

Rousseau in Shelley's Eyes

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The Role of Emotion in Environmental Narratives: An Analysis of Canada's Leading Environmental Organizations

by

Forrest William Parlee

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Approval

Name: Forrest Parlee
Degree: Master of Arts (Liberal Studies)
Title of Extended Essay: *Rousseau in Shelley's Eyes*
~ and ~
*The Role of Emotion in Environmental Narratives:
An Analysis of Canada's Leading Environmental
Organizations*

Examining Committee:

Chair: Jerry Zaslove
Professor Emeritus
Department of English and
Department of Humanities

Stephen Duguid
Senior Supervisor
Professor
Department of Humanities

Wayne Knights
Second Reader
Instructor
SFU Now: Nights or Weekends
Continuing Studies

Michael Kenny
External Examiner
Professor Emeritus
Department of Sociology and Anthropology

Date Defended/Approved: August 9, 2013

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Abstract:
Rousseau in Shelley's Eyes

Percy Shelley was a second generation Romantic poet who sought to understand the impact of the French Revolution, and the Enlightenment more broadly, on Western society. This essay focuses on the impact of the work of Jean-Jacques Rousseau on Shelley's world view and poetry, specifically through an analysis of Shelley's poem, "The Triumph of Life". Rousseau's intellectual legacy leading into the French Revolution, his influence on Jacobin political leaders and how he was perceived by English Romantics following the Revolution are explored and considered in the context of his influence on Shelley.

Keywords: Shelley; Rousseau; French Revolution; Romanticism; Triumph of Life

Abstract:
**The Role of Emotion in Environmental Narratives:
An Analysis of Canada's Leading Environmental
Organizations**

The role of emotion in the environmental narratives employed by Canada's leading environmental advocacy organizations is explored. Analysis is framed in the context of the dominant Western worldview, which is characterized by the opposition between rationality and emotion. The essay seeks to answer whether the environmental movement in Canada is undermined by its use of emotion in environmental narratives.

Keywords: environment; environmental organizations; ecocentrism; nature; narratives; reason and emotion

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Essay 1.
Rousseau in Shelley's Eyes

Introduction

By the end of the French Revolution, Jean-Jacques Rousseau's intellectual legacy was in need of resuscitation. The philosopher from Geneva, who died over a decade before the storming of the Bastille, was mythologized by the Revolution's supporters and critics. Rousseau's political thought proved to be particularly vulnerable to myth-making and co-option, and in the explosive decade that was the 1790's, his work was at the centre of dramatic societal change in France and England.

One of the great challenges to getting at the heart of Rousseau's writing is the fact that there are numerous different readings of his various works. The author of *The Social Contract*, *Emile*, *Confessions*, *Julie* and *Reveries of a Solitary Walker*, among many other works, did not have his own philosophical system for explaining the world; nor did he have a metaphysics of the origin of knowledge and being. Instead, his body of work serves as an illustration of a mind acutely focused on powerful tensions between passion and reason, society and solitude, and tradition and progress. And yet, according to Sir Ernest Barker, "You can find your own dogmas in Rousseau, whether you belong to the Left (and especially to the left of the Left) or whether you belong to the Right (and especially to the right of the Right)." (Barker, 1948, p. xxxix)

These different readings and Rousseau's ambition to write broadly in genres from political philosophy, fiction and autobiography have given scholars much to question and revolutionaries ample fodder for inspiration, particularly during the ambitious decade at the end of the eighteenth century. Needless to say, the relevance of Rousseau's thought to the political developments of democratic societies in the West is significant. Napoleon Bonaparte commented when visiting Rousseau's grave that, "It would have been better for the peace of France if this man had never existed. It is he who paved the way for the French Revolution." (Damrosch, 2007, p. 352) His views on the sovereign challenged the legitimacy of monarchical regimes and laid the groundwork for political revolution and political reform in the 18th and 19th centuries.

During the French Revolution from 1789-1799, petit-bourgeois Jacobin political leaders were drawn to Rousseau's rhetoric and philosophy, which focuses on man's natural goodness, privileges conscience over reason and warns of the corrupting force

of society on man. While the extent of his influence over the French Revolution is a matter of controversy, it is clear that Jacobin political leaders looked to Rousseau for inspiration and cited his work in their speeches and letters. They were particularly attracted to his writing on virtue, his confessional style and man's nature. Critics of the French Revolution like Edmund Burke, the conservative English Parliamentarian, however, viewed Rousseau as a source of shallow atheism, whose confessional style, eccentricity and vanity corrupted society and served as a powerful form of cultural decay in France. Following the French Revolution and the rise of Napoleon, many writers and critics of the Revolution laid part of the blame at the feet of the *philosophes* of the French Enlightenment and particularly Rousseau.

For Percy Bysshe Shelley, a second generation English Romantic poet born on the heels of the outbreak of the French Revolution, the fallout of the Revolution and the impact of Enlightenment thought on society, was a central focus of his work. Shelley was brought up in a society where the initial reaction to the French Revolution was complex, particularly within the community of English Romantics. Romantics, like William Wordsworth, initially shared in the enthusiasm of the Revolution, only to be disillusioned by its excesses and eventual failure. Shelley, however, was born during the Revolution and was resistant to the disillusionment experienced by Romantics that came before him. Instead, he focused on understanding its influences and impact. Juxtaposed against the writings of Wordsworth and other first generation English Romantics, Shelley defined his own position on both the Revolution and Rousseau. His unfinished poem, "The Triumph of Life", can be viewed as an intellectual re-claiming of Rousseau based on what Shelley saw as a shared orientation toward imagination, sensibility, reverie, and the elevation of conscience over reason.

Through an examination of Rousseau's influence on Jacobin political leaders of the French Revolution and Percy Shelley's poetry, this paper will consider the mythology surrounding Rousseau as a powerful example of what can happen when a philosopher's work is invoked posthumously as inspiration or, more seriously, justification for political action and the dangers of attempting to parse Rousseau's complex political thought given its inherent tensions between passion and reason. Further, it will be demonstrated that Rousseau had a significant impact on the mind of Shelley and that his work can be seen as an affirmation of Rousseauian virtue.

Rousseauian Justice

The General Will is central to Jean-Jacques Rousseau's political philosophy. As Judith Shklar famously remarked, "it conveys everything he most wanted to say." (Shklar, 1969, p. 184) It is the fundamental pillar of his *Social Contract* (1762). However, David Lay Williams does not overstate it when he describes it as "notoriously vague". (Williams, Volume 66, Number 3, July 2005) The fundamental concepts Rousseau forwards are those of freedom and equality. Essentially, Rousseau argues that man is born free in the state of nature with the fundamental natural right of independence. He owes a duty only to himself and his own self-preservation. In this state of nature, man knows no vice nor virtue, because there is no social interaction. There is no competition or property, and therefore man does not act possessively. These ideas form the basis of his argument that man is born good in nature, but is corrupted by society.

Rousseau provides a solution to a problem that had been touched on by scholars previously: the challenge of how to legitimize the social order in the face of selfishness, materialism, tyranny, and gross social and economic inequality. His solution was the *Social Contract*. Social contract theory was not new, but Rousseau approached the issue from a different position than previous scholars. The concept common among social contract theorists is the idea of a "consent" to be ruled.

17th Century philosopher and social contract theorist Thomas Hobbes, in describing the state of nature, argued in *Leviathan* (1651) that, "during the time men live without a common power to keep them all in awe, they are in that condition which is called war; and such a war as is of every man against every man".¹ In this state any

person has a natural right to do anything to preserve his own liberty or safety, and Hobbes believed that in this state life is "solitary, poor, nasty, brutish, and short." (Hobbes, 1985, pp. 186 Part I, Ch. XIII) His view of the state of nature was that of a state of war due to scarcity and lack of security. His solution was for members of society to enter into a social contract with an all powerful "Leviathan", or absolute sovereign, to rule over society.

While Rousseau and Hobbes agreed on the natural rights of man in the state of nature, Rousseau was critical of Hobbes' premise for Leviathan, claiming that in describing a state of war, Hobbes was taking socialized persons and simply imagining them living outside of the society in which they were raised. He argued instead that, in a hypothetical state of nature, people were neither good nor bad. Humans knew neither vice nor virtue since they had almost no dealings with each other. Their bad habits were the product of civilization. Nevertheless, both scholars believed that the conditions of nature forced man to enter into a civil society and therefore required a social contract.

Rousseau had a more sophisticated view of the legitimacy of the state than Hobbes. He sought a more nuanced legitimacy than simply an historical social contract granting absolute power to the sovereign, as such a form of sovereignty would encroach on individual freedom. He writes:

"The problem is to find a form of association which will defend and protect with the whole common force the person and goods of each associate, and in which each, while uniting himself with all, may still obey himself alone, and remain as free as before."
(Rousseau J.-J. , 2003, pp. 8-9)

The Social Contract and the carrying out of General Will of the body politic is the solution to this problem. Rousseau's interpretation of the social contract was an entirely new way of thinking about the sovereign. Whereas Hobbes viewed the entering into the social contract as an historical event that would place people under the rule of an absolute sovereign, Rousseau understood the social contract to mean an implicit understanding that exists continuously as the shared commitment that legitimizes the civil system. And whereas Hobbes viewed the people as being "subjects" to the ruler or

sovereign, Rousseau argued that, in fact, it was the people forming the body politic who were the sovereign and that the ruler, or government, would operate to carry out the will of the people, for the people.

A fundamental key to this legitimacy is the social equality of men, which creates the conditions for true freedom. This concept is found in our modern liberal societies and implicitly challenged the monarchical structures found across Europe at the time of publication in 1762. He believed that when each citizen puts themselves in common under the supreme direction of the General Will, it is an act of association that creates a moral and collective body composed of as many members as the assembly contains voters, which forms a *Republic* or “body politic”. He believed the General Will can transcend the self-interest that civilized society brings out in individuals, and the relative freedom afforded by the Social Contract is the best social man can do. However, it is the metaphysics of the General Will that remains the ongoing question.

Like most great philosophers, including Plato, Kant and Mill, Rousseau sought to establish the intertwined relationship between citizenship, the individual and virtue. In fact, some scholars argue that Kant’s categorical imperative, which outlines the fundamental principle of moral duties, outlined in the *Grounding in the Metaphysics of Morals* (1785), would not have been possible without Rousseau’s views on man’s goodness and natural compassion in the state of nature, as Rousseau wrote, “For an action to be just, it must be so in all its relations.” (Qvortrup, 2003, p. 101) Rousseau, however, did not develop his own metaphysics. As a result, the metaphysical root of Justice in the General Will is a disputed question, the result of which can be seen by some as contributing to justification for the Terror of the French Revolution. We see from social contract theory that Hobbes and Rousseau have both commonalities and key differences in their philosophy. A point of debate among scholars regarding these two social contract theorists is the metaphysics of Justice in terms of the “will”.² Specifically, Hobbes takes a positivist position in determining Justice that essentially allows for man’s

² John Locke, along with Rousseau and Hobbes, is considered one of the foremost social contract theorists and influenced Rousseau. The key purpose of this section is not a review of social contract theory in its entirety, but to highlight the metaphysical challenge between Rousseau’s metaphysically ambiguous approach via the General Will and the positivism of Hobbes.

will to be the preceding element of Justice. There is an unresolved debate over whether Rousseau's metaphysics is positivist or Platonian.³ In other words, does Justice follow the expression of the General Will or is there a higher Platonian Idea of Justice, or natural law, that guides the General Will? This question is not to be resolved here, but serves as an example of how the core metaphysical question in Rousseau's most compelling work of political theory is open to interpretation, and therefore, a root of Rousseauian myth-making in the French Revolution.

Rousseau's work continues to challenge readers and has done so for centuries. However, there is little doubt that despite the lingering questions surrounding his metaphysics, he has provided a political philosophy that addresses important questions for civilized society. In an article on Rousseau's unity of thought published in 1912, Gustave Lanson states that we can indeed find contradictions of detail in Rousseau's work, but the general direction is quite clear. Rousseau seeks to address a problem to which all his writings can be grasped as working toward a solution, that is: "How can civilized man recover the benefits of the natural man, so innocent and happy, without returning to the state of nature, without renouncing the advantages of the social state?" (Lanson, 1912, p. 16) His answer was to give man sovereignty over his ruler and equal rights before the law, but that virtue is realized by submitting oneself to the General Will once it is expressed. As will be seen, this concept played significantly in the minds of members of the Committee of Public Safety during the French Revolution.

³ See Masters, Roger D. *The Political Philosophy of Rousseau* (New Jersey :Princeton, 1968); Melzer, Arthur. "Rousseau's Moral Realism: Replacing Natural Law with the General will". In *The American Political Science Review*, Vol. 77, No. 3 (Sep 1983); Williams, David Lay. "Justice and the General Will: Affirming Rousseau's Ancient Orientation". In *Journal of the History of Ideas*. Volume 66, Number 3, July 2005

Confessional Writing: Conscience over Reason

Rousseau's thought does not start and stop with his political philosophy. While notions of freedom and equality expressed in his social contract theory were indeed revolutionary, his commentary on social interaction, authenticity, and sentimentality exhibited in his *Julie*, *Emile*, *Confessions*, and *Reveries of a Solitary Walker* had a similar impact.

Julie (1761) was the most popular and best-selling of all his books and the best-selling novel of the entire eighteenth century. (Damrosch, 2007, pp. 314-315) A theme of authenticity and sentimentality runs throughout the book and, while it does not have much in the way of plot development, moral principles are expressed about social interaction and the superiority of rural living in contrast to the corruption of Parisian society, which he despised. In *Julie*, pre-Romantic attitudes toward nature are also exhibited, for example, through Julie's garden, which she calls her Elysée. According to Damrosch, the garden appears wild and uncultivated by design, serving as a fine metaphor for domesticated love and nature is vested with spiritual value. (Damrosch, 2007, p. 322)

In *Emile* (1762), published around the same time as *The Social Contract*, Rousseau formulated his belief that virtue could not be achieved through one's self-directed development, but required being molded by a benevolent agent that enabled the achievement of moral rectitude. (Blum, 1986, pp. 66-67) Ultimately, such an education enables man to achieve Rousseau's "fundamental maxim". He writes:

True happiness comes with equality of power and will. The only man who gets his own way is the one who does not need another's help to get it: from which it follows that that the supreme good is not authority, but freedom. The true freeman wants only what he can get, and does only what pleases him. This is my fundamental maxim. Apply it to childhood and all the rules of education follow. (Rousseau, 1956, p. 35)

Through his *Confessions* (1782-1789), Rousseau essentially created the modern form of autobiography. J.M. Cohen, in his introduction to *Confessions* describes Rousseau as a man who is seeking to prove himself as fundamentally honest and good, despite his imperfections. In displaying his sins to the world, even in exaggerated form in some cases, Rousseau was unique in taking an individualistic variant of the Christian virtue of humility by displaying himself frankly as a more miserable sinner than the rest of man-kind. . (Cohen, 1953 , pp. 8-9) In doing so he reveals a subjective origin of objective thought that breaks with the *Philosophes* in placing virtue in thought most closely aligned with man's nature and sentiment and that originates within the individual, independent from the influence of society. One finds in Rousseau, Cohen states further, a man that is entirely a creature of his feeling, although having less constancy of sentiment than Wordsworth or Goethe. While they were equally in reaction to the intellectualism of the Enlightenment, the emotions expressed throughout their works were based on "some objective experience of the world", whereas Rousseau's sentiments, such as the experience he records on the shores of Lake Geneva returning from walking Mme de Waren's maid to her home, "were always muddled by a yearning for he knew not what and by the consciousness that something in the past had escaped him to which he could almost give a name." (Cohen, 1953 , p. 11) More than anything, *Confessions* is an account of Rousseau's feelings and what actions they led him to take. His honesty and exploration of his conscience and motivation were unprecedented at that time.

In his final work, *Reveries of a Solitary Walker* (1782), Rousseau does not take on any particular topic. Entering his final years, feeling like an outcast and residing in Paris, he sought to "give myself over entirely to the pleasure of conversing with my soul, since this is the only pleasure that men cannot take away from me." (Rousseau, *Reveries of a Solitary Walker*, 2004, p. 32) Rousseau, throughout his life, had been exiled and criticized extensively, and was feeling like a man scorned at this time. He wanted to gain new knowledge of his nature by understanding the feelings and thoughts that "nourish my mind in this strange state" and regarded *Reveries* as an appendix to his *Confessions*. (Rousseau, *Reveries of a Solitary Walker*, 2004, p. 33) If it were necessary to identify a common theme to this work, it would be the tension between society and solitude, and the role of reverie in enabling one to feel peace and

contentment. In his Fifth Walk, Rousseau reflects upon how one can enter into a state of soulful rest that is secure enough to place one's entire being there, in the present, without a need to remember the past or reflect on the future. We might regard this as a form of meditation, but for him a complete and perfect happiness fills the soul. Rousseau believes he obtained this state on the Island of Saint Pierre during his solitary reveries, where he "lay in a boat and drifted where the water carried me, or sat by the shores of the stormy lake, or elsewhere, on the banks of a lovely river or a stream murmuring over the stones." (Rousseau, *Reveries of a Solitary Walker*, 2004, pp. 88-89) He reflects on the source of happiness in such a state and finds that it is the feeling of existence unmixed with any other emotion that provides peace and contentment that is completely self-sufficient. Unfortunately, he laments, most men are continually stirred by passion and can know little of this condition. (Rousseau, *Reveries of a Solitary Walker*, 2004, p. 89) In this passage we see the Rousseau who inspired the Romantic Movement, whose imagination, reflections upon nature and conscience led the next generation of writers and poets to approach individualism in a way that questioned feeling and promoted understanding one's self in the world.

This partial summation of Rousseau's most influential works serves to demonstrate his thematic consistency of thought, while foreshadowing that Rousseau would become the subject of significant and varying interpretations. Most importantly, it is critical to realize that, as biographer Leo Damrosch writes, "Rousseau never wanted to found a system, and he didn't. His mission was to expose the unreconciled conflicts that make human life so difficult and that conventional systems of politics and education and psychology try to iron out." (Damrosch, 2007, p. 492) And so, Rousseau's *Social Contract* did not offer an approach to conventional systems of politics, such as the system that faced the Committee of Public Safety during the French Revolution. Instead, for the political leaders of the French Revolution, Rousseau's writings served as inspiration for their pursuit of liberty and Republican virtue and, for the Committee of Public Safety, were co-opted for the Committee's political ends. But he was equally impactful on the minds of English Romantics, particularly Percy Shelley. In Rousseau's work, Shelley found the sensibility of a poet who served as one of the world's unacknowledged legislators. Thomas McFarland illustrates how Rousseau's various works had their impact on the Romantics, in saying:

We may say that just as the *Social Contract* was the most important single formative document for the French Revolution, so too the *Confessions* is probably the most single antecedent for the development of the Romantic sensibility. But so complex and intertwined was Rousseau's texture of origins that perhaps *The New Heloise* equals, or possibly even surpasses, each of those mighty originants in its effect both on the Revolutionary sensibility and the emerging Romantic sensibility.⁴ (McFarland, 1995, p. 50)

In this sense, the clear demarcation between Rousseau and his contemporaries, the French rationalist *philosophes*, is apparent. The *philosophes*, notably Voltaire, Diderot, d'Holbach, La Mettrie, and Grimm were, broadly speaking, skeptics and materialists in the lineage of Bacon and Descartes. While they were also interested in virtue as a subject worthy of moral inquiry, they rejected Rousseau's focus on inner sensation and thought as a principle of goodness.⁵ Diderot, through his largely practical *Encyclopedie* (1751-1772), replaced morality of intention and sensibility with one solely based on socially useful action on the basis that it is not the thoughts that distinguish good men from the wicked, but the actions. (Blum, 1986, p. 58) Voltaire took a similar view in his *Philosophical Dictionary* (1764), in stating that virtue are those acts which are good for society and that man's actions in solitude are neither good nor evil, as he is nothing to society. (Voltaire, 2006, p. 311) Rousseau, in contrast, believed that virtue is achieved through thought most closely aligned to man's nature, or conscience, and greatly valued solitude. This divergence is not insignificant. It forms the basis of Rousseau's break with the Enlightenment. Damrosch elaborates on Rousseau's disaffection with Diderot and Voltaire. He states:

The Enlightenment was other-directed and placed its highest value on social interaction; Rousseau was inner-directed and valued freedom from society's influence. The Enlightenment promoted competitive individualism as the foundation of good life; Rousseau sought a collective

⁴ McFarland acknowledges that, while the first six books of the *Confessions*, which appeared in 1781, may be thought of as the inaugurating text of Romanticism, there are other claimants to that title. Leibniz's *Nouveaux eassais* and Goethe's *Werther* are two that come to mind. However, on account of the universality of the *Confessions* dissemination in the European reading public and from its "inexhaustible suggestive power", Rousseau deserves that distinction.

⁵ Blum discusses the conflict between Rousseau and Diderot over the significance of the word "virtue" in *Diderot: The Virtue of a Philosopher* (New York: Viking, 1974).

spirit that would respect the individual but help each one to feel part of a communal whole. The Enlightenment specialized in information gathering and theoretical speculation; Rousseau, like the philosophers of old, sought wisdom. The Enlightenment championed technology as the basis of progress; Rousseau chose the simple life and declined dubious gifts of progress. The Enlightenment was skeptical and even atheistic; Rousseau held firmly to belief in God and the soul. In addition, although the *philosophes* talked constantly about virtue, he was convinced that they were playing a double game, outwardly ethical but inwardly skeptical. (Damrosch, 2007, p. 295)

I will now turn to an exploration of Rousseau's impact on the minds of Revolutionaries during the Terror and how Rousseau's *Social Contract* theory was invoked to justify the revolution's excesses.

Rousseau and The French Revolution

The French Revolution began with liberal-democratic ideals of the Enlightenment that led to the transition of France from a feudal class system under a monarchy to a constitutional monarchy – and briefly a republic.

George Rudé, a French historian noted for his work on the French Revolution, argues that a revolutionary psychology was sparked in France due to a unique confluence of factors that set French society apart from other European states that featured similar riots, rebellions and discontent, but did not ignite revolution, such as Belgium, Poland, The United Provinces (today's Holland), Geneva and also England. There were long-term and short-term factors that influenced the social-political conditions of the French *ancien regime* and led to revolution. He describes French eighteenth-century society as a kind of pyramid, featuring the Court and aristocracy at its apex, the centre populated by “middling” classes or bourgeoisie, and a base of “lower orders” of peasants, urban tradesmen and craftsmen. A similar model could be found across Europe, but the distinguishing factor of French social dynamics were the contradictions both within and between the constituent parts of the societal pyramid. In short, France's monarchy, though “absolute”, carried the seeds of its own decay, as the indolence and personal failings of the Louis XV led to a weakening of the absolute monarchy that Louis XIV had built at Versailles a century before. French subjects, regardless of class, lost respect and loyalty for the monarchy, despite the efforts of Louis XVI to bring about reforms. The traditional aristocracy, or *noblesse d'épée*, though privileged and wealthy, held a deep resentment of its long exclusion from being able to hold official office within the royal bureaucracy, which Louis XIV refused them as punishment for their role in the civil war of the Fronde in the mid-seventeenth century . The bourgeoisie was enjoying increased prosperity, but was denied the social status and role in society that aligned with its growing wealth. Despite their growing numbers, they were unable to hold office in institutions like the army, Church and government

administration, where noble status remained a requirement. Meanwhile, peasants were becoming relatively more literate and independent, more and more aware of the disproportionate tax burden they carried, along with their complete lack of social currency. For revolution to grow from these seeds, Rudé notes, the final ingredient in France was the cohesive force of a unifying body of ideas, or revolutionary psychology, which arose from Enlightenment Paris. While revolutions past usually relied on political parties to mould a revolutionary mindset, eighteenth century France had no such parties. Instead, the liberal-democratic ideas of Montesquieu, Voltaire, Rousseau and others were widely disseminated and absorbed by the public, including aristocrats, bourgeoisie and plebeians. The political vocabulary of eighteenth century France was filled with words such as “citizen”, “nation”, “social contract”, “general will”, and “rights of man”. Social tensions and Enlightenment political ideology were further amplified by economic shocks arising from France’s participation in the American Revolutionary War and subsequent measures taken by the Minister of Finance to address France’s desperate fiscal situation. An aristocratic revolt led to Louis XVI summoning of the States-General in May 1789 to address demands for reforms, which was made up of three Estates of the Realm: Clergy, Nobility and Commoners (or all non-privileged classes). When this process quickly fell apart due to conflict between the Estates, the Third Estate rallied, for the first time, against the King in the Tennis Court Oath. The country was propelled into a state of revolution leading initially to the Declaration of the Rights of Man and the Citizen in August 1789 and the first step toward a new constitution for France based on the liberal-democratic ideas arising from Enlightenment political discourse. (Rudé, 1988, pp. 1-11)

There are many different historical accounts of the causes of the French Revolution. These accounts will not be explored here; Rudé’s analysis above and Palmer’s to follow are relied upon as a means of providing an historical narrative through which to consider Rousseau’s influence. The role of Rousseau’s conception of virtue, as achieved primarily through the expression of the General Will, and its impact on petit bourgeois political leaders of the French Republic’s Committee on Public Safety will be explored. It is through this investigation that we can understand how the events of French Revolution impacted Rousseau’s legacy and the lens through which English Romantics would have viewed him.

By 1793, France had completed its transition from *ancien regime*, to a constitutional monarchy, and finally to the first French Republic. In January 1793, Louis XVI was guillotined, setting the stage for the creation of the Committee of Public Safety, which served as the executive committee of the government in the French Republic. The Committee governed France during the Terror, which saw the mass execution of enemies of the fifth year of the Revolution. According to American historian R.R. Palmer, France was convulsing in conflict and turmoil. Half the country denied the sovereign authority claimed by the National Convention. Local and outlying authorities were agitating to take control, radicals and counter-revolutionaries roamed the streets of Paris. The armies of England, Holland, Spain, Prussia and Austria were pushing into France on the frontiers and the ports were essentially closed by the British navy. The country was simultaneously facing anarchy and invasion, with fear, war, inflation, hunger and sabotage crashing against equally powerful waves of hope and idealism that came with the promise of liberty, equality and fraternity that formed the basis of the Revolution. The Revolution was at its height and the Committee of Public Safety, a group of twelve men, operated knowing that, if they failed, they would die as criminals and murderers of their king. (Palmer, 1989, pp. 4-5)

Maximillien Robespierre was the most prominent member of the Committee and was the most strongly influenced by Rousseau and considered the Committee to hold Rousseauian ideals. According to Blum, Robespierre was different from his colleagues on the Committee in that he did not merely reference Rousseau's virtue in his speeches, but possessed it within his own mind. (Blum, 1986, p. 151) ⁶ Robespierre's "Dedication to Jean-Jacques Rousseau" reveals important aspects of Robespierre's Rousseauian self-representation. Most significantly, Robespierre's "Dedication" reveals that it is not a political theory or set of principles regarding the state he learned from Rousseau. Rather, through Rousseau he learned to "appreciate the value of his nature", which in turn led him to reflect upon the principles of the social order and discover his own worth and inner goodness. (Blum, 1986, p. 157) In a metaphysical sense, Robespierre states that "the great moral and political truth announced by Jean-Jacques, that men never

⁶ Louis-Antoine Saint Just was another member of the Committee that shared Robespierre's attachment to Rousseauian ideals.

sincerely love anyone who does not love them, that *le peuple* alone is good, just and magnanimous and that corruption and tyranny are the exclusive *appanage* of those who disdain *le peuple*.” (Blum, 1986, p. 159) In other words, Robespierre came to view virtue through a dual prism of his own moral goodness and worth and that of *le peuple*. He also had his own interpretation of who *le peuple* were. According to Blum, to Robespierre, the “people” was not any specific person or group of persons. Instead, *le peuple* was a single figure of goodness with which it was possible to fuse in the imagination. In other words, he had what can be seen as a Platonian Idea of *le peuple*. The extent to which someone distinguished themselves from that figure, he was not of *le peuple* anymore. (Blum, 1986, p. 159)

This view of virtue led Robespierre and the Committee, in organizing the Terror, to justify actions perceived as against the sovereign or *le peuple* to be met with severe consequences and to adopt a state of moral self-approval that, according to R.R. Palmer, was suggestive of the eras of Machiavelli and Hitler. (Palmer, 1989, p. 76) There were widespread calls within the Committee to “make Terror the order of the day” through the suppression of dissent via the guillotine. At the core of the Committee’s excesses is the metaphysical challenge noted earlier with the General Will. The Committee’s view was based on a positivist premise that, in the context of Revolutionary France, was dangerously simple and self-serving. Saint-Just expressed the General Will in this context: “Since the French people has manifested its will [in the creation of the National Assembly and the Committee of Public Safety], everything opposed to it is outside of the sovereign. Whatever is outside the sovereign is an enemy.” (Palmer, 1989, p. 75) This perspective highlights the challenge outlined earlier with applying Rousseau’s General Will in practice. Saint Just, in this case, takes a positivist approach to the General Will, in interpreting the expression of *le peuple* to create the National Assembly as justification for all actions forthcoming from that body. In other words, there was neither a higher natural law, nor a Platonian Idea, that should govern the General Will. As a result, the realities of revolutionary politics in France led to interpretations that led to justification of a range of political action, including the Terror that originated at the Committee. However, Saint Just, indicative of the actions of the rest of the Committee, was not always intellectually consistent and argued his point on the General Will depending on political convenience. Palmer writes that as late as 1793, arguing against

the Girondist, or moderate faction within the Convention, he had said that “this idea of the General Will, if it makes its fortune in the world, will banish liberty.” Saint Just had written in his book of 1791 that Rousseau made a serious omission in giving (what he saw as) the General Will a positivist basis in political authority, rather than requirement that the will be “just and reasonable,” or what could be described as Platonian. (Palmer, 1989, p. 76) With a belief in their own virtue, and seeing the common interest of citizen uniting *le peuple* within the General Will, the Committee relied extensively on a moral self-approval to implement the Terror.

France in 1793 was not a unified polity and there was no agreement on the form of the state, despite the existence of the First French Republic. The Committee did not represent a majority, but rather a group of righteous Revolutionaries seeking to make the transition from monarchy permanent. The Committee shared a moral self-approval that enabled them to view actions arising out of their perception of the General Will to take place. And as a result, the Committee’s interpretation of the *Social Contract* doctrine became the theory that justified the Terror. (Palmer, 1989, p. 77) It cannot be overstated, however, the degree to which the invocation of Rousseau’s *Social Contract* doctrine was applied as the basis for Terror aimed at protecting and solidifying the Republic in a state of virtual anarchy, in contrast to the idealized society Rousseau portrayed on *The Social Contract*. Gregory Dart put it well in stating, “According to Jacobin ideology, the guillotine restored the unanimity of the General Will by removing the will of the recalcitrant individual, reasserting republican transparency by cleaning away the aristocratic obstacle.” (Dart, 1999, p. 74) The Committee went much further, however, than attempting a purge of French nobles and aristocrats. Looking at the work of the Committee more broadly than the Terror, we can view the Committee as a Dictatorship in the lineage of the *ancien regime* and Napoleon. Its stated aim was inspired by a form of democratic and liberal ideals infused with Rousseauian civic virtue, but can also be seen as a totalitarian attempt to completely regenerate a society and crush opposition. The Committee centralized power through the Law of 14 Frimaire, which founded the revolutionary dictatorship. (Palmer, 1989, p. 127) The Committee acted as War Cabinet in coordinating Republican forces at war with Britain, Prussia and Austria, as centralized economic planner in managing food distribution, price controls and a range of other economic regulations aimed at protecting the Republic, and

devised a method of flowing authority from Paris to all corners of the country through the *Bulletin des lois*, which lasted until 1929 as the vehicle for formally publishing French legislation. The *Bulletin* enabled the Committee to bypass sub agencies of government, which could pervert or obstruct the government's policies. According to Palmer, "[The Law of 14 Frimaire] recalled the age-old efforts of kings and ministers to bring order out of feudalism, and anticipated the means by which Napoleon organized modern France...By the new law the Convention became the sole center of the impulse of government." (Palmer, 1989, p. 127) Palmer states that while the Revolutionary Government was still considered to be provisional, the Law of 14 Frimaire has as much significance as the Declaration of the Rights of Man, although they served opposite purposes. The Declaration attacked despotism and provided a basis for individual rights and liberty. The Law of 14 Frimaire sought to provide the Republic with a mechanism to achieve public order. The new law was an instrument of the Terror because the government that it empowered was a government that had the support of a relatively small minority of Frenchman and perhaps, although in the name of *le peuple*, was the government in the history of France that the fewest of its people really liked. The ruling group knew that in a free election it would not be supported, and so the Terror served as its tool to create unity and promote faith in the Revolution across France. As the Terror moved ahead, voices demanded unity, while division multiplied; loyalty was praised and conspiracy flourished and men trusted no one as suspects poured into the prisons and the guillotine fell upon an increasingly indiscriminate group of "enemies" of the Republic. (Palmer, 1989, pp. 128-129)

Such was the state of affairs in France at the height of the Terror. The political system that had evolved was not the product of Rousseauian Social Contract theory. (Rudé, 1988, p. 101) However, Rousseau's influence is without question. Thomas McFarland, in *Romanticism and the Heritage of Rousseau*, writes that a year before the Revolution, public dialogue was saturated with Rousseau's rhetoric of virtue, with the participants of "that mighty drama", regardless of which side they were on, "almost drenched in Rousseauism." Marat was deeply influenced by Rousseau, but so was his assassin, Charlotte Corday. Marie Antoinette read Rousseau; her antipode Robespierre studied him with assiduous attention." (McFarland, 1995, p. 75) However, the excesses of the Revolution and the Rousseauian myth-making that was employed was the

product of revolutionary politics rather than Rousseauian principles. In the midst and the aftermath of the French Revolution, and with Napoleon's empire grown from the ashes of the Revolution, English Romantics grappled with both the event itself and Rousseau's influence on these events, particularly the failure of Enlightenment ideals.

English Reaction and Rousseau's Impact on the Development of Romanticism

The English reaction to the French Revolution was complex. England and France had been at war on and off and on for hundreds of years and, therefore, the fall of the Bourbon monarchy could be viewed as a geopolitical benefit to Britain. For political idealists and liberals, the revolution represented the rise of republicanism and the people asserting their natural rights and sovereignty. However, Britain was (and remains) a constitutional monarchy and the French Republican cause represented a threat to societal order. Initially, though there was a sharp divide within its borders over the Revolution, broad support for the Pitt government and the eventual declaration of war by the French Republic against Britain during the Terror minimized the risk of civil upheaval in England. The brutality of the Revolution's early events and the excesses of the Terror cemented an impression of the Revolutionaries as barbaric.

Thomas Paine was an English idealist and pamphleteer whose writing provides us with a view to the reaction of early supporters of the Revolution, while Member of Parliament Edmund Burke's *Reflections on the French Revolution* offer an alternative conservative viewpoint that was widely read and impacted English perceptions. A brief review of these activists' work provides context for the political debate that English Romantic poets would have been exposed to and the two dichotomies that existed in attitudes toward the Revolution, the *philosophes* and Jean-Jacques Rousseau.

Burke can be considered the most prominent English opponent of the French Revolution from its outset. According to Edward Duffy, it is "scarcely possible to overestimate the English influence commanded by Edmund Burke for the several decades subsequent to his *Reflections*. Even for those on the other end of the political spectrum, he remained the interpreter of recent history who had to be answered, the

prophet who had to be shown false.” (Duffy, 1979, p. 51) In his *Reflections*, Burke blamed the ideas of the Enlightenment for inciting the masses to dangerous excesses. (Blum, 1986, p. 16) He considered Rousseau’s philosophy to be particularly dangerous and thought him to be the chief instigator of the French Revolution. (McFarland, 1995, p. 50) According to Seamus Deane, Burke was most strongly against what he considered plotting, impious, atheist, shallow French intellectuals- including Rousseau and the philosophes- claiming they were morally responsible for the Revolution’s excesses. In Burke’s *Reflections*, Deane sees Burke pointing to Voltaire and other *philosophes* as representatives of desiccated and impersonal form of rationalism, while Rousseau is represented as the standard-bearer of a new and diseased subjectivity, emotionalism and vanity. These mentalities, though different, are viewed as being in alliance against Christianity and civil order. Burke saw Rousseauism, specifically, as a union of professional authors and urban bourgeoisie (Jacobins and sans-culottes primarily) against both landed aristocracy, which he believed embodied the “moral essence” of a nation, and peasant culture. He believed Rousseau’s vanity corrupted normal human feeling, made a fetish of eccentricity and was the worst form of decay, and that his corruption of natural affection was matched in by *philosophes’* denial of religion. The French Revolution gave Burke a renewed emphasis on the natural intimacy between the British Constitution, national character and the Anglican Church, which provided his generation and the next with composite elements for attacks on the French Revolution and a defence of the British alternative. Wordsworth and other Romantic poets were inheritors of this. (Deane, 1988, pp. 4-19) Ultimately, according to Deane, Burke gave anti-revolutionaries an intellectual basis for conservative nationalism, which led to a wide-spread view that to be English was almost coincident with being anti-French. (Deane, 1988, p. 42) According to Duffy, the climate in England was not good for Rousseau’s reputation. A number of popular monthly publications, including the *Anti-Jacobin*, the *Gentleman’s Magazine* and the *Universal Magazine*, were fuelled by Burke’s criticism of Rousseau and communicated anti-revolutionary malice and regarded those who were inspired by Rousseau’s *Confessions* as engaging in selfish depravity, contempt of morality and impudent insult to virtuous part of the community. (Duffy, 1979, p. 42) Following the Revolution, between 1805 and 1813, two books appear featuring Rousseau in a large and unattractive role: Marmontel’s *Memoires* and Grimm’s *Correspondance littéraire*. Not one notable English reviewer found anything

objectionable about the negative portraits of Rousseau and, if anything, saw too much indulgence toward the man many considered a scoundrel and “apostle of immorality”. (Duffy, 1979, p. 43)

Paine was a political agitator and an activist in support of both the American and French Revolutions. Paine’s views on individual sovereignty are generally consistent with Rousseau’s *Social Contract* doctrine and he was widely read by the broader population and English radicals. His *Rights of Man* (1791) was published in response to Burke’s *Reflections* and was meant to illustrate the English people’s broad support for the French Revolution in contrast to the opposition of the Pitt government. He viewed monarchy and aristocracy as corrupt and was a strong proponent of representative government. He was the only Englishman to serve as a member of the French National Assembly during the Revolution and was closely associated with the moderate Girondist faction. During the height of the Terror, he wrote *The Age of Reason* (1794), which attacked institutional religion of all kinds from the deist perspective, which was broadly consistent with the *philosophes’* attitude toward religion, specifically the Catholic Church. According to Dart, Paine sought to show how Burke’s conservatism was more concerned with the well-being of the French Royals than the large numbers of French people suffering economic distress. Further, a central point of his counter argument against Burke was that aristocratic societies place far too much emphasis on titles rather than on the intrinsic qualities of mind and spirit. (Dart, 1999, p. 79) This focus on mind and spirit mirrors the values that Rousseau and Robespierre placed on conscience and can be seen as sharing an intellectual foundation.

The idealism of Thomas Paine and the conservatism of Edmund Burke provide the context for the exploration of how Romantic poets were influenced by the Revolution, and in turn, how Rousseau was viewed during this time, which coincided with the development of Romanticism. Both Paine and Burke were widely read by English Romantics and the Rousseauian themes espoused in Paine’s work formed part of the revolutionary climate of the time, which is highly relevant to understanding the mythology around Rousseau and his influence on first generation Romantics.

According to McFarland, Rousseau’s influence as one of the founders of Romanticism and his effect as instigator of the French Revolution cannot be separated,

as the great cultural upheaval of the Revolution is entwined with the emergence of the Romantic movement. (McFarland, 1995, p. 78) Dart provides sharp insight into Rousseau's role in this regard. He writes that Rousseau made two contributions to the legacy of the Revolutionary Generation in England: 1) He offered a radically egalitarian version of ancient political discourse of civic humanism (with his *Social Contract* doctrine forming an intellectual inspiration for the Revolution); and, 2) he developed a highly wrought rhetoric of confession that enlisted "modern" sensibility for the republican cause. Rousseau's influence upon Revolutionary Jacobinism, therefore, sheds light on the confessional writing of English Romantics such as Godwin, Wollstonecraft, Wordsworth, and Hazlitt, encouraging us to see them as works of transferred idealism, rather than resignation and denial following the Revolution. Through an analysis of these authors' works, Dart shows Romantic recourse to the "Confessional writing" of a "revolutionary tradition" that has its roots in Rousseau. (Dart, 1999, pp. 9-10) For example, William Godwin, in *Caleb Williams (1794)*, offers commentary, particularly through the trial of Caleb Williams, on the political history of the French Revolution. In the public trial at the end of the novel, the accused poor, orphaned young man, Caleb, express candour and authenticity to the jury in refuting the charge of robbery in such a way that, the aristocrat Falkland, confesses to murder in the courtroom. This confession reflects the metaphysics of conscience developed by Rousseau and Robespierre and the tension that exists with the aristocratic chivalry espoused by Burke, Through the attitude of the aristocrat Falkland, and they way society views him as the embodiment of civic virtue in contrast to the protagonist Caleb, Godwin shows the challenge of confronting social power and prejudice with truth and conscience in England. (Dart, 1999, p. 95) Godwin's wife, and mother of Mary Shelley, Mary Wollstonecraft, wrote a memoir exploring her thoughts on the French Revolution, which was published posthumously by Godwin. According to biographer William St. Clair, the memoir was inspired by Rousseau's *Confessions* in that it was unusually revealing and frank for its time. (St. Clair, 1989, p. 184) William Hazlitt regarded *Confessions* as Rousseau's best work, although at the time that would likely have been seen as an eccentric judgement given that the *Social Contract* and *Emile* were considered twin pillars of the Revolution. (Mitchell, 1990) Wordsworth's autobiographical poem "The Prelude" provides an example of how the early idealism of the Revolution, the reality of the Terror, and the influence of Rousseau's confessional style are captured in a Romantic poem widely regarded as one

of the greatest of the 19th century. The poem represented the Revolution as a crime against nature and a paradigm for acquisition of freedom and self-consciousness. Ostensibly, Wordsworth repudiates the revolutionary legacy, while surreptitiously redeeming it. Dart sees it as finding a narrative structure that represents the revolution as both a disastrous crime against nature *and* a paradigm for the acquisition of freedom and self expression. In this sense, "The Prelude" can be seen as, ironically, a Jacobin poem against Jacobinism . (Dart, 1999, p. 178)

While Rousseau's work can be found at the roots of these Romantic texts and the early idealism of the Revolution (which found a constituency in Romantics like Wordsworth prior to the Terror) can be linked to his *Social Contract* theory, the failure of the Revolution in achieving its ideals and the ensuing conflict between England and France that would continue beyond the Revolution and throughout the reign of Napoleon would leave Rousseau with the stamp of *philosophe* that Burke had placed upon him. According to Duffy,

The politically heated times in which they came to personal and poetic maturity had, as it were, clamped an embargo on their minds, and they chose not to recognize what Jean-Jacques Rousseau most assuredly was within the confederation of French letter: a very independent principality. (Duffy, 1979, p. 67)

It would take a young mind from the next generation of English Romantics to draw a powerful distinction between Rousseau and his French Rationalist contemporaries that Burke had so effectively denounced to the English intelligentsia. In doing so, Percy Bysshe Shelley would provide a powerful new lens by which to view Rousseau's contribution to Western thought and, in doing so, reclaim his legacy from the failures of the French Revolution and the excesses of the Jacobin Terror. This time, however, the reverence expressed for Rousseau would not be political, but aesthetic.

Rousseau in Shelley's Eyes

Percy Bysshe Shelley was born in 1792, three years after the outbreak of the French Revolution and died at the age of 29 in 1822. He was the son of a Whig Member of Parliament, Timothy Shelley, and attended Eton and Oxford, as was the usual practice for social elites in England. He is most often characterized as a Romantic poet; however, he also wrote prose and took great interest in politics and social progress. Richard Holmes, in his biography of Shelley, *The Pursuit*, notes that Shelley's "intellectual diet" at Oxford was rich with radicals and skeptics including David Hume, Voltaire, Condorcet, Paine, Franklin, Godwin and Rousseau. (Holmes, 1987, p. 43) According to Deane, no writer between 1789-1832 absorbed the thought of the French Enlightenment more than Shelley (Deane, 1988, p. 95). His studies informed his skeptical and atheistic worldview, which, according to Holmes, began with the building blocks of a crudely Rousseauian egalitarianism in the state of nature. He viewed Religion, Monarchy and Aristocracy as forming power-pyramids that corrupted natural society. (Holmes, 1987, p. 77) While his early views on equality echoed Rousseau, his appreciation for him did not fully form until 1816, while on a trip to Lac Lemman with Lord Byron and, his wife, Mary Shelley. Shelley was reading *Julie* for most of the journey, which turned the trip into somewhat of a literary pilgrimage. (Holmes, 1987, p. 334) Shelley's deep regard for Rousseau is revealed in a letter to Mary during the trip with Byron. While walking on the terrace of *Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire* author, the late historian Edwin Gibbon, Byron was deeply moved and gathered some acacia leaves to preserve in remembrance of Gibbon. Shelley refrained, "fearing to outrage the greater and more sacred name of Rousseau; the contemplation of whose imperishable creations had left no vacancy for mortal things." (Holmes, 1987, p. 337)

Shelley's interest in the French Revolution was fueled by the shattering disappointment he witnessed among a generation of English idealists, including a number high profile writers he had the opportunity to engage with, such as Robert

Southey and William Godwin. In 1811, Shelley was considering a novel on the Revolution. (Holmes, 1987, p. 102) Edward Duffy provides insight into Shelley's attempts to clarify the French Revolution, its causes and consequences, particularly in the context of what he perceives as shortcomings of the Enlightenment and Napoleon's role as the betrayer of the Revolution. Through his unfinished poem, "The Triumph of Life" (1822) Shelley singles out Rousseau from his Enlightenment contemporaries, the *philosophes* and seeks to demonstrate the inadequacy of reason in achieving the aims of the Enlightenment. Shelley positions Rousseau's focus on conscience and imagination, particularly as explored through his *Reveries of Solitary Walker*, as both a repudiation of the *philosophes'* focus on reason and the elevation of the dynamics of consciousness as a force for blurring the lines between subject and object. (Duffy, 1979, p. 114) In this sense, Rousseau can be seen as a counterpoint to the forces that led to the failure of the French Revolution, rather than the instigator of its failure, with the fault line of this contrast lying on Rousseau's elevation of conscience and focus on imagination, or reverie.

"The Triumph of Life" is a vision within a vision that follows in the first person narrative style of Dante's *Divine Comedy*. Whereas Virgil guides Dante through Hell and purgatory, Rousseau provides Shelley with his reflections on the impact of his ideas on the world, his tendency toward his heart and conscience, and the failure of the Enlightenment to sustain democratic ideals.

The poem begins with imagery that impresses the cycle of nature upon the reader and places living beings in the context of a rising and setting sun:

Swift as a spirit hastening to his task
Of glory and of good, the Sun sprang forth
Rejoicing in his splendour, and the mask

Of darkness fell from the awakened Earth--
The smokeless altars of the mountain snows
Flamed above crimson clouds, and at the birth (1-6)

The atheist Shelley writes that the earth “wears” living beings, all borne of the Sun, “their father”, and places the capacity of human imagination in context through “thoughts which must remain untold”:

Isle, ocean, and all things that in them wear
The form and character of mortal mould,
Rise as the Sun their father rose, to bear

Their portion of the toil, which he of old
Took as his own, and then imposed on them:

But I, whom thoughts which must remain untold (16-21)

He “had felt the freshness of that dawn”, indicating that the “strange trance” that came over him was not a dream, but a vision (30-35). A “grim feature”, which was of Shelley’s “thoughts aware,” addresses Shelley (190):

Were or had been eyes:--'If thou canst forbear
To join the dance, which I had well forborne,'

Said the grim Feature, of my thought aware,

'I will unfold that which to this deep scorn
Led me and my companions, and relate
The progress of the pageant since the morn;

'If thirst of knowledge shall not then abate,
Follow it thou even to the night, but I

Am weary. (188-196)

The grim feature is Rousseau, wearied from attack occurring during his life and posthumously, appearing to present Shelley with his account of “the dance” or “pageant” that he tried to avoid, or “had well forborne”. The “dance” can be seen as the development of civilization throughout the Enlightenment and the impact of Enlightenment thought on the French Revolution, Napoleon’s subsequent rise and fall, and the Bourbon Restoration in 1814. When asked to identify himself, Rousseau describes himself in a way that highlights a lifetime of focus on his own conscience and

feeling, suggesting his lineage within the Romantic movement and distinction from his French Rationalist contemporaries, “I feared, loved, hated, suffered, did and died,” (200). The reader is immediately brought to the overarching message of “The Triumph” as the vision of Rousseau goes on to suggest that if his ideas had been consumed by those with a pure intention, virtue perhaps, the excesses of the French Revolution and the fallout that came about through Napoleon and the Restoration would not have occurred. Subsequently, Rousseau’s legacy would not be corrupted by the failure to realize the ideals he conveyed through his work:

And if the spark with which Heaven lit my spirit
Had been with purer nutriment supplied,

'Corruption would not now thus much inherit
Of what was once Rousseau,--nor this disguise
Stain that which ought to have disdained to wear it;

'If I have been extinguished, yet there rise

A thousand beacons from the spark I bore' (201-207)

The “disguise” is necessary because he has been placed in a form of intellectual exile. Although he has been discarded or “extinguished” he sees, or hopes to see, his ideas taken up via “A thousand beacons”. This stanza echoes language from Shelley’s “Ode to the West Wind” (1819) and suggests Rousseau’s influence in other works by Shelley:

Scatter, as from an unextinguish'd hearth

Ashes and sparks, my words among mankind!

Be through my lips to unawaken'd earth (66-68)

In “The Triumph of Life”, Shelley is called upon to rise and reclaim his ideas with pure intent through the “spark” he bore. In comparison to other great figures throughout the Enlightenment, the vision of Rousseau contrasts 18th century Enlightenment figures Voltaire, Frederick the Great, Kant, Catherine the Great and Leopold Mozart, all symbols of the progress brought by knowledge (or enlightenment), against his elevation of feeling and conscience:

'Dost thou behold,'
 Said my guide, 'those spoilers spoiled, Voltaire,

 'Frederick, and Kant, Catherine, and Leopold,
 And hoary anarchs, demagogues, and sage--
 names which the world thinks always old,

 'For in the battle Life and they did wage,
 She remained conqueror. I was overcome
 By my own heart alone, which neither age,

 'Nor tears, nor infamy, nor now the tomb

 Could temper to its object.' (234-244)

Rousseau's sensibility and distinction from the *philosophes* is emphasized, as he references how he "was overcome/by my own heart alone, which neither age,/'Nor tears, nor infamy, nor now the tomb/Could temper to its object."

The vision of Rousseau goes on, in a message that echos the theme of Mary Shelley's *Frankenstein*, to reference Francis Bacon as the father of modern science and philosophy and reflect upon attempting to manipulate nature through science and the "infection" that society can bring about itself through mechanism and pursuit of the "treasure" nature's "secrets":

'If Bacon's eagle spirit had not leapt
 Like lightning out of darkness--he compelled
 The Proteus shape of Nature, as it slept

 'To wake, and lead him to the caves that held
 The treasure of the secrets of its reign.
 See the great bards of elder time, who quelled

 'The passions which they sung, as by their strain
 May well be known: their living melody
 Tempers its own contagion to the vein

 'Of those who are infected with it--I

Have suffered what I wrote, or viler pain!
And so my words have seeds of misery-- (269-280)

While Rousseau's words served, in a way, as seeds of misery by inspiring the French Revolution, blame is assigned to "the deeds of others [the Jacobins], not as theirs' [as in, his words]." (281) He points to those he viewed as "heirs" to those who sought to conquer man and build empire:

quickly recognized the heirs
Of Caesar's crime, from him to Constantine;
The anarch chiefs, whose force and murderous snares
Had founded many a sceptre-bearing line,

And spread the plague of gold and blood abroad: (283-287)

There are two ways to view this passage. Rousseau may be referring to Napoleon and the restoration of the Bourbon monarchy; there is also analogy to the French Republic's Committee of Public Safety, for which it has been noted that the Committee can be seen in the dictatorial lineage of Napoleon. (Palmer, 1989, p. 127) However, the passage is likely less political and more philosophical, linking back to the theme of the Enlightenment itself and Baconian efforts to conquer nature in modernity. Perhaps, the "heirs" are to those who sought to conquer nature and "spread the plague" of modernity abroad. Either way, this passage presents a basis for Shelley to separate Rousseau from the main actors of the Enlightenment. According to Duffy, in the poem, "the sustained metaphor of the Enlightenment as conquest drafts the *philosophes* into the ranks of those motivated and traduced by power" while drawing a clear distinction between Rousseau and other eighteenth-century luminaries. (Duffy, 1979, pp. 111-112) In this sense, Shelley has worked to starkly separate Rousseau from his French rationalist contemporaries and place him within the lineage of Romantic poets. The demarcation between Rousseau and the *philosophes* has been further highlighted by their contrasting approaches to virtue, with Rousseau believing virtue originates from conscience, rather than action. With Shelley's recognition of this dynamic, he reclaims

Rousseau's legacy from the failures of the French Revolution and sets the stage for a resuscitation of Rousseau's reputation.

Beyond "The Triumph of Life", there are other examples of Shelley's unique appreciation for Rousseauian virtue expressed through Shelley's work. In his essay, "A Defense of Poetry" (1821), Shelley outlines his belief in the role of poets as the "unacknowledged legislators of the world." (Shelley, 2008, p. 90) He writes that the human imagination is "the great instrument of moral good." (Shelley, 2008, p. 34) And he emphasizes Rousseau's unique place in his mind, particularly as distinct from the French rationalist *philosophes*, as he writes, with reference to an original footnote:

The exertions of Locke, Hume, Gibbon, Voltaire, Rousseau, [Footnote: Although Rousseau has been thus classed, he was essentially a poet. The others, even Voltaire, were mere reasoners.] and their disciples, in favour of oppressed and deluded humanity, are entitled to the gratitude of mankind. (Shelley, 2008, p. 72)

In his essay, "On Life" (1819), he reflects on how, as children, "We less habitually distinguished all that we saw and felt, from ourselves." These themes echo both Rousseauian virtue as reflected through consciousness and his critical views of society, which he sees as corrupting man's natural goodness, as Shelley writes:

Those who are subject to the state called reverie, feel as if their nature were dissolved into the surrounding universe, or as if the surrounding universe were absorbed into their being. They are conscious of no distinction. And these are states which precede, or accompany, or follow an unusually intense and vivid apprehension of life. As men grow up this power commonly decays, and they become mechanical and habitual agents. Thus feelings and then reasonings are the combined result of a multitude of entangled thoughts, and of a series of what are called impressions, planted by reiteration. (Shelley P. B., The Percy Shelley Resource Page, 2001)

Mary Shelley's *Frankenstein* (1818) can also be seen as an expression of Percy Shelley's attitudes toward Rousseau, given how closely he and Mary collaborated and shared a worldview. According to Seamus Deane, *Frankenstein* is a political allegory of the French Revolutionary and has often been read this way. Victor Frankenstein is a "Revolutionary idealist" seeking to create a "new man"; Mary Shelley's story reproduces 1789 in the form of the Monster and mirrors the historical failure of the Revolution. Most

accounts of the French Revolution at the time tended to reproduce the English counter-Revolution polemic of the period, which represent it in purely in terms of a commitment to the systematic materialism of the French Enlightenment. But Mary Shelley's more nuanced allegory exposes the inadequacy of this over-simplified model, inviting us to reassess the complex history of Jacobinism. Rousseau's highly democratic inflection of neo-Spartan civic humanism was simultaneously both Revolutionary and anti-progressive, so that for all the rather abstract nature of this political theory, he was in many ways as much of a defender of custom and tradition as Edmund Burke. (Deane, 1988, pp. 2-4) The first person narrative of *Frankenstein* is also significant. While Rousseau has an "over-determined absence", *Frankenstein* draws upon a Revolutionary tradition of confessional writing that had roots in Rousseau. (Deane, 1988, p. 9) According to Stephen Duguid, Mary Shelley's *Frankenstein* warns against the separation of rational, scientific inquiry from humane values and obligations in modernity. By seeking to create a "new man", Victor Frankenstein blends "holistic" ideas about unity and simplicity with the tools and systems of modern science – essentially merging Rousseau and Bacon to create a more perfect world. Things work out badly for both Victor and the Creature. (Duguid, 2010, pp. 173-174). Rousseau's state of nature theory, that natural man is born good and free and that society corrupts individuals, is played out in *Frankenstein* as the Creature is born with the goodness of natural man, but corrupted by the rejection of society and his maker.

When the above work of Shelley is considered in the context of the French Revolution, it can be seen as a form of intellectual reclamation of Rousseau's work and the creation of a new myth. Shelley finds kinship with Rousseau through shared appreciation of conscience relative to reason, sensibility and role of society in challenging man's natural goodness. By identifying Rousseauian themes within his poetry and prose, particularly through his "Triumph of Life", Shelley reclaims Rousseau's intellectual legacy from the failures and excesses of the French Revolution and affirms his role as inspiration for the Romantic Movement.

Conclusion

Jean-Jacques Rousseau was unique among his contemporaries, the *philosophes*, in his approach to virtue. He valued conscience over reason, which was reflected in the style of his *Confessions*, *Julie*, and *Reveries of a Solitary Walker*. French Revolutionaries were drawn to this style and to his political theory, outlined in *Social Contract*, which provided a basis for republican self-government and overcoming the challenge of consent via General Will. A decade after Rousseau's death, France was ripe for revolution due to dissatisfaction across classes with the Bourbon monarchy and the rule of Louis XVI. A popular mythology around Rousseau had developed by that time and Revolutionary leaders were prone to invoking his work and ideals in support of their causes. Indeed, Rousseau's political ideas and aesthetic style were an inspiration to Jacobin political leaders, particularly Robespierre, the most prominent member of the Committee of Public Safety. However, the excesses of the Terror cannot be laid at the feet of Rousseau. Rousseau's political theory was not designed as a system to be implemented to address the challenges of practical politics – he provided a theoretical basis for which to achieve republican government and to rule by consent. The realities of Revolutionary politics led to the extensive use of the guillotine and it is the members of Committee of Public Safety who shoulder the responsibility for their heavy hand and failed attempt to realize the ideals sought by those who brought down the Bourbon monarchy. Nevertheless, we have seen the dangers that come from attempts to parse complex political thought and apply theoretical concepts in practice, particularly in the midst of unprecedented social, economic and cultural upheaval in a developed state. Rousseau's General Will, the ambiguity as to its metaphysical origin, and the French Revolution provide us with a powerful case study for this danger.

The physical devastation, political destruction and idealistic let down that followed the French Revolution understandably had a significant impact on the minds of English Romantics. Burke's powerful denunciation of revolutionaries and the

philosophes in France had a lasting impact. It would take a second generation Romantic poet to find, in Rousseau, a mind worthy of adulation and reclamation. Like the generation of Jacobin revolutionaries before him, Shelley found Rousseau's focus on conscience to be a source of inspiration and purpose. However for Shelley, Rousseauian virtue would form the basis of political and aesthetic commentary rather than revolutionary action. Through "The Triumph of Life", Shelley presents Rousseauian virtue as a counterpoint to the failures of the French Revolution and the Enlightenment. While the ideals of the Revolution, the complete overhaul of society to benefit the governed, were not realized, Shelley relieves Rousseau of responsibility and provides a basis for moving beyond those failures and challenging the Enlightenment tradition from which his ideas emerged through an appeal to imagination, conscience and the heart as a source of virtue.

The tension between passion and reason, a theme found throughout the Western philosophical tradition, is most apparent and powerfully revealed through the work of Rousseau. Shelley builds on this legacy and provides a refreshed Romantic lens to view Rousseau. Neither Rousseau nor Shelley provides a path to overcome the tensions they identify, but rather offer an illustration of the battles we face in life in balancing solitude and society, nature and civilization, freedom and equality, tradition and progress and the power of conscience and the human imagination. For this reason, as seen in the case of the French Revolution, Rousseau's work is open to interpretation and prone to myth-making. For readers today, his work continues to provide much to grapple with as the tension between passion and reason remains a consistent theme in Western thought.

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Essay 2.

The Role of Emotion in Environmental Narratives: An Analysis of Canada's Leading Environmental Organizations

Introduction

This paper explores the role of emotion in the environmental narratives employed by Canada's leading environmental advocacy organizations. This analysis is framed by the thesis that environmental narratives are characterized by the dualism of the dominant Western worldview, which features opposition between rationality and emotion. In the context of humanity's relationship to nature, this worldview features an anthropocentric paradigm dominated by the Cartesian position that the power of reason can enable humanity to become masters and possessors of nature. Implicit in this approach is the belief that reason is distorted and undermined by emotion. However, within the Western paradigm are philosophical counter-strains (e.g. Romanticism, eco-centrism) that challenge and oppose this dominant worldview. The interaction of these competing worldviews, all found within the Western tradition, will be analyzed in the context of environmental narratives with a specific focus on the role of emotion and direct experience with the natural world.

The core philosophical foundations that have evolved into the dominant Western paradigm, broadly speaking, are mastery of nature through a mechanistic (scientific) worldview and the elevation of the individual in our moral affairs expressed through our political and economic institutions. The intellectual and scientific tools that have enabled us to overcome enormous challenges to living in the world have helped humanity flourish and expand to 6.6 billion people around the globe (some would certainly argue that this population growth is in fact smothering the globe and is unsustainable). Our output and productivity have exploded in historic terms over the last 400 years and we employ our knowledge to overcome the hardships of disease, extreme weather, transportation challenges and communications. Despite these incredible successes, the scarcity of natural resources and our broader impact on the environment leads to a concern over the sustainability of our way of life in Western society and, increasingly, the adoption of Western individualism and economic principles in developing countries, such as China and India, which are facing significant environmental challenges from the inability to manage economic growth with the developing of modern regulatory frameworks aimed at ensuring standards that protect the environment.

Emotional relationships with nature have typically been associated with the environmental movement in its various incarnations. In exploring the environmental narratives employed by Canada's leading environmental advocacy organizations, this paper seeks to determine if their work has been undermined by too great a focus on emotional, affective romantic arguments and public appeals that run counter to the dominant Western value system. Or, in contrast, this paper will seek to determine if these organizations have instead been co-opted by the brokerage inherent in the public policy development processes prevalent in Canada, which feature the subjugation of emotion/intuition-based values in relation to reason.

This investigation requires a broader look at the role of reason and emotion in the Western worldview. My analysis draws upon the sociological framework provided by J.M. Barbalet (Barbalet, 1998) to place the dominant Western worldview in context with other Western socio-scientific theories of the relationship between reason and emotion. These views inform different approaches to humanity's relationship with nature and can help make a determination as to the effectiveness and relevance of emotion in environmental narratives. Barbalet, in *Emotion, Social Theory and Social Structure* (1998), provides three approaches to viewing the interaction between reason and emotion in decision-making. In applying this framework to the narratives of the environmental organizations in question, the role of emotion in guiding rationale decision-making is explored, particularly in the context of Barbalet's "conventional approach", which features the opposition of reason and emotion, and the "critical approach" to viewing emotion as a solution to problems that rationality cannot solve.

In examining the role of emotion in attitudes toward the environment, the power of direct experience with the natural world is considered. I will briefly analyze the writing of Erazim Kohak, an author known for his affinity for nature and his first-hand account of the power of nature on his value system, to provide an example of the power of direct experience with nature. Specifically, Kohak demonstrates how the values that motivate subject-subject relationships to nature over conventional subject-object relationships are overcome through the power dynamics of our economic and political institutions, which prioritize economic advancement and resource exploitation.

The environmental movement includes contrasting viewpoints. These views range from the conventional, scientific, anthropocentric belief in environmental stewardship and management to the organic, ecocentric nature-centre value systems that strive for harmony with all living beings based on the assumption that all living beings have equal value. This paper will consider the narratives employed by the following well-established organizations in advancing their causes as related to environmental issues:

- Greenpeace Canada
- Nature Conservancy of Canada
- Sierra Club of Canada

The philosophical positions of these organizations will be explored in this paper, as part of informing an understanding of the broad, evolving nature of Western approaches to environmental relationships.⁷ Included in this process is the examination of the impact of direct experience with nature in informing perspectives on the environment.

Ultimately, this analysis intends to provide an understanding of the role of emotion in Western approaches to humanity's relationship to the environment and aims to answer the following question: *Is the environmental movement in Canada undermined by its use of emotion in environmental narratives?*

⁷ By "Western", I am referring to cultures of European intellectual heritage and Judeo-Christian religious ideals.

What is a narrative?

The purpose of this study is to link, where possible, environmental organizations' public policy positions with ideological foundations found in the Western tradition, with a focus on appeals to emotion in these positions and associated communications. The mainstream environmental organizations examined in this paper do not make direct reference to a philosophical heritage in their communications. Instead, these organizations use messages, stories, forms of evidence, vision/mission statements and campaigns to appeal to the public and decision-makers to support their causes. This combination of communications is what I refer to as a "narrative" for the purposes of this paper.

The Western Tradition

According to noted historian Richard Tarnas, the Western tradition, or Western worldview, is typically thought of in chronological terms as stemming from the classical, medieval and the modern eras, including the Renaissance and Enlightenment. (Tarnas, 1991, p. 1-2) The emerging modern worldview, which, put simply, cannot be conveyed concisely in a way that does justice to the complexity of idea throughout the centuries, contains philosophical counterstrains, or a shadow modernity (Duguid, 2010, p. 7), that challenged many of the key assumptions and principles of this new modernity. The interchange between these two conflicting views within Western modernity frames intellectual debate around humanity's relationship to nature and provides an historical understanding the evolution of the tension between emotion and reason in environmental narratives.

The Dominant Western Paradigm: An Intellectual Basis for Progress

In Western societies, worldviews or “paradigms” are in a constant state of tension and internal evolution. Such is the nature of the modern world and relatively rapid social and economic change. The prevailing interpretation of the dominant Western paradigm in the modern era is that it came into full bloom in the post-Renaissance period, where a paradigm shift was led by the likes of Copernicus, Rene Descartes, Isaac Newton and Francis Bacon, sparking the Scientific Revolution and the 18th century Enlightenment.

Tarnas argues that the humanism of the Renaissance, which saw humanity rise in consequence in relation to God, the Church and nature, set the stage for the Enlightenment. In the wake of late medieval cultural decay arising due to the Black Plague in the mid-fourteenth century, the Hundred Years' War between France and England, and the proliferation of bandits, pirates and mercenaries in Italy, and decadent corruption of the Church, Western culture turned

to a new version of the Classical commitment to learning, investigation and existential significance. A shift in the Western mindset toward “change” and “progress” penetrated the culture, with technical innovations playing a key role in defining the new era. (Tarnas, 1991) Four inventions with Oriental precursors were brought into widespread use by the fifteenth century, leading to significant cultural change. These inventions are as follows:

- The magnetic compass (enabling navigational feats)
- The mechanical clock (freeing the structure of human activities from the dominance of nature’s rhythms)
- Gunpowder (challenging the feudal order and fostering nationalism)
- The printing press (increasing learning and spreading knowledge) (Tarnas, 1991)

The modernizing effects of these inventions oriented Western culture into a more forward looking mode, providing the groundwork for the scientific revolution of the 17th century and the era of the Enlightenment in the 18th. Most significantly, the method of inquiry into the world and the pursuit of knowledge were the driving forces underlying the change in the scientific community leading to the Enlightenment. The way we perceive nature today has been influenced by the evolution of historical attitudes toward progress and inquiry formed in the Enlightenment.

Descartes, in his *Discourse on Method* (1637) put forward his metaphysical argument that the human mind and the experiential world were detached. With the goal of re-establishing human knowledge on firm foundations, Descartes argued for an image of nature as an intricate machine ordered by mathematical laws. This mechanistic rationalism was skeptical of sense perception, believed that emotion had a subversive influence on mind and body, and considered reason the primary source of knowledge. His famous first principle, that thought or reason was the basis for human identity, he expressed through the widely-known statement, “I think, therefore I am.”

Descartes’ metaphysics is an important factor in our consideration of the dualistic relationship between man and nature in the conventional, progress-oriented approach to the environment. In sparking this movement toward a mechanistic worldview, Descartes paved the way for Enlightenment philosophers to charge ahead and progress in the sciences and arts by

providing a key intellectual tool to overcome the limitations of the natural science practiced through the medieval period. The basic conception of the world as an atomistic system ruled by a few mechanistic laws became the cornerstone of seventeenth-century science. (Tarnas, 1991, p. 267)

Francis Bacon was an English contemporary of Descartes and furthered the Western investigation into how nature can be “conquered”. He sought to reform human reason and found a new paradigm of progress that went beyond the focus on contemplation of the Ancients like Plato and Aristotle and focus instead on action. His aim was, “to lay the foundation, not of any sect or doctrine, but of human utility and power,” in order to “conquer nature in action.” (Bacon, 1989, p. vii)

What followed for Bacon was a system of moral and political principles that would encourage the conquering, rather than the enduring, of the forces of nature. In 1620, his *Novum Organum* detailed a system of logic known as the Baconian method, a method of investigation into nature that used inductive logic to gain knowledge. This method was one of Bacon’s key contributions to the Scientific Revolution, in addition to his political insights into how the practical applications of new scientific method would improve quality of life and man’s control of nature. (Cohen, 1985, p. 147) Bacon’s attitudes toward nature reflect a long historical problem that began to be viewed as potentially being addressed through science. That is, the subjugation and vulnerability of humans to nature’s power. Bacon and others chose to overcome this vulnerability and concurrently developed oppositional attitudes toward the forces of nature.

Turning from science to economics, the Enlightenment era work *The Wealth of Nations* (1776) by Adam Smith provided the groundwork for modern capitalism. Advocating a free market to ensure economic efficiency in an open economy, the importance of choice and freedom from regulation and protectionism are the underlying principles of this work. *The Wealth of Nations* and subsequent works elevated the individual in political and economic affairs. The expression of these principles through the free market system has been a significant driver of environmental degradation in the form of resource extraction, consumption, green

house gas emissions, and extinction of species, but also the greatest expansion of wealth and prosperity in human history. Both the positive and negative outcomes associated with free market principles and individualism are woven into environmental narratives from different perspectives, and will be explored in this paper.

In examining how we have arrived at the current state of our planet and the human population, it is apparent that the elements of the dominant Western paradigm, those ideas and methods that have led to our astonishing progress since the Medieval period, have greatly impacted our natural environment and alienated humanity from the natural world.

The environmental movement has evolved around these concerns, and in doing so, has drawn upon the ideas of both the dominant Western paradigm and associated Western counter-strains.

Western Counter-Strains or Shadow Modernity

Arising from both the Scientific Revolution and the Enlightenment are intellectual counter-strains that challenge and oppose domination of reason & science in Western culture.

According to Carolyn Merchant, from 1500-1700, the organic concept of the cosmos that was dominant in communal societies of the medieval period slowly gave way to the mechanistic model. The rise of the mechanical order and removal of animistic, organic assumptions about the world resulted in what she calls the “death of nature”. (Merchant, 1983, p. 193) This transition was characterized by a relative shift from a subject-subject relationship between humans and nature to a subject-object relationship more consistent with manipulation (i.e. science) and capitalism.

In this context, one reaction to the Enlightenment paradigm was the Romantic movement of the late 18th century. In many ways Romanticism expressed aspects of the human experience that were suppressed by the overriding rationalism of the Enlightenment. (Tarnas, 1991, p. 366) In response to Descartes’ dualism, or mechanistic approach to mind-body, the Romantics can in many ways be seen as forwarding a defence of value for the organic and

unitary characteristics of the world. In other words, Romanticism looked at the world beyond the “mechanistic” or “atomistic” nature of things espoused by the dominant Western paradigm, instead seeing “wholeness”, “unity” in the connection between man and nature. Stephen Toulmin further emphasizes the coextensive elements of Romanticism by suggesting that Romanticism is simply Rationalism’s mirror-image. He argues that Descartes’ forwarding of the supremely “mental” aspect of human nature came *at the expense* of emotional experience- a regrettable by-product of our dualistic nature. (Toulmin, 1990, p. 148)

The Romantic Movement was expressed through such scholars, authors and poets as Wordsworth, Hugo, Goethe, Byron, Shelley, Keats and Coleridge, reflecting that Romanticism can be seen more as a broad movement than a philosophy. Like the dominant Western paradigm, Romanticism is an anthropocentric movement. Nature is approached in the context of human interests, feelings, emotions, and sensibilities. As Richard Tarnas writes,

Rather than the distanced object of sober analysis, nature for the Romantic was that which the existential dichotomy, and the revelation he sought was not of mechanical law but of spiritual essence. While the scientist sought truth that was testable and concretely effective, the Romantic sought truth that was inwardly transfiguring and sublime. (Tarnas, 1991, pp. 367-368)

The closer we look at the Enlightenment mind and the Romantic mind, it is apparent that these two paradigms are still prevalent throughout our culture. Max Milner has pointed out that early nineteenth century Romanticism continues to speak to us because “the crisis of civilization connected with the birth and development of industrial capitalism is far from resolved.” (Sayre, 2001, p. 2)

Arising from the Romantic defense of value in nature is the twentieth century Deep Ecology Movement. Unlike Romanticism, deep ecology can be seen as both a movement and a field of philosophy. The father of deep ecology, Arne Naess has been careful in his own use of these terms and uses the term “Deep Ecology Movement” to refer to a broad ecocentric social and political movement to contrast with anthropocentric, technocratic approaches to ecological issues. The term “deep ecology”, on the other hand, refers to his specific ecological philosophy of deep ecology, centred on “self-realization” achieved through wider identification with one’s ecological context. (Drengson, 1995, p. xix)

Naess identified two strains of the ecology movement, the “shallow” and the “deep”. The shallow ecology movement is concerned with the fight against pollution and resource depletion, with the central objective being the health and affluence of people in developed countries. (Naess, 1995, p. 3) The shallow ecology movement is both anthropocentric and mechanistic; modern environmentalists seeking to ban plastic bags and promote ethanol fuels fit into this shallow movement. The Deep Ecology Movement rejects the “human in environment” image in favour of a relational, “total-field” image that is based upon a principle of egalitarianism in the biosphere. (Naess, 1995, pp. 3-4) The deep approach, therefore, is characterized by an ecocentric paradigm that seeks to achieve an ecological transformation of our socio-cultural attitudes, actions and lifestyles. Naess refers to his own deep ecology philosophy as “Ecosophy T”. This version is characterized by an ultimate norm of “Self-realization”, referring to the universal Self that identifies with not only the ecosphere, but with the entire universe. (Devall, 1985, p. 227)

Deep ecology, as a movement, is not meant to serve as simply another ideology, however, and in this way shares further roots with Romanticism. According to Bill Devall, deep ecologists are, “questing to liberate and cultivate the ecological consciousness”, rather than add another modern ideology to a crowded field. (Evernden, 1993, p. 28) That being said, the ecocentrism of the Deep Ecology Movement requires a radical challenge to the dominant Western paradigm. As has been established, the elevation of the individual above nature, divinity and even the collective has been a central tenet of Enlightenment political thought.

The ecocentric transformation pursued by deep ecologists constitutes a great leap from current mainstream attitudes toward the environment. And, as we will see, even dominant Canadian environmental organizations have not employed the language and philosophy of deep ecology in seeking to advance their missions.

Despite the fact that the ecocentrism espoused by deep ecologists has not caught on as a broader movement in Canada, there is much that is drawn upon from the broader Western philosophical counter-strains in framing the narratives of environmental organizations in Canada. Understanding how these ideas fit into Canadian environmental narratives can be further supported by considering different sociological approaches to understanding the

interaction of emotion and reason, while drawing heavily upon the tensions within philosophical foundation of the Western tradition. Put simply, the elevation of reason within the dominant Western paradigm and the predominance of emotion and intuition within its shadow modernity.

Sociological Framework for Understanding Emotion and Reason

According to Kay Milton, emotion features prominently in discourse on nature protection and ecological relations. (Milton, 2002, p. 4) One side in an environmental conflict will often accuse their opponents of operating irrationally, usually suggesting that commitment to things like trees, landscapes and animals are emotional, while commitments to profits, progress and growth are rational. (Milton, 2002, p. 4) Milton examines this confrontation within an established sociological framework that is helpful in placing ecological and philosophical issues in context with Western society's approaches to emotion and rationality. Drawing upon the work of J.M. Barbalet, Milton challenges the view that emotion and rationality are opposed, in an effort to illustrate the critical role of emotion in informing the decision to prioritize nature and to give purpose to action.

Barbalet has identified three approaches to the relationship between emotion and rationality, each placed within Western philosophy and social science. These approaches are useful in providing a framework for analyzing both the philosophical positions and communications tactics of environmental organizations. The forthcoming analysis will reveal that despite the initially emotion/intuition-based origins of the environmental organizations in question, the elevation of reason over emotion through what Barbalet refers to as the "conventional approach" contributes to moderation of these organizations. However, despite the clear reliance on science and reason within the narratives of these organizations, it will be demonstrated that these organizations operate in way that suggests reason and emotion are not necessarily opposed, but fulfill different functions. According to Barbalet, the critical approach holds that "their differences allow each to serve in a division of labour in which their distinct capacities contribute to a unified outcome." (Barbalet, 1998, p.38) It will be shown that these organizations use emotion to identify the problems that reason is challenged to solve. It

will also be established that there is an inverse relationship between radicalism and influence, which, judging from the firsthand accounts of some of the pioneers of the organizations considered in this paper, is quite apparent.

First, the conventional approach, holds that emotion and reason are opposed. Derived in social science from Max Weber (*The Protestant Ethic and the Spirit of Capitalism*), and in philosophy from Descartes (and later Kant), reason is placed at the centre of the human being. Consequently, emotion is distrusted and viewed as distorting rationality. (Barbalet, 1998, p. 33)

Second, the critical approach provides emotion as a solution to problems rationality cannot solve. In the critical approach, emotion supports reason by providing direction and making rational thought possible by identifying goals, purposes and preferences. (Barbalet, 1998, p. 38) David Hume is the most prominent classical exponent of this view in his *Treatise on Human Nature* (1740), which has recently been highlighted in the work of popular neuroscientist Antonio Damasio. Damasio argues that emotional feelings indicate which problems reason has to solve and assist in delimiting a set of likely solutions, in short, guiding reason. (Damasio, 1994, p. 175)

Third, Barbalet's radical approach, maintains that emotion and rationality are continuous. Barbalet indicates that while this approach is detectable in Hume, it is most prominent in William James essay "The Sentiment of Rationality" (1882 and republished in *The Will to Believe*, 1897). James argued that intellect, will, taste and passion necessarily work together and support each other and that a set of sentiments provide philosophers with the mark of rationality. (James, 1897)

According to Milton, all areas of Western public discourse are characterized by the myth inherent in the conventional view that emotion and rationality are fundamentally opposed. Most prominently, this myth is apparent when people's attachment to non-market interests challenges the operation of the market. (Milton, 2002, p. 150) However, as we will see in examining the narratives of Canadian environmental organizations, it is clear that while emotion and reason are employed for different purposes within environmental narratives, emotion is not completely subjugated to reason. In fact, it is used to draw attention to the environmental issues that evoke emotional feelings and call upon reason to resolve. While emotion is

employed, the dominant Western paradigm, which elevates reason over emotion, is nevertheless most prevalent. This prevalence used, combined with the growing influence of environmental organizations, contributes to the marginalization of ecocentric value, such as intuition, in the mainstream environmental movement.

In Milton's view, cultural perspectives in which objects and entities are understood, occur in personal terms, as will be highlighted in the coming pages through a review of the work of Erazim Kohak. In other words, the development of knowledge is a private process informed by experience and direct perception. (Milton, 2002, p. 48) To develop a "love" of nature, therefore, requires an understanding of personhood that relates to nature on personal and moral terms. In mainstream society, there are barriers to the development of personhood in this context because natural things are presented primarily as resources with science as the main arbiter or truth. Further, the increasing urbanization of society alienates us from nature. Due to the dominance of reason over emotion in the Western paradigm, the personification of nature advanced by nature lovers is, therefore, unable to serve as a practical alternative to mainstream thinking and politics surrounding the environment. Even in cases where there is a coherent alternative political philosophy, such as the Deep Ecology Movement, marginalization is inevitable due to the relative subjugation of emotion as a basis for objective viewpoints in public policy development and related narratives. (Milton, 2002, pp. 30-31)

Nature, Direct Experience and Moral Sense

Direct experience with the natural world can form deep emotional bonds with our environment. In twenty-first century urban environments, our direct experience with nature is increasingly more distant and detached and further re-enforces the alienation, or subject-object relationship between humanity and the natural world. Building on Milton's position that emotional relationships with nature are developed in personal terms, I will briefly explore the writing of Erazim Kohak, who has explored nature through direct experience in an effort to highlight the role of intuition and emotion in framing attitudes toward nature. (Kohak, 1984)

Kohak is a Czech writer and philosopher who spent his early life in Prague but fled to the US in 1948 following the Communist take-over of Czechoslovakia. In *The Embers and the Stars*, Kohak makes the case for the moral significance of nature and the loss humanity suffers by adopting mechanistic constructs for the world around us, rather than having a primordial experience where, "boulders, trees, and the beasts of field and forest can be our kin." (Kohak, 1984, p. xi) He attempts to articulate, through metaphor rather than argument, the moral sense of nature based on seasons he spent living in solitude in the forest. By evoking a vision of nature and espousing a philosophy that encourages readers to spend time listening to and contemplating in nature, he is relying on direct experience and intuition to have its impact on perceptions and attitudes toward humanity's place in the world vis-à-vis nature. He suggests that by experiencing nature, its eternal worth will become apparent, "For nature in its integrity is not simply a reservoir of raw materials...the sense of nature as humans encounter it in radical brackets is also moral, a presence of value." (Kohak, 1984, p. 72) In showing the path to see the moral value of nature, Kohak goes beyond utilitarian and economic arguments against waste, stewardship, and the devastation of the natural world and suggests that the natural has an implicit, eternal value and integrity and is worthy of infinite respect.

Kohak's philosophy is not only an illustration of Milton's argument that attitudes toward nature are developed through personal, direct experience. It is also a roadmap for those who

wish to develop and evolve their understanding of nature via emotion and intuition. As will be seen in the forthcoming examination of Canada's leading environmental organizations, the early founders and supporters of these groups often develop their passion and motivation for action based on direct experience. The challenge for these groups, however, is that unlike a personal relationship and experience with nature, attempts to bring personal attitudes to the mainstream through mission-based organizations, the brokerage of the public policy process and the co-option of organizational values by power dynamics can be compromising to original ideals.

The Environmental Movement

The environmental movement is a diffuse movement led by diverse interests to address ecological concerns. The actors within the movement are varied and include individuals, not-for-profit organizations with environmental missions, academics, corporations, and even governments. As touched on above, views range from anthropocentric to ecocentric, mechanistic to organic, and in many ways socialist to capitalist. The ideology of the environmental movement is broadly defined as environmentalism, although clearly this label is hardly narrow enough to convey the specific beliefs of its adherents.

According to James Lovelock, environmentalism has mostly been expressed through radical political activity initially inspired by Rachel Carson's *Silent Spring*, soon translated at suburban dinner tables and universities, into threats to fancy birds living in Rousseau-style forests far away into a threat to people.⁸ (Lovelock, 2007, p. 111) Lovelock's point, while cynical in tone, highlights an important reality about the predominance of anthropocentrism within the environmental movement and the tendency for issues to shift from radical, utopian aspirations to compromised, anthropocentric positions. His comment suggests an inverse relationship between radicalism and influence. It is no revelation that radicalism should have an inverse relationship to influence, or mainstream acceptance. After all, that which is radical is outside the "normal", mainstream or widely-accepted viewpoints. It is important, however, to directly establish this point. When considering the narratives employed by environmental organizations, the growth and institutionalization of the organizations examined in this paper are examples of how radical ideas (or policy positions) can be driven out by either brokerage or a conscious desire to exercise influence in a particular sphere.

⁸ Carson's *Silent Spring*, which argued that impacts of pesticide use were not fully understood and were killing birds and people, is widely considered to have contributed to the launch of the environmental movement and its early label as a subversive effort (which has been described by some as a label advanced predominately by a combination of business and professional scientists who had a stake in DDT).

Within the movement, there is debate over the role of radicalism. As environmental rhetoric becomes more strident and alarming (in that it calls for drastic change to the status quo), it risks alienating the people it seeks to convince and undermines efforts to create critical alliances between environmentalists, the public and their representatives in government. (Treanor, 2010) Societal efforts to confront environmental issues require collaboration and collective effort, making this debate controversial within the movement.

Environmental Narratives

The competing world-views found within modernity are illustrated through the examination of the narratives of Canadian environmental organizations. It is clear, however, that the groups examined below are far from radical bastions of revolutionary ideas.

Greenpeace

Greenpeace is an independent, non-profit, global campaigning organization that uses non-violent, creative confrontation to “expose global environmental problems and their causes.” According to their mission statement, Greenpeace challenges government and industry to halt harmful practices by negotiating solutions, conducting scientific research, introducing clean alternatives, carrying out peaceful acts of civil disobedience, and educating and engaging the public. Greenpeace’s goal is to ensure the ability of Earth to nurture life in all its diversity. Greenpeace seeks to protect biodiversity in all its forms; prevent pollution and abuse of our oceans, land, air and water; end nuclear threats; and promote peace and global disarmament. (Greenpeace Canada)

In *Greenpeace: How a group of ecologists, journalists and visionaries changed the world*, Ray Wexler tells the story of Greenpeace’s creation and the cultural context that bore it. The late 1960’s, a cultural revolution was underway in developed Western countries. Wexler captures this movement, in part, by conveying the anger and disenchantment of urban youth in America, London and Paris following the assassinations of Martin Luther King and Robert Kennedy. In an illustration of the radical aspirations of the young people leading this cultural revolution, Wexler cites the example of students at the Sorbonne writing on the wall, “l’imagination au pouvoir” (Imagination is seizing power), highlighting that students were seeking a revolution of a human spirit. (Wexler, 2004, p. 47) This background for the creation of Greenpeace underscores the radical ambitions of Greenpeace in its early years. Bob Hunter, co-founder of Greenpeace in 1972, believed that ecology called into question the entire

philosophical foundation of dominant Western worldviews toward nature. In countering the conventional view and seeking large-scale change in human thinking, Hunter said, “Ecology suggests that engineering solutions won’t solve our problems. The organic world has its own laws.” (Wexler, 2004, p. 49) Much in the way that Copernicus discovered that the earth was not the centre of the universe, Hunter felt that ecology teaches that humans are not at the centre of the planet. (Wexler, 2004, p. 50) This viewpoint, bordering on ecocentrism, informed the radical positioning of ecological thinking leading up to the founding of Greenpeace.

In an effort to promote ecological thinking and counter the development of nuclear weapons, the group of activists who formed Greenpeace set out on a mission to halt nuclear weapons testing in Alaska. Greenpeace’s website quotes co-founder Bob Metcalfe speaking with CBC Radio as they embarked on their mission, positioning Greenpeace differently than Hunter years earlier:

Our goal is a simple, clear and direct one — to bring about a confrontation between the people of death and the people of life. We do not consider ourselves to be radicals. We are conservatives, who insist upon conserving the environment for our children and future generations. (Greenpeace Canada)

The contrast in positioning of Greenpeace espoused by its co-founders - with Hunter challenging the ecological relationship between humans and the planet in a way that challenges anthropocentrism and Metcalfe advancing more of a conservationist approach - highlights a trend that will be revealed in environmental narratives; organizations that have been successful in generating mainstream public appeal use a blend of different messages, many of which employ emotional arguments, to promote their cause. Further, the trend reveals that radical thinking like that promoted by the Bob Hunters of the world tends to be suppressed to fall within the dominant Western paradigm.

Campaigns

Through Greenpeace’s mission statement, the characteristics of modernity – anthropocentrism, elevation of reason over passion - are apparent across the spectrum. Clearly, despite its reputation in some circles as being a radical environmental organization, Greenpeace

espouses the intellectual values of Western society in citing science as a cornerstone of their advocacy. On the other hand, counter-strains are evident in the pursuit to prevent “abuse” of natural resources and support the Earth’s ability to “nurture” life.

In communicating their campaigns, Greenpeace weaves together language that captures both the rational/empirical foundation behind their claims and sentimental messages that strike emotive tones. Together, it is clear these messages form a narrative that aligns with the duality of Western attitudes toward passion and reason. For example, the following campaigns draw upon intellectual foundations from both the dominant Western tradition and shadow modernity to make their appeal.

Tar Sands

Greenpeace’s campaign against the oil sands presents empirical arguments in support of their claims about the impact of bitumen extraction and processing on climate change, while using powerful imagery to draw upon Romantic sensibilities about the natural world.

Alberta’s oil sands, referred to by Greenpeace and other activists as the “tar sands”, is the world’s second largest oil reserve. The oil extracted from the oil sands is a form of crude oil called bitumen. The thick, tar like nature of bitumen requires extensive processing in order to be refined into conventional oil. The oil sands development area covers an area of Crown land the size of England, which has been leased to oil companies based on resource extraction licenses. Because of the thickness of bitumen, it cannot be extracted using conventional drilling techniques. Instead, an open pit, surface mining extraction process is followed.

Greenpeace is calling on the Alberta government to immediately end the process of approving projects for oil sands development and to phase out existing projects. In their efforts to stop the tar sands, Greenpeace has adopted three visible techniques. First, keeping with their confrontational history, Greenpeace practices civil disobedience by trespassing into developments and displaying large banners reading things like, “Tar Sands: Climate Crime”.

Secondly, Greenpeace draws upon and commissions extensive scientific reports that highlight the impact of oil sands development and fossil fuel use on the surrounding environment and climate change. For example, in “Dirty Oil: How the tar sands are fuelling the

global climate crisis”, the report is positioned using a combination of rationalist, empiricist arguments about environmental impacts of the oil sands and resulting impact of corresponding climate change on political stability around the world. According to Greenpeace:

The report shows how the world’s addiction to oil is driving tar sands development with production likely to expand by three to five fold by 2020. The report argues that the unrestrained release of greenhouse gases from burning fossil fuels, especially carbon-intensive ones, “now threatens the political stability of human civilization.” The rapid increase in the development of carbon-intensive, unconventional oil “could tip the scales towards dangerous and uncontrollable climate change.” (Greenpeace)

Thirdly, Greenpeace uses powerful imagery of the destructive, invasive characteristics of oil sands development to make an emotional appeal to viewers. The Greenpeace commissioned film, *Petropolis: Aerial Perspectives on Alberta’s Tar Sands*, is an excellent example of an attempt to capitalize on a Romantic inclination found within our society that is uncomfortable with or in opposition to the destruction of nature. *Petropolis* is described as providing, through “a hypnotic flight of image and sound, one machine's perspective upon the choreography of others [which] suggests a dehumanized world where petroleum's power is supreme.” (Petropolis Film) In a review of the film, London’s *Sunday Times* described the film as a 45-minute tone poem that “eventually observes the gradual toxification of the landscape by the petroleum industry”. (Maher, 2010)

Boreal Forest

Greenpeace is campaigning to end “destructive logging practices” in Canada’s boreal forest, the country’s largest ecosystem. Greenpeace highlights the role of the boreal forest as home to “iconic species” like the Caribou, the watersheds that are important to rivers and bogs, and the ecosystems, including fish, amphibian and insect species, that rely on the health of the boreal forest. Clear cut logging is the symbol of boreal forest destruction used most prominently by Greenpeace and others. Clear cut logging is the practice of removing the entire standing crop of trees within a defined area.

Greenpeace positions itself as working to save the boreal forest through a combination of: challenging the marketplace; engaging consumers; pressuring governments; and working with industry.

In challenging the marketplace and engaging consumers, Greenpeace attempts to expose environmentally destructive logging practices and raise awareness among consumers about the companies that cause the most damage. In pressuring government and working with industry, Greenpeace uses a combination of aggressive civil disobedience (such as illegally raising provocative banners on corporate property) and more collaborative approach, based on accountability for logging practices and political decision-making, to encourage governments and companies to promote sustainable practices. (Greenpeace Canada)

Greenpeace's most prominent example of successful collaboration with industry and government is the Canadian Boreal Forest Agreement. Through this agreement, 21 major Canadian forest products companies and nine leading environmental organizations came together to protect 76 million hectares of boreal forest across Canada. (The Canadian Boreal Forest Agreement) While the agreement includes conservation through protected areas, the agreement implicitly accepts the role of logging in Canadian society and promotes science-based sustainable forest management and eco-system management systems.

Greenpeace produced a video celebrating the agreement that highlights the aggressive tactics of its activists, while contrasting images of clear cut forests with the robust rivers and ecosystems protected by the agreement. (Greenpeace Canada, 2010) Accompanied by images of logging trucks and animals struggling to move through clear cut areas, the video describes Canada's boreal forest as "one of the world's last intact wilderness area...and it's being destroyed." The "Greenpeace Forest Crimes Unit" is seen using confrontational civil disobedience to take on forest products companies like Kimberly-Clark. In celebrating their victory, the video ends with crediting themselves with achieving "the biggest forest conservation agreement on Earth. Ever." to make sure portions of the boreal forest "stays beautiful, protected, forever."

While Greenpeace used confrontational civil disobedience and emotional appeals to save nature to put the pressure on its eventual partners, the brokerage they have engaged in to

achieve the agreement, including the implicit acknowledgement that harvesting natural resources for economic purposes is an acceptable practice, illustrates the fact that they operate well within the dominant Western paradigm. Beyond seeking conservation, Greenpeace advocates for sustainable forest management, an anthropocentric and science-based position, that seeks to balance resource extraction objectives with the protection of indigenous plants and animals.

Nature Conservancy of Canada

Founded in 1962, the Nature Conservancy of Canada (NCC) refers to itself as Canada's leading national land conservation organization. As a private, not-for-profit organization that operates with corporate and individual partners, NCC works to achieve the protection of ecologically significant lands through property securement (donation, purchase, conservation agreement). In essence, it raises funds to purchase land and/or pursue agreements with landowners for conservation purposes. Since its founding, NCC and its partners have helped conserve more than 2 million acres of ecologically significant land in Canada. (Nature Conservancy of Canada)

The Nature Conservancy's original roots are in the natural areas movement in the United States. According to Bill Brichard in *Nature's Keepers: The Remarkable Story of How the Nature Conservancy became the Largest Environmental Organization in the World*, the original goal of the organization was to acquire unchanged remnants of natural features for preservation. (Brichard, 2005, p. 34) This original mission is in many ways a Romantic motivation, as the organization gave attention to acquiring lands never seriously modified by man. The essence of this action is preservation for preservation's sake. In 1970, however, the organization became more disciplined with the arrival of Robert Jenkins, a Harvard-educated ecologist who redefined the science-based mission of the Nature Conservancy and created a culture and processes for making decision systematically instead of opportunistically. (Brichard, 2005, p. 6) Much of the land acquired in the 50's and 60's was not viewed as ecologically "significant", leading Jenkins to articulate the organization's redefined mission as aiming to preserve lands that featured significant biological value that could support research and teaching. (Brichard, 2005, pp. 33-34)

In considering the role of emotion and the attributes of shadow modernity in the Nature Conservancy of Canada today, it is apparent that the shift that occurred with Jenkins in the 1970's continued with zeal. According to its website:

Wherever we work across Canada, we share and apply values that reflect this philosophy:

- We are guided by the best available conservation science.
- We work in a non-confrontational manner.
- We manage lands and waters for their intrinsic, natural values.
- We respect and promote nature's own processes of growth, succession and interaction.
- We recognize the need to create avenues for people to sustain themselves and live productively while conserving biological diversity. (Nature Conservancy of Canada, 2013)

From this philosophy, it can be concluded that the Nature Conservancy of Canada operates as an organization with values and principles that are far removed from the emotion and intuition-based ideas espoused through the Deep Ecology Movement or shadow modernity more broadly. In fact, as with Greenpeace above, the Nature Conservancy of Canada's environmental narrative falls well within the dominant Western paradigm.

Campaigns

The Nature Conservancy of Canada bases its decision on what it describes as "sound conservation science." (Nature Conservancy of Canada, 2011) Their approach is based on focusing conservation efforts on priority landscapes, primarily aimed at securing the long-term survival of viable natural species and community types of the ecoregion. It secures land through purchase, donation, conservation agreements or relinquishing of natural resources harvesting rights from both individuals and corporations.

Unlike Greenpeace, NCC's campaigns are primarily focused on fundraising, rather than policy. For example, NCC's Leaders in Conservation program provides opportunities and benefits to individuals who make an annual contribution of \$1,000 or more in support of the Nature Conservancy of Canada's (NCC's) work. Participants have the benefit of personally experiencing the spectacular landscapes and wildlife in their area through trips and tours and participating in presentations and events that will help them learn more about NCC's

work, while meeting like-minded people. NCC also seeks planned giving, gifts of stock, gifts of land and corporate partnerships with organizations like Shell Canada Ltd, TELUS and Petro-Canada.

NCC's narratives focus on the benefits its members and community experience from working to protect nature and wildlife. There is not a strong current of emotional appeal in their website. For example, while a recent news release is entitled "Fall in Love with Nature", the focus of the news release is the results of a study that showed that 97% of Canadians believe that nature is important to their family's well-being. (Nature Conservancy of Canada, 2013) Other news releases tend to focus on announcements of conserving habitat in partnership with corporate entities

The NCC makes decisions on which lands to preserve based on the use of science to inform priorities. Though Greenpeace uses more radical, confrontational tactics, NCC collaborates with governments closely, such as through the launch of the Government of Canada's Natural Areas Conservation Program, launched in 2007. It was the largest commitment by any Canadian government to conserve private lands. Through the Natural Areas Conservation Program, the Government of Canada set aside \$225 million for the protection of natural areas. Under the program, \$185 million were directly invested in NCC's conservation program. (Nature Conservancy of Canada, 2013). From a philosophical point of view, NCC claims that it seeks to "protect natural diversity for their intrinsic value and for the benefit of our children and those after them" reflecting both the ecocentric belief that there is moral worth in nature itself and the anthropocentric position that nature exists to benefit humankind. (Nature Conservancy of Canada, 2013)

Sierra Club

Sierra Club has been active in Canada since 1963, originally as an arm of the US-based Sierra Club, which was founded in 1892. In 1992, Sierra Club Canada incorporated to establish a formal Canadian entity. Sierra Club Canada is the agent of Sierra Club Canada Foundation. The mission of the Sierra Club Canada Foundation is to advance the preservation and protection of the natural environment with charitable resources. To fulfill its mission of protecting and

preserving natural environment, the Sierra Club Canada Foundation funds charitable projects of Sierra Club Canada and its chapters. (Sierra Club Canada)

The US site is a bit more revealing in terms of the objectives the Sierra Club seeks to achieve. It says that its 1.4 million members are seeking: a safe and healthy community in which to live; smart energy solutions to combat global warming; and an enduring legacy for America's wild places. (Sierra Club US)

Like Greenpeace, Sierra Club has policy objectives that are anthropocentric and consistent with the dominant Western paradigm. "Smart energy solutions", developed through exploitative economic development, however, managed, as we will see below, through a "transition to a sustainable economy."

Campaigns

Major national campaigns fall under the program areas of Health and Environment, Protecting Biodiversity, Atmosphere and Energy, and Transition to a Sustainable Economy. Sierra Club "Trade and Environment Campaign" highlights most prominently how the organization operates within established democratic processes to achieve objectives that are anthropocentric and consistent with mainstream values that elevate the individual above nature. The presence of science, empirical and rational argumentation are more significant messages in contrast to relatively muted emotional appeals. Sierra Club Canada's Trade and Environment Campaign cites:

mounting evidence that unfettered economic globalization and its agenda of free trade, de-regulation, and privatization implemented over the past two decades without public consultation, has had a devastating impact on our immediate environment, the ecosystems of the planet and broader planetary cycles that are now deeply out of balance from pollution, depletion of resources and excessive CO2 and other emissions. (Sierra Club Canada)

The Trade and Environment Campaign focuses on:

- (i) The cascade of bi-lateral and internal FTAs being pushed through without adequate consultation or impact studies
- (ii) The imperative of re-negotiating NAFTA, and all free trade agreements,

- (iii) Working to rid all trade agreements of the unjust, undemocratic and unsustainable NAFTA Chapter 11 investor state mechanism, and
- (iv) Working towards fairer trade models and sustainable economic systems. The Trade and Environment Campaign works to increase awareness of how globalization, free trade and NAFTA impact the environment and ecosystems and works with the membership and other national NGO's and coalitions to oppose trade agreements that are harmful to the environment, local economies, and sovereignty.

The intellectual focus of this campaign fits within the dominant Western paradigm. The Sierra Club's narrative merely seeks to tinker with Enlightenment inspired public policy frameworks. In *Eco-Warriors: Understanding the Radical Environmental Movement*, author Ric Scarce outlines the "muddling through" approach that characterized mainstream environmental organizations. Quoting Sierra Club Chairman Michael McClosky, Scarce criticizes the conventionalism and pragmatism of "traditional" environmentalists. McClosky argued "You do better not having grand plans and rigid ideologies...Instead, you constantly redefine your approach as you go along", depending on the issue and opponent and making deals as needed. (Scarce, 1990, p. 15) Scarce contrasted Sierra Club to the militant, no compromise attitude that the elites of the environmental movement hold are too genteel to employ.

Summary and Analysis

In summarizing the approach of Greenpeace, NCC and Sierra Club, Scarce's analysis provides a clear insight into the environmental movement and its segmentation into radical and mainstream. The purpose of this paper has been to determine if the narratives employed by the three organizations in question are undermined by romantic, emotional appeals that are subjected within the dominant Western paradigm. Further, using Barbalet's framework for considering the role of emotion in decision-making, the objective has been to determine where within his three approaches these organizations fit- either conventional, critical or radical. As it turns out, the philosophical brokerage that these organizations practice makes it challenging to definitively determine the degree to which these organizations consider emotion in decision-making and prioritizing action. What is clear, however, is that when analyzing outcomes, these organizations take Barbalet's conventional approach when articulating their position and policy

proposals. They rely on scientific arguments in their prescriptions and do not elevate emotion or intuition over reason. However, in making their appeals to draw attention to their causes, implicit in these organizations' narratives is what can be seen as the limited use of emotion to guide thinking toward the challenges that reason can solve. In other words, while their policy prescriptions use the conventional approach, the narratives used to set their priorities allow for emotion to be employed using the critical approach. Greenpeace's film, *Petropolis* which features powerful and troubling imagery of the environmental devastation caused by the "tar sands" and the NCC's attempt to make people "fall in love with nature" are examples of emotion within these organization's narratives. The Sierra Club, however, appears to rely primarily on the conventional approach across the board.

With each of the three environmental groups, there is no question that they operate within a philosophical framework that fits squarely in the dominant Western paradigm. Subsequently, these organizations do not face intellectual or philosophical barriers to achieving broad mainstream appeal and currency with the general public and in the halls of power.

The former CEO of the Sierra Club, Michael McClosky, captured some of the tension that exists between radical and mainstream environmental organizations in his memoir. In the 1980s, unity within the environmental movement was breaking down, with a new breed of radicals emerging through organizations like EarthFirst! At the time, a split was emerging between "nature conservationists" and "new environmentalists" who were more concerned with consumption. McClosky felt that Sierra Club had a foot in both camps. Deep ecologists were also in the mix, but McClosky felt that they disparaged Sierra Club as "shallow".⁹ (McClosky, 2005, pp. 236-237) Reflecting on the Sierra Club's lobbying tactics and PR strategy, it is clear that mainstream environmental organizations become embroiled in bureaucracy and forced into adopting and maintaining the conventional approach. The below excerpt is instructive:

⁹ McClosky's analysis here seems to conflate what we conventionally regard as "shallow" or simple intellectualism with the "shallow", rather than "deep" approach to eco-centrism forwarded by Arne Naess.

In dealing with midlevel and lower-level bureaucrats, I suggested [that] because they are more comfortable “dealing with issues on a technical basis, we should cast our arguments as much as possible in unthreatening terms that are consistent with the agency’s other suppositions and supported by data. The more rational we look, the more they will fear looking irrational and unsupported in the record if they rebuff us...Lobbyists who become expert in specialized fields can meet the bureaucracy on ground that it can relate to.” (McClosky, 2005, p. 239)

McClosky’s first-hand account further highlights the challenges environmental organizations face conveying their message to people that do not have personal, direct experience with nature. For bureaucrats, the environment and the surrounding regulatory framework to protect it, exists as an object-subject relationship typical of the post-Enlightenment world. Opinions and positions informed by sentimentality and romanticism have no place in the halls of power of the modern world. This problem is further echoed by Dave Foreman, an activist with EarthFirst! Foreman, however, directs criticism toward environmental organizations, rather than governments. According to Foreman, many of the people who work for environmental groups are not conservationists, but career-oriented technicians with a higher loyalty to the political process than conservation, and few who are actually outdoors people. (Foreman, 1991, pp. 201-203) The professional staff responsible for managing these organizations, in Foreman’s view, are becoming increasingly distanced from the grassroots of the environmental movement. As a result of the institutional structures that become a necessity as organizations grow and become better resourced and influential, the co-option of those organizations by the dominant paradigm becomes overbearing. The personal experiences that drive those at the grassroots to bring their passion and emotion to the debate are marginalized in such a structure, due to the incongruity between their motivations (personal experience) and the system (rationally-based institutional decision-making structures in government and organizations).

Conclusion: Emotion, Sentiment and Direct Experience

According to Percy Shelley:

The whole of human science is comprised in one question: How can the advantages of intellect and civilization, be reconciled with the liberty and pure pleasures of natural life? How can we take the benefits and reject the evils of the system which is now interwoven with all the fibres of our being? (Shelley, 1813)

Ultimately, the answers that Shelley contends are sought by science are the same as those sought by members of the above environmental organizations. Those engaged in environmentalism are, as Duguid has put it, engaging in a pre-rational, pre-romantic sensibility that Rousseau and others called an apprehension of the sentiment of existence. (Duguid, 2010, p. 111) At one time or another, we are experiencing a heightened awareness about our own existence while seeking a deeper, more meaningful connection to the natural, or meta-existence around us in nature.

According to Milton, there is a relationship between the basis of all cultural perspectives in which objects and entities are understood in personal terms. (Milton, 2002, p. 48) In other words, the development of emotional attachment is a private process that accounts for the unique perspectives of individuals according to various objects or subjects. As a result, individual relationships to nature vary based on personal, direct experience. Emotion can be experienced when humans are engaged in a subject-subject relationship with nature (see Merchant) through personal interaction. In public discourse, the subject-object paradigm frames discourse on public policy, evidenced by the science-based reasoning around climate change (Greenpeace), conservation “science” (NCC), and green energy solutions (Sierra Club). As these organizations, whose initial influence grows due to a support base that is often

motivated by emotional, personal attitudes toward nature, attempts to exercise growing influence in a public policy process that features brokerage and elevation of attitudes within the dominant Western paradigm, they face the challenge of marginalizing their most faithful supporters in order to exercise their power.

The environmental movement is a public movement aimed at changing people's views toward the environment. The environmental organizations studied in this paper are influential groups with deep histories of public advocacy and institutional structures. In a post-Enlightenment world that prioritizes reason over emotion, Barbalet's conventional approach is employed by environmental organizations in their policy prescription efforts, while there are examples of the critical approach in guiding reason to solve the problem identified by the use of emotion. It is safe to say that as environmental organizations either seek to become, or perhaps by their nature become, influential, the conventional approach Barbalet outlines is employed within institutions of government. Barbalet argues that there is enough in the critical and radical approach to show that the conventional distinction between reason and emotion is blurred, not sharp, and yet the durability of the conventional approach remains remarkable. In part, Barbalet, in referencing the work of Georg Simmel's "The Metropolis and Mental Life" (1903), sees the orientations of urban and market society displacing emotion as a motivating force, as the imperatives of human conduct in a capitalist society are outside the individual's subjective, or emotional, states and instead subject to the external demands of the market. (Barbalet, 1998, p. 54) Therefore, if the objective of these organizations is to become influential in encouraging change, then they can be viewed as having succeeded in sublimating their initial more emotional and value-laden positions in the name of brokerage and cultural currency. Indeed, these organizations are three of the most influential organizations in Canada on issues concerning environmental policy. Their current methods, however, will only succeed in making incremental change. For those who take a more alarmist position on the need to change the status quo and prevent further environmental degradation, these organizations fit neatly into the paradigm that has led us to our current state.

The above reality highlights the tension between emotional relationships with nature in the private and public spheres. Emotional relationships with nature, developed through personal experience, do not have the same currency in public dialogue, except perhaps with

those who have pre-existing relationships to nature. For this reason, policy prescriptions on environmental policy aimed at institutions of government default to the conventional approach, due to the elevation of reason over emotion practiced within those institutions. Elements of their marketing materials, however, aimed at engaging citizens in their cause, take the critical approach. The organizations in this study are not, therefore, undermined by a reliance on emotional narratives. In fact, seeking to maximize their influence, these organizations rely most prominently on arguments that fit well within the dominant Western paradigm. Emotional narratives would most appropriately be used in circumstances where recipients of messages can draw upon direct experience that surfaces their pre-existing sentimental relationship to nature. In an increasingly urban society, this approach is challenging for those who seek to be influential advocates for the environment in the modern world.

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