

A QUALITATIVE STUDY IN SEARCH FOR THE NEW ECOLOGICAL PARADIGM
WITHIN THE MODERN ENVIRONMENTAL MOVEMENT

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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

The modern environmental movement has taken a variety of shapes since its inception, but the contemporary environmental movement includes legitimized environmental organizations, a radical ecology movement, and the wise use movement. Some environmentalists actively collaborate with the government and its regulatory agencies. Comparatively, there are those environmental movements that operate outside the spectrum of this institutional domain. These environmental movements utilize radical methods to inform the public, the media and legislators of environmental problems. This philosophical divide in addressing environmental problems has created a rift in activism. One side embraces action through mainstream and accepted channels including the political sphere, and on the other side are those who do not compromise and who are not averse to unorthodox methods in seeking to have their issues addressed (Devall 1992; Mitchell, Dunlap and Mertig 1992).

This divide is not only exemplified through the divergent actions employed by these different philosophies, but it also yields differences in beliefs and attitudes. Institutionally based movements act in concert with government agencies and seek reform whereas radical movements are formed from disenchantment with the ineffective and inefficient workings of government coupled with their strong beliefs in “deep ecology” (Manes 1990:22; Devall 1992:56). What becomes apparent is that these

environmental organizations and movements are not only separated by tact, but also by philosophy. Where one has embraced the status quo and has chosen to operate from within the bureaucracies in place, radical movements view society as unable to adequately address threats to nature (Manes 1990).

This thesis explores the similarities and differences in addressing the global ecological crises by comparative analyses of members within wise use organizations, mainstream environmental organizations and radical environmental organizations. The focus will be on identifying anthropocentric identities of the Human Exemptionalist Paradigm (HEP) and those who identify with the New Ecological Paradigm (NEP) (Dunlap and Van Liere 1978; Catton and Dunlap 1978; Dunlap and Catton 1994; Dunlap, Van Liere, Mertig and Jones 2001). Previous research has identified differences between radical agency and institutional agency in the environmental movement, yet none have explored qualitatively how Dunlap and Van Liere's (1978) ideas can be explained or perceived from within environmental organizations and radical movements. The HEP/NEP scale has not been revisited since Dunlap, Van Liere, Mertig and Jones (2000) revised the scale, allowing for a decade of environmental issues and advocacy to promote a greater concern for ecological problems. In this length of time, it is possible that contemporary consciousness regarding the environment has changed the attitudes the HEP/NEP scale are meant to gauge. Further, examining the scales' relevancy to contemporary environmental organizations and movements would cast a light on the moral relevancy environmental issues play for participants in those respective groups. Although this research focuses upon individuals associated with environmental movements and organizations rather than the general public, the findings provide an

opportunity to reconsider the discrete conceptualization of the paradigms that warrant a closer examination of the HEP/NEP scale. Recently, conservative, business oriented organizations seeking to limit or roll back environmental regulations have changed tactics by focusing upon challenges of impact science. The change in focus may be nothing more than a tactful response to mistakes made in trying to limit regulation, however the acknowledgement (by the change in tactics) that citizens have a favorable view of protecting the environment could indicate a softening stance on the socio-environmental relationships (McCright and Dunlap 2010).

This study will utilize semi-structured interviews with members of three organizations/movements in order to better explain or understand how this rift in socio-ecological concerns can be explained by worldviews. The participants span three distinct organizations or movements and they include the Wise Use Movements (WU), Conservationists (CNSV) and Deep Ecologists (DE). These groups were selected for their diverse stances on issues of the environment and subsequently my access to them. Other groups or movements could have been used for this research, however due to the factors above, these were chosen. I will identify specific qualities that explain the positions held by the members of these three distinct philosophical camps.

CHAPTER II

LITERATURE REVIEW

Human Ecology and Environmental Sociology: The Human Exemptionalist Paradigm and New Ecological Paradigm Divide

Human ecology as a science has historically ignored undeniable connections between human social systems and the larger biological system. This disconnect has been fostered by the foundations of human ecology and how this science has developed (Catton 1994; Freese 1997). Human Ecology, whether viewed as a specific science or a part of a larger whole in bioecology, has its place in many disciplines. This appearance of disorganization is really the result of departmentalizing and compartmentalizing of the subject as academics increasingly specialized the field in their respective disciplines (i.e. ecological geography, ecological economics, primatology, socioecology, etc.) (Freese 1997). As a result, social sciences sought to mimic bioecologists and utilized much of the same nomenclature in order to explain sociocultural phenomenon (Freese 1997). This fragmentation as a result of institutional dogma on the part of academia never allowed for a comprehensive ecology to form that cut across the disciplines and sciences in order to grasp a concept that needs to be evaluated in terms of hierarchical domains (Freese 1997).

The development of human ecology by sociologists was intended to explain how urban surroundings affected social phenomena as Robert E. Park and Ernest W. Burgess'

Introduction to the Science of Sociology (1921) successfully demonstrated. While Park and Burgess did not connect bioecology to their findings, their thesis that an environment can act on its inhabitants was not different than the biological explanation of an environment affecting the wildlife present in its biosphere (Catton 1994). This social microcosm of the larger biological realm was a corollary to a general ecology. Extrapolating Park and Burgess (1921) to encompass not only human created social systems, but the larger environmental system is an essential component in understanding the complicated flow between social and natural systems (Freese 1997). The identification of human systems within larger biological systems requires the following understanding:

1. Humans are organically connected to ecosystems.
2. The prime impact of sociocultural organization on ecosystems has been to transform energy and food chains, shortening the chains and placing humans at the top.
3. Following up on their long-cascading interactions with human sociocultural systems, modern ecosystems give evidence of massive disorganization and correlative human environmental degradation-results that can hardly be said to be in the organic interests of humans. (Freese 1997:1)

This acknowledgment contradicts the traditional sociological interpretation of human ecology.

According to Freese (1997), sociology suffered from a necessary dogmatic origin in order to separate sociology from other disciplines. More specifically, this is labeled “Durkheim’s Dogma” which would have us believe a social fact could only be explained with other social facts (Freese 1997:21). For example, in order for a person to specialize in a profession, it is necessary for someone else to provide the produce, material and even transportation (mass transit). This transformation from a hunter-gatherer society to an

industrially consumptive system has taxed greatly the ecosystems that provide for human civilization (Catton 1994; Freese 1997).

This emphasis in human ecology and sociology according to Catton and Dunlap (1978) and Catton (1994) requires a retooling of the discipline in order to answer the rising environmental troubles, but also to remain a viable discipline. As a discipline, if sociology continues to ignore the Principle of Entropy and the Law of Conservation of Energy, then sociology will fail to recognize the limitations of the natural world and its subsequent effect on social systems (Catton and Dunlap 1978). In order to address this blind spot within sociology, Catton and Dunlap (1978) offered a new route for sociology to take in order to adopt a broader perspective.

The Human Exemptionalist Paradigm and the New Ecological Paradigm

Catton and Dunlap (1978) examined the need to reverse the anthropocentric perspective within society and adopt a more eco-centric view in managing the direction of civilization. The development of these paradigms was in contradiction to the anthropocentric theories that dominated sociology (functionalism, ethnomethodology, conflict theory, Marxism, etc.) (Catton and Dunlap 1978:42). These theories maintained what Catton and Dunlap (1978) term the “Human Exemptionalist Paradigm” (HEP) (originally labeled the Human Exceptionalist Paradigm, see Dunlap and Catton 1994) by maintaining a purely human perspective on matters of social relevance. HEP consists of four basic assumptions,

1. Humans are unique among the Earth’s creatures, for they have culture.
2. Culture can vary almost infinitely and can change much more rapidly than biological traits.
3. Thus, many human differences are socially induced rather than inborn, they can be socially altered, and in-convenient differences can be eliminated.

4. Thus, also, cultural accumulation means that progress can continue without limit, making all social problems ultimately soluble. (Catton and Dunlap 1978:43)

In contrast to this line of thinking, an alternative to HEP was developed by examining the work of other sociologists in environmental sociology and arriving at a different set of assumptions. This alternative was labeled the “New Ecological Paradigm” (NEP) (originally termed the “New Environmental Paradigm”) (Dunlap and Van Liere 1977; Catton and Dunlap 1978; Dunlap and Catton 1994). NEP posits three fundamental beliefs about humans and nature:

1. Human beings are but one species among the many that are interdependently involved in the biotic communities that shape our social life.
2. Intricate linkages of cause and effect and feedback in the web of nature produce many unintended consequences from purposive human action.
3. The world is finite, so there are potent physical and biological limits constraining economic growth, social progress, and other societal phenomena (Catton and Dunlap 1978:45).

In utilizing a set of assumptions that recognize human existence within nature, Catton and Dunlap (1978) argued for the inclusion of these sets of concerns within the dominant theoretical framework in sociology that merely dealt with social facts in absentia of natural phenomenon. This epistemological imperative opened up a larger world for sociologists to view social phenomena within environmental parameters. Prior to the development of a New Ecological Paradigm, sociologists paid little attention to soil erosion, oil importation, environmental degradation, and other environmental issues (Catton and Dunlap 1978). The adoption of the NEP eliminates a disconnect between the social and biological, creating an accurate view of impacts one has on the other (Catton and Dunlap 1978). Consequently, accepting these ecological limitations has huge ramifications on global social organization. According to the NEP, it is ecologically

unsustainable for society to continue on its current trajectory, yet any slowdown in limitless growth would disproportionately affect the poor and middle classes of the world unless a redistribution of wealth accompanied the realization that we all share finite resources (Catton and Dunlap 1978). Addressing these concerns illustrates the importance of sociology in dealing with these systemic risks and repercussions of social answers to environmental problems and limitations.

At the time Catton and Dunlap (1978) called on sociology to embrace environmental sociology, the influence of the environmental movement strengthened among the public. The realization of this socio-ecological connect was evident in the environmental degradation and industrial waste. Accordingly, with or without academia, social agency took notice and the development of environmental sociology and the environmental movement has occurred simultaneously and, at times, each has influenced the other.

Development of the Environmental Movement

The modern environmental movement in the U.S. began with the conservationist movement that permeated thinking in the late 19th century and continued into the 20th century. These groups organized in defense of particular natural resources either for their inherent value as a commodity or just for the responsible maintenance of nature. These organizations grew into groups still active today such as The Sierra Club and the National Audubon Society (Mertig, Dunlap, and Morrison 2002) and largely emerged during the same time as environmental sociology grew into its own sub-discipline. The transformation of the environmental movement has also mirrored the administrations in power in the United States, yet not always on political grounds. Many of the 1970s

environmental laws were signed by Richard Nixon and the support for the environmental movement persisted into Jimmy Carter's administration. The ideological split politically took root primarily during the Ronald Reagan administration (Bevington 2009). Ever since, the influence of environmental organizations and movements ebb and flow with various forces, governmental and non-governmental. Contemporarily, it can be argued that such changes in influence have spurred the rebirth of how organizations and movements are formed (Bevington 2009). This transition and adaptation have impacts, and the framework from which these movements and organizations organize as a result of such changes should be closely examined. To look more closely at the modern environmental movement, we have to look at the origins of its ethics and philosophy.

While the change from conservationism to environmentalism did not occur at a distinct time or place, some credit is given to two individuals, Rachel Carson in her work, *Silent Spring*, and Aldo Leopold for his development of the "land ethic" (Leopold 1949; Carson 1962). Whereas prior conservationism sought to preserve particular areas, an ecocentric perspective was brought to the forefront by their work in response to massive environmental degradation as a result of mismanagement (Mertig et al. 2002). This, however, did not end conservationism but simply created another avenue to address ecological issues under a conceptually different perspective.

Perspective is an important aspect of the environmental movement. According to Mertig, Dunlap and Morrison (2002) there are three stages of environmental activism. Those three stages consist of conservationism, environmentalism, and ecologism. These three are further divided into two distinct differences. Those within the conservationism and environmentalism movements are more likely to hold an anthropocentric worldview.

Individuals in the ecologism movement maintain an ecocentric perspective that appreciates nature not for its value to humans but for its importance to the natural system (Mertig et al. 2002). While not necessarily polemic, conservationism, environmentalism and ecologism do take two different approaches to addressing environmental concern. Douglass Bevington (2010) considers this an insider/outsider strategy that seeks the best method in accomplishing the goals set out by an organization or movement.

Currently, these similar views embrace different philosophies in addressing issues of environmental concern. Subsequently, those more radical advocates left the more professional and mainstream environmental groups and have organized groups geared towards preserving the environment rather than working cooperatively with the government (Dunlap and Mertig 1992; Cramer 1998; Mertig et al. 2002). Even so, radical organizations similar to Earth First! have begun to transition from destructive actions or philosophical dogmas to more grass roots and bio-diversity concerned messages that seek to gain protection not by legislation, but legal matters that force the government to enforce laws already in place. This process has garnered small victories, yet in mass, has created an alternative to the dominant parameters of radical/mainstream approaches (Bevington 2010). It is important to clearly understand these distinctions in order to gauge the impact each is having nationally in addressing issues of the environment.

Within the context of the history of the environmental movement it is important to consider the fracturing of this movement into disparate strands. The individuals interviewed for this project fall into three organizations or movements that can be divided into two major categories: mainstream organizations/movements and radical

organizations/movements. These two categories do not encompass the entirety of the contemporary environmental movement, but they provide a way to summarize not only the individuals interviewed for this research but also large cross-sections of the environmental movement more generally.

Mainstream Organizations

The development of mainstream conservation organizations within the environmental movement had its origins in the conservation advocacy in the middle of the 20th century. As legal matters, legislation, and scientific debates became more complex, the amateurism of the movement necessitated a professional advocacy able to exchange information and put forth a sense of legitimacy to the structures in place (government and media) (Mitchell, Dunlap and Mertig 1992). Problems stemming from industrial waste and pollution such as the smog in New York City in 1966, Santa Barbara oil spill in 1969, the Cuyahoga River set on fire in 1969 garnered bad publicity for industry. Strengthened by the media's depiction and attention to these environmental disasters, citizens questioned the actions of companies and sought protection by government mandate (Harper 2008). Interestingly, since the 1960s the environmental movement and its support has waxed and waned with periods of complacency followed by moments of invigoration. For example, administrations (such as those of Ronald Reagan and George W. Bush) took an adversarial role to environmentalism and conservationism, prompting a reinvigorated base, alternative modes of activism and "check-book supporters" (Brulle 2000; Harper 2008; Bevington 2009).

This transformation led to successes in steering the government and bureaucratic agencies in reforming industrial practices in the use of fluorocarbons, over-hunting and

fishing, technological advances that degraded soil, water and air. This meshing of advocacy with science in order to refute industrial backed scientists (contrarians) created formidable conservation organizations that wielded significant power. These conservation organizations challenged industries by utilizing lawyers, impact scientists, economists and professional staff (Mitchell 1978; McCright and Dunlap 2010). This large cooperation of varying professionals helped establish the social construction of environmental concerns and issues that permeated the media and legislation (Dunlap and Marshall 2007). These conservation organizations became known as voluntary environmental social movement organizations (VESMOs). Their success as organizations also allowed for more formal bureaucracies to be created within the government. These bureaucracies came to be known as institutional environmental social movement organizations (IESMOs). These IESMOs consist of such organizations as the Environmental Protection Agency that work to regulate and promote pro-environmental solutions and regulations within the authority of the government. The connection between VESMOs and IESMOs is due in part to the exchange of prominent individuals as head of VESMOs and IESMOs. In addition, VESMOs operate as lobbyists and auxiliary arms to IESMOs creating the institutional approach that these mainstream VESMOs adopt (Mertig, Dunlap and Morrison 2002).

The drawback however has resulted in what some describe as “routinization” of the environmental movement, the “insider strategy” or “playing by the rules” (Mitchell, Mertig and Dunlap 1992; Bevington 2010). This creation of legitimacy and strong lobbying power strictly limits these conservation organizations to adapt to the structure rather than the structure adapting to concerns of the environmental movement. Those

who question the validity of this strategy claim that rather than protection of the environment, what has occurred is simply a string “of symbolic victories, with government passing reassuring but essentially meaningless legislation” (Dunlap and Mertig 1992:4). This mindset regarding the large national environmental conservation organizations sparked claims about the end of environmentalism. While it appeared that the environment was spoken for legislatively, the results did not match the effort. However, discounting smaller efforts perhaps has led to that conclusion. Smaller attempts to force the government into action by court mandates under the auspices of previous legislative decisions have increased and have resulted in grassroots movements that do not fall into the mainstream/radical dichotomy (Bevington 2010).

In addition to mainstream environmental organizations, another group that utilizes similar mainstream tactics, primarily free markets, is the Wise Use Movement. The Wise Use Movement’s aim is to roll back the environmental movement’s gains and allow the free market to determine how to solve environmental issues according to economic feasibility (Mertig et al. 2002). As a result of this challenge, a moral dilemma of importance arises between personal property rights and environmental regulation (Reitan 2004).

This movement, according to Mertig et al. (2002), presents the most formidable challenge to the environmental movement as it is well-funded and capable of passing legislation or rolling back past environmental gains on the basis of its economic power that stems from the industries most affected by environmental legislation. The argument by the Wise Use Movement is put more succinctly by Reitan: “environmentalists are being unreasonable in that they are trying to defend and justify public policy decisions

appealing to an ideology that falls outside of what Rawls calls the ‘overlapping consensus’ of reasonable comprehensive doctrines” (2004:330). In doing so, the Wise Use Movement has appealed to the sense of individuality and private property rights as superseding public policy driven by ideology not shared by all in the public.

Another point of emphasis is the intentional delegitimizing of impact science as it pertains to limitations on industrial wealth, production and production science. This pattern has resulted from the failure of this movement to secure overwhelming backing of the general public for rolling back environmental regulations. Rather, the regulations in place have been weakened by complacency on the government’s part or transitioning from conservation roles of government agencies to development and “energy-related policies” (Davis 2008:44). This appeal is further strengthened by the perception of those within the Wise Use Movement that government interferes in local issues and seeks more control and power. The Wise Use Movement thus draws upon its historical connection to the land (i.e. property rights), as well as a supposed superior knowledge of its dynamics as an argument for delegitimizing federal control under environmental legislation (McCarthy 2002).

The unique characteristic of this movement is its utilization of the same grassroots tactics that environmental movements take in promoting legislation and action on issues of importance. Yet unlike those movements, Wise Use Movements are funded, in part, by the industries seeking less governmental control over the environment and natural resources. Consequently, some have categorized these groups as astro-turf movements due to their lack of real grassroots organization (Sanchez 1996; Mertig et al. 2002). Subsequently, the industries at odds with environmental legislation seek ways to

utilize these supposed grassroots organizations as lightning rods for attention and dissemination of information that, “obfuscates, misrepresents, manipulates and suppresses research results” (McCright and Dunlap 2010:111). The Wise Use movement as a strand of the conservative activism thus promotes and cites peer-reviewed and non-academic publications as counter arguments to overwhelming peer-reviewed and academic backing of impact science. The conservative think tanks that regularly produce these findings to mainstream media outlets and legislators in turn creates a false dichotomy on the topics of interest to capitalist modes of production and industries reliant on natural resources (McCright and Dunlap 2003, 2010). Although it would be difficult to categorize the Wise Use Movement as part of the environmental movement per se, they certainly fall within the larger domain of the mainstream movements/organizations.

Radical Ecological Movements

The alternative to VESMOs and IESMOs are those movements rooted in “deep ecology” and ecocentrism. These radical movements do engage in similar tactics as those more institutionalized organizations, but they are more critical of industry and can utilize tactics that many consider terroristic or “monkey wrenching” (Mertig, Dunlap and Morrison 2002). These groups differ in the sense that they choose to operate as a movement rather than as an organization. These movements/philosophies vary in title, however not necessarily in aims. One distinct philosophy is that of Murray Bookchin’s Social Ecology from the 1960s. According to Brian Tokar, Bookchin’s contributions to radical ecology consisted of the,

Socially reconstructive dimension of ecological science, the potential links between sustainable technologies and political decentralization, and the evolution of class consciousness toward a broader critique of social hierarchy. (2008:51)

Social Ecology as a science developed by Bookchin encapsulated various constructs (i.e. society, history, anthropology and politics). This served as a forerunner to many of the more contemporary radical ecological philosophies to date (Tokar 2008).

Eco-feminism is another radical ecological philosophy that bridges ecology with feminist analysis (Freese 1997). This combination according to Freese is combined to explain that,

All forms of oppression are interrelated. One gets oppression, whether against women, nature, the poor, people of color, domesticated animals, whomever or whatever, as a natural result whenever some periphery is symbolically defined with respect to some center and the center is given greater value. Then, the social and cultural privileging of the center follows as a matter of course; after all, it was prioritized. (1997:226)

This concentration upon domination is the backbone of this philosophical underpinning. It's relevancy to western economic theory and development serves as a critique of modern society (Freese 1997).

A broader yet particular radical ecological philosophy is that of Deep Ecology. Deep Ecology in reference to other radical ecological philosophies takes more of an anti-anthropocentric view (Freese 1997). Deep Ecologists share the idea that dualisms do not exist between humans and nature and they formulate a lifestyle around that basic tenet (Pepper 1996). That said, there is very little uniformity or grand organizing that takes place amongst Deep Ecologists. The depth and impact of their actions vary from local acts of defiance to legal challenges in court (Bevington 2010). They combat institutionalization by remaining decentralized, locally minded and reluctant to act in concert with larger more institutionalized advocacies. Their ability to remain informal makes them less susceptible to adopting status quo methods that they genuinely spurn

and see as counter to ecological concerns (Scarce 1990; Lee 1995). Clare Saunders states,

At the radical extreme, behaviors that are inconsistent from societal norms are consistently required, and, because individual behavior change is essential for participation in such movement organizations, the collective identity will be more encompassing and the resultant solidarity stronger. (2008:230)

This solidarity in conjunction with the sense of community among these individuals builds a stronger consensus as the individuals within it are organized from the bottom up rather than simply dues paying members of the Sierra Club, for example (Saunders 2008). The primary ethic or concern for these movements is not protecting the environment for humans, but defending nature for nature (Manes 1990; Scarce 1990; Devall 1992).

This philosophical issue stands in contradiction to modern social norms and mores. While certain aspects of Deep Ecology may blend with mainstream society, such as the appreciation of nature, the actual adherence of lifestyles to those beliefs proves more difficult. This endeavor requires a strong ecocentric worldview that establishes for these individuals a form of code on how to live in harmony with nature. Ecocentrism as a philosophy “predispose individuals to value nature for its own sake, judging that it deserves protection because of its intrinsic value, irrespective of its usefulness by humans” (Casey and Scott 2006:58). Ecocentricity borrows philosophically from Aldo Leopold whose axiom states,

1. In contrast to philosophical tradition, it extends the moral community-the community deserving of ethical consideration-beyond the human species and to include all others.
2. It attributes moral standing not just to other living things, which would be decently biocentric in itself, but to the community of them, which is to

say to the manner in which living things are ecologically organized.
(Freese 1997:218)

Thus, ecocentricity is at the heart of Deep Ecology. Rather than numerous stringent rules, Deep Ecology follows one main rule, which is to live naturally and not alter the natural rule of law for the exploitation of the environment. This would entail damming of rivers, home lawns; manmade conservatories that intend to manipulate nature (Freese 1997).

Deep Ecologists, generally speaking, do not argue for right and wrong on with the issue of religion (Christianity, Judaism, Islam etc). They however do believe a universal law should transcend all religions and belief systems, and that is our environmental limitations as imposed by nature. These tenets borrow from, “the science of ecology, Asian religions, the perennial philosophy, naturalism, pastoralism, counter cultural ideals and creation-centered spirituality” (Zimmerman 1994:19). Deep Ecologists cling to eight basic principles:

1. The well-being and flourishing of human and non-human life on Earth have value in themselves. These values are independent of the usefulness of the non-human world for human purposes.
2. Richness and diversity of life forms contribute to the realization of these values and are also values in themselves.
3. Humans have no right to reduce this richness and diversity except to satisfy vital needs.
4. The flourishing of human life and cultures is compatible with substantial decrease of the human population. The flourishing non-human life requires such a decrease.
5. Present human interference with the non-human world is excessive and the situation is rapidly worsening.
6. Policies must therefore be changed. These policies affect basic economic, technological and ideological structures. The resulting state of affairs will be deeply different from the present.
7. The ideological change is mainly that of appreciating life *quality* (dwelling in situations of inherent value) rather than adhering to an increasingly higher standard of living. There will be a profound awareness of the difference between big and great.

8. Those who subscribe to the foregoing points have an obligation directly or indirectly to try to implement the necessary changes. (Pepper 1996:20)

Deep Ecologists take the position of identifying with nature and subsequently feel as though they are speaking for nature, not for humans (Manes 1990; Scarce 1990; Devall 1992). While this philosophy cannot be generalized as ecocentric, the participation of radical groups in this process indicates a shift in thinking (Bevington 2010).

Such movements as Earth First! and Greenpeace have been known to adopt such messages and tactics in bringing an ecocentric message to the mainstream by utilizing similar methods as VESMOs yet remaining radical and disjointed in order to prevent compromise on issues they find to be more important than the status quo (Mertig, Dunlap and Morrison 2002). As individuals the people within these movements tend to be highly educated yet lack wealth; most often by choice in order to lead a life that makes the little amount of impact on the environment as possible (Scarce 1990). This form of belief is structured around the idea that, “the richness of life on the planet is greatest when the diversity of life on the planet is greatest” (Pepper 1996:20). Environmental impact obviously plays a universal role among these individuals.

The success of this movement legislatively has hinged on their more radical methods and ideology towards industries that degrade the natural world. While their impact is smaller than the national mainstream organizations whom adopt a more anthropocentric ideal, they have made strides in getting the more structured agencies to weigh in on topics they consider important (Manes 1990). Legislation that has been pushed through as a result of deep ecological concern within environmental organizations and conservationists include the Clean Air Act of 1963, Wilderness Act of 1964, National

Environmental Policy Act of 1970, Clean Water Act of 1972, and the Endangered Species Act of 1973. While most of these Acts contained primarily anthropocentric reasoning, the Clean Water Act and the Endangered Species Act are largely considered victories by the deep ecology movement because their primary concern was the protection of the environment and wildlife (Cramer 1998).

Adherence to this philosophy essentially shapes the lifestyle choices as well as the aims of these loosely knit movements. Deep Ecology's radicalism is not as externalized as those who would destroy property, yet many who go to those extremes share the same philosophical message as Deep Ecology. Thus, Deep Ecology is quintessentially the best example of humans living in balance with nature that challenges the norms of modern society (Merchant 1992; Zimmerman 1994; Pepper 1996).

The benefit of understanding whether the NEP paradigm is present within the individuals of these environmental groups/movements/organizations could indicate whether certain aspects of either scale (HEP/NEP) have remained static or if environmental concern has begun to change the position of individuals relative to the HEP/NEP paradigms. Examining these changes on a qualitative scale can provide insights not rendered from a quantitative survey. Perhaps evaluating how each member constructs their perspective will indicate how much environmental concern has changed, improved or declined in the modern environmental movement. In addition, establishing these perspectives relative to an organization or movement allows for future research to utilize the HEP/NEP scale to gauge the shift in paradigms. The NEP/HEP scale has been revisited on various occasions, however, the literature would indicate a substantial period since the survey was last conducted. Subsequently, if the dichotomy is found to have

blurred the heretofore understood philosophical boundaries, perhaps this is good indication that the environmental movement has affected the worldviews of individuals relative to their location in the HEP/NEP dichotomy.

CHAPTER III

METHODOLOGY

This research is based upon the use of a qualitative method that employed semi-structured in-depth interviews to acquire data. The questions that comprised the interviews addressed four main topics. Those topics included background and familial influence on views of nature, questions to ascertain anthropocentric or NEP views of the environment, managing one's ecological perspective with personal practices (i.e. recycle and reuse), and finally questions that explore the participants views of ecological limits, crises and outlook for the future. By differentiating the participants into three distinct group/organization types (WU, DE, CNSV), the worldviews and global perspectives of these participants can be evaluated and compared relative to the NEP Scale (Catton and Dunlap 1978; Dunlap, Van Liere, Mertig and Jones 2001). The application of these questions in a qualitative manner should further expand the knowledge of how one constructs their views of these issues and what influences perceptions of ecological crises.

Over the past decade, the argument between environmentalists and anti-environmental forces has centered over regulation and most recently impact science. A qualitative approach to the Catton and Dunlap (1978) and Dunlap et al. (2001) scale may give an indication of how the two countervailing forces have succeeded or failed in moving the axiom over a decade. The benefits of identifying a shift or transition may in

fact suggest a need to revisit the established dichotomy of the NEP/HEP scale and adjust for a possible third dimension to this measure which bridges both dominant paradigms. As was mentioned earlier, this topic has been addressed largely through the use of quantitative data of randomly selected individuals. The need to explore the qualitative dimensions of these individuals with regards to the New Ecological Paradigm is the void left in explaining worldviews as they relate to the active participants of the modern environmental movement. The interview guide was devoted to adding depth to the quantitative data already accumulated on the NEP. By expanding this knowledge more in depth, I hope to add to the breadth of knowledge already accumulated regarding this scale and the modern environmental movement.

Sampling Procedure

First, an internet search was conducted to discover organizations and movements that matched previously discussed groups such as wise use organizations (WU), conservationists (CNSV) or VESMOs and Deep Ecologists (DE). I was successful in identifying groups who were willing to participate as members of this type of organization, but not as official representatives of their organization or movement. This in turn did not necessitate the need to identify their organization, only the broad label that their organization falls under. After I secured access and permission from these organizations, all were willing to send out emails to their members and recommend participation in my research. Data collection for this research project consisted of fifteen in-depth interviews. This sample was acquired using a combination of “purposive” and “snowball” sampling techniques which all organizations contacted found the least-invasive and acceptable to its members (e.g. email, phone and listserv).

I conducted interviews in public places that provided a partial sense of privacy for the participants. Venues that fit this description consisted of coffee shops and offices, but the participants were given the option to choose a place they felt comfortable if these venues were not sufficiently private. Interviews generally ranged from forty-five minutes to an hour. A consent form was produced, explained and allowed to be reviewed by the participant in order for the participant to understand the purpose of the interview and any liabilities that may accompany this research and the assurance of confidentiality. The participants were made aware of the fact that they were audio taped and that the tapes were only to be heard by me and me alone.

Sample Characteristics

The factors that determined those chosen for this research endeavor were first and foremost members of environmental organizations, wise use organizations or formerly members of these groups. My goal was to achieve fifteen to twenty interviews and create an even distribution between all three organizations. The final amount was fifteen after data collection was complete. Special attention was not given to gender, race, sex, age, or class for this sample, but those factors were taken into account as the data was analyzed from this sample. Of the fifteen participants interviewed for this research an even distribution was accomplished that resulted in five WU members, five DEs, and five CNSVs. These members consisted of ten males and five females. Ages ranged from twenty-eight to sixty-two. The mean age was forty-seven. The participant's race was predominantly white with only three minorities (Hispanics).

Analysis Technique

After the semi-structured interviews were completed, the audio tapes were transcribed and coded according to Esterberg's (2002) method of open coding. The transcripts were repeatedly read and placed into patterns and themes as I discovered them. During the transcription names were changed using pseudonyms so that anonymity can be maintained. When identifying participants, I will provide in parentheses the affiliation (WU, DE, CNSV).

In conclusion, the data material (transcripts and audio tapes) shall be held in a locked file cabinet to ensure that anonymity is maintained until which time these items are destroyed (approximately one year from the conclusion of its presentation in a thesis defense). Participants were notified that they could request a copy of the final research thesis once completed as described in the consent form.

CHAPTER IV

FINDINGS

Before detailing the specific findings, it is useful to underscore and identify the broad themes as a result of the interviews. Prevalent early on for many participants is a *familial influence and early connection to nature*. Within those with a strong connection to or advocacy for nature is an early introduction to nature, often fostered by parents or siblings who appreciated nature. While not all list their parents as environmentalists or conservationists, many explain merely being exposed to nature as a child and young adult as playing an important role in their appreciation for nature or development of a green ethic.

Those participants within WU organizations almost unanimously agree that humans were different and more important than other species, but have the responsibility to ensure that nature is not harmed. This feeling of *responsibility for, yet dominion over nature* shows a strong propensity for those within the WU organizations as falling within the HEP philosophy.

Both deep ecologists and conservationists view humans as an extraordinary species. At the same time, these individuals *view humans as part of a dynamic system – one species among many*. While they share the idea of being responsible for nature, they suggest that humans only through our ability to rationalize should understand the complexity of the web of life. All DEs and CNSVs explain ways that humans should

seek to amend our civilization to nature and not the inverse. While literature on conservation groups suggests a more anthropocentric view of their motives, I found quite the opposite from these members.

Wise Use members have some practices that could be associated with sustainability. However, most WU individuals viewed *cost as the priority*. Most examples they provided consisted of ways to save energy, appliances that used less power, shading around the house and good insulation to limit energy use in cooling their homes. None of the wise use participants were interested in the purchase of items for their own green values; this however is not necessarily a condemnation of their lifestyle as it can be argued that buying green is not a part of green values. Recycling plastics and aluminum was the only practice found to be in absence of monetary benefit from these participants.

When asked for examples of how they live sustainable lives, none of the DEs or CNSVs used examples of being green consumers. To these two groups, *green living is being simple, not consumptive*. Both offer solutions such as shopping at thrift stores for second hand clothing, making cleaning products from home ingredients such as vinegar and baking soda. Gardening is a solution many give, as well as purchasing from local markets their necessities. Almost all are suspect of green labeling, yet they acknowledge that they pay attention to these items if they are necessary.

Interestingly, one contribution DEs and CNSVs make is *promoting sustainability through dialogue*. DEs and CNSVs mention talking to others and sharing ideas. They feel it is a responsibility to not only act, but to be models for people if not through the

exchange of ideas, then by showing their homes to curious people. This sense of community and exchange transcends both DEs and CNSVs.

Aside from one wise use participant, they are all hesitant to accept *Global Climate Change* as an occurring phenomenon. While all commit to needing further research, few believe the idea that anthropocentric climate change is occurring. Some are outright hostile to the notion. Instead, several respondents suggest conspiratorial motives and agenda driven ideology. On the other hand, a unanimous consensus is found to exist between DEs and CNSVs on this issue. Many point to examples of its effects and were generally well informed about the issue. All of those who agree that this is a real problem, with the exception of the one wise use proponents, felt that this is the most urgent environmental concern today.

Something all three groups agree upon is that *there is a need for a shift in how we produce energy*. While wise use members feel that fossil fuels should not be culled, DEs and CNSVs feel that if the popular will exists, these things could be answered, as the technology exists to begin the conversion.

Interestingly, even wise use advocates believe *changing behaviors to alter our trajectory is a necessity*. They however hold stronger views towards technology as a solution. In contrast, while DEs and CNSVs share an appreciation for technology, most feel that behaviors are the driving force behind our unsustainable practices, and a shift in thinking is preminent to our utilization of technology.

While there is pessimism about the current environmental conditions within the DEs and CNSV respondents, all three groups have *optimism* that environmental problems can be solved in the future. Many DEs and CNSVs point to indications of changing

mindsets, green marketing, and hope for at least an answer to their most pressing concern (GCC) through the development of wind and solar power. Members of Wise Use organizations pointed to how much has changed in the past few decades such as hunting/fishing limits and corporate concern for the environment that did not exist in the past. They also speak of tremendous technological innovation in the near future that would help the planet sustain the inevitable increase in population and development.

BACKGROUND INFLUENCES TO CURRENT VIEWS OF THE ENVIRONMENT

Questions pertaining to the participant's background elicited distinct findings. I found familial influences in all three groups. It appears for these individuals, family plays a major role in the development of an environmental ethic or appreciation of nature. All three groups (wise use, deep ecologists, and conservationists) cite periods of their childhood as great influences on their current appreciation of nature. While that appreciation varies per individual, most are influenced in some form or other by direct contact with nature in combination with family events or values.

Though the connection is more profound amongst Deep Ecologists and Conservationists, some Wise Use members share this appreciation. A WU member remembers his first connection to nature as one that is motivated by his family experiences.

My earliest memories were of my parents who were farmers, but unfortunately because of the depression they had to leave the farm and my earliest memories are outdoor and gardening and things like that. I joined the cub scouts when I was nine, and I think it was their 50th anniversary, and now they are having their 100th. Yeah, exactly [laughing]. The first thing I can remember doing was going to their 50th jamboree and the Will Rogers Coliseum in Fort Worth. That was very much outdoors, of course, in every way. And you were taught conservationism...That there were limited resources and they were to be respected, and always carried over

to hunting and fishing. Like for instance, I would never hunt for trophies or fish for trophies. I would only take what I'm going to eat. (Jasper WU)

Jasper's (WU) connection to nature, while not spiritual, was one of appreciation that views nature as a repository that needs to be respected for what it provides to us. This appreciation displays a sense of gratitude that results in responsible attitudes towards the environment as he points out his propensity for only killing and catching what he intends to eat. This appears to hint at respect, however not reverence that deep ecologists hold for nature. Jasper's view in contrast respects nature, yet it is due to the function that it serves humans. This is similar to John's (WU) experience as a child and young adult. He explains that when camping with his family, his father was constantly reminding him to leave the camp ground the same or cleaner than he found it. He mentions that one of the first books as a child that he remembers his mother giving to him was a children's book that advocated fifty ways to keep your environment clean. He feels that his parents were always reminding him to recycle.

Not to diminish the details offered by members of Wise Use organizations, conservationists and deep ecologists gave far more details into their experiences and their connection to nature is deeper in the sense that they feel immersed in, and part of, nature.

The thing that probably nudged me in this direction was, uh, number one, my sister. She was eight years older than I and led some summer camps. She was very forward and or progressive thinking. She would offer summer camps that took advantage of the woods behind our house. That combined with having the woods near behind us built into my thinking that having the natural world close by built an affinity for me or respect. It was hardwired; it was our kingdom, everything we did out there. We self organized, we became peacemakers, organizers, anti-establishment, connivers, constructors. Everything happened in those woods for us. (Paul CNSV)

This feeling is shared by Lilly (CNSV) who explains that she was raised in a cabin in a rural area that required them to hunt and fish for food and garden for vegetables. Her fondest memories are of her family gatherings that required each member of the family and extended family members to pitch in what they caught or grew for big celebrations or holidays. The obvious influence of being in nature and the combination of familial events has a profound effect not only on how they view nature, but on how these individuals view themselves in relation to it.

DEs also share similar stories to CNSVs. Tanya (DE) explains that her parents are some of the early 1970s environmentalists and subsequently are adamant organic farmers, some of the first according to Tanya. She explains:

My parents were of the opinion that it was not camping unless you were in a tent on the ground and there was some real suffering involved [laughs]. We were roughing it, but it was incredibly beautiful, so I had the opportunity to be exposed to many areas of the country. I can remember sitting down in this Mullen plant and feeling very much a part of the environment. I was in, and certainly not distanced from it. (Tanya DE)

This connection to the environment is consistent with other deep ecologist members such as Richard (DE) who explains that his extracurricular activities consisted of mountain climbing, canoeing, and hiking trails, while other teens his age were playing football, basketball, and baseball. Richard (DE) explains with pride his ability to live off the land and how what he learned as a child transferred into adulthood. As these examples point out, an early connection with nature was essential to a later appreciation for nature in these individuals. All share experiences in nature that helped develop their environmental ethic.

HUMAN EXEMPTIONAL PARADIGM OR NEW ECOLOGICAL PARADIGM

One goal of this study was to establish the worldview of these participants with regards to the human species and nature highlights some interesting findings. What is discovered is a distinct line in how these respondents view humans and nature. WU members clearly share an HEP perspective while DE and CNSV maintain a NEP view of humans in relation to nature. The importance of establishing this distinction illuminates for us the perspective of the participants when discussing issues of environmental relevance and especially in managing environmental crises as they arise. Despite these distinctions and as will be elucidated below, there are a number of subtleties to these views that provide a complex and rich understanding of the HEP/NEP divide.

Responsibility and Dominion over Nature

All WU respondents feel that humans are special in relation to nature and share a common belief that humans hold dominion over the environment. Yet this position has a subtlety to it as most are adamant that with this status in nature comes responsibility.

I absolutely believe we have dominion, but with that comes responsibility. I don't think it was a mistake that we are at the top of the food chain. We have a lot in common with animals, plants, these are great gifts we were given and it's a sin to treat these things that aren't given the same dominion, respect. (Jasper WU)

Will (WU) echoes this sentiment stating, "I do believe we have dominion, it is our right but also our responsibility. It's not scot free, we have to respect nature." Wayne (WU) also indicates that the unique abilities of humans set us apart and guaranteed man a place on top. He, as the others, provide an addendum that indicates he feels it is humanity's obligation to be responsible and wise in how it manages resources and wildlife to ensure the planet can sustain life. It is interesting to note that all these individuals feel that it is

the responsibility of humans to ensure the flourishing of life on the planet rather than living harmoniously with nature and allowing life to persist with or without the help of humans. This viewpoint is partially consistent with the HEP perspective insofar as it views humans and nature as separate, yet it shows a value for nature that is based on exchange values or domination (Catton and Dunlap 1978; Dunlap and Van Liere 1978; Dunlap, Van Liere, Mertig and Jones 2001).

Humans are a Part of a Dynamic System, Different, but not More Important

Interestingly, there is very little difference in regards to how DE and CNSV see humans and nature. Both groups share a deep appreciation for nature and our role as species within nature rather than external to it. To most, this question is silly, indicating a strong belief that humans are merely another species on this planet. Yet, all marvel at our capabilities.

Oh no, I certainly don't see us as any more important to the planet as bacteria is or the blue whale. Yet, we do have unique abilities, don't you think? I believe humans were intended to operate as nature's consciousness. It's fascinating to think that billions of years of evolution have resulted in this. It's sad though to imagine with this tremendous ability, we use it to disregard the planet. So no, anyone who thinks we are special is diluted. The planet existed before homo-sapiens and will continue after we're long gone. (Jeff DE)

Offering a gloomier picture, yet from the same paradigm, Richard (DE) calls human beings "nature's Frankenstein." In order to illustrate that what has evolved from nature has subsequently resolved itself to ignore the warning signs and destroy the creator (Earth). Gary (DE) emphatically states that he feels absolutely horrible about what we have become. He states that we have defiled our mother and as a result he feels that we are now experiencing the fifth great extinction.

CNSVs similarly hold the view that humans are not special in comparison to other animals but a unique species among many. Mary (CNSV) acknowledges that while humans have skills and abilities that can harm and help the earth, it is our perspective that limits us and leads us down the disastrous path.

What if one of those bacteria all of the sudden woke up and said, oh, this environment we are existing in is actually a living environment. When you're a bacteria, you have no way of knowing that. I think that's what Ellis, the guy that came up with Gaia, thought. That bacteria could say, oh, we're living on a living being. We have no way of knowing what that being is or how it operates. But we need to make sure that being stays alive because our existence is dependent on it. (Mary CNSV)

Reinforcing that notion, Fred (CNSV) also is astonished at the line of questioning that presumes humans could be in any way more important to the planet than other species. He, like the others, proceeds to condemn anthropocentric practices that endanger the environment. Fred (CNSV) points to life such as flora and fauna that exist as we do and how it plays a function in the larger system. Perhaps the most incredible finding within this line of questioning is the startled reactions from DEs and CNSVs at the notion that humans are more important or special in relation to other species.

When evaluating all three groups and their responses to humanity and its role within or separate from nature, the distinction is quite clear, yet all three hold a sense of responsibility to nature. The dramatic differences in perspective perhaps explain many of the following findings and how WU members differ from DE and CNSV members.

INDIVIDUAL SUSTAINABLE PRACTICES

Exploring what measures each individual takes to live sustainably assisted me in determining how one manages their views with their personal practices. The responses again differ greatly between WU participants and those with DE and CNSV ideals.

Notwithstanding the positive message of responsibility towards the environment, WU members place stronger convictions on fiscal responsibility than an ecological ethic.

Cost is a Priority

Dallas (WU) acknowledges that he does have a consciousness of the effects he has on the environment, however he manages that concern with his own survival. Dallas (WU) explains that for his way of life and current financial situation, these things do not weigh heavily on his mind. Dallas (WU) goes on to insinuate that in Texas being environmentally friendly is a metaphorical death sentence if not practiced by other small business owners. He feels that rather than incentive in the form of subsidy from the government, that he should receive tax breaks for being environmentally friendly based on having to pay more taxes if subsidies were the preferred method of encouragement. Interestingly, Dallas (WU) steers from his own practices at home to a more concerned effort in explaining how being environmentally friendly just does not have the reward that he seeks for making that lifestyle change.

John (WU) has a more tempered response and points to environmentally friendly practices as part of his approach to sustainable living. John (WU) indicated he goes to great lengths to ensure his home is properly insulated, shaded around the window areas, windows properly sealed, energy saving appliances, dimmer switches and a sprinkler system that is advertised as cost saving and environmentally friendly. Yet, John (WU) willfully points out that he would be lying if he told me that what motivates him to make these changes are strictly environmental concerns, when it is mostly about saving him money.

The one commonality about all the WU participants is the utilization of recycling as a practice that does not necessitate a financial incentive. Most point to the readily provided service of the cities they live in as something that is easy to do and part of the existing infrastructure.

We do put bottles, paper and plastics in different bins because the city does that here, so we go ahead and do that. I suppose that is one way I help. (Wayne WU)

Jasper (WU) also suggests that rather than buy bottled water, he uses a filter, stating that it is not only cheaper and less wasteful, but that bacteria requirements are far more stringent on tap water than on bottled water. This informed consumership also plays a role in how Will (WU) views environmentally friendly or organic produce. Will (WU) says:

We like to buy fruits and vegetables that aren't sprayed too heavily, you know, organic stuff. I guess if more people cared about what they put in their bodies, growers would care about what they put on stuff they sell to us.

These statements by Jasper (WU) and Will (WU) indicate viable concerns for being environmentally friendly, but such concerns appear to be driven by consumer choices. Considering the groups inclination to support individual rights over governmental mandates, it is interesting to point out that they manage their sustainable practices around the importance to them monetarily and the safety of what they eat and drink.

Green Living is Being Simple, not Consumptive

In contrast to the WUs, DEs and CNSVs are much more aware of consumptive practices as a possible “greenwash” marketing campaign rather than truly sustainable living. While they do practice some of the same methods as WU members, such as

purchasing energy star appliances, they seek out simpler solutions that do not require purchasing at all.

A lot of times I know it's a scam (re: green labeling). But I check things. The biggest problem is just the lack of selection here of products that are needed and handled in a fashion that is deemed friendly to the environment. I mean, I come from an educated background, I check things. I mean cheap goods, shirts at Wal-Mart, I think, where did it come from, how were the people who made it treated? A lot of people don't really look into that or care. Look at the hybrids. How much went into building that? How much waste was given off in its production? You still put gas in it. So is it really a solution? (Betsy CNSV)

Mary (CNSV) shares this concern about green labeling and states, "I look at it with a jaundiced eye." Mary (CNSV) like Paul (CNSV) is wary of the corporate mindset of profit as the primary goal. Both point to the organic labeling of dairy products as disingenuous due to milk production being run by agri-business, not small local dairies. According to them, the concern is more than just the production of the milk, but the management of cows, land, water and the environmental ramifications and consequences of running a dairy farm. One CNSV member even considers herself an adherent to the "no impact man" philosophy:

I don't bathe every day. I take either very shallow baths or very short showers. I don't run the water when I'm brushing my teeth. I don't flush the toilet every time I use it. I don't travel by plane a lot. I recycle so much that I have almost no trash, and I have started recycling in this building and we have big events and we recycle everything. I compost my vegetable waste. When we have events, we have a set of a hundred plates, cups and utensils. I can finish an event for one hundred people and have only one trash bag to throw away. And all of that is biodegradable stuff. (Lilly CNSV)

Not only does she employ this strategy in her own residence, but she actively promotes this in her place of business. As an events coordinator she actively dismisses the notion

that being sustainable is expensive, but she is quite proud of her frugality and how much money she saves as result of sustainable practices.

DEs, like CNSVs, also examine closely items labeled for their “green” properties. Richard (DE) thinks of it as “hoopla and cheerleading” stating that the non-consumer is the real environmentalist. In contrast to purchasing green items, Richard (DE) prefers simpler solutions such as making his own bread, shopping at local markets rather than chain stores, and most importantly to him, never buying fast food. Richard (DE) prefers choosing healthy seasonal meals that he views as not disturbing the Earth’s cycles. This idea of seasonal foods and local markets resonates with DEs. Tanya (DE) and Tina (DE) both advocate shopping at local markets, supporting local farmers and ensuring the food they consume is sustainably produced.

Reuse is a prominent theme for most DEs and CNSVs. Both groups not only state that they reject consumerism but most practice reuse by purchasing second hand clothes. Tina (DE), Tanya (DE), Lilly (CNSV), Mary (CNSV), and Betsy (CNSV) all indicate that they shop at thrift stores, garage sales and on Craigslist for second hand clothing. While some are concerned that some of the items they purchase may have been produced unethically (developing world labor), they all believe that the reuse of these items help to limit their consumptive impact.

Richard (DE) takes this idea further -- rather than buy second hand clothing, he and his wife make their own clothes. He indicates that when shopping for linen they are careful in choosing only those that are produced nearby and that are not “sweatshop junk.” Most of these individuals take great pains to manage themselves in a manner that

they feel serves an environmental ethic. Yet, in doing so, all the individuals feel liberated from the social norms of society.

I would encourage people to start making the little changes. Don't let it hurt, be creative, we're the lucky monkey because we are clever. Be clever, be creative, have fun. Make those little choices and learn about the planet and figure out ways to be less of a footprint on Earth. (Paul CNSV)

I find that Paul's (CNSV) statement accurately portrays the mentality of most of the participant's views on living sustainably.

Promoting Sustainability through Dialogue

As Paul (CNSV) points out above, sustainability, environmentalism, and conservationism are ideals that many DEs and CNSVs do not see as a burden, but a lifestyle they champion. Several members from both groups remark on the importance of speaking to others and sharing information, tips and just establishing dialogue with people. This dialogue ranges from seeking out a willing audience when they feel the need to talk about issues, modeling their homes, and outright organizational advocacy.

When we started building green homes, nobody really knew what we were doing and we generated a lot of interest in the community. My brother and I gave tours every weekend for eighteen months while we were building homes. Mind you, this wasn't part of our deal, we were just interested in building these homes, but we felt the need to teach when people of no background in environmentalism or conservation began to ask questions. So, we began to give workshops on educating people, we were putting our money where our mouth was. Even my daughter started a recycling program at school where they weren't throwing anything away and we were taking it to recycling centers in town. (Fred CNSV)

The sense of sharing the knowledge and concern is also shared by Betsy (CNSV) who talks of "spreading the word," in social settings, family events, and formal settings, where she acknowledges speaking about many environmental issues in her classroom and in board meetings. Tanya (DE) also speaks of writing an online blog about sustainable life;

where she has many novice and environmentally minded individuals following her bi-weekly updates, commentary on news reports, and advice on managing a sustainable household. Likewise, Richard (DE) publishes what he calls an “underground newspaper” for the deep ecology movement in ways to combat the corporate mindset and fighting what he terms “the ecological fight for our future.” Tina (DE) takes a more passive approach of dialogue by encouraging her kids and their friends to start environmental projects and communicating with the school they attend to help sponsor these ideas. She states, “I think a sense of community with people eases them into acceptance.” These examples clarify the lengths that these individuals go to not only live a sustainable life, but promote it through active participation with the community, society and just being outgoing about their values. This should register as a strong dedication to developing an environmental ethic in their surroundings. This finding shows that in contrast to a non-active member of an organization who simply pays dues, that these advocates certainly promote sustainability not only in their homes, but outside of it as well.

PERCEPTIONS OF ENVIRONMENTAL ISSUES

The final group of questions centered on broad and specific examples of ecological limitations and crises. It is likely these are the most important explorative set of questions in relation to how individuals view the environment and what our impact is on it. Global Climate Change emerged as a strong dividing line between WU members and DEs and CNSVs. However, I found that the remaining themes showed similar views with respect to energy production, behavioral change and optimism for the future.

Global Climate Change

No topic in this research is more provocative or divisive than the discussion of Global Climate Change (GCC). Similar to its portrayal in the media, GCC is delineated along political lines rather than strictly on the science of the matter for WU members. The discussions with almost all WU members results in either denial or refusal to accept that the science of GCC has reached a consensus. While one WU member does accept the anthropogenic cause of GCC, he ardently defends the need for more tax breaks on behalf of the energy companies in order for the market to seek out solutions to solving these problems. Dallas (WU) feels that it is not the role of the government to artificially create markets for carbon credits or to provide subsidies for alternative energy research when the best possible solutions lay with the energy companies in existence. Dallas (WU) acknowledges that mistakes have been made by energy companies, but responds that no other institution could be more driven to solve a problem, than one motivated by profit.

Dallas (WU) is not the norm, however. Jasper (Wu) does not dispute that humans can affect nature, but he believes that climate scientists are far too cozy with government funding to accept their findings as objective. He states:

You need the big tent with a lot of opinions, especially when there are leaks of emails showing disingenuous actions. The things that came out from that British meteorology school or group, they are those controlling people. If you are going to be in science, or in science in that part of the world, you have to go through that agency, and I'm afraid it taints it and leans things in the direction of what's popular. (Jasper WU)

Both Will (WU) and John (WU) share the belief that too much is made in the media about GCC and not enough research had been done to ensure that the findings were indisputable. This is a common factor for WU members that are concerned with the

suppression of critical research that disputes GCC findings. Wayne (WU) states anecdotally, “it’s bullshit” and points to this past winter as evidence of what he terms “the hoax” being perpetrated by individuals seeking government grants and global equality. Wayne (WU) persistently admonishes the efforts to curb global warming as a national threat due to the fact that, in his opinion, competing nations are not harboring the same concern and will continue to produce as they are, leaving the United States uncompetitive. While motives cannot be discerned from this research, it would appear that most members of the WU group fear the economic ramifications of actions taken to limit carbon emissions. Jasper (WU) and Wayne (WU) explain that any government imposed limits on the private sector would result in federal regulations that endanger the free market and profitability of industry.

In contrast, DEs and CNSVs unanimously view GCC as reality and an urgent dilemma facing humanity. The consensus feeling is that solving this crisis is connected to other pressing environmental problems.

I would not separate it out from the other environmental issues, because I really think they’re all parts of the one greater whole. I would view climate change as part of the overall environmental concerns which include things like pollution, habitat destruction, which you know all these things ultimately trace back to that question. Climate change, pollution, extraction of resources faster than they’re being replaced, you know just everything is one giant problem. It’s all connected. It all needs to be treated together because the root issue is the same for all of it. (Tanya DE)

Despite all DEs and CNSVs placing GCC’s level of importance high on a scale, they do not stratify the other environmental concerns as less of an ordeal. Tina (DE) echoed this sentiment stating, “I certainly think that it’s one of the core issues, when you look at issues of extinction and issues of pollution, when you change what is creating global climate change, you change those as well.” Mary (CNSV) and Lilly (CNSV) suggest that

what is most startling about GCC is the aspect that becoming sustainable now has a time limit. Both use examples of melting ice caps, water shortage, animal extinction, desertification of arable land, acidification of the oceans, and the disappearance of islands because of rising seas as indicators of impending problems that face the planet over the course of the century. The connection of GCC to environmental impacts for both DEs and CNSVs demonstrates their rationalization that GCC is not only important for the human species but for the thriving of ecological systems. This appreciation of the natural world highlights what is a strong NEP perspective in these individuals.

There is a Need for a Shift in How We Produce Energy

Members of all three groups agree that a transformation in energy production is needed. The difference rests with why an alternative form of energy was needed. WU members felt the shift in energy was necessitated due to the viable economic impacts that developing an alternative energy resource would bring. Jasper (WU) fears that governmental intervention in private industries is hindering the development of alternative resources by those capable energy companies. His opinion is, “the current energy companies have already developed an infrastructure to supply us with these things, and it is just a matter of what type of energy, nothing else.” Jasper’s (WU) concern is the Federal government’s subsidization of alternative sources of energy by way of wind and solar would create an unfair advantage to those industries when energy companies in existence are already capable of handling a transition. Wayne (WU) and Will (WU) both recommend that the free market be allowed to work outside of regulation, yet they do not share Jasper’s belief that energy companies should be responsible for developing alternative fuel sources.

People need to realize that, in fact, I was talking about this the other day. Everybody thinks it's the oil company's responsibility to come up with different sources of energy, and that's not true. Oil companies are in the oil and gas business. Anyone with a brain and understanding can try to come up with different alternative energy sources. (Wayne WU)

One can surmise that the need for a shift from fossil fuels to alternative sources is accepted by WU members, however, the motivation and onus is not necessarily placed on energy companies by all its members. It is unclear whether they feel that free market ideology trumps necessity or necessity requires the free market ideology to solve problems. This interview suggests that the sense of free market entrepreneurship gave these members the persistent mindset that all solutions be funneled through market valuation. Dallas (WU) is the only WU member who hints at government involvement, yet only in the form of tax incentives, tax breaks and perhaps the government easing environmental restrictions. His rationale is that energy companies are like children not wanting to do as they are told. Setting rules for them when knowing they will be broken was counter-productive to finding solutions. In his opinion, government needs to "play ball" with corporations in order to utilize the immense resources that energy companies command.

DEs, while in agreement that weaning ourselves off of fossil fuels is necessary, do not necessarily believe the answer is only energy production but how society is organized. Gary (DE) explains that solutions should not come from the top-down, but the bottom-up. He is emphatic in stating that energy providers hold the population in bondage by necessity. In his opinion, energy independence is the key to not only solving our problems, but eliminating the need for large transnational corporations to exploit other nations for their resources and subsequently destroy the environment by using those

resources. Tina (DE) similarly views the answer to an energy shift as necessitating a ground-up approach.

People have to shift fundamentally their belief in how much energy they should have serving them and their needs. When you make that self examination about yourself, you realize you can address energy issues with less demanding options such as a windmill in your back yard and solar panels on your roof. So I think it's a mindset shift in individuals and in families that ripples out into communities. So again, I'm thinking bottom-up approach. (Tina DE)

Simplicity, as in their answer on being sustainable, is consistent with this question as well.

CNSVs view themselves as much more pragmatic and willing to accept infrastructural changes. Paul (CNSV) reasons that being human, we are not special in any physical sense and do not have special sensory perceptions that other animals have. In turn, he points to our ability to innovate and to imagine, and with this he feels that we can address our energy crisis on multiple fronts by utilizing all the tools at our disposal. Mary (CNSV) expands on that notion by claiming we all will not be on board when we decide to make the shift. In her opinion forcing others to subscribe is the wrong approach. Thus, Mary offers a solution that can perhaps bridge us to a sustainable resource. In her opinion, much like a drug addiction, you cannot shock the system as it will become "reactionary" and perhaps lead society to respond negatively. Betsy (CNSV) also feels that the process perhaps needs to be gradual due to how many individuals are reliant upon the oil and gas industry. However, she has a suggestion for speeding up the process:

I mean, you're in a state where that is one of the prime methods of income, so it's a hard sell. I have friends that are on the edge about global climate change and as soon as the gas prices went up, they traded in their

Suburban for a Prius. Gas prices need to reflect the actual cost for us to have a fair talk about converting to a different fuel source. (Betsy CNSV)

This pragmatic approach may be reflective of their involvement in conservation organizations that seek to reach out to individuals of all ideologies for the preservation of common interests. Obviously not all subscribers to preserving a section of land or water will do so from the same mindset. It is conceivable that members who seek to keep waters pristine are business minded individuals who profit from tourism. Perhaps exposure to those types of individuals gives conservationists a better grasp on reaching out to people despite ideological differences. Working cooperatively with others according to Mitchell, Mertig and Dunlap (1992) has been a key component in the success of institutionalized groups that work within the confines of the law through lobbying and other legislative processes.

Changing Behaviors to Alter our Trajectory

Another shared concern from all three groups is the direction of global civilization. The impact of exploding populations, development and economic turmoil concerned members of all three groups. The concern however resulted in a myriad of responses that advocates changing our behaviors as well as technological solutions. Betsy (CNSV) and Will (WU) both clarify that technological innovation will be a necessity since most people will not accept decelerating progress. Yet, both are adamant in suggesting that technology could be no more than a bridge or in the long run it would become a crutch for civilization to limp along while the problems went unsolved. Tina (DE) and Tanya (DE) prefer a much more behavioral and attitudinal shift from the sense of entitlement that many developed nations feel. Both clarify this by examining the imbalance in wealth and the exploitation of developing nations.

I think in order to stabilize things like population and growth we have to recognize we are not entitled to a standard of living that is obscenely higher than other people who occupy the same planet. We need to work that out in order to come to some level where everyone's needs are met and civilization can live sustainably. (Tanya DE)

Most respondents who agree with this notion point to our wasteful behaviors and excess as being the root to our unsustainable path. Jeff (DE) feels that simply looking at our economic choices as a nation that advocates spending rather than saving, glorifies possessions as items of stature, and always needing the new gadget or a bigger home as part of our problem. According to Jeff (DE), no amount of technology can protect us from ourselves when we are simply retaining the same values that produced the waste and ecological destruction that we have today.

Those individuals stand in stark contrast to Wayne (WU), John (WU) and Jasper (WU) who all feel that there is an abundance of resources yet available to people and it is the job of technology to seek out ways to utilize those unconventional methods. While behavioral and attitudinal changes need to be made according to them, technology is seen as yet another untapped answer.

When has civilization ever moved backwards to move forward? It's a paradox, it's silly. The world is far too complex to seek simpler solutions when you have other nations creating superior technology and continuing to grow. Hell, look at China, in the span of a few decades they went from mud huts to being the United States' loan shark. We have to develop technologies that make us less dependent on foreign nations for resources and money. When the government eases restrictions on valuable resources here in America, you'll see the next technological boom because the money is going to stay here. (John WU)

Evidently for some, the problem is not us, as in the world, but us, as in the United States. This is a particularly concerning finding as many of the problems perpetrated by humans on nature are not occurring in a vacuum and do have global ramifications. This view of

matters certainly fits the WUs mantra of pushing back against environmental restrictions for the benefit of the individual or corporations. Reitan (2004) states in his admonishment of overlapping priorities that sways toward environmentalists as unfair to the individual due to all citizens not adhering to that ideology.

Optimism

Undoubtedly, the future can appear bleak when discussing issues of environmental concern. And there are certainly members who feel quite pessimistic about the future of humanity and of the condition humans will leave the planet. Yet two-thirds of those interviewed have a bright outlook for the future. Many point to signs of ecological social change such as the prevalence of green marketing. Despite their suspicion of its manufactured advertising, they grasp on to the need for corporations to do so as a sign that people are becoming more aware and cognizant of the fact that we can control our impact on the environment.

I am hopeful, I remain optimistic. I tell people when they come to my viewing they'll find me smiling with my fingers crossed. We're in this separation tendency. That isn't helping. I think we'll whoop that, I think we'll have to. We don't all have to love each other, but we can work together. Discovering ways to be more sophisticated in how we interact with each other is important. I think we'll solve the energy crisis or we'll find some balance. I have to think that, or why else am I doing this. (Paul CNSV)

This feeling is shared by the others as well. Dallas (WU) points to the interconnectivity of people and the fact that cities are starting to bunch together, even in a state as large as Texas, along the I-35 corridor. Dallas (WU) hints that this is not a bad thing, because through technology we will seek ways to make these new structures greener and not just one big iron and concrete metropolis like New York. This idea of connectivity also resonates with Gary (DE).

I see a world of cooperative human beings living in a garden with respect for all life forms. We're not all that different. This whole thing about individuality and all of that to me is just wrong. The more advanced species cooperate in this world. Take for instance the idea of cutting edge medicine looking to treat people at the cellular level. What we want to do is take care of our cellular health and then you'll be healthy. That can be extrapolated to any level of life on Earth. We are on a living body, if we are unhealthy, so is the planet. (Gary DE)

Optimism to many respondents is the key in holding the sustainable movement together.

Like Paul (CNSV), Fred (CNSV) feels that the change will come when people make the choice to live together and form a sense of community that does not rely on outside sources of energy or resources that tie people down to corporations and other paternalistic entities that thrive from dependence. In his view, the planet will eventually have an energy network that transcends the planet allowing for areas in sunlight to power areas in darkness.

One could make the argument that these individuals are perhaps disconcerted based on current events and apparent warning signs that the planet is quickly changing for the worse, yet it is no surprise that individuals who promote a change also feel positive about their efforts. Members of WU movement such as Jasper (WU) do not see quite the same world, as the idea of collectivism does not mesh well with WU ideology of individual property rights and decentralization of authority. He and Will (WU) see a future where the nation has thrived based on energy independence and technological innovation.

These findings indicate differentiated perspectives of the environment from the views of WU members in contrast to CNSVs and DEs. While very few differences are found between CNSVs and DEs, WU members and CNSVs are much more in tune with mainstream society insomuch as they do embrace technological solutions. This feeling is

tempered by CNSVs agreement with DEs that simplicity and harmonious existence with nature is paramount.

CHAPTER V

DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSION

This research explores the Wise Use movement, Conservationists and Deep Ecologist for the presence of the New Ecological Paradigm. Not surprisingly, the Human Exemptionalism Paradigm was found to be quite prevalent within the WU movement. All WU members interviewed for this research believe humans had dominion or even divine right to the Earth. In comparison, The New Ecological Paradigm was very prominent among the DEs and CNSVs. The CNSVs are anthropocentrically motivated since many were members of watershed groups, sustainable home builders and river foundations, and these organizations generally seek to preserve natural resources for the importance to humans. Nonetheless, in exploring their personal views of the environment, they do not differ from individuals who adopt ecologism as their ideology. This finding sheds more light on active members of CNSVs as being perhaps just as ecocentric as DEs and perhaps the need to explore more in depth the members of conservation groups.

One significant finding is that individuals in this research who experience nature in some form or manner at a young age through familial encouragement have a positive correlation with the NEP perspective as adults. Nearly all DEs and CNSVs share some fascinating story about growing up in the forests, hiking, canoeing or just being immersed in nature as their sanctuary. While this research does not allow for a generalization to all

DEs and CNSVs, the findings indicate that the adoption of the NEP perspective may have begun at an early age as a result of exposure to the natural world. Not coincidentally, those with the strongest convictions on being responsible for the environment within the WU movement also share experiences as a child or young adult that left an appreciation for nature.

This finding is likely the most important for several reasons. If there is indeed a connection between early exposure to nature and the development and acceptance of the NEP, the connection itself provides an avenue for those seeking a paradigm shift. This finding, if applicable to most individuals, could become a blueprint for establishing ecocentric values at an early age. There are obvious limitations to this component for urban schools. Yet, knowing that frequent and early interactions with nature helps promote ecocentric values, educators should encourage early childhood development that incorporates environmental components. These activities can be as simple as extended outdoor recess for young children and more specialized activities that attempt to connect units of study in junior high and high school courses to real life experiences in nature. The opportunities are limitless for an education system willing to explore the possibilities. Not to leave out the most important aspect of this, but the adoption of outdoor activities such as camping may increase ecocentric values if parental guidance is part of the experience.

The WU advocates, despite having a strong HEP perspective, did however show signs of adhering to some NEP points such as, “intricate linkages of cause and effect and feedback in the web of nature produce many unintended consequences from purposive human action” (Catton and Dunlap 1978:45). All WU members share a sense of

responsibility to nature that coincides with their belief that humans are unique in that they can control outcomes in nature, thus warranting responsible actions upon it. This presents a blending of the paradigms that has not previously been discussed in the literature. Yet, when asked how they contribute to being sustainable, most respond with minimal examples of how they live sustainably.

The overarching motivation for these individuals is the cost to them of being sustainable in their residence or business. These responses from WU members challenge the popular notion that they view nature as a limitless natural resource commodity with exchange value. Viewing nature as nothing more than a limitless commodity is what individuals with HEP perspectives would adhere to according to the HEP/NEP scale (Catton and Dunlap 1978; Dunlap and Catton 1994; Dunlap et al. 2000). All of the members of the WU organizations however displayed a sense of use value that showed respect for finite resources. This seems to be inconsistent with the scale to this point and may indicate that the HEP/NEP scale could now exist as a sliding scale or continuum rather than as a dichotomy.

DEs and CNSVs described adherence to their philosophical and ideological stances. They gave many examples of living a harmonious life and while environmental impact plays a role in their purchases, they do not consider themselves green consumerists. Rather, they enjoy simpler solutions that gave way to a more sustainable livelihood. Interestingly, they share their livelihoods with others by not doing so in obscurity, and promoting it through outgoing personal interactions discussions, blogs, underground newspapers, with their children, neighbors and community. One can garner from this that these individuals value a sense of connectivity in how they approach being

a CNSV or DE. This is consistent with Saunder's (2008) idea of a strong sense of identity being formed by individuals engaging with each other to create a more tightly knit community that perhaps are not as large or well funded like larger organizations but due to their interactions and close associations create a solidarity that is not easily broken.

The largest divide amongst participants in this research is on the topic of Global Climate Change. All WU members, with the exception of Dallas (WU), feel that either GCC needs to be investigated more or that it is simply not occurring. WU members indicate that the science has yet to be resolved on the matter or that the science is intentionally distorted to serve the interests of research scientists. According to McCright and Dunlap (2003; 2010) this would indicate that the misrepresentation and manipulation of impact research has been successful in coercing these individuals into accepting the viewpoint that there exists a debate in climate science. Coupled with the disbelief about GCC, WU members are nearly unanimously concerned about unnecessary, inefficient or ineffective governmental regulation. This feeling among WU members, however, appears to be misplaced as McCright and Dunlap's findings indicate that:

A key reason is that pursuit of environmental protection often involves governmental action that is seen as threatening economic libertarianism, a core element of conservatism. Yet, most environmental protection up to present – such as regulations designed to control air or water pollution – was accomplished without posing a major threat to industrial capitalism, despite protests from the corporate sector. (2003:353)

This extends to other topics discussed with reference to questions that seek to evaluate the perceptions of environmental phenomenon such as GCC and issues of ecological limits as are included in the NEP measures provided by Dunlap and Van Liere (1978); Catton and Dunlap (1978); and Dunlap, Van Liere, Mertig and Jones (2001).

When discussing issues of shifting how society produces energy or sustainable trajectories, WU members while agreeable to some extent, still maintain the strong mistrust for government intervention. The availability of natural resources is also not a particular concern to WU members as most insist that the trajectory is merely unsustainable as a result of government interference. This lack of concern for rapidly diminishing natural resources firmly entrenches these individuals with respect to that question closer to the HEP perspective. Ecological problems are also cast aside as merely problems of technological limitations that can be overcome in the future.

When gauging the responses of CNSVs and DEs, the largest contrast was in response to ecological limits. Both groups acknowledge the limitations are staggering and quite serious at this point. CNSVs are much more willing to accept behavioral changes along with innovative ways to reach out and bridge the transition from fossil fuels to a cleaner energy source. While this difference does not exclude them from being adherents to the NEP, they do have a more facilitating perspective in getting others to accept this change. This compromise would automatically discount many of the limits that DEs hold as most important to living harmoniously with nature. DEs seek out simpler solutions that eliminate the need to expand the already large impact made on society by the current infrastructure.

Simplicity is a theme for both DEs and CNSVs personally; however, how each view the rest of society differs in how they suggest we curtail our current unsustainable behaviors. The strand that brings both groups back to agreement is the rejection of corporate and market manufactured solutions. Both groups see through the thin veil of

green consumerism and do not buy into the notion that consumerism is in any way, shape or form a sustainable solution.

Finally, the issue of optimism is profound because it is present in all three groups. How they viewed the future was not necessarily the same, and some appear to hold on to a positive outlook as it strengthens their efforts from an intrinsic sense. Considering the sobering topics covered in this research and some of the responses that seem rather pessimistic, when asked to prognosticate about the future, most begin with the positive views of humanity. Despite rejecting green consumerism and green marketing, DEs and CNSVs view this as a positive sign that people are needed to be sold on the idea that what they are buying will be gentle to the environment. In addition to that, there is a belief that in the years to come people will be forced to rely on each other and in doing so they will learn to live with each other in a communal manner that promotes cooperation rather than individualism. This is not necessarily true of WU members who hold to the technological answer and more of a nationalistic view of the future that sees the United States free of foreign dependency for natural resources.

While not a theme, it should be noted that two CNSVs shared with the interviewer a sense of depression and loneliness in maintaining their lifestyle while watching others live so wastefully. Lilly (CNSV) and Mary (CNSV) both feel disheartened at seeing so many people continue to disregard the environment and not share the level of awareness they have for nature. Mary (CNSV) claims that many days she requires her husband to cheer her up and continue the advocacy for sustainable practices. This is certainly a theme that if this research is to be expanded should be evaluated more closely.

A limitation to this research is the small non-random sample, and while themes are found in this research, they cannot be generalized or quantified as representative of other CNSVs, DEs and WU members. However, determining from this research that there is little difference in perspective between CNSVs and DEs serves as a precursor to further exploration of paradigm shifting amongst ecologically minded individuals.

Further limitations include the small comparison groups that include five members from each group. This research should be conducted on a larger scale that not only seeks out participation nationwide, but as well as different organizations within these three large movements and those outside of these (i.e. eco-feminist). As mentioned above, managing depression and other negative effects on these individuals should be explored more succinctly in order to determine whether the participants in this group is reflective of the general psychological well-being present in the environmental movement. Additionally, the existence of ecologism within the CNSVs perhaps necessitates a closer look at members of these organizations for personal beliefs aside from the aims of their organizations.

While the NEP was found present in both CNSVs and DEs, this should necessitate a quantitative evaluation of a larger sample in order to establish that both groups are working from a perspective that can be deemed as ecocentric. In addition, the influence of conservative think tanks should be added to the questioning when evaluating WU groups due to their congruence on matters of the environment. It is likely that WU groups are utilizing information disseminated by these think tanks. Many of the responses given by the WU participants were examples of conservative think tank policies of delegitimizing scientific findings. According to McCright and Dunlap,

conservative think tanks employed a tactic of, “symbolically indicting government-funded climate scientists on charges of unethical, immoral, and illegal behavior” (2003:357). The behavior in question was intentional manipulation of data in order to secure government grants (McCright and Dunlap 2003). The WU members utilized this exact talking point when asked to address the issue of climate change. It is also a possibility that conservative think tanks have not directly influenced these individuals; however, it has become a common practice for think tanks to host events and conferences regarding issues about the climate. As a result of this, the attendance of dignitaries, politicians and the mainstream media has lent credibility to the dissenting opinions (McCright and Dunlap 2003).

Participants in this research are predominantly from Texas and this geographic limitation may affect the results. The fact that most members represented are from this state may have significant effect on the findings as social dynamics likely differ in other states that may have significantly more positive or negative views of environmentalism and wise use activism.

The aim of this research is to establish whether there is a presence of the NEP perspective within members of the modern environmental movement, however small, is a beginning to a larger exploration of those who advocate for sustainability and the environment. Like the DEs and CNSVs within this research, establishing dialogue is important, what is being said and in the manner that it is conveyed is also important. If NEP is being promoted either through personal behaviors and attitudes by the environmental movement, or actively by the aims of their organizations, perhaps the reason for optimism amongst the members interviewed here is well founded.

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