an organic beef stew. In carefully monitoring what is taken into her body, Sally is 'repairing' the damages caused by unsafe agricultural practices and bringing into her world 'good objects' in the form of organic meats and dairy. Likewise Sally possesses a large library of books on herbs, vitamins and alternative health, although she does not necessarily ascribe to the lifestyle any longer (the books as objects, as the 'save the whale' cards, reference a previous time and self). She mentions owning a book about endocrine disruptors, *Our Stolen Future* (Colborn et al., 1997). The discussion of this book illustrates some ambivalence on her part with regard to 'knowledge' and awareness about environmental health risks; her first comments about the book are:

> And I started reading that and I couldn't handle it. Because the ramifications from all of that knowledge, once you have the knowledge you have to change your behaviour. You know you can come to the precipice and you have a choice, of learning the knowledge and once you learn the knowledge you have to do something with it. Or you can step back, and just leave it because you don't want to do anything different. So. With that book, I started reading it and realized, I have so many limitations with what I can eat, and food allergies, and all of this other stuff already, I don't want to know more, I don't want to know". She continues to say the book is up in the library "and I'm not doing anything with it. [Laughs a bit.] I think the best thing I should do is donate to a good cause! [Laughs.] So that other people that want to, and really need to, because if your health is effected that badly by what they have to say you have to make the change.

The book itself becomes objectified knowledge, containing attending risks of knowledge, and her ambivalence about becoming more literate and aware of environmental health risks is reflected in her possessing and rejection of the book ("I should donate it"). What is at stake, as Sally articulates, is her own responsibility to take action based on what she knows; and she would rather not know, as she states very clearly. And yet she continues to own the book and perhaps feels guilty for not reading it (it would benefit someone else).

Winnicott stresses in his writings the importance of the mother as the "environment-mother" to be able to contain and "humanize" the infant's instinctual and aggressive (destructive) impulses, by surviving its attacks, and allowing the infant to then experience guilt towards the object. For both Winnicott (and Klein), guilt is the foundation for the capacities for reparation, for in our awareness of our destructive abilities, can come the (moral) sense of wishing to make repair. This is the basis, or matrix, for a creative, contributing life, whereby one takes responsibility for herself and others, and is able to engage in a loving and constructive mode with the world (Winnicott, 1965). Winnicott (1965) writes,

> In this way, the guilt is not felt, but it lies dormant, or potential, and appears (as sadness or a depressed mood) only if opportunity for reparation fails to turn up. When confidence in this benign cycle and in the expectation of opportunity is established, the sense of guilt in relation to the id-drives becomes further modified, and then we need a more positive term, such as 'concern'. The infant is now becoming able to be concerned, to take responsibility for his own instinctual impulses and the functions that belong to them. This provides one of the most fundamental constructive elements of play and work. But in the developmental process, it was the opportunity to contribute that enabled concern to be within the child's capacity (p. 77).

The point regarding the "opportunity to contribute" and the infant's confidence in the "benign cycle" of contributing is particularly important both for this analysis and how environmental engagement and participation is conceptualised. It cannot be underestimated how vital this confidence in contributing-to is both for the formation of any viable environmental agency, and the importance of its establishment in early childhood. In other words, it is not only the social opportunities that must be afforded, but we must also recognise the ways in which this basis for concern can be impaired given the conditions in early childhood.

In another surprising example, Sally tells me, in a free associative way at the end of an interview (having just remembered a memory fragment not related to our current topic of discussion), about her neighbour's purchasing of pheasants for the back lot shared among the neighbours. She does not seem to want the interview to end and is pleased to share this story with me. While it appears trivial, I am quite moved by this little vignette, as it speaks clearly to me about the importance of being able to *contribute* and find a 'home' for one's reparative impulses, for expression:

> s: You know what? I just. My neighbour, he loves the wildlife in the back. Behind our house. And, he used to feed the deer, but that's illegal to do so he had to stop doing that [laughs] and we're neighbours so don't say anything, you see it but you don't say anything, so he decided to go and raise money and buy pheasants. He bought one rooster and five hens. And um,

we had five to one, and he bought several of them, and set them loose in the back here. And you know, for our environmental whatever, and um, he thinks it's a good thing and he's going to be putting corn out and stuff and if we want to, will I? Probably not, because I'm off for four months without pay right now, feeding other critters is not, I've got three critters and me to feed right, so that's kind of my priority right now, I'm not going to feed them out there. It's interesting, I did contribute to buying some of those. And um, it's kind of exciting, knowing that there's a nice variety of critters in the background, and not just the mice and the rats [laughs].

R: Why did you mention that now?

S: I don't know! I don't know! It just popped up so I thought I'd bring it up real quick. As you were saying that it just popped in my mind, I don't know why. So kind of support, you know give the neighbourhood support, you know here's some money, go buy some [laughs].

My reading of Sally's sharing of this story that "popped into her head" is her desire to demonstrate her reparative, environmentally 'contributing' energies, as demonstrated in her modest participation with the neighbours' acquiring pheasants. We can see in the story an opportunity, or a 'home' for Sally's affective concern to take root, or at find a temporary expression. Her enjoyment of her back garden and of nature was able to connect effectively with her neighbour's activities, although she drew boundaries about feeding the birds on an ongoing basis. It was enough for her to help buy them.

Saving the whales: Expressions of reparation

The sense of not being able to contribute is poignantly reflected in her discussion about her involvement with the 'save the whales' in our third interview (I present the excerpt at length):

S: [Laughs.] After you left, I was rather, um, I thought about it a lot after you left the last time.

R: About what?

S: All the different things I talked about. I hadn't thought about save the whales in years and I still, like I said I still have three of those cards that you can, and you know, it's just really nice cards with envelopes you can mail out, I think I may even still have the T-shirt, and all the different environmental issues that came up, that I remembered, it was [.] interesting to remember them all. And just, be that animated about it because, when you can't do anything about it, a lot of times, after a while, it's just, yeah, okay. Well there's nothing I can do. And, like for example, with the water thirty years later they are saying get going, there's nothing I can do in that thirty years. You know. So, sometimes you can just watch and see how things happen and what, what happens. So it was kind of, um [...] fun to touch back on that, how [.] intense I was at one point with the save the whales thing.

And all the environmental stuff. And over the years you just kind of realise there's nothing you can do and you just go on, so it was, kind of um,

R: What does it mean to you that you were once passionate about those issues.

S: [..] um. [..] Hmm! [...] Somebody once said when you're young you need to have a heart, and when you're older, you need to be able to you know, have heart, be passionate over those things when you're young because when you're older your priorities change a bit, and as you're, in your 50s to 60s you start thinking more about retirement, and how you're going to live out your final years, things like that, and if you can help out you do. But on the whole, your priorities change. So. Um. It was [..] actually, I was glad. I mean everybody knew about the save the whales thing, I mean, my family thought it was hilarious that I would just, [laughing] get into that. But, it um, I don't know. It brought back good memories. I don't know if that's answering your question or not.

R: Yeah. Well, I guess I'm wondering, how, what it means to look back and to see that you were once really engaged with those things. And, um, I mean I hear you saying that you kind of have to move on, at a certain point. And realize-

S: Yes.

R: What you can and can't do. But that's kind of like, um, that's, that's analysing it, um, from your perspective now. Whereas, um, I guess when I ask what does it mean for you, when you look at yourself as a younger person, really passionate and, really um, yeah I guess, I guess I'm wondering what feelings come up around that. Um, if you feel maybe, like it, do you feel you lost something, or-

S: yes and no. Because, when you're young and you're not exactly sure which direction your life is going to go, how you're going to go, what your calling is in life, I guess calling, I don't know if calling is the right word, but what your abilities [.] are, and where you can make the difference. Um. You look, you know when you're young you're just kind of looking at everything trying to figure out where do I fit into this whole, where's my path, where's my [.] thing and that was it for a little bit, but as I got more into the music that consumed more of my time. So priorities changed, because of, with music there's practice, and there's rehearsals, you know there's performance, things like that. So priorities [.] Knowing that I have the ability to do different musical things, I can play guitar, I can play viola, I can sing, and [.] having those abilities, not using those and focusing on total environment things, is not a good use of the talents and the abilities that I have.
And there are other people who, [.] don't have those talents or not willing, it's not their passion. Music is my passion. So I think over the years, it just, it was a matter of, the music taking over more and more of my time.

R: Hmm hmm. [..] And did you find you thought about environmental things less? As you became more focused on other things?

S: Not so much less, but you pay attention, you read it like I would have read the article and I would have looked at it and saying, I hope they start it soon. I hope they really don't let them out of it. I hope you know, that they

will follow through and really make them do it this time. And that's about as far as this time, and otherwise it would go. Because there's nothing I can do.

There is a powerful assertion in the passage where Sally feels her concern and contributions lie. She became involved with the Save the Whales campaign, and still possesses the cards and T-shirts as desired and cherished objects, indicating her desire to hold on, and retain this aspect of herself—the reparative aspect. She mocks her involvement, particularly in the second interview, as being frivolous and suggests fantasies of omnipotence in her desire to make an impact on something as remote as protecting whales from extinction. It is also suggested that her family did not take her environmental commitments seriously, as discussed in Chapter 6. To better understand if Sally experiences a sense of loss or nostalgia for herself as a young, impassioned woman collecting whale cards and T-shirts, I press her to articulate a possible sense of loss; this is quickly sped over in her rushed and semi-coherent narratives about her process of finding where she can adequately contribute, and make a difference in a particular sphere. What becomes clear is her decision at a certain point, to *contribute* in an area she feels reasonable competent, even gifted, and to choose to withdraw affectively from those areas in which she does not feel able to make a difference; as she repeats frequently, "there is nothing I can do". My reading of the involvement with the 'save the whales' campaigns when she was younger expresses something quite powerful and important regarding her impulses for addressing ecological degradation, even if it was not channelled locally; in fact it is the way she focuses on the whales in distant regions, in the context of her "shock" at the polluted environment in Green Bay that is particularly notable. If we view reparation as expressions of the desire to repair, to contribute-to—and not only defined in terms of environmental activism that is sustained—it is clear there is a presence of concern, or *ruth*, in this case directed towards vulnerable and endangered large creatures of the seas. Perhaps Sally is identifying with the whales and seeks to repair an internal sense of vulnerability or fragility. Regardless, how she expresses her contact with 'save the whales' indicates the whales as important objects that were safe for directing such creative impulses; ultimately however, there was not an adequate sense of contributing-to, for unclear reasons, and she moved on to spheres of influence, albeit more intimately focused. The intimate sphere therefore can contain and harbour reparative impulses that may not feel 'at home' or safe in the larger world of activism, politics and social movements. We must not assume the concern is therefore absent; it may be seeking a home elsewhere.

Lost opportunities for reparation: Environmentalism as black and white

The recognition of limits of oneself as an individual, and the failure to find a 'home' for reparative impulses is reflected in Howard's narratives as well. He begins the interviews with a strong declaration that his participation in the study itself is an expression of "having some influence", which he suggests more effective than voting. At the end of the interviews as well, he considers himself "very lucky" for having been selected as one of ten participants. He is overall enthusiastic about the process, and followed up the interviews with sending vintage photographs he discovered of the family home on the Fox River in De Pere. When Howard begins to acknowledge his own pro-environment feelings, he notes that he is not "fanatical", an expression that is echoed in almost every participant case, in which they seem to equate environmental activism or agency with fanatical behaviour. What is most striking is when Howard projects on to me a query as to why he does not take more environmentally active behavior, and proceeds to outline what such environmentally active behaviour would look like and how he has chosen to not pursue that avenue. He is describing a local environmental issue, which he suggests (by association) is connected with his bronchitis (but is not fully asserted). Howard begins mentioning his bronchitis, which he first suggests is from being in the city ('bad object'). Then, with the added, "And it's not" he effectively discounts this assertion. It initiates a discussion of environmental issues that bother him (there are quite a few; he claims he is "more sensitive" than other people seem to be, and since he has gotten older).

> I've got some bronchitis, the first time I've ever had it is this year. I've always said, when I moved into town, I wanted to get back out of town, because I always felt the air quality probably wasn't as good. Um. Twenty years here, and I've never had any problems, I get one year I have bronchitis and I'm like, yeah it's from living in the city, you know the pollution in the city! And it's not. So I, it's, but I do believe the valley uh, is more polluted than outside of the, once you get above the ridge on the end either side, and tend to think the west than the east side, because you can't be burning as much cola in the Pullman power plant and I know, years ago the solution, because they, they do tests air quality tests around the area, and they didn't pass, I remember seeing that in the news, I don't know how many years ago it was, their solution, was to build another how many feet on the tower [laughs] to disperse it a little farther out. I'm like, no, to get it up so it doesn't fall down into where they are testing. I'm going, [sigh] I understand about how scrubbers work, they are expensive but they work- but it's cheaper to build on and build a little taller and that way they pass the testing on it. So they, but I'm like, you're still putting as much in, you're just spreading it over a larger area! That kind of stuff, I keep, I keep thinking, it's, don't people see that? [Laughs.] Um, I guess I'm not as much of an advocate to actually go after, and doing anything about that, but I end up having my opinions.

I then ask, "What would, what does it mean, 'doing something about it'?"

> Uh. Going out and getting petitions, or to um, join any organizations that might be involved in it, or even to the point of starting organizations that would you know, take something an issue like that, and just bring it to the public going how can we let this, you know, let this go this way? So I'm not, active in that, in that way. On stuff like that. Um.

When I press him to discuss this subsequently, in the third interview, he says, "I keep thinking that you're wondering why that even though I have all the knowledge, ... to do something about it, what would have to happen for me to [..] take that step to actually do something?" And then says:

> I think that it probably has to do with my feeling that [..] people who get this involved tend to be [..] fanatical about it [.] obsessive, um, this is the way it's got to be over everything else, everything else is completely wrong, this is right... to kind of get to that point you have to be black and white, you can't be gray at all... and that I don't want that, I don't [..] I understand the other part and the, and why people do it that way to turn around and, to be and to do that I think you have to be definite about it, you can't go in and say 'well I think this is what you should do' and it'd be good you know, to do something like that but I understand that you don't do it', to be part of the organization it has to be... this is the way it's supposed to be done...
>
> To do it that way is wrong, this is why it's wrong, this is how it's wrong and this is what you should do [..] that's not my personality, and I, and so I wouldn't [.] go that direction except as a very small part of it.

Howard continues to describe the local environmental group, Wisconsin Citizen Action Counsel, going door-to-door, and how focused they were on fundraising, and how he "has a problem with fundraising" and again associating this with being obsessive. As with Scott, he perceives this as controlling and lacking attunement to the needs and concerns (ironically) of others; hence appearing as obsessive or manic.

In light of the interviews and related issues that come up for Howard regarding agency and action, in his own personal life *and the fears of making the wrong choice or decision* (discussed at length in all interviews, notably around his paralysis to move into the country despite the fact he has never felt at home in town and has never settled into his current home after twenty years), it is evident he is able to make contributions in particular contexts. For example, in the workplace, if there is something to do he "has no problem getting it done" and taking whatever risks are necessary. His environmental concerns and sentiments are essentially sequestered into a manageable area, "as a very small part" of anything that might be taking place.

This contrast between his high levels of knowledge and awareness with his actions and behaviour is compelling. For Howard, as for others, he primarily channels his concerns into small actions such as recycling and entreating others to (e.g. his boss), drinking bottled water (which he feels is morally superior to drinking Great Lakes water from the tap), using the truck or outside for keeping things cold, not using salt on the sidewalks for de-icing, and expressing his views through discourses with friends, co-workers, and acquaintances. In light of his lack of 'action', Howard refers to himself as an "apathy-type person"; his concerns have not found a suitable 'home'. Howard remarks that "To go beyond his 'own little world', that's a step, that's a different, different thing... I guess I never got along with people who did that because of the fact that they tend to be, I think in the ones I've met, I hate to be opinionated too much on things, but ah, that they tend to be better than thou people". In the third interview, Howard admits that environmental problems are *"always in the background, for me... On a personal basis..."*

Scott is another participant whose feelings about environmental groups and advocacy are quite painful; there is a sense of having been either unseen or not approached respectfully. One of the reasons I selected Scott as a participant was based on his short answer responses, and a comment he made regarding Greenpeace, signalling to me there was some aspect of environmental concern, even if it was not particularly 'active' for various reasons. In our second interview, Scott relates to me a particularly painful story about an initial attempt to connect with Greenpeace when he was about twelve. His "hate" for Greenpeace is rooted in the organisation's gross lack of appropriate or adequate response to his effort to connect and 'contribute' in some way, that is not monetary. Most participants' perceived environmental organisations as primarily only wanting money, or signatures on a petition, and very little else. As Scott recounts, it soured his perceptions of environmental groups from that point on, characterising them as inflexible and "forcing people to do things" instead of offering options (which is what happened to him as a child).

S: I really hate Greenpeace [laughing]. One time I was um, doing research because I was really interested when I was in middle school about seventh or eighth grade and [..] and I wrote to Greenpeace and asked to send some information brochure and all they wanted was money [.] you know and I, oh I sent a nice letter and said I'm doing research and I'd like to do a report on Greenpeace, da, ta, da, ta, da, please send us money. (Hmm.) No, [laughing] so then I decide, whatever.

R: Hmm, was that the last time you reached out to an environmental group?

S: Yeah, [...] yeah because there's, you know, there's different, there's definitely other [.] environmental groups out like Sierra Club. And just some of the things that [.] you know they, le, some of the tactics that those environmental groups use you know are, not productive, they, they [.] you know, they'd

rather just you know try to force people to do things instead of just offer options. You know.

The perception of the organization as a totalizing and controlling entity is the result of a radical mal-attunement between Scott's needs and expression for contributing, and the response of the organization. In order to contribute there must be a receiving context or construct in which to be; to create rather than to comply.

Finding a home for concern: Ambivalence and perceived helplessness

In light of the above material, I make three central arguments. First, I argue for a conceptualisation of how environmental issues are experienced and related with, that can allow for ambivalence, contradiction, concern and anxiety; equally, for the presence of loss and the sense of *disappointment.* I want to suggest that a lack of active engagement with environmental practices, e.g. restoration, conservation, participation in groups or active personal commitments, may not reflect a lack of care or concern. Rather, it may be the result of an inability to process the sense of loss and ambivalence towards the environment and industrial practices, as well as a failure to find an adequate 'home' for contributing to, and participating *creatively* with ecologically reparative practices. The failure to contribute-to, to animate aspects of concern which may be present but dormant, is a theme running throughout the interviews. In many cases the participation in the study itself was a form of 'contributing to' which appeared to provide participants a great sense of relief, enjoyment, and pride. Second, I argue that the presence of ambivalence, notably towards the damaged environmental objects, is bound up with feelings of guilt and conflict regarding industry and the act of feeling anger or critique towards the 'provider' for the city.

The ambivalence seems to have an effect of neutralizing anger (e.g. the ability to be creative, according to Winnicott, 1963), and producing instead an acute sense of disappointment and inchoate sense of loss. This loss is related to the lack of contact with one's own sense of creativity and agency in the world. It appears to be a form of the depressive position, without the capacities for maturation into reparation. Third, I argue that the quality that may best describe the mode of relating and experiencing ecological issues, particularly those affecting loved objects (e.g. the dunes, the Fox River, Bay Beach), is *melancholic.* My employment of the term melancholic is a direct reference to Freud's formulation in *Mourning and Melancholia* (1917) that distinguishes mourning from melancholia, and attempts to address what may interfere with the 'work of mourning' which is so essential for the capacities for what Winnicott may term 'concern' and what Klein terms 'reparation'. There are two central features of Freud's melancholia that are relevant for this discussion: the unclear origins of the loss ("Indeed, this might also be the case when the loss that is the cause

of the melancholia is known to the subject, when he knows *who* it is, but not *what* it is about that person he has lost"), and the "extraordinary reduction of self-esteem, a great impoverishment of the ego" (Freud, 1917, p. 204). The ambivalence towards the lost object, even after it has been internalized, results in a painful mutual hatred between this internal object and the ego, that is in conflict with the love that also exists between them; there is ambivalence towards the internal object (Segal, 1997, p. 158). Conceptualising relations with ecological degradation as melancholic may have the productive capacity to shift the normative frame away from the discourse of valuation, to allow for the considerably broader and more complex psychic and social processes involved with how loss and agency (and ultimately, contributions and creativity) are negotiated and managed. Importantly, I want to argue that the lack of space, the 'home', for contributing-to, can result in a profound sense of melancholic affect, leading to a withdrawal of affective investment (as evidenced by Scott's ill-fated contact with Greenpeace). The acute sense of not being able to contribute, (e.g. Sally's refrain, "There is nothing I can do") forces any affective investment to shrink down, as the world becomes very small. Any available reparative energies are then directed in the most intimate and manageable spheres, e.g. food, water, recycling, and so on. Or, they are disavowed altogether.

The importance of contributing

Winnicott provides a potentially productive lens for thinking through the dilemmas of apathy, concern and care, in the concept of 'contributing'. For Winnicott the ability to 'contribute' begins in infancy, as the child learns to smile, or gesture, which in turn evokes a response from the mother or adults. Parents, as Winnicott suggests, humanize the terrors of destructive and aggressive instincts, by withstanding, tolerating and processing (or assimilating) the infant's experiences. The infant needs a context, a frame, for fears. The ability to express the range of impulses and desires, according to Winnicott, sets up a "benign cycle" in which the contributions of the infant can be received and enjoyed. I relate this dynamic in infantile development to what is being expressed in the interview material, notably an absence of a site for contributing, and the subsequent withdrawal or sublimation of the reparative or creativity energies elsewhere, or quite possibly resulting in a melancholic or depressed affect. In the case of Sally, for example, we see how she has effectively chosen to channel her 'contributions' into music where she feels she can make an actual contribution; her efforts and produced effects are valued, appreciated but most importantly, employed. In her participation in an orchestra or choir, she is part of a group, a *contributing member*. Sally articulates this in terms of focusing on her talents, but there is an important subtext in both her and Howard's sentiments regarding their environmental commitments and actions; both perceive themselves as lacking in certain skills for contributing

in a particular way. This is dictated by the constraints and contexts provided, e.g. Howard's ability to list the various activities in which he could be involved. There is a discounting of one's own offering ("I'm not an expert"). Donald removes himself from any political context in asserting his need to keep these issues "close to my person", as if to make them public would be somehow unsavoury or unacceptable. Scott experiences a radical 'mal-attunement' in terms of his needs and those of the organisation's, based on his contact with Greenpeace; where he sought affirmation and a 'good experience', he was treated as a donor, only reinforcing the sense he had nothing of value to offer their efforts.

The question becomes how much takes place in environmental outreach and engagement efforts and communications that reinforces these experiences of feeling either unwanted, other than in particularly circumscribed ways, or so overwhelmed with the magnitude of the problems and the perceived insignificance of oneself, to lead to a withdrawal or shutting down of affect and concern altogether. There is little opportunity for engagement that is not determined by compliance. As Klein asserts, guilt is the basis for reparation, if it can be tolerated and processed adequately ('worked through'), requiring a series of good (environmental) experiences; if this does not take place it can surface as sadness or depression, complacency and resignation. On the other hand, in light of Winnicott's notion of a more positive term than reparation (to repair), concern leading to creativity means "seeing the world with new eyes all the time" (Newman, 1995, p. 109). This suggests a critical need for environmental communications practices to consider new forms and venues for fostering and facilitating contributions, rather than compliance.

Reflections

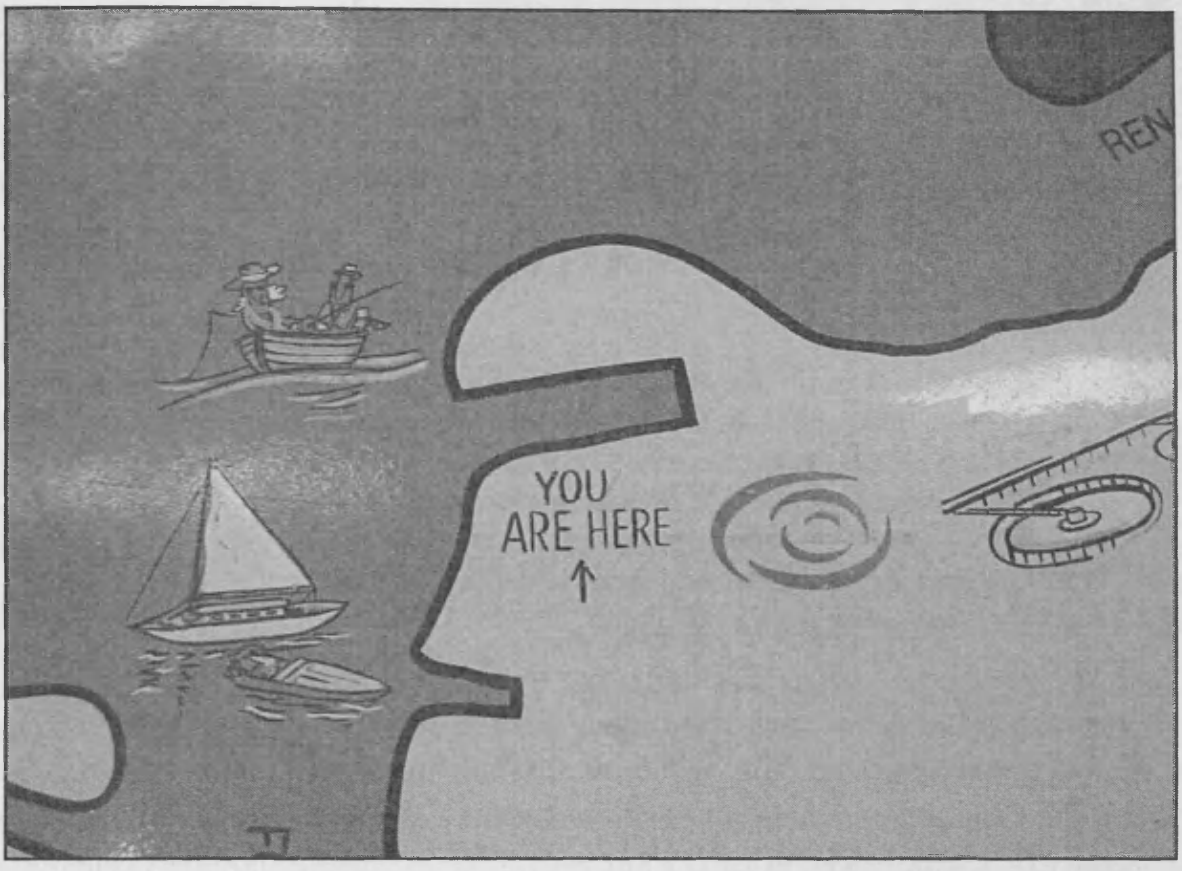
Klein suggests a direct and active involvement with nature helps preserve the desire to make reparations; whereas a disconnection with nature, e.g. through industrial practices, may actually disrupt the processes of guilt leading to reparation:

> ... [T]he struggle with nature is therefore partly felt to be a struggle to preserve nature, because it expresses also the wish to make reparation to her (mother). People who strive with the severity of nature thus not only take care of themselves, but also serve nature herself. In not severing their connection with her they keep alive the image of the mother of the early days. They preserve themselves and her in phantasy by remaining close to her—actually by not leaving their country. In contrast with this, the explorer is seeking in phantasy a new mother in order to replace the real one from whom he feels estranged, or whom he is unconsciously afraid to lose" (110).

In the context of industrialisation, we may perhaps extend this analysis of the explorer to include the need to not only "replace the real one", but to then dominate,

control and extract from. Feelings of vulnerability and the terrors of dependency are transmuted into a relationship of service and exploitation. However there may be psychic costs (as well as ecological costs, which are well documented) to this dynamic; namely the sense of guilt that may arise in the face of our actions. When people are confronting the severely polluted water—the shock that is registered by Jeff and Sally on apprehending the polluted water in Green Bay, Howard's realisation of "what clean water looks like" or Scott's sadness and disappointment when he learns as a child about the dirty waters—the sense of guilt combined with loss may be too much to bear consciously. Anger is required to move us into action, as Winnicott reminds us; healthy, constructive anger, not "losing one's temper", but the ability to say "NO!" (Newman, 1995, p. 112). Winnicott prefers to think that it is in living creatively that we "can allow ourselves to become concerned with our destructiveness and come to do something about it. Reparation here is not for him a sufficiently generous word to describe how we might make up for the damages we do: he thinks of *creating something new* (italics added; Newman, 1995, p. 108). For Winnicott, *"Immorality for the infant is to comply at the expense of the personal way of life"* (1963, p. 93). Conversely, morality is the creative response to wrong-doings. When not complying, we may experience the results of own destructiveness: concern, sadness, depression. This is an achievement. The sense of loss, sadness and depression detected in the interviews *is* positive; it signals the ability to register transgressions and loss. What is happens, however, is a stasis, an inability to translate or move through these results into a creative mode; the basis for making, making-up, creating.

In the following and final chapter, I conclude with reflections for the implications of these arguments in the practice of environmental communications. Specifically, what it means to produce environmental outreach and communications strategies informed by a conception of environmental subjectivity that can contain ambivalence, loss and mourning, melancholia and dilemmas of contradictory desires and impulses. Underlying this analysis is a reframing of a subjectivity of 'apathy' to a subjectivity of concern that may require new forms of facilitation or support. Rather than conduct a survey of environmental communications media and strategies, which extends the scope of the present project, I focus on central tenets for productive strategies, inferred from the data gathered in this research study. They follow similar conventions to contemporary psychodynamic and therapeutic contexts: the need to tell the truth, provide containment and support, and a facilitating context in which one may find creativity and unique expression of one's particular concern or investments.



Bay Beach Wildlife Sanctuary, Nature Centre. July 2006, R. Lertzman

And the end of our exploring
Will be to arrive where we started
And know the place for the first time.
—T.S. Eliot, Four Quarters

Chapter 10

From apathy to concern: Reconceptualising environmental subjectivity

> *The stubborn refusal to accept that latent acts are psychic in nature can be explained by the fact that most of the phenomena in question have never been studied outside psychoanalysis. Those who... accept that the 'slips' of the tongue are accidental, who are content with the hold saying 'dreams are froth' need ignore only a few more riddles of the psychology of consciousness to spare themselves the trouble of postulating unconscious psychic activity.*
>
> —Freud, *In Defence of the Unconscious*

I began this thesis reflecting on how my experiences in environmental studies lecture halls at university in the 1980s, combined with the heady intellectual atmosphere of post-structuralism led me to question how chronic ecological issues shape and touch our lives. I felt the chill of paralysis brought on by anxiety and a sense of powerlessness—an inchoate mixture of anger, frustration, sadness, loss and passion to fight and protect precious ecological resources. Ulrich Beck (1992) describes the risk society as "an epoch in which the dark sides of progress increasingly come to dominate social debates. What no one saw and no one wanted—self-endangerment and the devastation of nature—is becoming the motive force of history" (p. 2). He asks the question that has been on my mind for years: "Why is nothing happening, or why isn't more happening? What does it mean for everyday life to believe the problems exist and to take them seriously?" (1995, p. 12).

As discussed in Chapter 3, I have sought to incorporate an analytic attitude into the context of environmental engagement, to bear on the complex issues of how humans are caught up in nettings of affect, desire, hopes, fears, anxieties and losses. I found Schafer's definition of an analytic attitude particularly useful and reflect my own methodological aspirations: maintaining an atmosphere of neutrality; avoiding either/or interpretations; an interest in analysis (that relies on interpretation) and the aim to be helpful (Schafer, 1983). Bringing these sensibilities into the context of an empirical qualitative study presents strengths, challenges, and limitation, as others have attested (Hollway, 2006; Frosh, 2007; Frosh and Baraitser, 2008). This chapter looks back on the thesis as a whole, and considers its strengths and limitations, how the findings of the thesis can be applied to the practice of environmental campaigns and communications, and where the study of environmental subjectivity and unconscious processes might go from here.

The present study has aimed to offer a critical analysis of environmental 'apathy'; to provide an alternative to constructions of environmental subjectivity in popular media and environmental communication sectors as apathetic or uncaring. In critiquing the 'myth of apathy' the study has attempted to reframe the debates from 'barriers' to action and perceived absence of care ('apathy'), to how care, concern and attachment to threatened or lost ecological objects may be complicated and impeded by various psychic, social and biographical contexts. In re-shifting the conceptual frameworks about environmental concern as a *presence* (care and concern exist but may be impeded) to be potentially tapped or negotiated, rather than an *absence* (apathy or an uncaring, selfish and pleasure-seeking public), new opportunities emerge for how communicators, educators and activists may design and tailor messaging and outreach efforts. From a position of *presuming a presence of care*, in other words, the 'barriers' perceived may perhaps shift or dissolve into new formations and configurations for effective environmental engagement and citizenry. Opportunities for reparation, using this perspective, may be enabled or facilitated through communications, outreach and new models for environmental community engagement (Lertzman, 2010).

Towards this end, the study was designed as a 'psychosocial' qualitative research project. The result was a combination of conventional methodology tools, such as an online survey, the centrality of research interviewing for generating data and an ethnographically inspired two-month immersion *in situ* with elements of participant observation, with more unconventional, innovative approaches to interviewing informed heavily by the Psychoanalytic Research Interview (PRI) (Cartwright, 2004; Stewart, 2007) and similar approaches in psychoanalytic social science research (Jimenez, 2005; Walkerdine et al., 2006; Stopford, 2004). As I shall discuss, this endeavour to conduct an environmentally sensitive, psychosocial qualitative study was quite successful in certain respects, and also has raised further questions about methodology and directions for further research.

The study has brought attention to the complications involved in the formation of particular environmental subjectivities, and specifically what informs certain kinds of actions and responses, or what Klein would call "reparation". In presenting an analysis of affective themes and environmental object-relations from the data, the study has argued for a different, more 'depth' approach to the psychic and social conflicts bound up in environmental degradation and how we act. In turn, the study has problematised the heavy reliance on quantitative and cognitive-based approaches in environmental psychology. Where most studies investigating environmental concern or 'engagement' are conducted using larger samples, and tools such as surveys, polling, focus groups and one-off interviews, this study used an in-depth approach, spending approximately three hours with each participant, in addition to the use of an online survey. The interviews were conducted with attention to safety and 'containment', and encouraged free association. The

analysis was also conducted using a combination of psychoanalytic narrative analysis and object-relations approaches, with qualitative data analysis in which the material was systematically reviewed (as discussed in the Preface to Part II). As a whole, the project as a critique of 'the myth of apathy' has sought to destablise the conception of 'apathy' as a trope; a taken-for-granted concept that carries assumptions regarding subjectivity (as rational, unitary and self-conscious), but more importantly about the nature of reparation, concern, grief and loss. In critiquing apathy I have sought to help re-establish some measure of dignity for those who may be labeled as 'apathetic' based on certain criteria, and respect for the highly complicated dilemmas such issues can involve.

Summary of chapters

In Chapter 2, I presented a review of pertinent literature in relation to the research topics and concerns; specifically, work that has explicitly engaged with unconscious dimensions of environmental issues and engagement (including work on denial, even if not using an explicitly psychoanalytic framework, e.g. Norgaard 2006 and Stoll-Kleemann et al., 2001). In the presentation of the literature, I demonstrated how the predominance of literature concerning environmental engagement and public perceptions of environmental issues tends to emphasize values, attitudes and beliefs. Specifically, this literature is often constructed in a discourse of 'gaps' or 'barriers' (e.g. Lorenzoni, Nicholson-Cole and Whitmarsh, 2007; Jamieson, 2006), which posits a gap between values or sentiment and practice or action, and engagement is defined as a state of personal involvement comprising cognitive, affective and behavioural aspects (ibid.). In this view, 'barriers' are variables that may render engagement or action as difficult (such as not perceiving the threats as directly relevant, confusion regarding scientific credibility, a sense of powerlessness, or practical barriers such as lacking information or means of acting).[89] I focus on this literature exclusively, as most commonly invoked in communication studies of environmental issues; I am aware of existing literature on identity and culture but did not include, as the emphasis was on the studies currently informing environmental communications practices and theory.[90] I then introduced psychoanalytic writings on the topic of environmental issues, highlighting the work of Harold Searles (1960; 1972) as one of

[89] Dale Jamieson's paper, *An American Paradox* (2006) expresses the oft-used mode of conceptualising the problems of the "apparent contradictions between two sets of attitudes" or "the gap between high-minded words and low-down behavior" as between attitude and action. Jamieson addresses the "gap" as concerning cognitive deficiencies (such as the difficulty sensing the impact of climate change, complex science, issues of credibility also discussed by Krosnick et al. (2006)) and values. This level of analysis certainly addresses the complex contradictions inherent in maintaining a certain way of life and its ideological underpinnings (e.g. progress, status, etc.) and concern about ecological decline (e.g. memberships to conservation organisations, reported concern in polls). However the scope of this purview—attending primarily to attitudes, values and actions as if variables to be isolated from affective, unconscious or irrational processes—only addresses arguable one level of the problem, as this thesis aims to demonstrate.

[90] Studies on culture, identity and environmental agency include e.g. Guldbrandsen and Holland, 2001; Kitchell et al., 2000; Holland, 2003; Clayton and Opotow, 2006.

the few voices in the psychoanalytic field to address the complex unconscious processes involved with awareness of, and responses to, ecological degradation and 'crises'. The chapter demonstrated a clear gap in the literature with regards to psychosocial work (e.g. qualitative research emerging out of the psychosocial or critical psychological field in the U.K.), psychoanalytic theory and environmental communications to adequately address the constellation of affective dimensions informing how people perceive and respond to environmental issues. It is this gap the present study has sought to help fill.

To enable such an endeavour, I turned to psychoanalysis and psychosocial research as providing a theoretical framework for the study. I discuss the theoretical underpinnings in Chapter 3, signalling in particular the valuable work in British object-relations psychoanalysis, and to some degree, relational analytic work in conceptualising the researcher-participant relationship. In my explorations of the literature I have found the work of Christopher Bollas to be particularly useful in his work on the 'object' and specifically how to read our object-relations—that is, our relations with the non-human, environmental object world—as manifest of unconscious processes and meanings. Bollas represents one of the few psychoanalytic thinkers to turn his attention to the material object work, in a similar spirit to Searles, and as such has informed the project in terms of how objects are theorised. I also signal the work of Hanna Segal as being a fundamental inspiration for the project and its aims, particularly her work on terrorism, nuclear threat and political engagement, and her theorisations of apathy as a primitive manic defence (ibid.). In establishing the theoretical underpinnings and orientation of the project, the study becomes more explicitly conceptualised as a psychoanalytically informed, qualitative psychosocial research study. My commitments to the psychoanalytic project—of examining unconscious dynamics, engaging with the data in a particular way, and bringing a particular sensibility and sensitivity to the research interviews—become more clearly outlined.

The methodological design of the project is thus described in considerable detail in Chapter 4, following on from the theoretical purview. I set out the chapter by presenting the process by which I came to develop the mixed-methodology approach, specifically the dialogic method used in the conduct of the interviews. I then provide the rationale for taking certain decisions in the design of the methodology, including the use of a survey, selection and recruitment of participants, ethical guidelines and considerations, and the specific sensitivities brought to bear in the conduct of in-depth, psychoanalytically inspired, dialogic interviewing. Included in the chapter are graphic representations of the data as revealed in the survey responses, to help clarify and make transparent the use of the particular 'sample' of participants. In bringing together the theoretical and methodological considerations—hardly separable, but rather deeply informing one another—the shape, objectives and aspirations of the project become more clear. I then introduce the following five analytic chapters with a brief preface to the second half of the thesis, with a

brief discussion of how the data analysis was conducted, and its presentation as two case studies and three analytic thematic chapters.

Chapters 5 and 6 are case studies aiming to provide a finer grain analysis of the constellation of object-relations, affective investments and narrative content as reflected in my encounters with the material. The decision to produce case studies was also a strategy for managing data that resisted fragmentation; to help preserve some semblance, even partial, of a *gestalt*, I wanted to present these various affective themes and object-relations—such as loss, sadness, ambivalence—as a constellation constituting aspects of 'environmental' subjectivity. The case studies are selected, as discussed in the preface to Part II, by virtue of the richness of the data and what seemed to be strong case studies of complex portraits of environmental concern and engagement. The first case study presents Donald, whose story I found particularly moving in terms of his negotiating strong affective investment and concern for the region and specific ecosystems, as well as the ways in which certain objects (the river, the bay, the creek) carry distinct associations, meanings and affects. His relationship with the children's book, *Paddle-to-the-Sea* (Holling, 1941) presented a compelling illustration of how certain unconscious associations and investments may be managed, conveyed and expressed through the use of an object. As a narrative device, the story presents valuable dimensions to how complex relations with industrial practices and degradation are managed; Paddle-to-the-Sea drifts from one lake into the next, narrowly escaping a saw mill, and catching a ride in a container ship carrying iron ore mined from the nearby mountains. This iron, from Michigan's Marquette Iron Range, the world's richest iron mine, fuelled the Industrial Revolution in the States; the iron was precipitated into the ocean and then raised into mountains almost two billion years ago. In Donald and his affection for the story and the region, the affects of pride, pleasure and excitement concerning regional industrial achievements, with sadness, loss and mourning about its ecological losses and threats, present a rich prism into the contradictions and conflicts inherent in ecological degradation. Finally, the incorporation of the object into the interview context and analysis supports the assertion, discussed below, of the methodological possibilities for bringing more 'materiality'—environmental contexts, objects and so on—into qualitative research practice. The case study helped generate the following observations: first, how particular object-relations, such as the 'tooth accident' illustrate the ways certain affects are introjected into how objects are experienced (e.g. Fox River as abject); the tooth accident also symbolises a greater trauma, of the father's accident, which may be more difficult to bear consciously. The tooth therefore is a 'stand-in' or screen memory for another trauma. Secondly, in exploring deeply powerful levels of concern and attachment to the region's ecology, the case study helped showcase a disjuncture between concern and *certain* reparative actions.

In other words, some forms of agency are 'good' and others are not recognised; the case study illustrated the examples of reparations as expressed in very specific contexts

and practices that are coherent and affectively manageable by the participant (e.g. attending courses on local ecological history, instilling respect for nature in children, spending much time outdoors enjoying the country property). While the so-called 'good' forms of agency focused on by environmental organisations may not be present (e.g. taking more explicitly political action, or involvement with community-based activities), it is evident such practices are not appropriate or suitable for this individual. The case study therefore helps to portray in rather vivid terms how an appearance of 'apathy' defined narrowly by participation in certain practices is not a correlative with levels of concern, reparation or even creativity. Finally the case study was an excellent example of how certain objects (e.g. the book) can help people manage complicated and often contradictory feelings, as well as ambivalence regarding industrial progress and its consequences.

The second case study features an in-depth thematic analysis as well, giving particular attention to specific objects and sites and the significance of their particular meanings for the participant. Through exploring Sally's biographical contexts—having grown up on the shores of Lake Michigan, and relocated as a teenager to Green Bay—I took a keen interest in exploring the ways Sally related with her former home and newfound home, the attending change in circumstances, and the decisions she has made regarding her own clear environmental concerns and commitments. I additionally selected Sally as a case study due to the fact the interviews had presented challenges for me, such as tendency to speak rapidly, breathlessly and at times incoherently punctuated with lots of joking and laughter, and the way the interviews and their tenor shifted over the three sessions. It therefore served as a strong case study for helping me clarify and appreciate the benefits and strengths of the style of interviewing; this continues to be evident in Sally's follow-up email contact with me, and her words of encouragement and support for the project as a whole. The second case study presented in rather clear terms the way in which the participant was balancing highly charged and conflicting investments and feelings regarding environmental issues; she was extremely keen to participate in the study, and followed up later to tell me she had donated to a Great Lakes charity.

At the same time, she went through extraordinary lengths to clarify her decisions to focus her affective energies on music: an area she can *contribute* to in a visceral and clear way. The mantra throughout the case study of "there is nothing I can do" supported the view that a profound sense of being a 'little person', lacking knowledge, expertise and power, can greatly delimit what forms of agency are taken. For this participant, levels of awareness and concern about environmental issues were high, and yet responses were complicated and in some ways, convoluted (e.g. the comment about the Nile having parasites, the discussion of immunity and the moving narratives about her experiences with water contamination). Decisions had been taken in terms of how to modulate this awareness, for example, keeping a book about toxic contamination and yet joking about giving it away, as she could not bear to read it. The overwhelming sense I had from the case study

was of a woman with powerful and strong concerns, who feels the threats viscerally and passionately, and yet who has chosen very specific responses in the sphere of her personal world, as affectively and pragmatically manageable. I also had the sense that all she needed was an *invitation*—in this case, being invited to participate in the study—to tap into these feelings and activate her sense of action (by later donating to the charity, and emailing photographs to me).

The two case studies set up the next three chapters for exploring the specific affective themes and dynamics suggested by the data, through the process of analysis (as described in the Preface to Part II). These chapters—Chapter 6 addressing loss, Chapter 7 addressing ambivalence and splitting, and Chapter 8 addressing reparation, creativity and concern—represent the central affective tenors that potentially help to illuminate and shift the framework for environmental engagement discourses. In surfacing these particular affective themes: loss, mourning and melancholia, ambivalence and splitting and capacities for concern and reparation, a different picture begins to evolve that places affect and unconscious dimensions as more central than the particular attitudes, beliefs or opinions the participants may hold. This approach is complementary to environmental studies and extends theorisations of political agency, citizenship and issues of having a voice, impact, or what Winnicott refers to as "contributing-to" in relation with environmental reparation. It moves conceptions of environmental engagement from perceiving 'gaps' or 'barriers' to action, to different contexts and influences that may inform political or 'environmental engagement', such as early childhood experiences and associations, the way certain objects 'hold' particular self-states or impressions (and are thus related with reparatively or otherwise), and how contradictory and ambivalent feelings and experiences about both loved and abject objects and practices can lead to 'paralysis' or impair the capacities for fuller expressions of one's environmental concern. Several participants noted that opportunities for environmental engagement were so determined and dictated—donating, petitions, etc.—that they exercised their creativity by *not* participating in practices they did not wish to. Rather any reparative impulses were directed into arenas of personal control and creativity, such as buying local organic meat, becoming literate about issues and sharing information with friends and family.

The research problematises an exclusive focus on attitudes and behaviours, that tends to show a 'gap'; something missing and thus implicitly blaming people for their lack of action or 'practices'. The gap or barrier discourse tends to place the problem in the individual and fails to recognise that in fact, often environmental outreach can be alienating; it also misses out on the fact that people may care a great deal about specific environmental issues, but feel themselves as so insignificant in relation to the problems that the notion of repair naturally becomes transmuted into private acts. What is often on offer by environmental groups, signing a petition or donating money, may not feel adequate or appropriate, and more creative aspects of reparation and concern are entirely missed

out. Further, studies on behaviour, attitudes and the 'gap' between values and actions do not take into account the problem of ambivalence and guilt in relation to environmental problems; it presumes a particular subjectivity that is predicated on a rational mode of being. In fact, as my data suggests, notions of good and bad, right and wrong, reparation and destruction are more likely to be quite confused and mixed up, as we live in a context that continues to reap benefits from damaging systems.

Strengths and Limitations

Undertaking a research project using psychoanalytic qualitative methodologies such as the "Psychoanalytic Research Interview" (Cartwright, 2004), brings great excitement and possibility, along with some measure of anxiety and dread[91]. As I have mentioned, in taking a path less clearly delineated and forging a methodological approach drawing from the borderlines of qualitative research and psychoanalytic work, can have its challenging moments. Throughout the process, from inception through to conducting the fieldwork and its eventual analysis and writing-up, I have noted several aspects that seem particularly salient for considering the project's strengths and limitations, and what I may do differently in future research contexts. These aspects include 1) the implications of a labour-intensive methodology and data collection process, specifically the use of iterative, in-depth, dialogic interviews; 2) the ethics, responsibilities and sensitivities involved in conducting such interviews; 3) the emotional dimensions of conducting psychoanalytically informed research, particularly as a sole researcher; 4) the issue of scope in focusing exclusively on narrative analysis and psychic material and 5) relating to the issue of scope and scale, the implications for translating the findings into practice and application, when using a small data set (relatively), which aims to produce in-depth, richly textured case study analysis, rather than generalisable findings.

The decision to undertake a psychosocial approach was informed by a basic desire to probe deeper and perhaps with greater sensitivity into the nature (and possibly painful) aspects of how ecological degradation touches our lives. Having surveyed numerous studies addressing this topic, with the use of surveys, polls, focus groups or more ethnographic approaches, I wanted to employ a decidedly more psychically and affectively informed sensibility. I was aware in-depth interviews would be involved; however it was only after I had met with Dr. Luis Jimenez and Professor Valerie Walkerdine in the Cardiff School of Social Sciences, as a potential research assistant for their ESRC-funded research psychosocial study in Ebbv Vale, that I became aware of multiple, iterative research interviewing.[92] According to Jiminez and Walkerdine, the notion of conducting only one or

[91] A similar sentiment is expressed in Phoebe Beedell's aptly titled, "Charting the clear waters and murky depths" (2009).

[92] ESRC Identities and Social Actions Programme, Regenerating Identities: Subjectivity in Transition in a South Wales Workforce, 2004–2007. RES-148-25-0033

two interviews was not intelligible in the context of psychosocial and psychoanalytic interests (2006). This view was fully endorsed by Duncan Cartwright, with whom I also had personal communications, who advises to conduct a *minimum* of three interviews per participant (2004). I thus found myself facing a labour intensive study, given the fact I would be the sole researcher and transcriber of the interviews. This aspect necessarily impacted the related points above, concerning scale and scope. I had to adjust the number of participants in terms of what would be feasible according to the particular constraints of schedule, budget and resources; while I had hoped to interview around twenty participants, and had also wanted to interview different constituencies (stakeholders) in the region (e.g. industry staff, scientists, fishermen, and so on) to gain a fuller picture of the various modes of relating with the natural resources and place, I was not able to. Further, given the enormous amount of data generated from approximately thirty hours of interviews, I faced a surplus of rich material that I could not possibly engage in its entirety. This was a painful realization as I progressed through the analysis.

Second, it was evident that the style of the study introduced ethical concerns, as the psychosocial approach "differs from more traditional forms of social science in that it uses a different ontology of the self; whether you call this psychoanalytic, Kleinian, or relational, it is about depth, in contrast to the rational, constructed, conscious self" (Clarke and Hoggett, 2009, p. 21). As I have discussed in Chapter 4 and Chapter 5, the recognition of my own emotional associations, projections and countertransference are regarded as part of the process, and my ability to be as transparent and aware of such processes would distinguish my conduct as capable and competent. In other words, the recognition of the centrality of anxiety, in both my participants and in myself, and the oft-complicated ways in which we manage anxiety, had to have a place in how I approached and thought about the work. This particular commitment translated into the practices keeping of field study notes and journals, regular communications with my supervisor and ongoing support in my personal psychotherapy, which has remained a constant since 2006. Additionally, as I also discussed in Chapter 4, the ethical concerns were related through my conduct with participants, particularly in terms of being 'present', holding the space (the neutrality Schafer advocates, but also a mood of active listening and sympathy), and frequent 'checking in' to ensure the participants are feeling safe and consenting at every step of the way. For myself, another very important ethically informed practice was the simple act of 'feeding back' to participants both what I had heard and retained from our previous sessions, and remarking on what I wanted to hear more about (or clarification). In this sense I did not remove myself entirely from the process as 'objective researcher' but involved myself in a way that conveyed to the participants, what they had to say was *important*.

This mode of conduct, I feel, was an enormous strength for the project and my development as a researcher. I gained confidence and realised that in fact, I was fully able to hold the space safely and establish trust, rapport, and mutual respect. Every single

participant, with the exception of the last participant (Jessica) who did not show up for our final session, remarked on how much they had benefited and enjoyed the series of interviews; some participants elaborated on this more than others, such as Howard to exclaimed when hearing I interviewed ten people, that he is rarely so "lucky". There are a few participants I have maintained contact with following the interviews, such as Geoff and his wife who have invited me to come visit when I am next in the area, Howard who kindly sent me several photographs and a scanned image of a painting he refers to in the interviews, and Sally who has sent me her "prayers" for the successful completion of the thesis, along with images of the "waves poster" she refers to in the interviews. Every participant expressed genuine interest in the topic and in my own situation, and commented that the (open-ended, free associative, dialogic) style of interviewing was refreshing and valuable for reflection. The limitations of this approach, however, involved the emotional toll on myself as researcher, and the fact I spent much of the time in Green Bay feeling exhausted and drained. I was quite certain this feeling state was relating to the energetic aspect of carefully attentive, dialogic interviewing (in which, rather than using a set series of questions, relied on my capacities to follow 'tracks' and 'traces' in the narratives).

It also related to what I feel was the countertransferential dimension of the research, in terms of what I was 'picking up' on from the participants. For example during my interviews with Victoria I felt often very sad and quite depressed; with others I felt more agitated. Naturally this was the result of the complex interplay between my own encounter with the participants, the place and the material; however it cannot be denied that this method of interviewing and analysis carries its own particular burdens. For this reason, I began to feel very strongly two things: first, psychosocial (psychoanalytic, relational, dialogic, Kleinian, etc.) qualitative research should *not* be conducted as a sole venture, but with the support and collegiality of a team or cohort; and second, the researcher must either have been in long-term psychotherapy and have some form of support (e.g. similar to the supervision used in clinical training), or be a trained psychotherapist or practitioner in a related field. These points are part of a larger series of controversies (cf. Clarke and Hoggett (2009), and the special issue of *Psychoanalysis, Culture and Society* (2008) featuring related debates in psychosocial research. I was grateful to my twenty-plus years experience in various kinds of psychotherapy and as a journalist specializing in interviews, however the experience has left me with serious ethical concerns regarding the training needed to responsibly and adequately undertake research that is concerned with unconscious processes.

Finally, with such intensive emphasis and focus on the psychic dimensions of my research topic and interests, I was not able to fully engage with the related and vitally important dimensions of environmental research, which in my view must take account of multiple contexts, such as cultural constructions of nature (an area of scholarship in cultural geography and cultural studies that exploded in the early to mid 1990s, e.g.

Cronon, 1995; Soper, 1995; Robertson et al., 1996; Plumwood, 1993), socio-cultural analyses of environmental issues (e.g. Berland and Slack,1994; Slack, 2008) and industrial historical accounts, particularly relating to the Green Bay region (Summers, 2006). Further, I was well aware of vitally important dimensions of class, gender, demographics (for example, age, generational positions), and race or ethnic factors that exerted great influence on the material and could have afforded multiple, richly textured levels of analysis and interpretations. I was aware of the fact, for example, there were patterns emerging, even in the very small sample of participants, between the female and male accounts of experiences in nature (for example, men tended to regard nature as sites for boundary and limits-testing, social male bonding; women tended to associate nature with family, relationships and sense of security or safety, or lack thereof). I was faced with certain decisions early on *regarding* the focus and scope of the project; environmental studies are necessarily systemic and interdisciplinary, so omitting any dimensions felt difficult but necessary for the purposes of successfully completing the thesis. I chose therefore to focus almost exclusively on the *psychic* and *affective* dimensions of the data and fieldwork, knowing I was not able to fully engage with the *social* and cultural dimensions that constitute the fuller and more comprehensive picture of environmental engagement and agency. In focusing on the psychic dimensions—in this case, affective themes concerning loss, mourning, melancholia, as well as reparation and contributing—and exploring object-relations in a particular way (including environmental objects), I was never presuming this level of analysis supplants or replaces insights and analyses generated through political, sociological, cultural, economic studies and so on. Rather, it is my view that such a focus can become a viable *additional* and enriching dimension to these more conventional approaches for understanding environmental issues and psychology today.

Thus, in summary, using a 'depth' approach to qualitative research and focusing on affective dimensions affords very specific strengths, opportunities and limitations. For a study involving a sole researcher (myself), the issue of labour is a limiting factor, as is the isolation of conducting emotionally involving research without the support of a team, cohort or support group. Further, for a study concerning nature-culture relations, more environmental and historical contexts are required for a more comprehensive level of analysis. That said, in focusing closely on a 'micro-analysis' of narratives in terms of affective dimensions, environmental object-relations and themes, a greater level of detail and fine-grain analysis is possible.

Implications for practice: from barriers to opportunities

The research project was undertaken explicitly and from the beginning with an intention for generating valuable data for the practice of effective environmental communications, for the Great Lakes region and beyond. If we refer to the introductory Chapter 1, the central problem the research study has sought to address, through a psychosocial enquiry,

concerns *how people experience environmental issues emotionally, affectively, existentially*, and how certain affective unconscious processes such as anxiety, loss, and fear may impair or complicate effective modes of agency and action. It is these forms of environmentally-directed agency and action that environmental professionals are so chagrined to find lacking in the majority of the public in the United States (and most industrialised counties). As much of environmental communications as a discipline of research and a practice-based sector is concerned with outreach, advocacy and developing effective means of mobilising particular forms of responses—carbon use mitigation, preservation and conservation and the like—the issue of unconscious motivators and processes underlying responses to such issues is paramount.

In terms of specific implications this project has for the practice of environmental communication, campaign strategies and overall efforts to mobilise more effective political responses for ecological sustainability, there are (at least) three clear arenas of impact. All three arenas for impact draw directly from the experience and process of data analysis and fieldwork and the theoretical underpinnings informing the entire project. They draw from the following insights developed through the study, particularly the ideas discussed in the analytic Chapters 7, 8 and 9:

(1) The data derived concerning environmental attitudes, values and behaviour does not adequately reflect 'what is really going on' in relation to environmental problems, particularly data derived through surveys, polling, focus groups, and must be critically interrogated;
(2) Levels of concern regarding specific ecological issues or degradation, both locally and globally, are not commensurate with levels of action or otherwise observable forms of agency;
(3) 'Apathy' is a term to describe a particular affective state that is likely to obscure difficult, painful or conflicting feelings, thoughts, or beliefs, and is not an adequate descriptor for environmental subjectivity or political engagement;
(4) For cultivating capacities for reparation (or what Winnicott refers to as "concern") and reparative impulses, we need to look more carefully at how the environmental sector, through its communications practices and its structures for action, allow for contributing and creativity.

In Chapter 7 I argued for attending to the undercurrents of sadness and loss, and the implications for mourning and melancholia. I suggested that if in fact there is unresolved mourning, particularly in relation to the loss of specific environmental objects, whether the objects signify certain memories, feeling-states, or appreciation for the objects on various levels, this would present potentially profound implications for the capacity for reparation. More specifically, if *melancholia* emerges as a core affective theme or psychic process in relation to environmental losses, then the issue of environmental engagement and response becomes complicated. This problematises epistemic and ontological assumptions concerning subjectivity: specifically the focus on attitudes, values

and behaviour that currently inform much of environmental communications research (if it engages with psychology at all; much of it does not). The notion that a mood of mourning and loss may be running throughout much of how environmental issues are experienced has implications for how communications are conducted. If we look to psychoanalytic literature on these (often unconscious) processes, the 'work of mourning' is supported through various practices in psychotherapy and community activities; as Leader (2007) points out, mourning is often a social phenomenon, and without the social context (including recognizing and acknowledging the losses), mourning can be impeded. Communications practices enter the arena in terms of developing means for acknowledging the loss and possible sadness, so it may be brought to awareness and perhaps processed more effectively.

The data analysis revealed to me many things, but the most powerful and moving observation coming through, starting with the first interviews, was how complicated and often un-straightforward ways *concern* and *reparation* can be expressed. I became aware of how reductive and superficial most analyses of environmental concern tend to be, given the often are not based in-depth methodologies that—again, are labour intensive—but yield richer data. With this in mind, I began to critique my own internal constructions of the 'apathetic subject' and began to see it as full of cracks and fissures. The construct of the apathetic subject crumbled before my eyes as I met with people who clearly struggle on various levels with often deeply held and painful associations with their local environmental situation. Therefore how environmental activism is conceptualised became reworked in my mind, as reflected in the analysis in Chapter 9, as narrowly defining what activism and agency is, and more importantly, how determined such structures for action and agency can be.

Therefore, environmental communications and campaigning strategies must begin to take account of the issue of contribution—what Winnicott (1963) refers to as the basis of concern, the ability to "contribute-to"—and offer up a more collaborative mode for engagement (reparation) that can allow for *creativity, concern and contributions* to be animated.

Taking a psychoanalytically informed approach to the study and research of environmental advocacy, communications and outreach, as demonstrated through this study, necessarily draws on conceptions of subjectivity that can allow for contradiction, ambivalence, guilt, loss, pain and sorrow, mourning and melancholia. It is a conception of subjectivity that allows for fluidity, for contexts and biographical backgrounds, and the ways in which our early life experiences often deeply inform important object-relations, *including* nature, ecology, and existential belonging. Such an approach gives credence to the presence of unconscious processes as informing attitudes, values and behaviours, and recognises these them as dynamic and context-specific. As I have argued (Lertzman, 2008a), a cogent environmental communications theory and practice *must* account for

unconscious defences to anxiety, such as denial, projection, splitting and paralysis; and it must account for the ontological and existential dimensions of environmental problems and their consequences and impacts.

Using a psychoanalytic approach to communications and political actions also raises the ongoing question, addressed in this study, of the 'portability' of the theory to practice. If psychoanalysts are describing processes and dynamics that are coherent in the clinical context and consulting room, then the capacities for translating into different contexts are complicated. While we wish to avoid simplistic attempts to 'cut and paste' certain theoretical positions and clinical practices into non-clinical contexts, I believe there is tremendous opportunity. For example, if the view is taken that perhaps one strategy for helping to soften defences is to provide a supportive, non-judgemental space, e.g. the 'holding environment', then we can creatively consider communications in the context of support and 'containment', either actually (e.g. modelled in Cambridge Carbon Footprint's 'Carbon Conversations'; see Randall, 2009) or rhetorically in acknowledging possible emotional responses, e.g. "We know it is scary (overwhelming, frustrating, upsetting, etc.), but we are in this together" messaging. Further, if we are to take seriously Winnicott's work on capacities for concern and the vital role of creativity and contributing, then campaign efforts can incorporate modes for engagement that draw on and *invite* creative participation, rather than transmitting prescriptive and directive actions such as donating, signing a petition or showing up for a rally—actions which may not 'work' affectively or practically for many concerned populations (as illustrated vividly in the narratives of Howard, Scott and Donald).

My suggestions for implementation and impact in the field of practice are tentative and speculative; what is required is the opportunity to pilot actual environmental communication campaigns and strategies informed by the suggestions and thoughts above and to evaluate them accordingly. As yet there has been no large-scale psychosocial research study to provide more comprehensive data regarding the role of unconscious processes and affective investments in environmental issues. (In fact the field of psychosocial studies has yet—at the time of this writing—to adequately engage with the domain of environmental issues.) The need for future research in this area is urgent, and I do not believe the psychosocial research findings can be adequately conducted on a small scale to attain the necessary level of impact. In terms of informing policy decisions and governmental leadership for designing more effective public information and outreach campaigns, there would need to be larger projects, comprised of research teams, ideally in diverse regions, demography and populations; and this would require adequate funding levels. Further I feel the psychosocial research endeavour in relation to environmental issues and concerns would be strengthened profoundly through the use of interdisciplinary teams, drawing from geography, ecological sciences, environmental history and social theory, anthropology and humanities. In terms of researching affect and environmental threats, the arts and

poetic fields must be incorporated more actively, as the work of Cape Farewell and related arts projects can attest (Lertzman, 2008b; Jeremijenko, 2009).

It is my hope this project (as a future monograph, papers, presentations to communities of practice, including a site visit with environmental organisations in Green Bay), can serve as a rallying cry to the field of psychoanalysts and psychosocial researchers; as well as a bridge for connecting with the field of environmental communications practice. Already it has started in the form of a forthcoming white paper published by WWF-UK, "Defence Mechanisms and Climate Change" (Lertzman, 2010). The PhD thesis was always conceived as an argument for a more 'critical ecopsychology'—an ecopsychology to take account of broader contexts and influences, ideology and unconscious formations (Lertzman, 2005). Until the environmental sector begins to fully come to terms with the human capacities for unconscious responses to anxieties and threats, as articulated a century ago by Freud, I am afraid it will be handicapped in its ability to reach out to those with deep concern, creativity and reparative energies; energies that need active facilitation, support, encouragement and most of all, respect and compassion.

APPENDICES

Appendix A

Ethical consent form

Participant Information Sheet (Interviews):
Experiencing the Great Lakes in Green Bay, Wisconsin

I would like to invite you to participate in my research project, that explores how people experience their local environment in Green Bay. The following will give you a brief overview of what this means for you, and the information you decide to give me. Before you decide to participate, it is important for you to understand why the research is being done, what is involved, and what will happen to the data. Please take the time to read the following information carefully. Do not hesitate to discuss the study with other people if you choose to.

Why am I doing this research?
There have been various studies on what people think about various environmental problems, however there have been very few that take the time to understand the full picture of how we live with and experience our immediate environments. Green Bay and its surroundings provide an ideal place to explore these themes, due to its proximity to the Great Lakes and its history as a center of industry, agriculture and water recreation. I am interested in meeting with a range of people, with diverse backgrounds and interests.

Who can take part?
I am inviting people who have lived in the region for some time, and including those who may ***not*** have any expressed interest or concern in the environment, to participate. I am interested in the experiences of people living and working in Green Bay: life experiences, what it was like to grow up in the region, and what it is like to live by the Great Lakes, the Fox River and Green Bay. *This is not about environmentalism per se, nor are there any expectations regarding your feelings, views or experiences.*

What would be involved?
If you choose to participate, I would like to discuss your experiences of living in the area in a relaxed, and open way. We will meet for 3 sessions, and each would last exactly 45 minutes to 1 hour. I will ask you to speak a bit about your life in Green Bay, and it will be very open and easy going. You can speak as long as you like, and I will not interrupt. At any point you can choose to end the interview or not answer a question. I may ask you to share personal or family photographs, if you so choose to, in later sessions. I may also introduce the use of images, such as photographs of the region in the past and present, and discuss them. The interview will be audio-taped, so that I have a record of what was said, and I will take some notes for follow-up in subsequent sessions.

What will I do with the information?
I will transcribe the interview, and if you are interested I will give you a copy of the transcript. The transcript will only be read and used by me and not be used for any other purpose. The information from these discussions will be the basis of my PhD thesis which will be assessed in order for me to gain the PhD degree. The transcripts might also be used to write and publish articles in academic journals. You are welcome to see the final thesis and/ or a copy of the articles before they are published.

Will everything you say to me be kept private?
You can say as little or as much as you wish. The transcript will be kept in a secure place, and only myself and my PhD supervisor in Cardiff will have access. In the transcript the names of yourself as well as those people who you mention will be changed so you will *not be identifiable.*

What if you change your mind about taking part?
If you decide to take part in the interviews, then this is your voluntary decision, therefore you are also free to withdraw from the study at any point you wish, without giving a reason.

Who am I?
My name is Renee Lertzman, and I am conducting my PhD at Cardiff University, in the United Kingdom. I am supervised by a Professor in the School of Social Sciences. The research has the approval of the School Research Ethics Committee and is funded by the Biodiversity Project, a small organization in Madison. *The property of the work is entirely mine, and does not belong to the organization, Matousek and Associates or my university.* If you would be interested in taking part or have any questions concerning the research, feel free to contact me at 920-264-4548 or email: rlertzman@igc.org. I would be happy to answer any questions, and I look forward to meeting you.

Consent Form: Experiences of Environment in Green Bay
Name of Researcher: Renee Lertzman, MA

	Please Initial
1. I confirm that I have read and understood the information sheet for the above study. I have had the opportunity to consider the information, ask questions and have had these answered satisfactorily.	
2. I understand that my participation is voluntary, and that I am free to withdraw at any time, without giving a reason.	
3. I agree to take part in the study, and to be interviewed for up to three or four sessions of one hour each.	

_____ _____
Name of Participant Date

_____ _____
Name of Person Taking Consent Date

2 copies: 1 for participant, and 1 for research file.

Appendix B

Screening preamble

Online Survey, administered by Matousek & Associates, October 2007

Preamble/introduction

You are invited to participate in an innovative study that explores how people in Green Bay experience their local environment. This study is for a student completing a research project for a doctoral degree, which has broader implications for how populations in the Great Lakes feel about and are involved with their Lakes, water and broader environmental concerns. This student is not an environmental professional, nor is she funded by any governmental or environmental groups. She is not looking for any particular level of knowledge, awareness or expertise. She is conducting this research to gain a better understanding of how people in Green Bay understand and experience their local and broader environment.

All of the information provided will be confidential, your identity will be anonymous, and at any time you can decline to participate.

In offering your valuable time for interviews, you are contributing to a research study which may have broader implications for understanding the different ways people feel about, and make sense of, various current environmental issues and concerns. in the purpose of meeting with people for interviews is to help provide insight and information for Green Bay's community, in light of the issues relating to the Great Lakes, the Fox River Basin and Green Bay itself.

In completing the following survey, you are agreeing to be contacted for follow-up by phone to allow us to discuss the possibility of setting up future interviews. If you and the student agree to meet for the sessions, you will receive a participant information sheet and a consent form to sign.

Your responses and time are greatly appreciated.

Matousek & Associates

Appendix C

Screening questions

Demographic Parameters
> 18 years of age
Exclude environmental professions if possible (sciences OK, but not specific to environment)

Basic Demographic Information to Collect:
Occupation
Age
Education level
Length of time living in Green Bay or in a Great Lakes region
What part of Green Bay do you live in (choice of regions)
Would you be willing to be interviewed over 3-4 sessions, in your own home or at Matousek and Associates?

Level of Environmental Awareness/Consciousness Screen:

1. I think about environmental problems (including local issues, or those in other parts of the world)...

☐ never
☐ rarely
☐ occasionally
☐ seasonally
☐ depends on events
☐ frequently
☐ not sure

IF ANSWER NEVER/NOT SURE, TERMINATE.

1a. What specific 'issues' come most to mind for you?
(e.g. climate change, water quality in Lakes, threat to species far away, local biodiversity, etc)

_____

(FILL IN BLANK)

2. Are these topics ever discussed in your family?
☐ Yes
☐ No
☐ Rarely
☐ Not sure

3. Are these topics ever discussed among your friends, or colleagues (e.g. work, church, etc)?
☐ Yes
☐ No
☐ Rarely
☐ Not sure

4. If you answered yes to questions 2 or 3, can you please give a brief example of such a discussion or exchange?

_____(FILL IN THE BLANK)

Media Screen:
How do you get your news and information? [GENERAL IS OK]
[Check all that apply]

☐ Books
☐ Magazine articles (what magazines)
☐ Scientific articles
☐ Newspapers (which ones)
☐ Radio (what stations)
☐ Television (what stations/news programs)
☐ Videos
☐ Courses/Training/Workshops
☐ Own observation and experience
☐ Friends
☐ Memberships in interest groups (which ones?)
☐ Movies
☐ Internet
☐ Discussions with friends and other people
☐ Rallies or political demonstrations
☐ Spending time by or near the water
☐ Council hearings
☐ Other (please specify)

Short Answer Questions:

1. Can you recall the most recent occurrence of hearing about an environmental issue? What was the issue? Where was it? What were you doing?

2. If your feelings or behavior towards the environment have changed over time, what has influenced these changes? Please rate the extent to which the following sources of information or events may have changed your feelings about the environment:

☐ Books, magazines, articles, newspapers (please provide details)
☐ Radio and television (please provide details)
☐ Courses
☐ Conversations with friends or family (please specify)
☐ Local events, incidents (please specify)
☐ First-hand experience (please specify)

3. Off the top of your head, what issues do you think are most pressing for residents in Green Bay? This does not have to include the environment.

Appendix D

Survey responses: 9 participants

(See following pages for individual survey responses.)

Jeff

Occupation	Middle mgmt. - retired
Involved in a science-related field	No
What area of science do you specialize in?	—
Age	65–74
Education	Some college
Length of time Green Bay area	11 or more years
Part of Green Bay	City of Green Bay
Willing to participate	Yes
Frequency of thinking of environmental issues	Frequently
Discussed with family	Yes
Discussed with friends/colleagues	Yes
Can you please give a brief example of such a discussion or exchange.	Discussion about health and effects of environment on the body as relates to people in group. usually in social environment.

How do you get your news and information?

✓ Books	× Courses/ Training/ Workshops	× Memberships in interest groups	× Rallies or political demonstrations
✓ Magazine articles	✓ Own observation and experience	× Movies	✓ Spending time by or near the water
× Scientific articles	✓ Friends	× Internet	× Council hearings
✓ Newspapers		✓ Discussions with friends and other people	× Other
× Radio			
✓ Television			
× Videos			

Magazines read	Time, U.S. News and World Report, Consumer Reports, Forbes, AOPA Pilot, AARP, Popular Science, Diesel Truck, Wisconsin Natural Resources, Playboy
Newspapers read	Milwaukee Journal Sentinal (daily), Green Bay Press Gazette (Sunday)
Radio stations	—
Television stations	ABC local and national evening news, PBS Newshour With Jim Lehrer, The Daily Show, Meet The Press, This Week With George Stephenopolis(?), Face The Nation
Interest groups	—

Thinking about the most recent occurence of an environmental issue, please answer the following questions:

What was the issue?	Cleanup of the Fox River.
Where was it?	Issue of what type of cleanup and where to dispose of the spoils.
What were you doing?	?
Have your feelings or behavior towards the environment changed over time?	Yes
What has influenced these changes?	As I grow older, realizing the influence and effects of environment on health.

Rate Impact:

Books, magazines, articles, newspapers	6
Radio and television	5
Courses	6
Conversations with friends and family	3
Local events, incidents	6
First-hand experience	7

Off the top of your head, what issues do you think are most pressing for residents in the Green Bay area?	Education/schools, retention of industry/jobs, illness "hot area" (parkinsin's, etc.).
If you were asked about environmental issues, which specific environmental issues come to mind?	Global warming. Air and water quality.

Victoria

Occupation	Housewife
Involved in a science-related field	No
What area of science do you specialize in?	—
Age	45–54
Education	Associates degree
Length of time Green Bay area	11 or more years
Part of Green Bay	DePere
Willing to participate	Yes
Frequency of thinking of environmental issues	Rarely
Discussed with family	Rarely
Discussed with friends/colleagues	Rarely
Can you please give a brief example of such a discussion or exchange.	—

How do you get your news and information?

× Books	× Courses/ Training/ Workshops	× Memberships in interest groups	× Rallies or political demonstrations
× Magazine articles	× Own observation and experience	× Movies	× Spending time by or near the water
× Scientific articles	× Friends	× Internet	× Council hearings
✓ Newspapers		× Discussions with friends and other people	× Other
× Radio			
✓ Television			
× Videos			

Magazines read	—
Newspapers read	greenbay press gazzet
Radio stations	—
Television stations	5
Interest groups	—

Thinking about the most recent occurence of an environmental issue, please answer the following questions:

What was the issue?	Global warming
Where was it?	everywhere
What were you doing?	nothing
Have your feelings or behavior towards the environment changed over time?	No
What has influenced these changes?	—

Rate Impact:

Books, magazines, articles, newspapers	4
Radio and television	5
Courses	2
Conversations with friends and family	3
Local events, incidents	4
First-hand experience	7

Off the top of your head, what issues do you think are most pressing for residents in the Green Bay area?	cleaning up the fox river
If you were asked about environmental issues, which specific environmental issues come to mind?	water pollution, air pollution, landfills

Sally

Occupation	Tradesman/Laborer
Involved in a science-related field	—
What area of science do you specialize in?	—
Age	45–54
Education	Some college
Length of time Green Bay area	11 or more years
Part of Green Bay	City of Green Bay
Willing to participate	Yes
Frequency of thinking of environmental issues	DependsOnEvents
Discussed with family	Yes
Discussed with friends/colleagues	Yes
Can you please give a brief example of such a discussion or exchange.	if it comes up at work. I share what I think

How do you get your news and information?

- × Books
- ✓ Magazine articles
- ✓ Scientific articles
- ✓ Newspapers
- ✓ Radio
- ✓ Television
- × Videos
- × Courses/ Training/ Workshops
- ✓ Own observation and experience
- × Friends
- × Memberships in interest groups
- × Movies
- × Internet
- ✓ Discussions with friends and other people
- × Rallies or political demonstrations
- ✓ Spending time by or near the water
- × Council hearings
- × Other

Magazines read	womans day, O oprah, real simple,
Newspapers read	green bay press gazette, herbal newspaper also
Radio stations	102.7, 91.5, 90.5, 88.1, 89.3,104.3 FM 1280am
Television stations	abc, nbc, cbs, cnn, cnbc
Interest groups	—

Thinking about the most recent occurence of an environmental issue, please answer the following questions:

What was the issue?	water contamination for bottled water
Where was it?	several places
What were you doing?	trying to figure out which brand of bottled water I could drink
Have your feelings or behavior towards the environment changed over time?	Yes
What has influenced these changes?	unable to drink the brand of bottled water I used to drink due to contamination

Rate Impact:

Books, magazines, articles, newspapers	5
Radio and television	5
Courses	1
Conversations with friends and family	5
Local events, incidents	5
First-hand experience	5

Off the top of your head, what issues do you think are most pressing for residents in the Green Bay area?	wires being buried. A person does not know if these wires are in your back yard or the neighbors yard. If they are up above you can see and avoid living there.
If you were asked about environmental issues, which specific environmental issues come to mind?	pollution in water, dioxins, growth hormones to all animals being raised for food consumption

Howard

Occupation	Tradesman/Laborer
Involved in a science-related field	—
What area of science do you specialize in?	—
Age	45–54
Education	High school graduate
Length of time Green Bay area	11 or more years
Part of Green Bay	DePere
Willing to participate	Yes
Frequency of thinking of environmental issues	Depends on events
Discussed with family	Yes
Discussed with friends/colleagues	Yes
Can you please give a brief example of such a discussion or exchange.	we have talked about using less water for normal household chores and the fact that all the water that rains down in city and suberbs doesn't drain through the soil to replenish the water supply but is piped directly to the rivers.

How do you get your news and information?

× Books	× Courses/ Training/ Workshops	× Memberships in interest groups	× Rallies or political demonstrations
✓ Magazine articles	✓ Own observation and experience	× Movies	✓ Spending time by or near the water
✓ Scientific articles	✓ Friends	✓ Internet	× Council hearings
× Newspapers		× Discussions with friends and other people	× Other
× Radio			
✓ Television			
× Videos			

Magazines read	popular science
Newspapers read	—
Radio stations	—
Television stations	history channel, hgtv,home,public broadcast,discovery,national channels,ect
Interest groups	—

Thinking about the most recent occurence of an environmental issue, please answer the following questions:

What was the issue?	recyling
Where was it?	home
What were you doing?	cleaning out my car with all my water bottles that needed to be recyled
Have your feelings or behavior towards the environment changed over time?	Yes
What has influenced these changes?	general public awareness

Rate Impact:

Books, magazines, articles, newspapers	5
Radio and television	4
Courses	2
Conversations with friends and family	4
Local events, incidents	4
First-hand experience	4

Off the top of your head, what issues do you think are most pressing for residents in the Green Bay area?	pcb clean up of fox river
If you were asked about environmental issues, which specific environmental issues come to mind?	clean drinkable water, recycling, clean energy, pollution of all types

Heather

Occupation	Clerical/service
Involved in a science-related field	—
What area of science do you specialize in?	—
Age	35–44
Education	Associates degree
Length of time Green Bay area	11 or more years
Part of Green Bay	City of Green Bay
Willing to participate	Yes
Frequency of thinking of environmental issues	Occasionally
Discussed with family	Yes
Discussed with friends/colleagues	Yes
Can you please give a brief example of such a discussion or exchange.	the amount of pollution from boats in the water

How do you get your news and information?

× Books	× Courses/ Training/ Workshops	× Memberships in interest groups	× Rallies or political demonstrations
✓ Magazine articles	✓ Own observation and experience	× Movies	× Spending time by or near the water
× Scientific articles	× Friends	× Internet	× Council hearings
✓ Newspapers		✓ Discussions with friends and other people	× Other
× Radio			
✓ Television			
× Videos			

Magazines read	time, national geographic
Newspapers read	local
Radio stations	—
Television stations	local chanels and discovery, history
Interest groups	—

Thinking about the most recent occurence of an environmental issue, please answer the following questions:

What was the issue?	water quality of our lakes and bays for swimming
Where was it?	news
What were you doing?	watching the news
Have your feelings or behavior towards the environment changed over time?	Yes
What has influenced these changes?	seeing the changes in our lakes, rivers and bays

Rate Impact:

Books, magazines, articles, newspapers	6
Radio and television	6
Courses	2
Conversations with friends and family	4
Local events, incidents	7
First-hand experience	5

Off the top of your head, what issues do you think are most pressing for residents in the Green Bay area?	clean up of the river and bay
If you were asked about environmental issues, which specific environmental issues come to mind?	our water, lakes, rivers

Dana

Occupation	Middle management
Involved in a science-related field	No
What area of science do you specialize in?	—
Age	45–54
Education	high school graduate
Length of time Green Bay area	11 or more years
Part of Green Bay	City of Green Bay
Willing to participate	Yes
Frequency of thinking of environmental issues	Occasionally
Discussed with family	Yes
Discussed with friends/colleagues	Rarely
Can you please give a brief example of such a discussion or exchange.	The importance of reusing or recycling to conserve land fill space

How do you get your news and information?

- × Books
- ✓ Magazine articles
- × Scientific articles
- ✓ Newspapers
- ✓ Radio
- ✓ Television
- × Videos
- × Courses/training/ workshops
- × Own observation and experience
- × Friends
- × Memberships in interest groups
- × Movies
- × Internet
- ✓ Discussions with friends and other people
- × Rallies or political demonstrations
- × Spending time by or near the water
- × Council hearings
- × Other

Magazines read	Newsweek, Vanity Fair
Newspapers read	Green Bay Press Gazette, USA Today
Radio stations	WIXX, 99.7
Television stations	Too many to list
Interest groups	—

Thinking about the most recent occurence of an environmental issue, please answer the following questions:

What was the issue?	Global warming
Where was it?	Artic
What were you doing?	Watching TV
Have your feelings or behavior towards the environment changed over time?	Yes
What has influenced these changes?	Older and wiser?

Rate Impact:

Books, magazines, articles, newspapers	5
Radio and television	4
Courses	3
Conversations with friends and family	3
Local events, incidents	4
First-hand experience	3

Off the top of your head, what issues do you think are most pressing for residents in the Green Bay area?	Employment
If you were asked about environmental issues, which specific environmental issues come to mind?	Recycling

Ray

Occupation	Disabled : stay-at-home-father
Involved in a science-related field	Yes
What area of science do you specialize in?	paper science engineering
Age	45–54
Education	Associates degree
Length of time Green Bay area	11 or more years
Part of Green Bay	Freedom
Willing to participate	Yes
Frequency of thinking of environmental issues	Frequently
Discussed with family	Yes
Discussed with friends/colleagues	Yes
Can you please give a brief example of such a discussion or exchange.	declining water tables, groundwater contamination, industrial pollution, Superfund sites, uncontrolled growth in SE US and future projected water needs, et al

How do you get your news and information?

× Books	× Courses/ Training/ Workshops	× Memberships in interest groups	× Rallies or political demonstrations
✓ Magazine articles	× Own observation and experience	× Movies	× Spending time by or near the water
× Scientific articles	× Friends	✓ Internet	× Council hearings
✓ Newspapers		✓ Discussions with friends and other people	× Other
× Radio			
× Television			
× Videos			

Magazines read	Newsweek, Time, Natl Geographic, Smithsonian, Esquire
Newspapers read	Wall Street Journal
Radio stations	—
Television stations	—
Interest groups	—

Thinking about the most recent occurence of an environmental issue, please answer the following questions:

What was the issue?	capping on the remaining concentrations of PCB in the "end of the Fox River"
Where was it?	news conference in Green Bay, I believe I saw Rebecca Katers speaking
What were you doing?	family dinner time
Have your feelings or behavior towards the environment changed over time?	Yes
What has influenced these changes?	maturity

Rate Impact:

Books, magazines, articles, newspapers	4
Radio and television	4
Courses	8
Conversations with friends and family	4
Local events, incidents	5
First-hand experience	6

Off the top of your head, what issues do you think are most pressing for residents in the Green Bay area?	People who are not citizens and are in fact un-documented, living here illegally, consuming precious community resources at taxpayer expense while negatively impacting overall quality of life.
If you were asked about environmental issues, which specific environmental issues come to mind?	preservation of water resources

Scott

Occupation Tradesman/Laborer
Involved in a science-related field —
What area of science do you specialize in? —
Age 25–34
Education Some college
Length of time Green Bay area 11 or more years
Part of Green Bay DePere
Willing to participate Yes
Frequency of thinking of environmental issues Depends on events
Discussed with family Yes
Discussed with friends/colleagues Yes
Can you please give a brief example of such a discussion or exchange. i sometimes tell my coworkers what they need to recycly

How do you get your news and information?

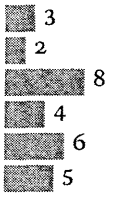
- × Books
- ✓ Magazine articles
- × Scientific articles
- × Newspapers
- ✓ Radio
- ✓ Television
- × Videos
- × Courses/ Training/ Workshops
- × Own observation and experience
- × Friends
- × Memberships in interest groups
- × Movies
- ✓ Internet
- ✓ Discussions with friends and other people
- × Rallies or political demonstrations
- × Spending time by or near the water
- × Council hearings
- × Other

Magazines read car and driver, truck trend, popular science
Newspapers read —
Radio stations WTAQ WZOR WOZZ
Television stations TODAY, local news
Interest groups —

Thinking about the most recent occurence of an environmental issue, please answer the following questions:

What was the issue? recycling
Where was it? everywhere
What were you doing? helping people understand recycling
Have your feelings or behavior towards the environment changed over time? Yes
What has influenced these changes? i wanted information on greenpeace, they sent me a money donation form not information, i ridicule them now, publicly

Rate Impact:



Off the top of your head, what issues do you think are most pressing for residents in the Green Bay area? air quality
If you were asked about environmental issues, which specific environmental issues come to mind? recycling, PCB cleanup, energy conservation, air quality.

Jessica

Occupation	Clerical/service
Involved in a science-related field	—
What area of science do you specialize in?	—
Age	35–44
Education	Associates degree
Length of time Green Bay area	11 or more years
Part of Green Bay	City of Green Bay
Willing to participate	Yes
Frequency of thinking of environmental issues	Frequently
Discussed with family	Yes
Discussed with friends/colleagues	Yes
Can you please give a brief example of such a discussion or exchange.	eating more organic or home grown fruits and vegetables due to pesticides in soil and sprayed on foods. Only buying US produce. Not buying produce from Walmart.

How do you get your news and information?

✓ Books	× Courses/ Training/ Workshops	× Memberships in interest groups	× Rallies or political demonstrations
✓ Magazine articles	× Own observation and experience	× Movies	× Spending time by or near the water
× Scientific articles	× Friends	✓ Internet	× Council hearings
✓ Newspapers		✓ Discussions with friends and other people	× Other
✓ Radio			
✓ Television			
× Videos			

Magazines read	Health, Parenting
Newspapers read	Green Bay Press Gazette, LaCrosse Tribune
Radio stations	98.5, 104.9 FM
Television stations	date line, 20/20, daily news
Interest groups	—

Thinking about the most recent occurence of an environmental issue, please answer the following questions:

What was the issue?	the deadly fish virus
Where was it?	in the news
What were you doing?	going up to Pelican Lake
Have your feelings or behavior towards the environment changed over time?	Yes
What has influenced these changes?	more aware, am older and wiser

Rate Impact:

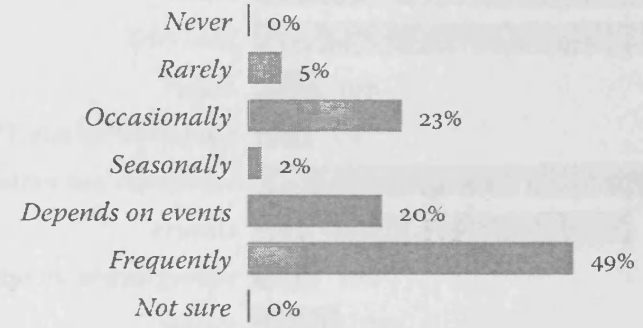
Books, magazines, articles, newspapers	7
Radio and television	7
Courses	8
Conversations with friends and family	7
Local events, incidents	7
First-hand experience	4

Off the top of your head, what issues do you think are most pressing for residents in the Green Bay area?	the poor air quality because of the paper mills
If you were asked about environmental issues, which specific environmental issues come to mind?	global warming, genetically modified food

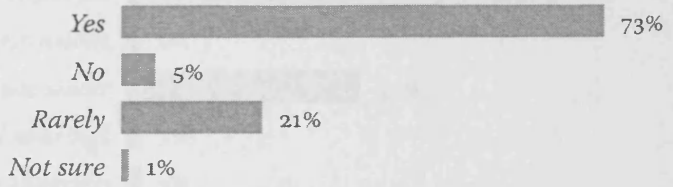
Appendix E

Survey responses: Frequency breakout

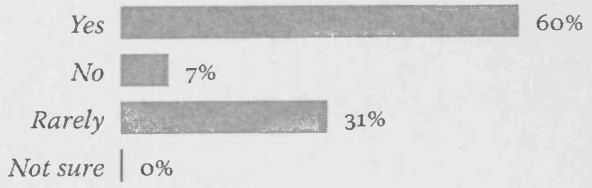
I think about environmental problems (including local issues, or those in other parts of the world):



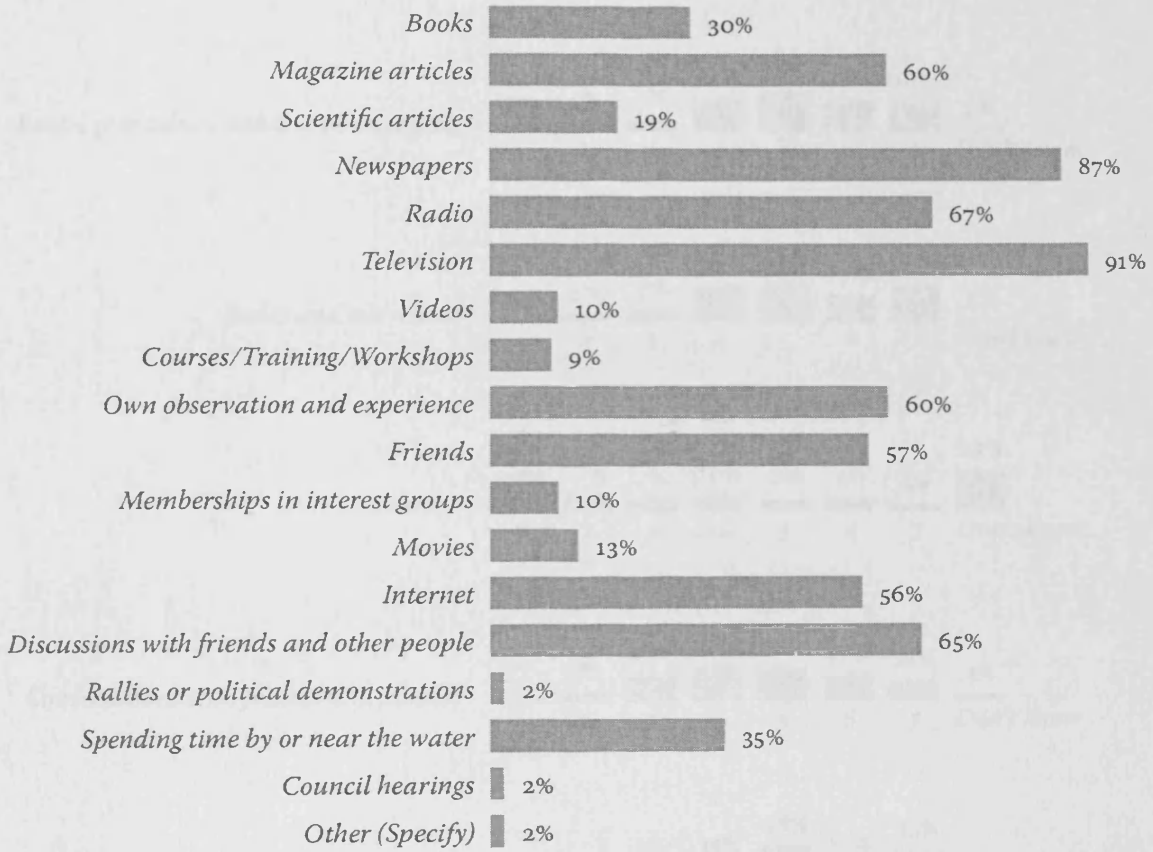
Are these environmental issues you shared above ever discussed within your family?



Thinking about those same environmental issues you shared above, are these issues ever discussed among your friends or colleagues (e.g. work, church, etc.)?



Thinking about those same environmental issues you shared above, are these issues ever discussed among your friends or colleagues (e.g. work, church, etc.)?



Using a 1 to 7 scale with 1 being 'No Impact at All' and 7 being 'Very Strong Impact', how much impact do the following sources of information have on your feelings or behaviors towards the environment.



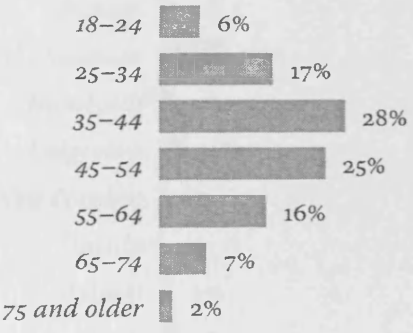
Which of the following categories best describes your occupation?



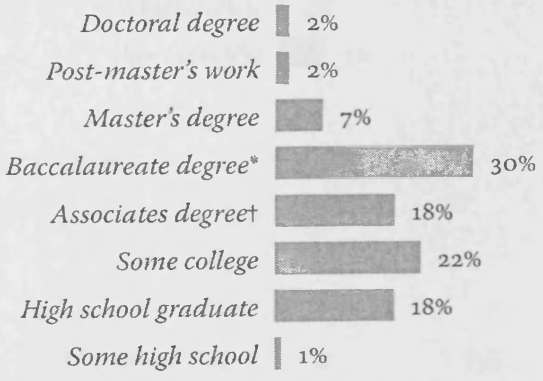
Are you involved in a science-related field?



Please indicate which of the following age categories you fall in (select one):

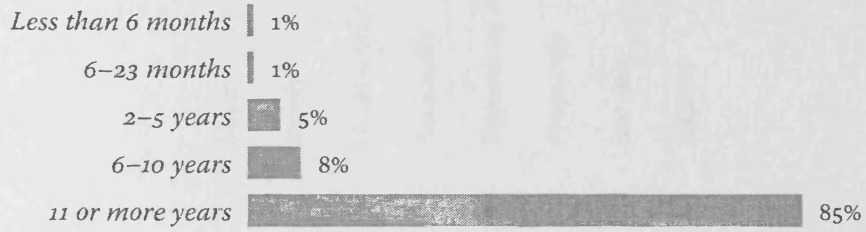


Which of the following categories best describes the highest level of education you have completed? (Select one)

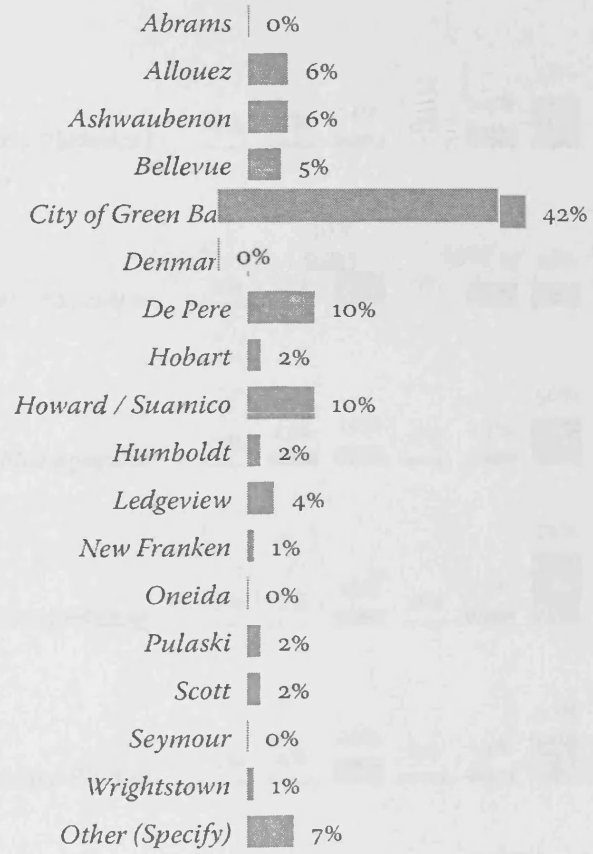


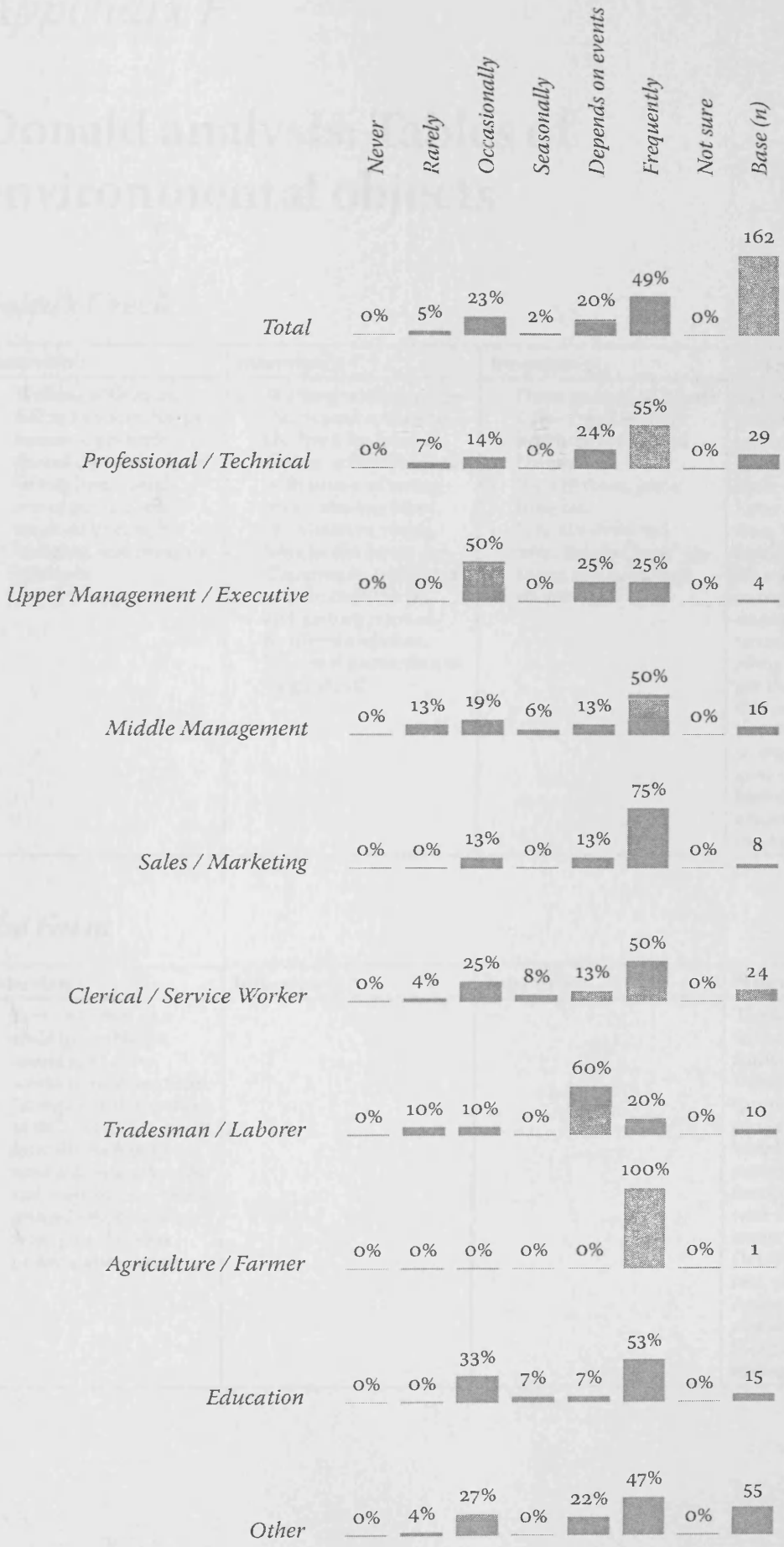
* 4-year college † 2-year technical college / vocational school

Which of the following categories best describes the length of time in which you have lived in Green Bay or in the Great Lake region?



What part of Green Bay do you live in?




Never
Rarely
Occasionally
Seasonally
Depends on events
Frequently
Not sure
Base (n)
Total
0% 5% 23% 2% 20% 49% 0% 162
Professional / Technical
0% 7% 14% 0% 24% 55% 0% 29
Upper Management / Executive
0% 0% 50% 0% 25% 25% 0% 4
Middle Management
0% 13% 19% 6% 13% 50% 0% 16
Sales / Marketing
0% 0% 13% 0% 13% 75% 0% 8
Clerical / Service Worker
0% 4% 25% 8% 13% 50% 0% 24
Tradesman / Laborer
0% 10% 10% 0% 60% 20% 0% 10
Agriculture / Farmer
0% 0% 0% 0% 0% 100% 0% 1
Education
0% 0% 33% 7% 7% 53% 0% 15
Other
0% 4% 27% 0% 22% 47% 0% 55

Appendix F

Donald analysis: Tables of environmental objects

Baird's Creek

Interview 1	Interview 2	Interview 3	Notes
• Walking with aunt, falling in water, happy memory, privately shared (between them) • Group (teenagers) would go out, sometimes do overnight camping, just enjoy the outdoors	• Walking with aunt special occasion because she lived far from us • Going to Baird's creek with group of young men, take our bikes, 'do whatever young boys in the forest do' • Camping in rainstorm with friends (boys) and getting rescued by friend's mother "parental protection at its greatest!'	• Development of Baird's Creek "well it's built up, there are a lot of homes" • It's still there, just a little bit. • "I'm at a dead end with Baird's Creek" (in terms of what to talk about)	Initially a containing holding environment; experience with aunt special, falling into water, their own private joke. Later it's a place of separation, autonomy from family, parents, and yet it's containing—evidenced in being rescued by a frantic mother who drove in the middle of the night along winding roads to get them. No shame about this rescue. Sees Baird's as a wilderness but close to city; registers sense of loss, not a place can go back to. Flat affect when discussing development (no anger).

The Farm

Interview 1	Interview 2	Interview 3	Notes
• Every summer as a child (pre siblings) would spend two weeks at relatives farm, "always a thrilling thing to do"... Learning about farm life, before they used machines, horses and wagons, hay, being around relatives, away from parents. Very positive association	—	—	The farm comes up early in the first interview, as something important for Denis when he was young (presumably between ages of 4-6 before his sister was born). Signals a sense of autonomy early on in his forays away from parents with a more exciting and exotic farm life. Brought Denis first hand into contact with a working farm. Again like Baird's Creek, it was about adventure and being away from parents/ siblings.

Bay Beach

Interview 1	Interview 2	Interview 3	Notes
• A *fond* memory, very young years, going to Bay Beach with father, learning to swim, walking out on very nice sandy bottom, to raft. • Don't have specific memory of when it closed. They just shut the whole thing down... • going to Bay Beach, enjoying the rides, recreation, etc.	• After the closure, we swam in very tiny, little pools and you'd pretend you were swimming by hanging on to the bottom and walking across the pool • Describes large municipal pool, sighs when saying that's where the swimming now revolved	—	Very positive memory with father of learning to swim. When talking about closure and replacement of recreation, I start to feel bored and sleepy; there is a lack fo affect in this account. Suggest perhaps a closure or an affective flattening as it was such a pleasurable place, but closure was when he was quite little. Contrast of Bay Beach with pools striking

The Fox River

Interview 1	Interview 2	Interview 3	Notes
• The "tooth incident", Denis lost his front tooth when playing with boys down on the riverbank. One of his primary associations with the river, comes at the very end, with some humour but associated very strongly with The Fox River.	• It isn't seen as a river in the sense that it was a recreational opportunity; we were much aware of that, because my father would tell me he used to swim in the Fox River... • Nothing called us to the Fox River, there were other bodies of water, the Green Bay, of course Baird's Creek, that called to us... • Even at its most polluted days, you could use it, because you didn't have to go in it; But I guess you could say we didn't see it as a river, and I would say, the Fox River is an important part of the whole Green Bay scene... • I mean, you could see, not that we went down there, but you could see solid matter floating on the water. And so there was not an attraction, nothing that called us to the Fox River.	• Canoe trip: Denis remembers story of paddling in a canoe with a friend down the Fox River about 20 years ago. "I had totally forgotten about it." Took the same canoe we canoed the Lakes, not the lakes but the rivers in Northern Wisconsin. • We just wanted to see if we could do it. I don't have any memories of it, other than understanding that we were on a polluted body of water... • it doesn't have the same impact as if had been on that body of water for the first time (naturalized to it) • It was just something we needed to try one time, and accomplished it and that was enough. • Denis then switches abruptly back to previous topic about how the interview is going. Just sort of stuck that memory in, in a disjointed way.	The Fox River seems to have a menacing association with it. Relationally it connects with a traumatic accident where he loses his front tooth (and has to live with it permanently) and his father's accident although that does not come up directly in relation to the Fox River, until I ask directly about it.

Two Rivers

Interview 1	Interview 2	Interview 3	Notes
• Bought cottage on property with wife 23 miles away, on the west twin river that flows into Lake Michigan, Two Rivers; use to hike, walk and have enough water in river to fish, "enjoyed the area for all of these years, nurturing our kids out there, they have enjoyed it, to the point where when they come back home, that is one place they wish to go." • Unique geography, rocks, woods, water. • Story of how they first found it, going to the property, being attacked by mosquitoes and then having it cleared up and falling in love with it	• Familiar with the land through friend; because of work in food processing, didn't have much time off, so the land was close enough to use and enjoy year round easily (accessible) • It had all the things that I cherished as a young person and even into that stage of life where I could get outdoors and recreate • I wanted to share that with my family and kids	• Canoe trip: Denis remembers story of paddling in a canoe with a friend down the Fox River about 20 years ago. "I had totally forgotten about it." Took the same canoe we canoed the Lakes, not the lakes but the rivers in Northern Wisconsin. • We just wanted to see if we could do it. I don't have any memories of it, other than understanding that we were on a polluted body of water... • it doesn't have the same impact as if had been on that body of water for the first time (naturalized to it) • It was just something we needed to try one time, and accomplished it and that was enough. • Denis then switches abruptly back to previous topic about how the interview is going. Just sort of stuck that memory in, in a disjointed way.	New place, new memories, new associations. Replacing Baird's Creek of childhood and young adulthood with Two Rivers, starting over. *Terra Nova.* The place is a locus for the family, to return to and provides continuity (contrast with Donna, sense of fragmentation). For Denis the children live far away but the land seems to act as a hub or a focus. It's remained relatively unchanged, hence it's outside of progress, industry, tech, etc.

Paddle to the Sea (book)

Interview 1	Interview 2	Interview 3	Notes
—	• As he grew older he became aware of GB as a port, commerce, business and all that, became aware these bodies of water served a great purpose for the development of the Green Bay area. I was given a book that I cherished as a young person... • A very neat little story about an Indian boy who was given by his father a little carved out canoe... • Aunt gave him book, she is someone interested in stories and books • Gave it to oldest grandson in Delaware but then asked for it back • Understood from the stories what impact the Great Lakes has on, commerce and business, and how fortunate we are to have water resources that we do in the GL basin • Leads into discussion of value of the Great Lakes, environmental ethics	• Book is "respected but well used" • Mother would read it to him from time to time, then started reading it himself • Teaching about activity/commerce in Great Lakes: forest fires, beaver dams, logging, shipping • You weren't sure the little guy would survive at all • Paddle never made it to GB; sort of works out why he didn't and if he did he would have gotten stuck • Book suggests/shows some carelessness in illustrations (bottle, etc.) • Being aware that GB is a small part of a very large system	Good object relation: respected by well used, which are phrases he uses in connection with the Great Lakes (wishing people would use but respect). Book suggests a bridge or way to connect positively with the goodness of the region, seeing GB as part of larger system, helping make coherent its significance in the face of senseless brutality with father's accident perhaps. Great deal of affection tied up in this object; relationship with aunt and mother, and with the locale. Also Paddle is the boy going out into the world, it's a coming of age story and also about transition from boy to man. He seems very identified with the boy and with the figure. In his recall, the boy was given canoe by father. In the story, the boy carves the canoe himself and sends it out into the world so he can stay at home and help father with work. Significant error in recall (it is serving something for Denis to see it as father giving to son, wishful phantasy?)

Green Bay industry, Father's accident at Fort Howard, relationship with industry

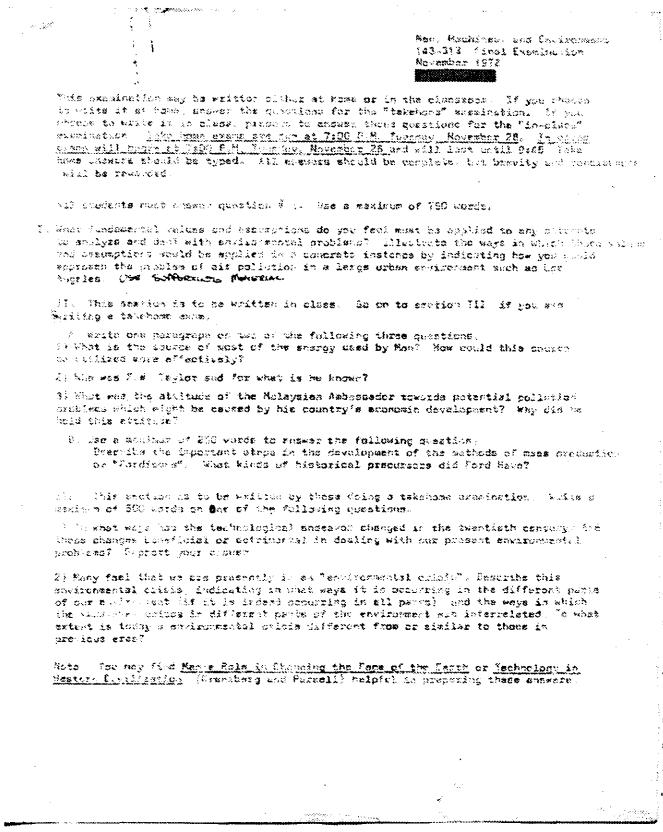
Interview 1	Interview 2	Interview 3	Notes
• Father was machine tender, injured at work, broke both legs. Company made sure he was mended and then told him they didn't need him anymore • Nearly destroyed the man, emotionally shattered, great upheaval, betrayal • Denis worked at automotive factory with father briefly between accounting school and work in Green Bay for cannery • father moved around a lot, for work, bought a motel, eventually came back to GB to live	• Father never talked about anything that may have bothered him. Not a great communicator. • Doesn't know if father was even aware • One of the things I think about the old Fort Howard (now Georgia Pacific), when I walk down the trail, I'm kind of aware that they filled in parts of the river in order to make land for their operation. Also aware that they have lagoons and which they discharge their effluent and just opened gates and let it flow into river. Then they stopped that. Also aware because of recent knowledge that the treatment of wood was one of the big polluters in our system. But again I think as I matured became involved in business, recognized what the paper industry has meant to this city. We are not a one-horse town. • I knew my father had been wronged. He had been terribly wronged by that company. Was never able to talk with dad about what happened. • they were a company, environment allowed them to make the decision • they eventually just threw him out • I was laying the groundwork for trying to find something where I had a little better control of MY destiny than my father did...	• We were put here for a purpose and that is to enjoy and use the land. But does that need to spoil it? In my mind, I don't think so. • I can accept we modify the things around us, for our own comfort, I can't accept is why my forefathers had such a terrific, terrible impact on the water and the land. • I think about, this is a total environment not just waterways, I think about what has happened to it and I get upset. We don't respect it (environment).	Very interesting movement here between anger, resentment, even disgust at paper mill and then quickly moves into 'what the paper industry has meant to this city'. (Cannot tolerate this critique, or perhaps is able to hold both the good/bad, destroying and nurturing mother). Denis able to distance from the traumatic events with father, and how he feels about the presence of industry in the city. At once it's a positive, 'appreciating' and on the other he is aware of the damages they have done to the land, the water and his own family, in the brutality expressed by this company. It's a disregard that upsets Denis so much. And yet he lives close by and seems to manage this and not allow it to become focused or fixated too much on the industry itself, as it's the industry which has made GB what it is (good place to live etc).

Great Lakes, fishing etc.

Interview 1	Interview 2	Interview 3	Notes
• Renting uncle's boats with father, fishing on Green Bay • Adolescence, going with friends on fishing trips, became less of an attraction because of pollution • group of friends after high school went up to Boundary Waters north of Lake superior, "one week or ten day excursions, came back home and enjoyed more of this local area..."	• Great Lakes in relation to Paddle to the Sea, how book has helped his awareness, appreciation, connecting him with the larger system, commerce, business. • Sadness at the fate and issues facing the Great Lakes	• Disappointed that "Paddle" doesn't get to Green Bay, indicating something about GB in relation to the Great Lakes (important, etc). GB as overlooked, forgotten? • Travels to Lake Superior with wife in recent years • Great concern, worry about the fate of the Great Lakes, especially issue of exporting water	Denis is able to extend and generalize his own connection with Green Bay (it's always been home) with the larger system of the Great Lakes. This seems to come about due to his early experiences with father, relatives, fishing and swimming around the waterways, and with the introduction of the book Paddle to the Sea, which helped Denis articulate or conceptualize GB in relation to the excitement and significance of the Great Lakes systems. Worries a lot about its future, but from a distance.

Appendix G

Jeff's university papers



Man, Resources and Environment
143-313 Final Examination
November 1972
[redacted]

This examination may be written either at home or in the classroom. If you choose to write it at home, answer the questions for the "takehome" examination. If you choose to write it in class, proceed to answer these questions for the "in-class" examination. Take-home exams are due at 7:30 P.M. Tuesday, November 28. In-class exams will begin at 7:30 P.M. Tuesday, November 28 and will last until 9:45. Take-home answers should be typed. All answers should be complete, but brevity and conciseness will be rewarded.

All students must answer question # 1. Use a maximum of 150 words.

1. What fundamental values and assumptions do you feel must be applied to any attempts to analyze and deal with environmental problems? Illustrate the ways in which these values and assumptions would be applied in a concrete instance by indicating how you would approach the problem of air pollution in a large urban environment such as [redacted]

II. This section is to be written in class. Go on to section III if you are writing a takehome exam.

A. Write one paragraph or two on the following three questions.
1) What is the source of most of the energy used by Man? How could this source be utilized more effectively?
2) Who was F. W. Taylor and for what is he known?
3) What was the attitude of the Malaysian Ambassador towards potential pollution problems which might be caused by his country's economic development? Why did he hold this attitude?

B. Use a maximum of 250 words to answer the following question.
Describe the important steps in the development of the methods of mass production or "Fordism". What kinds of historical precursors did Ford have?

III. This section is to be written by those doing a takehome examination. Write a maximum of 500 words on one of the following questions.

1) In what ways has the technological endeavour changed in the twentieth century? Are these changes beneficial or detrimental in dealing with our present environmental problems? Support your answer.

2) Many feel that we are presently in an "environmental crisis". Describe this environmental crisis, indicating in what ways it is occurring in the different parts of our world (and if it is indeed occurring in all parts) and the ways in which the various crises in different parts of the environment are interrelated. To what extent is today's environmental crisis different from or similar to those in previous eras?

Note: You may find Man's Role in Changing the Face of the Earth or Technology in Western Civilization (Cranzberg and Purcell) helpful in preparing these answers.

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values to determine a course of action.

Solution of environmental problems cannot be accomplished without the acknowledgment that problems exist. It must be assured that people can, through communication and education, become aware of the interrelationships between the various spheres of our environment and realize the need for improvement on a total scale. It is as difficult to convince one who lives in a slum environment of the importance of water pollution that is destroying the ecology of some distant lake, as it is to convince the lake property owner on this same lake that he should be

Question III. (2)

Crisis: "A crucial point or situation in the course of anything; a turning point."[1]

An environmental crisis is occurring in our physical environment as indicated by man's continuing efforts to "use up the land". Our mineral resources are being depleted to an extent where higher prices (reflecting higher effort for extraction) are apparent for such resources as coal, oil and iron. "We have been living, and we still are living, on resource capital as well as income to make possible continuing industrial expansion and higher levels of living for ever more people".[2] In our attempt at getting the last of these resources from the earth we are resorting to techniques such as strip mining, which often renders the land useless after extraction of the particular material we are interested in. Our urban areas suffer from air pollution to an extent that people have died as a result of thermal inversions in some of our cities. Man is producing, consuming and discarding at a rate that makes it difficult to

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[illegible] time attempting to deny equal education and human rights which many times prevents the poor from obtaining jobs.

We are poisoning and hunting biotic species to extinction, which may have far reaching consequences when they are removed from the biological cycle.

The changes in our psychological environment must consider basic human instincts and drives limiting population densities as enumerated in such theories as "personal defense perimeter". This is exemplified by the failure of such projects as the high rise, high density, low cost housing projects in St. Louis and other cities.

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[illegible] s from those in previous eras mainly because of the global scope of the problem. Early man could slash and burn, utilize the temporary fertility of the soil, and move on to the next area to repeat the process. If man allowed the soil to be eroded away, it could affect hardships on the immediate area, or possibly destroy a local culture, but all mankind was not endangered. By ignoring environmental problems such as pollution of the air and water, population, limited natural resources, poverty and unequal distribution of resources (which causes wars), contemporary man has the capability of destroying the entire human race.

[redacted]

[1] American Heritage Dictionary of The English Language

[2] [illegible] Gods Can Change The Laws of The Earth; Possible Limits of Raw Material Consumption" Samuel H. Ordway, Jr.

THE KEWAUNEE NUCLEAR POWER PLANT
CONTEMPORARY ENVIRONMENTAL ISSUES
A CASE STUDY

PREPARED FOR: MAN, MACHINES AND THE ENVIRONMENT, 143-315
WRITTEN BY: [redacted] AND [redacted]
SUBMITTED ON: DECEMBER 19, 1972.

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rent state of affluence in American society which could allow examination of effects on environmental spheres, taking into consideration "trade-offs", prior to implementation of suspect projects.

Environmentalists, in using the term "consumption ethic", refer to an apparent excessive use of materials and services, which they attribute to an affluent society. The concern is not only the depletion of natural resources, but also the degradation of hum hydrosphere, biosphere, lithosphere, and atmosphere by the over-use and misuse of these resources. The environmentalist assigns values to "quality of life"

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to consider alternatives. One source of resistance is connected with the character of hierarchical organizations in which decisions are made centrally by a few people. Utilities have been highly successful in dealing with their narrowly defined and predictable set of problems; electricity is perhaps the only commodity which has actually not increased in price over the last ten years. Sus-Sustained success, with minimum challenge, however, tends to petrify structure....Hierarchical organizations characteristically find it hard to respond to outside pressures and have limited adaptive capacity to meet the kinds of broad problems posed by the political and technical uncertainties involved in the present case....the options selected by the company in response to the controversy were rational, from the point of view of the company's own narrow objectives."

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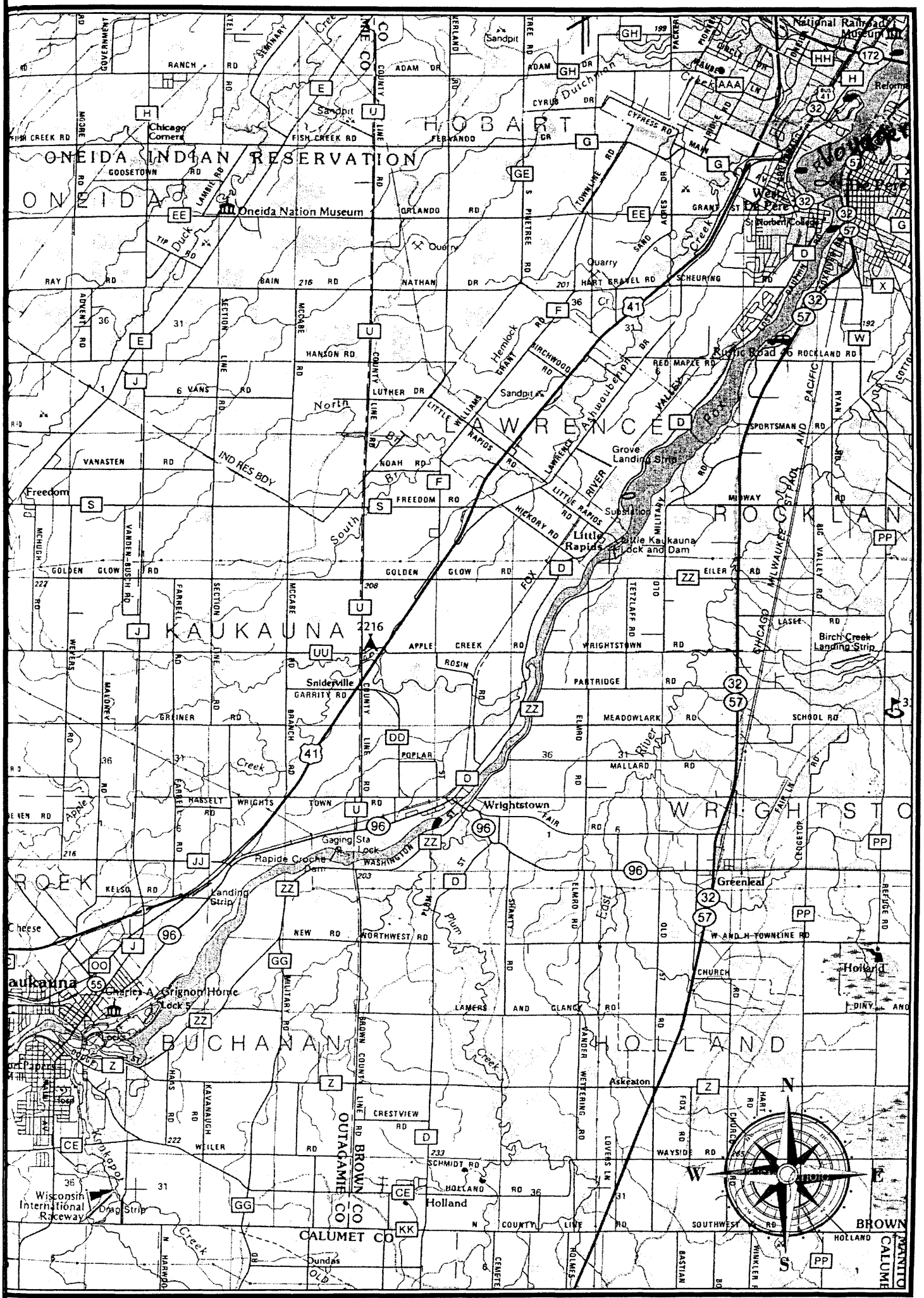
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ONEIDA INDIAN RESERVATION
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Grove Landing Strip
Birch Creek Landing Strip
Rapide Croche Dam
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